



**Australian Government**



**IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY**  
**LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC SCHOOL COMMUNITIES**

**NSW**  
**Progress Report 2012**  
**(1 January – 30 June 2012)**

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## Section 1 – Improving Teacher Quality

### Overview/Highlights - 1 January to 30 June 2012

During the first six months of 2012, NSW continued to build on the considerable achievements of reforms supported by the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership (ITQ NP). The priorities for the first six months were guided by the NSW State Plan as well as the Addendum to the NSW Smarter Schools National Partnership Implementation Plan, which sets out an ambitious set of initiatives to support quality teaching practices. Of the twelve Addendum priorities for 2012, seven focused exclusively on initiatives to be implemented in the non-government sector.

All school sectors in NSW are committed to implementing the initiatives of the new Principal Professional Development National Partnership. While awaiting release of Commonwealth funds for this Partnership, extensive planning occurred in the first six months of 2012 in each of the four projects of principal action learning communities, building instructional leadership capacity, leading improvement, innovation and change and principal preparation pathways. This Partnership will build the capacity of school leaders to improve teacher quality through scaffolding school improvement, with an emphasis on performance management and professional development linked to school plans, the professional teaching standards and the National Standard for Principals.

At the end of June 2012, there were 50 Centres for Excellence in operation across the three sectors, including 35 Centres for Excellence in government schools, 14 Catholic Centres for Excellence and the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence (ISCE), based within the Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AIS).

The significance of reforms already implemented through the 35 government schools Centres for Excellence was recognised by offering continuing support to the first ‘tranche’ of 13 schools which commenced in 2010 and where the funding period would otherwise have ceased. All 13 schools chose to submit applications to participate in a further year of teacher quality focused activities, providing the opportunity to further embed the practices found to have the greatest impact for teacher quality.

In order to extend the implementation of ITQ reforms more widely in the government sector, a further six schools and four groups of schools not already in the ITQ NP were provided with the opportunity to participate in a one-year initiative, the Teacher Quality Project. This additional funding is allowing the schools to implement school-designed projects that focus on one or more of the key objectives of the Partnership.

The Catholic sector has also grown the capacity and number of Centres for Excellence. For example in early 2012, the Canberra–Goulburn Diocese officially launched the Birrang Centre for Excellence in Science in Trinity Catholic College. Since its launch, the Centre has supported and encouraged students and teachers of science in a range of activities including a science expo, participation in the *myScience* program through the Australian Catholic University, a workshop for science coordinators and the first of a number of planned community science events.

Over 160 schools have engaged with the ISCE since 2009, with strategies to improve teacher quality and improve leadership, particularly in regional areas and hard-to staff schools. The strategies in 2012 have focused on making professional learning and support more accessible, mentoring to engage and improve teachers in regional and hard to staff schools, and building supportive, collaborative, sustainable relationships to allow teachers to examine classroom practice and improve their own teaching practice.

Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) continued to support teacher quality initiatives in 2012 through both the ITQ and Low SES NPs. At the end of June 2012 there were 107 HATs in government schools, including five continuing in 'tranche 1' government school Centres for Excellence being supported through additional funding. As at 30 June, 2012, 117 Highly Accomplished Teacher positions had been created in NSW government schools since 2010<sup>1</sup>.

In the Catholic sector, there were at least 81 positions equivalent to Highly Accomplished Teachers, while there were 41 teachers in independent schools accredited at the level of Professional Accomplishment.

In order to enhance opportunities for employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in educational support services, and following the establishment of Indigenous traineeships in Education Support Services and Business Services in regional independent schools in 2010, another Indigenous traineeship was negotiated in 2012. The trainee will be employed in a regional independent school and will undertake study for a Certificate III in School Support Services.

Independent schools have been further supported to participate in school-based projects that focus on improving teacher quality. The ISCE has continued to target four schools with significant numbers of Aboriginal students to provide support for individual teachers. The teachers have each been given five days of on-site mentoring to develop their teaching strategies for Science, Design and Technology, Visual Arts, and English.

The ISCE also facilitated a final year teacher education internship focused on Mathematics and Science teaching and engagement with the local Aboriginal community. A second internship, focused on Primary teaching and engagement with the local Aboriginal community, is planned for that school later in 2012.

As a priority for 2012, planning was completed for a Principals' Forum on educating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NSW independent schools later in 2012, with the ISCE also planning a two day conference for 2013.

The independent sector prioritised establishing and developing processes for promoting and managing teacher accreditation. For example, the ISCE supported mentoring between schools for teachers undertaking accreditation, while teachers in 40 schools completed courses in supervising New Scheme Teachers or those seeking accreditation beyond Professional Competence.

The reforms supported through initiatives such as Centres for Excellence have benefited from the dedicated funding provided through the ITQ NP, but there has been a concerted effort to learn the wider lessons that may be transferred beyond Partnership schools, and continued beyond the life of the NP.

Independent, state-wide evaluations are identifying what works well and what is sustainable, at local and state-wide levels. Implementing a combination of strategies has been most successful, particularly with high quality instructional leadership. Networks of teachers, principals and executives are expected to continue and to grow with an explicit focus on longer-term sustainability. Across all sectors there is an overarching commitment to transfer the learnings from the ITQ NP through collaborative professional learning, the sharing of best practice, and continuous improvement of teacher quality.

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<sup>1</sup> Due to different accounting periods, this is consistent with other reports in this document that as at 30 June 2012, there were 107 currently employed. For the period July 2011 to Dec 2011, the number is 108 (as the Tighes Hill position finished end 2011)

## Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students - 1 January to 30 June 2012

In the first six months of 2012, NSW provided significant support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, particularly through teacher professional development.

In the government schools sector, DEC is working in partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. (AECG) to implement the *Connecting to Country* program across NSW.

*Connecting to Country* is a quality teaching and leadership program designed to develop teachers and principals understanding of their Aboriginal students' cultural, linguistic and family backgrounds. The project aims to help foster genuine relationships between schools, Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community, build a culturally responsive leadership and knowledge base in Aboriginal education and lead improved education and training outcomes for Aboriginal students. Principals, as well as newly appointed and transferred teachers from 143 participating schools are eligible to participate in *Connecting to Country*.

*Connecting to Country* is a five day program, which consists of three days of cultural immersion run by Regional and Local AECGs which provides insight into the social, cultural, historic, economic and political issues that continue to affect Aboriginal people and communities. This is followed by two days of professional development which strengthens teachers' and principals' capacity to plan, develop and implement culturally inclusive programs and practices.

*Connecting to Country* began in July 2011 and is being rolled out incrementally until December 2012.

Between 1 January and 30 June, 142 teachers and 40 principals participated in the program. Over this period, participating schools included 25 from a regional or remote location and five urban schools.

In the Catholic sector, the Wilcannia–Forbes Diocese has focused on equipping teachers with the ability to better analyse the assessment results of Indigenous students to inform the development of Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs). The introduction of the *Yarning Strong* resource in participating schools within the Diocese has engaged Aboriginal students and deepened teacher understanding of issues related to Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal Contact Teachers in the Parramatta Diocese developed expertise in using school measurement (SMART) goals when writing PLPs, analysed appropriate and authentic resources to improve student outcomes and the explicit program development for Aboriginal students

In the Armidale Diocese, which has a high concentration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments, schools have implemented a number of strategies to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including an Aboriginal Education Assistant providing professional learning for supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attendance, while seven schools participated in 'Let's Talk Dhawunda' Diocesan cultural immersion program.

Progress has also been made by participating independent schools in establishing teacher professional development which specifically responds to Aboriginal students' needs, including:

- eleven independent schools have completed professional learning on teaching



Aboriginal students or on increasing the cultural awareness of staff. In four of these schools more than 20 teachers participated in professional learning

- seven teachers from five independent schools participated in the three day Australian Education Consultative Group Inc. *Connecting to Country* courses at Ballina and Grafton, with participation in further courses planned for Semester Two
- Aboriginal languages continue to be taught in three independent schools and teachers are involved in learning with their students.

Independent schools participating in the ITQ National Partnership have also directly supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in a range of ways, including through the ISCE university partnership with UNSW, which provides support for further developing the university's outreach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through their *Year 7 Science and Engineering* program, the *Maths Mentoring* and the Business School's initiative to increase the number of Aboriginal accountants.

### ***Aboriginal community engagement***

Within the government sector, the *Schools in Partnership* (SiP) initiative aids schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments to improve student outcomes by implementing strategies developed in partnership with local school communities. In 2012, Phase Three of the initiative is being implemented in 89 schools (69 individual schools and 20 schools in five communities of schools).

Each SiP school receives between \$30,000 and \$240,000 yearly for three years to implement strategies to improve teaching and learning outcomes and strengthen Aboriginal community engagement.

68 SiP schools are in regional or remote locations and 21 SiP schools are in an urban location.

Within the Catholic sector in Wollongong Diocese schools, the on-going employment of an education officer specific to Indigenous education is proving successful for liaison and linkage between schools and community, supporting teachers in designing Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for Aboriginal students and in overseeing the roles of the Aboriginal education aides (AEAs) in schools with significant Aboriginal students. Part-time employment of three Indigenous paraprofessionals as AEAs to support teachers' knowledge on local community and Indigenous protocols is helping with engagement and achievement.

This Diocese has also focused efforts on building professional pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education workers and members of the community who are interested in progressing to teaching. The Diocese has sponsored two Aboriginal AEAs to further their teaching qualifications.

The Parramatta Diocesan Centre for Excellence 'Learning Exchange' has been focused on supporting the work of the Catholic Education Commission (CEC) Aboriginal unit, providing expertise in the area of multimedia and technology. An Aboriginal teaching educator works in schools with the highest Aboriginal enrolments. Schools report that her work with students and families is making a difference in a range of areas including improved numeracy skills for students and better understanding for parents and caregivers in supporting their children's numeracy development

In the first six months of 2012 the ISCE targeted funding for two schools to work with Aboriginal communities from which they draw students with a view to increasing the

capacity of their teachers to meet the needs of Aboriginal students and to build stronger community support for education. Independent schools with Aboriginal boarders have community engagement strategies with regular meetings and input from parents.

Cultural immersion programs have been designed and approved for implementation at Lake Cargelligo for next term. The program has been specifically designed for the needs of the community. Discussions have also taken place in the new Low SES schools (Cootamundra, Broulee, Moruya and Bateman's Bay) and preliminary plans and have been developed for their implementation in 2013.

One Indigenous traineeship – in Education Support – was completed in a regional independent school in the first half of 2012. Another Indigenous traineeship - also in Education Support – has been negotiated to commence in August 2012. The trainee will be also employed in a regional school and will undertake study for a Certificate III in Education Support Services.

An Aboriginal education worker (AEW) continues to be supported by the ISCE with course fees and study support to gain a Certificate III in Education Support Services. As a role model he is encouraging Aboriginal students to complete their secondary education and consider pathways into further qualifications and higher education. Community interest in further study has also increased, with two other community members expressing interest to commence the same qualification, supported by the ISCE.

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## **Progress against TQNP facilitation reforms - 1 January to 30 June 2012**

### **1. National Professional Standards for Teachers**

National Professional Standards for Teachers were endorsed by agreement of all states and territories. The NSW Minister for Education formally adopted the national standards for use under the NSW Institute of Teachers Act in July 2012.

The NSW Institute of Teachers developed an implementation plan to establish an orderly transition from the NSW Professional Teaching Standards to the National Professional Standards for Teachers for all teachers with mandatory accreditation requirements. This plan was endorsed by the NSW Quality Teaching Council in February 2012 and subsequently approved by the Minister.

NSW will determine transition arrangements to Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher standards when key national procedures and support are in place.

For pre-service teachers in NSW, as agreed with providers of initial teacher education courses, in 2013 the National Graduate Teacher Standards will be used in all programs and across all stages of programs through revised relevant program units.

From 2013, Professional Experience Reports in all pre-service programs will be based on the National Graduate Teacher Standards, including relevant assessments.

The transition for provisionally and conditional accredited teachers and for those accredited at Professional Competence (PC) will occur during 2013 and 2014.

- All teachers given initial accreditation from 1 October 2012, will use the National Professional Standards for Teachers – Proficient level, to undertake their next accreditation requirements

- Teachers initially accredited before 1 October 2012, who wish to continue using NSW standards to meet PC accreditation requirements will be expected to complete their accreditation process by the end of 2014.

The transition for those accredited at Professional Competence and maintaining this accreditation, will occur during 2013.

- Teachers whose maintenance period will end in 2013 will complete all their maintenance requirements against NSW standards. Their next maintenance period will use the National Professional Standards for Teachers
- Teachers who complete Professional Competence accreditation from 1 October 2012 will undertake their professional development and write their accreditation report against the National Professional Standards for Teachers – Proficient level
- Teachers who complete Professional Competence requirements before 1 October 2012, with a maintenance period ending in 2014 or later, will use the NSW Standards at Professional Competence to map teacher identified professional development during 2013, but will change to national standards from 2014.

From October 2012, prospective applicants for Endorsed Provider of Institute Registered Professional Development will undertake the process using the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

The transition arrangements also include a schedule for revision of Institute policies and support materials for accreditation. In June 2012, the Institute of Teachers' Quality Teaching Council endorsed changes to the policies for Accreditation at Proficient Teacher / Professional Competence and for Maintenance Of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher/Professional Competence.

To further support teachers with the transition to national teaching standards, the Institute of Teachers has focused the content of its new regular publication to teachers and school leaders, *Accreditation Matters*, on key aspects of the transition process. The first two issues covered the timeline for transition and key aspects of the new standards.

The Department of Education and Communities (DEC) participated in a pilot project with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (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 used 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. DEC schools and teachers are also represented on AITSL focus groups and committees supporting the implementation of the national standards.

The independent sector has been involved in national level discussions and committees around the National Professional Standards for Teachers. Independent schools are involved in validating the Standards and providing *Illustrations of Practice*. Three independent schools are pilot schools for the adoption of the National Professional Standards for teachers and independent schools are involved in a variety of Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) projects.

## **2. National certification of Accomplished and Lead Teachers**

National certification procedures for a consistent process for accreditation of Highly Accomplished or Lead Teachers were endorsed by Ministers in April 2012.



AITSL has deemed the current accreditation process against NSW standards for Professional Accomplishment and Leadership as equivalent in an interim arrangement for payments under *Rewards for Great Teachers* because key elements of national certification also exist in the NSW process. These elements include making assessment decisions against standards that are comparable to national standards, an observation of the teacher seeking certification or accreditation by a trained person external to the teacher's school, the sources of evidence and the assessment decision made by assessors outside the teacher's school.

To 30 June 2012, the following numbers of teachers were engaged in voluntary accreditation for Professional Accomplishment and Leadership.

***NSW Teachers Engaged in Accreditation to June 30 2012***

Accreditation	Teachers completed Preliminary Assessment	Teachers undertaking submissions	Teachers accredited
Professional Accomplishment	706	142	38
Professional Leadership	527	159	0
Total	1233	301	38

NSW teachers undertaking certification for Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher will need to be supported by an Evidence Guide (indicating what types of evidence would be appropriate for demonstrating their practice) and a new online submission tool that is adapted for the new standards and changes in procedures.

The NSW Institute will participate in trialling and advising on the development of an online self-assessment tool, and the training for the external observation and assessment.

As at 30 June, 2012, 117 Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT) positions had been created in NSW government schools since 2010<sup>2</sup>. During their appointment, Highly Accomplished Teachers undertake their submission for accreditation at either Professional Accomplishment or Professional Leadership.

In NSW government schools, HATs supported through the ITQ NP continue to work with teachers both in their own school and other groups of schools to expand knowledge of the Professional Standards for Teachers, including the national standards. In addition, HATs work with other experienced teachers to increase awareness of the processes of accreditation at the higher career stages.

During the first six months of 2012, five government school Centres for Excellence, where ITQ NP funding would otherwise have ceased, chose to continue to employ HATs through additional NSW Government support as part of their extension program.

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<sup>2</sup> Due to different accounting periods, this is consistent with reports later in this document that as at 30 June 2012, there were 107 currently employed. For the period July 2011 to July 2012, the number is 108 (as the Tighes Hill position finished end 2011)

A further 22 HATs continued in the second 'tranche' of government school Centres for Excellence, whose ITQ NP funding is due to cease at the end of the year.

In the period to end June 2012, there were also a further 80 HATs in government schools supported through the Low SES NP – including 57 in Reform Extension Initiative (REI) schools.

In the Catholic sector, there were a total of 81 positions equivalent to Highly Accomplished Teachers.

In independent schools, there are 41 HAT equivalents, all of them fully accredited at the higher levels.

### **3. Nationally consistent registration of teachers**

All states and territories agreed to implement a set of principles to achieve consistent registration of teachers nationally. There are eight components of nationally consistent registration.

- the NSW Institute of Teachers has established accreditation processes that meet each of the eight components. All NSW teachers (who are in the accreditation scheme) meet the national components of registration.
- there are two areas that require some amendments to existing NSW policy and procedures:
  - the NSW Institute of Teachers Policy for English Language Testing will be amended in August 2012 to meet national requirements
  - implementation of the requirement for a regular five year national criminal history check will be synchronised with the roll out of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012.

Independent school teachers have participated in working groups developing support materials related to nationally consistent registration and certification. There has been extensive participation at a senior level in the associated reference groups.

### **4. National consistency in accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses**

During 2012 jurisdictions will transition to the national initial teacher education accreditation system described by *Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* April 2011.

Through the first half of 2012, the NSW Institute of Teachers continued to work with staff from AITSL and other teacher regulatory authorities to clarify aspects of the National Program Standards and to develop consistent approaches to assessing programs. This is being done through the Institute's membership of AITSL's National Initial Teacher Education Advisory Committee (NITEAC) and the National Accreditation Officers Network involving teacher regulatory authorities and AITSL staff.

The Institute has contributed to advice on literacy and numeracy expectations of applicants for teacher education; the development of draft descriptions of requirements in National priority areas including literacy and numeracy, Aboriginal education and special education; requirements for early childhood and primary programs and aspects of professional experience. The Institute has also contributed to the development of common reporting processes to AITSL and common templates for advice to teacher education providers after their programs have been assessed.

The Institute has continued to ensure there is a smooth transition to the national system and the adoption of the National Professional Standards for Teachers at Graduate Teacher level within all programs. This has involved:

- ensuring that all NSW teacher education providers were aware of the timeframes for reviewing and submitting their initial teacher education programs to the Institute for assessment under the National system in accordance with a revised approval schedule negotiated in 2011 and approved by the NSW Minister
- ensuring that NSW teacher employers are informed of the timeframe and implications of moving to the National system through existing forums such as the Institute's Quality Teaching Council and regular meetings with Catholic diocesan officers
- providing an information brochure to NSW teacher education providers to alert them to the implications of the transition to the National system. This brochure highlighted the timeframe for including the National Professional Standards for Teachers at Graduate Teacher level within current programs and the need to raise the awareness of current teacher education students to the transition to the National Professional Standards for Teachers through modified content and delivery of relative units within programs. Providers were also asked to refer to the National Graduate Teacher Standards instead of NSW Standards in revised professional experience report templates from 2013 onwards and to apply these report templates across all programs and all stages of programs in 2013
- providing an information brochure to NSW teacher education students currently enrolled in programs to alert them to the implications of the transition to the National system including the attention being given to the National Professional Standards for Teachers and the move to assess newly graduating teachers in schools from 2013 in terms of the National Proficient level standards
- developing and disseminating to all NSW teacher education providers a recommended professional experience report template that is based on the National Graduate Teacher Standards to assist providers in converting professional experience report templates to the National Standards and to support uniformity across all NSW providers
- finalising advice on the relationship between the National and NSW Professional Teaching Standards at Graduate Teacher level that aims to assist providers in the task of converting program documentation to the National Standards
- working closely with those teacher education providers that are preparing or starting to prepare applications for program accreditation in 2013 and 2014. A small number of initial teacher education programs are being submitted for assessment by the Institute under the National system in 2012. These programs will be assessed by panels of principals, teachers and teacher educators who had undertaken a national accreditation panel training program at the end of 2011
- providing presentations to staff and students at a number of teacher education providers.

The Institute has also commenced the process of revising current policies and procedures to ensure they are compliant with and support the National system. This includes revising the Institute's *Policy and Procedures for the Approval of Initial Teacher Education Programs* and the *Supplementary Documentation on Subject Content Requirements*; amending existing Institute advice templates to providers after program assessment; and making necessary modifications to records management procedures and computer databases.

## **5. Professional development and support for principals**

Schools in NSW have continued to implement strategies to increase and improve professional development and support for school principals. (Note that additional initiatives under the Principal Professional Development NP are reported separately, later in this document.)

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' Professional Teaching Standards*.

In 2012, the DEC has conducted 562 courses involving 6,351 school principals that supported their professional learning aligned to key accountabilities.

In 2012, 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:

- Introducing the *Executive Assessment and Review Schedule in Your School*
- Understanding performance management
- Skills for performance management
- Leading effective systems for records management and
- An introduction to leading within legal and regulatory frameworks.

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.

In the Catholic sector professional learning opportunities have been provided for principals through system network meetings and precinct (cluster) meetings as well as in and between systems through conferences and forums. Mentoring programs between newly appointed principals and more experienced principals are being well supported. A leadership forum was offered in addition to a two-year *Beginning Principals* program which continued with six Catholic Schools in the Broken Bay Diocese.

The Catholic Education office has focused on increasing access to and the use of video-conference equipment in the sector to assist principals and leadership teams to share expertise in and across Dioceses.

Individual Dioceses continue to provide a broad range of professional development and support for school principals, including:

- a two day residential *Masterclass* program on effective school leadership was conducted in the first half of 2012 to target professional learning for 80 principals in the Parramatta Diocese. The Diocese also offered professional learning initiatives to specifically improve the capacity of principals and school leaders as instructional leaders including:
  - ELIM – a program aimed at experienced school principals and senior educational administrators
  - the Newly Appointed Leaders Program which supports 12 principals and other members of school leadership teams across seven schools in their implementation of the system leadership framework
- all 24 schools in the Armidale Diocese have been provided with resourcing to implement the Team Leadership and School Improvement (TLSI) process. The Diocese has also been working with the NSW Department of Education and Communities on the delivery of TLSI training packages for all principals.
- the development of the Quality Catholic Education framework in Bathurst Diocese. This has resulted in a clear focus on management and continuous improvement in schools.
- Broken Bay Diocese's *Leading Learning* program has specifically targeted principals, assistant principals and school leadership teams to deepen their understanding and application of leadership dimensions and leadership capabilities. The program has focused on the Teacher Inquiry Cycle and the development of school improvement plans.
- In the Wollongong Diocese, a National Partnership coordinator has been employed to support principals and leaders to implement reforms that require decision making around initiatives for whole school professional learning. As part of this work, four secondary schools in the Diocese are developing plans targeting professional development.

In the independent sector, thirteen newly appointed principals participated in a ten day leadership development course. Nine of these were from regional schools and/or schools serving low SES communities. A further 32 middle leaders, seven emerging principals and seven school executives completed leadership development courses to enable them to support their principals more fully and prepare them for future leadership roles in independent schools.



So far this year, the 2012 *Masterclass* series has provided targeted professional learning for principals on challenging learning, communication skills and dealing with conflict, and schools and the law.

The 2012 ISCE outreach to schools has so far given more than fifty independent school principals opportunities to discuss their needs and their personal professional learning, as well as the support needs of their school. The 2012 ISCE Council Survey was sent to all NSW independent schools in May 2012.

In-school mentors for staff, paraprofessional support for the implementation of MultiLit and projects to build staff capacity and expertise have all contributed in supporting principals in independent schools.

## **6. Improved performance management and continuous improvement in schools**

### ***Continuous Improvement***

All sectors in NSW are engaged with performance management systems to support and improve teacher quality in schools. Following a period of consultation on the draft *Rewards for Great Teachers* National Partnership, the Minister endorsed New South Wales' participation in the Agreement.

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. 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 *DEC Understanding educational change* program provides teachers and school leaders with an introduction to educational change theory. The course supports participants to develop a deeper understanding of school improvement and introduces a change model suitable for major school change such as curriculum implementation or the introduction of a standards approach. It provides aspiring, newly appointed and current school leaders with an understanding of the leadership requirements associated with change, a model of change, a critical analysis of current research and change that focuses on 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 continuing to review processes to improve teacher performance management.

Incentive payments to principals of government school Centres for Excellence in 2012 were potentially available to principals of the 22 'tranche 2' Centres. In 2012, the

delivery of bonus incentives has been split into two payments (mid and end of year) to better align with performance planning processes. All of the 19 principals who elected to participate in the 2012 mid-year assessment successfully achieved the mid-year incentive payment.

Within the Catholic sector, the *Leading Learning* program in the Broken Bay Diocese has focused on using School Improvement Plans as a key tool to drive and measure school improvement. The Plans include the development of goals, strategy and targets which help to measure improvement. In addition, the increasing use of fit-for-purpose assessments (such as *PAT-R* and *PAT-Maths*) has enabled improvement at the individual, class, cohort, school and system levels to be measured.

Principals of participating schools in the Parramatta Diocese have continued to work on a revised performance management pro-forma to be implemented for school leaders and teachers. All schools recently took part in an extensive survey of all staff, students and parents (Quality Catholic Schooling). Principals are using the results to inform individual school improvement plans.

Performance management and continuous improvement are addressed within each individual independent school. However, in its capacity supporting the needs of independent schools, in 2011, AIS NSW developed *Appretio*, a professional review and teacher development tool and this has been made available to schools in 2012.

This comprehensive program linking school and personal goals, professional learning and teacher improvement is available to all schools. It supports schools to establish a cycle of review and professional learning for each teacher.

In the first half of 2012, 14 schools were involved in a more intensive program of evaluation and goal setting. *Evaluating Excellence in Independent Schools* involves all stakeholders in an extended process of reviewing learning.

In 2012, AIS participated in the AITSL pilot project looking at how schools can familiarise their teachers with the National Standards. Three schools participated in the pilot and two of the schools have opted to implement the online performance and review tool in 2013.

AISNSW has been supporting teachers applying for Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership by providing intensive and comprehensive three day courses. In addition a two day course supports leaders in school who support and co-ordinate teachers who apply for the higher levels of accreditation.

AIS also provides a rigorous review process for teachers applying for Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership. Applicants are provided with feedback that details where other actions need to be taken and other evidence needs to be included in the submission. AIS has also been conducting assessment panels for teachers who have made applications for the higher levels through the NSW Institute of Teachers. Teachers in the sector are trained to be reviewers and assessors. These teachers build colleagues' understanding of the standards.

Other courses that support teachers in schools who are applying for accreditation have been successfully conducted such as *"Using lesson observations to improve teacher practice"* and *"Using standards to support school improvement"*. It is planned to offer these courses to teachers and school executive in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

### ***Professional learning***

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

*MyPL @Edu*, the NSW DEC online professional learning record management system, indicates that during the January-June 2011 period, the NSW DEC provided the following range of professional learning:

- 4,399 registered, non-registered and developed professional learning courses and programs on *MyPL @Edu*
- 3,230 professional learning sessions aligned to the Professional Teaching Standards
- 1,588 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 Leadership Learning program* an evidence-based professional learning program for all aspiring and current school leaders. The online program supports educational leaders to make a significant difference to improving student learning and is grounded in current research in instructional leadership, professional learning and school improvement.

All courses in the *Leadership Learning program* are aligned to both the key accountabilities of the role of the principal in NSW DEC and the *National Professional Standard for Principals*. All courses are DEC accredited and Institute Registered at the key stage of *Professional Leadership* and enable participants to generate evidence for seeking accreditation at *Professional Accomplishment* or *Professional Leadership*.

Twelve teachers across the Wollongong Diocese were sponsored for post-graduate studies in the area of Literacy, Diverse Learning Needs and Pastoral Care; this occurred across a number of National Partnership schools. Seven teachers across the Diocese have been sponsored to complete the NSW Institute of Teachers Professional Leadership Accreditation Course.

Catholic Dioceses have utilised ITQ NP funds to provide a broad range of professional development and support for school principals, including:

- a restructure of roles within the Catholic Schools Office which has allowed the establishment of two school consultants to assist principals with school based strategic planning, managing improved performance and continuous improvement through the appraisal of principals and assistant principals
- a Teacher Placement Program in the Lismore Diocese which placed 16 primary teachers and 16 secondary teachers in selected schools outside the Diocese for one week. Feedback on the Teacher Placement initiative showed that the Program was valuable in assisting teachers continue the change and improvement agenda back in their own schools as a result of exposure in the host schools

- a further seven doctoral and 17 masters by research scholarships taken up by principals and teachers in the first half of 2012. It is anticipated that the continued research in these areas will lead to improved programs within the systemic schools and enhanced student learning
- a majority of school based Action Research Projects initiated in 2011 which have come to fruition in 2012. There has been support provided for a total of 60 projects across the 147 systemic schools
- development by the Wollongong Diocese of individual professional learning plans for teachers and school leaders in National Partnership schools. This Diocese has also focused on the performance management of 25 early career teachers and has employed 25 mentors working across schools in the Diocese to support early career teachers
- four secondary schools targeted in the Wollongong Diocese to develop principal and leadership team coaching processes. This has included designing performance management, professional learning plans for senior and middle management, professional learning plans for teachers for enhanced student outcomes, utilising forums, workshops, school-based practice models, materials development and toolkits and demonstration of alignment with AITSL standards for professional accomplishment and leadership
- twelve staff from the Bathurst Diocese took part in the *DEC Team Leadership for School Improvement* program. All principals in the Diocese have also been trained to make local decisions built on the diocesan Quality Catholic Education framework.

The independent sector has continued to work on making professional learning more accessible through

- the anticipated 2012 growth in the use of videoconferencing is having a very positive impact on schools and provides a sustainable strategy for addressing disadvantage beyond the period of the ITQ NP funding. The videoconferencing hubs in ten independent schools across regional NSW have provided increasing delivery of professional learning and mentoring. Although the hubs are still not yet operating at full capacity, the impact on accessibility of professional learning and support for principals is very clear. By reducing travel costs for professional learning, the professional learning budgets of regional schools are increasingly allowing for more staff participation
- the 2010 increase in the number of principals in smaller regional and remote schools undertaking a leadership course was sustained in 2011, and again in 2012, as nine principals from regional areas participated in the course. Four other leaders also undertook more intensive leadership development, supported by the NPs
- Regional and Remote Schools Travel Assistance has continued to support leaders and teachers from regional and remote schools to attend targeted professional learning. The travel grants have been particularly important for leaders from rural and remote schools to attend leadership courses and be involved in mentoring, coaching and shadowing programs. Regional teachers have received a total 102 travel grants so far in 2012.

- teachers in independent schools have been encouraged by course subsidies to attend professional learning focused on deeper subject content knowledge and quality teaching. In the independent sector 1560 teachers from 290 schools attended professional learning directly related to the ITQ NP agenda.

## 7. *New pathways into teaching*

In the government sector, 290 teacher education scholarships were provided in the first half of 2012, of which:

- 74 were accepted by Aboriginal teacher education students;
- 152 were accepted in the areas of maths and science
- 20 were scholarships to support teachers working in government schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments under the *Enhanced Teacher Training Program*.

Following the successful completion of their teacher education studies, 19 teachers who had previously won scholarships through the *Enhanced Teacher Training Program* commenced their teaching appointments at the beginning of the 2012 school year. The Program is aimed at teacher education students intending to teach in government schools with significant Aboriginal enrolments.

Teacher education internships will be undertaken in NSW in 2012 through the National Partnership in Semester Two, 2012. 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.

Strategies to support internships across the Centres for Excellence are being complemented by additional activities, coordinated by the HAT, 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.

In the Catholic sector, the Maitland–Newcastle Diocese continues to support scholarships for undergraduates in teacher education. A total of 18 students have accepted scholarships of \$4,000 each which provide a targeted internship placement, guarantee of three interviews for teaching positions and helps students to build relationships with the Catholic Schools Office. There is one additional scholarship for an Aboriginal education worker who is completing study in teacher education.

A total of 30 students (12 from Broken Bay and 18 from Parramatta Diocese) completed *Step Up Into Teaching* during the first half of 2012. These modules have been developed by the Catholic Education Office in collaboration with the Australian Catholic University (ACU) to provide Year 11 HSC students with the opportunity to complete two first year university subjects linked with teaching while completing their Year 12 studies. Completion of the course can be used as credit towards a teaching qualification.

Parramatta Diocese offered four scholarships to first year teacher education students at ACU and Notre Dame who had completed Step Up Into Teaching. An additional two scholarships were offered to fourth year students at ACU and Notre Dame in hard to staff secondary key learning areas including science. The graduate recruitment program also commenced, which aims to place high performing aspiring teachers in



catholic schools. Broken Bay Diocese provided six two-year scholarships to second and third year students at ACU and Notre Dame University.

Sydney Diocese offered ten ACU fourth year students scholarships to work in schools two days per week in the area of special needs and 12 fourth year students from Notre Dame to work in the area of Early Years numeracy, two days per week.

The Wollongong Diocese provided a range of school-based experiences across several schools for three highly accomplished fourth year graduates from the University of Wollongong. It also supported the placement of twelve third year pre-service teachers in the four Centre for Excellence schools to participate in teacher professional learning in spelling.

To further support new pathways into teaching the Wollongong Diocese has facilitated the placement of two fourth year students to complete their internship in two Low SES schools. The Diocese has also improved pathways for Indigenous people and Indigenous education workers who wish to progress to teaching through the sponsorship of two AEAs to further their teacher qualifications.

Due to the autonomous nature of schools within the independent sector there is no sector wide strategy to deliver teacher education scholarships; however, a number of individual independent schools have made the commitment to offer teacher education scholarships as their contribution to improving teacher quality:

- a recent survey of independent schools indicated that six schools provided teacher education scholarships in 2012, while 46 schools had active programs to engage students with teaching as a career
- by supporting educational paraprofessionals in schools, the ISCE is looking to promote increased interest in teacher education as a career.

## **8. Better pathways into teaching**

NSW DEC has continued to work with DEEWR to determine the processes for participation in the *Teach Next* initiative. The University of Wollongong has completed a successful tender to deliver an intensive initial teacher education course successful applicants. Up to ten positions will be made available in government schools, with recruitment action planned for later in 2012. Mentor support will be made available in the placement schools of successful applicants.

In the independent sector, stronger relationships between the ISCE and teacher education faculties in three universities in 2012 have ensured that a more proactive approach has been taken to seeking interested students for teacher practicum placements in regional, remote and hard to staff school and in schools with high Aboriginal enrolments. The 2012 focus has been particularly on Mathematics and Science placements.

By June 2012, one internship had been completed and seven others were scheduled to commence in semester 2. Each internship grant offers financial support for final year teacher education students to access professional experience outside metropolitan areas. The interns are given additional mentoring support and enhanced professional experiences in order to develop a deeper understanding of the skills of teaching. To better prepare them to meet the diverse needs of students, they are also provided with opportunities not usually part of a professional experience. The intern who has already completed her placement, focused on Mathematics and Physics in a school with high

Aboriginal enrolments. She worked with the school's AEW and the local Aboriginal community to deepen her understanding of the needs of Aboriginal students.

Working with UNSW, the independent sector has focused on building interest in Mathematics and Science at school level, thus increasing the pool of people who will potentially take up positions in teacher education courses.

### **9. Improved quality and availability of teacher workforce data**

The Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College (NTWD), a key facilitation reform under the ITQ NP, aims to improve the availability and quality of teaching workforce data to inform strategic teacher workforce planning at the national level.

NSW DEC is represented on the NTWD stakeholder reference group and project working group. Activities undertaken as part of the data collection process have included:

- discussions and presentations on a national view on the availability and suitability of teacher data currently collected across each jurisdiction and sector
- performance of a privacy Impact Assessment and development of a Data Management Framework, outlining processes for collection, linkage, classification, aggregation, storage and reporting of data, including controls to manage privacy risks
- engagement of privacy officers in each jurisdiction, as well as the Australian Information Commissioner, to obtain general feedback and comment about whether privacy risks have been adequately addressed in the Framework.

In addition to this work, a Longitudinal Teacher Education Workforce Study is being conducted in collaboration with Deakin University. Teachers graduating in 2011 and their principals have been surveyed as part of the initial data collection with a view to better identifying future career patterns and the impact of significant events on the teacher market.

#### *My PL @Edu*

- 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 NSW Institute of Teachers 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 NSW Institute of Teachers Professional Teaching Standards across the Department and can identify any gaps in the provision to inform future planning. *MyPL @Edu* also has the functionality to electronically feed information into the NSW Institute of Teachers' professional learning register. In the January-June 2012 period, there were 36,556 registrations of teachers participating in registered courses.

## **10. Indigenous education workforce pathways**

NSW employs a range of strategies to support Aboriginal students to improve their outcomes by attracting Aboriginal people to both the teaching profession and paraprofessional positions. It also offers opportunities for pre-service teacher education students to undertake internships and extended practicum placements in schools with high Aboriginal populations.

At 30 June, 2012, 52 Aboriginal people had been employed in full or part time paraprofessional positions in NSW government schools since the commencement of National Partnerships programs. This includes a paraprofessional position – Aboriginal community engagement officer – specifically designed to support effective home, school and Aboriginal community partnerships to improve Aboriginal student engagement. At 30 June 2012, Aboriginal community engagement officers represented over 16% of all paraprofessional positions working in NSW government schools.

The *Teacher Education Scholarship* program is available to Aboriginal students seeking to train as primary or secondary teachers. Seventy four Scholarships were accepted by Aboriginal teacher education students under the 2012 program. Also in 2012, following successful completion of their teacher education studies, 19 teachers who won scholarships through the Enhanced Teacher Training Program commenced teaching appointments in government schools with significant Aboriginal student numbers.

In addition to supporting Aboriginal people to enter the teaching profession, NSW DEC is also committed to ongoing leadership development for Aboriginal teachers aspiring to leadership positions. In 2010, the *Aboriginal Teacher Leadership Program* was piloted with 16 Aboriginal teachers. The program involves ongoing support from a development coach, career planning and professional learning, as well as the implementation of an action learning project in the teachers' school. Following the success of the pilot, the program has been continued and expanded. In 2011, 20 Aboriginal teachers successfully completed the program, and a new cohort will be identified for the 2012-13 program.

The Bathurst Diocese has also found the scholarships an effective reform, with five recipients being supported during 2012 at different stages of their study. Applications for the 2013 program opened in May 2012, with up to 80 scholarships available.

Traineeships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have also been successful. One trainee in a regional school has completed his traineeship and is planning to commence teacher training.

The initiative to support AEWs in the Catholic sector to gain appropriate qualifications has grown slowly since it commenced in late 2011. One student is currently being supported to study for a Certificate III in Education Support Services. Negotiations are underway for two Aboriginal people to undertake training as aides for MultiLit and MiniLit in a regional Aboriginal school. It is hoped that they will subsequently continue on to an AEW traineeship.

Parramatta Diocese provided a range of support (including financial) for Indigenous support officers to complete teacher training.

The Independent Schools Centre for Excellence has worked particularly closely with UNSW's Aboriginal Unit, Nura Gili, to increase interest in Mathematics and Science amongst Aboriginal students. The Year 7 Science and Engineering for Aboriginal students is a long term strategy in this area and the 2012 program focuses on Years 7 - 9, as well as promoting the mentoring of Aboriginal students in Years 10 - 12 in

Mathematics. The intention is to promote interest in teaching, and particularly in teaching Mathematics and Science.

Traineeships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been successful, with one young man in a regional school already finished and considering commencing teacher training. The last of the traineeships has been negotiated this year.

Internships have been offered for Aboriginal teacher education students; however, negotiations with the students have not led to the positions being established.

### **11. Quality placements**

Centres for Excellence, supported by Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs), continue to develop relationships with university partners to strengthen initial teacher education practicum placements and internships.

In 2011, a small number of NSW government schools also participated in a pilot program offering enhanced professional experience placements in schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments. Following positive feedback from the pilot schools and the initial teacher education students, the pilot has been extended, with planning taking place in early 2012 for another small group of schools to support placements later in the year.

The Lismore Diocese has made plans for ten fourth-year teacher education students to be placed alongside a high performing mentor teacher for three weeks. The mentor teachers will work alongside the student teachers, incorporating team teaching where necessary. The mentor teacher completes a detailed report at the completion of the program which also acts as a useful professional development tool for the student.

Scholarship recipients in the Maitland–Newcastle Diocese receive a targeted internship placement. This placement identifies schools of excellence that provide an internship that ensures quality support and formations. Schools were invited to support the program by providing an excellent environment to nurture beginning educators.

All schools in Parramatta Diocese offer practicum placements to students from a variety of universities. Students are supported in their practicum by a dedicated mentor as well as school and university staff.

The Wollongong Diocese provided quality placements by:

- placing one high performing principal in a Diocese primary school
- placing five Teacher Educators to work in and across six Diocesan primary schools
- placing three highly accomplished fourth year graduates from University of Wollongong in Diocesan schools. The Diocese also placed twelve third year pre-service teachers in its four Centres for Excellence schools to participate in teacher professional learning around their focus area '*spelling*' and two fourth year students to complete their internship in two Low SES schools.

The independent sector is engaging with university partners in a project on improving the quality of teacher education practicum experiences. Five universities are collaborating with seven independent schools on projects involving:

- developing strong processes for schools and universities that support the provision of quality practicum placements

- building the knowledge of supervising teachers for reliable assessment and reporting against the graduate teacher standards
- addressing the mentoring and coaching skills of teachers supervising practicum students
- providing pre-service teachers with a practical knowledge bank of teaching practices that support the education of students with autism, communication and behavioural needs and to share knowledge and skills between the involved universities and the school in special education and teaching education.

In the recent survey of independent schools 70 per cent of respondents indicated that they offered at least one practicum placement while 20 per cent offered more than seven placements.

## **12. School Centres for Excellence**

The 35 government school Centres for Excellence commenced operation of their two year program in two tranches. The first tranche of 13 schools commenced in 2010 and the second tranche of 22 schools commenced in 2011. At the end of 2011, the first tranche of schools had an opportunity to participate in a further year of teacher quality focussed transition activities. These schools were required to submit an evidence-based plan aligned to successes over the previous two year period with a focus on sustainability.

As a result, in 2012, all 35 Centres for Excellence have continued to focus on teacher quality initiatives, with the second tranche of 22 schools entering their second and final year of formal participation in the Centre for Excellence initiative, and the first tranche of 13 schools refining their focus on those activities that have proved to have the greatest impact on strengthening teacher quality and student outcomes.

Following on from a government school Centre for Excellence conference which was highly valued by participants in 2011, planning has occurred for another sharing and professional learning conference for the Centres for Excellence scheduled for later in Semester Two, 2012.

A one-year, government school based initiative, the *Teacher Quality Project* commenced in 2012, involving six individual schools and four groups of schools not already participating in a National Partnership. These schools and groups of schools are implementing school designed projects that focus on one or more of the key objectives of the ITQ NP.

A significant area of focus for the 35 NSW government school Centres for Excellence is to assist experienced teachers to commence and achieve accreditation at one of the voluntary levels of Professional Accomplishment (PA) or Professional Leadership (PL) with the NSW Institute of Teachers. Leading this area of work is the HAT, who is required as part of that role to complete a submission for accreditation at either Professional Accomplishment or Professional Leadership within the two years of their appointment.

Two government schools commencing as Centres for Excellence in 2011- Homebush West Public School (HWPS) and Burwood Public School (BPS) have been particularly successful in their approach to supporting experienced teachers to seek accreditation with an overarching focus of improving quality teaching and leadership. Working within the same South Western Sydney school education group, the two schools' HATs work together to facilitate a sustainable network of support for teachers interested in



accreditation at the voluntary levels. The network has grown to over 40 current and aspiring school and classroom leaders both within and beyond cluster schools. Each Centre for Excellence has been able to provide some teacher relief to PA/PL network participants, while other support structures include the creation of a network wiki and a series of workshops addressing different aspects of the submission process.

Feedback from network participants has shown a significant increase in confidence about their capacity to manage the accreditation process, and all participants find the network support invaluable to the progress of their accreditation submissions. The network is also having a significant positive impact on the collegial discussion and focus on quality teaching within and across schools, with executive participants reporting that the professional dialogue and activities facilitated by the network has led to improvements in their personal educational leadership and mentoring skills.

In the Catholic sector, the Armidale Diocese launched its Centre for Excellence in partnership with the University of New England and University of Newcastle during 2011. By June 2012 the Centre had already created DVDs outlining the changes and strategies used in Kindergarten classes, coordinated a visit of the kindergarten teachers to speak at two lectures for students training to be teachers and has provided professional development for three schools on understanding oral language in the early years.

Trinity Catholic College (Canberra–Goulburn Diocese), officially launched the Birrang Centre for Excellence in Science on 15 March 2012. Since its launch there have been a number of significant activities including a science expo, participation in *myScience* through the Australian Catholic University and a workshop for science coordinators.

Lismore Diocesan funds support the Online Education Centre which provides HSC students across all NSW Catholic Dioceses with access to HSC courses in situations where local candidature is not possible. This is often in rural and remote secondary schools or where a single student or small cohort wishes to study a subject not offered by the school. Results published by the Board of Studies for students in these courses indicate excellent performance.

The Parramatta Diocese continues to support The Learning Exchange Centre for Excellence, which supports quality teaching by providing a range of professional learning opportunities around the use of technology in the classroom and coordinates a range of study tours to high performing schools within the system.

The Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College (SCCVC) in Sydney Diocese continues to develop as Centre of Excellence. It has deepened its links with Charles Sturt University to better engage school and university staff, with five action research projects during the first half of this year.

The NSW Teaching Standards provide the focus in 2012 for St Augustine's in the Diocese of Wilcannia–Forbes. Reviewing the Standards has facilitated professional learning conversations amongst staff and the use of the language of the Quality Teaching Framework. The school has increased the number of pre-service teachers for practicum placement from Charles Sturt University and has increased the hours of regular professional learning with neighbouring schools.

Wollongong Diocese has continued to promote its Centres for Excellence by establishing a 'critical friend' from the University of Wollongong (UoW) to support the Centre for Excellence's literacy focus area 'spelling', placing twelve third year pre-service teachers to complete their teaching practicum, using video-conferencing

facilities and eight highly accomplished teachers to assist in developing an effective cluster of schools.

St. Paul's Catholic College Manly in the Diocese of Broken Bay has continued its work in Collaborative Teacher Inquiry. This work, in partnership with the University of Newcastle, involves examination of and reflection upon teaching practice with reference to the Quality Teaching Framework. With academic support, a group of seven teachers collaboratively inquire into the effectiveness of their practice by examining the impact on student learning.

Over 160 schools have engaged with the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence (ISCE) since 2009. The ISCE strategies to improve teacher quality have aimed to improve leadership and reduce the disadvantage of teachers in regional areas and hard-to staff schools, with a view to improving teacher quality. Through the ISCE, regional schools have access to support not previously available and some of the impediments of isolation, distance and cost have been reduced.

The ISCE has also focused on Teacher Accreditation as a new priority in 2012, promoting teacher accreditation in the sector and supporting mentoring between schools for teachers undertaking accreditation, while teachers in 40 schools completed courses in supervising New Scheme Teachers or those seeking accreditation beyond Professional Competence. Initiatives included nine teachers supported to work with their colleagues to improve teacher quality, fourteen schools completing a course in supervising New Scheme Teachers and 26 schools undertaking a course supporting teachers through accreditation beyond Professional Competence and a further 18 teachers who undertook teacher accreditation courses with a view to embarking on the process of teacher accreditation at the higher levels.

Other strategies of the ISCE in 2012 have focused on:

- making professional learning and support more accessible. Strategies have included 102 leaders and teachers from regional and remote schools attending targeted professional learning through travel grants, increasing the use of videoconferencing hubs in ten independent schools across regional NSW, supporting nine principals from regional areas to participate in leadership courses and subsidising courses to encourage 1560 teachers from 290 schools to attend professional learning focused on deeper subject content knowledge and quality teaching
- mentoring to engage and improve teacher quality in regional and hard to staff schools through the Professional Exchange and Mentoring Program. This has seen 18 mentors in the first half of 2012, and a further three mentors part way through their training. In 2012, Science, Mathematics and Technical and Applied Studies, as well as Stage 6 teaching, have been areas of great demand for mentors. There is already evidence of the very positive impact of the Program as the assistance provided is on-site, in context and focused on the classroom. Of the 30 teachers who completed their mentoring experience in 2011, most are maintaining contact to exchange advice and share resources.
- building supportive, collaborative, sustainable relationships to allow teachers to examine classroom practice and improve their own teaching practice, including three teachers who have worked towards teacher accreditation at the higher levels establishing regional networks in ICT, Mathematics teaching and Visual Arts. *Building Relationships* projects have involved building school capacity and sharing learning with the wider educational community, involving a mix of

university partnerships and schools developing and sharing high quality practice. There has also been a pilot for a new model of supporting New Scheme Teachers in regional, disadvantaged schools, in which two larger schools are working via Skype and email with a smaller school with 16 New Scheme Teachers.

### **Paraprofessionals**

The paraprofessional is a new employment classification for NSW government schools participating in National Partnership programs. Paraprofessional roles can be either educational or operational and can be part time or full time. Educational paraprofessionals are required to have a minimum qualification of Certificate III in Education Support (or equivalent). There are five different types of operational paraprofessional, recognising a range of specialist tasks that support the capacity of teachers to deliver quality teaching and learning. These positions include technology learning facilitator, professional experience placement officer, information management support officer and community engagement officer.

When initially designing the roles, it was envisaged that some people taking on paraprofessional positions may use the opportunity as a pathway to teacher training (see Case Study *Beverly Hills Girls High School* for example).

As at 30 June 2012, around 100 full or part time paraprofessional positions were operating across government schools participating in National Partnerships. Since the beginning of 2010, over 160 paraprofessional positions have been created. Across all National Partnership programs, community engagement officers (including Aboriginal community engagement officers) currently represent over 50% of all paraprofessional positions.

Government schools participating in National Partnerships continue to employ paraprofessionals to provide in and out of classroom support for teachers and leaders. Centres for Excellence schools are allocated a 1.0 FTE paraprofessional position for the two year participation in the initiative. Centres for Excellence principals have the opportunity to choose the type of paraprofessional resource to best meet the needs of their school.

In the independent sector, paraprofessional roles can be operational or educational, including being aides involved in MultiLit implementation. In 2012, the ISCE has provided financial support to five independent schools to employ educational paraprofessionals to implement MultiLit. Through Indigenous traineeships in Educational Support or Business Services plus assisting an AEW to gain qualifications in education support, the independent sector is assisting a further six paraprofessionals to enhance their qualifications. As at June 2012 at least 33 full and part-time paraprofessionals were operating across independent schools participating in the National Partnerships. Twenty four of these were educational, 4 were operational and 5 were solely implementing MultiLit.

## Showcase Examples - 1 January to 30 June 2012

### **Educational paraprofessionals – a pathway to teaching**

*Beverly Hills Girls High School (BHGHS) is a government school in the South West region of Sydney with a population of 1000 students. In 2011, it was established as a Centre for Excellence hub school. Its focus on assessment for learning, effective feedback and analysis of data to inform teaching and learning led to the decision to engage an educational paraprofessional. The key focus of this role is to support teacher learning across the cluster, including providing specific in-classroom support to teachers in implementing teaching strategies to improve student performance.*

*Recruitment for the position identified individuals with a sound theoretical background in pedagogy, making recent graduates or final year students of teacher training courses ideal candidates. Over the last two years, the school has employed three people into the educational paraprofessional role, with the first two moving on to permanent employment in teaching. The current paraprofessional was identified for the position following a successful internship placement at the school.*

*As a result of their tertiary training, the paraprofessionals at BHGHS have been skilled in supporting teachers in a partnership model and developing effective teaching resources. The paraprofessionals play a significant part in enhancing teacher capacity through activities such as educational research and collegial planning, development and implementation of classroom activities.*

*The role of the educational paraprofessional has been highly effective in increasing the preparedness of recent teacher education graduates to take on full time teaching positions and in supporting improved teacher capacity and student outcomes.*

*Specific tasks undertaken by the educational paraprofessionals at BHGHS include:*

- analysis of student data, including NAPLAN, to support development of targeted literacy learning activities*
- Compilation and analysis of research on contemporary classroom management, assessment for learning and reciprocal teaching strategies to support school developed teacher professional learning*
- Working with small groups to reinforce literacy or numeracy strategies*
- Supporting teachers in implementing ICT applications in teaching and learning programs, including researching and creating a database of educational websites and enhancing faculty intranet pages*
- Supporting pre-service teachers and mentor teachers during practicum placements, and assisting early career teachers with the development of their teacher accreditation submissions.*

*Student engagement and learning outcomes have improved, while there has also an increase in the implementation of ICT strategies in the classroom.*

## Technology enables collaborative learning approach for rural schools

*Barellan Central School is a comprehensive, K-12 Government School located in the Riverina region of NSW approximately 60km from Griffith. It supports around 130 students and commenced operation as a Centre for Excellence in 2011.*

*As it is a small, rural school, students and staff had already been utilising connected classroom technologies to strengthen curriculum delivery. However, the additional resources made available through participation in the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership have enabled the school to use the targeted integration of technology as a driver to enhance and improve student learning.*

*The school implemented an action learning project, '21st Century Pedagogy for e-learning', which aims to support the key objective of improving and enhancing teacher quality. The cornerstone of this project has been the implementation of Moodle.*

*The demonstrated outcomes of the Barellan Central School Moodle include: improved student engagement and learning outcomes; enhanced capacity of school leaders to focus on instructional leadership; a data-driven school improvement plan; enhanced support for professional experience students; streamlined administration and communication; and, an increase in collaborative activities with partner schools in a virtual faculty environment.*

*The Highly Accomplished Teacher and operational paraprofessional, engaged by the school through the Partnership, have taken lead roles in developing the online resources and supporting teachers, students and parents to utilise the online learning environment.*

*Parental engagement and involvement in student learning is significantly enhanced through the Moodle. Students are able to use the site at any time, allowing parents to access the 'virtual classroom' to view student work, provide feedback and develop positive communication with teachers.*

*Local spoke schools have the opportunity to benefit from professional learning and collaboration activities organised by the school but are also able to engage with the hub school via Moodle.*

*An indicator of the quality and success of the approach is the participation of over 100 schools across the state that have accessed aspects of the program so far, 85 of which are participating in online professional learning modules designed to develop teacher capacity in generating high quality e-learning and assessment activities.*

*The school will continue to incorporate e-learning as a focus in its on-going school planning and improvement process.*



## Student interest in science increases through the Birrang Centre for Excellence

*Trinity Catholic College in the Canberra – Goulburn Diocese is a co-educational secondary college located in Goulburn, a regional city in the Southern Tablelands of NSW.*

*On 15 March, 2012 the College officially launched the Birrang Centre for Excellence in Science with the funding it received as part of its participation in the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality.*

*The Centre has been established to promote and demonstrate quality teaching, creating a collaborative learning community in the Diocese, as they guide other schools toward excellent pedagogical practice in science.*

*The Centre has organised several activities and initiatives to help the Diocese become a leader in science, including:*

- a science expo involving local and interstate science-based businesses as well as staff and students from the Australian National University and University of Canberra. The expo allowed students to participate in exciting hands-on science workshops and learn from leaders in the field*
- a student mentoring program where Year 11 students help primary school students to conduct open-ended science inquiries as part of the 'myScience' program through the Australian Catholic University*
- creating work experience opportunities at scientific organisations, such as CSIRO*
- ongoing training of all coordinators and lead teachers in Understanding by Design (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005), an inquiry-based learning and quality assessment.*

*Science teachers at the Trinity Catholic College have reported that the series of workshops and programs have helped them to incorporate inquiry-based learning and technology into their teaching plans with success.*

*Student interest in science has increased, with the behavioural issues in science decreasing and with more students participating in a variety of activities supported by University partners. A great example of student achievement was the publication of a student's article in CSIRO's Helix magazine.*

*A science teacher network has been established within the Archdiocese and coordinators regularly collaborate on teaching practice and planning. The positive effects of the Centre are already being realised beyond the school level with results in school-based examinations in science improving across the Canberra - Goulburn Archdiocese.*

*The success of the collegial work between teachers across the diocesan as well as between educational facilities at the primary, high school, and tertiary level has created a supportive educational community that will assist with the sustainability of the benefits of the Centre for Excellence beyond Partnership funding.*

## University partnership enhances reading proficiency

*Minimbah is a small independent primary school in the Northern NSW town of Armidale. Aboriginal students make up over 90 per cent of school enrolments.*

*The school identified increasing the reading proficiency of Aboriginal students in Years 2-6 as a focus area for improvement at the school. Through their partnership with University of New England, the school engaged nine undergraduate Education students from the University to assist in the implementation of a reading intervention program.*

*The undergraduate students, trained in “Making Up for Lost Time in Literacy” (MultiLit), now work with two Aboriginal students each and provide reading instruction for half an hour, three times per week.*

*Student progress is recorded following each session and communicated on a regular basis to classroom teachers to ensure targeted teaching and learning needs are supported in the classroom.*

*The success of the program has been supported by a clear improvement in student results. Records of progress over two terms showed that students improved by an average of eight sublevels on the Multilit program. Further, as students developed their decoding and sight reading skills, their confidence and engagement increased in the reinforced reading sessions. In terms of the PM Benchmark reading levels, participating students improved by an average of three levels.*

*One-to-one targeted teaching and learning sessions and positive feedback on personal progress has meant that the students see them themselves as successful learners. This has extended to their engagement in the classroom and overall attendance at school.*

*Implementation of this program with the assistance of the UNE students has:*

- *provided specific training and practical classroom experience in literacy teaching for pre-service teachers*
- *built a strong relationship between the school and the university as it meets the needs of both parties, providing excellent research material for the university and a viable model of future engagement with schools*
- *provided school students with the opportunity to engage in targeted, appropriate individual teaching and learning sessions. This has resulted in a positive impact on their growth in reading skills and their perception of themselves as readers*
- *created a model that is highly cost effective and sustainable beyond the life of the National Partnerships.*

## Principal Professional Development

The NSW Implementation Plan for Principal Professional Development will strengthen NSW reform activities within the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership. It will build the capacity of school leaders to improve teacher quality through scaffolding school improvement with an emphasis on performance management and professional development linked to school plans, the professional teaching standards and the National Standard for Principals.

Action within the Principal Professional Development National Partnership will drive the development of principal and teacher capacity within the NSW DEC Local Schools Local Decisions teacher and leader quality reforms. This will include building teacher and school leader quality through greater local authority and the development of the leadership capacity of aspiring school leaders through new principal preparation pathways.

### *Overview of activities and key achievements*

In the first six months of this year, in anticipation of the receipt of funds from the Commonwealth for the *National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality: Implementation Plan for Principals Professional Development in New South Wales*, activity in NSW was directed towards planning, including mapping foundation courses for the program to the National Professional Standard for Principals. A number of foundation courses were also developed and trialled during this period, preparing for full implementation on receipt of funds.

Since 30 June, the NSW DEC has developed and implemented a state-wide pilot program involving current and emerging principals in government schools. The pilot program was designed to be incorporated into the *National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality: Implementation Plan for Principals Professional Development*.

The NSW DEC continued planning for the full implementation in October of the *National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality: Implementation Plan for Principals Professional Development* by:

- developing a principal professional development needs analysis based on the National Professional Standard for Principals which was trialled at the NSW DEC Principal Induction Conference in July 2012 and developing a course to enable emerging and newly appointed principals to develop and implement a personalised professional learning plan based on the 360<sup>0</sup> needs analysis
- mapping a suite of courses, aligned to the National Professional Standard for Principals and the National Professional Standards for Teachers, which would meet the professional development needs of current and emerging principals
- developing and trialling 15 online and blended professional development courses which align to the National Professional Standard for Principals. These foundation courses provide over 50 hours of registered professional learning. They provide equitable access to quality professional learning for emerging and current school leaders across NSW. These courses will contribute to the *Principal Preparation Pathways* project within the *National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality: Implementation Plan for Principals Professional Development*.

The focus of activities supported by the Principal Professional Development NP in the Catholic sector has varied in each Diocese. For example, principals in the Bathurst Diocese have developed a contemporary model of learning, teaching framework and learning and teaching principles, resulting in an increase of professional development across the Diocese.

All principals in the Broken Bay Diocese engaged in the *Leadership Forum 4*, which focused on leading professional learning within the school context, particularly related to School Improvement Plans. This has resulted in greater confidence among principals in overseeing and guiding teacher professional learning aligned to the school improvement goal. Two cohorts of beginning and early career principals engaged in a *Beginning Principals* program on pedagogical leadership assisted by University of Auckland Centre for Educational Leadership. Two cohorts of experienced principals engaged in *Mentor Coach* program allied to the *Beginning Principals* program.

The Lismore Diocese has focused on three of the four activities listed for action Program Activity 1, 2 and 3. All Teacher Quality activities have emphasised teacher capacity to respond to change through improved practice, innovation, new strategies and instructional leadership.

Targeted areas in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese include: HSC Science courses - unpacking of skills, designing of assessment tasks, review and restructure of assessment schedules, development of a core skills grid, visit to host school with focussed outcomes, skills in Stages 4 and 5 that best prepare for Stage 6.

The Sydney Diocese has planned a conference for leadership teams from 13 secondary schools and 20 primary schools in September 2012 to look at the skills and knowledge required to implement the Australian Curriculum.

The Principal Master Classes and the Principal Network Meetings in the Parramatta Diocese been significant in the development of action learning communities. The professional networking opportunities held once a term facilitate the sharing of expertise to inform the use of assessment for teachers and leaders, and improving literacy and numeracy instruction.

The implementation plan for Principal Professional Development in the Wagga Wagga Diocese has been critical in exposing the Diocese's school principals and leadership teams to research, quality literature and expert speakers presenting 'big picture' thinking around their leadership.

Currently seven school communities in the Diocese of Wilcannia–Forbes Diocese are participating in the '*Team Leadership for School Improvement K-12*' Program, guiding and supporting . school teams through an improvement cycle.

The Wollongong Diocesan Implementation Plan for Principal Professional Development will expand the capacity of principals and schools to develop and lead development of self, innovation, improvement and change, enhance and develop a culture of evidence-informed continuous improvement of teaching, and will develop a coaching culture within four identified Diocesan secondary schools.

In the independent sector, under *Project 1: Principal action learning communities*, schools are participating in the *Evaluating Excellence in Independent Schools* program.

This project has involved schools collecting and analysing data from a range of sources to identify areas in leadership and teaching and learning that could improve student learning and performance. As a result of analysis of the data, targeted professional learning is identified for the leaders and teachers in the schools. Schools are supported

by trained facilitators who assist the school to collect and analyse, then select professional development and learning strategies to address the needs so as to improve students' educational outcomes.

Through *Project 2: Building instructional leadership capacity, independent schools* have engaged in building instructional leadership through Foundation Leadership Program for Senior Executives. This program provides senior executives with the knowledge and skills required to successfully contribute to the leadership of an independent school. It includes a wide range of leadership and management issues, tailored to the independent sector.

*Project 3: Leading Improvement, Innovation and Change*, has involved schools in the independent sector developing and implementing a performance review and development system for leaders and teachers. Schools select school goals that target improvement in teacher quality and implement a system that involves teachers and leaders reflecting on their practice, identifying areas for improvement, participating in professional learning and collecting evidence of improved performance that includes observations of practice. Principals lead the change process and contribute to an online forum to inform the process that facilitates the sharing of implementing the performance management system.

*Project 4: Principal preparation pathways*, is designed to increase the number of potential principals as well as developing the leadership capacity of principals. Preparation for principalship courses and courses for aspiring principals in the independent sector have been redesigned so they align with the National Standard for Principals. A new course for aspiring principals is currently under development and this will be offered to potential school leaders in late 2012. An academic reference group consisting of Australian and international scholars has liaised and supported the development of the new program

The current intensive nine day Foundation Leadership Program for Preparation for Leadership has involved senior executive in independent schools preparing for leadership. A special feature of this program has been the opportunity for participants to shadow an experienced principal using an observational framework designed to support them to consider the highlights and challenges of the role.

### ***Engagement of non-government sector***

Consultation and planning meetings were held and are continuing between the Department of Education and Communities, the Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools.



## Principal Professional Development NSW

Description of Activity	Milestones 2012	Progress against milestones to date
<p><i>Where appropriate please address the principles for use of funding as included in the relevant section of the Implementation Plan.</i></p>	<p><i>List milestones as stated in the Implementation Plan</i></p>	<p><i>Please report all activity undertaken against each milestone to date, clearly stating whether the milestone has been achieved, in progress or delayed.</i></p>
<p><b>Project 1: Principal action learning communities</b></p> <p>This project enables schools across NSW to build both current and emerging principal capacity for school improvement through the implementation of an action research enquiry to improve student learning in a locally identified focus area.</p>	<p>Number of learning units developed aligned to the National Professional Standard for Principals.</p> <p>State-wide participation milestones (across all sectors)                      50 schools, engaged in project.                      50 principals engaged in project.                      100 emerging principals engaged in project.</p>	<p>Please refer to the narrative in the body of the report for examples of activities across the projects in the government sector and in various Catholic Dioceses in NSW.</p> <p>Projects in the independent sector include:  <i>Evaluating Excellence</i></p> <p>NSW has met state-wide participation milestones.</p>
<p><b>Project 2: Building instructional leadership capacity</b></p> <p>This project is designed to build on research that identifies the significant impact of school leadership focused on the professional learning of teachers.</p> <p>The project focuses on enhancing a principal's skills in instructional leadership to enhance their impact on classroom teaching and learning and on student achievement.</p>	<p>Number of learning units developed aligned to the National Professional Standard for Principals.</p> <p>State-wide participation milestones (across all sectors)                      50 schools, engaged in project.                      50 principals engaged in project.                      100 emerging principals engaged in project.</p>	<p>Please refer to the narrative in the body of the report for examples of activities across the projects in the government sector and in various Catholic Dioceses in NSW.</p> <p>Projects in the independent sector include:  <i>Foundation Leadership Program for Senior Executives</i>  <i>Foundation Leadership Program for Newly Appointed Principals</i></p> <p>NSW has met state-wide participation milestones.</p>

<p><b>Project 3: Leading improvement, innovation and change</b></p> <p>This project focuses on implementing change and building capacity for leading and managing local school reform through evidence-based local decision-making, observation and reflective practice, performance management and feedback for all staff, continued professional learning to enable school improvement and networks of school support led by principal leaders.</p>	<p>Number of learning units developed aligned to the National Professional Standard for Principals.</p> <p>State-wide participation milestones (across all sectors)  50 schools, engaged in project.  50 principals engaged in project.  100 emerging principals engaged in project.</p>	<p>Please refer to the narrative in the body of the report for examples of activities across the projects in the government sector and in various Catholic Dioceses in NSW.</p> <p>Note that a framework outlining the implementation actions for Local Schools, Local Decisions was released by the NSW Minister for Education in February 2012.</p> <p>Projects in the independent sector include:  <i>Appretio</i></p> <p>NSW has met state-wide participation milestones.</p>
<p><b>Project 4: Principal preparation pathways</b></p> <p>This project will increase the pool of potential principals to meet the projected shortfall arising from changing demographics in NSW, and will include activities such as those based around the National Professional Standards for Principals to provide feedback on current leadership practice and competencies, a 2360 degree diagnostic experience to identify professional learning needs, and a suite of professional learning units to support a customised pathway.</p>	<p>Number of learning units developed aligned to the National Professional Standard for Principals.</p> <p>State-wide milestone (across all sectors)  100 emerging principals engaged in project.</p>	<p>Please refer to the narrative in the body of the report for examples of activities across the projects in the government sector and in various Catholic Dioceses in NSW.</p> <p>Projects in the independent sector include:  <i>Foundation Leadership Program for Preparation for Leadership</i>  <i>Foundation Leadership Program for Middle Leaders</i></p> <p>NSW has met state-wide participation milestones</p>

## Section 2 – Low SES School Communities

### Overview/Highlights - 1 January to 30 June 2012

Schools from all three sectors are reporting that significant positive changes are occurring as a result of their participation in the Low SES NP. As new cohorts of schools in all three sectors commence their participation in the Partnership, the lessons learnt over the past years by the schools in earlier cohorts are being shared with new schools as well as within networks of continuing schools.

At the beginning of 2012, 115 additional schools commenced their four year participation in the National Partnership on Low Socio-economic School Communities (Low SES NP), including:

- 92 government schools
- 17 Catholic schools and
- 6 independent schools.

At the end of June 2012, the total number of schools participating in the four-year Low SES NP was 635.

In addition, a further 23 schools were identified to join through the Reform Extension Initiative (REI), with a focus on actions that directly lift the availability of high quality teaching and students' literacy and numeracy outcomes:

- 7 Catholic schools (joining the four year program)
- 8 Catholic schools (joining the two year program)
- 8 independent schools.

These 23 non-government schools, together with the 63 DEC schools already participating in the REI, brought total participation in the REI to 86.

Across all sectors, and including the participation in the REI, a total of 721 schools were participating in the reforms supported by the Low SES NP:

- 613 government schools
- 76 Catholic schools and
- 32 independent schools.

The effective use of data has underpinned the identification of priorities for schools, for teachers and for students. School plans are now explicitly indicating strategies and professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their skills in the use of data to inform programming and planning for teaching and learning. As a result, robust and transparent data is increasingly being relied upon to develop cohort, class and individual learning plans. Teachers are increasingly using detailed diagnostic information to review student performance and to inform lesson planning. The range of data being used includes not only NAPLAN results, but Best Start, school-based assessments, HSC data, and the outcomes of particular literacy and numeracy programs.

At the whole-school level, local self-evaluation based on rigorous evidence is guiding schools to make more informed local strategic decisions and to enhance the value and coherence of school plans. Schools are being supported in this process often through working together in networks which leverage the experience of different approaches. Further support is given for whole school improvement through central and regional offices in the government sector, and through diocesan offices in the Catholic sector, particularly through specialist curriculum officers. In the independent sector, there is a movement towards local self-evaluation being associated with normal practice, rather than merely a feature of involvement with the Partnerships. The skills learnt during the initial implementation of Partnership reforms are now being applied across the board in the identification of new areas for improvement.

Whole-school reforms that leverage a combination of strategies have been most successful, particularly those that have involved high quality instructional leadership. The identification of what works well is occurring both at the local level and through the suite of independent, state-wide evaluations that have been commissioned to assess the impact of reforms across all three sectors.

Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) have been identified as effective models of high quality teaching, and their contribution to the development of quality teaching practice across schools has elicited very positive feedback from principals. Through the Low SES NP, the 80 HATs in government schools and their equivalents in non-government sectors undertake a wide range of roles, including the facilitation of professional learning across schools and for individual teachers, supporting and mentoring best practice in the implementation of literacy and numeracy programs, and supporting the innovative use of technologies and team teaching arrangements.

The Low SES NP has enabled schools to employ additional teaching and non-teaching staff – including at least 229 government schools with additional executive staff who are supporting teaching, leading professional learning and providing release from face-to-face time teaching time to build teacher capacity.

Paraprofessionals also provide crucial support within and outside of the classroom, in a wide range of roles including assisting teachers in the implementation of individual intervention programs, supporting the operation of specialist learning centres, and providing technical expertise to embed the more effective use of technology in classrooms.

Partnerships have been developed between universities and schools in all three sectors, with 138 schools in the government sector alone indicating in their school plans their intention to establish or continue such ventures. These partnerships benefit all parties, with active involvement in teaching and learning, research activities, innovative pedagogy and effective supervision of pre-service teachers.

Aboriginal students have been given priority in 2012 through a range of strategies designed to close the achievement gap. External partnerships with parents and other community stakeholders, particularly Aboriginal Elders, have been effective in enhancing the engagement of Aboriginal students in the learning process both in and outside of classrooms. Personalised Learning Plans for Aboriginal students are informed by student data, with professional development of teachers ensuring that the Plans are valuable working documents that reflect both individual learning needs and the strategic aims of the school.

There is widespread recognition of the importance of attendance in improving outcomes for all students, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and local

Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups have been extremely important in partnering with schools to engage students and communities to achieve this aim. A range of strategies have been implemented in all three school sectors, resulting in increasing trust between schools and local communities, and a greater and more open dialogue between schools and Aboriginal parents.

The Low SES NP has resulted in a greater commitment to enhancing school leadership through targeted professional learning, with schools undertaking a wide range of professional development opportunities for principals and leaders. These include not only courses, but strategies such as networking and mentoring, identification of leaders in priority learning areas within schools, and restructuring of timetables to allow more effective leading of learning and support for classroom teachers.

With the first cohort of Low SES NP schools nearing the end of their four-year participation at the end of 2012, there has been conscious effort at local, system/sector and state levels, to identify and to share learnings about what works best and why. This evaluation effort will reinforce the gains experienced in participating schools even after the expiry of the funding period, but perhaps more importantly, priority has been given to sharing these lessons more widely across the State to schools outside the immediate reach of the Partnership. The transferability and sustainability of many of the reforms will be assured through an enhanced culture at the school level of data-driven self-evaluation and self-reflection, whole-school reform and combinations of strategies, and improvements to the density and capacity of leadership teams.

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## **Progress against LSES NP Reforms - 1 January to 30 June 2012**

### ***1. Incentives to attract high performing teachers and principals***

A range of strategies are being used in New South Wales under the Low SES NP to attract and retain high performing teachers to give schools access to high quality teachers and leaders.

#### ***Highly Accomplished Teachers***

Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) in government Low SES NP schools and their equivalents in non-government schools are employed as expert teachers to model high quality teaching across their schools and lead other teachers in the development and refinement of their teaching practice to improve student learning outcomes and raise expectations.

In government schools during Semester 1 2012, 80 HATs were employed under the Low SES National Partnership (23 in Low SES schools and 57 in Reform Extension Initiative schools). Feedback from schools and principals about the HAT strategy has been extremely positive.

Through the Low SES NP in all New South Wales schools, HATs undertook a variety of activities including:

- at Crawford Public School, the HAT has assisted school leaders in facilitating quality professional learning opportunities in literacy, numeracy, quality teaching and the use of technologies. The emphasis was on K-3 classrooms with modelling and team teaching opportunities provided by the HAT
- the HAT at Batemans Bay High School facilitated the design, development and implementation of a whole school Professional Learning Plan underpinned by the



## NSW Institute of Teachers Professional Teaching Standards and the Quality Teaching Framework

- at Holroyd High School the HAT has supported the development of individual Professional Learning Plans for teachers. This has seen the school's professional learning program develop in accordance with teacher identified learning needs in addition to a mentor/induction program for all new staff
- in the diocese of Canberra-Goulburn, a HAT was employed in an isolated and remote participating school to assist with the implementation of numeracy programs and the recommendations from the *Targeted School Self-Evaluation and Improvement Report*.
- four of the six independent schools in the 2012 cohort have employed highly experienced or expert teachers to lead, support and mentor school practice in the areas of literacy and meeting the needs of the English as a second language (ESL) learner.

### **Leadership development**

Effective school leaders have a profound influence on student learning outcomes. As a result of implementation of the Low SES National Partnership, schools are enhancing leadership capacity through targeted professional learning that addresses the needs of teachers and principals.

371 government schools indicated that they would be participating in leadership programs in 2012 (an increase from 304 in 2011). Many of these schools are participating in the *Team Leadership for School Improvement K-12 (TLSI)* program and a number of these schools are also undertaking *The NSW DEC Analytical framework for effective leadership and school improvement in literacy and numeracy*<sup>®</sup>. Government schools are also implementing additional leadership development strategies, for example:

- Kempsey West Public School utilises mentors to lead the development and implementation of teachers' Professional Learning Plans and is employing Leaders of Learning to provide timetabled professional learning opportunities to build teacher knowledge and increase opportunities for collaborative planning and programming processes
- Woolgoolga Public School identifies leaders from within the school to lead learning in literacy and numeracy. Leadership development is further supported by a relieving executive induction program run at the school.

In the Catholic sector, Low SES NP funding has been used to develop leadership in several ways, including:

- a two year *Principal Wellbeing* program in the Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese, facilitated by the St John of God Health Service
- supplementing the salary of the principal's position at Holy Trinity Granville in the Parramatta Diocese and attracting a new principal with 17 years of leadership experience to guide the School
- reduced face-to-face time for the assistant principal and Key Learning Area (KLA) Coordinators in the Diocese of Broken Bay, to allow them to more effectively lead learning and support classroom teachers.

In Semester One the independent sector prepared for several two-day leadership courses for the principal and the National Partnership leadership team at each participating school, to be delivered at the AIS Leadership Centre in July and August 2012. The courses have been tailored to school needs depending on the year in which the participating school joined the National Partnership. The courses will focus on topics such as:

- developing collective responsibility for whole of school improvement (2010 cohort)
- data gathering and evaluative instruments to develop stronger evaluative skills (2011 cohort)
- engaging the whole school community in change (2012 cohort)
- creating and sustaining a critically reflective culture (2010 cohort)

Independent schools have also been accessing additional leadership development. Three schools in the 2010 cohort have had a change of leadership, and all three newly appointed principals have now completed the nine day course for new principals during Semester 1 of this year. Senior executive and middle leaders of six independent schools completed leadership development courses in Semester One, 2012.

### ***Staff coaching/mentoring and professional learning***

Schools participating in the Low SES NP are implementing a range of coaching and mentoring strategies as a means of attracting and retaining high performing teachers. These strategies enhance the capacity of school-based personnel to deliver ongoing and consistent support for teachers that enable improvements in teaching and learning and student achievement.

Strategies indicated in government school plans include modelling, team teaching, opportunities for reflective dialogue between colleagues and collegial programming. The purpose is to build the capacity of teachers to embed best practice in curriculum, pedagogy and classroom management into their own teaching and learning programs and practice.

In addition, school plans for 2012 indicated that 174 government schools had explicit mentoring programs in place for early career teachers. Examples of staff coaching/mentoring and professional learning activities funded in government schools include:

- an additional assistant principal at Bidwill Public School to implement the school's Induction Program, mentor early career teachers and support temporary and permanent teachers in the acquiring or maintaining of their accreditation with the NSW Institute of Teachers. The focus is on cultivating quality teaching through the induction and ongoing mentoring of early career teachers
- the HAT at Lawrence Public School who conducts demonstration lessons in literacy and numeracy supported by post lesson peer coaching conferences with teachers. Further mentoring occurs with an in-school technology mentor who assists in the professional learning of staff in integrating technology into lesson plans and lesson delivery
- Burke Ward Public School combining with neighbouring schools to engage a mentor to work with executive staff to enhance school evaluation and planning and increase the quality of executive mentoring.

In the Catholic sector, strategies include:

- a mentoring program for a newly appointed principal in the Wollongong Diocese. The Diocese also provided release time for leaders to teach and lead whole school professional learning in and across the three participating schools
- focusing on providing professional learning for teachers centred on literacy and numeracy in Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. The program uses classroom observation, team teaching, modelling and reflective practice to increase teachers' confidence in improving literacy and numeracy outcomes for students
- appointment of a peer principal in the Canberra-Goulburn Diocese to provide support and mentoring to a new principal during 2012.

In the independent sector, the model of professional development in schools that have been participating in the Low SES NP since 2010 has moved from a heavy reliance on externally provided courses to more school-based measures, including greater use of school leaders and mentors working with small school teams.

External experts or consultants are now more frequently engaged in supporting mentors or leaders, or in the design and delivery of specific professional learning tailored to respond to the needs of the school and less frequently in delivering a generic program. In this group of schools there is growing evidence of teachers being supported to research and trial new teaching approaches and strategies, shown by the provision in school plans of time release for teachers to collaborate.

### ***Employment of additional teaching and non-teaching staff***

Schools participating in the Low SES NP, including at least 229 government schools, are employing additional staff to provide an increased number of executive positions to support teaching, support individual programs, provide time for executive, teachers and school leaders to lead professional learning, and to enable the release of teachers from face to face teaching in order to build teacher capacity. Examples from the first half of 2012 include:

- a deputy principal employed at Doonside Public School to review staff professional learning. This position leads the implementation of the Quality Teaching Framework across all Key Learning Areas (KLAs) and provides individual support to teachers
- a teacher employed at Mount Austin High School to develop and mentor executive staff in classroom practice, including literacy and numeracy strategies. The school has also employed an additional deputy principal to focus on curriculum requirements
- the eight participating Catholic schools in the Lismore Diocese have each employed a Leader of Pedagogy or professional development consultant to focus and support staff in improved teacher performance and student learning outcomes
- a school in the Parramatta Diocese has employed an internationally recognised professional artist as an Artist In Residence (0.2 FTE). The artist provides mentoring to teachers and students and works in collaboration with Visual Arts teachers and senior students to enhance students' literacy skills in developing their Visual Arts Process Diaries. Another school in the Diocese has employed a speech pathology consultant from St Anthony's Migrant Family Centre to review intervention plans and communication programs, and to undertake collaborative teaching with class teachers

- Catholic schools in the Wollongong Diocese each employed two additional Teacher Educators who are classroom-based but who play a lead role in school-based professional learning. The Diocese also placed two high performing graduates as interns in two participating schools
- in two independent schools in the 2012 cohort, the executive has been expanded to more directly address the professional learning and mentoring of staff by the employment of a deputy principal and a primary curriculum coordinator.

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

Teachers in all government schools have benefited from regular performance management under the existing *Teachers Assessment 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 a term. In the first half of 2012, 490 government schools indicated they were implementing programs that supported performance management and 112 schools were providing additional executive time for the development of performance management programs.

The Catholic sector has used Low SES NP funding to implement a variety of professional development programs linked to performance management that articulate a clear role for the principal. For example, in a participating school in the Parramatta Diocese, the Lead Teacher for numeracy works with the principal and Teacher Educator to plan and implement personalised professional learning for the Stage 4 Mathematics teachers. In the Wollongong Diocese all participating schools have implemented the Professional Development and Personal Review process within each school for all staff.

Independent schools have also started using more formally structured collaborative appraisal approaches. Three participating independent schools have moved to a model which encourages teachers to work towards higher levels of accreditation.

## **3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility**

Schools in NSW are using a range of flexible organisational practices through the resources provided by the Low SES NP to innovate and make changes to existing practices to improve teaching and learning.

### ***Schools working together***

Building partnerships across primary and secondary schools helps to develop expertise in middle years teaching and learning. Teachers and parents from high schools and partner primary schools can work together to plan strategies and professional learning to improve outcomes for students. For example:

- overall, government school plans indicated that 440 government schools are working in cluster network activities to share resources and expertise.
- Liverpool Boys High School has employed a deputy principal to create pedagogical and transition links in conjunction with Liverpool Girls High School and partner primary schools. This has enabled teaching practices to be observed across schools, supporting teacher professional dialogue and the development of quality teaching and learning programs. The school has also employed a community engagement officer (CEO) who, with CEOs from partner schools,

runs shared parent forums to build knowledge of teaching and learning programs across the learning community

- Cowra High School, in partnership with its primary partner school, has employed a Head Teacher to expand middle school programs. The learning community act as a team to meet student needs. This streamlines the evaluation process for teachers and students and improves transition. Transition plans for Stages 2-4 have been developed and include a gifted and talented program
- at a participating high school in the Sydney Archdiocese, 10 students from feeder primary schools were invited to attend a Science Enrichment Program that gave primary school students access to the high school's facilities and expertise. In addition, four Teacher Educators from primary schools in the Parramatta Diocese have commenced planning with Leaders of Pedagogy to deliver professional learning on reading for high school teachers
- in the Parramatta Diocese one participating ran a *Teaching Reading Comprehension: Strategies for Success* themed professional learning day for neighbouring schools that were not part of the Partnership. This allowed schools to share expertise and strategies that work to improve reading and literacy
- in the Diocese of Broken Bay, a participating school organised for teachers to visit other local schools to learn more about literacy and instructional leadership and see first-hand what quality literacy instruction looks like. Given the challenges of low expectations, teachers have recognised the worth in observing students in similar school environments achieving to a high standard
- teachers from three independent schools which have recently joined the Partnership visited Regents Park Christian School, an independent school participating in the Partnership since 2010. The focus of the visits has been to view the success of pedagogical change this school has achieved.

### **University Partnerships**

In the government sector, 138 Low SES NP schools indicated their intention to establish or continue to partner with one or more universities. These partnerships can support innovative pedagogy and may include undertaking action research with academic partners. Projects such as Quality Teaching, peer coaching, research into teacher/classroom practice, research into assessment for learning, physical education research projects and environmental research projects such as Water Watch have been planned for 2012. For example:

- Junee North Public School has partnered with Charles Sturt University in a pre-service program. The school benefits from this partnership by having pre-service teachers in the school, while supervising staff at the school are also provided with opportunities to reflect and focus on best practice. Staff members from Junee North PS have lectured at the university and the transfer of knowledge between the university and school has positive outcomes for all involved
- Belmore Boys High School's partnership with the Australian Catholic University (ACU) enables the school to collaborate closely with an academic partner who provides in-class support for teachers in History, Science and Geography to develop and embed literacy in the middle years. The school has seen improvements in student learning outcomes in school-based assessments as a result of this innovative work



- Cessnock Public School has established a strong partnership with the University of Newcastle through the Speech Pathology in Schools Program. A qualified speech pathologist oversees several undergraduates as they assess teacher identified K-2 students. In addition to individual interventions the program provides teacher professional learning, including in-class support and parent information sessions
- Morisset Public School has established a partnership with the University of Newcastle to reinforce the implementation of the NSW Quality Teaching model and develop a greater understanding of the Professional Teaching Standards. The partnership has provided a range of highly valued teacher professional learning opportunities through access to current research.

The Catholic sector has also been developing innovative partnerships with universities:

- the Australian Catholic University has partnered with dioceses and participating Catholic schools to deliver several innovative programs including Word Generation, a project that helps to build students' academic language and vocabulary
- the Bathurst Diocese has developed strong links with Charles Sturt University to train Low SES National Partnership school staff to use the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) system
- two participating schools in the Canberra-Goulburn Diocese have established a professional relationship with the National Capital Centre for Literacy Research and the University of Canberra. The Centre facilitates a reading intervention strategy called UCANRead. The Director of the Centre trained Learning Support Assistants, community volunteers and teachers to be UCANRead tutors. The program will commence in the participating schools in the second half of 2012
- in the Wollongong Diocese, teachers at schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership have developed mentoring relationships with pre-service teachers at Wollongong University. This is assisting in the development of a new pedagogy and vital links between future and current teachers
- the Sydney Archdiocese has developed the Literacy in Music project for participating schools in collaboration with the University of New England. The project works on developing literacy activities to support Stage 6 Music
- one regional independent school indicated the intention of seeking university support for a team teaching project in the school. Two other independent schools have students from nearby universities providing individual reading tutoring to its primary students.

### ***Specialised staffing resources***

Educational paraprofessionals provide important support for teaching and learning in the classroom. Paraprofessionals have a diverse range of roles including delivering individual intervention programs or providing in-class assistance in the kindergarten classrooms of schools where many students come from a language background other than English.

In the government sector, Ashcroft High School employs a classroom teacher support officer (generalist paraprofessional) to support the operation of a learning centre. The centre was developed to facilitate a more personalised, data-driven approach to

teaching and learning and focuses on student assessment, supporting students in transition back to school from integrated TAFE programs, and the provision of structured study skills programs.

Morisset Public School employs a technology learning facilitator (specialist paraprofessional) to improve student engagement by embedding information and communication technology into classroom practices. As a result, teachers have improved their capacity in the use of technology in teaching and learning programs.

The Parramatta Catholic Diocese has appointed teacher aides to provide extra support to students who are struggling with their learning. The Teacher Aides implement reading programs designed by the class teacher to target specific learning difficulties.

The Catholic sector has also used Low SES NP funding to provide specialised support to students from a refugee background. At Holy Spirit College Lakemba, for example, an African community liaison officer provides individual support to ten refugee students from Africa and their families. At Mary Mackillop College Wakeley, a Sudanese liaison officer funded through the Partnership works with Sudanese students and their families to aid the cultural transition and support learning. Many participating schools across dioceses also use the Mercy Connect program to provide one-on-one support to secondary students from refugee backgrounds.

In independent schools, the employment of education paraprofessionals continues to be a significant strategy deployed under the Low SES NP. Schools report that paraprofessionals contribute significantly to the improvement of student outcomes, especially in literacy. Overall, there are currently 28 paraprofessional positions (19.65 FTE) in Low SES NP schools in the independent sector.

### ***Innovative operational practices and flexible timetabling***

Many Low SES NP schools are using flexible operational practices to encourage and improve student learning:

- Wilcannia Central School is establishing an enterprise based focus with 'real life' learning experiences. The Wilcannia Central School Hairdressing Salon and the School Cafe are located within the school learning environment. The school is working to develop additional enterprise opportunities with the Arts Enterprise Coordinator
- the '*Compacted Curriculum*' at St Marys Senior High School is a stand-alone curriculum where students can gain multiple TAFE credentials and industry skills. The program has a variety of exit points and can also result in a Higher School Certificate if students continue in the program for three years
- Year 6 students at Lake Heights Public School are engaged in project-based learning tasks while attending a one day per week gifted and talented class within a community of schools. They participate in higher order, open ended tasks that challenge and extend their learning such as digital storytelling
- in the Sydney Archdiocese, Holy Spirit College Lakemba provides out-of-hours learning opportunities for students and their families through workshops in the school library. The workshops aim to develop parents' skills in supporting their child's literacy and numeracy. In another school in the Parramatta Diocese, an Extending Mathematical Understanding Specialist Teacher and a Reading Recovery Teacher have been allocated a shared class teacher role in 2012 for Year 2. This innovative model has meant that both teachers have a continuous

opportunity to monitor the progress of vulnerable students

- St Joseph's Walgett in the Armidale Diocese has restructured the learning environment K-6 to introduce an inquiry based teaching and learning model with a particular focus on the learning needs of Indigenous students. This has meant the establishment of team teaching units across the school, a direct focus on cooperative planning that is based on a range of data sets including NAPLAN
- a kindergarten teacher in an independent Christian school has introduced a form of individual student contracted learning to cater to the diverse language and learning needs of her class. This is developing more independent learners and is allowing the teacher to provide more explicit teaching for targeted groups in her class.

### *Using new technologies*

Through their 2012 school plans, 419 government schools indicated the use of new technologies as part of the Low SES National Partnership. Schools are supporting staff to implement new technologies in the classroom with differentiated professional learning covering the use of hardware such as laptops, iPads and interactive whiteboards. For example:

- Chifley College Mount Druitt Campus has a multifaceted approach to the use of new technologies in their school. The school has implemented the iRIS Connect System, which enables teacher reflection, collaboration and professional dialogue to support pedagogical practice to lead learning and improve student engagement. This method of teacher professional learning is supported by the deputy principal, Low SES NP. The school is also building the capacity of teachers to engage in the use of iPads to identify and share quality teaching and learning practice in literacy and numeracy
- students at Lake Illawarra South Public School use technology as an integral component of learning. They use mobile tablets to gather internet-based information, create multimedia material and share their knowledge in collaborative sharing sessions with peers and teachers
- teachers at Eden Marine High School have developed a Moodle platform for professional learning in which they share teaching and learning programs, resources and expertise across partner schools in literacy, numeracy, science and technology. A technology learning facilitator (specialist paraprofessional) has been employed by the school to support technology innovations.

In non-government schools, new technologies have also been used to improve teaching and learning:

- schools in the Lismore Diocese are linked through a video conference centre, which is used to facilitate collaboration between the Leaders of Pedagogy at each school. Wollongong Diocese has also been using video conferencing technology to facilitate clustering arrangements between participating schools
- in the independent sector, three participating schools have employed specialist staff to support teachers in the use of technology within classrooms in order to better meet the diverse needs of students. Schools are also using technology to share teaching strategies, resulting in a growing sophistication amongst participating independent schools in using technologies such as interactive whiteboards and Moodle.

#### **4. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities (including professional development)**

Schools in NSW have provided many different innovative and tailored learning opportunities through the Low SES NP, including specialised literacy and numeracy intervention programs, professional learning for teachers in data analysis, new and innovative delivery strategies and tailored opportunities for refugee, ESL and gifted students.

##### **Professional learning in data analysis**

In 2012 school plans, 587 government schools indicated explicit strategies for teachers in the analysis and use of data to inform programming and planning for teaching and learning. Participating schools in all sectors provided teachers with professional learning around NAPLAN data and use the SMART package to provide teachers with detailed diagnostic information to inform teaching and learning to cater to individual learning needs.

Examples of professional learning in data analysis include:

- professional learning provided to all teachers at Narrandera High School by regional officers and the Low SES NP funded deputy principal. All teachers have responsibility for developing the school plan which is grounded in the analysis of data. Following SMART training the teachers review the evidence, draw conclusions and make recommendations for student improvement. They plan teaching and learning strategies based on the data with alignment to syllabus outcomes
- with the support of the Low SES NP funded assistant principal, teachers at Tamworth West Public School are being mentored to analyse data to support teaching and learning. Teachers are being provided with additional relief to analyse a range of data (including NAPLAN, *Best Start* and *Count Me In Too*) to map student progress. Tracking sheets to monitor literacy and numeracy benchmarks have been developed for each stage and placed on the school server
- in the Lismore Diocese, two secondary schools have trained senior staff and Leaders in Pedagogy in the effective processing of HSC data and all schools will be able to access professional learning around NAPLAN data later in 2012
- professional learning in data analysis, developing a response at individual student level, class or cohort and whole school level is a strategy in all plans of the six 2012 cohort independent schools. Continuing schools have accessed more targeted professional learning in using data including DIBELS, NAPLAN and other class, cohort and whole school data. In some of these schools the data is not simply guiding the direction of the change of classroom practice and intervention, but also is used to identify the professional learning needs of the teachers.

##### **Literacy and numeracy intervention programs**

Low SES NP schools are implementing a range of whole school and individual literacy and numeracy intervention programs. These programs are developed to best meet the needs of the students in the local context. Examples of literacy and numeracy programs that have been implemented include:

- 161 government schools are implementing the Focus on Reading 3-6 (FOR) professional learning program which supports the teaching of reading, including comprehension, vocabulary and fluency in Years 3-6. For example, Nowra Public School has released an assistant principal to provide professional learning on FOR for their learning community as well as facilitating the continuing implementation of the initiative at their school through mentoring, team teaching and professional learning around data analysis
- in total, 613 government Low SES NP schools are implementing 729 literacy and numeracy programs including *Reading to Learn*, *Accelerated Literacy*, *QuickSmart*, *Taking off with Numeracy*, *Making Up for Lost Time In Literacy* (MultiLit) and *Focus on Reading 3-6* (FOR), with some schools implementing more than one program
- Condobolin High School has employed an additional head teacher, funded by the Low SES NP, to support the implementation of literacy programs including *Reading to Learn*. Professional learning in the *Reading to Learn* program has led to whole school training in explicit teaching strategies and the initiation of a writing initiative throughout all KLAs. Driven by data analysis, the strategies have been embedded in teaching programs to promote literacy development
- Northlakes Public School is implementing Language, Learning and Literacy (L3) in Kindergarten classrooms, providing a timely response to targeted student needs. The implementation is strongly supported by a quality professional learning program.
- as part of The Meadows Public School's implementation of the Targeted Early Numeracy (TEN) program, teachers are building their knowledge of TEN strategies and increasing their awareness of relevant resources to support effective numeracy teaching. The School is incorporating technology into teaching and learning programs, particularly TEN, and the goal is to further support increased student engagement in numeracy.
- Shalvey Public School and Hebersham Public School in Western Sydney employ additional school learning support officers (SLSOs) to support the implementation of QuickSmart Numeracy in their schools. The SLSOs tutor students in basic mathematical skills in order for the students to be able to undertake higher order mental processing with greater efficiency and success
- Sunning Hill School utilises Low SES National Partnership funding to employ a literacy support teacher to implement the MultiLit program. The Literacy Support Teacher facilitates professional learning, provides individual in-class support to students and conducts pre and post literacy assessment
- participating Catholic schools have implemented many literacy and numeracy programs, including *Reading Recovery*, the *QuickSmart* numeracy intervention program, *Sounds Write*, *Maths 300*, *Word Generation*, *Early Bird Reading* program, *Books In Home*, *Reading Matters*, *Reading to Learn*, *First Steps in Reading*, *First Steps in Writing*, *Focus on Reading 3-6*, *Accelerated Literacy*, *Lexia Reading*, *Count Me In Too*, MultiLit, MiniLit and *Taking Off With Numeracy*
- staff newly appointed in the Canberra-Goulburn Diocese received professional learning in the *First Steps in Reading* and *First Steps in Writing* programs early in 2012. Workshops were also provided at some schools to further embed the First Steps pedagogical approach and design literacy teaching activities based on an



analysis of student assessments

- through the Low SES NP, 16 participating independent schools are using the MultiLit and/or MiniLit programs with students that are below the National Minimum Standard. Following the success of MultiLit, a number of independent schools are now also using MiniLit and/or the MultiLit Extension program. In addition, four independent schools are using the DIBELS system to measure the impact of teaching of students' literacy skill development and to plan the next steps for these students
- two K-12 independent schools have focused on *Reading to Learn* and *First Steps in Reading* to deliver improved student literacy. Staff members at these schools are receiving school-specific professional learning designed to match the needs of the staff and students.

### ***Innovative delivery strategies***

Homework centres have been one way that many schools across all three sectors have provided extra support to students and connected with them out of traditional classroom settings. The school plans of 117 government schools indicated that they would be operating homework centres in 2012, an increase from 85 in 2011. Some government schools also indicated they are establishing learning centres and expanding senior study opportunities. In the independent sector, schools with homework centres report that this strategy is popular with parents and students.

Examples across the sectors include:

- Arthur Phillip High School has established an after-hours homework and tutorial centre and is extending the opening hours and capacity of the centre enabling students to access subject specific assistance. The homework centre also has an explicit program of support for senior ESL students
- Broken Hill High School conducts a homework centre on two afternoons every week. It is staffed by a teacher and a school learning support officer, funded by the Low SES National Partnership. A significant number of students attend the centre and it has resulted in increased completion of assessment tasks
- James Busby High School conducts a homework centre supporting students in being better able to access and complete the literacy and numeracy components of their homework, assessments and assignments, which is reflected in improved literacy and numeracy outcomes. Funding from the Low SES National Partnership has enabled additional staff to support the students in the homework centre
- In the Parramatta Diocese, five study grants have been offered to teachers to undertake professional development in project-based learning. This pedagogical framework for teaching has been developed over three years and teachers from all faculties in the Diocese now have opportunities to be trained in the model of project-based learning. In the first half of 2012, a pilot project-based learning program was offered to Year 7 students
- in the Lismore Diocese, a homework centre has been established in one secondary school and this has shown a significant reduction in the number of outstanding assessments in comparison to this time last year. The Diocese is also training staff at three participating schools in the use of inquiry based learning

- the Sydney Archdiocese has established a new learning space known as the Learning Matrix Unit. Over 200 students at Patrician Brothers College Fairfield engage in cross-curricular problem-based learning initiatives with integrated assessments, supported by a team of four teachers.

### *Tailored learning opportunities*

Partnership schools are providing tailored learning opportunities to many different groups of students in a range of ways:

- in their school plans, 396 government schools included a reference to the implementation of targeted interventions to cater to individual student needs
- Bourke Public School employs three additional school learning support officers (SLSOs), funded by the Low SES NP, to provide in-class tuition for students on individual learning plans to support engagement and learning. An integral component of this approach is the professional learning provided to teachers and the SLSOs to be better able to provide focussed, evidence-based support to students
- at E A Southee Public School, the assistant principal facilitates the analysis of Best Start and NAPLAN data to support the identification of underachieving students and coordinates professional learning in identified areas for incorporation into teaching and learning programs. Four additional school learning support officers support student learning in small groups and a speech therapist identifies and supports students with expressive language needs
- the engagement and retention initiative at Airds High School targets Stage 5 students who are disengaged from learning and facilitates the attainment of each student's accreditation equivalent to Year 10 by re-engaging the students to prepare for their chosen career paths or further education. The Stage 5 class is structured using a KLA based approach, although the content is differentiated and contains vocational and life skills based concepts. This structure provides intensive individual support and links to vocational studies and work preparation initiatives. The tailored learning opportunities are provided in a home classroom by a home room teacher with the support of an additional school learning support officer
- at Holy Family Emerton in the Catholic sector, a dedicated literacy special Projects Coordinator has been appointed to challenge high achieving students in reading. The Coordinator works with class teachers to identify these students, to plan activities and to assess student learning
- in the Sydney Archdiocese, Teacher Educators from primary schools and Leaders of Pedagogy from secondary schools attended professional development on Understanding by Design. This was to enhance their knowledge and skills to go back into their schools and work with teachers to build their capacity to tailor their programming and unit development to the learning needs of students. This professional development experience helped the Teacher Educators and Leaders of Pedagogy to think more purposefully and carefully about the learning opportunities for their students to ensure the development of their understandings rather than just knowledge
- in the Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese, a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) facilitator in each school has been appointed to facilitate development, implementation

and sustainability of a whole school approach for delivery of PLPs for Aboriginal students

- in some Low SES NP schools in the independent sector, the analysis of student growth and the patterns of achievement in the middle and upper bands of NAPLAN have revealed the need to explicitly address the learning needs of the more proficient students. This is leading to a culture of high expectations being more systematically fostered at whole school and individual class level
- a remote independent primary school has employed an Aboriginal aide to address the emerging needs of Aboriginal students by supporting students in the classroom. An Aboriginal principal from another independent school participating in the Low SES Partnership has been providing advice and guidance in the development of PLPs.

Low SES NP schools are also tailoring opportunities to meet the needs of English as a Second Language (ESL) students:

- the 2012 school plans of 53 government schools indicated the provision of explicit professional learning in ESL, with many of these implementing the *Teaching English Language Learners* (TELL) program to develop a shared, consistent knowledge and understanding of how students acquire a second language
- Fairfield Heights Public School analyses ESL student NAPLAN data to guide programming and assessment to maximise student support. An additional teacher provides targeted support specifically for ESL and refugee students and provides professional learning in language, literacy and numeracy and appropriate ESL pedagogy, such as the ESL Scales and Teaching English Language Learners (TELL). The additional teacher is under the coordination of the deputy principal (curriculum), also funded by the Low SES National Partnership. In addition, the school employs a speech pathologist to support and mentor teachers in the teaching of talking and listening in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 with an emphasis on support for ESL students
- Punchbowl Boys High School conducts professional learning on ESL pedagogy through an action research partnership with an academic from the University of New South Wales. Supported by a Low SES National Partnership funded ESL teacher, all teachers have developed an understanding of using the ESL strategies in program development, assessment task design, scaffolding of content and the language demands of subjects
- Auburn West Public School provides an after school learning centre coordinated and staffed by the assistant principal ESL, community liaison officers, teachers and school learning support officers (SLSOs) funded by Low SES National Partnership. The purpose of the centre is to enhance the learning opportunities and oral language skills of the students whilst encouraging parent participation. Parents attend programs that develop their skills in assisting their children's learning and their own knowledge of the community
- two independent schools have an external consultant with mentoring support being provided to teachers to develop a cross curriculum approach to meeting the language need of ESL learners
- four independent schools have employed specialist staff to support ESL students.

In addition to support for English as Second Language students, 59 government schools are implementing a range of strategies including providing alternative timetabled curriculum to support refugee students to improve student attainment. A number of government schools are engaged in a variety of refugee support programs including:

- eleven schools participating in *Teaching Refugees in My Classroom*
- five schools participating in *Promoting Positive Behaviour and Learning: Assisting Refugee Students at School*
- nine schools participating in refugee transition programs
- eleven schools participating in *Intensive English Program in Primary Schools*
- three schools participating in the *Macquarie Mentoring Program for Refugee Students*
- fourteen schools participating in *Refugee Action Support (RAS)*
- eight schools participating in *ESL Pedagogy*, a twelve month scaffolded action research project.

Auburn North Public School in South-West Sydney has a *New Arrivals Program (NAP)* which targets students in Stages 1-3 who have lived in Australia for less than 12 months. Refugee students participate in this daily program, which offers small group support each morning for two hours. Refugee students are further supported by the assistant principal ESL, funded by the Low SES NP, who oversees the development and implementation of Individual Learning Plans for students, including refugee students, to improve literacy and numeracy skills. A community liaison officer provides additional support as part of the refugee program.

Supported by Low SES National Partnership funding, the *Refugee Transition Program* at Chester Hill High School is providing a group of students with access to intensive literacy and numeracy programs. The program is creating differentiated resources in a team teaching approach which are designed to increase students' understanding through the incorporation of additional visual aids and a more rigorous and comprehensive scaffolding than traditional resources.

## **5. Strengthen school accountability**

All NSW schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership develop school plans that are publicly available. Throughout the development and implementation of the school plan, school leaders work in collaboration with teachers and communities to identify, plan and lead strategies to optimise student learning.

### ***Situational analyses and school-based evaluations***

School plans are updated and improved upon through the use of situational analyses and/or other evaluation methods that track the school's current issues and progress. All Low SES National Partnership schools undertake a situational analysis in preparation for their participation in the Partnership, which evaluates internal and external data sources, such as student performance and achievement, attendance, retention, staff profile, teacher and parent surveys and focus groups. Continuing schools undertake an annual evaluation opportunity to refine, discontinue or introduce new strategies to achieve targets.

In government schools the situational analysis/annual evaluation process is strategically supported by the Department of Education and Communities' central and regional offices through workshops, support documents and professional learning. Schools in the government sector submit revised school plans based on their evaluation findings. These school plans are endorsed by school education directors and approved by regional directors.

For example, the Hunter Central Coast region has structures in place to support schools with self-evaluation. Early in the evaluation process, schools are encouraged to find a partner principal from another Low SES National Partnership school so that schools can support each other throughout the process. Each term network meetings are held for principals, HATs, change agents, community liaison officers and paraprofessionals. Opportunities are provided for discussion around key programs as well as key concepts such as building capacity, facilitating sustainability, being a critical friend and team building. School visits by the coordinator or a combination of School Education Director, School Development Officer and regional coordinator each term also support the accountability process.

In the Catholic sector, schools are also supported by diocesan offices in the evaluation and planning process. For example, in the Canberra-Goulburn Diocese in the first half of 2012, curriculum officers from the Catholic Education Office continued to liaise with school principals to audit school performance according to the Targeted School Self-Evaluation Improvement Report Recommendations, to plan for, provide support in and timetable implementation of further recommendations and to embed current practice according to identified recommendations. Senior curriculum officers assisted principals to align National Partnership activities with school Management Plans and make staffing and funding decisions that aligned with Literacy priorities.

In the independent sector, the use of a deeper, evidenced-based approach has become established as normal practice in continuing schools. In many of the 2010 cohort of independent schools and some in the following cohorts a change in the language associated with this annual cycle of evaluation and evidence-based decision making is demonstrating a move from being associated with the National Partnership participation to being associated with normal school practice for school improvement thus ensuring the practice will be sustained post the school's National Partnership involvement.

Furthermore at least four schools in the 2010 cohort are now using the skills developed when identifying initial area of focus for improvement (e.g. Literacy), to identify a new area of focus for improvement (e.g. Numeracy). This is being more strategically planned as the leaders are drawing on the experience gained in the first years of NP participation where a change process has been successfully managed.

In independent schools the following trends are becoming apparent:

- the analysis of data and target setting has become more strategic
- data is now being shared across the whole school and more whole school responses are being developed and implemented
- a shift is occurring in the use of data with some school leaders beginning to analyse student performance data to determine the direction and success of teacher professional learning
- teachers in most schools are more readily engaging with whole school/class and individual student data



- the nature and amount of data used in planning is becoming more sophisticated eg. cohort specific characteristics, staff confidence and competence in the new approaches implemented, or teacher readiness or capacity to engage in further innovation
- some school leaders are beginning to identify that the data needed to be gathered to inform the success of a proposed educational change as part of the process of developing a plan, and not as part of the process of evaluating the plan
- planned formative evaluation processes are being established to monitor strategies during implementation e.g. sampling student work, teacher dialogue and a formal review conducted each term.

### ***Accountability innovations***

Some NSW schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership have implemented innovative ways to strengthen the school's accountability.

In the Parramatta Diocese, for example one high school has undertaken a project to research the post-school success of students at various tertiary institutions including TAFE. The findings will be presented to school staff to inform and change teaching practice to make it more relevant to students' needs and aspirations. The research will also aim to inform and update the careers advice provided to senior students at the school. Another school in the Diocese carried out a detailed survey of the school community overseen, collated and analysed by an outside agency. The data will help build a better picture of the community served by the school to enhance the relevance and focus of teaching practices and strengthen the school's accountability.

### ***6. External partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities and the provision of access to extended services (including through brokering arrangements)***

Active engagement and communication with parents, community members, other schools, businesses and local organisations are essential to improving levels of student engagement and learning outcomes. Under the Low SES National Partnership, a range of strategies are being developed, implemented and refined to engage parents and communities more effectively.

#### ***Parent, carer and community engagement***

All sectors offered parent workshops focused on strategies to assist student learning.

584 government schools made explicit reference to strategies to engage local communities in their school plans, including:

- 370 parent education classes or parent sessions
- 75 Aboriginal Elders and community members providing classroom support
- 18 drop-in centres or parent cafes
- 12 schools providing refugee programs including NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS).

The focus on improving parent and community engagement has been strengthened at Marrickville High School by the employment of additional community liaison officers (Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic and Pacific Islander), all funded by the Low SES NP. The

role of the community liaison officer is to increase parent and community participation in the school by improving the first language communication strategies including written, oral and multimedia and updating the school's website to make it more accessible by parents and the local community.

Macksville Public School has created a Learning and Community Centre (LCC) to build school and community partnerships. The LCC coordinator and community engagement officer work with the principal and executive to promote and support the ideas and aspirations of teachers, students and parents. Innovative programs are conducted to support individuals and groups across the whole school community, including the facilitation of Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) for Aboriginal students. The LCC assists Aboriginal students and their families to access technology and learning support. Evaluative data indicates a measurable increase in the participation of parents in their children's learning and increased community understanding of curriculum and technology.

Tweed Heads South Public School developed the Community Garden initiative as a means of strengthening school and community partnerships. The Community Garden initiative involves students from Tweed Heads South Preschool, Tweed Heads South Public School, Tweed River High School and Out Of School Hours and Vacation Care (Oosh). Students write letters to relevant businesses and organisations seeking support for the initiative, thus providing an authentic purpose and audience for students' writing. The creation of the garden involved parents and community members from local organisations, businesses and local government. The initiative has resulted in improvements in student achievement and parent and community engagement in the school.

The Catholic sector has also developed many community and family engagement projects, for example:

- Patrician Brothers College Fairfield shares computers and resources with parents through the 'Mac and Mug' project after school while students attend supervised homework classes. Parents are able to develop skills in web-based tools for learning, supported by the College's e-learning coordinator and two Leaders of Pedagogy
- primary and secondary schools in Sydney Archdiocese have been providing out of hours learning opportunities for parents and students. These have been mainly in the form of series of workshops designed to engage parents in their child's learning at home. Schools have endeavoured to break through barriers that may have previously precluded parents from participating in such workshops, e.g. linking with community liaison officers, Aboriginal Elders, school counsellors and parish priests
- Mary Mackillop College Wakeley has established the Irene McCormack Centre for Learning and Innovation (IMCLI) where families can come together to enjoy learning together and nurture the wellbeing of their daughters. The IMCLI has run family learning workshops to develop parents' skills in supporting their child's learning. The Centre facilitates Year 10 subject selection interviews, working collaboratively with parents to support their daughters in making informed subject choices.

In independent schools there has been more parent education and support for student learning and less emphasis on simply providing information. There are examples of greater use of translations into community languages, phone calls for

positive catch ups, production of DVDs and resources for parents. Schools report the continued effectiveness of PLPs in engaging with parents.

### ***Student wellbeing initiatives and access to extended services***

A variety of programs are being implemented in governments schools, to promote wellbeing, positive relationships and the resilience of every student, including the most vulnerable and at-risk students. In addition, a number of schools are providing access to extended services to ensure the most appropriate support for students such as speech pathology and counselling.

Examples of student wellbeing initiatives funded through the Low SES National Partnership can be seen in all sectors:

- Murrumburrah Public School has employed a teacher to coordinate a Boys' Shed to provide support and mentoring of boys identified at risk. Parents and community members are encouraged to participate. The school is also employing a school learning support officer to coordinate a Breakfast Club each morning for K-6 students
- James Meehan High School has developed partnerships with organisations to support the educational, welfare and employment aspirations of students. Students in Year 9 take part in the program, *Law Firms Encouraging and Assisting Promising Students* (LEAPS) with Minter Ellison. The Smith Family gives students the opportunity to visit businesses and industries to look at career options which includes an opportunity to visit the University of Sydney. A grant from the *National Australia Bank Schools First* program has seen the establishment of a driver education and mentor program
- in the Lismore Diocese, two Wellbeing Centres have been established and are being accessed on a daily basis in response to student needs. Classroom teachers are noticing an increase in students being 'on task' as less time is required to manage the emotional, social and behavioural needs
- the *Positive Behaviour for Learning* (PBL) program and the 'You Can Do It' program have been implemented in a variety of both government and Catholic Partnership schools to meet the social and wellbeing needs of all students
- Parramatta Diocese has employed two stage co-ordinators to assist in enhancing student well-being and connectedness to school. These teachers have adopted a mentoring role with at-risk students to improve school attendance and to ensure they are connected to support services provided by the diocese and external agencies for support of families and students
- in three independent schools the links with health, welfare and community based services have been strengthened and extended. These include: provision of space in the school for a Youth Worker; weekly visits to a school by health support workers and drug counsellors; supporting students to attend community programs (*Skills to Chill, Healthy Start Program*).

### ***Culturally inclusive transition programs***

A number of Low SES NP schools are also implementing strategies to support the various transition points in students' education. Schools are building relationships with government and non-government agencies, local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (AECGs) and community organisations to support transition. For example:

- Woodbury Public School runs an ‘*Early Birds Transition*’ program two days per week which is further supported by a playgroup program one day per week. Emphasis is given to supporting at-risk students and families to assist in the development of school readiness in literacy and numeracy and build positive relationships
- In the independent sector, through partnership with WISE employment, Blacktown Youth College students are provided with assistance to find pre apprenticeships and part-time employment
- A participating school in the Lismore Diocese has used Low SES National Partnership funding to support an Indigenous aide at the school to engage Indigenous families and the local Indigenous community in the transition to school.
- Guildford West Public School employs a community liaison officer (CLO) to coordinate strategies to engage parents of all cultural and linguistic groups in the school community. The CLO facilitates culturally inclusive practices to enhance home and school partnerships in transition programs
- In the Wollongong Diocese, a participating school partners with local preschools to ease transitions into kindergarten. Another school in the Diocese uses funding to support a community based pre-school playgroup at the school.
- Shoalhaven High School implements a Y6-7 orientation for Aboriginal students and their families
- Mount View High School conducts a school cultural camp with partner primary schools to support the established mentoring links with students and to ensure they are meeting the needs of Aboriginal students.

### ***University partnerships to support student transitions***

In addition to supporting innovative pedagogy and raising the overall quality of teaching, university partnerships can develop innovative options to support pathways for students to improve retention.

Chester Hill High School works in partnership with the UNSW on the ASPIRE program, an equity initiative that challenges attitudes to Higher Education from the very early stages of primary school right through to university, providing workshops, activities, campus visits and events to assist in building student awareness of University as a future option.

Chester Hill High School is also in partnership with the University of Western Sydney (UWS) on the *Fast Forward* program which helps students to see the value of continuing their education through to Year 12 and beyond. It offers the opportunity for enhanced academic and personal achievement to a large number of students. Those students choosing to study at UWS after completing their schooling are also assisted in their transition to University and given the opportunity to be role models to younger students in the program, further developing their leadership skills.

At Holy Spirit College Lakemba, a careers information night was held in the first half of 2012 in partnership with the Australian Catholic University and Bankstown TAFE. Over 50 students attended with their families to receive careers and transitions information and support from the Careers Teacher funded through the Low SES National Partnership.

The Sydney Archdiocese has been successfully running the *Step Up Into Teaching* program in partnership with the A. The program is for senior students interested in the teaching profession.

Two schools in the independent sector are linking into University programs to help raise students' expectations while two other independent schools have arrangements in place for university students to regularly provide support in reading to individual school students. Four students from Macleay Vocational College Kempsey participated in the Charles Sturt University (CSU) *Future Moves* program designed to build aspiration for tertiary study amongst students in regional NSW.

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## **Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students - 1 January to 30 June 2012**

Low SES National Partnership schools are implementing a range of support strategies and programs to close the gap in educational outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. There are a number of integrated initiatives that are supporting attendance, engagement and the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Of particular importance are strategies in all three sectors that directly use student data to identify issues and gaps in attainment, leading to personalised learning opportunities.

### ***Personalised Learning Plans***

Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) are developed with parents and caregivers and 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 PLPs are contributing to improved attendance, increased student learning outcomes and increased engagement in education by students, parents and the broader community.

PLPs are collaboratively developed and are regularly reviewed to inform teaching and learning and recognise the achievement of goals. Students can be targeted for extra support and provided with appropriate mentors linked to the student's particular skills or interests. One school is targeting high achieving Aboriginal students and providing mentoring support through the PLP process. All participating Low SES NP schools have developed PLPs for their Aboriginal students. Examples include:

- more than 490 Low SES National Partnership government schools made explicit reference to enhancing and/or refining processes around the development of PLPs in their school plans for 2012
- Mount View High School reviewed their current Personalised Learning Plan practices and as a result has incorporated strategies such as making the PLPs more accessible to relevant teachers and undertaking professional learning on their design and implementation. The PLPs have become valued, workable documents that individualise education and engage the community in education, forming positive productive partnerships
- Chifley College Bidwill Campus employs a full time Aboriginal SLSO to support the Personalised Learning Plan process. The SLSO is a member of the round table conference that occurs as part of the PLP process which also involves students, parents and other staff. The SLSO also receives weekly updates on



Aboriginal student attendance and maintains regular contact with the families of students with attendance issues

- The Entrance Public School employs an Aboriginal SLSO to coordinate the ‘*Young, Black and Ready for School*’ program for preschool children. The SLSO supports strengthening of home–school partnerships, tracks and monitors attendance and is an advocate in the development of PLPs.
- in the Armidale Diocese, which has a high concentration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments, the Learning Services Team analysed and tracked NAPLAN data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and worked with seven schools to improve student performance. Individual student needs were addressed through the work of the Aboriginal Education Consultant, principal, classroom teacher and parent bodies. This work has led to developing and improving current PLPs and to improving the framework for the improvement and roll out of more engaging and strategic PLPs in 2013
- Personalised Learning Plans have been prepared for Aboriginal students in the Canberra–Goulburn Catholic school Diocese. The plans outline student strengths and areas to focus on for improving student performance. Students that were not meeting minimum standards are receiving additional support through the *Numeracy Intervention Program* and *Reading Recovery*
- the PLPs created at Minimbah Aboriginal Primary school are integrated into the daily work of the classroom. They are presented as a visual learning journey which begins with “Belonging” and include the personal development goals of Identity, Knowing, Kindness and Confidence. These colourful documents, which include culturally significant illustrations, support the collaboration between family, student and teacher. They also provide the opportunity for the students to celebrate and mark their successes. The principal of Minimbah has also been supporting the principal of Namoi Valley Christian School to further develop a PLP process for that school based on this model.

### **Language Programs**

A sense of cultural and linguistic identity and the active recognition and validation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and languages by schools is critical to student wellbeing and success at school. The Low SES National Partnership has provided schools with an opportunity to respond at a local and individual level to recognise the value of and teach local languages. For example:

- Alma Public School implements the Paakantyi Language program where students K-6 participate in a one hour weekly lesson. The program is also offered to Aboriginal workers from other Broken Hill schools and agencies for one and a half hours per week
- Walgett Community School supports an Aboriginal Language teaching position through Low SES National Partnership funding. Their language program runs from Preschool to Year 7
- there are a number of other government schools implementing similar localised language programs such as Trangie Central School with the Wiradjuri language program, Kemblawarra Public Schools with the Wadi Wadi language program and Menindee Central School which extended their program to include the Nyaampa language

- in the independent sector, the Dunghutti Elders Language group is exploring the possibility of a joint project with Macleay Vocational College to produce illustrated children's books in the Dunghutti language.

*Teaching English Language Learners* (TELL) is a professional learning program that develops staff to support programming and application of effective teaching strategies to assess student progress in the acquisition of skills in Standard Australian English. This professional learning program supports all students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, who do not speak Standard Australian English as their first language, or whose parents do not speak Standard Australian English at home. This professional learning program has been undertaken in many government schools including Dawson Public School. Ballina Public School is implementing an Aboriginal ESL program for Year 3-6 classes in conjunction with Southern Cross School and Ballina/CTI Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG).

The Armidale Diocese in the Catholic sector has a Centre for Excellence for enhancing oral language. This Centre for Excellence has as its goals to:

- train and continue to build capacity of staff in the area of oral language
- develop materials and resources to support in-class activity
- partner with 'Therapy Matters' for analysis of testing and continued upgrading of teacher knowledge and skills
- provide school based practicum placements for undergraduate speech pathologists
- provide school based e-learning opportunities for undergraduate teachers from the University of New England (UNE) to observe classroom practice for receptive and expressive language in 'real time'
- partner with a university or speech pathologist for research related to the Centre for Excellence
- provide opportunities for ongoing professional development in the area of expressive and receptive language for all teachers in the Diocese using Hub and Spoke Model
- facilitate access to teachers for professional learning.

### ***Community and family engagement***

Low SES National Partnership schools indicate extensive engagement with local Aboriginal communities. These activities include employing Aboriginal community members to provide educational support to students, partnering with Aboriginal families and community to develop PLPs and cultural awareness training for school staff to localise the learning. Visits to schools by community Elders and consultation with and in school support provided by Aboriginal community Elders, is also an explicit strategy for many schools.

Government schools are providing opportunities for partnerships with Aboriginal communities and a number of schools offer training for Aboriginal Elders and Aboriginal community members in providing support for literacy and numeracy programs in the classroom. Schools are also offering parent education classes to further engage parents with their child's learning. Menindee Central School offers the *Literacy @ Home Caregiver Literacy Program* as well as employing in-class tutors to support literacy and numeracy programs.

Government schools are working with the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and the community to support the attendance and engagement of Aboriginal students. Schools are utilising strategies that bring community members into the classroom. Aboriginal Elders and community members are providing classroom support in 75 schools. Other highlights from this sector include:

- Shoalhaven High School, which is an example of developing partnerships with community in the provision of specialist support services, such as Aboriginal Medical Services and other allied health services
- Mount Warrigal Public School's Aboriginal SLSO is primarily engaged to market the Mt Warrigal Preschool across the local community, in particular to the Aboriginal community
- Bowraville Central School employs an Aboriginal SLSO to support flexibility in the delivery of literacy and numeracy programs and further enhance family and community relationships.

The Canberra-Goulburn Diocese introduced the *Yarning Strong* resource with great success in 2012. *Yarning Strong* has engaged Aboriginal students and deepened understanding of issues related to Aboriginal people. Intensive inservicing on the resource was undertaken and the unit written using the *Understanding By Design* process. Other highlights in Catholic schools include:

- Holy Family Primary School in the Parramatta Diocese has employed five Aboriginal Aunties for three hours per week to help raise the profile of Aboriginal culture in the school. The Aunties have been engaged in activities such as reading stories, arts and crafts activities, making a bush tucker garden and leading NAIDOC week celebrations. Their presence in the staffroom has also been an invaluable support and learning opportunity for the teachers at the school
- Sydney Archdiocese continues to promote Aboriginal parent committees at participating schools and strengthened involvement with local Aboriginal community organisations. Schools in the Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese have also strengthened links with the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
- around eight teachers in primary schools in the Armidale Diocese host a weekly 'homework afternoon' focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This also provides valuable opportunities for Aboriginal parents who may otherwise not visit the school, to dialogue with teachers and engage with their child's learning.

In the independent sector, Kempsey Adventist School has experienced an increase in Aboriginal enrolments in 2012 as a result of successful school efforts to build a positive and trusting relationship with the local Aboriginal community. A further example from this sector is at Macleay Vocational College where another adult Aboriginal presence has been provided through the employment of a horticulturist (through Work For The Dole) to work with students to build a fruit and vegetable garden.

### ***Employment of Aboriginal paraprofessionals and education support workers***

Many participating schools from all sectors employ Aboriginal paraprofessionals and other support workers to improve learning outcomes and engagement of their Aboriginal students.

106 Aboriginal staff have been employed as school learning support officers in government schools in 2012. Funding available under the Low SES National Partnership has also been used across sectors to:

- employ extra staff to lead professional learning, particularly in Aboriginal Education as evidenced at Narromine Public School
- employ staff to support classrooms to engage Aboriginal students in their PLPs and implement programs to address anti-bullying and harassment in the playground through the employment of an AFL Indigenous trainee Sport and Recreation at Portland Central School
- gain extra workers to support transition programs from home to preschool as evidenced at Tolland Public School and the Early Bird Workshops at Trangie Central School
- employ experts to teach *Aboriginal Culture Education* programs, language programs and career education programs, for example at Wilcannia Central School, which is employing a careers advisor to develop a whole school 'School to Work Plan' K-12
- employ education support workers to support communication strategies to parents, carers and community such as at Walgett Community College, which employs a part-time school administration officer to continue the coordination and publication of the school newsletter "Gaay Gawaala".
- employ Aboriginal education workers and learning support officers to support Aboriginal student learning in the classroom. In the Sydney Archdiocese this is done particularly through reading and numeracy programs and continued assistance to Aboriginal students in the homework centre program
- employ a third full time Aboriginal community liaison officer to strengthen the continued focus in the Sydney Archdiocese on developing initiatives to support Aboriginal student attendance and retention, and to support parent and community engagement
- increase the hours of employment of existing Aboriginal Education Workers, such as at Blacktown Youth College in the independent sector.

### ***Strategies specifically to support attendance***

Schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership are using a range of interconnected strategies to support the attendance of Aboriginal students. For example:

- At Narromine Public School, staff are initially supported by a mentor in models of engaging students, including professional learning around *Regional Aboriginal Pedagogy (RAP)* which addresses the *8 Ways of Learning*, a pedagogy framework that includes Aboriginal pedagogies. This is strongly supported by a range of programs being implemented such as the K-2 'Spot On' program, Fathers/boys' days and *Yarn Ups* which specifically focus on Kindergarten attendance. The school is also building stronger links with families and community through holding information evenings and follow up visits supported by the Aboriginal education officer and utilising Elders and other community members to support programs to engage students
- through the analysis of data, Kurri Kurri High School identified the need to

improve attendance and close the achievement gap for Aboriginal students. The initial strategy was to improve professional learning for staff in Aboriginal Education to increase student learning outcomes and included sessions on the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan*. Personalised Learning Plans were already in place but were redesigned to strengthen partnerships with families and the community. The employment of a tutor to support students' learning has been a key strategy to engaging students in school. The employment of an Aboriginal Education Worker across the learning community to support students and initiatives has meant that the outcomes of Aboriginal students are being closely monitored to identify and provide targeted support

- Hunter River High School is conducting an action research project to identify the causes of the gap in attendance and developing common understandings of contributing issues for all staff, parents and the community. The school is accessing Elders to support wellbeing, cultural and learning programs and plans to form an Elders Group with representatives from the major communities to support students
- seven independent schools formulated specific strategies to close the gap in attendance rates between indigenous and non-indigenous students. (See also the case study of Minimbah Primary School (in the ITQ section), in which partial release from teaching load has allowed the principal to personally deliver intensive literacy and learning support and to manage and coordinate initiatives under the Closing the Gap initiative which has impacted significantly on attendance.)



## Exemplary schools – Low SES School Communities

### Additional staffing and innovative classroom practice lifts student attendance

*Lightning Ridge Central School is located in the north-east area of Western NSW. It has an enrolment of 385 students, 236 primary and 149 secondary, with 43% of students being Aboriginal.*

*The school identified the interconnecting challenges of school attendance and engagement, particularly for Aboriginal students, as key areas that the school needed to improve for 2012. Partnership funding enabled the employment of additional staff to implement programs aimed at continuing to improve these key areas.*

*Twelve additional staff members include: an additional deputy principal; a paraprofessional; technical learning facilitator; eight student learning support officers, three of which target Aboriginal education; an additional classroom teacher and a shared partnership mentor. The staff coordinate literacy and numeracy initiatives, aim to accelerate student learning, implement Aboriginal education initiatives and integrate interactive technology into teaching practice.*

*A further reform-based strategy is the establishment of an attendance committee involving the deputy principals, student learning support officers (Aboriginal education) and teachers, to case manage students with poor attendance. The committee members liaise with parents over attendance issues and develop Personalised Learning Plans for Aboriginal students.*

*Data indicates the effectiveness of the strategies in addressing the school's challenges:*

- The attendance rate of primary students increased from 87% in 2010 to 90% in 2011 and the attendance of secondary students increased from 82% in 2010 to 86% in 2011*
- feedback from Aboriginal parents, through survey data, indicates higher levels of satisfaction with the school in meeting the needs of their children*
- classroom observations and interviews with students, teachers and parents demonstrate the effectiveness of the technology learning facilitator in supporting the use of interactive technologies that help to engage Aboriginal students in their learning.*

*The school is continuing the successful strategies which are improving student attendance as well as continuing to provide on-site professional learning with a focus on innovative classroom practice that engages students in their learning.*

## **Working together to improve student learning outcomes**

*Peak Hill Central School is located in the Western NSW region. The school caters for 164 students from K – 12 of whom almost half are Aboriginal. The school participates in the Low SES School Communities NP.*

*The situational analysis process identified the need to improve student outcomes in reading. The school planned strategies including aligning professional learning with the school's targets and implemented the Focus on Reading 3-6, Reading to Learn and MultiLit programs to improve student outcomes.*

*Low SES National Partnership funding has enabled the employment of additional staff including a deputy principal, a middle year coordinator, a School Learning Support Officer and a Community Liaison Officer.*

*These additional resources have enabled the school to develop a whole community approach to improving student outcomes and has enhanced the school's capacity to plan strategies to align professional learning with the school's educational targets.*

*New strategies to improve student outcome include:*

- *providing professional learning on the 8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning Framework and developing a mentoring program for Aboriginal students*
- *developing partnerships with local Aboriginal community organisations*
- *analysing NAPLAN and other data across stages and faculties to inform teaching and learning.*
- *developing Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) for Aboriginal students with specific literacy goals and support strategies*
- *conducting a context-specific induction program for newly appointed teachers and developing professional learning networks to support the integration of technology in teaching and learning.*

*Data is beginning to demonstrate the effectiveness of these strategies. The 2011 NAPLAN results showed that the average growth for Aboriginal students in Reading between Years 7 and 9 was 20 scaled scores above the state for all students and 28 scaled scores above the state for all students in Numeracy.*

*The school plans to continue its focus on developing a learning culture in which all members of the school community work together to support student engagement.*

## Community Partnerships enhance student results

*Bonnyrigg Public School is in the South-Western Sydney region. It has an enrolment of 203 primary students and 40 preschool children. Three quarters of all students are from language backgrounds other than English, including: Vietnamese; Assyrian; Chinese; Cambodian; and Arabic and 7% of students are Aboriginal (and who may not have Standard English as their home language). The school receives funding under the Priority Schools Programs (PSP) and the Low SES School Communities NP.*

*Bonnyrigg Public School prioritises parental engagement and community support in student learning. Participation in the Partnership has enabled the school to hire an additional school principal to assist in implementing programs aimed at strengthening family and community partnerships.*

*Key initiatives introduced to support community engagement are:*

- facilitating support for parents with community agencies*
- involving the community liaison officer, the Aboriginal Education Officer and the community language teacher in following up attendance issues with parents*
- engaging parents and community members in school planning processes*
- raising the expectations of parents for their children's education by conducting workshops in literacy and numeracy and in understanding NAPLAN data*
- facilitating the participation of Aboriginal Elders to work with Aboriginal students to improve attendance, expectations and engagement in learning.*
- improving communication channels with parents and the local community through the expanded school website.*

*The multifaceted approach to increasing engagement with parents and the local community has seen an increase in parent participation in workshops, interviews and other school and community activities. The school reports improved student outcomes which it attributes to increased community engagement in learning. These include results from the 2011 NAPLAN assessment:*

- 96% of Year 5 students were above the National Minimum Standard (NMS) in numeracy compared to 74% in 2010*
- 83 per cent of Year 3 students met the minimum standard in numeracy compared to 74 per cent in 2010*
- 27% of Year 3 students achieved in the proficient bands in reading compared to 18% in 2010.*

*Bonnyrigg Public School believes that the key to improving student achievement is parental engagement in learning. It will continue to build on the foundations of the community engagement initiative designed to assist parents and the local community in supporting the learning that takes place in the classroom.*

## **Personalised Learning Plans significantly enhance student performance**

*St Patrick's School in the Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese is a K–6 primary school with an enrolment of 43 children. Over half of the enrolments are Aboriginal and the school is located in a remote area.*

*With the support of funding from the Low SES School Communities NP, the school has focused on improving the educational outcomes of all students and on closing the gap for Aboriginal students.*

*The school has implemented Personalised Learning Plans (PLP) which enables teachers to plan, implement and monitor students and individually tailor programs to respond to the diverse learning needs of their students. The PLP process empowers students to take greater responsibility for their own learning, including monitoring of progress against agreed learning goals.*

*School based evaluations indicate that student achievement has improved. Individual class assessments results have also demonstrated the effectiveness of PLPs with some remarkable individual improvements.*

*One student commenced individualised assistance in July 2011, working daily on the MultiLit Program. Since then, she has advanced 5.6 levels in Word Attack and moved from List 2 for sight words to List 18.*

*Further, there is a correlation between improved student results through intervention programs and tailored resources like MultiLit, and student attendance.*

*One student on the MultiLit Program has had attendance improved by 17% in 2012 when compared to the first semester of 2011. Another student, also receiving individualised assistance on MultiLit, has increased attendance by 28% during 2012.*

*National Partnership funding has also allowed the school to employ additional Indigenous School Support Staff which has led to stronger community links. The relationship with the local community is constantly being developed to strengthen the educational partnerships between school and families. Information sessions and Parent/Teacher evenings ensure parents are well informed about student learning targets and their progress.*

## Helping students to get back on track

*Macleay Vocational College Kempsey is an independent Year 9 -12 Special Assistance School located in South Kempsey. The College caters for approximately 87 students who are returning to education after having been suspended or expelled from traditional education settings, periods of chronic truancy and those exiting Juvenile Detention. Just over 76% of the students are Aboriginal.*

*For over 25% of the students, fragmented educational experiences have resulted in significant gaps in their learning resulting in minimal skills in literacy and numeracy and least 25% of the students are homeless or have no consistent or permanent residence.*

*Using Partnership funding the school employed two new staff members to assist in a series of new strategies initiated by the principal in 2012 and aimed at increasing student engagement:*

- *a reward system for meeting attendance requirements of 85%*
- *higher levels of interaction between families and the school through school BBQ afternoons*
- *the inclusion of interest electives, including a partnership with the Slim Dusty Centre and visits from professional performers*
- *the development of units of work that can be delivered to students by Moodle. This has proven particularly beneficial for allowing students to remain connected with their school work when they are absent.*

*Staff report that there is evidence of the growth in the students' commitment to and engagement in their learning, reflected by proudly guiding the guests around the school and pointing out examples of their work at afternoon BBQs.*

*The school cites as further evidence of the success of this integrated package of strategies designed to improve attendance and student engagement:*

- *two students leaving the school with sufficient confidence to enrol in Year 11 and re-enter traditional schooling at a local high school.*
- *five students successfully completing a WRAP course (designed to develop instructional skills for the teaching of Spelling, Writing and Reading) and Early Language and Literacy Program (a Certificate IV qualification).*
- *the progression of twelve students to Year 12 in 2012. This is the biggest cohort and highest success rate for the College to date.*



## ***Section 3 – Literacy and Numeracy***

NSW will not be submitting content for this section as the final report for the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership was submitted previously.

## Section 4 – Milestones

### Section 4 – Milestones

### Improving Teacher Quality NP

#### Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in the 2011 Annual Report

Milestone (state 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 ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why ( <i>Qualitative</i> )	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone and updated timeframe ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )
N/A			

#### Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report - (Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2012)

Milestone	Detail of achievement against milestone ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why ( <i>Qualitative</i> )	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone and updated timeframe ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )
N/A			

#### Part 3 - Milestones that will progress through the 2012 calendar year (with no set milestone date)

Milestone	Detail of achievement against milestone ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone and updated timeframe ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )
N/A		

## Section 4 – Milestones

## Low SES School Communities NP

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

Milestone (state 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 ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why ( <i>Qualitative</i> )	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone and updated timeframe ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )
Not applicable- New South Wales achieved all milestones specified for the Annual Report for 2011			

### Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report - (Achieved 1 January to 30 June 2012)

Milestone	Detail of achievement against milestone ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why ( <i>Qualitative</i> )	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone and updated timeframe ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )
All continuing schools have completed an Annual School Report which includes National Partnership activity for the previous year.	Achieved	Not applicable	Not applicable
NSW has revised its Implementation Plan for 2013.	NSW will provide an addendum to the Implementation Plan containing additional and updated information for 2013.	Not applicable	Not applicable

### Part 3 - Milestones that will progress through the 2012 calendar year (with no set milestone date)

Milestone	Detail of achievement against milestone ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone and updated timeframe ( <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i> )
All NSW milestones are linked to set milestone dates, as identified in the revised Implementation Plan.		

## Appendix A: Centres for Excellence

Centre for Excellence	Location	Partnering university
Bankstown Girls High School	South Western Sydney	University of New South Wales University of Newcastle
Barellan Central School	Riverina	Charles Sturt University
Bega High School	Illawarra South East	University of Wollongong
Beverly Hills Girls High School	South Western Sydney	University of Sydney
Blayney High School	Western NSW	Charles Sturt University
Bonnyrigg Heights Public School	South Western Sydney	University of Western Sydney
Burwood Public School	South Western Sydney	University of Technology Sydney
Carlingford West Public School	Western Sydney	University of Technology Sydney
Chatham High School	North Coast	TBA
Coffs Harbour Senior College	North Coast	Southern Cross University
Colyton Public School	Western Sydney	University of Western Sydney University of Technology Sydney
Coonabarabran High School	Western NSW	University of New England
Eden Marine High School	Illawarra South East	University of Wollongong
Epping Boys High School	Northern Sydney	Macquarie University University of Sydney
Gulmarrad Public School	North Coast	Southern Cross University
Heaton Public School	Hunter Central Coast	University of Newcastle
Homebush West Public School	South Western Sydney	University of Sydney
Keiraville Public School	Illawarra South East	University of Wollongong
Lansvale Public School	South Western Sydney	University of Western Sydney University of Sydney
Leichhardt Campus - Sydney Secondary College	Sydney	University of Sydney University of New South Wales
Macarthur Girls High School	Western Sydney	University of Western Sydney
Macquarie Fields High School	South Western Sydney	University of Western Sydney University of Sydney
Merewether Public School	Hunter Central Coast	University of Newcastle
Morisset Public School	Hunter Central Coast	University of Newcastle
Mudgee High School	Western NSW	Charles Sturt University
Narooma High School	Illawarra South East	University of Wollongong
Narrandera High School	Riverina	Charles Sturt University
North Ryde Public School	Northern Sydney	Macquarie University
Nowra High School	Illawarra South East	University of Wollongong
Oxley High School	New England	University of New England
Quirindi High School	New England	University of New England
		University of Newcastle
Temora High School	Riverina	Charles Sturt University
Tighes Hill Public School	Hunter Central Coast	University of Newcastle
Warialda High School	New England	University of New England

		Southern Cross University
Westmead Public School	Western Sydney	University of Western Sydney
St Paul's Catholic College	Manly	University of Newcastle
Diocese of Lismore Online Education Centre	'Virtual' school based in Lismore with the ability to reach into every diocese in NSW	
Building Leadership Capacity	Diocese of Wagga Wagga	Charles Sturt University Australian Catholic University
St Augustine's	Narromine	University of Newcastle
Holy Family Public School	Merewether Beach	University of Newcastle
St Joseph's High School	Aberdeen	University of Newcastle
St Paul's High School	Booragul	University of Newcastle
Learning Exchange	Railway Parade Mt Druitt	University of Notre Dame
Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College	Burwood, Sydney	Charles Sturt University
Partners4Learning	Virtual	
Outside the Bell Curve	Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta	
Professional Learning and Collaboration	Southern Illawarra	University of Wollongong
Birrang Centre for Excellence in Science, Trinity College, Goulburn	Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn	Australian Catholic University Australian national University
Enhancing oral language	St Nicholas' School, Tamworth	University of new England Charles Sturt University
Independent Schools Centre for Excellence	The secretariat is based in Sydney at AISNSW, but activities occur across NSW.	Independent schools work with 16 universities <sup>3</sup> .

<sup>3</sup> Macquarie University; University of Sydney; Charles Sturt University; University of New England; UNSW; University of Western Sydney; University of Newcastle; Avondale College of Higher Education; UTS; ACPE; Southern Cross University; The Wesley Institute; ACU University of Wollongong; University of Notre Dame; Southland College – subsidiary of Morling College. Some schools are also working with Edith Cowan (WA) and Charles Darwin University (NT) for teacher practicum placements



## Appendix B: Acronyms

ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACU	Australian Catholic University
AECG	Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
AETD	Aboriginal Education Training Directorate
AEA	Aboriginal Education Aide
AEW	Aboriginal Education Worker
AIS	Association of Independent Schools of NSW
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
CCGPS	Cessnock Community of Great Public Schools
CLO	Community Liaison Officer
CEC	Catholic Education Commission
CSU	Charles Sturt University
DASA	Data Analysis Skills Assessment
DEC	NSW Department of Education and Communities
DEEWR	Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations
EARS	Executive Assessment and Review Schedule
EMU	Extending Mathematical Understanding project
ESL	English as a Second Language
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HAT	Highly Accomplished Teacher
HS	High School
ILPs	Individual Learning Plans
IMCLI	Irene McCormack Centre for Learning and Innovation
ISCE	Independent Schools Centre for Excellence
ISLC	Independent Schools Leadership Centre
ISTAA	Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority
ITQ	Improving Teacher Quality
LBOTE	Language Background Other Than English
LCC	Learning and Community Centre
Low SES NP	National Partnership on Low Socio-economic Status School Communities
MCEECDYA	Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs
MultiLit	Making Up for Lost Time in Literacy program
My PL@DET	NSW DEC online professional learning record management system
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NITEAC	National Initial Teacher Education Advisory Committee
NP	National Partnership
NPEC	NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee
NSW	New South Wales
NTWD	National Teaching Workforce Dataset
OoSH	Out of School Hours
PaCE	Parental and Community Engagement program
PARS	Principal Assessment and Review Schedule
PLPs	Personalised Learning Plans, targeted to Aboriginal students

PC	Professional Competence
PS	Public School
REI	Reform Extension Initiative
SCCVC	Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College
SES	Socio-economic Status
SLL	Successful Language Learners pilot
SMART	School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit
SSNPs	Smarter Schools National Partnerships
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Project
TARS	Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule
TLSI	Team Leadership and School Improvement
TOWN	Taking off with Numeracy program
UNSW	University of New South Wales
UoW	University of Wollongong
UWS	University of Western Sydney
WRAP	A Writing Approach (to reading)
WSC4E	Western Sydney Centre for Excellence cluster