

Outcome 2

Improved learning and literacy, numeracy and educational attainment for school students, through funding for quality teaching and learning environments, workplace learning and career advice

The Australian Government's Education Revolution aims to ensure that all young Australians have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills to enable them to reach their full potential as confident learners and effective citizens.

The Government provides educational leadership and works in partnership with state and territory governments and non-government school authorities, parents, educators and other organisations so that teaching and learning for all Australian school-age children is of the highest quality.

Building on advances that have already been made, the Government is addressing educational disadvantage and investing in priority areas such as supporting quality teaching and school leadership, standards, assessment and reporting, and national curriculum.

New initiatives to support and recognise teacher quality, increase school autonomy, reward school improvement and enhance student pathways, announced in 2010, will increase and reinforce investment and effort to improve schooling.

To ensure that schools are funded in the best way possible and that all children in our schools are supported, a review of funding for schools is being conducted by a panel of eminent Australians, led by Chairman David Gonski AC. Its aim is to identify funding arrangements that are transparent, fair, financially sustainable and effective in promoting excellent educational outcomes for all Australian students.

The panel was given the task of conducting an open and transparent review that is consultative, wide-ranging and comprehensive. Throughout the review, panel members have undertaken a range of consultative processes including stakeholder meetings, receipt of submissions and school visits to inform their deliberations. The panel has commissioned a comprehensive program of research to establish a solid evidence base for its recommendations.

The review is due to report to the Government by the end of 2011.

The Government's focus on targets directed at lifting educational outcomes and meeting the Closing the Gap targets for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students continued as a priority. These targets are to:

- halve the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade (by 2018)
- at least halve the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students' Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020.

To improve the quality of education and provide greater transparency and accountability of school performance, the release of *My School 2.0* by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) in March 2011, provided an even more comprehensive range of nationally comparable information about schools. For the first time, *My School 2.0* published data about National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) gains in student achievement over time and school financial data, which included information on each school's recurrent income and capital expenditure.

The development of a rigorous and world-class Australian Curriculum from Foundation to Year 12 continued. It will be one of the first in the world to be delivered in an online environment, ensuring it is dynamic and can be both readily updated and linked to high-quality curriculum resources.

The Office for Youth builds on the Government's significant investment and effort in ensuring that young people are safe, healthy, happy and resilient and have the opportunities, skills and capabilities to learn, work and engage in community life and to influence decisions that affect them.

Outcome 2 key priorities

The key priorities for 2010–11 were to:

- progress the review of funding for schooling to report to the Government by the end of 2011
- progress the following national partnerships under Outcome 2:
 - Digital Education Revolution (\$2.4 billion)
 - Building the Education Revolution (\$16.2 billion over three years)
 - Smarter Schools—Literacy and Numeracy (\$540 million)
 - Smarter Schools—Low Socio-economic Status School Communities (\$1.5 billion over seven years)
 - Smarter Schools—Improving Teacher Quality (\$550 million)
 - Youth Attainment and Transitions (\$624 million over four years)
- continue the rollout of \$2.5 billion over 10 years for the Trade Training Centres in Schools program
- support ACARA’s development of the Foundation to Year 12 national curriculum in the phase one learning areas of English, mathematics, science and history, including trials in 150 schools
- support improvements in educational outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other Australian students through the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014*. The plan provides an important platform for all governments to improve the educational outcomes and economic participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students over the coming years
- support the operation of the Building the Education Revolution Implementation Taskforce, including implementation of recommendations outlined in the taskforce’s reports.

Outcome 2 key achievements

The key achievements for 2010–11 were:

- All Australian education ministers endorsed Australia’s first national curriculum from Foundation to Year 10 in the learning areas of English, mathematics, science and history.
- State and territory education ministers agreed to work toward substantial implementation of the Foundation to Year 10 national curriculum in the first four learning areas by the end of 2013.
- The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014* was launched on 9 June 2011 by education ministers on behalf of the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs.
- *My School 2.0* was released in March 2011, providing a more comprehensive range of nationally comparable information about schools including financial information for each school.
- All Australian education ministers endorsed the National Professional Standards for Teachers and agreed to a national approach to the accreditation of initial teacher education programs.
- There were 107 Trade Training Centres built (out of a total of 288 approved) benefiting 256 schools at 30 June 2011.
- Ninety-six per cent of all Building the Education Revolution projects had been completed at 30 June 2011, delivering 22 587 projects across 9498 schools.
- At 31 March 2011, over 430 000 computers had been installed since the commencement of the National Secondary School Computer Fund. The aim of the fund is to deliver a computer to student ratio of 1:1 for students in Years 9 to 12 in Australian secondary schools by the end of 2011. Over 786 000 computers will have been delivered to Australian schools through this program.

Literacy and numeracy—national minimum standards

National Assessment Program

The National Assessment Program encompasses the set of assessments of student performance endorsed by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs. It includes national full-cohort literacy and numeracy assessments in Year 3, 5, 7 and 9, three-yearly

sample assessments in science literacy, civics and citizenship, and ICT literacy, and Australia's participation in international assessments.

National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy

The National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results reported in this section relate to meeting and improving literacy and numeracy standards in both government and non-government schools.

Following the introduction of NAPLAN in 2008, all students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are assessed in May each year in the domains of reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, punctuation and grammar) and numeracy. Reporting from 2010 NAPLAN provided comparative data for 2008, 2009 and 2010 as well as, for the first time, student gain, by tracking the increase in achievement in 2010 for the same cohort of students tested in 2008.

The greatest gain in mean scale score for the same cohort of students was in grammar and punctuation by students in Year 3 in 2008 and Year 5 in 2010, and the least gain was in writing by students in Year 7 in 2008 and Year 9 in 2010. In comparing the domains, the greatest gains were made in numeracy and the least gains were made in writing.

Results are reported using five national achievement scales which cover the full range of achievement from Year 3 to Year 9 in each domain. Each scale consists of 10 bands which represent the increasing complexity of the skills and knowledge assessed by NAPLAN. Six of these bands are used for reporting student performance in each year level. The national minimum standards are represented by a range of scores aligned with the second achievement band for each year level in each domain. The national minimum standard for Year 3 is band 2, Year 5 is band 4, Year 7 is band 5 and Year 9 is band 6.

In 2010, more than 90 per cent of students were at or above the national minimum standard across year levels and domains (with the exception of Year 9 writing and spelling):

- 91.0 per cent (spelling) to 95.5 per cent (writing) for Year 3 students
- 91.3 per cent (reading) to 93.6 per cent (numeracy) for Year 5 students
- 91.7 per cent (grammar and punctuation) to 95.1 per cent (numeracy) for Year 7 students
- 87.2 per cent (writing) to 93.2 per cent (numeracy) for Year 9 students.

Chart 3 Percentage of Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students in achievement bands—reading and numeracy, NAPLAN 2008, 2009 and 2010

Domain	Year level	Test Year	Exempt	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8	Band 9	Band 10
Reading	Year 3	2008	1.7	6.1	12.0	17.7	23.0	21.8	17.7				
Reading	Year 3	2009	1.9	4.4	11.2	18.1	22.7	20.0	21.8				
Reading	Year 3	2010	2.1	4.0	9.8	16.6	23.2	22.1	22.2				
Reading	Year 5	2008	1.5			7.5	13.5	23.9	26.1	18.1	9.3		
Reading	Year 5	2009	1.7			6.6	12.9	20.7	25.1	20.6	12.5		
Reading	Year 5	2010	1.8			6.8	14.0	23.2	25.4	18.4	10.3		
Reading	Year 7	2008	1.2				4.6	14.1	27.6	27.8	16.9	7.7	
Reading	Year 7	2009	1.2				4.8	13.2	24.5	28.6	19.0	8.6	
Reading	Year 7	2010	1.6				3.6	12.6	24.4	28.5	19.4	10.1	
Reading	Year 9	2008	1.2					5.9	17.6	29.1	26.2	14.5	5.5
Reading	Year 9	2009	1.3					6.5	15.5	27.0	28.6	16.1	5.0
Reading	Year 9	2010	1.6					7.6	18.1	27.7	26.9	14.1	4.2
Numeracy	Year 3	2008	1.7	3.3	10.8	23.0	27.9	21.1	12.4				
Numeracy	Year 3	2009	1.8	4.2	11.8	22.7	26.9	20.2	12.3				
Numeracy	Year 3	2010	2.1	3.7	11.4	22.9	27.7	19.8	12.5				
Numeracy	Year 5	2008	1.5			5.9	17.4	28.9	25.7	14.0	6.6		
Numeracy	Year 5	2009	1.7			4.2	13.7	27.4	28.3	16.5	8.2		
Numeracy	Year 5	2010	1.8			4.5	13.1	26.4	27.7	17.1	9.3		
Numeracy	Year 7	2008	1.2				3.4	14.6	25.8	26.0	17.2	11.7	
Numeracy	Year 7	2009	1.2				3.9	13.5	25.7	27.9	17.4	10.3	
Numeracy	Year 7	2010	1.5				3.4	12.6	26.0	26.9	17.6	12.0	
Numeracy	Year 9	2008	1.1					5.2	18.0	28.3	25.2	14.4	7.7
Numeracy	Year 9	2009	1.3					3.7	14.8	28.3	28.1	16.2	7.6
Numeracy	Year 9	2010	1.5					5.3	15.8	28.3	26.5	14.6	8.0

Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority 2010, *National Report for 2010, National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy*.

National Assessment Program—sample assessments

Selected groups of students in years 6 and 10 participated in the national sample assessments, which are held on a rolling three-yearly basis. Students' achievement is measured against nationally agreed proficiency standards in science literacy (Year 6), civics and citizenship (Year 6 and Year 10) and ICT literacy (Year 6 and Year 10). The cyclical conduct of the sample assessments using comparable datasets allows trends in student performance to be monitored over time.

Samples of Year 6 and Year 10 students participated in civics and citizenship assessments in 2004, 2007 and October 2010. The *2010 National Assessment Program—Civics and Citizenship Years 6 and 10 Report* will be published in late 2011.

Samples of Year 6 students participated in science literacy assessments in 2003, 2006, and 2009. The *National Assessment Program—Science Literacy Year 6 Report 2009* was released online in November 2010. The results from the 2009 assessment showed that nationally 52 per cent of Year 6 students achieved or bettered the Year 6 proficiency standard compared to 54 per cent of Year 6 students in 2006, although the difference is not statistically significant. An analysis of the student survey showed that 74 per cent of students were interested in learning more about science.

Samples of Year 6 and Year 10 students participated in the ICT literacy assessments in 2005 and 2008. Students will participate in the next ICT literacy assessments in October 2011.

National Assessment Program—international assessments

Participation in international assessments provides information on the progress of Australian school students relative to other countries and assists education systems and schools to identify strengths and weaknesses in policy and practice.

Australia currently participates in three international student assessments: the Programme for International Student Assessment, Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and for the first time in 2010 the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study.

Results from the most recent cycle of the Programme for International Student Assessment 2009 were released in December 2010. Australian students performed well (as they have done in previous cycles), achieving mean scores significantly above the OECD average in the three assessment areas of reading, mathematical and scientific literacy.

The performance of Australian students in the Programme for International Student Assessment has fallen in recent times relative to that of other countries in the OECD. In the period between 2003 and 2006, Australia declined in both its absolute and relative performance in reading literacy. The 2009 results show that no further decline has occurred but the lost ground has not yet been regained.

In Australia there is a link between low performance and disadvantage, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Programme for International Student Assessment results indicate that over the last nine years the percentage of students who are less than proficient at reading or maths has not reduced. The results also show that the reading performance of Australian students at the high end of the achievement scale has declined between 2003 and 2006 and again between 2006 and 2009.

Results from the 2011 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study are expected to be released in December 2012. This study assesses progress in developing literacy at the stage when students move from learning to read to reading to learn and will provide an international benchmark for reading literacy at Year 4.

Effectiveness indicators for programs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3

Table 7 shows the number of full-time student enrolments across Australia. The data is broken down by government and non-government primary and secondary school enrolments, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments by government and non-government schools.

Table 7 Effectiveness indicators for programs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
Enrolment trends—government		
Trend in full-time student enrolments in Australian schools:		
▪ Primary	1 397 000	1 389 263
▪ Secondary	892 000	893 094
▪ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	136 000	138 012
Enrolment trends—non-government		
Trend in full-time student enrolments in Australian schools:		
▪ Primary	620 000	621 064
▪ Secondary	585 000	583 458
▪ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	23 000	23 768

Note: These indicators were previously reported separately under programs 2.2 and 2.3. To avoid duplication, they are reported here and have not been included in the respective programs.

Program 2.1 Government schools national support

The objective of this program is to contribute to boosting participation and Australia’s productivity by providing supplementary funding to government schools that contributes to the achievement of the five outcomes articulated in the National Education Agreement. These are:

- all children are engaged in and benefiting from schooling
- young people are meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards, and overall levels of literacy and numeracy achievement are improving
- Australian students excel by international standards
- schooling promotes social inclusion and reduces the educational disadvantage of children, especially Indigenous children
- young people make a successful transition from school to work and further study.

Government Schools Specific Purpose Payment

The National Education Agreement, which began on 1 January 2009, sits within the framework of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations. The Australian Government’s financial support to the states and territories for the delivery of government school services is administered by the Department of the Treasury, which makes payments to the states and territories under the National Schools Specific Purpose Payment (government schools component) in accordance with the arrangements specified in the intergovernmental agreement.

Under the intergovernmental agreement, an estimated \$14.1 billion in funding associated with the National Education Agreement is being provided by the Commonwealth for government schools over four years from 2009 to 2012. This funding is supplementary to the funding provided by states and territories, which have primary responsibility for funding government schools.

The Australian and state and territory governments’ roles and responsibilities, objectives, outcomes, performance benchmarks and indicators are defined in the National Education Agreement. These governments have committed, through the agreement, to the objective that all Australian school students acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in society and employment in a globalised economy. States and territories are responsible for working with the non-government school sector in their state or territory to ensure their participation in relevant aspects of the agreement.

All parties to the National Education Agreement are accountable to the community for their progress against the agreed outcomes through the performance reporting framework detailed in the intergovernmental agreement. The National Education Agreement and agreements with non-government schools and school systems incorporate the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) targets set for schooling. These targets apply across all Australian schools regardless of sector (government or non-government).

Key performance indicator

Table 8 Key performance indicator for program 2.1

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
Government Schools Specific Purpose Payment		
Number of full-time equivalent students funded (enrolment projections)	2 278 218	2 278 218

The figures in Table 8 reflect the full-time equivalent number of students in government schools funded under the intergovernmental funding framework associated with the National Education Agreement in the 2010 school year. The number of full-time equivalent students increased by 8941 (0.4 per cent) between 2009 (2 269 277 students) and 2010. This increase is consistent with the increase between 2008 and 2009 school years.

Program 2.2 Non-government schools national support

Fulfilling its election commitments to non-government schools, the Government will provide an estimated \$36.8 billion for non-government schooling for 2009–2013 under the *Schools Assistance Act 2008*. Funding appropriated under the Act supports the capital costs, which runs from 2009 to 2014 under the Act and provides an estimated \$837.5 million in funding over that period, and operating costs of non-government primary and secondary schools and education systems. Government funding to non-government schools supplements funding raised by the schools from other sources.

Key performance indicators

Table 9 Key performance indicators for program 2.2

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
Recurrent Grants—Non-government		
Number of full-time equivalent students funded (enrolment projections)	1 192 252	1 205 766
Capital Grants—Non-government		
Number of schools assisted with capital support	250	246
English as a Second Language—New Arrivals—Non-government		
Number of new arrivals assisted	940	940

Note: Figures are for the 2010 calendar year.

Recurrent Grants—Non-government

The objective of the Recurrent Grants program is to assist non-government schools with the recurrent costs of school education so they can offer students educational programs directed towards the achievement of the Australian Government's priorities for schooling. Funding is provided under the *Schools Assistance Act 2008*.

During the 2010 calendar year, \$6.35 billion in grants was paid to non-government schools on a per student basis.

To support the delivery of educational services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, a further \$63.9 million was provided under the Indigenous Supplementary Assistance program and \$1.8 million under the Indigenous Funding Guarantee.

The Recurrent Grants program also provides a remoteness loading to eligible non-government schools in recognition of the higher cost of delivering education services in regional and remote area of Australia. In 2010 this amounted to \$31 million. Non-government schools also received \$5 million for the provision of distance education.

The Recurrent Grants performance indicator in Table 9 refers to the number of full-time equivalent students in non-government schools during the 2010 school year. The number of full-time equivalent students increased by 31 341 between 2009 and 2010 (2.6 per cent).

Capital Grants—Non-government

The Australian Government also provides capital grants funding under the *Schools Assistance Act 2008*. Funding for new and upgraded capital infrastructure is provided to non-government schools that would not otherwise have access to sufficient capital resources.

There was a small decrease in the number of non-government schools assisted as a result of the withdrawal of a few projects submitted by schools for capital funding. In general, the schools assisted were of lower socioeconomic status.

In 2010, \$125.2 million was allocated to non-government schools for capital projects.

Short Term Emergency Assistance—Non-government

The Australian Government provides funds under the Short Term Emergency Assistance program to assist non-government schools in the event of an unexpected circumstance causing severe, temporary financial difficulty.

In 2010, \$165 250 was paid to eligible non-government schools under the program.

English as a Second Language—New Arrivals—Non-government

The English as a Second Language—New Arrivals program provides Australian Government funding to state and territory non-government education authorities to assist with the cost of delivering intensive English language tuition to eligible newly arrived migrant primary and secondary schools students. The program is demand-driven. In the 2010 program year, there was a small decrease in the number (compared to the previous year) of student new arrivals assisted. The department accepts claims made for any eligible student, but it is the responsibility of education authorities to claim on behalf of these students.

During 2010, \$7.9 million in grants was paid to non-government schools under the program.

School Languages Program

Under the *Schools Assistance Act 2008*, the School Languages Program provided \$14.4 million in 2010–11 to non-government schools and after-hours community languages schools to support the teaching and learning of Asian, European, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Auslan languages from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs Program

The Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs Program assists non-government education authorities to improve the learning outcomes of educationally disadvantaged students by contributing funding for additional teaching and learning assistance. The program has a particular focus on literacy and numeracy and includes students with disability. The program is only one source of funding available to non-government schools to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students.

Education authorities have the flexibility to make decisions on which schools, including special schools, have the greatest need for additional assistance for educationally disadvantaged students and to determine appropriate funding amounts for those students using the principles of equity, effectiveness and efficiency. Schools have the flexibility to use funding innovatively to meet the needs of their students.

The program consists of two components: the school grants (recurrent) component and the students with disability (per capita) component. Funding for the recurrent component is determined using a composite allocative mechanism. Funding for the students with disability (per capita) component is determined by using a rate per eligible student. In 2010 the rate per student was \$947.

During 2010 grants totalling \$32.4 million for students with disability and \$163.4 million for educationally disadvantaged students were paid to non-government schools.

Country Areas Program

The Country Areas Program aims to improve the access of non-government school students in rural and geographically isolated area to quality education by providing enhanced learning opportunities and additional educational activities. The program also assists students to achieve outcomes and participation rates that match those of students in urban centres and less isolated areas.

Funding is paid directly to non-government education authorities in the states and the Northern Territory. Authorities have the flexibility to allocate funds under program guidelines according to identified priorities based on assessment of local need. Student outcomes are not recorded under this program.

In 2010, \$5.8 million was provided to eligible non-government schools under the program.

Program 2.3 Schools support

In its national leadership role, the Government funds initiatives that aim to improve the quality of educational outcomes for all Australian students. In 2010–11, the department delivered a range of programs designed to achieve this goal.

Key performance indicators

Table 10 Key performance indicators for program 2.3

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
Helping Children with Autism Package		
Number of teachers and other school staff attending professional development courses	366	454
Number of parents and carers attending workshops and information sessions	1816	2044
Parliament and Civics Education Rebate		
Number of schools receiving the rebate	1540	1888
Indigenous Youth Mobility Program		
Number of participants in the Indigenous Youth Mobility Program	364	483
Indigenous Youth Leadership Program		
Number of participants in the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program (secondary and tertiary)	491	756
National School Chaplaincy Program		
Number of schools with a school chaplain	2674	2674
Sporting Chance Academies		
Number of students attending Sporting Chance Academies	4300	4267

Helping Children with Autism Package

In response to the increasing prevalence of children with an autism spectrum disorder in Australia, the Government is providing targeted support for these children, their parents, carers, teachers and other professionals through the Helping Children with Autism Package. The package is being delivered by DEEWR, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, and the Department of Health and Ageing.

DEEWR is responsible for delivering the Positive Partnerships initiative under the package, which aims to build partnerships between schools and families to improve the educational outcomes of children with an autism spectrum disorder. Through this initiative the department provides professional development for teachers, school leaders and other school staff to build their understanding, skills and expertise in working with children with an autism spectrum disorder. The department also delivers workshops and information sessions for parents and carers of school-aged children with autism to help them work more effectively with their children's schools.

The targets for the period 2008 to 2012 are for 2200 teachers and 5800 parents and carers to participate in positive partnerships workshops. In 2010–11, 454 teachers and 2044 parents and carers took part in training. A total of 18 facilitator training workshops were held during 2010–11 for state and territory government and non-government education authorities. Participants were able to use the workshop materials to extend their schools' capacity to support students with autism. The initiative is ongoing and workshops will continue to be delivered over 2012 to 2015.

Parliament and Civics Education Rebate

The Parliament and Civics Education Rebate is designed to reduce the cost to families of school excursions to Canberra that include visits to national democratic and historical institutions as part of school civics and citizenship education programs. These excursions provide valuable learning experiences to students at places of national political and cultural significance.

In order to receive the rebate, students are required to participate in relevant classwork at school, visit Parliament House, Old Parliament House (the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House and/or the National Electoral Education Centre) and the Australian War Memorial. School groups are also encouraged to visit other national civic institutions where possible.

The rebate subsidises school groups travelling more than 150 kilometres to Canberra as part of an approved school excursion for students in years 4 to 12. The rebates are paid on a per student basis, starting at \$20 per student for school groups travelling 150–499 kilometres and increasing to \$260 per student for school groups travelling more than 4000 kilometres to Canberra.

In 2010–11, \$4.38 million was paid or committed to 1888 schools in respect of 97 744 students. These figures will decrease if any approved schools fail to acquit their application for the rebate.

Civics and Citizenship Education

The Civics and Citizenship Education program provides assistance to schools for civics and citizenship education and supports the teaching of history through initiatives such as the National Schools Constitutional Convention, the Simpson Prize, the National History Challenge and a national civics and citizenship website.

The 16th National Schools Constitutional Convention considered the topic 'Should Australia become a republic?' on 22–24 March 2011 at Old Parliament House. A communiqué composed by the 127 student delegates, selected from conventions in states and territories, was presented to the President of the Senate. The eight state and territory 2011 Simpson Prize winners attended Anzac Day commemorations at Gallipoli in April 2011. More than 600 students in years 9 and 10 participated in the 2011 Simpson Prize. Over 4700 Year 5 to Year 12 students took part in the 2010 National History Challenge. The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP, Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, presented awards to the challenge winners on 23 November 2010. The 2010 challenge topic was 'Celebrations, memories and history'.

Indigenous Youth Mobility Program

The Indigenous Youth Mobility Program provides post secondary pathways for young people aged 16-24 years who are mostly from remote and regional areas. Participants are supported through accommodation, education and training placements, mentoring and other practical support to take up vocational education and training, apprenticeships or university in 16 cities across Australia. Six providers deliver the program in the 16 locations: Career Employment Australia (four), Aboriginal Hostels (seven), Nyaarla Projects (two), AUSWIDE Projects (one), Yarnteen (one) and Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE (one).

The program helps each participant to commence study at the level that best meets their current circumstances (pre-vocational through to degree) but aims to help as many participants as possible to achieve at least a Certificate III level qualification in recognition that this level of qualification has the greatest impact on sustainability of future employment.

In 2010–11, the program's 483 participants achieved 133 course completions which is 27.5 course completions per 100 participants during that period. This compares very positively with annual course completions per Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participant in higher education and vocational education and training nationally. The program supported Australia's first Indigenous Rhodes Scholar who completed her degree in Adelaide in 2010.

Indigenous Youth Leadership Program

In 2010–11 the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program continued to help to close the gaps in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educational disadvantage through supporting 756 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (mostly from remote and regional areas) to attend high performing secondary schools (government and non-government, day and boarding) and/or universities to complete Year 12 and/or an undergraduate degree.

Practical leadership experiences are provided for students to help them to obtain a greater level of self esteem and confidence to complete Year 12 and or a degree and to become positive role models for others and future leaders for their communities and the wider Australian society.

The program is delivered through eight Partnership Brokers that work with schools, students and families to support the education and leadership develop aims. The brokers are Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership, Yalari Limited, Catholic Education Office Diocese of Townsville, Dubbo College Senior Campus, the Smith Family, MADEC Australia, Presbyterian Ladies' College Perth and MADALAH Limited.

In 2010, 75 of the 76 students who commenced Year 12 successfully completed. The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP, Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, presented certificates to these graduates in November 2010.

National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program

In 2010–11, the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program continued to support the study of the languages and cultures of China, Japan, Indonesia and Korea. The states and territories continued to implement 172 projects as outlined in their strategic plans for the three-year period. On 9 November 2010, Minister Garrett announced 10 projects for Round 2 of the Strategic Collaboration and Partnership Fund and 122 projects for Round 2 of Becoming Asia Literate: Grants to Schools. Projects funded through the Strategic Collaboration and Partnership Fund will continue into 2012. Under the National Projects Element, Education Services Australia collected digital resources from National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program projects and made them accessible to schools nationally.

Asia Education Foundation

In 2010–11, the Asia Education Foundation received \$1.45 million under the Grants and Awards Program. During 2010–11 the foundation supported the study of Asia in Australian schools by working collaboratively with state and territory education authorities, businesses and community organisations. To support the development of the national curriculum, the foundation provided advice to ACARA on Asian studies content through the cross-curriculum priority of Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia. The foundation conducted Round 3 of the Leading 21st Century Schools Program.

National School Chaplaincy Program

The National School Chaplaincy Program is a voluntary program that supports schools and their communities by providing pastoral care support. The program provides up to \$20 000 per year per school to schools to establish a new chaplaincy service, or to expand an existing service. During 2010–11, the program provided ongoing support to 2674 government and non-government schools across Australia.

Sporting Chance Program

The Sporting Chance Program is an Australian Government initiative that uses sport and recreation as a vehicle to increase the level of engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their

schooling to improve their education, training and employment outcomes. The program is implemented with providers working together with schools, education authorities, sporting bodies, businesses and community groups. The two elements of the program are:

- School-based sports academies—innovative, intensive and high-quality, sports-focused learning and development. The academies are targeted at secondary students only.
- Education engagement strategies—a range of sport and recreation-based activities to engage students in education in remote communities. The education engagement strategies are targeted at remote primary and secondary students.

Currently there are 22 providers operating 68 projects across Western Australia, Northern Territory, South Australia, Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales.

Effectiveness indicators

Table 11 Effectiveness indicators for program 2.3

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
Apparent retention rate of full-time students from Year 7/8 to Year 12	78%	78%
<i>Indigenous trends</i>		
Percentage of young people who commence on the Indigenous Youth Mobility Program who exit the program after achieving a vocational education and training or higher education qualification or to take up full-time employment	60%	42%
Percentage of eligible Indigenous students in receipt of Indigenous Youth Leadership Program scholarships who complete Year 12	98.7%	98.7%

Indigenous Youth Mobility Program providers are not set up with systems to track all participants who leave. The employment outcomes data in Table 11 therefore relates only to immediate exits of participants. In addition to the 42 per cent identified in the table, 6 per cent of participants who exited in 2010–11 were reported as studying but without the assistance of the program (for example, back in their home community). Of all those who participated in 2010–11, 66.6 per cent either completed courses or were still studying at 30 June 2011.

Program 2.4 Trade training

The Trade Training Centres in Schools Program is an important element of the Government’s workforce development agenda. The program helps to address national skills shortages in traditional trades and other eligible occupation areas by improving the relevance and responsiveness of trade training programs in secondary schools.

Trade training will also contribute to increasing the proportion of students achieving at least a Year 12 or equivalent qualification to 90 per cent by 2015 as agreed by COAG in April 2009. Trade Training Centres provide students with access to high-quality, relevant education and training opportunities that continue to engage and encourage them to complete their studies.

The program will be evaluated in 2012–13.

Key performance indicators

Table 12 Key performance indicators for program 2.4

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
Trade Training Centres in Schools Program		
Number of schools funded	195	194
Number of projects funded	58	58

Table 12 reflects the estimated and actual number of schools and projects funded from the government and non-government components of the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program under Round Three in 2010–11. Funding has been provided through an annual national competitive process to build or upgrade training facilities for secondary school students. In Round Three of the program, \$219.6 million was approved for 58 projects involving 194 schools (one school was funded in a previous round).

Trade training goes mobile

The Outback Hospitality Trade Training Centre is a mobile hospitality trailer providing Certificate III level training in hospitality to six schools in outback Queensland. The schools involved in the project are Longreach State High School, Blackall State School, Aramac State School, Winton State School, Barcaldine State School and Longreach School of Distance Education.

The lead school, Longreach State High School, received more than \$2.7 million under the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program for this project to address current skill shortages in hospitality in the region and increase employment opportunities for participating students. The funding was also used to construct facilities at four of the cluster schools to connect to the mobile hospitality trailer and for refurbishment of a kitchen at Barcaldine State School.



The mobile trade training centre in outback Queensland is a real showstopper.

Effectiveness indicators

The impact of the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program will be measured using the following indicators:

- trend in number of students participating in vocational and technical education in schools
- trend in Year 12 or equivalent attainment
- trend in retention rates for Year 11 and 12 students
- trend in Indigenous and non-Indigenous students' Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates.

The data for these indicators is available from official statistical agencies and is affected by a wide range of factors including the impact of the department's programs. The department will report on them as data becomes available.

Trade Training Centres report on student activity in the calendar year following their first enrolments. Only a few centres were operational in 2010 and submitted activity reports as part of their reporting obligations. Activity reports include data on student enrolments, student outcomes and site usage and are available on the department's website.

Program 2.5 Digital Education Revolution

The aim of the Digital Education Revolution is to contribute sustainable and meaningful change to teaching and learning in Australian schools that will prepare students for further education, training and to live and work in a digital world. In this context, the Australian Government is investing over \$2.4 billion to support the effective integration of ICT in Australian schools in line with the Government's broader education initiatives.

Through the Digital Education Revolution, the Government has continued to work with government and non-government school systems and higher education sectors to support the deployment of technology-enriched learning environments. All state and territory governments have agreed to a national, coordinated and collaborative partnership approach to developing and implementing the Digital Education Revolution.

The National Secondary School Computer Fund continued to be the major funding element under the Digital Education Revolution, providing new ICT equipment for secondary schools with students in years 9 to 12.

Funding under the Digital Education Revolution has also supported professional learning for teachers and school leaders and access to high-quality digital tools, resources and infrastructure.

The progressive rollout of the National Broadband Network will support the Digital Education Revolution by providing Australian school students, parents and teachers with access to similar bandwidth capabilities anywhere and at any time, enhancing access to learning resources and opportunities for communication and collaboration. The department has continued to work closely with the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, National Broadband Network Co Ltd and school authorities to ensure that the needs of schools are considered throughout the progressive broadband network rollout process.

The Australian Information and Communications Technology in Education Committee provided ongoing advice on the implementation of the Digital Education Revolution to the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs and the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment.

Key performance indicator

Table 13 Key performance indicator for program 2.5

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
National Secondary School Student Computer Fund		
Number of schools assisted	2900	2833

National Secondary School Student Computer Fund

The fund continues to assist schools and schools systems to provide new computers and other ICT equipment for students in years 9 to 12. The fund is on track to deliver a computer to student ratio of 1:1 for students in years 9 to 12 by 31 December 2011. At 31 March 2011, 434 000 computers had been installed in Australian secondary schools through the program.

Program 2.6 National Action Plan on Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy and numeracy are the essential foundation skills that allow young people to achieve at school, go on to further learning, and participate fully in society and work. This program focuses on the key areas of teaching, leadership and the effective use of student performance information to deliver sustained improvement in literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students, especially those who are falling behind. The key elements of this program are:

- the National Partnership Agreement on Literacy and Numeracy, including strategic research initiatives
- literacy and numeracy pilots in low socioeconomic status communities.

Key performance indicators

Table 14 Key performance indicators for program 2.6

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
National Action Plan on Literacy and Numeracy—literacy and numeracy pilots		
Number of literacy and numeracy pilots successfully implemented under the National Action Plan for Literacy and Numeracy	30	30
National Partnership for Literacy and Numeracy		
Number of schools/students assisted	Over 400 000 students in approx. 1100 schools (2009–10 to 2011–12)	Over 400 000 students in 1069 schools (at 30 June 2011)

Note the schools and students numbers include aggregates for 147 schools that participate in both the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities and Literacy and Numeracy National Partnerships.

National Partnership Agreement on Literacy and Numeracy

The \$540 million Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership is the centrepiece of the National Education Action Plan for Literacy and Numeracy. The four-year national partnership, which began in 2009, comprises:

- \$500 million to states and territories (\$150 million in 2009–10, to facilitate reform; \$350 million in 2011–12, to reward reform).
- \$40 million to strategic initiatives, including \$13 million for ACARA to support research and data collection. The strategic initiatives will improve the collective understanding of which literacy and numeracy strategies lead to the best outcomes for students.

Reforms in each state and territory have been implemented since 2009 in more than 1000 schools, both government and non-government. This includes approximately 400 000 students, or 12 per cent of Australia's student population and 18 per cent (approximately 28 000) of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population.

In June 2011 states and territories received reward funding based on achievement of agreed 2010–11 literacy and numeracy targets and local measures. Second-year targets are currently being negotiated with states and territories.

The national partnership is achieving significant reforms at the national, state and local school levels. The 2010 state and territory annual reports provided many local examples of reform activity, including widespread adoption of in-classroom support for teachers by specialist coaches; increased teacher skill and confidence in using data to better address individual student learning needs; and the delivery of targeted literacy and numeracy programs to raise levels of student achievement. The COAG Reform Council's performance report for the national partnership indicated that in 2010 all states and territories made progress in improving students' literacy and numeracy skills.

Smarter Schools National Partnerships

The Smarter Schools National Partnerships are into their fourth year and are having a significant impact on improving outcomes for students. The Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership reward funding has been a highlight for this year. Over \$138 million was paid to states and territories for their progress in lifting educational outcomes in participating schools. This is the first time that states and territories are being measured against targets they set for themselves, and rewarded for delivering improved literacy and numeracy results. Queensland and South Australia in particular achieved outstanding results, earning 100 per cent of available reward funding.

It is exciting to see the reforms being achieved at the school level. At Maroochydore State School in Queensland, a national partnership-funded literacy coach has implemented whole-school strategies to improve literacy teaching and the use of student diagnostics and data. The school demonstrated its success through achievements in NAPLAN reading results, showing an increase of 151 points in the

mean scale score achieved by the Year 3 2008 cohort to the Year 5 2010 cohort, which is a substantial improvement compared to statistically similar schools.

Ramingining School in the Northern Territory, supported by Closing the Gap and the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership, celebrated the outstanding achievement of five of its assistant teachers in 2010. These assistant teachers completed their Diploma in Education Support to become the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander assistant teachers in the Northern Territory to receive a diploma qualification.



Working hard at school.

Effectiveness indicators

Table 15 Achievement in NAPLAN for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students 2009–10

	2009 NAPLAN results								2010 NAPLAN results							
	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9		Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N	R	N
Percentage of all students at or above the reading and numeracy national minimum standards	93.7	94.0	91.7	94.2	94.0	94.8	92.2	95.0	93.9	94.3	91.3	93.7	94.9	95.1	90.8	93.1
Percentage of Indigenous students at or above the reading and numeracy national minimum standards	75.1	74.0	66.7	74.2	73.2	75.8	67.0	75.0	75.1	76.6	66.2	71.4	76.6	77.0	64.2	70.4
Percentage of non-Indigenous students at or above the reading and numeracy national minimum standards	94.8	95.2	93.1	95.3	95.0	95.8	93.5	96.0	95.0	95.3	92.7	95.0	95.9	96.1	92.2	94.3

R = reading; N = numeracy.

Note: Confidence intervals are not included.

Sources: 2009 and 2010 NAPLAN Achievement in Reading and Numeracy; Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs 2009; Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority 2010, *National report for 2010, National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy*.

Three key observations emerge from this data:

- In 2010 for each domain, more than 90 per cent of Australian students are estimated to be working at or above the national minimum standard.
- Since 2009 there have been some small decreases in the gaps between the percentages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Australian students at or above the national minimum standard.
- There were also increases in the gaps between the percentages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Australian students at or above the national minimum standard in some areas.

Table 16 Comparison of gap in Indigenous reading, writing and numeracy

2010 NAPLAN	Indigenous reading %	Gap %	Change on 2009 gap %	Indigenous writing %	Gap %	Change on 2009 gap %	Indigenous numeracy %	Gap %	Change on 2009 gap %
Year 3	75.1	19.9	+0.2	79.0	17.6	+0.9	76.6	18.7	-2.5
Year 5	66.2	26.5	+0.1	70.5	23.9	-0.2	71.4	23.6	+2.5
Year 7	76.6	19.3	-2.5	69.8	24.1	+0.3	77.0	19.1	-0.9
Year 9	64.2	28.0	+1.5	59.0	29.7	-0.5	70.4	23.9	+2.9

Source: 2010 National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy, Achievement in Reading, Writing Conventions and Numeracy—Proportion of Indigenous students at or above the national minimum standard.

Under the partnership accelerated improvement in literacy and numeracy outcomes for Indigenous students is a priority. The results of Australia's 2010 NAPLAN show that although some gains have been made, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are still achieving at levels below their other Australian counterparts. The gap is not the same across all geographic locations: it is similar for students in metropolitan and provincial locations across all year levels and areas assessed, but greater for remote and greater still for very remote students.

Lower literacy and numeracy skills in Year 9 have been associated with lower engagement in school, lower retention to Year 12, and less successful transitions from school. Census data show that in 2006, 41.5 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 20–24-year-olds had completed Year 12 or at least a Certificate II qualification (this was made up of 32.2 per cent completing Year 12 and 9.3 per cent who did not complete Year 12 but completed a Certificate II or higher).

It should be noted that these tables include NAPLAN performance information for all Australian schools, not just those participating in the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership, and therefore represent an indicator of the collective efforts of Commonwealth and state and territory governments to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for Australian students.

The national partnership has been implemented in different ways in each state and territory, and performance measures and targets have been negotiated bilaterally with each jurisdiction. Performance under the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership is assessed by the COAG Reform Council. The council's role is to assess the extent to which targets negotiated between each jurisdiction and the Commonwealth under the national partnership have been met. The council's first report on the national partnership was published on 19 April 2011 and is available at www.coagreformcouncil.gov.au.

Literacy and numeracy pilots

The Australian Government invested \$41 million in 30 literacy and numeracy pilot projects which operated in around 400 schools nationally. These pilots trialled new approaches aimed at improving literacy and numeracy teaching strategies in schools. A national evaluation of the pilots is being carried out and its findings will assist all educational authorities and the Government to further the literacy and numeracy reform agenda, in addition to informing the evidence base of effective practices.

Program 2.7 Education infrastructure

As part of the Government's \$42 billion Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan, \$16.2 billion is being invested over four years through the Building the Education Revolution (BER) program. The program is made up of three elements: Primary Schools for the 21st Century, Science and Language Centres for 21st Century Secondary Schools and the National School Pride program.

The BER was an important part of the Government's response to the global financial crisis. It has provided economic stimulus through the rapid construction and refurbishment of school infrastructure, and building learning environments to help children, families and communities participate in activities that will support achievement, develop learning potential and bring communities together. The BER is underpinned by a strong partnership between the Australian, state and territory governments and non-government education authorities.

The BER program is delivering 23 649 projects in 9498 schools across Australia and is providing much-needed infrastructure to Australia's schools and their communities.

At 30 June 2011, 96 per cent of all BER projects had been completed. Of the \$15.9 billion allocated in project funding, \$15.5 billion had been paid by the Commonwealth to the education authorities. The remaining project funds have been allocated to projects by the education authorities to ensure project completion, and are being monitored closely by the department.

The BER Implementation Taskforce, in its December 2010 first report, stated: 'The vast majority of the BER projects across the country in the government and non-government systems are being successfully and competently delivered, which has resulted in quality and, from our own observations, generally much-needed new school infrastructure, while achieving the primary goal of stimulating economic activity.'

Independent research commissioned by the taskforce for the report suggests that the BER has made a material contribution to economic growth and is projected to support around 120 000 jobs over the full life of the program. The report also confirms that the program assisted in the maintenance of skills in the economy and saved Australian jobs during the global financial crisis.

During 2010–11, the taskforce received and investigated a total of 332 complaints and undertook 137 detailed value for money assessments. The number of complaints received represents 3.5 per cent of all schools involved in the program. Of those projects selected for a detailed value for money assessment, 86 per cent were selected as a result of a complaint being lodged. For the 58 schools that the taskforce identified as not meeting or only partially meeting its value for money assessment and requiring some form of rectification work, defect resolution plans have been put in place with the responsible education authority. The department is working closely with education authorities to ensure the implementation of these plans.

The department appeared before the Senate Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations relating to the inquiry into the BER Primary Schools for the 21st Century element on 4 February 2011. The committee's final report, which was tabled on 27 March 2011, made seven recommendations. The Government is currently considering its response to the report.

BER Implementation Taskforce recommendations

The taskforce, which commenced operations in May 2010, is responsible for:

- receiving, investigating and responding to complaints regarding the full operation of the BER, including individual school projects
- reporting publicly on the nature, progress and results of investigations and informing the Australian Government of recommendations for changes to policy, contracts or projects required to ensure the objectives of the BER are realised.

On 6 August 2010 the taskforce released its interim report into the BER program and on 15 December 2010 released its first report. The taskforce made 14 recommendations in its interim report and a further three recommendations in its first report. The Government agreed to all 17 recommendations.

The department has made substantial progress in the implementation of the taskforce's recommendations.

Consistent with recommendation 1 from the interim report, consensus was reached with all 22 education authorities to develop and publish the Primary Schools for the 21st Century National Common Reporting Structure with consistent definitions. Cost and project information data against the agreed structure has been published on the department's website since January 2011. The project information dataset will continue to grow as projects reach completion and costs are finalised.

The taskforce recommendations also included the establishment of an ongoing unit in the department to review, share and transfer lessons learnt from the BER program and to fund a suitable custodian for the BER Cost Analysis Model database. A suitable custodian for the database will be identified 2011–12.

The database, which has been developed by the taskforce, includes detailed cost data on over 3700 BER projects under the Primary Schools for the 21st Century element and is a valuable benchmarking tool.

In its first report, the taskforce proposed a rectification plan for those NSW government schools that failed to meet, or only partially met, its value for money test. The rectification plan formed the basis for the progressive payment of \$75 million in BER funds withheld from the NSW Government in June 2010. Progress against the rectification plan was monitored by the taskforce and the department.

Program assurance

The department has developed a program assurance framework to monitor the implementation of the BER to effectively achieve the BER objectives. The department’s program assurance activities complement the work being undertaken by the taskforce.

The range of activities includes:

- monthly reporting by education authorities of project progress across the three BER elements
- onsite education authority monitoring visits, including site visits to a sample of schools, to monitor project progress within each education authority
- desktop monitoring and audits to ensure compliance with program guidelines and funding agreements
- investigation of complaints that are outside the scope of the taskforce terms of reference.

The department has made significant progress on these activities. Every education authority has had at least one comprehensive assurance visit. In addition:

- 207 schools across the country, in every state and territory, have been visited by or on behalf of the department
- approximately 800 desktop audits of project financial records have been conducted.

Primary Schools for the 21st Century

At 30 June 2011, 9450 projects had been completed from the total of 10 473 approved projects. The majority of the remaining projects have been re-phased into the 2011–12 financial year following the Government’s decision to re-phase a portion of the Primary Schools for the 21st Century funding.

Science and Language Centres for 21st Century Secondary Schools

At 30 June 2011, 502 projects had been completed from the 537 approved projects. The remaining projects are expected to be completed by December 2011.

National School Pride program

At 30 June 2011, 12 635 projects had been completed from the 12 639 approved projects. The remaining projects are expected to be completed early in 2011–12.

Key performance indicators

Table 17 Key performance indicators for program 2.7

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
Government		
Percentage of eligible schools receiving funding through Primary Schools for the 21st Century	70.07%	70.07%
Non-government		
Percentage of eligible schools receiving funding through Primary Schools for the 21st Century	28.4%	28.4%

Program 2.8 Smarter Schools—Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership

The Smarter Schools—Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership provides \$1.5 billion over seven years (2008–09 to 2014–15) to facilitate a range of in-school and out-of-school reforms to address the learning needs and wellbeing of students in low socioeconomic status school communities.

This national partnership is now achieving significant reforms at the national, state and local school levels. The 2010 state and territory annual reports provide some high-impact examples of reform activity, including widespread adoption of in-classroom support for teachers by specialist coaches, increased teacher skill and confidence in using data to better address individual student learning needs, and innovative approaches to supporting the holistic needs of students and families to improve attendance and participation.

Key performance indicator

Table 18 Key performance indicator for program 2.8

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
Smarter Schools—Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership		
Number of schools assisted	Approximately 1700 (over 2009–10 to 2014–15)	1587 (at 30 June 2011)

Note: The school numbers include aggregated figures for 147 schools that participate in both the Low Socio-economic School Communities and Literacy and Numeracy National Partnerships.

Smarter Schools—Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership

Across Australia, approximately 1700 schools (17 per cent of all schools) and approximately 456 500 students (13 per cent of all students), including 65 000 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students (42 per cent of all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students) will benefit from the national partnership over its seven-year term. This includes students who are also being supported by the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership.

Effectiveness indicators

The effectiveness of program 2.8 will be measured by the performance indicators set out in the National Education Agreement. These include the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and low socioeconomic status children enrolled in and attending school and the literacy and numeracy achievement of Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students in national testing.

Program 2.9 Smarter Schools—Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership

The Australian Government has committed \$550 million to the Smarter Schools—Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership, which supports ambitious, nationally significant and sustainable reforms to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and school leaders. These reforms provide a platform for raising student performance and support other schooling reforms targeting low socioeconomic status school communities and literacy and numeracy outcomes.

Bilateral agreements and implementation plans agreed to by the Commonwealth and states and territories set out strategies in each jurisdiction to implement reforms along with payments and state co-investments to be made in support of the national partnership. Summaries of the state and territory implementation plans have been published on the department's Smarter Schools website at www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/Programs/SmarterSchools/Pages/_state.aspx.

Under the national partnership, facilitation funding is available for states and territories for implementing national reforms such as the National Professional Standards for Teachers, improving pathways into teaching, providing professional development for school leaders and improving the quality and availability of teaching workforce data.

States and territories will be eligible to receive reward funding from 2011–12 for the demonstration of achievement in reform areas that improve teacher remuneration structures, increase school-based decision-making, improve in-school support, reward teachers in ‘hard-to-staff’ and disadvantaged schools and increase Indigenous teachers’ and schools leaders’ engagement with community members. The COAG Reform Council will assess achievements against reward reforms and will report performance information to COAG.

Key national reforms continued to be led by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership in 2010–11. In early 2011, the institute finalised and gained ministerial agreement to the National Professional Standards for Teachers and a national approach to the accreditation of initial teacher education programs.

This national partnership also includes funding for the development and introduction of additional pathways into teaching.

Key performance indicator

Table 19 Key performance indicator for program 2.9

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
Smarter Schools—Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership		
Number of Teach for Australia associates commencing in the program in 2010–11	42	42

Teach for Australia initiative

The Teach for Australia initiative was introduced in 2010 and provides a new pathway into teaching for high-achieving university graduates. The program offers a unique combination of university study and employment-based teacher training. Following intensive residential training, graduates undertake a two-year placement (with a reduced teaching load) at a secondary school while continuing their study to complete a Postgraduate Diploma of Teaching with the University of Melbourne. Graduates are supported throughout their placement by a clinical specialist, a training and leadership adviser and an experienced teacher mentor who are specifically trained for their roles.

In 2010 and 2011, Teach for Australia received more than 1100 applications from university graduates across Australia. In addition to the 43 graduates currently in their second year, a further 42 graduates joined the second cohort of the program in 2011. The number of schools hosting Teach for Australia graduates has expanded to include 26 Victorian schools (including one Catholic school) and four government schools in the ACT, totalling 30 schools across two cohorts.

The Australian Council for Educational Research was engaged in March 2010 to conduct a formal three-phase evaluation of the Teach for Australia initiative. The Phase 1 Summary Evaluation Report found that stakeholders consider the strengths of the program to be the rigorous selection process, the quality of the university preparation program and the high level of ongoing support provided to graduates.

National Conversation with Principals

On 7 and 8 April 2011, the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP, Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, hosted the second National Conversation with Principals in Canberra. The forum was held over one and a half days and was attended by 140 primary and secondary school principals from all states and territories across the different school sectors. Representatives from the national principals associations, peak parent bodies, education unions, ACARA, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership and Education Services Australia were also present as observers.

The conversation was an opportunity for Minister Garrett to engage with school principals on the Australian Government’s education reform agenda and listen to feedback on the impact of these policies at the school level. There were three main themes for discussion—empowering local schools, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, and quality teaching. Minister Garrett attended the entire forum, giving the keynote address and introductions to all theme sessions as well as participating in group discussions with principals.

Feedback from principals who attended the forum was very positive. The Minister praised their input to the conversation and committed to holding a similar event in 2012. More information about the 2011 National Conversation with Principals, including vox pop interviews with principals during the forum and summaries of the feedback received, is on the DEEWR website at www.deewr.gov.au/nationalprincipalsforum.



Prime Minister the Hon Julia Gillard MP and the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP, Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, talking with a principal at the 2011 National Conversation with Principals.

Effectiveness indicators

The effectiveness of the national partnership in achieving the intended result of program 2.9 will be measured by the achievement of the reform milestones which are set out in the bilateral agreements and implementation plans. States and territories will report to the Commonwealth biannually on progress against the agreed reform milestones.

Program 2.10 Youth support

The government is committed to ensuring that all young people make a successful transition from school to further education and training or work. There is a clear link between Year 12 or equivalent attainment and improved social and economic outcomes for young people.

A small proportion of young people experience extended periods of non-participation after leaving school and protracted periods of reliance on income support. A larger minority do not make smooth transitions from school and cycle through education or training courses. For both these groups, support can reduce the likelihood of disengagement and increase rates of participation, productivity and social inclusion.

The National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions clarifies roles and responsibilities between the Australian Government and the states and territories for transitions arrangements and is driving longer term reform to ensure that young people stay engaged in education and training, and increase their skills and qualifications.

The *National Strategy for Young Australians*, released in April 2010, sets out the Australian Government's vision and goals for young people. It provides a framework to guide government investment in young people. The strategy identifies eight priority areas for action: health and wellbeing, education, families, communities, online, work, early intervention and safety.

Office for Youth

The department's responsibilities include the Australian Government's Office for Youth. The Office for Youth supports a positive and integrated agenda for young Australians that recognises and values the contribution they make to the nation now and into the future.

The office manages the Australian Youth Forum, which is a mechanism for young people and the youth sector to engage directly with the Government, giving them the opportunity to shape and influence policies on issues that matter to them. The forum engages with young people through a range of initiatives, including a website (www.youth.gov.au/ayf), forums and community events, and the Youth Engagement Steering Committee. The Australian Youth Forum is the principal partner of the Young Australian of the Year Award and also provides funding to Australia's youth affairs peak body, the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition.

The Office for Youth also has a research focus and works across government at all levels, and with the youth sector, to identify gaps, emerging issues and areas of focus for the future. The office is responsible for the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth, which track young people as they move from school into further study, work and other destinations. The surveys provide a rich source of information to help understand young people's transitions from school to post-school destinations, as well as exploring social outcomes, such as wellbeing. Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth research is used by the Australian Government, state and territory governments, and researchers and organisations that provide services to young people.

The office funds the Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies to provide access to a range of youth sector information, including a quarterly journal, a monthly newsletter, and a website of resources about youth studies.

The office is supporting young people in their community through a \$10 million investment in five youth centres across the country. Each youth centre has been designed in response to the needs of young people in the area. From youth enterprise to mental health to skills training, the youth centres will be a valuable addition to youth services of each region. Building on this initial investment a further three youth centres will also be established with funding support of \$7.7 million over three years commencing from 2011–12.

The Government also engages with young people through a range of events including National Youth Week, the largest celebration of young people in Australia. National Youth Week 2011 was held from 1 to 10 April 2011. An estimated 156 500 people engaged in National Youth Week events with approximately 2000 events held across the nation. Approximately 1500 young people attended the national launch event, held on 1 April 2011 in Melbourne, and around 154 000 watched the televised event on Video Hits.

Youth Development and Support Program

The Youth Development and Support Program, a national program launched in October 2009, is designed to provide financial support to non-government, not-for-profit organisations which deliver small-scale, community-based projects. The program provides \$500 000 annually to fund initiatives that inspire and encourage young people to engage with government and community, and help them develop skills and connections within their communities.

Transition to Independent Living Allowance

The Transition to Independent Living Allowance is available to young people aged 15–25 years who have exited, or are about to exit, state-based care and/or informal care such as juvenile justice, out-of-home care, foster care, supported care or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship care arrangements. Under the program, assistance of up to \$1500 is available to help with the costs involved in moving to independent living. The program is administered by Southern Youth and Family Services in Wollongong, New South Wales.

The number of young people accessing the Transition to Independent Living Allowance has increased steadily since the program commenced in 2003. In 2010–11, 2297 young people accessed the payment.

Key performance indicators

Table 20 Key performance indicators for program 2.10

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions		
Progress towards 2015 COAG target of 90 per cent Year 12 or equivalent attainment	na	na ^a
Number of young people for whom outcomes are achieved through support provided by the Youth Connections program	15 000	14 160 ^b
Number of regions that School Business Community Partnership Brokers support (delivered through 31 Local Learning and Employment Networks in Victoria)	107	107 ^b
Transition to Independent Living Allowance		
Number of young people assisted	2260	2297

Progress toward targets under the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions is expected to accelerate with the bedding down of the two program elements (Youth Connections and School Business Community Partnership Brokers) along with the implementation of state and territory initiatives. The first year of the programs in 2010 delivered an appropriate build-up of activity from the beginning of the contract period.

Results reported under the Youth Connections program reflect the outcomes achieved for young people receiving individual support services. Youth Connections also delivered group activities for the benefit of young people in their communities, and improved the coordination and capacity of services for young people at risk. The School Business Community Partnership Brokers explored partnership opportunities and created or enhanced partnerships to meet their regions' needs as the year progressed. In the 2010 calendar year, there were approximately 850 active and self-sustaining partnerships associated with Partnership Brokers nationally (excluding Victoria) involving over 5700 partner organisations. (In Victoria, the Partnership Brokers program is delivered through the Victorian Government's Local Learning and Employment Network and is managed by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.)

Effectiveness indicators

The effectiveness of the Government's youth transition and support services is measured by the number of young people achieving real outcomes under the new programs (in Table 20) and with reference to their impact on the Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates once data is available in December 2011.

Program 2.11 School student assistance

The Government is committed to raising the Year 12 or equivalent attainment rate to 90 per cent by 2015 and to reducing the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education under its policy of giving all eligible Australians an opportunity to gain a first-class education.

Measures such as student support encourage and assist young people to remain in education and training. Government support is provided through programs such as ABSTUDY and Youth Allowance and funding through the Assistance for Isolated Children scheme.

Changes to the Parental Income Test from 1 July 2010, as part of the Government's reforms to student income support, have increased the number of young students from low and middle income families eligible for assistance.

During 2010–11 the method used to allocate recipient numbers across the education sectors was changed. To enable comparisons with 2011 performance, the 2010 figures for ABSTUDY—Secondary and Youth Allowance—Secondary in this report were derived using the revised methodology.

a Attainment data for 2010 will not be available until December 2011.

b The programs under the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions are administered on a calendar year basis and figures are from the 2010 calendar year.

A revised 2010–11 estimate was in the 2011–12 DEEWR Portfolio Budget Statements (page 81 for Outcome 2 and page 97 for Outcome 3). The estimates for 2010–11 for student numbers were revised to reflect the number of students assisted during this year and in forward years. This is a change from the June point in time figures previously estimated.

ABSTUDY—Secondary

ABSTUDY provides a means-tested living allowance and other supplementary benefits to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school students to enable them to participate in full-time education. The number of ABSTUDY secondary school student recipients increased 3.8 per cent from 20 401 in 2010 to 21 179 in 2011.

Youth Allowance—Secondary

Youth Allowance (student) is a means-tested income support payment available to eligible young people aged 16 to 24 years. Certain 15-year-olds, including those who are unable to live at home, may also receive assistance. Youth Allowance (student) provides assistance for students and apprentices to participate in full-time education, training or apprenticeships.

In 2011, 120 710 secondary school students received Youth Allowance, which is an increase of 10.3 per cent from 109 479 in 2010. The continuing growth in the number of secondary school student recipients is mostly due to the changes to the Parental Income Test that have resulted in more dependent young people qualifying for Youth Allowance.

Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme

The Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme helps the families of primary, secondary and certain tertiary students who are unable to attend an appropriate government school on a daily basis because of geographic isolation. The 2010 program year saw an increase in the number of students in receipt of funding. The scheme is demand-driven. The department works closely with Centrelink to increase awareness of the scheme among families living in regional and remote areas.

Key performance indicators

Table 21 Key performance indicators for program 2.11

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
ABSTUDY—Secondary		
Average number of school students receiving ABSTUDY during the year	20 500	21 179
Youth Allowance—Secondary		
Average number of secondary school students receiving Youth Allowance during the year	115 000	120 710
Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme		
Students in receipt of Assistance for Isolated Children funding (figures based on a calendar year)	12 500	12 489

Departmental outputs for Outcome 2

DEEWR’s bilateral management arrangement with Centrelink and the Department of Human Services provides a framework for all three agencies to deliver outcomes, including payments, in relation to employment, education and child care. The arrangement contains a confidence framework to monitor the strength and success of the relationship between agencies and assure the parties that policy and program outcomes are being achieved.

Centrelink's performance against the confidence framework for education (including student payments and vocational education and training) delivered varied results during 2010–11. New claims for Youth Allowance (student), Austudy and ABSTUDY were processed within agreed timeframes. Payment accuracy as measured through the Random Sample Survey for these payments was 94.1 per cent, which is slightly below the 95 per cent target.

Service delivery performance for Youth Allowance (student), Austudy and ABSTUDY is reported in detail under Outcome 3.

Table 22 Departmental outputs performance information

Performance indicator	Estimate	Actual
Effective reporting of student performance in nationally agreed key areas	Results agreed and published	Results agreed and published for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2010 NAPLAN for students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 ▪ national sample assessment in science literacy (2009)
Effective use of online Schools Service Point	99% of all returns will be collected online	100% of returns were collected online
Effective use of online School Entry Point	99% of all applications for funding through the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program will be collected online	100% of applications were collected online
National Report to Parliament on Indigenous Education and Training	Seventh and eighth reports to be tabled in Parliament in 2010	Both the 2007 and 2008 reports were tabled on 20 April 2011