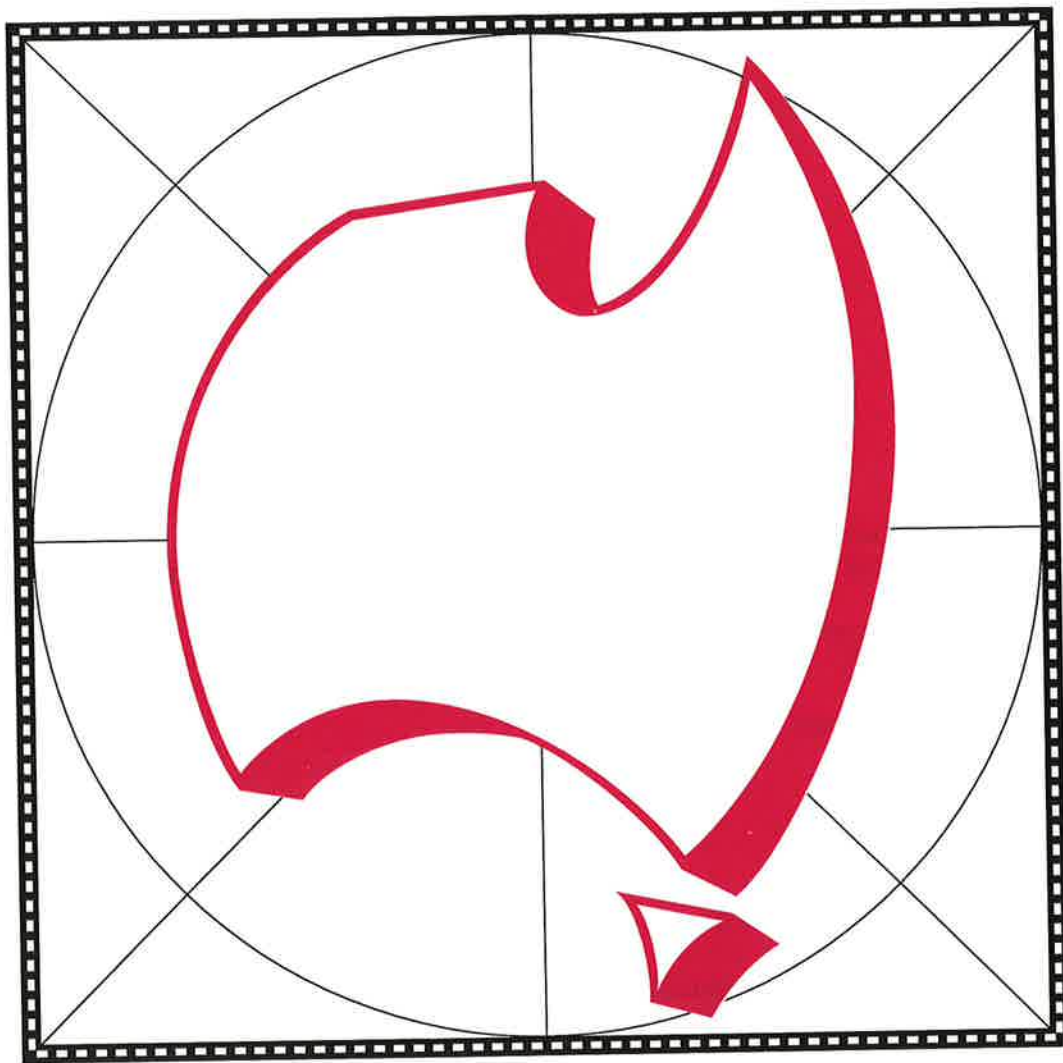


NATIONAL REPORT
ON SCHOOLING IN
AUSTRALIA



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for the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs

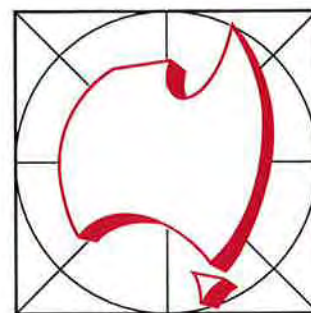
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PREFACE



In April 1989 the State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers responsible for education, meeting as the Australian Education Council (AEC), made a historic decision in relation to the provision of information on the expenditure of public money on education. Previously, States and Territories had reported individually to the Commonwealth Government through a plethora of resource agreements. It was now agreed that educational accountability requirements would be better met by an annual national report. This report would provide, in an accessible and readable form, a comprehensive account of schooling to the nation. A single audit certificate would suffice to meet specific Commonwealth financial accountability requirements.

This reporting arrangement was conditional upon the development of an agreed national framework. The framework, as it has evolved through the pilot report for 1989 and subsequent reports, has placed particular emphasis on progress towards the achievement of the national goals for schooling, with reporting on selected priority areas. Participation in national sample studies of key schooling initiatives is likewise an important contribution to the national reporting exercise. The development of national statistical data is a key feature of national reporting and a statistical annex constitutes a second volume to the report.

Initially, reporting by the non-government sector was negotiated by the Commonwealth, with the expectation that ultimately such schools would meet educational accountability requirements through the *National Report on Schooling in Australia*. In 1991, for the first time, Catholic schools, and independent schools in South Australia, participated fully in the *National Report* by providing information against the Agreed Information Framework. In 1992, all independent schools participated for the first time, with the result that all sectors of schooling in Australia now meet the Commonwealth's educational accountability requirements through this process.

In January 1994, the AEC amalgamated with two other ministerial councils—the Council of Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET) and the Youth Ministers Council (YMC)—to form the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).

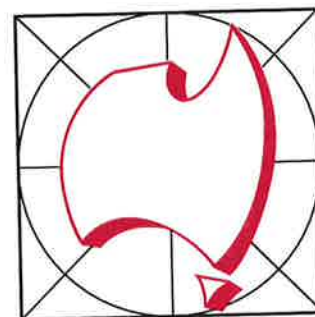
The commitment to national reporting on schools, established by the AEC, has continued under MCEETYA and the sixth annual national report provides commentary on the operation of school systems, priority objectives, the participation of students in schooling including equity initiatives, areas of student learning, student outcomes, teaching and learning and the application of financial resources to schools. Important new national, State, Territory and Commonwealth initiatives in schooling are highlighted. A major aim of the report is to raise public awareness of schooling in Australia by providing a comprehensive and authoritative source of information. At the same time, the contents of the report and the statistical annex provide an avenue for satisfying the legal requirements for the Commonwealth Government to account for the expenditure of Commonwealth funds on schooling.

State and Territory and Commonwealth Ministers with responsibilities for schooling in 1994 were:

New South Wales	The Hon. Virginia Chadwick, MLC
Victoria	The Hon. Don Hayward, MP
Queensland	The Hon. Pat Comben, MLA
South Australia	The Hon. Rob Lucas, MLC
Western Australia	The Hon. Norman Moore, MLC
Tasmania	The Hon. John Beswick, MHA
Northern Territory	The Hon. Fred Finch, MLA
ACT	Mr Bill Wood, MLA
Commonwealth	The Hon. Simon Crean, MP The Hon. Ross Free, MP

The Chair of MCEETYA in 1994 was the Hon. Virginia Chadwick, MLC; in 1995 the Chair is Mr Bill Stefaniak, MLA.

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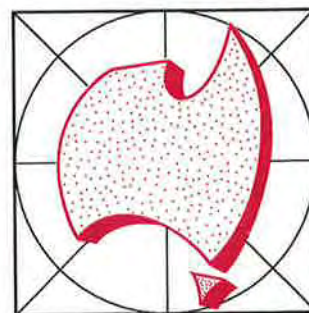
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COMMON AND AGREED NATIONAL GOALS FOR SCHOOLING IN AUSTRALIA

- 1 To provide an excellent education for all young people, being one which develops their talents and capacities to full potential, and is relevant to the social, cultural and economic needs of the nation.
- 2 To enable all students to achieve high standards of learning and to develop self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, respect for others, and achievement of personal excellence.
- 3 To promote equality of education opportunities, and to provide for groups with special learning requirements.
- 4 To respond to the current and emerging economic and social needs of the nation, and to provide those skills which will allow students maximum flexibility and adaptability in their future employment and other aspects of life.
- 5 To provide a foundation for further education and training, in terms of knowledge and skills, respect for learning and positive attitudes for life-long education.
- 6 To develop in students:
 - a the skills of English literacy, including skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing;
 - b skills of numeracy, and other mathematical skills;
 - c skills of analysis and problem solving;
 - d skills of information processing and computing;
 - e an understanding of the role of science and technology in society, together with scientific and technological skills;
 - f a knowledge and appreciation of Australia's historical and geographic context;
 - g a knowledge of languages other than English;
 - h an appreciation and understanding of, and confidence to participate in, the creative arts;
 - i an understanding of, and concern for, balanced development and the global environment;
 - j a capacity to exercise judgement in matters of morality, ethics and social justice.
- 7 To develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable students to participate as active and informed citizens in our democratic Australian society within an international context.
- 8 To provide students with an understanding and respect for our cultural heritage including the particular cultural background of Aboriginal and ethnic groups.
- 9 To provide for the physical development and personal health and fitness of students, and for the creative use of leisure time.
- 10 To provide appropriate career education and knowledge of the world of work, including an understanding of the nature and place of work in our society.

NATIONAL OVERVIEW



Introduction

The purpose of this *National Report* is to inform the Australian people about the schooling that was provided during 1994 to over three million students in approximately 10,000 schools in Australia's eight States and Territories.

This chapter offers an overview of schooling in Australia. In subsequent chapters States and Territories and the Commonwealth identify their own specific priority objectives for 1994 and chart progress towards achieving the shared national goals for schooling. Progress is reported both directly through achievements related to the three clusters of national goals—excellence and equity, general and vocational education and key areas of student learning—and indirectly through activities which support the national goals such as resourcing teaching and learning and physical facilities. In relation to the shared goal of excellence and equity, particular emphasis in 1994 has been placed on reporting, by gender, schooling participation and completion rates (as measured by retention to year 12) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and geographically isolated students.

Australia has two sectors of schooling: government and non-government. Constitutional responsibility for school education lies with State governments, which have responsibility for providing education to all children of school age, whatever their physical and intellectual ability, social and economic circumstances, and cultural background and beliefs. Parents, however, have the right to choose non-government schooling for their children and many do so for educational, religious, cultural or other reasons. Each chapter of this year's *National Report* contains information from the government and non-government (Catholic and independent) sectors of Australian schooling. (Note: the term 'State' is used in this chapter to refer to 'State' and 'Territory'.)

Responsibility for schooling in Australia

In Australia, schooling is provided by the six States, the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory and the non-government school sector.

State governments have the constitutional and major financial responsibility for school education. They are responsible for the provision of schooling to all students of school age in their state, with each state administering and providing substantial funding for its own system of primary and secondary schooling. Within each state, Ministers, departments and individual schools determine policies and practice on such matters as curriculum, course accreditation, student assessment, resource allocation and utilisation, and teacher employment and professional development. In addition to these general responsibilities, all states have developed equity policies and programs which aim to provide quality schooling for all students in the state, irrespective of their social background or geographic location.

The Commonwealth Government has a number of roles in relation to schooling, with its responsibility being exercised by the Commonwealth Minister for Employment, Education and Training. In co-operation with State and non-government school authorities, the Commonwealth has an important role in identifying national priorities for schooling, in promoting national consistency and coherence in the provision of schooling across Australia, and in identifying the strategies for achieving these aims. It provides significant supplementary financial support to State and non-government school authorities to support agreed priorities and strategies. In relation to disadvantaged students, continuing cooperation on agreed goals and strategies between State and non-government school authorities and the Commonwealth in schools' equity policies and programs is a shared national priority. This includes policy and programs in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and migrants, for whom the Commonwealth has particular responsibilities.

In addition, the Commonwealth has specific responsibilities for the provision of financial assistance to students, Australia's international relations in education, and shared responsibilities for schooling in Australia's external territories of Christmas Island, the Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Norfolk Island.

Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs: National cooperation in schooling

The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) came into operation at the beginning of 1994. The council comprises the State, Territory, Commonwealth and New Zealand Ministers with responsibility for the portfolios of education, employment, training and youth affairs, with Papua New Guinea having observer status. This new amalgamated council replaced the former Australian Education Council as the ministerial forum for national collaboration in policy development and implementation relating to schooling in Australia, in the wider context of tertiary education and training, employment and youth culture.

Ministers whose portfolios include school education are responsible for both government and non-government schools. The council, as a matter of principle, has established a range of consultative mechanisms at both federal and State levels to obtain the views of the non-government school sector and, whenever possible, extends membership of its working parties and committees to the peak national bodies representing the non-government employing authorities—the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) and the National Council of Independent Schools' Associations (NCISA).

Regular consultation also takes place with peak national bodies representing:

- parents—the Australian Council of State Schools Organisations (ACSSO) and the Australian Parents Council (APC), representing government and non-government school parents respectively;
- teachers—the Australian Education Union (AEU) and the Independent Teachers Federation of Australia (ITFA), representing government and non-government school teachers respectively;
- the business sector—the National Industry Education Forum (NIEF), representing a range of peak industry bodies including the Business Council of Australia (BCA) and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI).

Two national research and development companies, partly or wholly funded by Commonwealth and State Ministers of education, facilitate cooperative initiatives in schooling:

- Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), founded in 1930, which undertakes,

promotes, disseminates and markets research and development projects, including educational and psychological tests;

- Curriculum Corporation, which in 1990 commenced full operation in the development and publication of curriculum materials resulting from national collaboration, and is managed by a board comprising representatives from the government and non-government sectors and parent and teacher organisations.

MCEETYA held two major meetings in 1994, supplemented by teleconferences. Its ongoing work is undertaken through a number of taskforces with clearly-defined terms of reference and subject to annual review. The council is supported by a small independent secretariat, funded by all governments and located in Melbourne.

The work of the council in 1994 has taken place in close interaction with the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) which has a statutory responsibility in relation to certain aspects of vocational education and training, and with the ANTA Ministerial Council. This collaboration has been central to a major national achievement in 1994, the finalisation of arrangements for implementation, from 1 January 1995, of the new Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS) (detailed later in this chapter) which will have a significant broadening impact on the later years of schooling.

During 1994, national collaboration under MCEETYA resulted in a number of other key initiatives to enhance schooling outcomes across the nation.

National Strategy for Equity in Schooling

The National Strategy for Equity in Schooling (NSES) was endorsed by Ministers in November 1994. The strategy outlines the rationale for equity in schooling and the need for a national approach, identifies priority target groups and lists two basic goals relating to improving the access and participation and the educational outcomes of students in the priority groups. The document also details the priority areas for action and expected outcomes by the year 2001 and touches on the review and reporting process (detailed later in this chapter).

National Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education

At the end of 1994 a taskforce was established to develop a strategy to promote education and training outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples based on the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy. The taskforce is chaired by a member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and representatives of this community comprise the majority of the membership.

The Taskforce will submit its final advice to Ministers at the end of 1995.

National admissions system for universities and TAFE colleges

A taskforce has been established to develop a coordinated and cooperative method of matching applicants with places in tertiary institutions across Australia—a streamlining of procedures of considerable benefit to students in their final year of schooling. The system will include common dates for close of main round applications and offers for applicants entering tertiary institutions in 1996; a transparent and fair system of interstate equivalences; electronic linkages between tertiary institutions, tertiary admissions centres and other institutions; and common data and coding structures for use on application forms.

National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools strategy

The National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) strategy was developed in response to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Working Group report *Asian Languages and Australia's Economic Future*, which was endorsed by COAG at its meeting in Hobart in February 1994.

The strategy aims, over the next ten years, to support enhanced and expanded Asian languages and studies delivery through all school systems in order to improve Australia's capacity and preparedness to interact internationally, in particular, with key Asian economies.

The NALSAS strategy, a cooperative initiative between Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, will target Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, Indonesian and Korean languages. These languages were chosen on the basis of regional economic forecasts made by the East Asia Analytical Unit (EAAU) of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). National support for the strategy is also based on a recognition of the educational importance of learning languages, and it is expected to contribute to an overall increase in literacy in languages other than English.

The NALSAS strategy identifies performance targets in terms of both student participation in Asian language study and the proficiency reached, as well as the numbers of teachers trained and their proficiency. Two key goals of the strategy are first, the doubling to 25 per cent of the total number of year 12 students studying a language other than English by 2006 (15 per cent would be studying a targeted Asian language), and second, that by 2006, 60 per cent of year 10 students will be studying a targeted Asian language. The strategy also involves the incorporation of Asian studies into the mainstream school curricula.

The NALSAS strategy will be funded jointly by the Commonwealth, States and Territories.

A taskforce of MCEETYA will oversee the implementation of the strategy. The NALSAS Taskforce has representation from the Commonwealth, all government school systems, the higher education and vocational education and training sectors and the peak bodies of Catholic and independent schools.

Australian Qualifications Framework

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) was endorsed by MCEETYA at the end of 1994. The AQF links the senior secondary school certificate qualification with four levels of vocational education certificates, the diploma and advanced diploma, graduate certificates and graduate diplomas, and bachelor, masters and doctoral degree qualifications in a comprehensive range of education and training pathways.

Implementation of the AQF is to take place from 1 January 1995. An AQF Advisory Board is to be set up to facilitate and monitor the national implementation of the AQF.

Career Education

A taskforce was established to advise Ministers on strategies for improving the quality of decisions associated with career pathways made by students in schools and the vocational education and training sector.

Council of Australian Governments Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision

In late 1993, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) established a review of Commonwealth/State service provision, the objectives of which included "the collection and publication of data to allow benchmarking comparisons of efficiency". The review was expected to cover a number of areas including school education, health, law and community services.

In February 1994, COAG asked the Chair of the review to give priority to the development of outputs and outcomes for government school education.

A COAG Schools Working Group was subsequently established, chaired by the NSW Cabinet Office and comprising representatives from all State school education systems and the Commonwealth. The key objective of the Working Group is to develop nationally agreed performance indicators and detailed definitions for these indicators for the government school sector.

By the end of 1994, the working group had identified a range of potential context, efficiency and effectiveness indicators, the latter including a number of outcome indicators. The main gap identified by the group was the lack of data on nationally comparable student learning outcomes. For this reason most of the group's efforts were focused on this area.

Further work is to be undertaken during 1995, with a first report on the review as a whole expected before the end of the year. The COAG Schools Working Group has worked closely with the Schools Taskforce of MCEETYA, and the Chair of the COAG review has briefed non-government schools and other interest groups on the process.

The structure of schooling in Australia

The first (1989) *National Report on Schooling in Australia* contained detailed information on the social and economic context and the structure of schooling. It was decided not to repeat all of this information each year, but to compile the detailed data in a statistical annex companion volume. The *Statistical Annex* will be made available on request to education researchers and writers and other interested persons.

Of the two broad sectors of schooling in Australia, government schools, which enrol the large majority of students, operate under the direct responsibility of the state education Minister. Non-government schools, which operate under conditions determined by government registration authorities, are required to provide certain minimum education standards and satisfactory premises. Almost all non-government schools have some religious affiliation, most commonly with the Catholic church (68 per cent of non-government students are enrolled in Catholic schools). Each State has a substantial system of Catholic schools. About 800 non-government schools are independent; that is, they do not belong to a system.

Schooling is compulsory from ages 6 to 15 (16 in Tasmania). However, in most States, children start primary school at around the age of five, when they enrol in a preparatory or kindergarten year. After the preparatory year, primary education lasts for either six or seven years, depending on the State concerned (see Figure 1). In 1994, there were over 1.8 million primary school students, of whom 74.5 per cent were enrolled in government schools. The scattered rural population in most States has necessitated a large number of very small primary schools, although this number is declining. All government primary schools and most non-government primary schools are coeducational.

Secondary education is available for either five or six years, depending upon the length of primary school in

the State concerned. Students normally commence secondary school at about age 12. In 1994, there were approximately 1.3 million full-time students enrolled in secondary schools, of whom 67 per cent were in government schools. Most government secondary schools are coeducational, but a significant number of non-government secondary schools are single-sex.

These historical differences in the organisational structures of Australia's school systems cause problems for Australia's increasingly mobile student population. Since 1989, education Ministers have worked to minimise problems associated with differences in year levels and nomenclature.

Features of the structure of Australian schooling in 1994 were:

- There were 9,679 schools in Australia, which represented a decline of 186 (1.9 per cent) since 1993.
- Seventy-one per cent of the schools were primary schools, 16 per cent were secondary schools, 9 per cent were combined primary and secondary schools and 4 per cent were special schools.
- There were 3,099,380 full-time students in Australian schools. This was an increase of 1,005 in student numbers (0.03 per cent) since 1993.

Figure 1. The structure of primary and secondary schooling in Australia

There are three basic patterns evident, as illustrated below.

Level	NSW, Vic., Tas., ACT	SA, NT	Qld, WA
Year 12	SECONDARY	SECONDARY	SECONDARY
Year 11			
Year 10			
Year 9			
Year 8			
Year 7	PRIMARY	PRIMARY	PRIMARY
Year 6			
Year 5			
Year 4			
Year 3			
Year 2			
Year 1			
Pre-year 1			

Pre-year 1 is called Kindergarten in NSW and ACT and Preparatory in Vic. and Tas.

Pre-year 1 is called Reception in SA and Transition in NT

Table 1. Key features of Australian schooling, 1994

	<i>Government</i>	<i>Non-government</i>	<i>Total</i>
Schools	7,159	2,520	9,679
Students (full-time)	2,214,938	884,442	3,099,380
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	73,379	10,032	83,411
Full-fee paying overseas students	1,197	7,555	8,752
Staff (in schools)	177,740	72,896	250,636
Teachers (in schools)	143,192	56,965	200,158
Expenditure (1993–94) (government schools)	\$m10,568	n.a.	n.a.
Apparent retention rates (to year 12)			
Males	65.1%	79.4%	69.6%
Females	76.4%	87.4%	79.9%
Persons	70.6%	83.3%	74.6%
Participation rates			
16 year olds	—	—	80.0%
17 year olds	—	—	59.7%
Pupil–teacher ratios			
Primary	18.3	19.1	18.5
Secondary	12.4	12.9	12.6

Source: Statistical Annex, 1994

- Seventy-two per cent of full-time students in Australia attended government schools. The respective proportions for primary, junior secondary and senior secondary government school enrolments were 74.5 per cent, 67.7 per cent and 65.5 per cent.
- The total number of teaching and non-teaching staff employed in Australian schools was 250,636 (in full-time equivalents), which represented a decrease of 847 or 0.3 per cent since 1993.
- There were 200,158 teaching staff (in full-time equivalents) employed in Australian schools, which represented a decrease of 1,753 or 0.87 per cent since 1993.
- The average number of students per teaching staff member was 15.5 in government and non-government schools. For all schools, the ratios for primary and secondary schools were 18.5 and 12.6 respectively.
- Females comprised 74.7 per cent of teaching staff in primary schools and 51 per cent of teaching staff in secondary schools. Both ratios paralleled the 1993 situation.
- Among non-teaching staff, 79.6 per cent were female, the same proportion as in 1993.

Achieving the national goals

Excellence and Equity

As was noted at the beginning of this national overview, in relation to the shared goal of excellence and equity, particular emphasis in 1994 has been placed on improved mechanisms for reporting, by gender, schooling participation and completion rates (as measured by retention in schooling to year 12) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and geographically isolated students. Reports on these priority groups are provided by the individual jurisdictions in the chapters which follow.

An important contribution to improved reporting is expected from the work of the new Taskforce on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, which is likely to bring forward a more adequate measure of completion rates for this group than is currently used, one which will recognise cultural differences in approaches to learning.

The National Strategy for Equity in Schooling

The National Strategy for Equity in Schooling (NSES) was endorsed by MCEETYA in April 1994.

The NSES accords priority to six categories of students. These are groups whose participation and range of educational outcomes are currently significantly lower than those for the population as a whole, and who require additional support and resources to improve their educational outcomes. They are:

- students with disability, difficulties in learning and/or emotional or behavioural disorder;
- students at risk of dropping out of school;
- students from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds or living in poverty;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- students from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) who need English as a second language (ESL) assistance;
- students who are geographically isolated.

Work is currently underway to develop nationally-agreed definitions of the above groups.

Obviously, these groups are not mutually exclusive. Schools are often called upon to provide extra support or to develop specific strategies for students whose learning is affected by the cumulative effects of multiple disadvantage.

Gender equity is a mainstream issue in Australian schooling, as described in the National Policy for the Education of Girls (NAPEG). The National Action Plan for the Education of Girls 1993–97 contains priority areas for action within the national policy framework. Girls are therefore not identified as a specific group under the NSES. Neither are issues relating to the education of boys specifically addressed in the NSES. However, gender inequities intersect with, and in most cases compound, other forms of educational disadvantage. The NSES therefore incorporates appropriate measures that take into account the related and interactive effects of gender and educational disadvantage. In particular, reporting of progress towards the goals of the NSES and evaluation of outcomes will be gender-specific.

Students who are described as gifted and talented or of high intellectual potential are not included as one of the priority groups identified in the NSES. Such students, as a group, usually have access to the educational benefits which the strategy is seeking to ensure for all students. Nevertheless, it is recognised that gifted and talented students may be members of priority groups for a variety of social, cultural, linguistic or socioeconomic reasons. Therefore the NSES will assist those gifted and talented students who are also members of one of the priority groups.

The NSES is designed to contribute to improvement in two principal goals—Access and Participation and Educational Outcomes.

Goal 1: Access and Participation

To improve access to, and the quality of participation in, schooling for all students and in particular to:

- increase the participation rate of identified priority groups in relation to the nationally accepted target (95 per cent) for the whole school student population;
- increase the successful completion of students in priority groups to year 12 or equivalent;
- ensure that priority group students have access to a comprehensive range of educational opportunities;
- maximise access to preschool provision that facilitates transition to school for families and children in the priority groups.

Goal 2: Educational Outcomes

To enable all students to maximise their educational outcomes by:

- lifting the attainment levels of students in the priority groups;
- ensuring that the range of outcomes for students in the priority groups is the same as those for the remainder of the student population;
- increasing the post-school education, training and employment participation of students from the priority groups.

Taken together, these two goals assume that groups of students identified as disadvantaged will have the same educational opportunities as those in the remainder of the student population. They will be expected to achieve the same rates of participation, attendance and completion, and the same range of educational attainment as students in the general population. The latter expectation implies a rise in the educational attainment of all disadvantaged students.

Priority areas for action

In addition to the two principal goals the NSES identifies five priority areas for strategic action. These are:

Curriculum and assessment

The NSES aims to ensure that curriculum and assessment are inclusive and relevant for all students.

Teaching

The NSES aims to ensure that teachers of all students apply both general and specific knowledge and skills and attitudes that are inclusive of the perspectives of students in the priority groups.

Awareness and commitment among the education community

As a vehicle for increasing the understanding amongst teachers, policy makers, administrators and the general community, of the needs and capacities of the students in the priority groups and of the benefits of strategic action, the NSES aims to ensure that the parents of students in the priority groups are able to exercise their right to participate in decisions about their children's education.

School environment

The NSES aims to ensure the provision of a supportive school environment—one in which the social, cultural and physical elements provide a basis for valuing and empowering students and meeting their needs in an equitable manner.

Use of resources

The NSES aims to ensure the optimal use of resources. This is achieved when policies and methods of allocation are consistent with principles of equity—that is, resources are targeted at those students that are most disadvantaged and are used effectively and efficiently, and sharing and collaboration in their use is encouraged and enhanced.

Annual reporting and evaluation of the NSES

Annual Reporting

As part of their commitment, school authorities will participate in annual reporting and monitoring of agreed performance measures. This will be consistent with the framework developed for the annual *National Report on Schooling in Australia*. The reporting structure will also allow for the outcomes of the Industry Commission review of education being conducted for the COAG.

Evaluation

In 1998, MCEETYA will conduct a mid-term evaluative review of the overall strategy using available data. This will be repeated in 2001. Annual monitoring and reporting processes will inform decisions about the nature of, and priorities for, that evaluation. The 1998 evaluation may result in the NSES being refined and refocused in response to changing circumstances.

The review process for the NSES will be managed by MCEETYA through its relevant taskforce. This will be done in consultation with groups and authorities affected by the strategy.

In this way, the essential features of the NSES—its comprehensiveness and its collaborative and inclusive nature—are built into the further development of the strategy beyond the initial period to the Year 2000.

National sample studies on definitions of 'SES' and 'NESB'

Two sample studies were undertaken under the auspices of MCEETYA (one on SES in 1993/94 and another on NESB in 1994) and summaries are published here to inform public debate. The findings do not necessarily constitute an endorsed position or agreement to the definitions by members of the Council. Definitional work in both of these areas was also undertaken in 1994 by the MCEETYA Schools Taskforce and the Taskforce on School Statistics as well as the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) Schools Working Group. Recommendations to Ministers were considered and endorsed on these and related areas, including the appropriateness of using the Australian Bureau of Statistics Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage (IRSED) and the Griffith Service Access Frame (GSAF), especially in relation to the definition of socioeconomic status (SES) and associated locational disadvantage. Further definitional work is envisaged during 1995 and 1996 to establish the implementation of agreed national definitions in both areas.

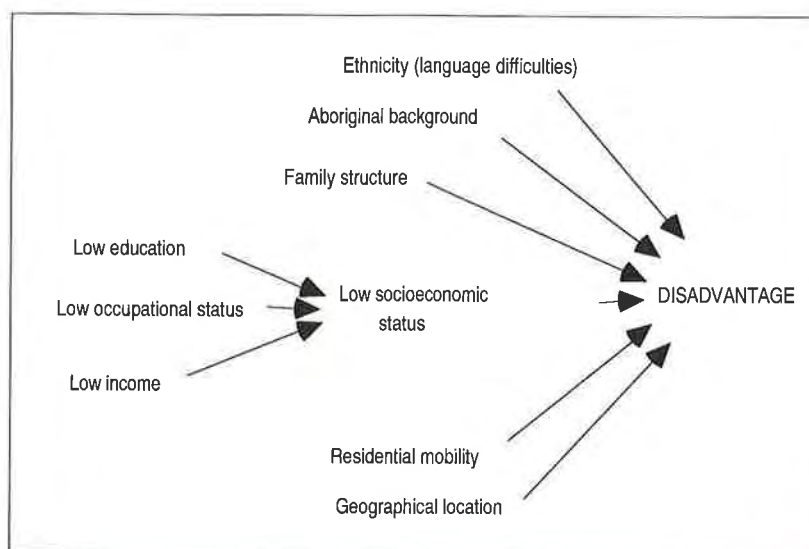
National sample study on definition, measurement and educational provision for school students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds

Socioeconomic status is a term used to describe a person's overall social position or social standing. It is determined by individual achievements, the most important of which are:

- educational attainment;
- employment and occupational status;
- income and wealth.

In some situations the term socioeconomic status is used to refer to a wider concept of disadvantage. Socio-economic status is then seen as determined both by individual attainments and other attributes that may impinge on a person's social position and life chances. These other attributes include: ethnicity and language proficiency, Aboriginal background, gender, family structure, geographical location, and residential mobility. It is therefore recommended that a term such as social disadvantage or disadvantage be used for the broader approach. The idea of different components contributing to educational disadvantage is shown schematically in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Socioeconomic status and other components of disadvantage



In 1994, programs for socioeconomically disadvantaged students tended to be funded at the Commonwealth level and implemented at the State level. The most common were those within the Disadvantaged Schools Component of the National Equity Program for Schools, followed by the Students at Risk Component. The emphasis was on programs which provided basic living skills (such as literacy and social skills) rather than learning in specific curriculum areas, and programs which ensured that adult support people (teachers and parents) were involved and trained. Participants were mostly from primary or junior secondary levels. Other recognised attributes of disadvantage were evident in the profile of participants—poverty, Aboriginality, living in geographical isolation, and coming from a non-English speaking background—with the greatest emphasis being on poverty.

There was an emphasis on funding projects in literacy and language, and these projects took many forms, from language across the curriculum to parents helping with beginning readers. Computers featured frequently in school submissions; some schools had no computer equipment and wished to acquire resources in this area, while other schools were integrating computer technology into curriculum development. All education authorities were encouraging schools to look beyond the acquisition of material resources to thinking about how to use resources to improve learning outcomes and how to monitor those outcomes.

It would be of considerable benefit to promote wide acceptance of an agreed definition and for education authorities to follow similar procedures in the measurement and monitoring of disadvantage experienced by students of low socioeconomic status.

Although the actual approach to its measurement may vary according to the circumstances of a given investigation, it is important that there exists an understanding of the consequences of different approaches. It is also important that issues of definition, measurement and practice are seen as interdependent.

National sample study on definition of Non-English Speaking Background

The aim of this study was to develop an agreed definition (or definitions) of non-English speaking background acceptable to education authorities in all States and Territories that will enable the collection and reporting of nationally consistent data on the performance of students from both English speaking and non-English speaking backgrounds. Participation by education authorities in the study and agreement to public reporting on it do not constitute endorsement of the definitions by individual States or Territories, nor agreement to the definition being applied to any allocation of resources.

Issues arising from definitions of non-English speaking background concern ethnic identity, language shift and language maintenance. Language may be seen as a key factor in the definition of ethnic identity but other factors of importance are cultural core values, the degree of cultural similarity to the dominant group and the extent of intermarriage.

Most systems and sectors defined the cultural background of students by using the country of birth of the subject and/or the country of birth of the subject's parents (one parent or both parents); and the linguistic background by using the main language spoken at

home. Depending on the purposes for which information was required, other variables were used to refine the data collected, for example, date of arrival.

Participation and performance indicator information on NESB students both of migrant origin and of Aboriginal background indicated that NESB students are not a homogeneous group. Some national groups would tend to be over-represented in the more 'prestigious' subject choice areas at year 12, whilst the performance of other cohorts would be below average. Aboriginal students, however, are very much under-represented in terms of both participation and performance.

It was agreed that any definition of the term must be concerned with the expression of both the cultural and linguistic aspects of the subject. However, there was a tension between the notion of this broader definition and the uses of the proposed definition for data collection purposes. A hierarchy of definitions was proposed as follows:

Level 1 (i.e. the broadest level)

- Those who speak or understand a heritage language other than English used in the home by parents, relatives, caregivers and/or significant others; or
- those who were born in or have one or both parents born in a non-English speaking country; or
- those who identify themselves as being of non-English speaking background.

Level 2 (i.e. the level focusing directly on linguistic and cultural issues)

- Those who speak or understand a heritage language other than English used in the home; or
- those who were born in or have one or both parents born in a non-English speaking country.

Level 3 (i.e. the level focusing more specifically on linguistic issues)

- Those who speak or understand a heritage language other than English used in the home.

Of these, the recommended definition for national reporting purposes was Level 3. While one of the advantages of the recommended definition is that it is compatible with definitions already used by most school education authorities, it is not intended to replace definitions used by school systems and the Commonwealth for other purposes. The report of the study will be referred to the MCEETYA Taskforce on School Statistics for specific advice on the implementation of the definition and, to enable useful reporting by subgroup, the development of a classification of heritage languages.

Whilst some dissatisfaction was expressed with the use of the term 'non-English speaking background' other suggested terms also had disadvantages. Any revision of the terminology therefore will need careful consideration.

Gender Equity in Schooling

National Action Plan for the Education of Girls 1993–97

The priorities for the 1994 implementation of the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls (NAPEG) were 'eliminating sex-based harassment' and 'reforming the curriculum'. Ongoing Commonwealth initiatives such as the Gender and Violence Project and the Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project have been collaboratively developed with State systems to assist in achieving the objectives of improving girls' educational outcomes. Qualitative data on State-level implementation of strategies to address these priority areas is provided in the individual State chapters.

MCEETYA Gender Equity Taskforce

Attention to the priority areas of 'sex-based harassment' and 'reforming the curriculum' has inevitably had a flow-on effect of highlighting the need to examine some of the forms of boys' behaviour and values that conform to restrictive expressions of masculinity.

As public interest becomes focused on the potential role for school culture as a 'change agent' encouraging tolerance, diversity and equity, there is increasing support for an approach to schooling which focuses on gender relations.

Over the past few years, the policies and strategies supporting girls' education have become sufficiently visible to encourage the public to expect similar intervention in boys' problem areas such as under achievement in reading and a preference for violent forms of conflict resolution. However, there is also a growing community perception that addressing these boys' problems by increasing resources for boys such as remedial reading programs and behaviour modification programs is not an adequate response. Moreover, the emergence of a more assertive, higher-achieving generation of girls expecting to be financially independent adults, will need to be complemented by a generation of boys confident in their masculinity based on a gender equity rather than a male-dominance model.

This flow-on effect of intervention at the school level to improve girls' schooling experience resulted in a MCEETYA decision in 1994 to broaden the terms of reference of its advisory body on girls' education to address the additional changes required to boys' education to achieve the broader objective of gender equity. The Gender Equity Taskforce has continuity of chairing from the former AEC National Advisory Committee on the Education of Girls and comprises

senior officials from each of the MCEETYA jurisdictions including New Zealand and the non-government schools sector. The taskforce will present its advice to MCEETYA in 1995. During 1994, the taskforce continued to monitor the implementation of the NAPEG at the State level, with national monitoring to take place through a national sample study to be carried out over 1994–95. This sample study, which will also reflect the wider brief of the Gender Equity Taskforce, will be reported on in detail as a special focus area of the National Overview chapter in the *National Report* on the 1995 school year.

General and vocational education

Australian Vocational Training System

In November 1994, MCEETYA agreed to the progressive implementation of the Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS) from January 1995. The AVTS provides a broad range of articulated pathways combining education, training and work placements. Ministers agreed that vocational programs in the school sector would be converted to AVTS principles by the start of the 1998 school year.

These decisions build on extensive piloting of the system through work-based and institution-based projects. Schools and school systems in all States and Territories have participated in the AVTS pilot process since 1992. The AVTS supports cross-sectoral partnerships between schools and industry, and between schools, TAFE and other vocational education and training providers. A draft evaluation report of the pilot projects in late 1994 indicates broad acceptance of AVTS by industry, students, teachers and parents. Stakeholders indicated support for a greater convergence of general and vocational education, and particular support for the principle of the integration of structured workplace learning into programs.

The AVTS is based on nationally endorsed industry standards, and includes generic competencies such as the key competencies. Achievement of competencies through the AVTS leads to qualifications at certificate levels within the AQF. School students will increasingly be able to achieve vocational education sector certificates while completing their senior secondary schooling or will gain credit towards such qualifications.

National collaboration in curriculum

During 1994, carriage of collaborative activity in relation to school curriculum statements and profiles was undertaken by Curriculum Corporation, as requested by MCEETYA. Curriculum Corporation was

also given the task of annual monitoring of this exercise. The Corporation found that almost all States were incorporating the national statements and profiles in the development of their own curriculum documents, while reflecting local policies and priorities. The Curriculum Corporation survey yielded the following general observations:

- the outcomes approach to learning is widely and seriously 'on trial', with particular attention to the quality of the learning outcomes, the demands on teachers, reporting to parents and the speed of implementation;
- there is a general demand for a wider range of work samples and pointers for some of the key learning areas;
- planning, recording and assessing across all eight key learning areas presents a particular challenge to resourcing for primary teachers;
- a significant amount of professional development is being undertaken, including workshops, sample units/courses and ongoing consultancy support and programs funded by the Commonwealth under the National Professional Development Program;
- similarly, a range of additional support materials is being developed by States, together with appropriate computer technology;
- a requirement for more advice on assessment and reporting, including assistance with moderating techniques, is to be expected as implementation proceeds;
- cross-curriculum issues such as literacy key competencies and equity are significant additional considerations;
- there is wide diversity in views and practice on making a link between profile levels and year levels.

Overview on key competencies

In 1994, individual and collaborative work to pilot the key competencies in schools and TAFE/training settings continued in all States and Territories, assisted by an ongoing funding commitment by the Commonwealth. Pilot projects focused on three main areas: the extent to which the key competencies were reflected in the curriculum, either implicitly or explicitly; teaching and learning practices to develop the key competencies; and assessment and reporting on them. To coincide with the piloting process, a major information campaign on the key competencies was developed and conducted with the major outcome being the distribution of information kits and videos on the key competencies to schools and TAFE institutions across Australia. Several projects involving business and industry were developed during

the year with the major focus being the extent to which the key competencies are embedded in industry standards and recruitment practices.

The report on the development of Cultural Understandings as an additional competency was considered by MCEETYA in November 1994 and referred back to States and Territories for their consideration.

Languages other than English

In 1994, the AEC/MOVEET Working Party on the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) was replaced by the MCEETYA Taskforce on the ALLP. The taskforce has three subgroups: the Languages other than English (LOTE) in Schools Subgroup, the Adult LOTE and Asian Studies Subgroup and the Adult English Language and Literacy Subgroup.

The LOTE in Schools Subgroup was established to provide advice to the taskforce on the development of policies and programs for the implementation of the ALLP in schools. It comprises representatives with expertise in LOTE policy and programs from each State, Territory and the Commonwealth.

The LOTE in Schools Subgroup developed a Collaborative Strategy on LOTE Education in Schools which was submitted to MCEETYA after an extensive process of consultation, and endorsed by the Council at its April 1994 meeting. The collaborative strategy identifies several broad categories in which the Commonwealth, States and Territories have a common interest and where collaborative development would be a valuable means of sharing information and achieving efficiencies. Tasks identified by the collaborative strategy include:

- information management—collecting, analysing and disseminating information to assist in system level planning;
- coordination and rationalisation of LOTE and Asian studies curriculum development;
- support for the implementation of pre-service and in-service programs which will ensure an adequate supply of appropriately qualified teachers of languages to meet the needs of jurisdictions and the goals of their language policies;
- increasing the awareness in the community (students, parents, school councils, teachers, industry groups and the wider community) of the value of language skills.

The work of the subgroup in 1994 focused on developing a work plan for the implementation of the Collaborative Strategy. The 1994–95 Innovative Languages other than English in Schools (ILOTES) Program supported State and Territory education departments in developing projects to implement

aspects of the strategy. Projects to be undertaken in 1994–95 were:

- Data collection for LOTE—a project to facilitate the collection, analysis and dissemination of information on participation and retention patterns in LOTE programs. The project involves collaboration with the MCEETYA Taskforce on School Statistics.
- Case studies of LOTE provision—development of an information kit for systems and schools describing a range of LOTE programs currently being provided. Case studies will be selected on the basis that they have identified and addressed problems frequently met by schools and have provided viable options to deal with them.
- Information on print and audio-visual promotional materials for LOTE—this project will collect, document, describe and disseminate information on all available print and audio-visual material for LOTE applicable to the schooling sector.
- Promotional material targeting students, parents and school communities—development of a multi-media resource package to be used at school and regional level to encourage students, parents and school communities to value the educational, personal and vocational benefits of studying a LOTE.
- Resource package for career educators/advisers—development of a resource kit to help career educators to increase their knowledge and understanding of the increasing importance of languages for the individual, the community and the nation.
- LOTE curriculum materials in Australia—this project will produce an information booklet, describing briefly the kinds of curriculum materials developed by government and non-government systems in each State and Territory.

Equity in Senior Secondary School Assessment (ESSSA) Project

This project has analysed some of the patterns of student participation and performance and outlines of recommendations for further action and research by the Commonwealth, Australian Curriculum Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA), the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia and systems of education, including higher education and vocational education.

ACACA has undertaken a Commonwealth-funded Curriculum Development Project during 1994, to develop assessment procedures and a set of examination and assessment guidelines which are free of gender bias, based on the findings from the ESSSA project.

Supporting the national goals: teaching and learning

Teacher competencies

Work on developing national competency standards for the teaching profession was carried forward by a working party which comprises representatives from government and non-government teacher employers and teacher unions, the university sector, the Australian Teaching Council (a national professional association for teachers, incorporated in the Australian Capital Territory in June 1993) and the Commonwealth.

The competency framework was developed under the auspices of the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning to define the essential aspects of the work of beginning teachers. It articulates five key and essential areas of competence for teaching, elements associated with each area of competence, indicators of effective practice for each element and case studies to illustrate each element. It is supported by a number of documents including principles, possible purposes and uses for competencies and an extensive set of case studies. The competency framework has been the subject of extensive consultation with, and validation by, the profession.

During 1994, the framework was further refined and underwent field testing to explore how it might be used to inform and support teacher professional development, teacher induction and teacher education. Findings of the field studies will be available in 1995.

Resourcing the national goals

The Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia are resourced by State and

Commonwealth governments in a variety of ways, not always specifically attributable to any particular goal. They may be resourced through collaborative financing or through one government's initiatives, sometimes through combined efforts of two or more governments.

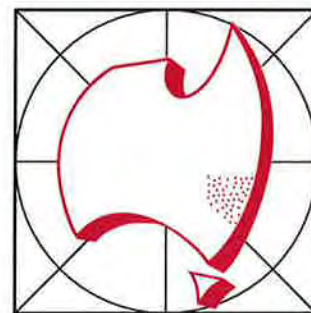
In 1994, the major national collaborative initiatives in schooling continued to be in curriculum development, especially the publishing of educational materials through Curriculum Corporation and in educational research through ACER. All systems and the Commonwealth contributed to the resourcing of these enterprises which make a significant contribution to the nationwide achievement of the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia.

In addition, 1994 saw an historic decision for Australian schooling, involving a major long-term resourcing commitment made by all governments to improving literacy in languages other than English, and knowledge of other cultures, in particular, the four key Asian languages and cultures identified as of critical importance to Australia's economic future.

In 1994, the AVTS pilot projects in schools have been a major mechanism for achievement of goal number five. The funding arrangements for the pilot projects involved both Commonwealth-specific financial outlays and significant supporting resource commitments by the States and Territories.

The goal of promoting equality of education opportunities is resourced through a range of programs including general recurrent and capital funding programs and specific purpose programs which aim to address educational disadvantage. These include the National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS) and State and system-level equity programs. NEPS agreements include requirements to report on resource inputs as well as educational outcomes.

NEW SOUTH WALES



Introduction

In NSW education is compulsory for children from the age of 6 until they turn 15, through attendance at a government school, a registered non-government school or by approval for home schooling. Primary education covers the seven years from kindergarten to year 6, and secondary education covers the six years from year 7 to year 12. In 1994, there were 1,051,849 full-time students attending schools in New South Wales (34 per cent of Australian school students).

Of these students, 72 per cent attended the 2,187 schools operated by the Department of School Education (DSE) and 28 per cent attended 826 registered non-government schools, provided in the case of systemic schools through Catholic dioceses and the Seventh Day Adventist system, or in the case of non-systemic schools, by governing bodies.

Priority objectives for 1994

Government schools

An Annual Priorities document was produced to communicate DSE plans to the education community. Schools incorporated the priorities as appropriate in their plans. In this way, the priorities became the key element in system-wide planning, and guided schools, regions and State office directorates in the development of their annual plans, the application of budgets and the monitoring of progress. The priorities in 1994 for government schools were:

- quality teaching—maintaining a skilled, knowledgeable and motivated teaching service with a commitment to continuing professional development;
- quality learning—providing opportunities for all students to develop their capacities to the maximum and ensuring comprehensiveness, rigour and an appropriate focus on learning;
- regular reporting to parents—identifying desired learning outcomes and publicly reporting student progress throughout the year;

- community participation—ensuring teaching and learning programs reflect the needs of students and the aspirations of their communities;
- happy and safe schools—ensuring high morale, that students and teachers feel secure and respected, and that a high value is placed on working together.

Non-government schools

Catholic schools, whether diocesan administered (systemic) or congregational (non-systemic), expressed a common purpose. They aimed to be centres of learning, excellence and Christian evangelisation. Catholic schools aimed to: value the worth of each individual; nurture, promote and provide for students' faith development; encourage students to strive for excellence in all areas of human growth; and provide a range of learning opportunities so that all students could gain knowledge and develop skills and competencies necessary to participate in, and contribute to, society. In 1994, there were 592 Catholic schools, which commonly emphasised the following program objectives:

- improving desired educational outcomes for students;
- developing and implementing the curriculum key learning areas (KLAs);
- providing opportunities for all students to develop their individual potential in all fields, especially for Aboriginal students and students disadvantaged by socioeconomic status, isolation, special academic needs or gender inequity;
- integrating students with disabilities into regular schools and providing necessary support structures;
- providing a diversified curriculum to meet the needs of the growing proportion of students continuing to years 11 and 12;
- maximising the competence, efficiency and confidence of school staff by increasing opportunities for professional and personal development.

As well as Catholic schools there were 234 other non-government schools in New South Wales. The majority were independent. Others formed small systems, were mostly coeducational and two-thirds of them served metropolitan communities. Most were affiliated with Christian organisations while others were community based or offered differing philosophies of education.

Overall, priority objectives for most independent schools in New South Wales reflected a strong emphasis on improving and upgrading education related resources. Staff professional development was considered an integral part of resource improvement. The next major concern was student development. Many schools focused on the holistic development of students and offered programs covering the physical, social, emotional and spiritual aspects of human development. The schools aimed to develop students' full potential by fostering confidence, self-reliance and independence, including self-discipline and self-respect.

Other priority objectives reported by independent schools included increased emphasis on pastoral care, cultural awareness via language and courses on different cultures, and the improvement of school administration.

Board of Studies

The Board of Studies is responsible for the development of curriculum and curriculum support materials, the conduct of the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate (HSC) examinations, and the registration of non-government schools.

The Board's priority objectives included the implementation of major changes to HSC requirements to allow greater flexibility in patterns of study; the realignment of NSW curricula in the light of national priorities for education; and the introduction of new courses and new ways of reporting student achievement in courses that combined general education with vocational education and training.

The priorities of each school sector and of the Board of Studies related directly to the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia.

Excellence and equity

Retention rates

The years 7 to 12 apparent retention rate at the mid-year census in 1994 was 70.4 per cent. This was slightly lower than in 1993 and marked the end of the rising trend evident from 1985. The rates for each sector and by gender for selected years are set out in Tables 1 and 2. The stabilisation in the NSW retention rate was consistent with trends in most other States.

Table 1. Year 12 retention by sector, selected years (per cent)

	<i>Govt</i>	<i>Non-govt</i>	<i>All schools</i>
1986	39.1	60.0	44.4
1989	49.1	69.3	54.4
1990	51.4	71.3	56.8
1991	56.3	74.0	61.4
1992	64.4	78.4	68.5
1993	66.5	80.0	70.6
1994	66.2	80.0	70.4

Source: NSW Dept of School Education

Table 2. Year 12 retention by gender, selected years (per cent)

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
1986	42.4	46.6	44.4
1989	50.7	58.1	54.4
1990	52.0	61.9	56.8
1991	56.6	66.4	61.4
1992	64.0	73.3	68.5
1993	66.3	75.0	70.6
1994	65.4	75.6	70.4

Source: NSW Dept of School Education

Age participation rates of 15 to 19 year olds

The rates of education participation for all sectors by age provide a broader perspective than retention rates. There were significant differences in the participation of 15 to 19 year olds in each education sector in NSW compared to the rest of Australia, as detailed in Table 3. This is partly because of differing entry patterns at the beginning of schooling, which results in NSW senior students being older, on average, than students from other States, and partly because of greater TAFE participation in this State.

There were 421.9 full-time equivalent (FTE) part-time students enrolled in all NSW schools, 342.6 in government schools and 79.3 in non-government schools.

Issues associated with effective schools

Community participation

The effectiveness of NSW schools was enhanced by expanded parent and community participation in educational decision making. New and more flexible guidelines for establishing school councils in government schools were negotiated with the relevant interest groups. School councils became more involved in setting the broad policy directions, aims and educational goals of schools and in the framing of school plans and budgets. They also provided advice on the curriculum directions taken by schools, as well as developing and endorsing policies on student welfare and other issues.

Council members represented various constituencies including parents, school staff, other school community organisations and often students. Representatives reported to, and consulted with, the parent organisations within the school. In this manner groups within the school were able to participate more effectively at all levels of school activity and decision making.

By the end of 1994, 69 per cent of government schools had established school councils compared with 58 per cent at the end of 1993.

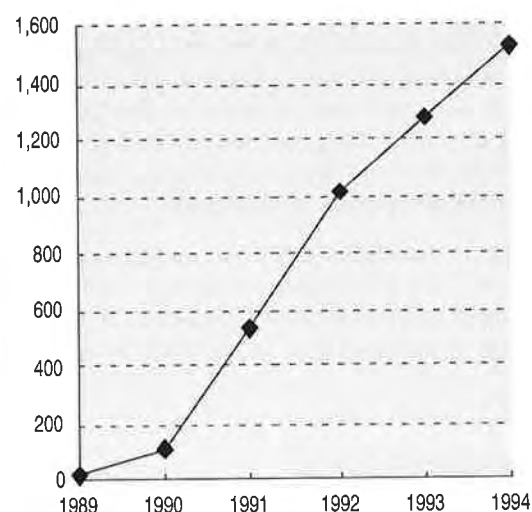
School councils, student representative councils, and members of the Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations and the Federation of School Community Organisations contributed significantly to the consultative process at school, regional and State office levels. Over 23,000 parents and community members participated in courses related to school decision making.

Table 3. Participation in education 15 to 19 year olds, 1994, NSW compared to rest of Australia (per cent)

	<i>Males NSW</i>	<i>Females NSW</i>	<i>Rest of Australia</i>
School	58.3	56.8	53.1
TAFE	12.7	7.6	8.6
Higher education	6.4	8.8	10.0
Other institutions	0.8	1.4	1.3
Total	78.19	74.55	72.79

Source: Derived from ABS Cat No. 6272.0.40.001, *Participation in Education, Australia*, Sept 1994

Figure 1. School councils: growth 1989-94



Source: NSW Dept of School Education

School community organisations volunteered substantial physical and financial support to schools in all sectors.

Community consultation continued to be a significant feature of curriculum development in New South Wales. Draft syllabus and support documents developed by representative committees of the Board of Studies across the range of key learning areas were circulated widely for comment and discussion.

The Parent Committee of the Catholic Education Commission, NSW launched the Real Education Affirms Church and Home (REACH) Program. REACH is a five-session program for school communities, designed to build parent and community involvement in primary and secondary schools.

Independent schools in New South Wales considered parents, ex-students, extended families, local supporting churches, tertiary education institutions and business communities to be part of their school community. Communities were involved in school administration through membership of school boards or councils. These groups dealt with issues such as the development of school policies, curriculum reviews, budget control and financial management.

Outstanding school and community efforts during and after the January fires were recognised in a NSW Governor's Award presented to the Director-General of School Education and permanently displayed at Como West Primary School.

Parent and student perceptions of the effectiveness of schools

The Quality Assurance Reviews in Government Schools program found evidence of widespread parental and student satisfaction with most aspects of schooling. The findings for individual schools provided directions for improving student learning outcomes in schools while the collective findings provided clear guidance for planning in the government school system.

Reviews found that students, teachers and parents were satisfied with the attainment of students and most acknowledged successful teaching practice. This was especially so in small schools and schools for specific purposes.

Equity initiatives

Education of girls

During 1994, girls as a group continued to improve academically compared to boys, particularly in the HSC examinations. HSC results show that girls increased their participation and performance in a number of subjects. For instance, 35 per cent of 4-unit mathematics students were girls compared to 26 per cent in 1989, and 51 per cent of 4-unit science students were girls compared to 38 per cent in 1989.

While girls' improved learning outcomes are welcome there are further gender-equity challenges. Consideration of girls' post-school options and outcomes, as well as the improvement of gender relations between students, are among a range of educational issues which still require attention.

A reappraisal of all programs to achieve gender equity began in 1994. A government inquiry into boys' education included extensive consultation with students, parents, teachers, educational administrators, teacher unions and academics. DSE Quality Assurance data and HSC learning outcomes data were used to inform the inquiry. Recommendations were made for the development of an improved Gender Equity Strategy underpinned by a set of gender-equity principles. The need was identified for a strategy which included programs for girls, programs for boys and programs for both girls and boys and which was theoretically based on the social construction of gender. At the completion of the inquiry a further community consultation process began to consider the recommendations.

Initiatives in government schools continued to address the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls. The priority of eliminating sex-based harassment was addressed by the development of procedures for resolving complaints about discrimination against students.

Resources were provided to schools to raise teacher awareness of sex-based harassment and a project was conducted to provide primary schools statewide with a variety of models for addressing harassment. Professional development activities were provided for teachers and parents, particularly in the personal development, health, and physical education KLA. Many student representative councils adopted the issue of sex-based harassment as a priority for action.

The priority of reforming the curriculum was addressed primarily through professional development of teachers of mathematics and science working within the Disadvantaged Schools and Country Areas Components. The emphasis was on gender-inclusive teaching and learning strategies linked to relevant curriculum areas. The Early Learning profiles and curriculum support materials for English were revised to be gender-inclusive. Some schools focused on improving curriculum offerings to broaden primary school girls' perceptions of their post-school options.

Issues concerning the education of girls continued to be significant in Catholic schools. In the Sydney archdiocese, for example, 65 teachers and system personnel attended a system-funded conference entitled 'Gender and Equity: 7 Years On'. Keynote addresses covered gender construction and sex-based harassment. Workshop topics included HSC results and subject choices, educational needs of migrant girls, and boys education issues. Gender equity initiatives benefited from \$28,776 in Commonwealth funding.

The Board of Studies *Statement of Principles on Gender Equity* was incorporated into the *Syllabus Development Handbook*. The *Statement* requires the committees involved in curriculum development to ensure that curriculum documents cater to the needs of girls and boys and that they reflect an expectation that boys and girls should equally be able to achieve syllabus objectives.

Educational provisions for students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds

The Disadvantaged Schools Component (DSC) of the National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS) assisted some 156,000 students disadvantaged by socioeconomic status in 472 government schools. Commonwealth funds of \$20.6 million were supplemented by approximately \$16 million from the NSW Government. These additional funds were used in part to reduce class sizes in disadvantaged schools.

Data on the outcomes of the DSC program showed that attendance rates for students in disadvantaged schools were close to the State averages. Scores on Basic Skills Tests (Aspects of Numeracy and Literacy) and in the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate

examinations continued to be below the State means, with disadvantaged students being over-represented in the lower deciles. The retention rates of schools serviced by the DSC program were 54.7 per cent for males, 67 per cent for females and 60.5 per cent overall. These figures were below state averages. Compared to the previous year, the rates were stable for males and showed a small improvement for females.

Work began on a comprehensive strategy to focus on conditions for successful learning by all educationally disadvantaged groups, including socioeconomically disadvantaged students. Two important aspects will be effective coordination between all government services which provide assistance and allowances, and resource allocations which take into account concentrations of poverty or low socioeconomic status backgrounds.

The pilot edition of *Key Issues for Educators of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students* was published by the DSE. This support document for schools suggests various questions concerning curriculum, assessment and reporting, teaching methodology and school structures that schools can investigate. It also contains sections on how schools can undertake research and on integrating equity measures into the school plan.

A mapping exercise, conducted in every NSW Catholic school during 1993, used the Ross-Farish methodology, applied to the most recent ABS Census data, to identify those schools serving the 12.5 per cent most socioeconomically disadvantaged communities in NSW.

A new list of Catholic schools declared 'disadvantaged' will be implemented in 1995.

One hundred and fifty teachers and community members from Catholic DSC schools in NSW attended a two-day conference in November 1994 to celebrate and review 20 years of the DSC. The conference included over 40 school-based workshops on the most significant DSC projects.

A total of 122 Catholic schools were supported under the DSC, using Commonwealth funds of \$3,101,800. The schools continued their emphases on teacher development, parental involvement and curriculum review. The curriculum areas that received attention were numeracy; literacy, music; science and technology; and personal development, health and physical education.

The DSC provided \$306,000 to assist 1,935 students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds in Independent schools. These schools implemented 32 projects.

These projects focused primarily on the English, mathematics and science KLAs. Professional development of teachers and school—community participation were key outcomes of these school projects.

Students at risk of not completing a full secondary education

The Students at Risk Component (STAR) targeted students who were most at risk of not completing secondary schooling. The 143 government schools involved in the program identified small numbers of the most 'at risk' students and developed a wide range of curriculum, structural and organisational strategies to meet the individual needs of students in crisis. The Commonwealth funding was used to support system and school-based research projects. The projects featured innovative approaches to achieve significant and observable differences to the lives and prospects of the identified young people.

During the year, 94 Catholic schools were involved in STAR projects, using Commonwealth funding of \$604,000. A feature of the program was the extent to which the various dioceses developed particular approaches designed to respond to local situations and student needs.

Eighteen independent schools instituted special programs for 243 students, using the \$204,000 provided under the STAR Component of NEPS. The vast majority of targeted students exhibited learning and/or behavioural difficulties at school. Almost half of the targeted students were reported to have experienced homelessness, family dislocation, violence or abuse, with approximately 17 per cent of students being young offenders. The principal activities aimed to develop basic literacy and numeracy, personal/social skills and vocational preparation. Student outcomes were reported to include improved academic performance, positive self-esteem and improved peer/family relationships, and more regular attendance and participation in school activities.

The introduction of Pathways options to the HSC, implemented from year 11, 1994, has widened the options for students at risk in the post-compulsory years of schooling. Through flexible progression, accumulation, and recognition of prior learning provisions, students unable to complete the traditional full-time, school-based HSC can now combine their studies with employment, or with other responsibilities such as family care.

Education of gifted and talented students

Commonwealth funding for government school gifted and talented students totalled \$232,500. Among the activities funded were two projects that investigated the attitudes and understandings of students, teachers and parents from the priority groups about aspects of educating gifted and talented students. Data analyses, surveys and interview evidence emphasised the need for students from disadvantaged groups to be targeted

specifically for inclusion in all programs for gifted and talented students.

A symposium for 200 gifted students disadvantaged by isolation and a range of sociocultural factors demonstrated that the identification of students with exceptional abilities does not have to rely on formal test results. The students were identified from across the State and spent three days working at an advanced level in telecommunications, the creative arts, English and social responsibility.

Independent schools aimed at improving the communication and social skills, and the social integration and acceptance of the gifted and talented by other students. A variety of options including individual/group research projects, part-time enrolment in tertiary courses, peer-tutoring programs and subject/grade acceleration was implemented. No additional government funds were provided to support these projects.

Education of gifted and talented students continued to be a priority in Catholic schools, with a focus on teacher professional development and parent involvement. Commonwealth funding for Catholic school gifted and talented students totalled \$99,100.

In the Armidale diocese two projects were completed in 1994. Firstly, the second year of project years 3–10 resulted in the development of a book which is pending publication and distribution. The project also involved the development of some twenty eight modules for gifted and talented disadvantaged students, parent and teacher workshops and visits to other institutions. Secondly, the project K–1–2, allowed six days of workshops for some twenty teachers, distribution of resources and development of a 'book' of exemplar practice. It involved the dioceses of Lismore, Bathurst, Wilcannia-Forbes and Wagga Wagga which all offered workshops and support to those within their teaching teams. As part of the program in the Armidale Diocese, over 350 parents attended workshops conducted in Armidale, Tamworth, Gunnedah and Moree. The workshops introduced parents to the common challenges of teaching gifted and talented students, provided background information, highlighted resources and began the process of establishing support networks. It was voted an overwhelming success by parents and further workshops were requested.

The Board of Studies offered Distinction Courses in philosophy, cosmology and comparative literature to accelerating students for the first time in 1994. Under the Board's Pathways provisions, students can access these high-level courses by accelerating in one or more subjects and presenting for the HSC ahead of their cohort.

By meeting specified achievement levels and other criteria, students can study these university-level courses and gain advanced standing into certain first-year tertiary courses.

Education of students from non-English speaking backgrounds

In 1994, NSW government schools enrolled the equivalent of 141,123 full-time students from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB). This represented 18.7 per cent of all school enrolments. NESB students participated in all aspects of the curriculum offered to students of their age.

NESB students were provided with English as a second language (ESL) assistance as required. This ranged from intensive support for newly arrived students with minimal or no English language, provided through the New Arrivals sub-component of the NEPS, to team teaching between ESL specialists and classroom teachers catering for English language development within mainstream classes.

The learning of languages spoken in school communities was promoted through Community Languages Programs in primary schools (20,000 students), and through the Saturday School of Community Languages (8,000 students).

The special learning needs of NESB students were supported through strategies in the *DSE Multicultural Education Plan* and *Ethnic Affairs Policy Statement (EAPS) Plan*.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds continued to form a very significant group in Catholic schools. Programs were provided to meet their needs using Commonwealth NEPS funding of \$8,016,000.

In 1994 there were 47,147 students identified in Catholic schools as "ESL students requiring assistance", that is, students whose first language is not English and who require ESL tuition. This represents 21.8 per cent of the Catholic school population in NSW.

Ninety per cent of the identified ESL students were in the metropolitan area. Less than half of the eligible ESL students received assistance under the Commonwealth English as a Second Language component. In the Archdiocese of Sydney, ESL students represented nearly one-third of the total Kindergarten enrolment in the Archdiocese, and in some schools as high as 90 per cent of the Kindergarten intake. A focus was on the entry to Kindergarten of students with little or no English, particularly those not eligible for direct support from the New Arrivals per capita grants (\$1,613,604) under the NEPS ESL component.

In addition to extensive provision in Catholic schools of specialist classroom and regional support teachers for ESL, specialised activities in 1994 included: production of a resource, *ESL in Action*; sponsorship for classroom and specialist ESL teachers to undertake postgraduate courses; a New Arrivals Itinerant Service to primary schools; bilingual support classes in primary schools in

Arabic, Spanish and Vietnamese; and mother-tongue maintenance classes in Spanish, Arabic, Italian and Vietnamese. The Catholic system operated two Intensive English Centres in Sydney for new arrivals.

Independent schools with a high proportion of students from non-English speaking backgrounds often used specialised teachers, for example ESL teachers, to assist in the integration of these students. Programs were developed either on an individual or group basis. There were 43 Independent schools funded under the ESL General Support Sub-component which provided \$479,000 for the projects. The applications identified 2,358 eligible students under the ESL General Support Sub-component and 12 students from 10 schools under ESL New Arrivals.

The Board of Studies and the DSE published the *Statement of Intent for the Charter of Principles for a Culturally Diverse Society*.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

Funds from the DSE Aboriginal Education Plan supported initiatives in six areas: curriculum; literacy and numeracy; Aboriginal community development and education; early childhood education; juvenile justice centre education; and Aboriginal cultural programs. Aboriginal Education Assistants were appointed to Schools for Specific Purposes within juvenile justice centres to cater for the educational and cultural needs of school-age Aboriginal detainees.

Early childhood education initiatives were implemented to promote the involvement of Aboriginal communities in preschool and early childhood education and to increase the participation of Aboriginal children in schooling. Activities were provided for Aboriginal students to appreciate their history, cultures and identity. The Aboriginal Visiting Speakers Program operated for all schools. The program provided funds to pay local Aboriginal people to come into schools and share their stories with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. Understanding of the history and cultures of Aboriginal people was enhanced for all students.

Support was given to the teaching, and continued recording, of Aboriginal languages. Teacher understanding of Aboriginal health issues was increased.

DSE schools with high proportions of Aboriginal students used Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program (AESIP) funding to provide additional resources and supplement staffing provisions in their schools.

The Catholic Education Commission employed an Aboriginal Education Officer to assist schools and

dioceses in the coordination of initiatives in Aboriginal education. Many Catholic schools used Aboriginal education funds to bring Aboriginal resource persons to the schools, to develop an appropriate curriculum, and to release teachers for in-service training on Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum. Schools with high proportions of Aboriginal students used AESIP funds to supplement recurrent funding for the employment of Aboriginal Education Assistants and to provide additional resources and staffing.

Independent schools used AESIP funds to provide homework tutorial centres and visiting Aboriginal resource persons. Twenty-nine Aboriginal students were also targeted through the Students at Risk Component. These students received individually tailored educational programs, with particular emphases on literacy, numeracy, life skills and vocational preparation. These projects resulted in increased professional development for teachers and improved student performance and attendance. Under the National Equity Program for Schools, 77 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participated in projects. Of these students, 40 were female and 37 male. At the end of 1994, 68 students had progressed to the next grade. Three students left to take up employment, 1 student went to TAFE, and the destinations for only 2 students were unknown.

The Board of Studies made significant contributions to educational initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during the year. A School Certificate syllabus in Aboriginal studies was implemented to complement the years 11–12 syllabus, a generic language framework was developed for the study of Aboriginal languages, and teaching kits were produced to support the years 7–10 history and geography syllabuses. Aboriginal perspectives were developed across relevant KLAS, including English; human society and its environment; and personal development, health and physical education.

Advice from Aboriginal communities was instrumental in the development of programs. Aboriginal people were involved in DSE educational decision making through the Director-General's Advisory Group on Aboriginal Education and the Regional Aboriginal Education Advisory Committees. The DSE and the Board of Studies continued to develop and implement strategies pursuant to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The Board addressed Aboriginal education issues through the ongoing work of the President's Aboriginal Education Initiatives Advisory Committee.

The range of initiatives described above should over time contribute to an increase in the length of schooling of Aboriginal students which on 1994 figures was substantially below the rate of the general population.

Distance and rural education

The ability of DSE rural schools to respond to the needs of their communities was strengthened by the implementation or consolidation of major initiatives. Revised teacher recruitment and selection procedures ensured that teaching vacancies in rural and remote schools were filled more easily. Principals' positions were established in the smallest primary schools, improved administrative support was provided for principals of other small schools and provision was made for principals of the smallest central schools to be released from teaching duties.

The use of distance teaching technologies and pedagogies increased access to, and the quality of, curriculum provision in rural schools in the government and non-government sectors. Major infrastructure developments were underway for the upgrading of communications systems within schools and between schools and other major information sources, using terrestrial and satellite-based access and delivery systems.

Collaboration between schools, and between schools and their communities, maximised the impact of available physical and human resources. Schools, TAFE institutes and industry developed integrated education and training packages to prepare students for local and national employment opportunities.

Rural and isolated schools increased their use of satellite technology to broaden the curriculum and widen opportunities for students. For example, ten rural secondary schools (five government and five Catholic) followed courses in Indonesian language and culture through the Canberra–Goulburn Diocesan Distance Education Centre.

Commonwealth funding provided under the Country Areas National Component (CANC) of NEPS supported innovative approaches by government and non-government secondary schools aimed at improving access to education, for example, through the production of learning materials for a variety of delivery methods, interschool and cross sectoral collaboration and other support services.

The Country Areas General Component (CAGC) element of the NEPS has been well received in NSW Catholic schools. The Catholic sector received \$412,200 in Commonwealth funds. The involvement with other non-government and government schools under the administration of the DSE has worked effectively with good relationships between the systems being established. The building up of community support for CAGC activities and the sharing of resources and expertise between the systems have been two of the highlights.

This has been one of the greatest achievements of the CAGC in that it has built up strong links amongst isolated schools. The schools shared resources, participated in innovative educational programs together, have undertaken excursions to major cities together and have built up community support for all schools. This has resulted in strong community involvement in all schools. Some of the projects that have been shared by schools include: Instrumental Music programs, Sports Coaching programs, Gifted and Talented workshops, Computer Awareness programs, Provision of resources through Resource Centres, Excursions to Sydney and Canberra, Readers' Theatre Workshops, Performing Arts, LOTE support programs, Drama Workshops and Parent Reading Support Projects.

Funding to all school sectors under the Country Areas General Component was devolved through a mix of direct allocation and submission-based allocation. Funding provided by the Country Areas General Component enabled isolated secondary and central schools to provide senior schooling and broader subject choice. Year 7-12 retention rates for schools serviced by the Country Area Program were lower than state averages. However care should be taken in interpreting this information as many Country Area Program schools offer education only to year 10.

The Board of Studies *Statement of Principles for the Education of Isolated Students* was incorporated into the *Syllabus Development Handbook*. The *Statement* requires committees involved in curriculum development to ensure that curriculum documents assist students to develop skills as self-regulated learners. The *Statement* reflects an expectation that isolated students will have the opportunity to achieve intended outcomes, access syllabus content and complete intended teaching-learning activities.

Special education

The Board of Studies addressed the curriculum requirements of students with special education needs by developing Generic Life Skills courses in each KLA. These courses are in the form of curriculum frameworks and identify the focus and other elements of each KLA which may form the components of a student's individualised educational program.

Since 1993, students with special education needs have been eligible to receive the School Certificate by accessing the Generic Life Skills courses if entered for a special program of study. From 1995, these students will receive a Testamur, a Record of Achievement and a Student Profile. The Student Profile will report on the outcomes achieved by students based on their individual programs of study. This major development ensures that all students with special education needs can be

appropriately credentialled at the end of year 10 or its equivalent.

The Board laid the groundwork for the establishment of the Consultative Network for Special Education, representative of the main organisations involved in the education of students with special needs. This network will be consulted in future curriculum and credentialling matters.

The DSE continued to implement its Special Education Plan. The draft *Model of Support for Students Experiencing Difficulties in Learning* was released in September for broad school and community consultation. The model focuses on early intervention for students experiencing difficulties in learning and specialist services for students requiring ongoing support.

The Learning Assistance Support Team Project continued in 1994 and over 1,400 teachers and 330 schools completed the training course.

An Early Learning Program training package was trialed for regular class teachers, school executives and parents. The program focuses on the prevention of learning failure and supporting young children with disabilities and severe learning difficulties in their transition from early intervention settings or preschools into schools.

From the beginning of 1994 onwards, teachers were employed by the DSE only if their course of teacher education contained special education content equivalent to a thirteen-week unit of special education.

Students with disabilities were supported in their transition from school by all sectors. Within government schools a range of vocational services such as TAFE courses, job coaching or enclave participation was provided to assist students in this transition process. The Commonwealth funded the establishment of ten Transition Liaison Officer positions to support government and non-government regular schools. Staff development was provided through the National Professional Development Program (NPDP)—Key Competencies in the Transition Process for Teachers of Students with Disabilities.

The Department of Community Services Post-School Options Program supported young people with disabilities with moderate or high support needs.

The integration of students with disabilities into regular schools, and the provision of appropriate support for students, teachers and schools, continued to be a high priority for Catholic schools. Enrolment policies and procedures were reviewed in the light of the Commonwealth *Disabilities Discrimination Act* (1992).

Parental involvement and the provision of information for parents were emphasised during 1994. There was increasing use of technology to assist students with special needs. Commonwealth funds for Special School Support \$4,492,800, Special Education Capital \$386,912 and Special Education Intervention \$95,000 were applied to the programs in Catholic schools.

Under the Special Education Component \$3,579,900 was allocated to independent schools to provide educational interventions for students with significant physical, sensory, intellectual, social/emotional impairments or multiple disabilities. There were 927 students targeted in special and mainstream schools.

Independent schools used funding under the Special Education Component of the NEPS to increase access to the curriculum, and improve the implementation of the curriculum. Access projects included the provision of technology such as closed-circuit television for students with visual impairments, and minor building works such as ramps and the provision of toilets for students in wheelchairs. The implementation of curriculum projects provided for the employment of special educators, teachers aides and itinerant services. Funds were also spent on appropriate resource materials for educational programs, and on participation in relevant professional development activities designed to support curriculum implementation.

Over \$423 million was allocated to DSE equity programs. Commonwealth specific purpose payments to the State under the 1994 NEPS agreement formed a component of this funding.

The DSE began to investigate ways of improving the measurement of educational outcomes of students from targeted groups.

Table 4. Recurrent Equity Payments 1994–5 (\$m)

	NSW
Special education	256.3
NESB	63.9
Socioeconomic	37.4
Rural education	50.7
Aboriginal education	8.7
Other equity	6.3
Total	423.3

Source: NSW Dept of School Education

General and vocational education

New initiatives in the post-compulsory years in schools

Structural changes to improve flexibility and to ensure optimal curriculum access for post-compulsory students were featured across all sectors. These included increasing timetable flexibility, integrated sport, mature-age entry, organising courses by semesters, part-time attendance and flexible progression through acceleration and distinction courses.

The new Pathways provisions were fully operational for year 11 students, allowing them to:

- accumulate the HSC over a period of up to five years;
- repeat individual courses and upgrade results;
- accelerate in one or more courses and accumulate results;
- gain credit for other types of courses already undertaken and for prior learning;
- study Distinction Courses.

Over 2,800 senior secondary students in government and non-government schools undertook dual-accredited vocational courses. There was a high level of student demand and school and parent support for these courses.

The courses are dual-accredited by the NSW Board of Studies for the HSC and by the Vocational Education Training and Accreditation Board to meet industry standards. They include a workplace learning component for approximately one-third of course time.

The courses give senior students the opportunity to undertake nationally recognised, entry-level vocational education as an integral component of their HSC studies. As well as gaining a result in the HSC, students gain credit for successfully completed TAFE modules.

Teachers delivering these courses must meet strict quality assurance requirements and by the end of 1994, 1,000 government and non-government school teachers had completed, or were undertaking, industry-specific training. The teacher training to meet industry-standard credentials was funded in part through the NPDP.

New vocational courses were implemented in the industry areas of hospitality, retail and office skills. The first year 12 cohort completed its HSC in industry studies, a vocational course introduced as an Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS) pilot in 1993.

The Board also developed further vocational courses in building and construction, furnishing and rural

industries for implementation in 1995. All dual-accredited vocational courses are written in competency terms and are modular in structure. The increase in vocational courses in the senior years of schooling continued to place significant demands on the resources and structures of schools, especially in arrangements for workplace coordination.

Across all sectors there was cooperation between schools and businesses to form a diverse range of education-business partnerships. As part of the Schools Visit to Industry Program 38,000 students and teachers participated in excursions to business and industry.

The Board of Studies conducted a survey of schools, employers and training groups on the effectiveness of the draft Guidelines for Workplace Learning, and completed groundwork for the Guidelines on Recognition of Prior Learning, which contain information on key principles and procedures for credit transfer and advanced standing.

The DSE funded 120 Teacher-in-Business placements. Teachers undertook short-term placements on specific projects. The program expanded teacher understanding of the workplace, reinforced curriculum links with business and enhanced relationships between schools and business.

An increasing number of Catholic schools were formally linked with industry partners through Business Education Partnerships or Compacts. Teacher professional development and support remained a high priority. In the Parramatta diocese, for example, a Vocational Education Teacher Network was established.

The Board of Studies continued to develop proposals for more comprehensive assessing and reporting of student achievement at the School Certificate. The proposals include options for reporting on competencies and will be informed by the results of a major Commonwealth-funded project to establish the extent to which the current curriculum addresses the key competencies. During 1994, the NSW pilot of the Key Competencies Project made significant progress in mapping mandatory K-10 curriculum documents and mapping teaching practice. All groups involved in education and training worked collaboratively on the project.

School-TAFE links

The Joint Secondary Schools TAFE (JSSTAFE) Program provided senior secondary students with opportunities to complete subjects from mainstream TAFE vocational courses as part of their HSC studies. The program continued to grow in 1994 with some 18,919 students from government and non-government schools participating in 1,241 courses at 114 colleges of TAFE.

New courses developed by the JSSTAFE program were accredited for the NSW Higher School Certificate to complement the dual-accredited vocational courses in schools developed by the Board.

Further credit transfer arrangements were negotiated between the Board of Studies and TAFE to allow students to receive advanced standing in TAFE for both general and vocational Board courses. These arrangements also allowed TAFE courses to be recorded on the HSC.

DSE and TAFE regional and State-level committees investigated ways to enhance provisions and to coordinate initiatives. The packaging of general and vocational courses to maximise credit transfer potential for students was further developed. In 1994, students could gain credit for up to 80 per cent of some TAFE certificates by carefully choosing the combination of courses studied at school. Credit transfer was arranged for 38 HSC subjects into more than 120 TAFE courses.

Catholic secondary schools were involved, as far as resources permitted, in a full range of post-compulsory schooling options. Vocationally oriented options included industry studies, training in retail and commerce, Certificate of Manufacturing courses, JSSTAFE courses, Teachers in Business Program, and work placement. Schools reported a high level of student and parent satisfaction with options and courses.

Independent schools reported easy student access to courses in their local TAFE institutions. There were some private training links in areas such as sports, crafts and business education. Links with local businesses and industries, tertiary education providers, and participation in community programs (for instance, Young Achievers programs) contributed to the personal development of students and facilitated the transition from school to work or further education.

A significant increase in the number of students participating in JSSTAFE courses occurred in 1994 with 436 students from independent schools across the State participating. This represented an increase in participation of 140 per cent on the previous year. The subsidy to the cost of these courses, through both federal and State sources, enabled a much wider range of students to participate than has previously been the case.

Initiatives in career education

The Board of Studies prepared and distributed a draft document of career education outcomes and modules for consultation. The draft document identified the outcomes students need to achieve to be able to make appropriate and informed decisions about education, training and employment pathways. The modules were designed to support both discrete career education programs and the integration of elements of career education across the KLAs.

With the complexity of changes occurring in the world of work, a review was initiated by the DSE into the training of careers advisers. As a result, a new course was developed which included up-to-date information on the training reform agenda and the emergence of vocational pathways. The revised training program was piloted in 1994 and delivered via a mix of face-to-face and distance education modes.

Parent and student perceptions of initiatives in the post-compulsory years

Quality Assurance reviews of government schools showed that expanded curriculum choice in senior secondary schools was widely seen as addressing the needs of a greater range of students and allowing more students access to a variety of relevant pathways. Associated with the need to move more towards a learning-centred than a teaching-centred approach, the need to adjust course delivery to ensure motivation, meaning and engagement was addressed in many review recommendations.

Most changes in the secondary area catered for the needs of the increasing number of senior students who were not planning to make use of their Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER) to obtain university placement. In almost all cases where such changes were made, parents, staff and students were satisfied with the range of options and that the curriculum had been reoriented to meet the needs of students.

The reasons for vocational education being accorded a high priority in most secondary schools appeared to be:

- the relevance it has to non-academic students and the growing opinion in schools that the TER was not an appropriate pathway for all students;
- the understanding among parents that it may assist students to obtain a job more easily;
- the recent developments on a national scale in this area and the influence of curriculum trends and priorities in New South Wales.

Schools in all sectors made substantial changes to their organisation for senior students. Most initiatives were well considered, having been introduced only after lengthy planning and research. Schools promoted the vocational alternatives to parents and students. Schools alerted parents to the changing teaching methods and to the new approaches required to supervise young people whose time was allocated partly to a formal school education and partly to acquiring pre-vocational experiences.

Parents and community groups were highly supportive of vocational education and often demonstrated their commitment by encouraging students to select a more vocationally oriented curriculum.

Transition from education to work

A longitudinal cross-sectoral policy research project, the Post School Destinations Project, surveyed a sample of 5,000 young people in 1993 when they were in year 10 (3,000 students) and year 12 (2,000 students), and followed them up again in 1994. Participants were drawn from a sample of 58 government and non-government schools. The response rates to the study were 92 per cent and 89 per cent in 1993 and 1994 respectively.

The 1994 follow-up survey showed that about 5 per cent of the year 10 students left school and took up employment (comprising 1.6 per cent part-time, 3.4 per cent full-time, 0.3 per cent home duties), with a further 3 per cent unemployed or not in the labour force, and a further 9 per cent undertaking further education and training, sometimes in conjunction with employment. The remaining 83 per cent continued with their schooling.

Year 12 graduates overwhelmingly continued in further education and training (73 per cent), often in combination with employment, as in the case of apprentices and trainees. Eighteen per cent of graduates proceeded from school to the labour force only, with a little over 6 per cent taking up part-time work, 11 per cent finding full-time employment and the remaining 0.5 per cent engaged in home duties. A further 9 per cent of graduates were not working or not in the labour force.

For both groups of young people, the biggest employers were the wholesale/retail trades, manufacturing, and recreation/personal services. Employment in the latter industry area was more likely to be part-time than full-time for those who had proceeded into the labour force only, without continuing any education or training.

While the methodology and sample have not been designed for evaluation of specific equity programs, the study provides a rich data source to allow exploration of associations between socioeconomic status, non-English speaking background, Aboriginality, and young people's education, training, occupational expectations and actual outcomes. A second follow-up survey is scheduled for 1995, providing the opportunity to monitor participants' movements in further education, training and the labour force.

Areas of student learning

The Board of Studies proceeded to build an outcomes emphasis into the KLAs. Trialing of subject profiles continued in preparation for their implementation in 1995 and national profiles were incorporated into syllabus documents.

The major focus of activity in 1994 in government schools was the introduction of an outcomes and profiles approach. This was the first year of a developmental process in which teachers were assisted to understand and begin implementing an outcomes and profiles approach to guide their planning, teaching, assessing and reporting.

The DSE began 1994 with a new administrative structure. A Teaching and Learning Portfolio with responsibility for curriculum, equity programs, special education, and training and development assisted in meeting the significant training and development demands of the DSE teaching and learning agenda. This agenda included literacy and vocational education in the secondary area and English K-6 and Early Learning Profiles in primary schools.

Assessment of student progress and learning in the KLAs was in the early stages of a move towards an outcomes and profiles approach. There was support for this move in government schools but there were also some practical problems, especially in the time it took to develop and assess a student learning profile.

Curriculum development and implementation in Catholic schools is based upon Board of Studies requirements and documents for the legislated Key Learning Areas and is essentially a school level responsibility. Schools are assisted by curriculum advisers and primary and secondary curriculum subject networks focusing on teaching and learning strategies and outcomes. A function of the networks is to produce information on national profiles and statements in relation to syllabus documents.

Independent schools in New South Wales engaged in curriculum development and/or reviews, with the national curriculum statements and profiles forming the major source of reference. The underlying objectives of most curriculum reviews included enrichment and enhanced competence in basic literacy, numeracy and enquiry skills.

Over half of independent schools had the national curriculum statements and profiles. Most had adopted them for student assessment and reporting procedures. Other schools used them mainly as resource material. The high cost was mentioned by a majority of schools as a major factor hindering the acquisition of the statements and profiles.

The Board of Studies endorsed a *Statement of Values* which specifically recognised the diverse backgrounds of students and specified that the Board's curriculum materials should provide constructive educational experiences which build on students' backgrounds. The *Statement* contained specific principles to be followed by all Board syllabus committees during the development of curriculum materials.

English

The K–6 English syllabus developed by the Board of Studies was distributed to schools in late 1994. The syllabus reflected the outcome of the most extensive consultation process ever in NSW curriculum development. The syllabus was based on the functional model of language and incorporated outcomes from the national profiles. The Board developed support materials to assist teachers in implementing the functional model of language, including a handbook on grammar.

The implementation of the new K–6 English syllabus was the focus of curriculum support in government primary schools. This support took the form of materials and training activities which focused on the two major aspects of the syllabus, a functional view of language and an outcomes and profiles approach.

Support materials included fifteen exemplary teaching units, which demonstrated appropriate strategies for students working towards particular levels of achievement.

The Early Learning Profiles were distributed to all kindergarten and year 1 teachers. Their purpose was to enable teachers to describe the progress of students as they work towards level 1 syllabus outcomes. The Early Learning Profiles were supported by a video and training course, *Profiling Students: The Early Years*.

Additional resources were targeted to the early years of schooling. One hundred kindergarten/year 1 teachers were appointed in 1994 and trained in the use of the Early Learning Profiles. They were placed in government schools where children had special literacy needs.

Students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds were supported by the Literacy and Learning National Component (LLNC) of the NEPS. Interventions funded by NSW included Reading Recovery, the Early Learning Program and the Learning Assistance Support Team Project, as well as several types of support classes.

The outcomes and profiles approach of the syllabus has implications for assessing and reporting and two support documents were developed in this area: *Ideas for Assessing and Reporting, Early Learning Profiles* and *Preliminary Ideas for Assessing and Reporting, English K–6*.

The major focus of training activity was an eight module course, *English K–6 in the Classroom*, developed under the NPDP and offered to teachers in all sectors. The course covered all the main aspects of the syllabus, planning and programming, assessing and reporting, grammar, early literacy, talking and listening, reading, and writing.

The Board is currently revising the years 7–10 English syllabus and compiling advice about the structural

Table 5. Students Studying HSC English 1994

	Male	Female	Total
3 unit	828	2,063	2,891
2 unit	2,620	4,911	7,531
General	14,523	16,658	31,181
Contemporary	10,006	6,881	16,887
Total	27,977	30,513	58,490

Source: NSW Dept of School Education

organisation and content for possible new HSC English courses.

All students are required to study English for the award of the HSC. From the 1995 HSC, at least one unit of English must be counted towards the TER. The number of students who undertook HSC English courses in 1994 is shown in Table 5.

Several independent schools revised their English curricula to fit in with the English K–6 syllabus. Many schools conducted in-service courses and workshops to assist staff in the implementation of the new syllabuses.

The Reading Recovery Program continued to be implemented in many Catholic schools. The Sydney Catholic Education Office published *Accessing Learning*, a years 7–10 project for teaching language across all learning areas.

The NSW Basic Skills Tests to monitor students' standard of literacy and numeracy were used in all government and in some independent and Catholic schools.

Languages other than English

The percentage of students studying languages other than English (LOTE) at both primary and secondary levels increased, with 90 per cent of secondary schools having language programs and over 60 per cent of primary schools providing language study. All 12 priority languages were taught in NSW government schools, with programs in other languages of community demand also being offered.

Home language maintenance and development programs were improved by encouraging more NESB students to participate in the Community Languages Program K–6 and the Saturday School of Community Languages K–12.

All schools teaching Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese were provided with copies of the national curriculum guidelines and teachers from those schools were trained to use the materials. Primary schools with German programs were also provided with German curriculum resources.

Over 70 primary teachers attended language immersion and resource development seminars organised and conducted by French, German and Japanese advisers.

Curriculum resource materials targeting students in years 11 and 12 were developed and distributed for French, German, Italian, Japanese and Modern Greek.

The teaching of languages other than English received considerable attention in Catholic schools during 1994. For example, in the Archdiocese of Sydney, a skills upgrading course (18 hours) was provided for existing teachers of LOTE in conjunction with Australian Catholic University (ACU): 20 teachers (3 from non-systemic schools and 17 from systemic schools) attended. A 30 hour training course in LOTE methodology was provided for untrained teachers of LOTE in conjunction with ACU: 20 teachers attended. Twelve primary schools introduced languages by satellite delivery (Japanese and Indonesian). Regional networks of LOTE teachers were supported for professional development, including in-service on the National LOTE Statement and Profiles and assessment. 30 secondary schools were provided with resource grants of up to \$2,000 each to support LOTE teacher study, teaching equipment and resources, in-school planning and programming.

The Board of Studies has developed generic frameworks for years K–6, 7–10 and 11–12 background speakers, containing aims, objectives and outcomes which can be applied to all languages. The two frameworks covering years K–10 incorporate the outcomes and pointers of the national LOTE profile, adapted to NSW conditions.

Any future syllabus development in primary LOTE will occur in terms of the K–6 framework, which provides schools with a means of developing their own programs in individual languages for which K–6 syllabuses do not exist. Similarly, all future syllabus revision in years 7–10 and 11–12 will follow the relevant framework. Work is currently in progress on a generic framework for years 7–10 syllabuses in classical languages, which are not covered by the National LOTE Statement and Profiles. Any new senior syllabuses in languages not currently provided for will follow the National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level (NAFLaSSL) model.

The Board participated in the nationally funded NAFLaSSL project to develop syllabuses and examinations of national applicability in 26 languages, mainly community languages of small candidature. Of these, 25 were used in NSW. The project provided for the hosting (development and national examination) of various languages by NSW, South Australia and Victoria. The syllabuses and their examination are available to all other States and Territories. The most recent senior syllabuses were developed by Victoria and are in Hindi, Persian and Portuguese.

There are currently 17 Board-developed syllabuses in LOTE available for study in years 7–10. Commencing with the 1996 year 7 cohort, 100 hours experience of a single language, over one year and at some time between year 7 and year 10, will become mandatory.

In the senior years the Board accredited a total of 37 languages and offered 60 courses at several levels: 2-unit, 2/3-unit, 2-unit general, 2-unit and 2/3-unit for background speakers, and 2-unit Z courses. The latter syllabuses cater for year 11 students who wish to begin the study of one or more of the 12 languages in which Z courses are offered.

In 1994, 15 per cent of HSC candidates studied a LOTE, and for the first time Japanese overtook French as the most popular HSC language.

Science

The Primestep teacher development program to support the implementation of the K–6 science and technology syllabus continued in most government school regions. The course provided primary teachers with practical experiences involving the processes of investigating, designing and making. A total of 486 teachers from eight regions participated in the course in 1994.

A group of 20 teachers was trained to deliver the chemical awareness course. The course was designed to support primary teachers in raising student awareness of chemicals and developing their confidence in using chemicals.

The initial draft of a resource package on the oil industry was completed by a teacher working for six months with Caltex. After local trialing, the package will be refined and printed for distribution to all government secondary schools in the State.

In many Catholic primary schools, the science and technology K–6 KLA continued to receive advisory support and substantial in-service.

In secondary science, the Sydney Catholic Education Office trialed the *Sense of the Sacred* project materials, integrating Gospel values across the science curriculum.

During the year, the Board began reshaping the years 7–10 science syllabus to clarify the scope and depth of the content covered by the syllabus. This was the second stage in providing a K–12 continuum of learning in the area of science. Stage one began with the release of the K–6 science and technology syllabus and support document and its subsequent implementation.

The reshaped years 7–10 syllabus will take account of the foundations laid by the K–6 document and provide greater detail for teachers, specifically in the content areas.

Table 6 shows the number of students studying sciences at the HSC.

Table 6. Students studying HSC science, 1994

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
3 unit	116	117	233
4 unit	322	329	651
Biology	6,108	10,620	16,728
Chemistry	6,625	5,518	12,143
Geology	226	174	400
Physics	7,662	2,872	10,534
Science for Life	2,687	2,241	4,928
General	1,463	1,139	2,602
Total	25,209	23,010	48,219

Source: NSW Dept of School Education

Technology

A comprehensive structure for students to learn about technology was in place for the first time in 1994. Science and technology K–6 provided a foundation for the study of technology in secondary schools. In years 7–10, 200 hours study of design and technology became a core requirement for the award of the School Certificate. The 2/3-unit HSC course in design and technology provides a continuum of study extending from kindergarten to year 12.

Other optional HSC courses introduced or revised recently include:

- 2/3 unit agriculture
- 2/3 unit computing studies
- 2 unit (general) computing studies
- 2/3 unit food technology.

In response to the release of the nationally developed documents *A Statement on Technology for Australian Schools* and *Technology—A Curriculum Profile for Australian Schools*, the Board of Studies began revision of learning outcomes for science and technology years K–6 and design and technology years 7–10.

The DSE appointed consultants in each region to provide advice and professional development to technology teachers in schools. Particular emphases for technology teachers included an outcomes and profiles approach to design and technology years 7–10 based on national technology outcomes, literacy, vocational education and implementation of new syllabuses.

Developments in Catholic schools focussed on the professional development of primary teachers in science and technology and secondary teachers in design and technology, as well as the use of new technologies in all key learning areas.

Mathematics

The DSE developed and trialed a training module to assist K–1 teachers in using the Early Learning Profiles in mathematics. A teaching unit was developed and distributed to help teachers design learning experiences to lead students to achieve level 1 outcomes.

Schools in all sectors used a variety of techniques to stimulate mathematics learning. These included excursions for practical hands-on experience, enhanced use of computers, increased use of cross-curricular activities, interschool competitions, and staff professional development. Accessibility to mathematics for special student populations was improved by remedial strategies such as individualised/group tuition and evaluation based on ability levels. Gender-sensitive approaches promoted equality in participation for female and male students.

An addendum to the mathematics K–6 syllabus is currently under development. This addendum will contain an additional strand, chance and data, and will also provide information on ways of linking the mathematics K–6 syllabus to the NSW mathematics K–10 outcomes and pointers. Further support was provided to schools by provision of the document *Assessment in Mathematics K–6*.

The revision of mathematics syllabuses for years 7–12 continued with the major focus on the three courses for years 9 and 10—the advanced, intermediate and standard courses. The first draft of this syllabus in three courses was sent to all schools and universities for consultation in June 1994. Feedback from this consultation was valuable in revising the drafts.

Once the years 9 and 10 courses are finalised, the development of draft syllabuses for three courses in years 11 and 12 will begin. The three courses are a 2-unit general course to replace mathematics in society, a 2-unit common course and a 3-unit additional course. A writing brief for the new 4-unit course will also be prepared. The number of students studying HSC maths is shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Students studying HSC maths, 1994

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
4 unit	2,251	1,223	3,474
3 unit	5,093	4,300	9,393
2 unit	9,392	10,390	19,782
Math. in society	9,324	11,534	20,858
Math. in practice	1,644	2,165	3,809
Total	27,704	29,612	57,316

Source: NSW Dept of School Education

Studies of society and environment

The Board of Studies completed the draft of the human society and its environment syllabus for K–6, which was distributed for consultation in term 4, 1994. Consultation commenced to incorporate the national profile outcomes into the mandatory courses in human society and its environment K–10.

The revision of the years 11–12 geography syllabus was completed for implementation in year 11, 1995. The 3-unit pilot legal studies syllabus was examined for the first time, the final two modules of which were completed in 1994. The Board developed additional documents to support the implementation of this course. Support materials for 2-unit business studies were developed, and work continued on the teaching kits associated with the years 7–10 history and geography syllabuses.

In its third year, 587 candidates presented for the HSC Aboriginal studies examination compared with 377 in 1993 and 87 in 1992.

A review of the status of environmental education in government schools was undertaken by the Quality Assurance Directorate. The review investigated the current status of environmental education in government primary and secondary schools and monitored the extent of awareness of environmental education issues among staff and students.

Environmental education contact people were appointed in all government education regions and a new field studies centre at Gulgong in Western Region was opened. One of its major programs is the cultural and heritage aspects of environmental education.

In Catholic schools, secondary curriculum materials to trial the integration of Gospel values in economics, business, legal and industry studies, geography and history were distributed to a number of schools.

The arts

The Board of Studies developed a writing brief for a K–6 syllabus in creative arts. The syllabus will include dance, drama, music and visual arts. Revised syllabuses will be implemented in years 7–10 music and 7–10 visual arts in 1995. These syllabuses contain important sections on content and include national profile outcomes as well as more specific subject outcomes. Subjects available for study in years 11 and 12 include visual arts, music, drama, dance and classical ballet. Groundwork was laid for revision of the years 11–12 visual arts and drama syllabuses.

Statewide activities in the performing arts grew rapidly, reflecting growing interest and participation at school, regional and State levels. Over 3,000 students participated in debating and public-speaking

competitions at State level, an increase of 50 per cent on 1993. More than 10,000 students performed at the Sydney Opera House and Sydney Entertainment Centre. These represented the peak of an enormous range of school and community performance activities supported by an unprecedented level of skill development for teachers and students. Over 30,000 students and teachers visited the Performing Arts Unit for training or took part in statewide camps and in-service activities in music, dance, drama and debating. Several groups of students and their teachers were recognised for high standard performances in overseas countries including China, USA and New Zealand. The *Encore 94* concert at the Sydney Opera House and the *OnStage 94* performances at the Wharf Theatre demonstrated the sophisticated knowledge, understanding and skills of HSC drama and music students.

The number of professional performers and groups authorised to visit government schools grew by 30 per cent to 350 and there were more than 16,000 performances for students.

The annual ARTEXPRESS exhibition generated widespread interest in the artworks submitted by students for the HSC. ARTEXPRESS exhibited at four Sydney venues, including the Art Gallery, and toured six regional galleries in NSW. Approximately 170 year 12 students from schools across the State were represented. The exhibits were selected from the top 10 per cent of the 13,813 artworks submitted for HSC assessment. Attendances were close to 100,000.

A selection of ARTEXPRESS works was exhibited in Tokyo as part of the 10th anniversary celebrations of the New South Wales and Tokyo sister-state relationship.

Health, physical education and personal development

During 1994, the Board of Studies completed the K–6 personal development, health and physical education syllabus and support document, which is planned for release to schools in term 3, 1995.

Two teaching kits were developed to support teaching of the years 7–10 personal development, health and physical education syllabus. They focus on the mandatory content strands: personal awareness and active lifestyle.

A content-endorsed course for the HSC Skills for Living was released.

Year 12 students presented for the HSC examination in the new life management studies course for the first time. The draft *Life Management Support Document* was revised and a final document distributed to schools.

All government secondary schools offered courses in personal development, health and physical education as

they entered into the third year of mandatory implementation of the years 7–10 syllabus. Catholic schools implemented the syllabus in conjunction with the Catholic perspective support document, *Towards Wholeness*.

A trial of drug education training initiatives for Aboriginal students was conducted in 35 schools. Drug education training materials were modified for teachers working with students with special educational needs.

Teaching and learning

Aspects affecting the quality of teaching

An additional 1,466 teaching positions were allocated to government schools. These additional teachers were allocated to reduce class sizes in the early years of schooling and senior years of schooling, improve literacy and numeracy in schools, improve access and opportunity for students with disabilities, and improve school counselling services.

School community and staff representatives were involved in filling 1,944 positions through local selection on merit. Of these, 1,378 were principal or executive positions and 566 were classroom teacher positions. Women represented 45.7 per cent of applicants and 56.1 per cent of successful applicants for advertised principal or executive positions.

An incentive scheme operated to appoint teachers to remote schools which in the past have experienced staffing difficulties. During 1994, 181 classroom teachers and 12 executive staff received incentive transfers. The scheme offered a range of benefits including additional training and development days, a 20 per cent rental subsidy for teachers in very remote schools and eligibility for transfer to a favoured location following completion of the required period of service.

The DSE established a number of welfare strategies for staff. These included a liaison officer in each region to provide a welfare service to staff, a toll-free 008 telephone number in each region from which staff could access welfare services, rehabilitation programs for staff, and the publication of a welfare chapter in the *Teachers Handbook*.

An Employee Assistance Program provided staff with free counselling services from an external provider for work-related and non-work-related problems. The range of services included face-to-face and telephone counselling, critical incident debriefing and home and school visits. These services were provided on a confidential basis.

Performance management continued to operate successfully for all senior executive service staff and principals.

A performance appraisal scheme for teachers and executive staff other than principals was developed in consultation with the Teachers Federation.

Developments in the use of technology

Government schools continued to receive grants to support computer education. Additional funds were provided to stimulate innovative teaching and learning using computers and related technologies.

In October, a one-off computer education grant to NSW schools totalling \$10 million assisted schools to acquire computers and related technologies for use in teaching and learning.

A trial of the software package Kidmap provided valuable insights into the technological requirements for the recording, retrieval and reporting of student achievement data.

The DSE was involved in a study on the feasibility of establishing an education facility in the yet to be developed Australian Technology Park.

An initiative was introduced to support non-metropolitan schools with access to satellite and telecommunications technologies. Schools were asked to consider the establishment of an open learning centre within the school, based around the new technologies.

The use of interactive satellite technology to broaden subject choice for students in Catholic schools continued to increase, particularly in rural areas. There was access to programs transmitted by education (OTEN) and commercial (DBN) networks. Programs broadcast included JSSTAFE, HSC tutorials and Japanese. There was integrated use of computing networks and CD-ROM in classrooms and libraries. Computer-aided design (CAD) systems were widespread in design and technology courses. Electronic mail use increased and some schools reported increasing interest in exploring the Internet.

Developments associated with teachers and teaching

Industrial

Permanent and casual teachers in the government sector received a 0.7 per cent salary increase on 1 July 1994 and a further 4 per cent on 14 December 1994 arising out of an enterprise agreement reached between the DSE and the NSW Teachers Federation. The enterprise agreement operates until 31 December 1995.

The enterprise agreement includes:

- the introduction of options to facilitate alternative work organisation in schools;

- the introduction of new curricula with an increased emphasis on teaching and learning focusing on agreed outcomes and profiles;
- implementation of a teacher appraisal scheme;
- the conduct of 50 per cent of training courses for teaching staff out of school hours;
- endorsement of a program of quality assurance school reviews;
- reviews of:
 - the formula for the allocation of head teacher positions;
 - the qualifications, skills and experience for appointment to the position of head teacher;
 - the rates of pay, working conditions and entitlements of casual teachers;
 - the Locality Allowance Award and related allowances;
 - executive structures and staffing formulae for schools for specific purposes;
 - qualifications in new areas of teaching and teachers in the senior years of schooling;
 - recruitment, training and retraining of school counsellors, career advisers, teacher librarians.

Under the enterprise agreement, an additional 3,163 advanced skills teacher positions were established to support teaching and learning.

A review of the system for filling vacancies for classroom teachers and executive staff was carried out by Professor Neil Baumgart, Professor of Education at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean. The principal objectives of the review were to analyse the procedures and processes for the staffing of schools and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current processes and procedures.

Professor Baumgart consulted widely with school staff and major interest groups. He was assisted by a steering committee comprising representatives of the DSE, the Teachers Federation, Primary and Secondary Principals' Councils, Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations and the Federation of School Community Organisations (FOSCO).

Developments associated with teachers and teaching

Pedagogical

The major development during 1994 was that teachers began using new syllabus documents containing student outcome statements. This assisted teachers to assess

accurately their students' current levels of achievement and their rates of progress in learning. Schools explored a range of different reporting approaches. New report formats provided schools and parents with more specific comments on student achievement in key aspects of each subject.

The DSE provided a major training and development program for teachers at a cost of \$40 million. This involved more than 34,000 teachers attending courses to increase their skills and to learn about latest developments in key areas of the curriculum. Teachers were supported by the establishment of a network of teaching experts in each of the eight KLAs. Eighty KLA consultants were appointed to regions to give advice and information to teachers, particularly in relation to new courses.

Government schools were provided with over 400,000 copies of support materials to help teachers implement changes to the curriculum.

Over 560 government schools were reviewed by Quality Assurance teams, involving interviews with 16,000 students and 10,800 parents and the participation of 9,000 staff members. Each school involved was given a report detailing the key findings and recommendations for future development.

Staff in independent schools received professional development on statements and profiles through attendance at seminars organised by systemic bodies or State education authorities and discussions on the integration of the statements and profiles into existing curricula during staff development days. Most independent schools set aside special staff development days during which teaching staff discussed education-related issues. Many staff development initiatives focused on the curriculum and pedagogy. Several schools set up small staff committees to research specific curriculum or pedagogical issues, with findings reported during meetings held on staff development days. Examples of staff development initiatives included the use of technology for teaching and learning, and techniques for enriching learning for gifted and talented students.

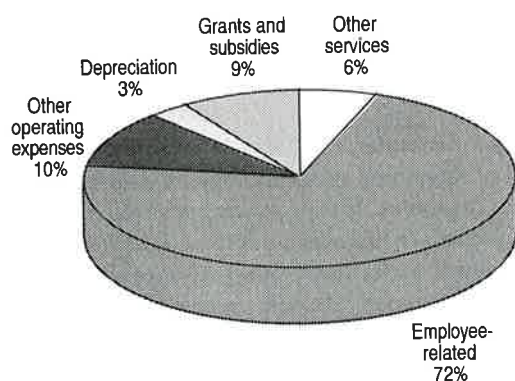
Professional and personal development of staff continued to be a high priority for Catholic schools. Induction courses were provided for all new employees. In-service training was provided on curriculum areas and government initiatives in post-compulsory schooling and vocational education. Personal development activities included in-service training on performance appraisal and leadership development (principals, middle managers and prospective principals). Schools and school systems established cooperative arrangements with tertiary institutions and other education sectors in the presentation and accreditation of professional development courses.

Resourcing schools

Recurrent expenditure

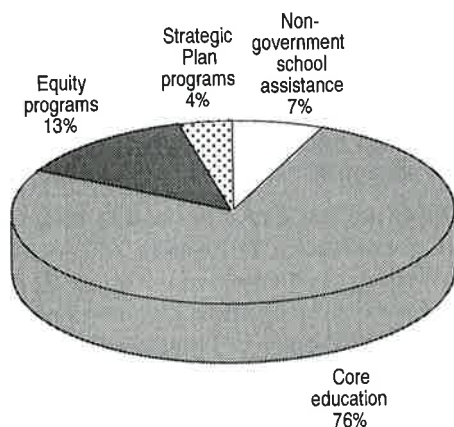
During the 1993–94 financial year, the New South Wales Government expended \$3.87 billion on an accrual basis in providing recurrent services for schools. This figure included expenditures totalling \$271 million relating to the provision of financial assistance to schools in the non-government sector. In terms of total current payments, \$3.21 billion was spent in 1993–94.

Figure 2. Recurrent expenses per line item, 1993–94



Source: NSW Dept of School Education

Figure 3. Recurrent expenses per program area, 1993–94

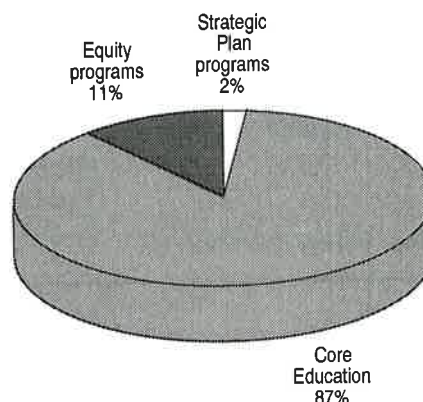


Source: NSW Dept of School Education

Capital expenditure

In 1993–94, expenditure of \$216.8 million on an accrual basis and \$208.6 million on a cash basis was incurred by the DSE on capital projects. These funds were applied toward building works, land acquisitions and the purchase and installation of equipment.

Figure 4. Capital outlays per program area, 1993–94



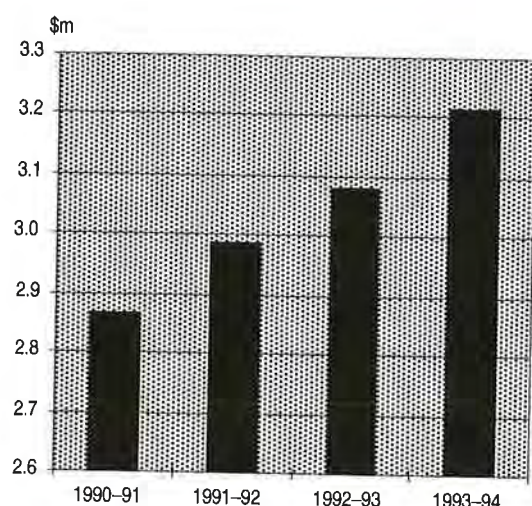
Source: NSW Dept of School Education

During the 1993–94 financial year, the Commonwealth Government contributed \$85.7 million toward total capital outlays. These funds were used to provide new facilities and to maintain and upgrade existing facilities. The broad objectives of this program were to improve educational outcomes in schools catering for disadvantaged groups, such as students with disabilities, both for social justice reasons and because these groups have the greatest potential to benefit educationally. The program also enabled students to maximise their competencies in all KLAs and encouraged retention to year 12. During 1994 the Commonwealth provided \$68.482 million (\$29.053 million for new student places and \$39.429 million to improve existing places).

Expenditure trends

During the four-year period from 1990–91 to 1993–94, the New South Wales Government increased recurrent services funding for the DSE by 12.1 per cent in money terms. Current payments for education services in NSW represented 26.35 per cent of the State's total current payments for the 1993–94 financial year. The DSE current expenditure for schools increased by 4.25 per cent from 1990–91 to 1991–92, 3.01 per cent from 1991–92 to 1992–93 and 4.38 per cent from 1992–93 to 1993–94.

Figure 5. Trends in recurrent payments



Source: NSW Dept of School Education

Income trends

Communities and businesses were encouraged to be aware of and participate in the education process. Schools were able to supplement their resources for the benefit of students through sponsorships. The DSE policy statement on sponsorships provided clear directions for schools considering sponsorship agreements. Departmental sponsorships for 1993-94 increased relative to the previous financial year. This growth reflected the continued support for public education by local communities and businesses.

Income from entrepreneurial ventures and partnerships formed a relatively small component of the total funding available to government schools from State and Commonwealth sources.

The total general recurrent funds provided by the Commonwealth for 1994 calendar year are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Funding to NSW under the Commonwealth General Grants Program by sector

	(\$m)
Government	303.6
Catholic	414.3
Independent	91.7
Total	809.6

Source: NSW Dept of School Education

Capital Grants Program, non-government schools

Under the NSW Catholic Block Grant Authority, 54 projects were completed in 1994, for which \$28.35 million was received in grants from the Commonwealth's Capital Grants Program. Local school and parent communities contributed an additional \$12.15 million to these projects. The projects were targeted at enhancing the educational achievement of disadvantaged students, particularly those in schools characterised by low socioeconomic indicators.

The projects supported schools in isolated rural areas, provincial cities, coastal growth areas, the rapidly expanding fringe growth areas and the old inner-city suburbs of Sydney. Forty-one of the completed projects were in non-urban areas. Thirty-three projects upgraded teaching areas and student and staff facilities.

The balance of the projects were stages of new schools in growth areas or schools expanding to include senior secondary education.

There was a particular emphasis in 14 schools on the provision or upgrading of technology facilities to meet curriculum requirements in secondary schools. Seven of the large secondary projects completed were wholly or partially funded under the Quality, Competencies and Technological Support Element of the Capital Grants Program. The objectives of the Commonwealth's Capital Grants Program were reflected in the 1994 project completions. While the majority of projects emphasised competencies in the KLAs, 50 per cent of projects aimed at improving the participation of disadvantaged groups.

During 1994, 32 capital projects were completed in independent schools in NSW, for which grants totalling \$7.379 million were received from the Commonwealth's Capital Grants Program. The projects completed reflected the objectives of the Commonwealth program and particularly benefited students who were educationally disadvantaged as a consequence of ethnicity, socioeconomic circumstances or geographic location. Of the 32 projects funded, eight were in schools with high proportions of students with ESL needs and 15 were in schools in non-urban areas.

The majority of projects aimed to assist in maximising the general competencies of primary and secondary students in literacy, numeracy and enquiry skills. In particular, 12 projects involved facility development or the provision of equipment in libraries. About 25 per cent of projects aimed to improve the efficiency of teaching staff through the development of staff facilities and enhanced administration facilities. Seventy-one per cent of projects fitted under the heading of upgrading of existing facilities, including provision of buildings for the first time in two schools that were previously housed entirely in demountable facilities.

Table 9. Commonwealth payment of 1994 capital funds to NSW by sector

	(\$m)
Government	68.5
Catholic	25.8
Independent	7.5
Total	101.8

Source: NSW Dept of School Education

Other NSW initiatives

Anti-racism

The DSE conducted activities to increase the awareness, understanding and ability of teachers, students and community members in keeping schools and workplaces free from racism and discrimination.

Student anti-racism forums arranged by regions were particularly successful. Students participated in full-day programs that included media and sporting personalities as speakers, and in workshops, discussions and planning sessions. The forums assisted students to identify prejudice and racism and to examine how prejudices affect decision making and lead to discrimination against others.

The DSE maintained a system-wide network of regional, school and workplace anti-racism contact officers. Training was provided for these officers. In addition, a set of anti-discrimination complaints procedures was developed to promote early intervention and resolution of complaints.

School violence

A new suspension policy gave principals greater powers to deal with major discipline problems, while a wide

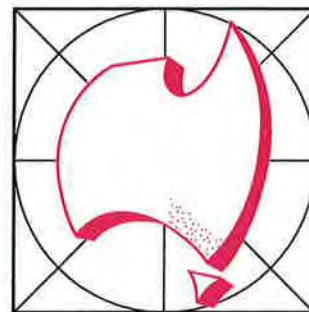
range of programs were used to teach appropriate behaviour and ways of peacefully settling disputes. Over \$5 million was spent on employing specialist teachers, teachers aides, community liaison officers and school counsellors to modify violent behaviour.

Priorities for 1995

The reaction to the 1994 priorities from teachers, principals and members of the government school community was positive. Consultation with key interest groups during the planning process for 1995 revealed that the 1994 priorities were still extremely relevant and that these priorities should in general be retained for 1995. As a result, the DSE in 1995 will focus on:

- *quality learning*—providing opportunities for all students to develop their potential as lifelong learners, capable of creating a future for themselves in a rapidly changing world;
- *quality teaching*—maintaining a skilled, knowledgeable and motivated teaching service with a commitment to continuing professional development;
- *reporting to parents*—providing clear and useful information to parents about their children's learning;
- *community participation*—ensuring parents and other members of the community have a real say in the teaching and learning programs offered at their local school;
- *happy and safe schools*—ensuring schools are ordered, happy and secure places, where effective teaching and learning can take place.

VICTORIA



Introduction

The government, Catholic and independent school sectors in Victoria catered for 774,007.1 students (full-time equivalent (FTE)) as at July 1994. In the government sector, 521,038.6 students were taught in 1,731 schools by 34,635 teachers. In the Catholic sector, 174,231.1 students attended 496 schools, and were taught by 10,261 teachers. In the independent sector, 78,737.4 students attended 178 schools with a total of 6,399 teachers.

As Commonwealth reporting requirements call for separate rather than joint reporting, information about each of the three school sectors has been provided in separate sections. Government and Catholic sector information has been provided by the Directorate of School Education and the Catholic Education Office (CEO) respectively, while the Association of Independent Schools of Victoria (AISV) elected to have the Commonwealth prepare educational accountability information on its behalf by means of a survey.

Victoria's three school sectors share many policy direction, strategies and activities. Although the chapter structure described above makes it difficult to fully demonstrate the extent of cooperation between sectors, this continues to be of a high level and has contributed considerably to the success of many educational initiatives in Victoria.

Priority objectives for 1994

Government sector

The mission of the Directorate of School Education is to ensure each young Victorian will have the best chance for the future by helping them to attain their full potential at school. As an operating principle, the Directorate seeks to make its schools among the world leaders in everything they do. To this end, the Directorate's Strategic Plan: 1994 to 1996, identifies five priority areas in which it will achieve a major improvement towards best practice in school education.

To add value to each young Victorian's time at school, schools will:

- provide high quality teaching and learning for all students;
- provide a broad range of educational opportunities for all students;
- successfully manage all their resources and programs;
- establish effective accountability and reporting to parents and the community;
- develop productive educational partnerships with parents, industry, further education and the wider community.

During 1994, there was a focus on consolidating reforms to primary and secondary education initiated in 1993 and to ensuring continued achievement and success through a range of activities which supported, in particular, the:

- implementation of Schools of the Future;
- implementation of the Early Years of Schooling Strategy;
- implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy;
- extension of programs for students of a non-English speaking background;
- implementation of the science and technology and communications strategies;
- implementation of the Languages other than English (LOTE) policy;
- provision of physical and sport education programs;
- development of vocational education programs;
- increased range of educational opportunities for students;
- improvement of school and student facilities;
- provision of communications and public information to schools, parents and the community;

- restructure of the Directorate to support schools;
- provision of professional development opportunities for teachers and principals.

These and other key activities of the government sector are described throughout this chapter and are consistent with the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia established by the Australian Education Council in 1989.

Catholic sector

The mission of Catholic schools is to provide a high quality education based on the values of the Gospel, so that children choose to live out those values in productive and satisfying lives. The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) and the Catholic Education Offices (CEOs) in the dioceses assist schools to carry out this mission.

Consistent with the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia, priority objectives of Catholic schooling for 1994 were to:

- review and revise the Guidelines for Religious Education for Students in the Archdiocese of Melbourne;
- continue the efficient and timely delivery of services and support for schools;
- formulate and refine policies, practices and guidelines that will assist schools to operate as distinctively Catholic schools and to guide their general administration;
- effectively represent Catholic education on various committees, external agencies and working groups;
- assess trends in educational practice, funding and administration and to evaluate and communicate these trends to schools;
- review and revise the data collections from schools and to foster its wider use in schools and CEOs.

Independent schools

Curriculum

All Victorian schools surveyed focused on curriculum enrichment and review, with a principal emphasis on enhancing basic literacy and numeracy skills. The national curriculum statements and profiles, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) were major sources of reference.

Curriculum reviews considered assessment and reporting procedures or special student populations, and

enrichment involved the introduction of programs including LOTE, physical education, communication, art and music.

Student development

Student development focused on the physical, moral, academic and social aspects of human development. Curricula offered were geared towards the development of positive social attitudes, respect for work, cultural awareness, and desire for the achievement of personal excellence.

Resource improvement

Staff professional development was a major focus of resource improvement, and was pursued through workshops and in-service courses. Some schools had enterprise agreements outlining staff job descriptions, policies on staff appraisal and general working conditions.

Increased enrolment and physical expansion was a goal for some Victorian independent schools. Strategies to achieve this included promotion of the schools within the community and applications for government funding.

General

Closer communication between the home, school and wider community was frequently mentioned by respondent schools as a general goal.

Common and agreed goals

Respondent schools used the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia to provide focus and direction in goal-setting exercises.

A few schools indicated that they were not using the Agreed Goals because: they did not address the school's specific concerns; schools had previously been unaware of their existence; or goals had been set prior to receiving the necessary information.

Excellence and equity

Government, Catholic and independent sectors

Retention rates

Victoria experienced a decline in the apparent retention rates to year 12 at July 1994. There was also a decline in the number of year 12 students in each of the government, Catholic and independent school sectors.

The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data (July 1994) show that the decline in retention rates in

Victoria was a consistent trend across Australia with all States and Territories experiencing a decline. Victoria's retention rate remained above the rate for Australia overall, the latter experiencing a slightly greater rate of decline.

At the July 1994 census, the apparent retention rate for all Victorian students, calculated using the FTE of students, was 78.0 per cent. The FTE apparent retention rate for students in the government sector was 74.2 per cent, while in the Catholic and independent sectors the rates were 75.1 per cent and 101.1 per cent respectively. In each sector the rate was higher for females than males, the rate for all females being 85.6 per cent and the rate for all males being 70.9 per cent. The greatest variation between males and female rates continued to be in the government sector (17 percentage points). Table 1 shows the apparent retention rates by sector and gender since 1991.

Age participation

In the final years of schooling, participation rates for students in Victorian schools continued to be higher than those for Australia generally. Participation rates are shown in Table 2.

Devolution of responsibility and decision making

Government sector

Schools of the Future

The Government's Schools of the Future program reflects a general trend in Australia and other English-speaking countries to locate responsibility, authority and accountability with schools, to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Through Schools of the Future, new arrangements are being implemented to ensure educational accountability, especially in the area of student learning achievements.

Schools have volunteered to enter the Schools of the Future program in four staged intakes. The 319 schools of Intake 1 became fully operational as Schools of the Future in January 1994 following a comprehensive induction program commencing July 1993. Intake 2 (506 schools) joined the program in July 1994 following induction, while Intake 3 (503 schools) completed their induction in December 1994. By July 1995, virtually all schools will be operating as Schools of the Future.

The Schools of the Future program will be continually monitored over a five-year period by a cooperative research project established by the Principals' Associations, the Faculty of Education at the University of Melbourne and the Directorate. Results from three major surveys drawing on principals' perceptions demonstrate that the objectives of the program are being achieved.

Table 1. Apparent retention rate by sector and gender, July 1991–94 (%)

	1991	1992	1993	1994
Government				
Males	63.5	71.0	68.1	66.1
Females	79.3	86.6	85.4	83.1
<i>Total</i>	71.0	78.4	76.3	74.2
Catholic				
Males	65.1	71.9	70.5	69.4
Females	78.5	82.7	82.2	80.6
<i>Total</i>	72.0	77.5	76.4	75.1
Independent				
Males	99.2	97.3	97.0	96.8
Females	113.4	109.2	103.8	105.5
<i>Total</i>	106.2	103.1	100.3	101.1
All schools				
Males	68.2	74.6	72.5	70.9
Females	83.4	88.6	87.2	85.6
Total	75.6	81.4	79.6	78.0

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

Table 2. Age participation rates in schooling for 15–19 year-olds (%)

	Male	Female	Total
15 years			
Vic.	96.0	97.1	96.6
Aust.	94.5	94.6	94.5
16 years			
Vic.	79.8	92.0	85.7
Aust.	77.5	87.3	82.2
17 years			
Vic.	65.9	79.8	72.7
Aust.	56.4	66.0	61.1
18 years			
Vic.	19.7	12.3	16.1
Aust.	11.7	6.8	9.3
19 years			
Vic.	10.5	5.8	8.2
Aust.	3.9	3.7	3.8

Source: Derived from the ABS Supplementary Survey of Transition from Education to Work in Australia, May 1994.

Reorganisation of the non-school services

In 1994, the Directorate's review of non-school services continued with the intention of creating a more effective and efficient management structure consistent with the philosophy of the Schools of the Future program. The main function of the review entitled Changes for Quality Education Project is to ensure that non-school functions are reorganised to become services directly supporting schools. The reorganisation should be completed by 1997.

School councils

Within broad ministerial guidelines, school councils continued to set the policies schools follow to achieve curriculum, financial and resource objectives. As school councils are responsible for the development of the school charter and its implementation, they play a significant role in the Schools of the Future program.

Catholic sector

Victorian Catholic schools continued to operate with a high degree of autonomy deriving from their history. The formation of the CECV in 1973 established an overlying process for ensuring planning and operation according to agreed policies while allowing schools to retain their individual and cooperative autonomy. The CECV is a consensus-producing body and develops and implements policy with the consultation and agreement of the four dioceses (Melbourne, Ballarat, Sandhurst, Sale). For the purpose of assisting schools, dioceses are currently divided into seventeen zones.

The CECV considers that an appropriate balance between centralised policies and school level decisions assists in ensuring good schooling in the Catholic sector.

The CECV and dioceses sought to ensure the best possible planning for Catholic schools in Victoria through a range of activities and initiatives in 1994:

- after extensive consultation with teachers and others, adoption of a policy with accompanying school guidelines in the areas of curriculum, assessment and reporting for years P–12. Consistent with the policy, it was decided that schools would participate in the Learning Assessment Project (LAP) proposed by the Victorian Board of Studies;
- development of policy statements in consultation with school communities on education and technology years P–12 and on education of full-fee paying overseas students;
- approval and dissemination of a revised policy on the pastoral care of students in Catholic schools;

- consolidation of enrolment policies established in 1990 through the distribution of *Guidelines for the Enrolment of Year 7 Students in Catholic Secondary Schools*;
- dissemination of the document *Planning for Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne*.

The development of policy documents involved extensive consultation with the relevant schools and school authorities to ensure an informed and coordinated approach. A broader base of community involvement occurred through the education assemblies conducted in the four dioceses and the Victorian Education Assembly conducted during 1994.

Independent schools

Community involvement

Most respondent schools considered parents, students, extended families, local churches, business communities, and sister schools as a part of their community.

Management committees, parents and friends associations, local business communities and churches were actively involved in school management. Members of the management committees were drawn from the community and dealt with issues such as the development of the school policy, review of school curricula, budget planning and general financial management.

The parents and friends associations were frequently involved in voluntary activities including: provision and maintenance of amenities; classroom assistance; and organisation of family camps. The relevant church mainly provided pastoral care while the local business communities provided financial backing, guest speakers and work experience opportunities.

Equity initiatives

Government sector

Equity resources

Equity resources included grants received from the Commonwealth under the National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS) and are outlined in Table 3.

In 1994, the Directorate received \$70,300 under the Commonwealth's NEPS Literacy and Learning National Component for a joint project with the CEO Melbourne and the CEO Canberra/Goulburn. The project examined a range of issues and strategies relating to reading and literacy intervention in the early years of schooling and is to be continued and further developed in 1995. Funding in 1994 was used to develop and trial a set of materials in 7 pilot schools as well as conducting a two day workshop for 18 teachers from these schools.

Table 3. Commonwealth NEPS funding in 1994 – Government sector

<i>Element</i>	<i>Funding level (\$)</i>
Access Element	
English as a Second Language Component	
New Arrivals sub-component	7,993,634 (\$2,861 per student)
General Support sub-component	13,502,000
Special Education Component	
Schools Support—Government sub-component	7,131,000
Schools Support—Non-Government sub-component	2,426,000
Equity Element	
Disadvantaged Schools Component	14,499,500
Country Areas General Component	1,847,700
National Priorities Element	
Country Areas National Component	375,500
Literacy and Learning National Component	70,300
Students at Risk Component	1,216,000
Gifted and Talented Component	75,000
Transition Support Component	420,400
Incentives Element	
Gender Equity Component	518,622
Students with Disabilities Component	811,082

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

Education of Girls

The Directorate's Education of Girls Program continued to develop and provide Statewide policy advice to meet the educational needs of girls.

In June 1994, the Minister for Education launched a policy statement on the education of girls. *Girls: School and Beyond* provides directions for the production of gender-inclusive curriculum materials, the conduct of professional development for school leaders and school councils, the implementation of strategies to improve girls' educational opportunities and new approaches to address the needs of boys until 1996.

In 1994, the Education of Girls Program included the following activities:

- support for implementation of the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls 1993–97;

- professional development programs for teachers in rural areas using the Interactive Satellite Learning Network (ISLN) funded by the Victorian Equity Program (VEP) and the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET). Programs promoted the teaching of gender-inclusive mathematics, science and technology;
- monitoring and reviewing programs in the Country Education Program (CEP) and Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) funded through the Gender Equity Component of the VEP;
- continued operation of State and regional equal opportunity resource centres to support primary and secondary schools in implementing the strategies identified in the policy statement *Girls: School and Beyond*;
- identification of school clusters to participate in the Primary Foundations for the Future Pilot Project, 1995–96.

Distance and rural education

Rural education is supported by the Commonwealth's Country Areas Component of the NEPS, known in Victoria as the Country Education Program (CEP). In 1994, 261 schools (15.1 per cent of all government schools) with a total enrolment of 29,121 FTE students (5.6 per cent of all government enrolments) received support under the CEP.

Table 4 shows the number of CEP schools and breakdown of enrolments by school type, as well as average school enrolment sizes for CEP schools compared with all government schools.

Table 4. Breakdown of CEP schools

<i>School Type</i>	<i>CEP Schools</i>			<i>All Schools</i>
	<i>No. of Schools</i>	<i>Total Enrolments</i>	<i>Av. School size</i>	<i>Av. School size</i>
Primary	213	17,064.2	80.1	224.7
Secondary	32	8,698.2	271.8	714.3
Primary/secondary	15	3,345.0	223.0	301.0
Special	1	13.6	13.6	54.2
Total	261	29,121.0	111.6	301.0

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

Table 5. Schools receiving support through the DSC: school type, number and enrolments

<i>Schools</i>		<i>Enrolments</i>			
<i>School Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>% Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Primary	264	28,982.9	27,359.6	48.6	56,342.5
Secondary	68	25,613.5	23,893.7	48.3	49,507.2
Primary/secondary	5	405.2	397.5	49.5	802.7
Language	2	194.0	148.0	43.3	342.0
Special	20	796.0	440.8	35.6	1,236.8
Total	359	55,991.6	52,239.6	48.3	108,231.2

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

A total of 39 CEP schools participated in the Schools of the Future program in 1994. These schools have identified a number of priority areas in their three year school charters including literacy, numeracy, technology and professional development. A wide variety of responses have been undertaken to address these issues.

1994 was the final year of funding under the three-year Country Areas National Component of NEPS. Country Areas National Component programs were conducted across the government and non-government school sectors and supported initiatives in the areas of vocational education, professional development via ISLN, and student support programs using delivery systems such as ISLN and audiographics.

Distance and rural education was enhanced by a range of multimedia technologies such as the ISLN and Telematics. These technologies are described below under the section of Teaching and Learning entitled Developments in the Use of Technology.

Education of students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds

Support for the education of students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds continued through the Disadvantaged Schools Component (DSC) of the NEPS.

In 1994, 20.7 per cent (359) of all government schools received support for the DSC. These schools made up 21.3 per cent (108,231.2 FTE students) of government enrolments. Table 5 shows the number of schools by school type and the breakdown of enrolments by gender and school type.

The apparent retention rate to year 12 for disadvantaged secondary schools compared with previous years and all government secondary schools is shown in Table 6.

In 1994, 57 DSC schools participated in Intake 1 of the Schools of the Future program. These schools have identified a number of priority areas in their three year school charters including raising levels of language, numeracy, students' self-esteem and communication with their school community. Other priorities include physical education and fitness, technology education, especially computers, and vocational education.

Table 6. Apparent retention rates for DSC secondary schools 1991, 1993 and 1994 compared with all government schools

	1991	1993	1994	1993-94 Change
All government secondary schools	71.0	76.1	74.2	-1.9
DSC secondary schools	76.4	76.8	85.3	+8.5*

* Care is needed in interpretation as school reorganisations in 1993-94 resulted in DSC secondary schools gaining enrolments from other schools. However, the rising and greater than State apparent retention rate for DSC schools is a reliable trend.

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

Students at risk

In the context of the Directorate's overall mission, the Students at Risk (STAR) component of NEPS is integral in supporting schools to address the needs of students at risk of not completing a full secondary education. Through participation in the program, schools are encouraged to develop and implement a range of organisation, welfare and learning approaches.

The needs of at risk students, in particular, those who were homeless or at risk of homelessness, were addressed through a number of STAR program activities in 1994:

- provision of a range of youth services including health, housing, counselling and financial services through Student and Youth Services Centres located in participating secondary colleges;
- development of action plans by 29 rural school clusters in response to information collection and analysis by the clusters;
- expansion of vocational education options in 25 schools and 3 school clusters.

Education of gifted and talented students

The Directorate's Gifted Students Program continued to support and advise schools on the maintenance and development of programs for the education of gifted students. Activities in 1994 included:

- support to secondary schools introducing select entry acceleration programs;
- provision of funds to schools participating in the University of Melbourne Program for High Achieving Students;
- production and transmission of interactive satellite programs and the development of related materials including an information booklet on the identification of gifted students;
- support for existing local networks and the establishment of new local networks to support the education of gifted students;
- expansion of the mentor program to include curators from the National Gallery of Victoria;
- provision of seminars and conferences on the education of gifted students including twilight seminars with national and international speakers for all teachers and two-day conferences and related materials for teachers in Regions;
- preparation for the 1995 Australasian/International Conference on the education of gifted students;
- consultation with key players to assist the preparation of a draft policy on the education of gifted students. It is expected that the policy will be finalised and launched in 1995.

Education of students from non-English speaking backgrounds

In 1994, 23.6 per cent (123,098) of students in government schools were from a non-English speaking background (NESB). These students were either born in a non-English speaking country, or were born in Australia with one or both parents born in a non-English speaking country. Almost 90 per cent were concentrated in the Directorate's two metropolitan regions.

English for new arrivals: English Language Schools and Centres (ELS/Cs)

There was a 6.69 per cent increase in the number of new arrivals in government schools, from 2,620 in 1993 to 2,794 in 1994. Thirteen English language schools and centres (ELS/Cs) in the metropolitan regions and a new arrivals program in Geelong catered for 1,496 primary and secondary students who met Commonwealth new arrivals eligibility criteria.

Of the primary new arrivals, 32 per cent (523) attended ELS/Cs. An outposting component from several ELS/Cs provided programs to a further 9 per cent (152) of eligible students in primary schools or clusters of primary schools having significant numbers of new arrivals. Of the secondary new arrivals, 82 per cent (973) attended an ELS/C for an average of one semester.

On completion of ELS/Cs courses students transfer to mainstream primary and secondary schools, many of which provide specialist English as a second language (ESL) programs. A new arrivals kit is also provided to teachers of new arrivals in isolated settings to assist the provision of appropriate programs.

General ESL: primary and secondary schools

ESL special needs allocations are provided to primary and secondary schools on the basis of the NESB census which is completed by all schools in July/August of each year. The following number of special needs ESL teaching positions (effective full-time (EFT)) were allocated in 1994:

- 196.5 primary positions to 311 schools;
- 239 secondary positions to 117 secondary schools.

School support for NESB students

The Directorate supported a range of school support activities and initiatives in 1994 including:

- preparation of an ESL companion document on behalf of the Board of Studies to accompany the English component of the CSF. Further work will occur during 1995;
- development of ESL course advice to assist teachers to prepare school based curriculum on the basis of the ESL companion document and

the English component of the CSF. In addition, annotations to the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) commenced to assist mainstream teachers to cater for ESL students;

- expressions of interest were sought from primary teachers working in ESL programs without approved ESL qualifications to undertake credit bearing ESL methodology courses. Negotiations were undertaken with universities for the provision of courses in 1995;
- provision of 6 ESL in the mainstream professional development courses. A process was established for training tutors and delivering courses in 1995;
- appointment of an ESL Project Officer at the Languages and Multicultural Education Resources Centre to further support professional development;
- successful tendering for the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) sample study, Definition of NESB, which aims to provide a common definition of NESB for use across State and Territory systems and sectors of education. The project commenced in 1994 and will be finalised in 1995;
- continued access for the NESB community to interpreting and translation services at the school level through the establishment of a credit line with the Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service;
- establishment of a statewide ESL Planning Group and plans to establish a Ministerial Standing Committee for LOTE and ESL in 1995 to advise the Minister on service provision for NESB students.

Education of Koorie students

There were 3,085 Koorie students in government schools in 1994, an increase of 9.2 per cent (259) students from 1993. Table 7 gives a breakdown of Koorie enrolments by school type.

Table 7. Koorie enrolments by school type

<i>School type</i>	<i>Students (FTE)</i>
Primary	2,143
Primary/secondary	16
Secondary	900
Special	26
Total	3,085

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

The Directorate continued to support the implementation of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (1993–1995) through its operational plan implemented in 1993. The plan seeks to:

- increase the number of Koorie students staying on to complete years 11 and 12;
- develop curriculum resource material which is culturally relevant to Koorie students;
- encourage all students to become aware of Koorie history and culture;
- increase Koorie involvement in education decision making.

A range of activities were supported by the Directorate and/or the Commonwealth in 1994 including:

- completion of planning for two P–12 Koorie Open Door Education campuses (one metropolitan and one country). These centres of excellence will provide the opportunity for Koorie and non-Koorie students to be educated together with an emphasis on Koorie decision making and ensuring that the curriculum focuses on Koorie history, lifestyle and culture.
- an increase of four Koorie Educator positions making 56 in total, as well as maintenance of the central coordination unit and cross sectoral coordinators;
- provision of professional development for Koorie Educator and cross sectoral coordinators to address literacy and language issues;
- a Koorie Intern Teachers Program run by Deakin University involving 22 interns;
- an agreement with the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. to provide mentor support to young Koorie people;
- commencement of the Community Relations in Education Project to address issues of racism, discrimination and violence within schools and the wider community;
- implementation of the School Speakers Program involving 30 schools that ran 70 sessions attended by nearly 4,000 students of whom 130 were Koorie;
- establishment of the Koorie Education Centre in Northcote.

Funding through the Commonwealth's Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program amounted to \$2,628,300 in 1994.

Special education

Following the adoption of the major recommendations of the Cullen–Brown Report, a small working party

chaired by Professor Kwong Lee Dow, Dean of the Institute of Education, University of Melbourne carried out an extensive research and consultation process to develop an index for resourcing students with disabilities and impairments. As a result, it is proposed to implement a new method of funding for eligible new students with disabilities and impairments entering government schools in 1995. The revised method will give schools greater flexibility in the use of resources and will include six funding levels ranging from \$3,000 to \$23,000.

In the interim, resources for special schools were maintained and those for the integration program increased. The number of integration aides was increased by a further 100 EFT positions to take the total to 1,377 EFT. Resources for integration teachers, paramedical/health and interpreter services were maintained. This funding supported a combined total of 10,600 students with disabilities and impairments in special and regular schools.

The NEPS supported a range of priorities through the NEPS Access Element (Special Education) allocations (refer Table 3). Through the NEPS National Priorities Element, the CEO, the AISV and the Directorate received joint funding of \$400,000 to assist the transition of students with disabilities from mainstream schooling to further education, employment and adult life. The program has been piloted in three metropolitan and three country inter-systemic school clusters.

Other initiatives include the preparation of various documents for release in 1995. These include:

- *Guidelines for Implementing the Curriculum and Standards Framework for Students with Disabilities and Impairments;*
- *new Program Support Group Guidelines for Students with Disabilities and Impairments* to assist program planning and to provide a framework for regular monitoring and evaluation of student progress.

Catholic sector

Catholic education authorities seek to ensure that schools are available to all Catholic children irrespective of the capacity of parents to contribute by way of fees, and that resources are distributed as equitably as possible among schools. A major aspect of equity is the needs-based distribution of recurrent grants from both Commonwealth and State governments which the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) redistributes on a more clearly defined basis. In its distribution of Commonwealth and State recurrent grants to schools the CECV takes into account an expected amount of local income which varies according to a socioeconomic index. The difference

between the highest and lowest expected income per pupil was \$431.00. Additionally an estimated \$1.1 million was made available to schools over and above entitlements to all schools, to assist with equity needs. The result is that schools serving poorer communities receive a greater proportion of government grants, enabling fees to be kept as low as possible and maintenance of educational standards in schools overall.

The second approach to equity in Catholic schools is to cater for the particular needs of various groups of educationally disadvantaged students. The CECV is greatly assisted in this area by the NEPS of the Commonwealth Government. Action deriving from NEPS during 1994 is set out below.

In 1994, a major focus has been to strengthen coordination of the NEPS components and other Commonwealth programs, and to position planning for access and equity within whole school plans. Links between components have been strengthened by establishing a common set of principles and by the development of a greater understanding of the objectives and activities associated with each of the components and programs.

Table 8: Commonwealth NEPS funding in 1994 – Catholic Sector

<i>Element</i>	<i>Funding level \$</i>
Access Element	
English as a Second Language Component	
ESL New Arrivals sub-component	1,018,516
General Support sub-component	7,409,700
Special Education Component	3,923, 800
Equity Element	
Disadvantaged Schools Component	3,615,900
Country Areas General Component	273,500
National Priorities Element	
Students at Risk Component	423,000
Incentives Element	
Gender Equity Component	33,354
Students with Disabilities Component	329,300

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

Equity resources and target groups

In 1994, the CECV received equity funding from the Commonwealth through the NEPS. Funding levels are shown in Table 8.

In addition, a joint project addressing reading and literacy intervention in the early years of schooling was conducted by the CEO Melbourne, CEO Canberra/Goulburn and the Directorate of School Education under the Commonwealth's NEPS Literacy and Learning National Component. The project is to be continued and further developed in 1995 and aims to develop teachers' knowledge of the reading process, especially in a second language, and to assist teachers in anticipating the particular linguistic demands, organisational features and content of different texts associated with learning areas of the curriculum. In 1994, the CECV received funding of \$42,550 for a project officer who worked with 10 teachers from five Catholic primary schools in Melbourne to develop a set of materials on intervention in the mainstream classroom.

It should be noted that in 1994, National Professional Development Program (NPDP) funds were used in particular instances to link national and State curriculum initiatives to equity issues by exploring their implications for groups such as ESL learners and students at risk.

Education of girls

The CEO's Gender Issues Committee continued its focus on two major areas in 1994, namely, the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls, 1993–1997, and the education of boys. The Committee sponsored several professional development activities provided by the central office personnel with further professional development activities being planned for 1995.

Other activities in 1994 included:

- reporting by CEO groups with responsibility for the provision of school services on the procedures to be adopted by them during 1995;
- establishment of a Gender Network as a pilot to enable primary and secondary teachers in the metropolitan area to meet and discuss issues of interest and concern. Two central meetings were held to facilitate discussion and plans were made for its continuation in 1995;
- appointment of a member of the Gender Issues Committee to the Gender and Violence Project, the Gender Issues Committee providing a forum for progress reports and follow-up action, such as communication to schools;
- allocation of funds from the NEPS Gender Equity Component to support a Teacher-in-Residence Program in seven eligible schools (two metropolitan and five country). The

program involved a three day visit by a mathematics or science teacher to work with teachers, students and parents to promote the importance of mathematics and science in the education and life choices of girls. A major component of the program was curriculum development.

Distance and rural education

Funding for distance and rural education from the Country Areas General Component of NEPS was administered directly through the CECV for the first time in 1994. Funding was distributed to schools for programs which responded to the learning needs of their student communities. Emphasis on LOTE programs and the use of technology to broaden curriculum options for country students continued to be a priority.

Of particular significance was the decision to enable all Catholic schools to become part of the Directorate of School Education's ISLN. Approximately 470 primary and secondary schools accepted this invitation across the State. Programs directed at primary schools in science and technology—Science and Technology Education in Primary Schools (STEPS) and LOTE Primary Access to Languages via Satellite (PALS) have enabled broader curriculum provision in country schools.

Education of students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds

In 1994, 107 schools received funding support from the Disadvantaged Schools Component (DSC) of the NEPS with 19 cluster projects across the four dioceses. The distribution of schools is shown in Table 9.

An additional 42 schools were introduced to the DSC for full participation in 1995. The increase in schools can be attributed to a change in the enrolment ceilings which have been raised from 28,500 to 32,500.

Table 9: Schools receiving support through the DSC

	<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>Ballarat</i>	<i>Sandhurst</i>	<i>Sale</i>
Primary	63	15	13	2
Secondary	9	2	2	—
Special Schools	1	—	—	—
Total	73	17	15	2

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

In 1994, the DSC was supported by DSC Field Officers (2 full-time based in Melbourne, 1 part-time in Sandhurst and 1 part-time in Ballarat) who assisted schools engaged in School Development Planning in a range of activities including:

- identification of specific needs and resources for DSC support;
- planning for future directions and formation of school-based DSC planning committees;
- evaluation of existing programs and development of a projects evaluation plan.

The list of schools to be supported in 1995 has been revised and is based on indices which combine a composite Ross methodology rating and percentages of students receiving the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA). The final index weights the Ross index and the EMA index in the proportion 75:25. Funding support will be provided in three bands:

Band 1	60 per cent of available funds applied to 17,000 students;
Band 2	20 per cent of available funds applied to 10,500 students;
Band 3	5 per cent of available funds applied to 5,000 students

Students at risk

In its second year of operation in Victorian Catholic schools, the STAR component of NEPS continued the development of projects reflecting the distinctive setting of the Catholic school community. Some activities continued or extended projects supported in 1993, while others were new initiatives. These include:

- a major initiative using clusters of parishes and associated schools (deanery) to help schools identify and assist target groups of students. The project emphasises links between the school, parish community, church and municipal and other agencies and is coordinated in each deanery by a full-time youth project officer;
- extension of services provided by two special education facilities to fifteen associate schools linked to the STAR project;
- a series of cluster projects in rural areas with a particular focus on vocational education;
- provision across all projects of a professional development program to support families in developing relationship and parenting skills. The approach assists schools to work in clusters and to make connections with relevant community support agencies;
- a Statewide STAR 'Seminar Breaking the Barriers—Mapping New Ground';

- the establishment of a database on early school leavers;
- the development of directories of resources.

Other initiatives include Community Linkage and Volunteer Programs, Peer and Mentor Support Programs, Vocational Education Schemes and Adolescent Accommodation as well as research into attitudes to work and study.

Through STAR activities schools have developed a heightened awareness of the circumstances which contribute to students being at risk. The STAR Component has also been a catalyst in the development of innovative responses to the needs of specific young people in our schools.

Education of gifted and talented students

Activities undertaken during 1994 to enhance the education of gifted and talented students include:

- professional development for teachers at school and cluster level as well as at a wider level;
- establishment of student support groups to facilitate communication between home and schools;
- involvement of students in the Tournament of Minds and the Future Problem Solving programs.

The CEO is also represented on the Executive of the Victorian Association for Gifted and Talented Children and works with the Directorate and the AISV to provide support for gifted and talented children. A joint submission under the National Priorities Element of NEPS established Country Gifted Connect, a project which aims to create a strong collaborative, cooperative and coordinated approach across sectors to assist teachers to enrich the learning experiences of disadvantaged gifted students.

Education of students from non-English speaking backgrounds

The goals and priorities of the ESL Component of NEPS have been established within a broad framework of ESL provision. The development of English language competence is viewed as a dimension of the work of classroom teachers and ESL Education Officers. The development of language is firmly situated within broader principles of cultural understandings, bilingualism, identity, inclusivity, gender and social justice.

In 1994, the General Support sub-component for ESL funding allocations was generally maintained at 1993 levels, with 126 primary schools and 41 secondary schools being resourced with 111 and 25.7 EFT positions respectively. These resources were used to employ ESL teachers, a significant number in 1994

having specialist ESL qualifications. Relevant to this, schools were asked to identify the number of other staff members with ESL qualifications so that a more accurate profile of ESL provision in Catholic schools can be developed.

Funding was also made available for 11.3 EFT bilingual teacher assistants (BTA) in primary schools. BTAs perform a range of duties including interpreting and translating in classrooms alongside ESL and classroom teachers.

Other activities to support the education of NESB students in 1994 include:

- development of revised criteria to determine future resource allocations to primary and secondary schools;
- a focus on monitoring and assessment by central in-service and zone-based clusters;
- examination of the applicability of the national statements and profiles to ESL students;
- professional development activities to assist ESL and mainstream teachers to identify the needs of ESL students within mainstream curriculum areas;
- provision of advisory support to both ESL funded and non-funded schools. This involved collaborative work with principals, staff and curriculum committees to support the development of culturally inclusive curriculum; the implementation of ESL plans; mainstream provision; monitoring and assessment practices; and evaluation of programs.

New arrivals

In 1994, there were 333 primary and 24 secondary new arrival students enrolled in Catholic schools. Support for the 357 students across years P–12 was provided by 22.8 EFT new arrival teachers.

New arrival teachers supported a range of professional development activities to assist mainstream and ESL teachers. This included the provision of school-based programs and assistance with planning and presenting sessions at professional development programs.

Aboriginal education and student programs

A total of 208 Koorie students were enrolled in Catholic schools in 1994, the distribution being shown in Table 10.

The needs of Koorie students and parents in Catholic primary and secondary schools are the focus of the Aboriginal Education Program. An essential component of this program is continuing consultation with Koorie educational and community service organisations.

Table 10. Koorie student enrolments

<i>Diocese</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Total</i>
Melbourne	55	19	74
Ballarat	13	28	41
Sandhurst	28	22	50
Sale	42	1	43

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

Professional development for teachers who work with Koorie students, as well as for those who do not have Koorie students in their schools, has been a major focus of the work undertaken in 1994. A professional development model which includes CECV curriculum support materials for teachers engaged in Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum has been developed through a process of consultation with the Local Aboriginal Educational Consultative Groups (LAECG).

Special education (integration of students with disabilities)

In 1994, 1,570 students with disabilities and impairments were supported in 428 Catholic primary and secondary schools either on a full- or part-time basis. This was an increase of around 17 per cent in the number of students over the previous year. The number of schools receiving support under the program increased by 3 per cent in the same period. The total of equivalent full-time attendance included 1,144 primary and 426 secondary students.

Total Commonwealth NEPS funding under the Special Education and Disabilities Components is shown in Table 8 and included special schools funding of \$1,158,091. Furthermore, a specific allocation of General Recurrent Grant funds (\$376,000) was used to provide additional support for integration in parish primary schools.

Support to primary and secondary Catholic schools for students with disabilities was provided from the Special Education Component of NEPS through the Schools Support—Non-government sub-component (\$1,686,709), and transferred to the Schools Support Non-government Sub-component from the Intervention Support Sub-component \$150,000, the Capital Support—Non-government sub-component (\$314,800) and the Students with Disabilities Component (\$312,314). Support included funding ‘quarantined’ for non-school organisations from the School Support—Non-government sub-component (\$246,000) for services such as therapy.

Independent schools

Equity resources

During 1994, the AISV administered the NEPS for independent schools. Total funding received is shown in Table 11.

Literacy initiatives

Classroom teachers identified students with literacy problems through observation and testing procedures. Other identification processes used included basic skills tests, daily progress records, and profiles from previous schools. Parents and specialist education consultants also made significant contributions to the identification process.

All respondent schools had special individual or group – based remedial programs developed by either resource teachers or educational specialists. These programs were designed for implementation under withdrawal circumstances or within classroom situations.

Strategies to assist implementation of remedial programs included parental involvement, cross age tutoring, and use of ability versus age groupings.

Table 11. Commonwealth NEPS funding in 1994 – Independent sector

<i>Element</i>	<i>Funding level \$</i>
Access Element	
English as a Second Language Component	
New Arrivals sub-component	154,494
General Support sub-component	764,300
Special Education Component	
Schools Support sub-component	2,182,000
Capital Support sub-component	160,700
Equity Element	
Disadvantaged Schools Component	143,500
Country Areas Component	22,500
National Priorities Element	
Students at Risk Component	150,000
Gifted and Talented Component	63,000
Incentive Element	
Students with Disabilities Component	780,200

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

Rural education

A total of three schools received funding under the Country Areas Component of NEPS to assist students who because of their location, had inequitable access to, and participation in social, cultural and educational experiences.

Education of students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds

During 1994, a total of 11 schools identified as serving students from communities characterised by low socio-economic status received funding under the Disadvantaged Schools Component of NEPS to undertake projects and programs involving whole school change.

Students at risk

A total of 19 schools involving over 500 students identified at risk were assisted under the STAR component of NEPS. These schools conducted a variety of programs. In addition, a major seminar/workshop program was conducted by the AISV for STAR coordinators to highlight good practice in the areas of utilising volunteers and identification of students at risk.

Education of gifted and talented students

Programs for the gifted and talented mainly concentrated around the provision of opportunities for enrichment, extension and acceleration (grade/subject). Most schools favoured subject-based acceleration with very few permitting grade skipping. Enrichment was provided through research projects and exposure to leadership tasks.

Outcomes of programs for gifted and talented students included high retention rates including more settled, happy and stimulated school bodies. This was deemed to be the result of exposure to challenging situations which enhanced confidence and self-esteem.

Education of students from non-English speaking backgrounds

During 1994, a total of 42 schools with over 3,500 identified ESL students were assisted through NEPS funding. In addition, the AISV conducted a sector-wide project involving consultancy assistance to individual schools in the review and operation of their ESL programs. A total of 54 students were assisted under the ESL New Arrivals Component.

Special education

In 1994, support was provided to over 430 students with disabilities in 101 regular schools and over 280 students in 10 special schools or units. Three non-school organisations providing services to independent schools for students with disabilities were also assisted with NEPS funding as were 15 schools in the provision of capital facilities for students with disabilities.

General and vocational education

Government sector

During 1994 there was a substantial increase in the number and range of programs available, particularly in post-compulsory education and training. The major effort during 1994 has been to develop programs in schools which are consistent with the developing Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS).

School and training

Credit transfer

Credit transfer is a key vehicle for students considering TAFE options in terms of their future destinations. Where competencies in the VCE are comparable to that in TAFE, credit can be given for subsequent TAFE enrolment to prevent repetition of work.

Credit arrangements were formalised in five further areas in 1994 (Aerospace; Automotive; Communication Skills; Printing; Social and Community Services), adding to the existing areas of Agriculture and Horticulture; Art and Design; Electrical and Electronics; Engineering; Hospitality and Tourism; Office and Secretarial; and Textiles, Clothing and Footwear.

Dual recognition

Significant for school-TAFE relationships was the continued development and implementation of the Dual Recognition Policy. Announced in mid-1993, the policy enables certain TAFE subjects to be recognised within the VCE. Building on credit transfer, this means that VCE students are able to complete a full TAFE credential as well as their VCE over a two-year period. Following significant progress in 1994, five industry areas are now included in Dual Recognition arrangements:

Electronics:	Certificate in Basic Electronics
Office Skills:	Certificate in Office & Secretarial Studies and recently accredited Certificate in Office Administration
Hospitality:	Advanced Certificate in Hospitality Operations and the Certificate in Hospitality Studies
Engineering:	Basic Certificate in Engineering
Automotive:	Certificate in Automotive.

Other program initiatives in 1994 included:

- development of a number of school-TAFE Dual Recognition networks to aid professional development;

- further development of Dual Recognition programs in other industry areas;
- the decision of the Victorian Vice Chancellors Committee to treat Dual Recognition programs as the equivalent of a 5th or 6th VCE subject and so attract a 10 per cent increment to the calculation of the Tertiary Entrance Rank.

TAFE in VTAC

For 1994 certain TAFE courses have been included in the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) tertiary admissions process for the first time. This enables VCE students to select TAFE courses as well as university courses as a part of the same process. At the end of 1993, some 19 per cent of applicants nominated a TAFE course as their first preference and 36.4 per cent of applicants indicated TAFE as one of their preferences. The introduction of this system is expected to promote TAFE as a viable option to secondary students.

Links with industry

Vocational placement programs

For several years Victorian schools have implemented work experience programs enabling thousands of secondary students to gain experience of the workplace while still at school. The arrangements have been formalised through the Work Experience Act and over the last few years, a number of new initiatives have begun to expand the notion of work experience.

Under Commonwealth programs such as the Students at Risk Program, the Country Education Program and most recently through the AVTS pilot program, schools have developed the notion of vocational placements. These placements allow more regular contact, for example one day per week rather than a one-off experience, and are also more likely to be extended, for example, over two school terms. The nature of the placement is negotiated with the employer and is often closely linked to the student's VCE curriculum. Some of the Dual Recognition programs include an element of vocational placement.

Industry organised programs

In 1994, industry links were further enhanced and the development of enterprise programs expanded significantly. In addition to programs organised through careers teachers in schools, the following key organisations assisted with special programs for schools during 1994:

- Know-Biz operated tours of industry for students and teachers and has developed a 'Preparation for Work' program to begin in 1995;
- Young Achievement Australia established teams of students to develop and market a product that

related to the curriculum they were studying as well as expand their 'Business Alive' program;

- the Australian Quality Council expanded the 'E Team' program developed for the first time in 1993. The program places a group of students on work experience in a company for a week, and through a structured learning program sets students the task of solving an identified problem within that company.

Teacher Release to Industry Program

School-industry partnerships also exist for teachers. Over the last four years the Directorate in collaboration with the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) and Deakin University, has operated a one-year Teacher Release to Industry Program (TRIP). TRIP provides teachers with the opportunity to learn about different workplaces and for schools to use this industry expertise to develop new programs. In turn, industry highly values the skills that teachers bring to a range of workplaces. Fifty teachers were involved in 1994.

An extensive review of the program took place in 1994 with a view to linking TRIP teacher experiences more closely to the host school.

Key competencies

In 1994, the Commonwealth provided funding under the Pilot Element of the Key Competencies Program for the following three initiatives:

- an audit of key competencies in the compulsory and post-compulsory curriculum as well as in the most common patterns of study managed by the Board of Studies;
- an audit and reporting of key competencies in apprenticeships managed by the Office of Training and Further Education;
- piloting of the concepts underpinning the key competencies in school and training settings. This project is being managed by the Directorate, the CEO and the AISV.

Tertiary studies in schools

A range of programs which have maintained prominence in post-compulsory education include those which involve the delivery of tertiary studies in schools. These were referred to in the Joint Ministerial Statement on Tertiary Studies in Schools, released in 1993, and have been continued and developed in 1994.

Extension Studies or Enhancement Programs involve VCE students taking a first year university subject as part of their studies at the school. Programs commenced with Mathematics 101 at the University of Melbourne and have now expanded to include further subjects from other disciplines taught at other tertiary institutions.

Tertiary Studies Programs are also delivered to post-VCE students in secondary colleges. The most typical programs are those operating through the Open Learning Agency coordinated by Monash University and an Associate Degree in Social Science sponsored by Swinburne University in three secondary colleges.

Catholic sector

New initiatives in the post-compulsory years in Catholic schools

The major developments in the post-compulsory years have extended recent initiatives and include:

- a growing number of schools working in accord with the AVTS by providing a larger range of school-TAFE credits;
- dual accreditation for both the VCE and basic or advanced certificates in approved TAFE courses;
- further accreditation of Catholic secondary schools as private providers of TAFE programs, in particular vocational courses, for example agriculture and horticulture and hospitality.

Further developments in 1994 include activities promoting cross-sectoral partnerships and initiatives of individual schools:

- the State Training Board Project continued to establish schools as TAFE providers to supplement VCE curriculum with accredited TAFE courses. Four metropolitan secondary schools clustered in the eastern metropolitan region were involved;
- the Victorian Schools Pilot Project, in combination with the Directorate and the AISV, continued to fund 15 schools (5 government, 5 Catholic and 5 independent) to develop vocational programs focusing on the implementation of credit transfer arrangements, student work programs in industry areas and combinations of school and work;
- continuation of the Local Industry Education Networks, an initiative which in certain areas increased teacher and student access to industry networks and to work placements.
- participation in the new AVTS initiative involving regional group training pilots in five areas around the State and involvement of schools from the three sectors. Locations and focus areas were as follows:
 - Wimmera/Grampians: students at risk
 - Ballarat: building and construction industry
 - Melbourne: retail industry
 - Lyndhurst: engineering and horticultural industries
 - Geelong: vocational studies in the VCE and pathways between schools and TAFE;

- establishment of a number of school–TAFE college partnerships. These have generally occurred in areas where dual accreditation has been established under the VCE.

Schools participating in the range of vocational initiatives cite some of the following benefits:

- promotion of curriculum diversity at the VCE level;
- improved student motivation;
- decline in rates of attrition from the VCE;
- more discriminating choices by students with regard to post-school destinations;
- increased understanding of the expectations of the work and training sectors by teachers.

While Catholic secondary schools have been active in embracing initiatives in the post-compulsory years, their implementation needs to be in a manner consistent with the core purposes of Catholic secondary education. Consideration is given to identifying strategies to ensure an appropriate balance between general and vocational education, and the ways human and financial resources are deployed in implementing and monitoring these initiatives.

Independent schools

Interactions with TAFE institutions and private training providers

A large number of surveyed secondary schools reported links with TAFE institutions, and found the staff, courses and information on course offerings easily accessible. A few schools, however, reported geographical and timetabling difficulties.

The majority of schools reported no major new developments with TAFE links in 1994. A small number, however, had accessed TAFE for the first time and had registered students for trade courses in 1995.

Many of the secondary schools did not have private training links, however, university research centres, young achievers programs, vocational visits and work experience programs provided opportunities for links with industry, commerce and higher education institutions.

Key competencies

Most respondent schools indicated that information on key competencies had been received through the AISV. Other sources of information included subject associations, professional journals, seminar handouts and the Mayer Committee Report. Only a small number of respondent schools had received no information at the time of survey.

The video and kit had been received by a small number of schools and was found to be a useful introduction to the integration of key competencies into existing school curricula.

Several schools indicated that aspects of learning fundamental to their educational processes and outcomes already addressed the key competencies, and in addition, regular reports kept staff updated with policy developments in this area. A number of schools indicated that they had specifically integrated key competencies into assessment and reporting procedures.

Areas of student learning

Board of Studies

The Board of Studies was established 30 June 1993 to be responsible for curriculum and assessment in Victorian schools from years P–12. The Board's charter is to:

- strengthen curriculum provision in Victoria by ensuring continuity and consistency of standards, subject content and skill development in years P–12;
- ensure that all students are able to undertake a balanced and challenging curriculum, which takes account of the diversity of needs and encourages students to develop a critical understanding and appreciation of our society's cultural heritage, while preparing them for higher education or employment;
- provide for comprehensive and reliable assessment of student achievement at all levels of schooling.

In fulfilling its charter, the Board of Studies liaises with the government, Catholic and independent school sectors and with various other bodies including the State Training Board and tertiary institutions.

In 1994 the Board of Studies:

- prepared a draft Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) in consultation with teachers, professional associations and education authorities. The framework provides the basis for curriculum planning for years P–10 and sets out the major areas of learning and learning outcomes to be achieved by students. A draft document was released for full consultation in July 1994 following which substantial work was undertaken to finalise the framework for proposed release to schools in February 1995; and
- commenced work on developing the Learning Assessment Project (LAP). The LAP will provide parents, teachers and schools with additional information on student achievement, initially in the areas of English and mathematics, for all students in years 3 and 5. The LAP is due for implementation in 1995.

Government sector

English

Draft Course Advice for primary and secondary schools was developed during 1994 based on the structure developed and successfully used for the *Primary Course Advice—Mathematics* (1992). Both the primary and secondary documents support the Board of Studies' CSF and draw on the frameworks and goals outlined in the national profile and statement. Consultation occurred during late 1994. Publication of English course advice will occur in 1995.

Languages other than English

The Commonwealth provided \$2.7 million to the government under the School Language Program.

The Ministerial Advisory Council on Languages other than English (MACLOTE) continued to advise the Minister on LOTE policy and implementation. In October 1994, the Minister launched the MACLOTE Report outlining policies and strategies for cooperation across all education sectors to extend and improve LOTE provision. The report complements the LOTE Strategy Plan previously launched by the Minister in November 1993. Consistent with improving and increasing the overall provision of LOTE in 1994:

- 68 per cent of primary schools (933) provided a LOTE program compared with 39 per cent in 1993;
- 46 per cent of primary level students (133,868) studied LOTE, compared with 28 per cent in 1993;
- 96.5 per cent of secondary schools (307) provided a LOTE program compared with 89 per cent in 1993;
- 48 per cent of secondary students (105,884) studied LOTE, including 99 per cent of year 7 students (38,069); 93 per cent of year 8 students (35,409); and 49 per cent of year 9 students (18,780).

A range of significant activities and initiatives were supported by the Directorate:

- the Victorian School of Languages (VSL) offered 40 languages in 26 centres Statewide and seven languages through distance education. In 1994, LOTE studies were provided to a total of 13,654 students (413 adults, 3,600 primary, 9,641 secondary and 1,111 secondary distance education students from government, Catholic and independent schools);
- funding for 22,000 students across 40 languages in after hours ethnic schools. Funding of up to \$70 per capita was provided by the Commonwealth and State and an additional \$240,000 was provided for a professional and materials development program. Approximately 700 teachers took part in the professional development program;

- continued cooperation with universities on the provision of credit-bearing language and methodology courses. In 1994, 18 language and three methodology credit-bearing courses were negotiated with universities and approximately 350 teachers took part;
- continued support for teachers to undertake credit-bearing in-country language courses. Five teachers attended Nanjing University in China, 15 attended Sanata Dharma University in Indonesia, and 15 attended the University for Foreigners at Perugia, Italy;
- implementation of the Primary Access to Languages via Satellite (PALS) Project for students in years 5 and 6. Indonesian and Italian programs were produced by the Directorate, while a Japanese program was tendered to the NSW Direct Broadcasting Network. An evaluation has indicated the need to extend to other languages and further year levels in 1995;
- provision of an additional 90 primary and 246.1 secondary special needs LOTE teacher positions making a total of 225 primary and 258.6 secondary positions;
- additional funding of \$2 million to support the implementation of the LOTE Strategy Plan. Initiatives funded included training programs for teachers in country areas, other teacher development, resource and project grants, the distribution of curriculum materials and support for enrichment and extension activities for students;
- participation in joint standing committees on educational cooperation with France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Indonesia and Vietnam. These committees support and assist the improved quantity and quality of a range of language and culture programs;
- negotiation of agreements with overseas governments for the provision of LOTE Advisers from France, Germany, Italy and Greece to provide language-specific statewide support to teachers and school communities. The Directorate has also appointed consultants for French, German, Indonesian, Italian and Modern Greek to support teachers and schools;
- collection of a range of relevant government school data for publication;
- consolidation of resources and provision of professional development by the Languages and Multicultural Education Resources Centre to support LOTE teachers in mainstream schools, the VSL and after hours ethnic schools.

Science

A science and technology interactive television series, Science and Technology Education in Primary Schools (STEPS), was commenced for all primary year levels. A pilot program began in mid-1994 providing two program series; years P-3 and years 4-6. The Directorate also continued its involvement in the activities of the Australian Academy of Science throughout 1994.

Technology

The Directorate commenced work on course advice to assist schools and teachers with the implementation of the Board of Studies accredited curriculum. Draft Course Advice was trialed commencing in July for release during 1995.

Mathematics

Substantial work was undertaken in developing course advice for years 7-10 and in reworking the course advice for primary maths to match the CSF. Trialing of both documents began in July for proposed release to schools in 1995.

Studies of society and the environment

Victoria continued its involvement with the Magnet Schools Program established to promote studies of Asia in ten schools. The Program is co-sponsored by the Asia Education Foundation (through DEET) and the Directorate.

Work began to establish schools Constitutional Conventions in liaison with the Constitutional Centenary Committee. A State convention was held in late October. A range of regional conventions are planned for 1995.

The arts

Regular articles on school activities in the arts were published in the Directorate's fortnightly newspaper, *Victorian School Education News*. The articles maintained an awareness of the range of activities available to students, celebrated student activity and encouraged schools and teachers to experiment with new initiatives.

Health and physical education

Following the Minister's acceptance of the recommendations of the Review of Physical and Sport Education (1993), the Directorate enhanced physical and sport education provision in schools through many initiatives including:

- the establishment of an Exemplary Physical and Sport Education schools network to promote best practice. The network consists of 42 primary and secondary schools across the State;
- the development of physical and sport education course advice for schools, for publication in 1995;
- an extensive teacher professional development program launched in Term 4 to support the mandatory timetabling of physical and sport education. Physical and Sport Education (PASE) Courses were developed and delivered by the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation for the Directorate and offered free of cost to primary and secondary teachers across the State. Over 2,500 teachers successfully completed the PASE Courses which will continue during 1995;
- the provision of grants totalling \$1,100,000 to sports districts across the State through the Victorian Primary and Secondary Schools' Sports Associations, to promote and resource increased student participation in school sport;
- the 'ABC School Sport' television program, a joint initiative with the NSW Department of Education to promote sporting achievements and news from both states;
- the School Sports Awards, incorporating the 'Sporting Blues' which recognise the achievements of both primary and secondary students, and the contribution of teachers, parents and administrators to school sport.

Catholic sector

During 1994 Catholic schools:

- were actively involved in the development of the Board of Studies' CSF through involvement in KLA committees and working parties and in responding to the draft CSF. Teachers were involved in professional development activities associated with the CSF in all eight KLAs;
- contributed through consultation to significant improvements being made to the Board of Studies' proposed LAP;
- were invited and assisted to purchase KIDMAP as a tool for teacher support in recording and reporting student assessments;
- were involved in extensive work undertaken to ensure the fair use and application of the CSF and LAP to particular student groups. Schools are

seeking to use the CSF in a way in which promotes a P-10 approach to education;

- were supported in activities leading to the implementation of the CSF through central, zone and school-based professional development provided by central and zone CEO personnel.

Catholic schools are encouraged to approach the eight learning areas of the CSF in an order conforming to their individual School Development Plans. Emphasis on particular learning areas and preparation for the use of outcome statements therefore varies between schools. Funding from the NPDP assisted schools in addressing issues relevant to national curriculum statements and profiles and involved nineteen school-based pilot projects and eight area projects (years 5–8).

Languages other than English

LOTE programs in Catholic schools were supported by \$3.3 million from the Commonwealth's School Language Program (Community Language Element (CLE) and Priority Language Incentive Element (PLIE)) and by the Mother Tongue Development programs (MTD). The provision of LOTE programs in Catholic schools is further enhanced by:

- the CEO LOTE Coordinating Committee which forms a vital link between CEO Primary and Secondary Staff Groups;
- LOTE Education Officers who provide support for teachers through involvement in professional development activities, program administration support and ongoing support to individual schools and LOTE teachers;
- membership of committees and organisations such as the Joint Education Systems and Tertiary Institutions LOTE Committee (JESTILC), Language Associations and other educational and community organisations which provide LOTE Education Officers and teachers with a range of opportunities to initiate and participate in professional development activities;
- use of the PALS programs by a total of 39 primary schools: Indonesian—19 schools; Italian—8 schools; and Japanese—12 schools.

The number of Victorian Catholic schools providing LOTE programs in 1994 is shown in Table 12.

Funding for the 1994 PLIE was based on the 1993 PLIE language enrolments of VCE year 12 students, the total being 633 (refer to Table 13). Additional numbers of students enrolled for language studies through the Victorian School of Languages, Distance Education and specific language schools.

Table 12. Provision of LOTE programs according to school type

<i>Primary</i>		<i>Secondary</i>	
<i>Languages</i>	<i>No. of schools</i>	<i>Languages</i>	<i>No. of schools</i>
Arabic	8	Chinese	2
Chinese	10	French	50
Croatian	1	German	6
French	10	Greek (Modern)	1
German	1	Indonesian	13
Greek	1	Italian	81
Indonesian	17	Japanese	25
Italian	218	Korean	1
Japanese	20	Latin	1
Maltese	1	Spanish	3
Polish	1	Vietnamese	2
Spanish	4	Language studies	3
Tagalog	1		
Vietnamese	6		
Total	299	Total	188

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

Table 13. Year 12 PLIE language enrolments 1993, Systemic and Catholic Aggregation

<i>PLIE languages</i>	<i>No. of year 12 students to attract funding</i>
French	136
German	38
Indonesian	45
Italian	407
Japanese	41
Vietnamese	17
Greek (Modern)	—
Chinese (Mandarin)	—

Source: Directorate of School Education (Victoria)

Independent schools

English

Schools surveyed aimed to promote language competence by providing opportunities to speak, listen, read and write. Common courses offered in this learning area included drama, research and report writing, literature, hand writing, spelling, creative writing, vocabulary development and public speaking.

Strategies for enhanced achievement were based on staff professional development, curriculum enrichment and resource improvement. Activities used to promote achievement included promotion through special events (for example book week), introduction of CD-ROMS, audio tapes and computers, and promotion of recreational reading.

Strategies to enhance accessibility by special student populations were based on withdrawal and focused on reading recovery and language enrichment. Most programs were delivered to special student populations by peers, parents, and education support groups.

Mathematics

Problem solving underpinned all teaching in the mathematics learning areas with most schools favouring a hands-on approach through concept learning, skill development and the application of skills learnt. Included in this learning area were computer packages, social and business maths, development of skills in number computation, application of maths to every day situations, and accounting.

Many schools reported that their maths curricula were all-inclusive and catered for the needs of all students and in addition, were constantly under review to reflect both national and State guidelines. Developments for the total student population included regular assessments accompanied by specific diagnostic testing, employment of special maths coordinators, parental support with home maths programs, promotion of group work, excursions for real life experiences, professional development for staff, and the use of a variety of learning and teaching techniques.

Accessibility by special student populations was enhanced by the development of specialised programs based on withdrawal (individual or group) and provision of remedial assistance where necessary.

Languages other than English

In 1994, 76 per cent of independent schools offered a LOTE. Of these schools, 20 per cent offered two LOTE, 21 per cent offered three LOTE and 17 per cent offered four or more LOTE. More than 79 per cent of secondary students studied a LOTE, the study of a LOTE being mandatory in most schools' years 7 and 8.

French and German were the two most widely taught languages, with the provision of Asian languages increasing rapidly. In 1994, 28 schools offered Indonesian, 44 offered Japanese and 35 offered Chinese. This compared with 15, 18 and 9 schools respectively in 1988.

The AISV supported the following activities with \$428,000 provided through the PLIE of the School Language Program:

- professional development for teachers;
- seminars on LOTE methodology and curriculum;
- consultancy services for schools on LOTE issues;
- development of curriculum materials.

Teaching and learning

Government sector

Standards Council of the Teaching Profession

The Standards Council of the Teaching Profession was established in December 1993 as an independent statutory body to advise the Minister for Education, Director of School Education on all matters relating to professional standards for members of the teaching service, specifically qualifications, professional development and criteria for advancement.

In 1994, the council conducted a major Review of Qualifications and Appointment which concluded that university courses for beginning teachers should be based on the development of personal capabilities, provision of sound knowledge of academic disciplines in the key learning areas and the acquisition of skills and knowledge appropriate for teaching. As a result, *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Teacher Education Courses* were established, and *Guidelines for Assessing Teacher Qualifications* were distributed to all school principals to assist with staff selection.

Other activities undertaken by the council in 1994 included:

- publication of information papers describing useful practice in schools. *Teacher Appraisal* encourages schools and teachers to share and trial ideas and practices to ensure a broader professional understanding of this issue. A further paper *Partnerships in Teacher Education* was in the process of development;
- extensive consultation with teachers on their individual professional development needs, resulting in a proposal for ensuring teachers' ongoing professional development. The Victorian Professional Development Network was established in December 1994 as the result of the council's initiative;

- participation in a project team which developed a comprehensive set of teaching standards in preparation for their application for a new career structure;
- continued nomination of teacher members of Merit Protection Boards and through the chairperson, setting of criteria for the State and national Teacher of the Year Awards.

Local selection of teachers

An innovative new system of filling teaching vacancies enabled principals to select teachers based on the needs of the school and on merit. The process involves a selection panel using statewide key selection criteria supplemented with local criteria.

District Liaison Principals

A significant advance in educational leadership was the appointment of 60 District Liaison Principals (DLPs) for the start of the 1994 school year. Fourteen of these appointments were women. DLPs:

- act as change agents assisting school principals with the implementation of the Schools of the Future program and other government education initiatives;
- provide collegiate support for principals in school operations;
- monitor the deployment of student and support services personnel to schools;
- assist the local community to develop a clear vision for schools/colleges drawing on statewide policy and guidelines to ensure best practice and accountability.

Merit and equity

In 1994, a range of activities supported the continued implementation of merit and equity principles within government schools and education administration:

- distribution of new Employment Equity Management Guidelines for Schools consistent with the devolution of staff management responsibilities. The guidelines outline merit and equity policies and principles, a school merit and equity plan and an accountability framework;
- establishment of Employment Equity Committees including members of both the teaching and non-teaching service in all school regions;
- inclusion of merit and equity criteria as part of the Directorate's Performance Management System to help ensure that all Principal Class Officers and Executive Officers incorporate these principles within their management responsibilities;

- research of a "Managing Diversity" approach to integrate merit and equity policies and supporting initiatives in the workplace and to implement management accountability for merit and equity outcomes. Further development will occur in 1995;
- merit and equity training was conducted as part of principal class selection panel training and included in training for local teacher selection;
- establishment of the Ministerial Review of Employment Equity for Women by the Minister for Education and the Minister for Tertiary Education and Training to advise on ways female employees can take full advantage of available employment opportunities. The review consulted widely with teachers, principals, school support staff, managers, non-teaching staff and senior administrators.

Women in School Leadership Program

The Women in School Leadership Program continued during 1994. The program successfully encouraged and supported women aspiring for principal class positions and increased their representation in leadership positions. In 1994, women were appointed to 38 per cent of advertised principal class positions (over 1000 positions) and 47 per cent of advertised assistant principal class positions.

Workforce restructure

Consistent with staffing targets for 1994, further workforce reductions were achieved through the use of financial incentives for staff to resign or retire. Over 2,500 teachers accepted Voluntary Departure Packages. Career transition and outplacement programs supported many staff who sought career changes.

Non-teaching staff in schools were able to transfer to a new School Services and School Technical Officer structure offering a better career structure, more rewarding work, development of new skills and potential for higher salaries. The new structure also gives greater flexibility in the deployment of support staff and facilitates the transfer of non-school based officers to non-teaching schools positions to support the administrative requirements of the Schools of the Future.

A new career structure and remuneration packaging for principals and assistant principals recognised the complexity of modern educational leadership and provides for performance payments. New processes to recognise and reward the professional achievements of teachers are planned for introduction in 1995.

Professional development and training

Resourcing and decision making for professional development continued to be devolved to schools. A

range of activities supported professional development and training including:

- development and delivery of system-wide professional development support for principals, school councillors, teachers and administrative staff in Schools of the Future as schools entered the program (induction or implementation focus);
- Principal Induction Programs supported principals in the task of charter development, while Principal Collegiate Groups continued to provide a useful forum for self-initiated professional development;
- approximately 565 Schools of the Future principals participated in a five-day leadership and management program covering topics such as team-building, performance management, situational decision making, negotiation and managing change;
- the Curriculum Leadership in Schools Program for school teams comprising assistant principals and teachers with designated curriculum leadership responsibilities;
- continuation of programs supporting the increasingly significant role of bursars, business managers, and other administrative staff. Key programs focused on the initial development of the Schools Global Budget and enhancements to the Computerised Administrative Systems for Schools (CASES) components;
- provision of programs for school councillors as a part of a service agreement negotiated with the Association of School Councils of Victoria;
- induction, mentoring and development programs were provided as a part of a service agreement with the Principals' Associations. In addition, a pilot program involving 48 experienced principals focused on leadership style and organisational climate questionnaires;
- work commenced on an audit of all system-level professional development programs which is expected to form the basis of reporting and accountability procedures in 1995.

National Schools Network

The National Schools Network (NSN) assists schools to become more responsive to students' needs in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing environment. In 1994, participating schools reviewed a range of key areas related to their organisation and teaching methods including:

- the roles, responsibilities and activities of staff including their contacts and relationships with students and other staff;
- the staffing mix and processes of staff appointment;
- staff/student feedback and appraisal mechanisms;

- student groupings and activities;
- applications of technology in the delivery of education;
- remoteness from the environment and surrounding community.

Overseas education

The Directorate's overseas program covers teacher and student exchange programs, the provision of consultants for overseas projects, the administration of overseas awards and scholarships, the participation in research projects and the distribution of education materials.

A range of activities took place in 1994:

- memoranda of cooperation were signed with France and Vietnam. These memoranda facilitate the development of a range of educational initiatives including, the development of exchange programs for students and teachers, development and exchange of curriculum materials, and provision of a range of professional development and training programs for teachers, principals and administrators;
- 56 teachers participated in exchange programs ranging in duration from one term to 12 months. Of these, 12 teachers participated in exchanges with non-English speaking countries in support of the LOTE program. These countries included China, Japan, Indonesia, France, Germany and Greece;
- 84 teachers and administrators were awarded scholarships to study overseas;
- 45 registered exchange organisations and schools sent Victorian secondary students overseas on exchange for an equivalent of 5,176 months;
- consultants were provided to assist UNESCO projects in Thailand and Samoa;
- continued support was given to the Overseas Project Corporation of Victoria in the tendering for Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB) and Asian Development Bank projects in Asia.

Developments in the use of technology

Interactive Satellite Learning Network and Telematics

The ISLN delivers full motion, real-time interactive programs to all government schools and most non-government schools. Interaction occurs between presenters and schools through telephone and facsimile.

In 1994, the ISLN delivered 300 hours of programming and was used to disseminate corporate information to teachers, principals and school communities. Curriculum areas included LOTE, science and technology for primary schools, and support programs for VCE

students. Professional development programs were presented for primary teachers in technology and LOTE.

Telematics (a combination of synchronous computer conferencing, facsimile transmissions and audio-conferencing) is used by clusters of schools in rural Victoria to link groups of students to teachers for lessons. This approach allows substantial expansion of curriculum options for students in small schools.

Science and Technology Centres

In 1994, funding was provided to establish three Science and Technology Centres, at Geelong, Glen Waverley and Shepparton. Further centres are planned for funding in 1995. These centres of excellence form an interrelated network and aim to:

- develop, provide and enhance science and technology education programs to improve student learning and enhance work opportunities for all students;
- increase awareness of and participation and performance in science and technology;
- support individual students to develop enterprise, innovation and invention competencies;
- develop, evaluate, promote and use leading edge:
 - teaching methodologies;
 - curriculum materials;
 - technologies;
 - facilities

in science education, technology education and in the application of information technologies across the curriculum;

- play a leading role in curriculum development in science and technology education;
- liaise and provide tangible links with industries, in accordance with the Government's Industry Development Strategy;
- provide teachers with high quality professional development related to these objectives.

Catholic sector

Professional development

Each CEO provided a variety of professional development activities to cater for the need of its diocese. Activities involved varying levels of input from the CEO, schools, the Australian Catholic University and the Victorian Independent Education Union. Of significance:

- central, regional and zone programs were developed in conjunction with zone professional development

committees networks and schools to address the needs identified by these groups;

- schools were responsible for developing professional development programs consistent with their school development plans;
- the CEO continued to support schools in the formation and implementation of school development plans by providing a wide range of services including curriculum publications, full- and part-time sponsorships, professional development programs at the central and zone level and curriculum support personnel at both the levels. The curriculum support personnel work with individual schools and continue to develop extensive networks with teachers;
- priority professional development areas included the Revised Guidelines for Religious Education, leadership issues, development of networks, school development planning, Asian perspectives, pastoral care, science and technology, the arts, language, literacy and learning and special education;
- the NPDP pilot project linking school development plans and national curriculum provided professional development for 12 primary and secondary school projects;
- continued involvement of schools in the NSN. Twelve schools were assisted in improving work organisation while other schools received assistance through the NSN to remove various organisational impediments to children's learning.

Developments in the use of technology

Catholic schools continue to adapt their teaching programs to rapid technological advances, although competing priorities, access to funding and costs associated with technology can create tensions. The need to explore the implications of technology in education led to the development, in consultation with schools, of a CECV technology policy including guidelines for schools. The policy outlines the potential educational benefits of technology for students, teachers, resource centre staff and administrators, recognising that technology in schools should serve the educational needs of the school community. Education about, in and through technology is seen as a necessary component of a school's curriculum.

The technology policy raises important issues of social justice and ethics such as equitable resource provision, equality of access and the use and misuse of information. It stresses the importance of professional development for teachers, teacher librarians and school leaders to raise awareness of the use of technology, to develop skills and to explore means of using technology to enhance learning.

Catholic schools took full advantage of the number of learning programs available through the interactive satellite television network. This led to the enhancement of learning areas and the availability of new areas designated as priority languages in primary schools.

Independent schools

Professional development: national curriculum statements and profiles

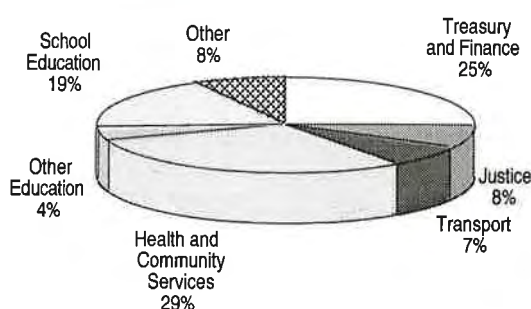
Almost all respondent schools had access to the national curriculum statements and profiles which they used in conjunction with the Victorian CSF.

A large number of schools reported using the statements and profiles as a point of reference for curriculum development/review processes. Most surveyed schools found them useful in reviewing assessment and reporting procedures, as a discussion base during in-service courses or as direction pointers to staff newly recruited from tertiary institutions.

A small number of surveyed schools had not used the statements and profiles. Reasons cited included: lack of time or resources to review the statements and profiles; affiliated/other bodies had already incorporated the statements and profiles into syllabi, while some schools had made decisions not to reorganise their curricula at present. A few respondent schools noted that if the Victorian education system made their use mandatory it could be a hindering factor.

Most teachers and principals in the schools surveyed had attended seminars by subject associations or conferences organised by State education authorities addressing the statements and profiles. In addition, many schools discussed the statements and profiles during staff professional days. A small number of schools had received no professional development programs specifically addressing the statements and profiles, but had attended in-service courses on the Victorian CSF.

Figure 1. Education share of the total State budget 1994-95



Source: Budget Paper 3 1994-95

Resourcing schools

Government sector

Budget share

Education continues to receive a major share of the total State budget. Figure 1 shows that it attracts just under a quarter of the State budget and is the second largest outlay after Health and Community Services. Just under one-fifth of total State outlays is provided for school education.

Expenditure trends

Calendar year 1994 falls across 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years. The actual and estimated expenditures of both these financial years are set out in Tables 14 and 15.

The strategies set in place in 1993-94 have been effective in making the savings necessary to place school education in Victoria on a sustainable financial base. Consequently, no new savings strategies were adopted in 1994-95.

Recurrent funds

Recurrent funds pay items such as salaries and associated costs, grants, allowances and operating expenses. Table 14 broadly outlines how the Directorate applies its recurrent funds.

As a consequence of changes to government policy, the 1994-95 school education budget includes an amount provided for employer superannuation liability and an amount to meet interest charges on capital borrowings.

Because of a government decision to improve fund flow to non-government schools by increasing payments to three per year (additional payment in February), the 1993-94 expenditure and 1994-95 budget both contain one-off adjustments. These adjustments will be unnecessary in future years.

An amount of \$208,827,422 was provided to the Directorate as part of the General Recurrent Grants Program for government schools in 1994.

Works and services

Works and services funds are used for capital purposes such as school construction, major maintenance and site purchases. Table 15 broadly outlines how the Directorate applies its works and services funds.

There is a major increase in new works in school education in 1994-95. This is reflected in the works and services budget rising from \$144 million to \$181 million for 1994-95. Proceeds from the sale of surplus or redundant school sites have supported this increase in works and services expenditure. Expenditure in 1993-94 includes a one-off \$10 million payment for rural school redevelopment.

Table 14. Recurrent expenditure, 1993–94 to 1994–95 (\$'000)

	1993–94	1994–95
	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Budget</i>
Salaries and associated costs	1,820,839	1,962,885
Non salary costs		
- Operating expenses	48,196	47,864
- Grants to schools	248,456	245,922
- Board of Studies	16,224	21,621
- Student transport/travel	33,391	34,457
- Maintenance allowances	30,394	32,548
- Non-government school grants	215,232	207,897
- Aboriginal Education Trust transfer	1,828	3,995
- Urgent and minor works	38,061	27,560
- EDP lease payments	773	571
- Other	5,364	10,757
Total recurrent	2,458,758	2,596,077

Source: School Education Budget 1994–95

Table 15. Works and services expenditure, 1993–94 to 1994–95 (\$'000)

	1993–94	1994–95
	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Budget</i>
School Construction—Major	34,102	64,308
Refurbishment	49,444	55,408
Grants to Schools—Capital	8,071	18,446
Property Management	22,769	6,000
Other	30,476	37,112
Total Works and Services	144,862	181,274

Source: School Education Budget 1994–95

Commonwealth funded capital projects

There were 135 major projects, which were partially funded by the Commonwealth, completed during 1994. The final Commonwealth allocation under the General Element of the Capital Grants Program in 1994 was \$48,309,000.

Victoria aims to meet the broad objectives of the Capital Grants Program listed in paragraph 3.2 and 2.2 of the *Commonwealth Programs for Schools 1994: Administrative Guidelines* through improving facilities at schools.

Table 16. Full-time students and FTE staff in government schools

	July 1993	July 1994
Students (full-time)		
Primary	303,985	302,897
Secondary	222,651	217,431
<i>Total</i>	<i>526,636</i>	<i>520,328</i>
Staff (FTE)		
Teaching	37,551	34,635
In-school non-teaching	5,565	5,620
Non-school	1,177	944
<i>Total</i>	<i>44,293</i>	<i>41,199</i>

Source: ABS Schools Australia

Resource trends

There was a small reduction (one per cent) between 1993 and 1994 in the number of students in Victorian government schools. While numbers in primary schools remained virtually unchanged, there was a more significant drop in numbers in secondary schools consistent with similar trends in other States and Territories in Australia.

Between July 1993 and July 1994, the number of teachers employed in Victorian schools fell by just under 3,000 FTE staff as part of the process of reducing expenditure in Victorian government schools to sustainable levels. These reductions were achieved through voluntary redundancy packages. At the same time, Directorate in-school non-teaching staff increased slightly while non-school staff decreased by almost 20 per cent.

Catholic sector

General Recurrent Grants Program

An amount of \$309,257,602 was provided to the CEO under the Commonwealth Recurrent Grants Program in 1994.

Independent schools

General Recurrent Grants Program

An amount of \$121,926,665 was provided to the various independent schools under the Commonwealth Recurrent Grants Program in 1994.

Capital works (non-government)

Catholic sector

The Catholic Block Grant Authority (BGA) Catholic Capital Grants (Vic) Ltd was able to allocate \$22,495,198 from 1994 Commonwealth funds to capital projects in Catholic schools.

During 1994, forty-seven projects were completed, partly from committed 1994 funds and partly from funds from the 1992 and 1993 allocations. Sixteen of these projects totalling \$8,075,672 in grants were for the upgrading of existing primary schools while ten, totalling \$7,971,719 in grants, were for upgrading existing secondary colleges.

The primary school upgrading projects included the refurbishment and extension of St. Mel's School at Shepparton South. A feature of this project was the provision of a new library, a function which had previously been provided in converted classrooms. The project aimed to maximise student competencies in the key learning areas as well as the competence, efficiency and confidence of teachers. The refurbishment of existing, older-style science laboratories at the Academy of Mary Immaculate, Fitzroy, a declared disadvantaged school, aimed to increase the participation and achievement of girls and disadvantaged groups in the science subject areas.

Four projects totalling \$2,277,263 in grants were undertaken for new places projects in primary schools while two projects totalling \$1,420,981 in grants were undertaken in secondary schools. The new places projects included the construction of general learning areas, science facilities and an extension to the library at Mary MacKillop Catholic Regional College, Leongatha. This project sought to maximise the competencies of students in the key learning areas and to maximise the competence, efficiency and confidence of teachers.

Thirteen projects were completed in primary and secondary schools under the Quality Competencies and Technological Support (QCATS) Element of the Capital Grants Program (\$4,959,978,00). A diverse range of projects were supported by this element including the provision of materials technology and performing arts facilities at St. Mary of the Angels College at Nathalia. The project aimed to assist the school to broaden and improve the quality of its curriculum to meet the needs arising from the education and training initiatives encompassed in the Finn and Carmichael Reports. The facilities were designed in an integrated way to allow flexible use of the specialist spaces.

In addition, two new primary schools were constructed involving total grants of \$2,489,671. These projects were the establishment of a new primary school at Strathfieldsaye, a growing area in the City of Greater Bendigo, and the total relocation of St. Michael's Primary School at Daylesford.

In all capital projects, schools were required to contribute an agreed proportion of the funds from their own resources. In most cases this involved the raising of loans to be paid off over a number of years, as schools attracting priority under the Capital Grants Program have only minimal cash reserves for commitment to capital purposes.

Independent sector

The Victorian Independent Schools BGA Limited allocated \$8,711,562 under the 1994 Commonwealth's Capital Grants Program to assist with capital projects in independent schools.

During 1994, thirty-nine capital projects were completed under the Capital Grants Program partly from committed 1994 funds and partly from 1992 and 1993 allocations. These comprised:

- ten projects involving grants of \$3,199,695 under the 1992 Schedule (six projects under the General Element, three under the One Nation Element and one under the Secondary Support Element);
- twenty-seven projects involving grants of \$5,445,167 under the 1993 Schedule (eleven projects under the General Element, four under the One Nation Element and twelve under the QCATS Element);
- two projects involving grants of \$66,700 under the 1994 Schedule (one under the General Element and one under the QCATS Element).

The completed projects were diverse and included the refurbishment of existing facilities, the provision of new facilities and the purchase of technological equipment to assist in expanding and improving school curriculum. A number of projects supported the development of science and technology centres.

All supported projects were designed to meet the objectives of the Capital Grants Program, including the One Nation Element where projects aimed to achieve the Commonwealth's objectives of supporting building projects in areas of high unemployment. In all projects, schools were required to contribute an agreed proportion of the project cost from their own resources.

Priorities for 1995

Government sector

Priorities for the Directorate in 1995 will include:

Schools of the Future

The implementation of the Schools of the Future program will continue to be a major focus in 1995. By the end of 1994 nearly 100 per cent of government schools in Victoria had registered to be part of the program. Particular initiatives in 1995 will include:

- induction of the final intake (Intake 4 — 406 schools) in January with the intention that all schools will have joined the program by July;
- implementation of training and professional development programs for all participants.

Resources

- implementation of the School Global Budget Research Project;
- further development of workforce planning;
- negotiation of Enterprise Agreements.

Professional Leadership/Recognition/Development

- implementation of the Teacher Personal Professional Development initiative;
- implementation of the Professional Recognition Program for the teacher career structure;
- further development of the Leadership Development Program;
- establishment of a Principals' Centre;
- implementation of the Principals' Performance Management system.

Student Learning

- support for the implementation of the CSF in schools including development of course advice;
- implementation of the LAP in schools;
- continued implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, including support for the Early Literacy Research Project;
- continued implementation of the Early Years of Schooling Strategy;

- continued trialing and evaluation of advanced learning technologies;
- establishment of further Science and Technology Centres as a part of the science and technology and communications strategies.

Accountability

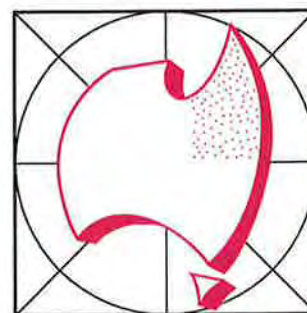
- further development of an Accountability Framework through the implementation of annual reports;
- development of mechanisms for reporting student achievement;
- implementation of primary and secondary school financial audits.

Catholic sector

Priority areas in 1995 will include:

- provision of professional development relating to a range of areas including the revised *Religious Education Guidelines*, the CSF and aspects of leadership for secondary school principal selection. Professional development activities to reflect a greater emphasis on Asian studies and perspectives;
- review of information collections and implementation of an information technology strategy to enable storage, retrieval and analysis of CEO data collections consistent with revised reporting requirements;
- establishment of a Student Support Service to address and identify student needs;
- further investigation of the use of satellite and other technology links in the delivery of curriculum and professional development programs;
- identification of potential areas and processes for collaborative research with external agencies;
- consideration of the development of a standard administration reporting package for schools;
- examination of the implications of P-12 school initiatives;
- development of planning processes to enable improved identification of future issues requiring key policy development.

QUEENSLAND



Government schools

Priority objectives for 1994

During 1994, the Department of Education's corporate mission, as expressed in its Corporate Plan 1994–1998, was 'to provide quality education appropriate to the needs of our students and of society'.

In achieving its mission, the department pursued activities connected with the following key issues:

- student learning and teaching—preparing students for the world of work, literacy and numeracy, developments in technology, and the nature of the curriculum;
- accountability—responses to the increased demand of the community for public accountability, program management and budgeting, progressive introduction of delegations, especially those which support school-based management, and accountability for student outcomes;
- the management of change.

Excellence in education

Retention and participation rates

Overall, apparent retention rates from year 8 to year 12 for Queensland government schools dropped from 79.2 per cent to 73.7 per cent in 1994. The rates for males and females for 1988–94 are presented in Table 1.

The years 8–11 retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 1994 was 52.6 per cent (49.0 per cent for males, 56.6 per cent for females).

Participation rates for 15 to 19 year olds in Queensland government schools are presented in Table 2. This table shows a slight decline from 1993 to 1994, which is consistent with the decline in retention rates.

By the end of 1994, 33,391 students in government schools received a Senior Certificate (17,241 females, 16,150 males).

Shaping the future through the curriculum

In November 1992, the Queensland Government appointed a three-member panel of review (chaired by

Kenneth Wiltshire, Professor of Public Administration, University of Queensland) to report on the Queensland School curriculum. A report, *Review of the Queensland School Curriculum: Shaping the Future* was published early in 1994. Late in 1994, the Government's decisions in relation to the report included a renewed commitment to quality in all aspects of education, and a long-term program of curriculum reform in which there would be \$300 million of funding over six years.

Table 1. Apparent retention rates to year 12, government schools, by gender, 1988–94 (per cent)

Year	Males	Females	Total
1988	57.6	65.1	61.3
1989	58.8	69.5	64.1
1990	63.9	74.2	69.0
1991	70.6	80.4	75.4
1992	77.5	86.9	82.1
1993	74.7	83.8	79.2
1994	68.8	78.8	73.7

Source: Qld Department of Education

Table 2. Age participation rates, 15 to 19 year olds, government schools, 1991–94 (per cent)

Age	1991	1992	1993	1994(a)
15	62.2	62.6	61.7	58.9
16	52.7	52.7	52.7	50.3
17	31.0	31.6	30.8	29.6
18	6.4	7.0	6.7	5.2
19	1.5	1.8	1.5	1.2

(a) 1994 based on estimated populations

Source: Qld Department of Education

The curriculum reform package included:

- a year 2 diagnostic net in literacy and numeracy;
- a year 6 test in literacy and numeracy;
- the provision of new curriculum advisers who will assist the introduction of new syllabuses and the implementation of Student Performance Standards (SPS);
- the recognition of the vital role of parents with the introduction of new reporting procedures and more parental involvement in the child's development of literacy and numeracy skills;
- the establishment of core curriculum for years 1 to 10 based broadly on the eight national key learning areas;
- the establishment of an inter-systemic Queensland Curriculum Council (QCC) to advise the Minister for Education on government and non-government curriculum issues and to develop a strategic plan for P-12 curriculum development;
- the establishment of the Queensland School Curriculum Office responsible for P-10 curriculum development, in line with the QCC's P-12 strategic plan;
- the convergence of general and vocational studies;
- the expanded use of Open Learning techniques in mainstream as well as remote schools to promote the use of new learning mediums and technology.

Further details are provided in relevant sections of this chapter.

Effective schooling

Devolution of responsibility

The trend towards devolution of responsibility from central office to the regional, school support centre and individual school level continued during 1994, with devolutions occurring across many departmental areas, including facilities, human resources, information management and quality assurance.

To ensure cohesive and effective management across the department, at the beginning of 1994 executive directors of all regions and central office directorates entered an agreement with the Director-General of Education on behalf of their individual regions or directorates. The agreements, titled *Statement(s) of Expectations*, outlined the Director-General's management expectations of each regional and central office directorate. As well as including specific departmental priorities for particular directorates, the agreements established and/or confirmed budgetary, resource and whole-of-government requirements of directors.

Community participation

During 1994, the department continued to consolidate its developing emphasis on increased community participation in education—at the local, regional and central levels. In individual schools, the trial of school advisory councils in all regions provided the opportunity for greater community participation in school-based decision making. Regions continued to increase their commitment to greater community participation by including parents on more regional forums, while parents are now represented on all State forums through nominees of the Queensland Council of Parents' and Citizens' Associations (P&Cs).

Parent Development Officers operated in all regions. These officers, usually more than one in each region, work on a part-time basis with school communities and regional officers on activities including:

- developing regional policy statements on parent participation;
- clarifying practical issues relating to P&Cs and their roles;
- supporting the trial of school advisory councils and other schools trialling increased community participation;
- ensuring that parents have access to information resources and services;
- presenting resources to assist in encouraging parents into schools;
- providing or supporting workshops for parents, principals and teachers on the topic of community participation in education;
- establishing local networks to support parent activities as part of the total school community;
- helping schools develop community involvement strategies and policies.

In addition, Parent Liaison Officers (Drought) were appointed to all seven schools of distance education.

Responses from schools involved in the trial of school advisory councils indicated that they were very satisfied with the support provided throughout this process and the majority were satisfied with the operating guidelines and model constitution.

Collaborative school development planning and review

By the end of 1994, the first three-year cycle of Collaborative School Reviews (CSRs) was completed, with most schools having undertaken at least one CSR. An analysis of information contained in CSR reports over this three-year period indicated that participation by parents and school staff in the planning and management of collaborative school reviews increased

in 1994. In over 90 per cent of reviews, community and teacher representatives were members of panels and teams which had overall responsibility for the conduct of the review.

It was also found that the collaborative nature of school reviews is being strongly endorsed throughout the whole system, with the high level of school and community participation reasonably consistent across all regions.

In addition, the outcomes of school development planning are being reviewed within four key result areas—studies, human resources, management and resources and administration. Topics within each key result area that schools identified for review in 1994 reflected current departmental priorities, as the following illustrates:

- The corporate vision of excellence in learning and teaching is being actively pursued. In three-quarters of the reviews the quality of student learning was a major focus, and half of the schools reviewed aspects of effective teaching and learning.
- Social justice policies are assuming greater importance in the quest for enhancing student outcomes. In 1994, there was a substantial increase in schools reviewing provisions for students with special needs.
- Promoting a respected curriculum is another component of the corporate vision. Reviews of curriculum in schools are gaining momentum, with a 10 per cent increase over the previous year.
- There has been a steady increase since 1992 in schools incorporating aspects of literacy and numeracy in their reviews, with smaller proportions of schools reviewing each of the other six key learning areas. In 1994, almost 80 per cent of school reviews assessed parts of their English program, and over half the schools reviewed mathematics.
- Schools continue to reflect on the adequacy of their resources. Sixty per cent of schools reviewed their resource needs as part of the departmental thrust towards enhancing responsible school management.
- Schools are very conscious of the need for effective communication with their community and within the organisation itself. Over half the schools addressed these issues in an attempt to forge more productive partnerships.
- The department is actively promoting responsible strategic management to maximise student outcomes, and school reviews reflect this priority. Human resource issues reviewed in 1994 were significantly different to those reviewed in other years, the focus being more student-oriented. The percentage of reviews concerned with student welfare jumped from less than 10 per cent in 1992–3 to over 40 per cent

in 1994, largely as a result of schools planning and implementing behaviour management policies.

Learning and teaching

Central to the operations of the department was a commitment to exploring ways to improve learning and teaching.

Effective learning and teaching

In 1994, the department published and distributed to all schools *Principles of Effective Learning and Teaching*. These principles were developed as a result of extensive collaboration with practising teachers and their students and through a detailed reference to current literature. By focusing on current practice, it was possible to identify the principles in operation rather than as an idealistic concept.

Principles was the focus for an Effective Learning and Teaching Conference held in June–July 1994. Over 200 teachers and educators from across the State participated and many effective practices were shared by teachers.

Towards the end of the year, the design for a systemic review of effective learning and teaching practices in schools was commenced. The review will centre upon the degree of implementation of these effective learning and teaching principles.

Information Access Network and effective practices

The department's Information Access Network (IAN) is a statewide dial-up network of databases which can be accessed for the cost of a local phone call from anywhere in the State, using a modem and suitable communications software. There are 40 databases available on the system, including a database of effective school practices which teachers on the Network can share. Over 200 entries are included on the School Practices Information Register (SPIR). These practices are reviewed annually and new practices are always being added.

Also during 1994, IAN newsgroups or conferencing facilities were being developed. These facilities will be available to all IAN users. A CD-ROM for demonstration and training was also being developed.

Workplace reform in schools and best practice

In 1994, the Department of Education—Operational Areas Certified Enterprise Bargaining Agreement 1994 was endorsed. This agreement provides for the establishment of a workplace reform framework through which schools can explore a range of reforms at the local level. The main elements of the workplace reform framework outlined in the agreement are the

pursuit of best practice, school-based management, establishment of consultative mechanisms and a Workplace Reform in Schools Program.

The Workplace Reform in Schools Program is the principal instrument for the progression of school-based management initiatives and a best-practice approach to work organisation. The program provides a range of opportunities for individual schools to progress workplace reform, including: conducting a pilot project for one of the school-based management initiatives (flexible staffing arrangements, alternative management structures, school-based resourcing, facilities management, workplace child-care and flexible working hours arrangements); participating in the National Schools Network (NSN); exploring alternative arrangements to enhance student learning outcomes; and trialling alternative and innovative approaches to work organisation. A key element of the program will be for schools to share information on the nature, progress and outcomes of workplace reform initiatives being explored across the State.

A key objective of the department's workplace reform agenda is the pursuit of a more participative management culture which recognises and values the contribution of employees. The consultative mechanisms provide a two-tier structure to facilitate employee-management consultation centrally and at the local level. The consultative structure is not only a mechanism for the Workplace Reform in Schools Program, but a significant workplace reform in its own right.

Review of teacher recruitment policies and practices

During 1994, a review of teacher recruitment policies and practices was conducted to address concerns about the extent to which current policies were meeting the needs of schools and prospective employees. The review involved discussions with personnel from regions, universities, the Queensland Teachers' Union, the Queensland Council of Parents' and Citizens' Association, the Board of Teacher Registration, a sample of teacher appointees and teacher applicants and other interested stakeholders. A scan of teacher recruitment and selection practices of other States was also undertaken. An implementation proposal has been developed and is expected to be considered by the department's Executive Management Committee with a view to introduction mid-1995.

Introduction of non-contact time

One hour of non-contact time for teachers was introduced in primary, special and preschools as part of a State government initiative in the 1994-95 budget. The initiative involved the employment of the

equivalent of 127 full-time teachers at a cost of \$5.9 million. These teacher numbers include approximately 40 additional specialist teachers and an allocation to employ casual teachers and temporary teachers to provide non-contact time in small, particularly rural schools, preschools and special schools. Approximately \$1.1 million has been allocated to meet the travel costs associated with providing non-contact time particularly to small schools. Teaching principals have been provided with non-contact time through the Shaping the Future initiatives at a cost of approximately \$459,000. The expansion of the languages other than English (LOTE) Program will also facilitate the provision of non-contact time.

Computers in Schools Project

Funding of \$9.2 million for the next round of the Computers in Schools Project, a long-term project planned to operate over five years, was distributed to schools. The project consists of three complementary components—the Primary Computer Program, the Primary Maintenance Program and the Secondary Maintenance Program. These programs aim to: ensure all year 6 and 7 government primary, special and schools of distance education classes have sufficient computer resources for learning by 1997, resulting in a ratio of one computer per ten students; provide funds for the development of teachers' skills in the use of computers for learning and teaching; and maintain the computer resource base for learning in government schools by providing recurrent funds to all government primary, secondary and special schools for repair, upgrading and replacement.

Support for the use of computers in learning was provided through the release of a video, *Computers for the Curriculum: Selection Guidelines*; the allocation of \$1.028 million for regional learning technology initiatives; and the efforts of regional Education Advisers (Learning Technology).

Social justice

The department's Social Justice Strategy 1994-98 provided a system-wide framework for action and a set of strategies to enhance social justice. Strategic action areas included: supportive school environment; inclusive curriculum; equitable resourcing; effective learning and teaching; and planning, monitoring, review and reporting.

A major departmental activity during 1994 was the conduct of a systemic review of social justice practices in schools. During Term 3 1994, five special schools, one school of distance education, 176 primary schools and 30 secondary schools worked with 101 external persons in a review of social justice achievements in schools.

The review was concerned with the extent to which schools had responded to departmental social justice policies and plans, as well as relevant legislation.

The 212 schools examined 48 indicators of school practice. Each school used 10 or 11 indicators as benchmarks to identify social justice achievements. A 1–5 rating scale was used to describe the level of achievement for each indicator.

The results showed that most schools have gone beyond planning for most indicators. Some areas requiring further action on the evidence of the review were: the inclusion of target groups in school planning documents; professional development for and about target groups; and the management of harassment issues.

A separate evaluation of the review process itself showed that schools had responded positively to the action learning nature of the review, and were able to link review findings to further efforts to enhance the prospects of special student groups.

The prospects of special student groups were also enhanced during 1994 through the continuing support provided by the Commonwealth-funded National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS), and its various elements and components: the Access Element (English as a Second Language and Special Education Components), the Equity Element (Disadvantaged Schools and Country Areas Components), the National Priorities Element (Country Areas, Literacy and Learning, Students at Risk, Gifted and Talented, and Transition Support) and Incentives Elements (Gender Equity and Students with Disabilities).

NEPS funding for 1994 provided supplementary support for identified target groups for the implementation of the Social Justice Strategy.

Gender equity

Inclusion in the department's Social Justice Strategy 1994–98 of gender equity issues and strategies in each of its five strategy action areas (see above) built on best practice and stimulated school-based responses.

The 1994 priorities of the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls—eliminating sex-based harassment and reforming the curriculum—also guided departmental emphases in gender equity.

Eliminating sex-based harassment

In 1994, the department continued to address the issue of sexual and sex-based harassment in schools. Significantly, the introduction of Sexual Harassment Referral Officers into schools enabled both students and staff the opportunities to address issues relating to sex-based harassment.

The development of a primary school resource, *Enough's Enough*, occurred in 1994. This resource was developed to assist primary schools in the examination of sexual and sex-based harassment. The *Sexual Harassment and Violence: Enough's Enough* package is to be sent to all Queensland schools in 1995.

The development of *Sexual Harassment and Violence: Enough's Enough* required a major allocation of gender equity funds at a system level in 1994. This was achieved by reviewing projects undertaken by the Gender Equity Unit to ensure that sufficient funds could be directed to the Sexual Harassment and Violence: Enough's Enough Project.

Regions and schools redirected funding to ensure that training and networking of Sexual Harassment Referral Officers was able to be successfully supported in 1994.

The continued training of both principals and Sexual Harassment Referral Officers is recognised as a major issue relating to addressing sex-based harassment in Queensland schools. The appointment of new principals and the movement of Referral Officers often result in personnel having limited training relating to the Queensland Department of Education Sexual Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedures. A review of the implementation of the sexual harassment policy aims to address these issues.

Many schools actively involve their parents in various workshops aimed at addressing issues relating to sex-based harassment. Information is also disseminated through school newsletters and through brochures that have been developed by the Department of Education. These brochures are available to parents in a number of LOTE.

Parents were also involved in the development of *Sexual Harassment and Violence: Enough's Enough*. Their involvement included consultation, through professional development and as part of the writing team for the project.

Reforming the curriculum

In partnership with the Association of Women Educators, the department was involved in a National Professional Development Program (NPDP) project in the development and implementation of gender-inclusive teaching units. Teachers from across the State worked to develop and implement units, utilising the national statements and profiles, across all key learning areas. This was a significant project which affected classroom teaching within schools in Queensland in 1994. Teachers reported that:

- the project had influenced and informed their teaching practice;

- they had a better understanding of inclusive curriculum, particularly gender inclusiveness;
- they had a better understanding of planning and using national statements and profiles;
- they had shifted from activity-based teaching to outcome-based teaching;
- they felt able to change teaching practice to cater for student needs and improved performance;
- networking with other teachers was pivotal to the success of their work.

These teachers also reported student outcomes in terms of greater cooperation, improved ability to justify verbally beliefs and opinions to peers, greater critical awareness of the way they are looking at gender and other issues.

Resourcing at a system level was directed at the development of *Sexual Harassment and Violence: Enough's Enough* by the Gender Equity Unit of the department.

The issue of gender and violence within the curriculum continues to be an emerging area of development within government schools. The relationship between the construction of gender and behaviour within the curriculum poses challenges for schools as they continue to provide environments for students in which they feel safe and are valued.

The mapping of gender issues within the national statements and profiles also continues as an important area of work within Queensland. In 1994, the mapping of these documents in relation to work education was begun.

Parents were involved in the development of gender-inclusive work units as part of the Association of Women Educators NPDP project. Their involvement included consultation and active involvement in planning and evaluation of units of work.

General achievements

The development of advice and strategies for the retention of school-age pregnant women and young parents in education was a significant project for the department in 1994. This document aims to assist schools and their communities in identifying and addressing the problems that school-age pregnant women and young parents face in achieving an effective education.

During 1994, the Interagency Project was also begun. This project involves a school or cluster of schools working with parents and government and non-government agencies towards a shared understanding

and commitment to addressing gendered violence in the school community.

In 1994, the department increased its commitment to gender equity through the appointment of two additional Senior Policy Officers to the Gender Equity Unit.

The re-establishment/establishment and maintenance of significant regional gender equity networks is an area of development needing further attention within Queensland. Through such networks, implementation of policy and integration of resources into the curriculum can be more effectively achieved for schools.

Embedding gender education across the curriculum through the key learning areas is also an area of further development within Queensland. Associated with this is future work to be done in promoting understanding in schools of the relationship between gender, curriculum and behaviour management.

The inclusion of a Queensland Council of Parents' and Citizens' Association member on the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Gender Equity in 1994 was an active step in involving parents in issues relating to gender equity on a system level. This involvement led to further contact and work being undertaken with parent groups through parent conferences and via publications and journals aimed at school P&Cs.

Distance and rural education

In 1994, the following projects were funded under the Country Areas National Component of the NEPS: Instructional Design; Non-traditional Curriculum; Curriculum Materials; Learning Skills; and Vocational/Career Education.

The aims of the projects were: to motivate more students in country areas to stay on at school and complete year 12; to expand opportunities available to rural school leavers to broaden the range of curriculum offerings; to provide access to quality educational programs that reinforce rural values and lifestyles; and to encourage students from low socioeconomic rural backgrounds, including girls and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, to look beyond traditional stereotyped career choices and to choose subjects that will broaden their options.

Teachers participated in professional development programs and workshops, with the result that both teachers and students have a greater awareness of strategies and opportunities available to them.

A total of 25,086 primary and 10,131 secondary students from 234 government schools accessed Country Areas General Component funding. The apparent retention rate for these schools is 60 per cent.

Outcomes for programs under this funding included:

- community-based inter systemic decision making process is in place;
- schools and their communities share projects, programs and resources;
- ongoing action research to identify barriers which prevent geographically isolated students from actively participating and achieving;
- improved access and participation through development of projects and programs which address the impact of social, cultural and educational isolation;
- statistical evidence of increased retention and achievement rates for geographically isolated students;
- heightened aspirations within geographically isolated groups, for further education;
- schools and communities undertaking strategies to broaden student experiences;
- development of appropriate curriculum and programs for geographically isolated learners;
- evidence of participation by geographically isolated students in local, State and national forums;
- ongoing process to develop an appropriate and equitable method of identifying and targeting client group;
- provision of professional development for teachers to include awareness of issues particular to geographic isolation.

In 1994, in addition to the above initiatives, the seven schools of distance education enrolled 6,595 full- and part-time students, including students living at a distance from schools, students overseas, travellers, students enrolled for medical reasons, and students approved for enrolment by the Minister. The level of participation in distance education will be further increased upon the implementation of the Government's Shaping the Future initiative.

A survey of students' levels of achievement conducted in 1994 in the schools of distance education showed that approximately 84 per cent achieved satisfactory levels in primary and preschool studies. A review of the Distance Education subprogram also indicated very positive performances related to a number of other performance indicators, including home tutor satisfaction, and satisfaction with field services. In addition, an independent evaluation of primary distance education materials by the University of Southern Queensland found that a large majority of users considered the materials to be of a very acceptable standard.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds

In government schools, the national Disadvantaged Schools Component of the NEPS is known as the Special Programs Schools Scheme (SPSS).

A new triennium for funding in government schools under SPSS began in 1994. Students in some 250 schools with enrolments totalling 55,000 are eligible for support for three years. This represents approximately 13 per cent of student enrolment figures. Changes within the operations of SPSS have given regions limited flexibility to assist additional schools on an annual basis.

SPSS supports school-based and cluster programs, and regional and statewide projects that cater more comprehensively for students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Initiatives funded through SPSS included projects that:

- address the Principles of Inclusive Curriculum and the department's Social Justice Strategy;
- focus on the sociocultural context as a basis for literacy development;
- collaboratively investigate the intersection of socioeconomic background with other social and cultural factors and programs;
- were based on action-research principles and involved parents, teachers, students and the community.

In 1994 apparent retention rates in SPSS schools was 59.2 per cent.

Good practices in SPSS schools were highlighted in the publication *Sharing Good Practices*, which documents a number of school approaches to improving the outcomes from schools with students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Students at risk (STAR)

Also in 1994, under the Commonwealth's Students at Risk (STAR) Component of the NEPS, 95 schools received funding to provide specifically designed programs for students most at risk of not completing their secondary education. STAR funding is provided to meet individual and small-group needs, rather than to focus on whole-school change.

All STAR programs throughout the State were designed in response to a particular need, identified by each school and region.

Gifted and talented students

In 1994, the Gifted and Talented Component of the NEPS funded the Zigzag Project for gifted underachievers.

Zigzag addressed the issue of increasing participation and equity for underachievers through access to appropriate curriculum designed to accommodate differences in students. Target groups in the project were:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- students with disabilities and learning difficulties;
- students from non-English speaking backgrounds;
- students in low socioeconomic circumstances.

The project focused on the development and trialling of an appropriate model of support for schools. These schools were targeted because of the identified incidence of poverty, poor English proficiency and disability.

Student identification was an important part of this project, as was professional development for school personnel to improve the quality and effectiveness of their educational provisions. A major aim was to change behaviours in classrooms to achieve greater understanding, recognition and willingness to act for disadvantaged gifted students.

As a result of the project, teachers have a greater awareness of the diversity of gifts and talents within their classrooms and a range of strategies to apply for appropriate identification and provision for underachievers.

In similar fashion, the Gifted and Talented Component of the NEPS funded schools of distance education to develop materials for gifted students in these schools. *Thinkers Keys* aimed to develop support and extension materials which could be utilised by students in their home context, working as a triad with the teacher and home tutor. Principals of the seven schools of distance education devised a framework and development guidelines with each of the schools undertaking to develop materials for a different year level. Materials were distributed across the State.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

Approximately 50,000 students of non-English speaking background were enrolled in government schools in 1994. Over 22,000 of these students had a main language other than English.

The department met the needs of these students through specialist services provided through the English as a second language (ESL) Schools Program. This program is funded through the Commonwealth's New Arrivals and General Support sub-components, and by State funding. In all, 877 newly arrived students received support through regionally managed programs which were coordinated by the statewide ESL Program. A funding formula based on student need is also being

trialled to provide a more equitable allocation of ESL funds to regions, and to indicate broad-level outcome data.

During 1994, cultural equity was promoted through:

- completion of the Cultural and Language Diversity in Education Policy and the development of supporting materials and documents to address the areas of culturally inclusive curriculum and ESL education—materials were designed to assist teachers and students throughout the State in implementing the policy through schools curriculum;
- completion of the Anti-Racism Policy and the development of supporting materials and documents to develop understandings and strategies to combat and deal with racism;
- development of partnerships with ethnic communities, for example Logan City Cultural Equity Coalition;
- development of a database on ESL students;
- incorporation of culturally inclusive perspectives in curriculum documents and policies.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

A total of 21,781 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders accessed Department of Education services in 1994 (1,812 in preschool, 14,037 in primary, 5,832 in secondary, 100 in special).

Major principles underlying the operation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education include:

- involving Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in educational decision making;
- ensuring equality of access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to education services;
- increasing the rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation of education to match those of all Queensland students;
- achieving equitable and appropriate outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Achievements in 1994 included the following:

- development of the Indigenous Languages Policy Statement;
- development of Early Childhood Guidelines;
- development of the P-12 Framework and Guidelines for the teaching of Aboriginal studies and Torres Strait Islander studies;
- inclusion of classroom strategies for teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in a component of the Supportive School Environment materials;

- rewriting and trialling of units 1 and 2 of the *Year 5 Social Studies Source Book*;
- development of the years 11 and 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies syllabus under the directions of the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies (BSSSS), with consultation and trialling to follow;
- operation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Support Centre, Townsville;
- development of an *Otitis Media Awareness Information Kit* for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, parents and educators;
- establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sub-program;
- provision of suitable input into curriculum support materials for studies of society and environment (contracted to the Department of Education by Curriculum Corporation);
- employment of other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education workers (teacher aides, community education counsellors and teachers);
- continuation of in-service training of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (NATSIEP) Teams and Indigenous Education Workers (IEWs);
- expansion of the Remote Area Teacher Education Program (RATEP).

Special education

In 1994–95 the major achievements included:

- continued support to students with disabilities in primary and secondary schools;
- development and installation of the Ascertainment Information System in 45 school support centres throughout the State, to enable the department to locate and identify the educational needs of students with disabilities;
- employment of an additional 76 teacher positions and 1,440 hours of teacher aide time per week to support these students;
- initiation of a statewide trial project to support and investigate the educational needs of students with autistic spectrum disorders through the employment of five teachers;
- establishment of a statewide consultancy service for deaf/blind students through the employment of an educational adviser with expertise in the area;
- additional support for the purchase of specialist equipment for students with hearing, physical or visual impairment;

- further employment of two speech language pathologists to supplement existing speech therapy services;
- establishment of an interdepartmental working group to review the implementation of educational provision for students with disabilities.

Other significant activities included:

- approval of the following policies for publication—*Educational Provision for Students Who Are Deaf/Blind*, and *Guidelines for the Establishment of Programs Based on the Principles of Conductive Education*;
- development of the Speech/Language Therapy Services policy in the department;
- provision of braille copies of policies and strategy plans to enable people with a vision impairment to access corporate departmental information;
- continued participation in the Queensland Disability Directions Committee to facilitate greater coordination of services, identification of gaps and overlaps in service provision and communication and access to information about services for people with disabilities;
- provision of significant input into the development of SPS in mathematics and English to ensure that the curriculum needs of students with disabilities are included. Generic professional development packages for teachers reflected basic information about students with disabilities in the areas of mathematics and English. Disability-specific professional development packages in SPS for mathematics were also developed.

The Corporate Plan lists educational provision for students with disabilities as a strategy plan for the Department of Education 1994–98. As such, the plan outlines the broad direction for educational provision for students with disabilities in the 1990s and focuses on the six key issues of acceptance: a broad range of curriculum options; skilling and empowering participants; effective communication; effective use and deployment of resources; and ongoing review. Throughout the year more schools became involved in incorporating these six key issues into annual operational plans, school development plans and performance plans.

In a review of the department's management plan in the student disability provisions area, regions reported various activities and outcomes related to teachers and students. Examples of achievements included:

- training in the Vocational Aspirations Program to raise awareness of future options;
- training in the Individual Transition Plan to facilitate effective planning processes for senior school students with disabilities;

- utilising support personnel more effectively;
- addressing resource management in schools and support centres;
- increasing skill levels in planning and implementing programs;
- providing modified and alternative programs through Individual Education Plans (IEPs) at primary schools;
- establishing Community Interest Management Groups for impairment areas;
- training in use of technology in the curriculum for senior and transition-age students with severe and multiple disabilities;
- maintaining the Low Incidence Support Centre's liaison with tertiary institutions in relation to guidance and counselling, developing inclusive curriculum, guest lecturing in areas of low incidence disabilities and in other areas such as the efficacy of speech and language therapy services.

General and vocational education

Post-compulsory schooling

Late in 1994, as part of its curriculum review *Shaping the Future* initiative, the Government:

- endorsed moves to raise the perceived status of vocation education;
- endorsed the principle of the convergence of vocational and general education in the senior school curriculum;
- decided that changes to the role of the BSSSS will include accreditation, recognition and registration responsibilities for vocational education programs conducted in schools, under delegation from the Queensland Vocational Education, Training and Employment Commission (VETEC)—schools would therefore generally deal with only one authority, the BSSSS;
- envisaged that students will be able to leave year 12 with credit towards vocational education programs offered elsewhere, as well as possibly being eligible for university entrance.

In a survey conducted in 1994, it was found that 44 per cent of year 11 and 12 students were enrolled in at least one vocational subject and that this amount was increasing. To reflect this demand, the percentage of Queensland teachers registered to teach vocational subjects increased from 25.5 per cent to 54 per cent in the period April 1994 to February 1995.

Other achievements in 1994 included the following:

- An increasing number of government high schools investigated delivery of vocational subjects embedded within general educational subjects.
- The decision to issue students who leave school after year 10 but before the end of year 12 with an exit statement from the BSSSS, provided they complete at least one semester of post-compulsory schooling.
- An increasing number of schools offered flexible timetabling to senior students to support access to vocational education, including the offering of a vertical timetable to cater for learning needs of students as a well as curriculum choice.
- A statewide vocational education and training survey was completed in December 1994 which provided valuable statistical data in this area.
- A short course, CNI10 Introduction to Hospitality, recognised by VETEC and by the Australian Hospitality Review Panel, was developed for use in both government and non-government schools. The course included 11 of the 12 introductory hospitality modules.
- The department developed Statements of Attainment and Certificates 1 and Certificates 2 to enable schools to provide certification for the students who successfully complete the modules.
- The revised Certificates in Clerical Administrative Fundamentals and Practices (CNCA1, CNCA2) were aligned with Australian Standards Framework (ASF) levels 1 and 2 respectively.
- The Teacher Industry Placement Policy to support the placement of teachers in industry was developed.
- The department was funded to conduct six key competency projects to examine the acquisition of key competencies in the wider curriculum, the teaching issues of key competencies, and the needs of particular target groups. The draft Cultural Understandings Key Competency, the development of which was promoted by the department, was referred by MCEETYA for consultation with the education and multicultural communities.
- Eight projects were approved under the Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS) Pilot Projects (round 2).
- The department, along with the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland (AISQ) and the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC), and in partnership with relevant industry training bodies, tertiary institutions and professional associations, was successful in gaining funding of \$452,000 from the Commonwealth's NPDP for the professional development of teachers to enable them to reach ASF level 1 in a range of industries.

School-TAFE links

During 1994, there was continued government support for improving links between schools and TAFE. In this respect, students received maximum benefit in terms of articulation and credit towards vocational education programs offered in settings such as TAFE.

Initiatives in career education

During 1994, Queensland was actively involved in the MCEETYA Career Education Taskforce, which is clarifying the role of career education in the school and vocational education and training sectors.

Other initiatives during 1994 included:

- the conduct of Career Counselling, a planned counselling program which empowers students to make decisions about their own futures in the workplace through personal exploration of study and post-school options. This was provided in secondary schools by trained guidance officers;
- provision of a support network service to guidance officers, through the Career, Course and Guidance Information Services section of the Open Access Support Centre;
- The Job and Course Explorer (JAC) database, in which there were approximately 280 government and non-government school subscribers;
- school participation in the Tertiary Studies Expo and Careers Markets throughout the State. These provide career and course information and labour market advice to students, parents and the general community.

Continuing education

In July 1994, there were 3,057 student enrolments in Centres for Continuing Secondary Education (CCSEs) and secondary colleges, which is a 16.4 per cent decline from 1993. This decline may be attributed to the fact that some students elect to attend a secondary school to complete their course of study and others prefer to undertake tertiary preparation courses at TAFE.

The ongoing importance of continuing education is illustrated by statistics which show that at the end of 1994, 37 per cent of the total number of students enrolled in BSSSS senior subjects sat for an external exam, and similarly, 27 per cent of the total number of students enrolled in BSSSS junior subjects. (An external exam is undertaken by students not involved in the usual school-based progressive assessment process.)

Transition from education to work

Departmental expectations for senior schooling are that senior students be provided with a foundation education

that prepares them for active and informed participation in family and community life; leisure and recreation; and further study and productive work (paid and unpaid).

Activities in 1994-95 included:

- continuing integration of work education into the learning experiences of students to help them acquire skills for working life in both paid and unpaid work, gain a critical understanding of both the paid and unpaid workplace, and understand the relevance of their studies in terms of further education, training and employment;
- school work experience programs in which students in secondary schools spent over 200,000 days on work placements involving research work experience, negotiated work experience, work shadowing and work sampling programs;
- students participating in over 13,000 days of industry placements as essential components of approved training schemes;
- schools offering Board-registered units on work education which focused on giving students a knowledge of the changing nature of the world of work and the skills required by students in the workplace;
- metropolitan school participation in the Total Quality Management Council of Australia's E Team program;
- cooperative activities between schools and industry sectors, aimed to develop understanding between students, teachers and employers;
- teacher placement in industry in which teachers spent 721 days in acquiring current knowledge and expertise with respect to recent industry developments;
- provision of a support service to school work education coordinators through 14 regional work education officers.

Transition from school to tertiary education

The Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre compiles a comprehensive analysis of the statistics associated with students' entry to tertiary education upon exit from year 12. Ten per cent of school leavers go directly to university and a larger proportion of school leavers enter into TAFE colleges. Of special interest is the number of students who transfer from university to TAFE colleges. In an early 1995 report entitled *University-TAFE Articulation in Queensland*, it was indicated that 21,081 enrolments in vocational courses in TAFE (9 per cent of total enrolments) were from students who indicated 'university' as their highest previous level of study.

Areas of student learning

English

During 1994, a *Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 1994–98* was promulgated to guide schools in developing these basic competences among students. Already the Government had allocated an additional \$20.7 million over four years to fund literacy and numeracy programs. Towards the end of 1994 the curriculum review *Shaping the Future* initiative saw further initiatives estimated at costing approximately \$17 million annually. These included plans for:

- the conduct of a year 2 diagnostic net in literacy and numeracy;
- the conduct of a test of literacy and numeracy for year 6 students;
- the continuation of the State's Assessment of Performance Program which monitors student achievement in aspects of literacy, numeracy and other curriculum areas through light sampling processes;
- the appointment of key teachers and specialist staff to support improvements to literacy and numeracy;
- the conduct of pilots in secondary schools to support students in lower and middle secondary (years 8–10) with poor literacy and numeracy skills.

Also in 1994, all Queensland government schools received copies of the English in years 1 to 10 Queensland syllabus materials, which were consultatively developed by personnel both within and external to the department.

The goal of the English syllabus is 'to develop and refine students' ability to compose and to comprehend spoken and written English—fluently, appropriately, effectively and critically—for a wide range of personal and social purposes'.

Part of the English syllabus materials is a guide to using SPS in English, which is Queensland's version of the national English profile. These standards will be formally implemented in 1996 following the introduction of SPS in mathematics in 1995.

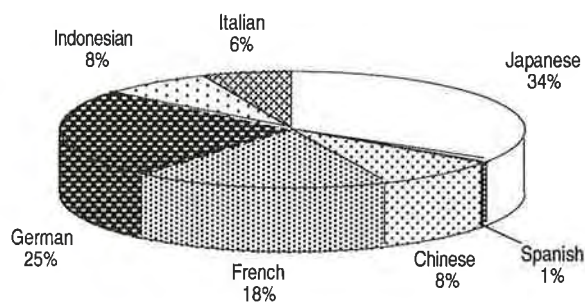
Throughout 1994, government schools were finalising components of their school English programs ready for completion by Term 1, 1995.

Languages other than English

LOTE is compulsory from years 6 to 8 in all government schools. The priority languages are Chinese, French, German, Indonesian and Japanese. Other languages such as Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese are also taught in schools.

Participation rates for selected LOTE subjects years 6–12 at February 1994 are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Enrolments in selected LOTE subjects, years 6–12, February 1994



Source: Qld Department of Education

Specific achievements in LOTE included:

- the provision of language-specific learning materials for the compulsory years of LOTE learning;
- provision of interim guidelines (non-language-specific) for addressing the issue of multi-levels of learners in years 9 and 10;
- the use of cross-curricular processes in schools, particularly in conjunction with the Asian Education programs;
- the use of differing modes of delivery including face-to-face, telelearning, distance, telematics and immersion;
- the use of late immersion programs (years 8–10) in five schools in four different languages.

Science

During 1994, the Government's curriculum review *Shaping the Future* initiative recognised that some additional support and resources were required in science, particularly in the primary level of schooling. The proposed appointment of Key Learning Area Regional Coordinators was seen as a positive step towards the support and assistance required to lift the standard and profile of science in primary and secondary schools.

Other initiatives in science in 1994 included the provision of practical and innovative resources and programs to Queensland schools, in conjunction with a number of tertiary institutions, professional associations, educationally focused institutions and the business community. Examples included:

- the Science Curriculum and Teaching Program (SCTP) in association with Curriculum Corporation;
- the Minds-On Primary Science Teachers programs in association with Questacon (the National Science and Technology Centre);

- the pet care project PETPEP, in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning;
- the national primary science project—Primary Investigations—in collaboration with the Australian Academy of Science;
- the BSSSS senior marine studies syllabus, and new senior chemistry and senior physics syllabuses, in which there was close liaison between the Board and the department.

The 1994 Assessment of Performance Program administered tests of science process skills and science concepts to a light sample of over 8600 government school students in years 5, 7 and 10. Student performance was portrayed within five levels for both the process skills scale and the concept scale.

On both scales, over 64 per cent of year 5 students, over 81 per cent of year 7 students and over 94 per cent of year 10 students performed at levels three, four or five.

The program also monitored change in performance for years 5 and 7 students since 1987.

There were changes in the performance of years 5 and 7 students from 1987 to 1994. Median performance was generally unchanged, except for a slight decrease for year 5 process skills. However, at both year levels, and for both the process skills and concepts scales, there was more variability in performance in 1994 than in 1987, with greater proportions of students performing at the higher and lower levels of the scale. The performance of boys reflected this variability more than of girls.

Generally, boys' performance was stronger on concepts than on process skills (except at the higher levels of the scale) while girls' performance was stronger on process skills than on concepts (except at the lower levels of the scale).

Technology

In Queensland, technology encompasses home economics, manual arts, business education, agriculture and film and media studies. While there are syllabuses in the subjects areas associated with technology, there are currently no syllabuses which address technology from an integrated perspective.

The Government's curriculum review *Shaping the Future* initiative recognised the importance of technology as a core area of learning for all Queensland students up to year 8 and as an optional area of learning past this point.

Technology programs are designed to equip students to make the most of future technological opportunities and enterprises, and to develop technological solutions which meet the future social, entrepreneurial and environmental needs of our society.

Initiatives in the technological area included:

- the introduction of Technological Regional Coordinators to assist the development of shared understandings of technology as a learning area and to facilitate appropriate in-service training opportunities for teachers and parents;
- the commencement of a nationally funded joint industry and department project designed to give students and teachers a greater understanding of, and experience with, learning activities as defined in the national technology framework;
- the offering of valuable opportunities for cross-curricular learning, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

Mathematics

During 1994, several initiatives aimed at improving literacy and numeracy were promulgated. Details are provided in the section about English.

Throughout 1994, in the compulsory areas of schooling (years 1 to 10), the movement towards outcomes-based education continued through SPS, which are equivalent to the nationally prepared mathematics profile. The years 1 to 10 mathematics syllabus was supported through the provision of material including:

- year-level sourcebooks which were made available to teachers to provide ideas and to promote the use of a range of approaches to teaching and assessment;
- an SPS kit comprising a video, booklets and CD-ROM.

As a result of the Government's curriculum review *Shaping the Future* initiative, 1995 will see the appointment of Key Learning Area Coordinators (Mathematics) in each region and a total of 90 Educational Advisers (Mathematics) to support teachers through professional development in school clusters based on school support centres.

Studies of society and the environment

During 1994, a significant curriculum development was the rewriting of the year 5 social studies syllabus to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

Other curriculum development was in the form of support material from Commonwealth-funded sources, for example the Australian South Sea Islander Curriculum Project (Australian International Development Assistance Bureau) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies (Curriculum Corporation).

A major cross-curricular departmental priority associated with studies of society and environment was active and informed citizenship (AIC). Data collected

for a submission to the Prime Minister's Civics Expert Group indicated that:

- 10 of the 11 regions had a written operational plan for AIC;
- seven regions were working with schools to incorporate AIC into school development and operation plans;
- eight regions frequently linked AIC with environmental education or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education;
- six regions linked AIC with studies of society and environment;
- five regions linked AIC with social education/sciences/studies.

The arts

In government schools, the visual and performing arts encompass art, dance, drama, media and music. The focus for 1994 was on continued support for the development of best practice across the arts.

Ongoing support for the arts curriculum included:

- distribution of *Media Curriculum Guide for Years 1–10: Constructing Realities*;
- the conduct of seminars and workshops in all regions of the State, in all the art forms;
- publication of *Tune In Level 4* music kit.

Specific arts programs which were instrumental in extending the range of appropriate arts experiences available to Queensland students included:

- the operation of KITE Theatre, which provided theatrical experiences for preschool to year 3 students;
- student access to activities connected with the Queensland Arts Council, the Queensland Theatre Company and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra;
- the provision of tuition in band and orchestral instruments for approximately 37,000 students in all regions of the State. The tuition covered lessons in small groups as well as the development of ensemble playing skills—usually in bands and orchestras;
- the Artists in Schools Program, which allowed students to observe and work with practising artists in a variety of art forms.

Other specific activities which focused on excellence in arts education included:

- FANFARE—the statewide festival for bands and orchestras in government schools. The program offered schools opportunities to promote excellence in music ensemble performance. A total of 10,000 students playing in 312 bands and orchestras from across the State participated in the festival.

- The recognition of high achievement by senior secondary art students through the Minister's Awards for Excellence in Art Education. The works of 45 students selected from 11 regional exhibitions were shown in the Queensland Art Gallery. Award winners also participated in enrichment activities with professional artists.

Health and physical education

As part of the NPDP initiated by the Commonwealth, the department supported teachers and schools who wished to use the nationally developed curriculum documents to review and develop school programs in health and physical education.

Health education

Activities in this area included:

- the completion of the Nutrition and Teenagers Project, including a resource package to assist school communities to implement a nutrition initiative;
- the expansion of the Health Promoting Schools network, which will be the focus of in-service programs in schools throughout Queensland;
- the continuation of the Sunsmart Program, which involved the distribution of education resources and sun safety products to students in the early childhood years; the allocation of funds to schools to develop school community sun safety strategies; and the development of curriculum resources in sun safety for preschools and primary schools (for dissemination in 1995).

Health issues education

Activities in this area included:

- the production of the Drug Education in Schools Policy, which will make issues such as smoking, marijuana use and binge drinking essential topics within the school health education program;
- the production of the *Guidelines for Drug Related Incidents in Schools* handbook for administrators, which provides constructive advice for action in this area;
- the initiation of a drug education in Aboriginal schools project aimed at developing some culturally specific resources for use in community schools;
- the conduct of the Marijuana Education Resource Project aimed at producing research-based material to support teaching about marijuana in secondary schools, with a focus on harm minimisation;
- the initiation of a project to develop a resource to address the HIV/AIDS education of students with special needs.

Human relationships education

In a survey conducted on the implementation of human relationship education in all Queensland schools (from preschool to year 12), a consistent finding was the positive contribution of human relationships education to the school climate. Parent and community interest and involvement were distinctive features of the development of the programs, which aim to meet the specific human relationship needs identified as a priority in each school community.

Guidance services

During the year, policy advice and support was provided to assist the maintenance of the provision of guidance services to students, and procedures were developed for the trialling of new assessment tests.

Developmental and Primary School Guidance Officers contributed to the implementation of the ascertainment process for students with special needs, providing personal counselling, and extensive support to schools in implementing departmental policy on managing behaviour in a supportive school environment.

Religious education

Legislation in Queensland allows for two different and distinct activities relating to religious education in government schools:

- approved and accredited representatives of religious societies and denominations may enter government schools to teach religious education to children whose parents wish them to attend;
- departmental teachers in primary and special schools have been required to teach 'selected bible lessons' for up to one half-hour per week.

The section of the legislation requiring teachers to give 'selected bible lessons' in primary and special schools was reviewed during 1994. New legislation will be enacted in 1995 to make the provision optional rather than mandatory.

Physical education

Activities in 1994 included:

- modifications made to the senior physical education syllabus to improve both syllabus construction and implementation procedures, following an evaluation of the trial syllabus in ten Queensland schools;
- the conduct of a review of the safety guidelines for teaching physical education, with the emphasis placed on risk management;
- the continuation of swimming and water-safety programs for all primary students (resources were increased to implement these programs);
- the publication of findings of a multidisciplinary research project conducted in 1993 which identified

factors contributing to the low level of involvement of some students in physical activity and the conduct of professional development programs for teachers to encourage a range of strategies to increase the level of student involvement.

Sports education

During 1994, support was provided to enhance the quality of sporting experiences for young people through:

- the appointment of a number of School Sport Promotions Officers—all national sporting identities—to promote sport in schools and to serve as role models for students;
- the development of an Aussie Sport Resource Directory;
- the development and distribution of a sports skills pack for distance learners.

The results of an extensive review of the management structure of representative school sport indicated:

- strong support, across all sectors of the community, for the department to own, control and support representative sport in Queensland;
- a strong sense of ownership and voluntarism associated with sport. The review acknowledged the large number of committed teachers who give freely of their time and resources in support.

As a result of the review, the department:

- moved to officially recognise school sport as a significant and valuable component of its core business;
- restructured the management of representative sport to ensure the legal and financial protection of the students, teachers, parents and departmental officers involved in representative school sport, should a legal or financial claim be made by or against them.

Resourcing Queensland schools

Of total government outlays in the 1994–95 State Budget, 26.8 per cent or some \$2.8875 billion, was allocated to education in Queensland. Of this, \$2.435 billion was allocated to the Education Department budget, representing an increase of 4.3 per cent over the comparable 1993–94 appropriation.

Students targeted in NEPS all benefit from the initiatives and budget allocations supported by the Department of Education. In addition, schools and community agencies allocate appropriate funds specifically for target groups. The department is developing information systems to identify specific school allocations to identified target groups.

Major schooling initiatives announced in the Budget include:

- \$22.55 million for the LOTE Program, including the employment of an additional 80 LOTE teachers;
- further provision of \$9.2 million for the Computers in Schools Program, which commenced in 1992–93 and aims to provide one computer for every ten students in Queensland schools;
- \$14 million for the Helping P&Cs with Basics Program, which relieves parents and citizens associations of the need to purchase basic equipment for schools;
- an additional \$2.3 million for programs to improve students' literacy and numeracy skills;
- \$900,000 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education programs;
- \$2.6 million for the provision of incentives to encourage teachers to teach and remain in remote and isolated areas of the State and an additional \$5.7 million for a further 32 houses for teachers in remote areas;
- \$22.5 million to distance education in order to provide access to education for students in rural and remote areas;
- \$21.6 million to relieve the cost to parents of providing textbooks and other learning resources;
- an additional \$4.5 million for students with disabilities;
- \$7 million for the introduction of non-contact time for teachers in preschools and primary and special schools during the 1995 school year.

A total of \$150.2 million (including both State and Commonwealth funds) was allocated for capital works in 1994–95. These funds provided for the construction of six new preschool units, an early education centre, four new primary schools, five special education centres and one new secondary school.

A total of \$174.2 million was allocated for assistance to non-government education. Of these funds, \$127.4 million was allocated to non-government schools to assist these schools with recurrent costs, and \$15.9 million was allocated to assist non-government schools with capital works. Some \$15.9 million was allocated for assistance for creche and kindergartens.

During 1994, government schools in Queensland received \$36.295 million in Commonwealth capital grants and \$164.9 million was provided to government schools under the Commonwealth's General Recurrent Grants Program.

Queensland Education Overseas Unit

The Queensland Education Overseas Unit (QEO) continued to have responsibility for all commercial activities of the Department of Education. In 1994 the QEO Unit continued to operate in three major program areas:

- Overseas Student Program, in which there were 190 full-year equivalent students in Queensland government schools at the end of 1994;
- aid and development consultancies, including a three-year curriculum development project in Tonga, and a consultancy on English language teaching in Laos;
- student tours, in which approximately 560 students from overseas visited Queensland schools to participate in programs of school intervention involving language and cultural exchange during the year.

The QEO also continued to sell curriculum-related materials and resources interstate and overseas.

Catholic schools

Priority objectives for 1994

Within the context of the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia, Catholic schools pursued a number of priority objectives, among which the following were most commonly stated:

- to refocus and re-articulate visions for Catholic education in Queensland contributing in part to changing the contexts of education in the State;
- to diversify the curriculum options, and pathways to further education for students in years 11 and 12;
- to develop greater opportunities for staff to upgrade knowledge and skills in the areas of the arts, technology, languages and Aboriginal and Torres Strait and Islander education;
- to refine school management and administrative structures to allow for more flexibility in the development of teaching/learning programs and the production of more consistent accountability processes required of schools.

Excellence and equity

Priority objectives for Queensland Catholic schools in 1994 have been actualised through a diverse range of initiatives. Among these are the following:

- activities by diocesan curriculum committees including the provision of advice to schools on matters regarding the changing nature of curriculum in Queensland;

- articulation of teacher professional development plans in the anticipation of the changing curriculum scene in Queensland;
- promotion of cooperative relationships with other agencies in the development of strategies for appropriate support of equity and a wide range of disadvantaged students;
- specification of quality systems for monitoring and enhancing system activities;
- expansion of vocational education through the inclusion of vocational content within the context of the total curriculum and through the industry placement of a number of students.

Excellence and equity initiatives include the continued establishment of school-based equity committees, diocesan equity committees and the statewide equity issues committee. While the ostensible purpose of such committees is the management of the suite of programs which come under the umbrella structure of the NEPS, there is an increasing movement toward a fuller understanding of a diverse range of equity issues outside the funding sphere. Within the Commonwealth's priorities the special target populations for 1994 were students from isolated areas and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The QCEC collected base-line data, monitored special initiatives and focused on increased participation for these target groups.

For other target groups, including students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, NESB/ESL students and students with special needs, the QCEC encouraged special initiatives. With respect to special education, Catholic schools, in collaboration with the Department of Education, have carried out extensive ascertainment programs which have been moderated across the State. All available funds are directed to those students ascertained at levels 5 and 6. Nevertheless, the level of provision for most of those students is still below the acceptable level and consequently the rate of progress in student performance, while generally heartening, is regarded as less than desirable. Funding is applied to specialist staffing and teacher aide time to address particular learning needs.

The majority of initiatives (over 50 per cent) undertaken had a literacy focus. Other initiatives encouraged participation, access and achievement through a range of projects. These initiatives include school-based projects such as home-school liaison personnel and literacy and numeracy programs as well as diocesan-wide projects such as regional equity coordinators and Aboriginal Education Liaison Officers. Additional base-line data will be collected to ensure these initiatives are making a difference.

The further establishment and elaboration of school boards has increased the effectiveness of the devolution process. These boards allow for the involvement of the

whole community in policy making for each school. Regular in-service training is provided to each school board through the employment of liaison officers.

A number of schools are completing the first cycle of Self Renewing Catholic Schools. Reports suggest that parents have a better understanding of schools, their goals and their programs. Outcomes such as positive parental attitudes and improved understandings are reported by a number of schools.

A range of initiatives in the education of girls has been evident. The priorities for 1994 were the elimination of sexual harassment and reforming the curriculum. There has been established a network of gender equity liaison persons whose tasks include developing resource kits and acting as school-based contacts in the realisation of the priority action areas. School-based personal development programs continue to be the major curricular approach to eliminating sexual harassment. Many school boards have established policy on sex-based harassment, including policy on the elimination of schoolyard bullying. Assessment methods have been examined by a number of schools to ensure that assessment does not discriminate against girls. Gender-inclusive language has received attention through teacher professional development activities and parent-teacher evenings.

A project partially funded by the Commonwealth Government and administered jointly with the Department of Education addressed the needs of gifted and talented students in one diocese. In another diocese a project (ZIGZAG) which was established by seeding funds from the Commonwealth Government was continued on a smaller scale. In addition, many schools have established special programs for gifted and talented students, particularly in the areas of language, music, drama and mathematics.

The QCEC in 1994 collected baseline data for Aboriginal students, Torres Strait Islander students and isolated students in the outcomes areas of post-school destinations, attendance patterns and subject selection in nominated year eleven subjects. Data collection of this type and magnitude is in its infancy for the Commission and the validity of the data is subject to question.

Girls generally show a higher absentee rate than boys in both target groups and in the non-target group. In comparative terms, Aboriginal girls and Torres Strait Islander girls show the highest absentee rate at five times the rate of absenteeism of non-target girls. Aboriginal boys and Torres Strait Islander boys indicate an absenteeism rate of 4.8 times the absenteeism rate of non-target boys, slightly less than that shown for girls. Isolated girls show an absentee rate of three times that of their non-target counterparts. Isolated boys have an absentee rate of 2.2 times that of non-targeted boys. Isolated girls indicate a higher absentee rate than isolated boys.

Post-school options of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students for both girls and boys generally show a greater tendency toward part-time employment with a lesser tendency to full-time employment and TAFE studies. The non-target group, both boys and girls, are more inclined toward tertiary study, TAFE studies and full-time employment. Unemployment is two times more likely in Aboriginal girls and Torres Strait Islander girls than in non-target girls but is three times more likely in Aboriginal boys and Torres Strait Islander boys than in non-target boys.

For subject selection patterns and post-school options for isolated students, the data is so scanty as to be inconclusive. Likewise, for information collected on subject selection patterns for Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students, the data is unreliable.

Data was also collected on the STAR Component of the NEPS. Across the State the mean attendance of students identified as 'at risk' for the purposes of this component was 91 per cent with a range of 48 per cent to 100 per cent. Of all students, 118 out of the total of 421 showed improved attendance patterns over the span of the year.

Retention patterns were also encouraging. Out of 342 students in years 8 to 11, 253 students have returned to the same school. Another 47 have transferred to another school but are continuing their education. Thus 300 students of 342 have been retained in education. Of those students, including year 12 leavers, who have left school, 35 are in full-time employment, 12 have taken up apprenticeships and 32 have enrolled in TAFE colleges. Only one student is unemployed, though there are 33 students for whom no post-school destination is known.

Also suggesting that the STAR Component funding is making a difference are the reports of improved participation and attainment. Of the target population of 421 students, 327 students were reported to have improved their participation. Reports on improved participation suggest that students' engagement in educational activities has improved as well as improvement in their attitudes to school and attendance patterns. Confirming the participation data is the improved attainment data. Schools report that 299 students of the target population of 421 students have improved their educational attainment.

General and vocational education

Schools have continued to embrace the provision of vocational education and training (VET) options for their senior secondary students with over 90 per cent of Catholic schools offering accredited VET courses to students. This activity is predominantly in the business studies area and the introductory levels of engineering, construction and hospitality entry-level skills.

Most VET subjects are embedded within Board-registered subjects and conducted at the school site.

Approximately 16 per cent of Catholic secondary schools became registered as private providers under VETEC for the delivery of business studies courses, while over 90 per cent participated in delivery of VET through cooperative program arrangements with TAFE. Approximately 350 teachers are registered to teach modules within 45 differing VET courses in Catholic schools.

Catholic schools were involved in various institutional and middle pathway AVTS pilots in Queensland. Three metropolitan schools participated in an entry-level training pilot for the retail industry in Brisbane. One school conducted a feasibility study of converging general and vocational education through curriculum alignment with National Training Board (NTB) competencies and ASF levels and increasing timetable flexibility to include on-the-job experience and training. Other schools were involved in entry-level training projects in the horticultural and engineering skills area. Another school participated in a generic entry-level skills pilot incorporated into a Work Experience Certificate. In total, around 10 per cent of Catholic schools were involved in AVTS pilots.

Six Catholic schools participated in key competency pilots that investigated best practice teaching, learning and assessment strategies for the key competencies in biology, art and English, and around eight others were involved in the mapping of key competencies in extra-curricular activities.

In regard to transition to tertiary study, 86 per cent of year 12 students from Catholic schools applied for university and/or TAFE enrolment. Seventy-two per cent (4,602) received a Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre offer for 1994 and 51 per cent (3,264) of the year 12 cohort in Catholic schools enrolled in a tertiary course. Twenty-seven per cent (14 per cent of total year 12 cohort) of this group enrolled in TAFE while 73 per cent (37 per cent of year 12 cohort) enrolled in university.

The above data confirms a continuous growth in enrolments to TAFE over the last few years. To accommodate the provision of increased VET delivery in schools and the accompanying tasks of accreditation, registration, certification and work placement, a number of schools have reorganised their administrative structure to accommodate a coordination role for vocational courses.

As well, a number of schools have adjusted the work organisation structures in years 11 and 12 to accommodate a larger teaching day, with greater flexibility in student attendance so as to facilitate access to learning opportunities outside school.

Areas of student learning

Schools and systems do not yet have data capture arrangements which allow them to address each area of student learning according to target groups. This is being addressed but no data is currently available in any comprehensive form.

English

English is regarded as part of the core curriculum for all Catholic schools. Proficiency in the use of English is considered to be the platform on which most other learning is built. The focus of school work in this subject has been heavily influenced by the new English/Language Arts syllabus and its emphasis on the written, oral, aural and read aspects of the language.

Individual schools have developed comprehensive school work programs which give priority to the foundations of literacy and which also seek to involve parents in the processes of developing children's literacy skills.

In conjunction with the Department of Education, Catholic schools have undertaken extensive in-service education programs focused on the new syllabus, and in particular the SPS and Student Reporting Framework.

Special programs exist for the gifted as well as for those learners who experience difficulty. At year 12, approximately 84 per cent of students study the BSSSS program, of which approximately 16 per cent study languages communication programs.

Languages other than English

The study of LOTE has increased in Catholic schools, though its development is curtailed somewhat through inadequate funding. A new policy document has been prepared (following research) which is paving the way for further systematic planning for LOTE. The use of satellite technology has been adopted in several dioceses and LOTE programs from interstate are being accessed.

The most popular languages continue to be Italian, Japanese, French, German and Indonesian. A number of community language programs are also operative.

With respect to the Community Languages Element of the School Language Program, most of those funds are directed to support the teaching of Italian in cooperation with Co.As.It who provide an extensive network of support and staff to Catholic schools. The Priority Languages Incentive Element funds provided by the Commonwealth have been used by those schools accessing such funds, to improve the in-service education of specialist teachers in this field and/or to purchase resources relevant to the particular language/culture being studied. Studies of priority languages continue to increase within resource capacity.

Science

During the 1994 school year, there was renewed interest in primary school science, generated in part by the national profiles and the adoption of a set of principles to guide curriculum design in science.

At the secondary level, traditional science subjects such as chemistry, biology, physics and multi-streamed science are receiving competition from more recently introduced subjects such as marine studies and engineering science.

Some schools have become collaborators with local universities in establishing active science centres which promote ongoing involvement in science education.

Single-sex girls schools continue to report good achievement levels by students, with student numbers being maintained at high levels.

Assessment in science is based on both practical work and on a portfolio of written work. Careful attention is paid to the correct use of scientific language as an aid to promoting literacy through science.

Technology

Much activity has occurred in the development of technology in primary and secondary classrooms. At the primary level, more and more students are accessing computer laboratories and, through them, acquiring basic skills and computer literacy.

At the secondary school level more than 100 key teachers have been trained through special programs (some involving the Technology Education Federation of Australia). These key teachers are assisting other teachers to develop computer skills.

Secondary schools are also sharing in TAFE courses (in computing) with up to 50 per cent of some enrolments attending such courses. The increasing introduction of PC and laptop computers is proving not only popular but also beneficial in promoting computer literacy through all subjects. One school conducted a major assessment in English around the computer-assisted production of a school magazine, while other schools broadened their interests in technology, including one school which related technology to solar power.

Mathematics

During 1994, considerable activity in Catholic schools was focused on the notions of SPS in mathematics in readiness for the introduction of the new mathematics syllabus in 1995 (years 1–10). The NPDP also provided very significant funding for intersystemic programs which involved workshops as well as individualised computer-assisted learning opportunities for teachers.

At the secondary level, new mathematics syllabuses were developed by the BSSSS.

Anecdotal information indicates that teachers found the new syllabuses helpful and the assessment and recording of achievement more clearly defined and consistent. There was general concern, however, at the potential for increased workload for teachers.

Catholic schools continue to provide alternative courses for gifted and talented students as well as for those whose learning capacities are considered to require additional or specialised teaching. Annual (national) mathematics competitions continue to provide solid evidence of strong performances by children in Catholic schools in Queensland.

Studies of society and environment

The studies of society and environment key learning area allows schools to integrate a number of traditional and/or newer type subjects. In secondary schools, it is not uncommon to find such diverse subjects as history, economics, legal studies and tourism being included. Primary schools follow a syllabus which is essentially a program of explorations of common societal concepts (for example, change, interdependence, development) and, frequently, integrated units of work are built on the local history, geography and environment.

One diocese has invested heavily in building an environmental education centre. The QCEC has led the way in developing syllabus for years 11 and 12 in Futures (Personal, Social and Global) which is concerned with empowering students to be agents of their own histories.

All schools report the popularity of this key learning area with students.

The arts

In all Catholic schools, a vigorous program in the arts is pursued through such subjects as speech and drama, music, art, dance, theatre, media and performing arts.

Many primary schools reported on efforts to expand instrumental music programs, and one diocese reported on the development of a new diocesan music centre to service all schools. Several primary and secondary schools gave accounts of exhibitions and performances by students in the arts. Performances by one school in the Queensland Festival of Music won the Best Stage Band; Best Concert Band; Best Lead Saxophonist; Best Trumpeter; and Best Drummer. Many Catholic schools participate successfully in local and statewide eisteddfods, and more senior students are performing in dance and theatre companies.

In the field of art, schools have continued to promote excellence in drawing, painting, pottery, sculpture, and photography.

It is anticipated that the recent review of the curriculum in Queensland will add further impetus to teaching and learning in the arts.

Health and physical education

Health and physical education subjects, along with the related subjects of personal development education and career and leisure education, feature strongly in the curriculum of most Catholic schools. Health and physical education is studied in theoretical and practical terms and complemented by other courses with a more vocational orientation, including some TAFE courses in leisure, and recreational aspects of tourism.

Catholic schools also provide solid grounding in personal development through such courses as Towards Christian Maturity. These courses cover many of the aspects of human development, and place a particular emphasis on a number of issues related to human sexual development. From a health perspective, matters related to sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS are treated fully. Most schools have developed policies with respect to these matters.

Health involvement in intra- and inter-school sport feature strongly in all schools' programs of health and physical education. This involvement leads to local, regional, State and national level participation in a wide variety of sporting and other indoor and outdoor competitions and pursuits.

Teaching and learning

Extensive work occurred during 1994, focused on improving teaching and learning, especially through systematic approaches to professional development. This development was increasingly organised around role descriptions, appraisals and consequent goal setting for professional development. Much of this work was integrated with the developments occurring in SPS.

Other aspects of teaching and learning which received particular attention in 1994 were associated with the teaching of children with special needs who are integrated into mainstream classes. In addition to the professional teaching skills necessary in these situations, special courses were also provided in the areas of pastoral care, and liaising with parents.

Attention was drawn to an emerging need for more professional counselling for teachers who were suffering from stress. This led to a re-examination of the policy and practices related to student behaviour management. In addition, teachers attend professional development courses dealing with bullying and harassment in schools.

Technology courses to assist teachers acquire new skills were provided in computers and distance education, and a number of schools provided mentoring programs, not

only for new teachers but also for teachers new to technology in education.

At the senior schooling level, teachers continued to acquire new skills with respect to TAFE courses and the embedding of national modules into existing courses. The increasing convergence of general and vocational education also provided opportunities for skill acquisition. Participation in subject advisory committees and review panels of the BSSSS also affords excellent occasions for much professional development in teaching and learning.

Within the NEPS, most schools have formed School Equity Committees whose major concern has been to see that equity—especially through the teaching and learning program—is delivered to children. Movement towards an inclusive curriculum based on Catholic social justice teaching has continued to challenge teachers.

Finally, the commencement of enterprise bargaining has focused on the objective of enhanced teaching and learning and this augurs well for future improvements in work practices in schools.

Resourcing Catholic schools

In 1994, the major contributor to resourcing Catholic schools continued to be the Commonwealth Government. Its three separate funding programs provided \$180.1 million under the General Recurrent Grants Program, \$10.8 million under the Capital Grants Program and \$5.2 million from programs targeted to promote equity.

Private sources and assistance from the State Government also contributed to the operations of Catholic schools. The State Government provided recurrent grants (\$77.3 million) and capital assistance (\$7.3 million).

Capital works

During 1994, 35 capital projects were completed in Catholic schools in Queensland, for which grants totalling \$13,819,060 were received from the Commonwealth Capital Grants Program.

The projects completed reflected the Commonwealth's priority of supporting building projects which will have a positive influence on the educational achievements of targeted groups and the promotion of national educational priorities. The majority of projects were for: facilities which supported the objectives of maximising student competencies in the eight key learning areas; improving the quality of schooling; helping to meet the broader curricula; meeting the diverse needs of the greater proportion of students being retained to year 12; other developments, such as those recommended by the Finn and Carmichael Reports to meet the diverse

needs of the greater proportion of students being retained to year 12; and providing technological support complementary to these objectives.

Independent schools

Background

The material that follows summarises the information provided by 27 independent schools in Queensland. The selected schools were required to report against elements of the 1994 Agreed Information Framework to meet their educational accountability requirements for Commonwealth programs. The survey was undertaken by Price Waterhouse (Canberra), consultants to the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training.

Priority objectives for 1994

Resource improvement

In Queensland, the improvement of education resources was a major priority objective for surveyed independent schools. The term 'educational resources' had a wide meaning and encompassed, for example, teaching staff, technology and school buildings.

A large number of respondent schools nominated staff professional development as a major objective of educational resource improvement. Strategies to achieve this included encouragement to seek membership on educational review panels, involvement in professional subject associations and the development of departmental in-service training courses. Schools also reported sending teaching staff to professional development courses organised by education departments and systemic bodies. These strategies aimed at improving staff performance and morale.

The upgrading of physical school facilities (for instance, playgrounds and libraries) and information technology equipment (for example, computers and CD-ROMs) was also a priority so that schools could enhance learning attainment through the use of improved resources.

Curriculum

The next important area of concern for many surveyed schools was the curriculum. Schools reported involvement in curriculum development and/or reviews in 1994 with the aim of enhancing competency in literacy, numeracy and enquiry skills. Strategies to achieve these included increased usage of information technology in teaching and learning; use of cross-disciplinary projects, for instance music and English; and the introduction of vertical streaming to accommodate the needs of special student populations

(for instance gifted and talented, slow learners). A number of schools also reported reviewing their internal student assessment and reporting techniques to reflect the national curriculum statements and profiles.

Several schools reported using their own teaching staff in curriculum development and review processes, for instance in the review of assessment and reporting procedures.

Student development

Closely allied to curriculum and educational resources, student development was another area of concern for surveyed schools. Most respondent schools aimed to develop within students attitudes, skills and knowledge needed to contribute positively to society. Objectives to achieve this were based on the enhancement of capacities to exercise judgement in social justice and ethics. Programs were offered on, for example, analysis and problem-solving skills and creative use of leisure time.

General

Other objectives reported by respondent schools included recognition of special student populations; development of language programs; improvement in cultural and international understanding; improved ties between school and home; and restructuring of school administration.

Common and agreed goals

Almost all respondent schools consulted the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia during goal-setting processes in 1994. They were considered useful in providing a framework of operation.

Two schools that had not used the National Goals reported that they had not received copies.

Community involvement

Most surveyed schools considered parents, extended family, local churches, business organisations, tertiary education institutions and sister schools as part of their community.

Community involvement in school activities was mainly through membership of management committees, parents and friends associations, and churches. The management committees dealt with issues like financial management, curriculum development, policy making and staff appointment. Parents and friends associations mainly provided voluntary services, for instance provision and management of school amenities, and organisation of sports carnivals, camps, excursions and fund-raising initiatives. Churches mainly gave pastoral

care while local businesses provided work experience opportunities and financial support.

Interactions between the various schools and their communities were facilitated by newsletters, sharing of facilities such as swimming pools and student involvement in community social services.

Literacy initiatives

Teacher observation and testing were popular methods of identifying literacy problems in the independent schools surveyed. Specialist diagnostic testing, departmental education specialists, standardised testing and student profiles were also commonly used.

Remedial programs, developed by either classroom teachers or education specialists, were delivered under withdrawal conditions with assistance from teachers' aides, parents and peers. Ability groupings and cross-age tutoring strategies were also used.

Several schools indicated that their staff members had attended a variety of workshops on students with literacy problems which they had found most helpful.

Education of gifted and talented students

Programs for the gifted and talented commonly reported by independent schools were based on extension (mainly lateral, for example, extra assignments but consistent with the student's grade level) and enrichment. Enrichment programs included exposure to leadership opportunities, involvement in competitions and provision of computers for independent working. Most schools encouraged gifted and talented students to participate in extra-curricular activities like clubs and holiday camps. A few schools reported peer tutoring and acceleration (grade or subject) options; however, most respondents did not favour acceleration.

Many respondents reported that their staff were competent in identifying gifted and talented students and developing programs for them.

Expected achievements from programs for the gifted and talented included assimilation with peers and the development of leadership and cooperative team building skills. Outcomes experienced included high retention rates, peer acceptance and student enjoyment of school.

Interactions with TAFE institutions and private training providers

TAFE links were reported by almost all independent secondary schools surveyed. Students and teachers were enrolled in courses while some schools reported having TAFE-accredited teachers. Most respondent schools reported easy access to TAFE facilities.

A few schools reported 1994 developments which resulted in improved access to TAFE courses, materials and resources. No respondents reported having private training links. However, industry links were many and varied and included work experience placements, guest speakers, student access to university orientation programs and involvement in young achiever award programs.

Key competencies

A large number of respondent schools had received information on the key competencies via seminars sponsored by the Queensland Education Department, regular updates from the Association of Independent Schools in Queensland (AISQ), and materials provided by the Christian Schools Association of Queensland. Other sources cited included the Queensland Teachers Union awareness-raising package and journal articles. Very few schools reported not receiving any information at all. However, no Queensland schools reported receiving the kit and/or video.

Most surveyed schools had integrated the key competencies into their curricula. In addition, the Queensland BSSSS materials, which were used by most schools, had already incorporated the key competencies.

Areas of student learning

English

Surveyed schools included spelling, punctuation, grammar, drama, debating, and vocabulary development in the English learning area.

Most schools were in the process of reviewing their English curricula to provide enrichment through, for example, provision in curricula for excursions to theatrical performances, use of guest speakers and student participation in drama productions. Strategies to enhance learning attainment included the use of computers for word processing, upgrading of library facilities, introduction of new learning approaches (for example, the cross-curricula approach), and development of LOTE programs. A few schools reported holding staff professional development sessions on curriculum related issues.

Specialist teachers, teachers aides and resource teachers were commonly employed to develop programs for special student populations in need of remedial assistance. Strategies they used included, for example, flexibility in program development to accommodate cultural backgrounds and use of simplified English in tests/assignments for students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Mathematics

Financial and computer mathematics, statistics, operations research, calculus, functional analysis, finance and tax were some of the units included in this learning area.

Most schools were undergoing curriculum reviews with a view to bringing mathematics closer to real-life issues. There was an emphasis on resource development, with several schools purchasing computers, calculators, stop watches or maths games. Several schools used mathematics laboratories to enhance the hands-on approach, while others reported major changes in their teaching strategies.

A large majority of surveyed schools had strategies for enhanced accessibility by special student populations which mainly involved withdrawal on either a group or individual basis. A few schools did not have any strategies for enhanced accessibility by special student populations—rather all students were given equal access to resources.

Professional development: national curriculum statements and profiles

The majority of schools had access to the national curriculum statements and profiles and had used them as resource material in curriculum review and development. The statements and profiles had mainly been integrated into English and mathematics curricula.

The surveyed schools that did not have access to the statements and profiles gave the following reasons: the statements and profiles were already incorporated into syllabuses obtained from other/affiliated bodies; the schools were new and had not yet purchased the statements and profiles; copies had been ordered but had not yet arrived; and some schools were awaiting more information from State and local education departments.

Almost all schools surveyed reported that their teaching staff had attended workshops, seminars or conferences conducted by either State or Commonwealth education bodies on the statements and profiles.

National Equity Program for Schools

AISQ administered the NEPS for Queensland independent schools. Grants to support 50 students ascertained at level 5 disability and 36 level 6 students totalling \$117,750 were distributed. Two Outreach Programs were also funded on behalf of independent school students with disabilities to the value of \$180,000. AISQ also funded a Joint Therapies Project

and two special schools were funded for basic services and intervention programs. A total of 919 students requiring ESL specialised teaching and support participated in school programs, which were supported by grants totalling \$274,957.

AISQ agreed to participate in Country Areas programs on an intersystemic basis and contributed funds to a State committee to support designated eligible schools. In addition, school-based and regional programs were provided by AISQ to support these schools. Socioeconomic disadvantage and multiple disadvantage factors were taken into consideration allocating equity element grants to disadvantaged schools. Sixteen schools received grants totalling \$35,000 to support programs which paralleled the AISQ priority of literacy and numeracy. All schools supported had significant disadvantage identified within their school population and the level of support funding available did not allow support for major programs.

STAR grants to support school projects were also quite small; however, the schools' education accountability reports indicated a high level of success. Projects included improved literacy, vocational

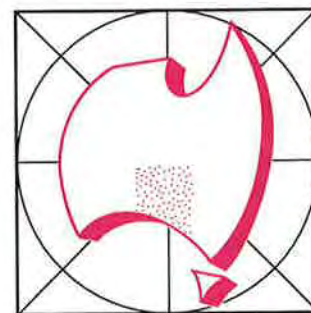
education, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander literacy and student behaviour and under-achievement intervention. Socioeconomic and multiple disadvantage factors were taken into consideration in allocating the grant funds.

Commonwealth Capital Grants Program

In 1994, payment of Commonwealth Capital Grant Program funds by Independent Schools of Queensland Block Grant Authority was completed for 18 projects; nine under the General Element and nine under the Quality, Competencies and Technological Support Element. Commonwealth Capital Grants of \$2,887,360 were received as final year grants for projects in 1994: \$1,988,300 from the General Element and \$899,060 from the Quality, Competencies and Technological Support Element funding.

These funds were directed to meeting the educational needs of schools serving students with the greatest degree of socioeconomic disadvantage, through the provision of standard facilities and by support for curriculum/technological developments.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Introduction

In 1994, 246,011 full-time students were enrolled in South Australian schools. Of these, 181,640 (74 per cent) were in government schools, 37,151 (15 per cent) were in Catholic schools and 27,220 (11 per cent) were in independent schools. Of the 863 schools, 674 (78 per cent) were government, 107 (12 per cent) were Catholic and 82 (10 per cent) were independent.

There is a long history of productive collaboration and mutual respect between the three sectors of education in South Australia. One significant initiative is the development of a mechanism to track the movement of students between schools in order to ensure continued provision for individual student needs.

Priority objectives

Government schools

The objectives of the Department for Education and Children's Services (DECS) Three Year Plan for the school education sector are:

- to improve the department's capacity to anticipate and respond to change;
- to improve the quality of teaching and learning outcomes;
- to achieve equality of opportunity and social justice for students;
- to improve the operations of all schools;
- to use resources better;
- to raise public awareness of the value, major directions and achievements of State education.

These objectives reflect the department's commitment to providing high-quality education for all students so that they are able to contribute to making Australia culturally rich and a competitive nation. The objectives also accord with the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia. The department's curriculum policy, *Educating for the 21st Century, a Charter for Public Schooling in South Australia* complements the national goals.

In 1994, the department continued to ensure alignment between the South Australian curriculum and the

national goals, and continued the implementation of the statements and profiles.

The functions of the former Education Department and the former Children's Services Office were combined in the new department and a priority area was the development of the Early Years Strategy to support young children's learning and literacy.

Catholic schools

Educational programs and initiatives continued to be a major focus. The South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) identified the following priorities:

- religious education and curriculum;
- planning for the future provision of Catholic education in South Australia;
- formation and development of current and future staff and leaders;
- provision of technology for management and educational purposes;
- review of funding principles and funding formulae.

The priorities of Catholic education in South Australia are closely related to the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia, particularly in relation to the formation of leaders, implementation of statements and profiles and trialing of the key competencies. In addition, planning for the future, provision of technology and the effective allocation of resources are central to the national goals for schooling.

Independent schools

Congruent with their goal that students have a fundamental right to an excellent education relevant to their individual needs and to the needs of Australia, independent schools in 1994:

- strove to ensure all students had access to a basic standard of education;
- promoted equality of educational opportunity;
- provided sound moral and spiritual development in ethics and values;

- helped students gain a sense of identity;
- enabled students to participate in a democratic Australia;
- provided for physical development and personal health;
- aimed to ensure young people gained appropriate career education and a basis for continuing education and training.

There is a very strong relationship between the objectives of these goals and those of the national goals for schooling. This is certainly so in the case of excellence and equity, general education and the areas of student learning, while the objectives of the national goals relating to vocational education are gaining more attention.

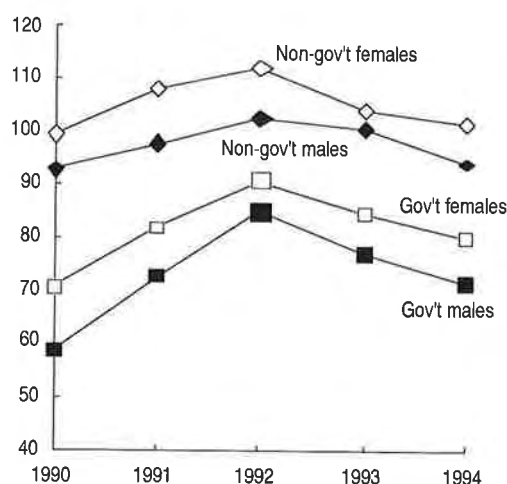
Excellence and equity

Retention and participation

The apparent retention rate to year 12 for full-time students stood at 81.7 per cent, a drop of 4.6 percentage points since 1993. Apparent retention rates dropped 5 percentage points in the government sector and 8.8 percentage points in the Catholic sector but were up 1.2 percentage points in the independent sector. Figure 1 illustrates the differences in apparent retention rates for males and females in government and non-government schools.

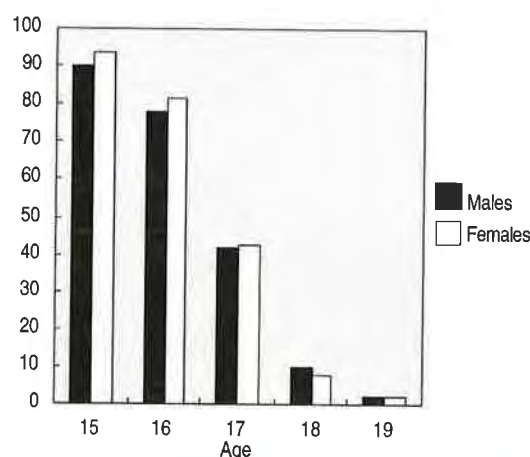
In 1994, 43.9 per cent of young people aged 15 to 19 years were at school. Figure 2 illustrates participation rates for males and females in all schools in 1994.

Figure 1. Apparent retention rates to year 12



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Figure 2. Age participation rates, all sectors



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Government schools

Transient students living in poverty are identified in the department's Social Justice Action Plan. Commencing in 1994, a group of schools began addressing issues for students who transfer between schools at least twice in a year. The Commonwealth provided \$90,000 under the Country Areas National Component (CANC) of the National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS) for the project, which focused on: defining transience; developing coordinated enrolment and induction procedures; and trialing programming, assessment and reporting strategies.

Effective schools

By the end of 1993 all schools had been reviewed by the Education Review Unit. During 1994, a more effective and less resource-intensive approach to monitoring the quality and success of schools was required by the incoming government, leading to the establishment of a Quality Assurance Unit with a brief to develop strategies, methodologies, instruments and data-collection procedures to serve as accountability measures. A framework for quality assurance was developed and key stakeholders consulted. The framework emphasises self-management of quality and provides reporting opportunities for schools and preschools to describe intentions and results to their communities and to the Chief Executive. A group of volunteer schools and preschools will work with the framework during 1995.

School governance

The department received more than 350 responses to its document, *School Councils—Shared Responsibility*. The consultation was implemented to assess the community's perception of the role of the school council and to support the devolution of some management responsibilities.

Catholic schools

Catholic schools, as religious schools, serve the needs of local communities such as parishes through community participation and decision making at the local level, with family involvement an essential element. Principals and school staff are guided by local school boards responsible for policy, planning, finance and curriculum, and pastoral programs and curriculum are monitored through community assemblies, surveys and family feedback. Modest growth in student enrolments has occurred annually for a number of years.

Independent schools

Independent schools, by their nature, have total responsibility for decision making. School governance is a vital part of the life of the school and community, participation is normal practice. The school community and professional staff place great importance on the effectiveness of the school. Thus academic excellence, pastoral care and values education all feature strongly in the ethos of independent schools. Involvement of the school community and the professional development of staff focus on a wide range of matters associated with the effectiveness of schools. In 1994, attitude and perception of students and parents of independent schools remained positive, with modest growth in enrolment being maintained.

Equity initiatives

Government schools

The NEPS allowed schools greater flexibility and responsibility in using State and Commonwealth funds to address educational disadvantage.

Officers from the department and the Catholic Education Office collaborated to produce materials to support teachers in literacy programming and planning in the early years. Under the Commonwealth-funded Literacy and Learning Component of the NEPS \$135,010 was provided (\$87,427 to DECS and \$47,583 to the Catholic Education Office). DECS provided \$536,000 for other programs aimed at improving literacy and numeracy in students disadvantaged by distance and other socioeconomic factors.

The department's curriculum division created a part-time position to address issues associated with the education of boys.

Parent groups and school councils were consulted as part of a review of the School Discipline Policy. The review focused on the links between curriculum and behaviour management, sexism and racism. Eighty-five salaries were maintained for student behaviour and interagency referral teams, and seventy primary school counsellors continued to support the development of safe learning environments in disadvantaged schools.

Equal opportunity consultants provided training and development on the sexual harassment policy and grievance procedures, including strategies to assist teachers to identify and intervene for children and adolescents who sexually abuse and harass in schools. Schools continue to provide opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning about the unacceptability of harassment.

Student attendance has been a key focus of the department's Three Year Plan. Attendance guidelines were rewritten to clarify schools' obligations and to support the monitoring of individual attendance. An amendment to the Education Act (Truancy) came into effect in 1994 to give the police greater powers to act in support of school efforts to reduce truancy.

The Early Years Strategy

The Early Years Strategy was a significant initiative, with a budget of \$2.5 million for 1994–95. The Early Intervention Component of the strategy focuses on literacy. A three-year plan was developed, incorporating Cornerstones, a training and development program for teachers of 4–8 year olds in identification of and intervention strategies for students not achieving in the first years of school.

The Early Years Strategy initiatives include First Start, a home-based literacy skills program for very young children at risk of developing learning problems; Eclipse, an early monitoring program for 4 year olds; and the development of curriculum frameworks which focus on the early years of learning. The strategy is also aimed at improving and integrating services for young children needing speech pathology or guidance assessment.

Aboriginal students

In 1994, there were 4,713 full-time Aboriginal students enrolled in 457 government schools, representing 2.6 per cent of the student population. A range of programs implemented to address the four aims of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy resulted in:

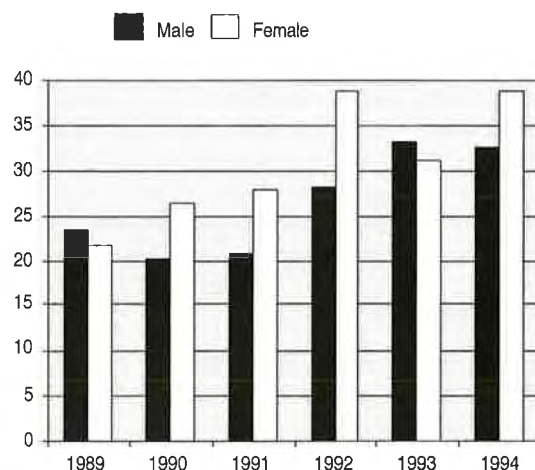
- implementation of a comprehensive 1993–95 operational plan detailing strategies, performance indicators and resource arrangements;
- Aboriginal parental participation in schooling, particularly through parent committees, of which there are now over 300, representing over 90 per cent of Aboriginal students. Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness (ASSPA) has been a successful strategy for encouraging Aboriginal involvement in schooling and there has been significant flow-on from ASSPA involvement to other forms of decision making such as School Council;

- increased community self-determination of schooling in Anangu (north-west) lands;
- employment of over 320 Aboriginal people as teachers, Aboriginal Education Workers, cultural instructors and educational administrators, and associated affirmative training and career initiatives;
- delivery of an accredited training and development course, Teaching Aboriginal Students, in thirty schools involving 800 participants;
- development of Aboriginal studies curriculum materials to ensure congruence with national statements and profiles;
- 420 schools offering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies programs to 90,000 students, 3,600 of whom were Aboriginal students undertaking indigenous studies courses;
- an English Language Acquisition training and development package used in ten schools;
- implementation of monitoring processes for student attendance, retention and attainment;
- 66 schools offering Aboriginal languages to 2,000 students of whom 1,800 were Aboriginal students;
- 45 additional places in schools provided specifically for Aboriginal students through extended provision of education services in the Oak Valley homelands area and the continued development of secondary course delivery in distance mode for Anangu schools;
- 193 Aboriginal students completing year 10 (93 males, 100 females) and 100 Aboriginal students receiving a year 12 Certificate (45 males, 55 females) at the conclusion of 1994;
- the South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC) receiving 27 applications from Aboriginal students for 1994 tertiary commencement, 18 of whom were successful in receiving offers for higher education places and 14 students enrolled in higher education courses.

Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program (AESIP) funds of \$4,216,423 were expended in the achievement of these outcomes and DECS contributed salaries for Aboriginal Education Workers and specialist teachers, regional project officers and central Aboriginal Education Unit officers as well as providing a range of salaries and other support for Aboriginal and Anangu schools.

In 1994, the Aboriginal Education Unit of DECS received world recognition in the UNESCO Comenius Medal for Excellence in Education Practices for Indigenous Students, acknowledging the unit's significant contribution to current improvements for Aboriginal students, providing a model for other States and Territories in Australia and promoting confidence in the future.

Figure 3. Apparent retention to year 12, Aboriginal students, government schools



Source: SA DECS

Education of girls

Support for the implementation of the Education of Girls: Three Year Action Plan 1992–94 and the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls 1992–97 was provided in the form of materials, workshops and seminars, including:

- seminars on Women's Studies and Broadening Girls' Post School Options as part of the Women's Suffrage Centenary celebrations;
- a three-day statewide conference on issues including sexual harassment and curriculum reform;
- a report on progress of the State's Action Plan compiled for use throughout the system.

In addition to the three full-time equivalent (FTE) salaries DECS provides for equal opportunity curriculum officers (\$145,000) and several equal opportunity consultants, four salaries (\$158,000) were provided for a girls at risk project which complements the Commonwealth Students at Risk (STAR) Component of NEPS. The research component continued a focus on girls in primary schools.

The Commonwealth provided \$254,700 under the Gender Equity Component of the NEPS. In a program aimed to increase girls' participation in mathematics and science, training and development was provided to teachers in Disadvantaged Schools Component (DSC) and Country Areas National Component (CANC) schools with secondary enrolments. In addition, materials were produced to support curriculum reform to increase girls' involvement and achievement in mathematics and science. An allocation of \$175,000 was made to provide training and development for secondary teachers.

Distance and rural education

The Commonwealth Country Areas General Component (CANC) provided \$1.5 million which was distributed to schools to support increased participation and retention of students disadvantaged by distance. South Australia was involved in two research projects funded under the CANC of the NEPS. The first was an investigation into the subject and career choices of girls in rural schools (\$80,000). The second involved work education practices and a trial of work education computer technology in targeted schools (\$100,000). The CANC also provided \$390,000 for an Alternative Delivery Systems project, which used interactive computer technology to enhance interaction between students and teachers in distance education programs. Forty schools took part in the project, which was managed by the Open Access College.

DECS continued to provide above-formula salaries to CANC schools for curriculum access and support through the programs of the Open Access College. In 1994, the equivalent of 69 full-time, above formula salaries were provided.

Other developments included:

- consultation with school communities to identify issues relating to improving learning outcomes for country students;
- consultation with school communities on new criteria for identifying Country Areas Component schools. As a result, a new list of Country Areas Component schools was declared for 1995–96;
- publication of a report, *Country Areas Program: Improving Participation and Retention to Year 12*, a summary of research into students' participation and retention to year 12 in seven rural schools.

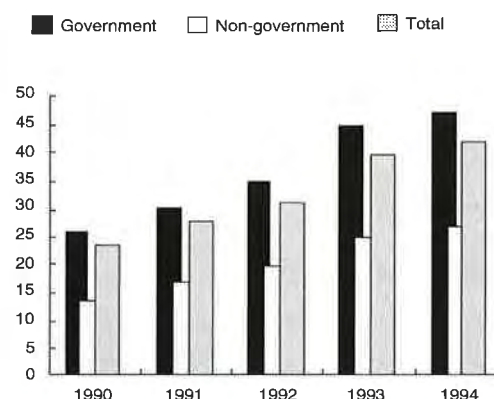
Three important objectives emerged from interviews with staff, parents and students:

- providing support for students and teachers using distance education;
- developing career/work education programs for students in primary and junior secondary schooling;
- training and development for staff which challenges discrimination and exclusion experienced by some students in country schools.

Socioeconomic disadvantage

A means-tested School Card Scheme provides assistance to low-income families in all schooling sectors. In 1994, the scheme provided allowances of \$113 per approved primary student and \$170 per approved secondary student, with a total of \$12.5 million provided to government school students.

Figure 4. School Card holders as percentage of enrolments 1991–94



Source: DECS, SA

Government schools with the highest percentage of students holding School Cards were supported with the equivalent of 70.9 additional full-time salaries allocated across 144 schools.

Funding of \$4.7 million was allocated under the DSC of the NEPS for a school-based Social Justice Curriculum Development Program. The purpose of the program was to support school-based curriculum development for students living in poverty and provide leadership and direction for schools about best practice. The focus was literacy and implementing statements and profiles. Training and development materials on poverty and education were published for use in schools.

Students at risk

The department was allocated \$363,000 for the Students at Risk Component of the NEPS. The department provided an additional 2.5 salaries to extend support for students at risk in 13 secondary schools. School communities collaborated to identify barriers to attendance and participation and to develop strategies to address those barriers.

School responses focused on:

- individual programs spanning educational, career, welfare and health needs;
- examination of organisational and teaching and learning practices to ensure students' continued participation is supported;
- development of monitoring mechanisms at a school level which contribute to planning processes;
- maintenance, documentation and development of local and interagency networks;
- investigation of the integration of literacy, career/work education and key competencies across the areas of study.

A key achievement for the majority of schools was the development of a management process which created extra support for students at risk. Central to this process was a team which collaborates in the development of appropriate strategies to support students at a personal, classroom and school management level. A training and development program was developed to provide schools, particularly schools not involved in the program, with materials to increase awareness of issues related to identifying, responding to and managing support for students at risk.

Gifted and talented students

Representatives from the department, the Gifted and Talented Children's Association of South Australia and the tertiary sector developed a policy for the education of gifted students. With funds of \$104,800 provided by the department, a focus school program for students with high intellectual potential, begun in 1993, commenced networking with over 50 schools, of which two were DSC schools. The focus was training and development for teachers in identifying gifted students, the delivery of appropriate programs and whole-school provisions.

With funding of \$84,000 from the National Priorities Element of the NEPS, a further program for students with high intellectual potential began with four DSC schools. Special interest centres continue in six secondary schools, with four specialising in music, one in languages and one in agriculture. In addition, one primary school caters for students who demonstrate high potential in the field of gymnastics.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

The Commonwealth provided \$2,211,553 under the Eligible New Arrivals sub-component of the English as a Second Language Component of NEPS for support to students at eight New Arrivals Centres for primary, secondary and adult re-entry students and to isolated new arrivals in rural locations. ESL teaching support was provided to 9,699 students in 334 junior primary, primary and secondary schools through the General Support sub-component (\$3,453,000), and Curriculum Officers and school-based Coordinators were available to all schools. Additional services were provided through Community Liaison Officers for the Vietnamese, Cambodian and Spanish communities and a Bilingual School Services Officer Program. Translating and interpreting services were also provided to schools.

Significant developments in 1994 included:

- completion of ESL Support School Model Review;
- implementation of ESL Teacher Professional Development Review;

- ESL Program response to Commonwealth NEPS Allocative Mechanisms Review;
- ESL in the Mainstream Teacher Development Course implemented in the Northern Territory with DECS ESL Program involvement in interstate tutor-training programs;
- ESL Program participation in research on classroom discourse;
- preliminary training and development activities conducted on ESL scales for ESL teachers;
- proposal developed for ESL curriculum framework development in the context of the ESL scales, statements and profiles;
- support package developed for teachers implementing ESL-accredited courses at stage 1 and stage 2 of the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) in conjunction with the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA);
- ESL scales review completed with scales endorsed for implementation in conjunction with statements and profiles Reception–year 10, including preparation of an action plan for 1995–97.

Twenty salaries were distributed for the provision of Mother-Tongue Development Programs, in which 69 schools participated.

The second phase of the Supportive School Environment Project, involving four clusters of schools, was completed. A document, *Providing a Supportive School Environment—a Focus on non-English Speaking Background Children and Students*, was produced. The document highlights key issues that support the participation of parents from non-English speaking backgrounds and attitudinal influences on students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

A major focus was the review aimed at implementation of the statements and profiles for all eight areas of study. As part of the culturally inclusive education strategy, particular emphasis was placed on studies of society and environment to develop a framework that includes a cultural perspective.

Students with disabilities

The Commonwealth provided \$2,321,000 from the Schools Support — Government sub-component of the Special Education Component of the Access Element of NEPS to support students with disabilities in South Australian government schools and a total of \$2,407,000 in connection with Special Education Intervention Support programs and activities. Approximately 8,200 students accessed services allocated for students with disabilities. Of these, approximately 900 attended special schools and 7,300

attended neighbourhood schools. In 1994, 403.4 salaries were allocated to primary and secondary schools to support students with disabilities in their neighbourhood school.

The department undertook a review of the policy Students with Disabilities and recommendations were developed for:

- integrated provision of services from preschool to year 12;
- allocation of resources and provision of regional support services;
- the negotiated curriculum planning process for children and students with disabilities.

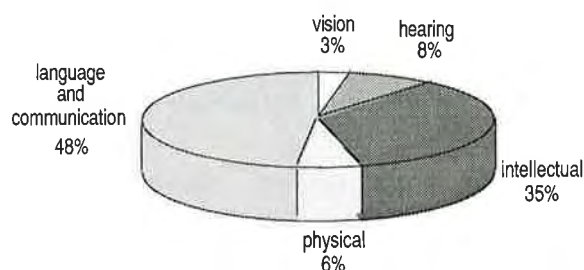
The Commonwealth Transition Support Component of the NEPS provided \$200,000 to assist seven metropolitan and country secondary schools in planning students' increased participation in work, vocational training and further education. A document with information about support agencies was developed for distribution to schools with a secondary enrolment in all school sectors.

A training and development program was developed with a focus on improved literacy learning across the curriculum within the requirements of the statements and profiles.

Teachers from special schools were involved in a range of curriculum development activities including:

- implementing the statements and profiles and developing assessment and recording strategies;
- trialing part-time work and part-time schooling which leads to competitive employment, training and placement either through the Commonwealth Employment Service or the Commonwealth Disability Services Program;
- developing and trialing curriculum materials and training and development programs in HIV/AIDS within health and physical education;
- mapping the curriculum in relation to key competencies.

Figure 5. Students with disabilities accessing special provisions, by impairment, 1994



Source: SA DECS

The Students with Disabilities database continues to be updated as part of the mid-year census collection, and in 1994 included Child Parent Centres in the collection for the first time.

Catholic schools

Aboriginal students

In 1994, over 150 Aboriginal students were enrolled in 55 Catholic schools. Of the year 12 leavers for 1994, three Aboriginal girls achieved tertiary ranking and one is attending dental nurse training.

A five-person Aboriginal Education Team worked with the government system in undertaking professional development and workshops using the Aboriginal Studies materials to support teachers of Aboriginal students.

A homework centre was established in Adelaide's central district at the request of Aboriginal Education Workers in nearby schools. These and similar activities with a wide range of schools continue to demonstrate a pro-active approach to improving the education of Aboriginal students in Catholic schools.

Education of girls

The continuing implementation of the SACCS Gender and Equity Policy was supported by the professional development of the Gender and Equity Committee, a network which liaises with Gender and Equity personnel in Catholic schools and provides materials, workshops, seminars and advisory support to schools. The aim of the Gender and Equity Policy is to raise awareness of the educational needs of girls and boys; to provide equal opportunity to participate and to achieve excellence in a gender-inclusive curriculum; to provide a safe and supportive environment; and to ensure equitable resource allocation.

The support of families and parents continues to be vital to the successful implementation of the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls.

A report based on the findings of teachers in two schools with concentrations of students from both low socioeconomic backgrounds and non-English speaking backgrounds has been provided to the Department of Employment, Education and Training as part of the educational accountability requirement for 1994 under the NEPS.

Two schools, St Brigid's in Kilburn and St Patrick's in Mansfield Park, have been involved in action research into the performance of girls from non-English speaking backgrounds in mathematics. Funding for the project has been provided under the English as a Second Language Component and the Disadvantaged Schools Component of the NEPS.

The research was designed to improve the educational outcomes of girls who benefit least from schooling, and in revealing the learning needs of girls from non-English speaking backgrounds in mathematics; this was achieved. A further outcome was that at St Brigid's (where the project was two years ahead of that at St Patrick's) a significant number of girls from non-English speaking backgrounds led their classes in various areas of mathematics. The performance of the girls was followed into secondary school and again their teachers reported that they were in the group of highest achievers in their mathematics classes.

The project at St Patrick's in 1994 was in its first year of a three-year plan. It is directed towards the specific needs of ESL students in the development of their mathematical knowledge and ability to communicate.

The Commonwealth contributed \$9,810 to gender equity programs in Catholic schools in South Australia.

Distance and rural education

Following a successful application for funding from the Quality, Competencies and Technological Support Element of the Commonwealth Capital Grants Program, six secondary schools implemented a distance education program in languages other than English (LOTE) which includes professional development and demonstrations in using the technology and methodological considerations for teachers.

Management of the Country Areas Components of NEPS occurs on a joint sector collaborative basis and involves four Catholic schools which received total funding of \$7,700.

Socioeconomic disadvantage

The SACCS established the Schools Equity Advisory Committee (SEAC) to provide advice on the management of programs under the NEPS. SEAC included teachers, parents, principals and union and employer nominees and provided an integrated budget of programs and a handbook for school communities. Sixteen schools were supported by the DSC of the NEPS (\$405,500), with particular focus on language development in the primary years, mathematics, science and technology, and studies of society and environment. The programs were complemented by work undertaken as part of the Literacy and Learning National Component.

Students at risk

From the STAR Component of the National Priorities Element of the NEPS, the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools received \$65,000 which was

allocated to seven secondary schools. School initiatives focused on:

- student counselling/support;
- individual and group processes;
- raising staff awareness of issues relevant to students at risk;
- exploring teaching practices and curriculum offerings;
- establishing links and networks with other STAR-funded schools;
- literacy support for students at risk;
- social development programs;
- school and community partnerships.

Each STAR-funded school established a Student/Curriculum Support Team which collaborated to design and support implementation of strategies for individual students within the school community.

Gifted and talented students

Catholic schools focus on the gifts and talents of all students through identification of special students and provision of programs in language, mathematics, science, technology and environmental studies. All schools have responded to the emphasis on appropriate programs for gifted and talented students.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

The New Arrivals sub-component of the ESL Component of the NEPS provided support for intensive programs to facilitate students' integration into mainstream education. In 1994, 26 new arrivals enrolled in Catholic schools and funding of \$74,386 assisted provision of a specialist teacher and interpreter support, materials and the assistance of a consultant.

The ESL General Support sub-component provided \$1,283,300 for the employment of specialist teachers who have the dual role of teaching ESL learners and teaching cooperatively with, and being resource person to, mainstream teachers. In 1994, there were 26.5 FTE ESL teachers in 26 Catholic schools. A multi-level professional development program, developed and supported by two full-time consultants, provided opportunities for ESL and mainstream teachers to enhance their skills.

A number of special projects, focusing on the curriculum and general support needs of ESL learners, were funded. These included mathematics and science, literacy development at primary and secondary levels,

gender issues and learning, and oral language development in the early years.

Students with disabilities

The Commonwealth provided \$593,900 under the Special Education Component of NEPS. In 1994, schools' data recorded that students with learning difficulties numbered 3,150, of whom 1,277 students met the Commonwealth requirements. These students attended regular settings, units and two special schools. The following initiatives were particularly significant in the provision of services to these students:

- the development and implementation of in-service programs for the inclusion of all students;
- the implementation of parent support materials;
- the development of action plans for assessment, monitoring and review of the needs of students with disabilities;
- the development of screening mechanisms for capital equipment and modifications to sites for students with disabilities;
- the extension of post-school options for students with disabilities.

Special education programs focused on improving service and access to educational facilities to increase participation for students with disabilities. Procedures covering the enrolment and support of students with disabilities were implemented and reviewed. Placement of intellectually disabled students in special schools, and specialised options in one primary and four secondary units were supported by eight regionally based advisers.

A feature of 1994 was the extensive review of special education services to students with disabilities across all sectors. In Catholic education this review was followed by detailed discussions of appropriate service to students with special needs. A final report is expected during 1995.

Independent schools

Aboriginal students

In January 1994, 172 Aboriginal students were enrolled in 35 independent schools. In primary schools, 53 per cent of Aboriginal students were boys and 47 per cent were girls, while in secondary schools there were equal numbers of boys and girls. A number of programs and strategies to address key issues were initiated without Commonwealth funding and included the following:

- appropriate teacher development courses;
- closer links with the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) programs, increased use of the Aboriginal

Tutorial Assistance Scheme and the creation of Aboriginal parent-school committees;

- a focus on achievement of secondary students by exploring strategies for increased retention rates and signalling a focus for exploring the issue of a disproportionately low number of boys completing secondary schooling;
- a focus on smoother transition from rural areas for students moving to metropolitan or other schools, and implementation of strategies to review and establish effective support systems for Aboriginal students;
- research opportunities initiated through outside funding bodies to focus on Aboriginal literacy, particularly at years R-2 and 7-9;
- a collaborative response to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy through an operational plan detailing priorities, objectives, strategies, intended outcomes and performance indicators.

Education of girls

The participation and achievement of girls was strengthened by a broad range of programs established prior to and during 1994. Single-sex classes in technical studies, physical education, technology and electronics were offered to ensure that girls were encouraged to make their subject selection from the widest range of subjects available. Schools continued to emphasise counselling on non-traditional careers and on subject selection that leads to opportunities in non-traditional areas of work.

Distance and rural education

The program of the Open Access College provided curriculum access and support for students in rural communities. A range of interactive multimedia programs was also trialed.

Two independent schools received funding from the Country Areas Component of NEPS, a total of \$6,400. There were 203.5 students enrolled in these schools of which 109 were boys and 94.5 were girls. Both schools were primary schools which sought to increase community involvement and reduce the disadvantage of distance. In South Australia, the three sectors pool these funds and management is vested in a cross-sector committee. This has proven to be a very successful strategy.

Socioeconomic disadvantage

Five schools were funded by the DSC of the NEPS, a total of \$28,000. Wide-ranging projects covered developments in computers and enhancement of science and technology in the curriculum. Use of computers has provided opportunities for development in all curriculum areas, particularly with the use of interactive

CDs, desktop publishing and spreadsheets. Software focusing on reading skills, word processing and spelling has proven to be motivating, particularly for students who are included in the NEPS target groups. Curriculum development, in line with individual schools' strategic planning, has been enhanced by the provision of specific resources funded by the DSC of the NEPS and has provided a springboard for increasing parent understanding and participation in school programs.

Students at risk

The two projects funded by the STAR Component of NEPS (\$35,000) had considerable impact on the targeted group. A small project hosted by a northern suburbs independent school focused on early intervention, and had a particular impact on families and their attitudes to schooling. The project emphasised training of teachers in ESL strategies with a strong literacy bias, encouraging oracy skills through puppetry and video filming and further development of a cross-age tutoring program.

The Northern Areas Cluster Group Project (involving four independent secondary schools) provided a catalyst to challenge students to consider the need for educational planning and planning for a career pathway, with a resulting change in attitude and behaviour for a significant number of students. The project enabled students to experience a range of lectures, lecturers, institutions and short core courses in various vocations.

Gifted and talented students

Although no NEPS funding was made available to the independent sector for the development of gifted and talented programs, existing programs continued. Teachers sought support from professional associations and the Flinders University of South Australia, and training offered by various agencies.

In May 1994, independent schools were surveyed to ascertain the extent and nature of provision for gifted and talented students and to gain an appreciation of teacher development needs for the future. Two-thirds of schools had a program for gifted and talented students, nearly one-quarter had written policies in place and almost all schools indicated a need for in-service training of teachers.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

NEPS ESL funding supported professional development opportunities for mainstream teachers and enabled thirty-six schools to initiate and develop programs aimed at creating a supportive school environment and effective literacy for the target group.

Surveys provided accurate data on the numbers, location and proficiency levels of ESL students in independent schools. This has allowed funds to be directed appropriately and has ensured equitable access and participation.

In 1994, 60 per cent of ESL students were male, 40 per cent female. Over 80 teachers were directly involved in professional development activities in ESL and many others participated in cross-sectoral in-service training and workshop opportunities on ESL scales, New Arrivals support, literacy and learning, and collaboration on national funding submissions for professional development in ESL. The Commonwealth contributed \$119,700 under the English as a Second Language General Support sub-component and \$22,888 under the New Arrivals sub-component.

Students with disabilities

The number of students with disabilities in independent schools continues to increase and the range of students with disabilities has broadened noticeably over the past two years. A total of 273.6 students (of which approximately 75 per cent were boys) in 65 schools meet the Commonwealth requirements for funding and range from students requiring additional curriculum support to those requiring significant and inter-agency support. Another 1,858 are recognised as needing support which can only be provided by individual schools. This necessitates very significant effort being given to curriculum development and financial resources by individual schools.

Students with complex needs, including intensive health-care needs, have challenged schools to focus on access for targeted students with both physical and academic needs. Consequently, there is a substantial increase in the number of applications for the special education funding available within the Capital Support—Non-government sub-component of the NEPS. Collaborative involvement across the health, welfare and education sectors has, by necessity, continued to develop for the benefit of targeted students.

Teachers and students in independent schools are eligible for the support of three part-time consultants funded by the NEPS Special Education Component. In 1994, the consultants focused on early identification and intervention, inclusion and issues for secondary students with disabilities. A key curriculum focus has been literacy in its broad terms, oracy, reading and writing—all fundamental skills for successful integration.

Families seeking an independent education for children with disabilities have a range of options. These include two special schools, five special units (partly funded by the NEPS Special Education Component) and integration into regular classrooms, with support offered in various ways such as a special education teacher, volunteers, and cross-age tutoring.

The participation by four independent schools in the NEPS-funded Transition Support Project was of great benefit to eligible students with disabilities. The Commonwealth provided \$315,000 under the Special Education Component of NEPS.

General and vocational education

Initiatives in the post-compulsory years

The first South Australian Certificates of Education (SACE) were issued in January 1994 to students who met the requirements of the new two-stage post-compulsory curriculum pattern. Review and refinement of the organisation and documentation of the SACE followed, and comprehensive data about students' participation and performance in 1992 became available publicly for analysis.

Government schools

The CANC funded two projects related to vocational education:

- a project called Vocational Education/Career Education in 22 Country Areas Component schools;
- research into retention and subject/career choice for girls in four Country Areas Component schools.

An increasing number of schools offered programs incorporating both SACE and vocational education and training across a range of areas such as horticulture, aquaculture, retail, tourism, office, business and transport. Schools made links with TAFE, industries, and State and national training boards. SSABSA negotiated further credit transfers with TAFE in areas such as the arts, technology and business.

Vocational education and training courses are delivered in SACE subjects in four ways:

- providing credit transfer into the vocational education and training (VET) sector;
- being used as a vehicle for Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS) pilots;
- having a significant vocational placement;
- Engineering Pathways Project using the SACE and involving SSABSA, the Department for Employment, Training and Further Education (DETAFFE) and the Engineering Employers Association.

Commonwealth funding assisted the following AVTS school-based pilot projects:

- accreditation, credentialling, curriculum infrastructure for school-based pathways;
- transportation and physical distribution;

- work experience/vocational placement;
- vocational pathways for rural and isolated students.

Three work-based AVTS pilots are currently delivering aspects of their training through the schooling sector:

- the Vocational Entry Level Training Pilot: Steel Industries Proposal (BHP) with Edward John Eyre campus of the Whyalla Secondary College;
- the stevedoring industry with The Parks High School;
- the Engineering Employers Association with The Barton Senior College.

An industry-sponsored work experience program called the E Team provides a medium for the integration of work-related studies and key competencies into a range of SACE stage 1 courses. It meets all the criteria for a significant work-related project and may be recorded on the SACE Record of Achievement.

The Young Achievement Program provided students with the opportunity to develop work-related competencies. As a stand-alone activity, a student's involvement can be recorded on the SACE Record of Achievement as a significant work-related project. If integrated into a SACE unit, it can become part of the assessment in that unit.

The Vocational Education in Schools Project was funded by DEET, to support teachers and schools in the introduction of vocational programs. The project concentrated on the post-compulsory years, and emphasised curriculum development and support. DEET contracted management of the project to Curriculum Corporation. The project has drawn on the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report *Towards an Enterprising Culture* to define enterprise and enterprise education. A draft package of materials was developed to support the implementation of enterprise programs in schools.

School-TAFE links

Schools broadened links between their curriculum and that delivered by TAFE, and those delivering VET curriculum did so within clearly outlined principles. Memoranda of Agreements were used by schools in conjunction with Institutes of TAFE to guarantee outcomes for students.

Data and anecdotal information about the attitudes and perceptions of students, parents and the community on the delivery of vocational education through the SACE was gathered. Outcomes from the AVTS pilots and the national evaluation of the E Team indicate strong support for vocational education, including vocational placements as an accredited part of the SACE. Cross-credit arrangements and portability of VET credentials are perceived as valued outcomes of the delivery of VET-accredited curriculum through the SACE.

Career education

Initiatives in career education included:

- availability of the Job and Course Explorer (JAC) in most secondary and area schools;
- provision of a Vacation Counselling Service;
- continued development of the VISITS register;
- publication of *Youth Labour Market Issues*;
- provision of Personal Portfolios free to year 10 students;
- use of Career Guidance computer packages;
- development of Tradeswomen on the Move in collaboration with DETAFE;
- establishment of the Schools, Education and the World of Work Project.

Transition from school to tertiary education

For admission to tertiary education in 1994, 10,696 applications were received from year 12 students, 15.5 per cent less than in 1993. Offers were made to 6,785 students and 5,136 (48 per cent of applicants) enrolled. Female students made up 54 per cent of the enrolments and male students 46 per cent. Students from government schools made up 54 per cent of tertiary enrolments.

Catholic schools

Catholic schools continued the work of implementing the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) and providing wider curriculum choice. Following discussions on the introduction of vocational education courses in years 11 and 12, a Post-Compulsory Taskforce was established by the SACCS to investigate the feasibility, desirability and possible impact of introducing vocational courses for dual accreditation. Members of the taskforce have visited interstate institutions and a report with recommendations is expected early in 1995.

Catholic schools continue to be involved with government and independent schools in trials implementing approaches to assessing the level of student achievement in the key competencies.

Discussions have been held with TAFE and private providers on collaborative ventures for vocational training and work experience placement. Catholic post-compulsory educators have continued to be involved in the Vacation Counselling Program.

Achievement of students in years 11 and 12 in Catholic schools remains at a high level, as evidenced by the SACE results for 1994.

Independent schools

Independent schools continued to provide the opportunity for students in the post-compulsory years to participate in a range of subjects that ensured the completion of the SACE. Several schools included a work education component with cross-credit transfer to the SACE, and the development of more flexible pathways to fulfil SACE requirements improved outcomes for a range of students. A two-year program of work experience was developed in some schools, supported by JAC and other computerised career resources and vocational aptitude programs. Closer links with TAFE were developed by individual schools and through information programs and conferences organised for the sector.

Four schools were involved in a Key Competencies pilot which documented the explicit teaching of key competencies at both compulsory and post-compulsory levels.

Several teachers from independent schools participated in the Vacation Counselling Program, a service offered to all students in the period following the release of SSABSA results.

Areas of student learning

Government schools

Curriculum statements and profiles

Reviews of the statements and profiles for Australian schools, conducted by reference groups from primary, secondary and tertiary institutions, business and industry personnel and department officers, recommended their implementation, with some amendments, in all areas of study. Schools began the process of becoming familiar with the documents and aligning the curriculum with the statements. Through widespread consultation, priorities were established for reporting to parents and to the system.

Support included training and development, materials and school-based development projects. Consultants worked with Curriculum Officers to ensure that issues relevant to the areas of study, levels of schooling, essential skills and understandings, and redressing educational disadvantage were integrated into the training and development program. Four school-based development projects identified and collated good practice in the area of transition, assessment and recording and reporting. Other projects supported implementation through focus schools, literacy programs and a range of networks.

Resources produced included:

- *Statements and Profiles into Practice: Improving Student Learning Outcomes*, with resource papers on programming and using student achievement information;

- *Curriculum Statements and Profiles Implementation Support Plan 1995–1997*, to be distributed to schools in early 1995;
- *Curriculum Digest* and other materials to assist principals as curriculum leaders in their schools.

English

The focus of R–10 English curriculum activity was on planning, programming and reviewing the statement and profile. Support for teachers was provided through workshops, train-the-trainer courses, and the National Professional Development Project, which comprised representatives of the English professional associations, the three education systems and the University of South Australia.

Materials on teaching visual and media texts in R–7 classrooms and using the full range of texts described by the English statement were identified as priority areas for development.

Curriculum personnel provided advice to Curriculum Corporation and the Australian Broadcasting Commission on projects related to the statement and profile.

The assessment requirements of year 12 English (School Assessed Subject) were reviewed in preparation for acceptance by the universities as suitable for higher education entry.

Languages other than English

The department made considerable gains in achieving its target of ensuring that languages form an essential part of curriculum for all students. A total of 448 junior primary, primary, area, rural and R–12 schools were offering 21 different languages to 90,062 students at primary level. This represented an increase of 481 per cent in the number of schools offering LOTE and an increase of 438 per cent in the number of students studying languages at primary level over the last nine years.

A close partnership developed between the department and the Language Teachers' Associations and curriculum support materials were developed in Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Modern Greek and Spanish. Expertise in the tertiary sector was used for comprehensive training and development.

Implementation of the statement and profile was a major focus. Support was provided to teachers of programs in French, German, Italian, Indonesian, Japanese, Modern Greek and Vietnamese.

Through arrangements with overseas governments, teachers were able to expand proficiency in the target languages by participating in exchanges or scholarships in China, France, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, Japan and Noumea.

Students in country and remote locations were provided with programs in German, French, Indonesian and Spanish through the Open Access College as well as through local delivery centres. A LOTE–Remote Working Party was formed to examine the provision of languages education to remote schools. Strategies to provide programs for difficult-to-staff schools included a Spanish Pilot Program, which provides long-term retraining for teachers in country locations.

Students have access to bilingual, mother-tongue, and second-language programs. In 1994, there were nine programs and advisory support provided in the establishment, management and evaluation of bilingual programs. The South Australian Secondary School of Languages and the Ethnic Schools are complementary providers of mother-tongue programs.

The School Language Program of the NEPS provided \$111,180 under the Priority Languages Incentive Element and \$124,000 under the Community Languages Element.

Science

Conferences provided opportunities for teachers to investigate curriculum and methodologies reflected in the statement and profile, and to assist work towards implementation. A number of teachers were released to write support materials.

Focus schools programs addressed R–7 science and technology and secondary physics. The department provided \$83,200 to DSC schools for these training and development programs aimed at improving the confidence and competence of teachers. A Technology and Science for Children Program focused on improving the learning outcomes of junior primary and primary students through a series of State-wide networks.

Science is to be incorporated into the School of the Future and staffing was allocated for development of new courses for training and educational programs in science.

Commonwealth Gender Equity Project funding was used to conduct workshops throughout the State to increase the participation of girls in science and mathematics.

Technology

The department provided over \$130,000 as part of the Schools Technology Education Program (STEP) grants.

Implementation of the statement and profile commenced and will continue to be supported by resources, materials and training and development programs.

A support booklet, *Introducing Technology Education R–7—A Guide for Teachers*, was launched by the

Minister in September 1994. A three-year Technology and Science for Children Program concluded and reviews indicated its success. A program focusing on technology through the middle years of schooling will begin in 1995.

The Engineering Pathways Program continues to expand and extensive training and development programs are planned for teachers in 1995.

The School of the Future piloted its first outreach program, based in Quorn in the State's far north. Further outreach programs are planned for 1995, to provide programs in technology to teachers in distant and remote locations. The school also trialed the TECHNET Program, to be further developed in 1995. Forty country primary schools were provided with the hardware and software for electronic mail and an audio graphics teaching program funded by the Country Areas Component.

Mathematics

DECS provided \$339,000 to DSC schools and country area schools for two focus school projects, the R-7 Mathematics Focus School Curriculum Project and the Junior Secondary Mathematics Focus Schools Curriculum Project. Project schools engaged in materials development and training and development for more than sixty schools.

The projects were integrated into general training and development for the implementation of the mathematics statement and profile. Focus schools provided venues, local expertise, knowledge and access to networks for a State-wide series of conferences and other events.

Papers outlining the overwhelmingly positive results of the evaluation of the Junior Secondary Mathematics Resource Schools Project (1991-93) were accepted for inclusion in the programs of national and international conferences.

Studies of society and environment

Curriculum development in studies of society and environment was supported by the implementation of the statement and profile. The preparation of materials and training and development programs and the need to emphasise active citizenship for society and environment through these developments was seen as crucial for their successful implementation. Materials development projects included:

- *How School, Society and the Individual Shape Identity and Status Based on Sex*—teaching and learning materials for years 7-10 addressing sexual harassment and the construction of gender;
- *Studies of Society and Environment Classroom Guides*—a curriculum planning resource providing

examples of curriculum development and delivery for years R-10.

Curriculum officers and subject associations collaborated to map agriculture, business and home economics across health and physical education, science, studies of society and environment, and technology.

Fourteen professional associations formed the SA Studies of Society and Environment group (SASOSE) to plan professional development programs for teachers.

Primary Industries (SA) provided sponsorship for an Environmental Education/Landcare Focus School Program which linked ten schools across the State. The aim was for 40 teachers to be trained to provide leadership in environmental education/landcare within the context of implementing the statements and profiles.

The arts

The introduction of the statement and profile led to significant activity for primary and secondary schools in aligning their arts curriculum with the documents for the delivery of curriculum in dance, drama, media, music and the visual arts in the compulsory years of schooling.

A significant number of students were assessed in publicly examined and school-based arts subjects for the SACE. Subject options for years 11 and 12 include art, craft, dance, design, technical drawing, drama, multi-arts, music, music history and literature and music performance and theory. The annual SSABSA Year 12 Show and Performing Arts Showcase celebrated the achievements of year 12 students.

The Artists in Schools Program, funded jointly by the department and the South Australian Youth Arts Board, placed 26 artists in 28 country and metropolitan schools.

Programs engaging teachers and students with new technologies in the visual and performing arts were conducted at the School of the Future.

Health and physical education

The health and physical education learning area has been highlighted in the department's Three Year Plan through the following priority statement: 'ensure that all students participate in physical education programs in the compulsory years of schooling and provide sport opportunities for all students'.

Teachers undertook familiarisation workshops to implement the statement and profile in health and physical education. Training and development programs investigated effective teaching practices in addressing critical literacy and literacy skills.

A document, *Towards Improving Physical Education and Sport in South Australian Schools 1995-7*, was

launched and a training and development program in physical education and sport for primary school teachers was drafted for implementation early in 1995.

The department and the Division of Sport have collaborated to map the Aussie Sports programs in the health and physical education statement and profile. This exercise has drawn national attention and has been used as a model in planning units of work based on the broad learning experiences in the statement and relating it to student learning outcomes as broadly listed in the profile.

Interagency support for school health and physical education programs is a priority of the Health Education Inter-agency Advisory Committee (HEIAC). Interagency groups work closely with DECS advisers and teachers to assist in activities to complement the statement and the profile.

School communities and agencies have assisted in the development of guidelines on the effective management of student health-related matters. The guidelines will assist schools to develop policies and practices which support the curriculum as well as the health and well-being of the whole school community.

HIV/AIDS education was integrated into sexuality education, a content area of the health and physical education statement and profile. Ten focus schools have received training and development to draft curriculum materials in sexuality and HIV/AIDS education R-10. A draft training and development package addressed a range of groups in school communities and involved collaboration with the Children's Services Office and health agencies.

A review of the Protective Behaviours Program was conducted. The two-stage review set out to establish the nature of teachers' use of the program, factors which affected use of the program, whether recipients of the program have greater knowledge of victim resistance strategies and are more able to describe their responses to unsafe situations than non-recipients, and whether student characteristics influence learning outcomes in Protective Behaviours. More than 300 students aged 4-16 years in 24 schools and preschools were interviewed. It is anticipated that the results will provide directions for strengthening abuse-prevention programs.

Literacy

The Children's Literacy National Project, administered under the Australian Language and Literacy Policy, was conducted in South Australian schools. A total of \$48,500 was expended on the research and development project Talking and Learning in the Middle Years. A video and two workshop outlines will be completed and distributed early in 1995 to assist teachers and parents to understand and value the role of talk in learning.

Middle years of schooling

The Action Plan for the Middle Schooling Years was developed and sent to schools. The plan was the DECS response to the Junior Secondary Review of 1992. The focus for reform will be curriculum, teaching and learning and school structures that support early adolescent learning.

Basic skills testing program

Students in years 3 and 5 will be tested using the Basic Skills Testing Program in Aspects of Literacy and Numeracy in a collaborative exercise between the NSW Department of School Education and the DECS in SA. The tests will be developed by the two systems from 1995 to 1998. Two reports were published on the results of the 1994 Basic Skills Test trials undertaken in 41 schools to ensure the compatibility of test procedures with the South Australian school context.

Behaviour management

Behaviour management is a priority focus for schools and service providers in keeping with the department's objective 'to improve operations in all schools'. The review of the school discipline policy highlighted key areas of change in behaviour management such as early intervention, curriculum development, community involvement and student accountability.

Learning Environment Technology—Australia 1994

Learning Environment Technology—Australia 1994 (LETA 94) was Australia's first international showcase of technology for learning, and provided a forum for educators, architects, educational technologists and the community (especially parents) to discover more about the ways in which technology will change learning methodologies and environments.

Over 1,000 participants from 26 countries attended events and more than 100 papers and demonstrations were presented. In excess of 5,000 people attended the public showcase, which included displays of technology for learning by schools, suppliers and specialists, and the STEP grant projects. The event operated in collaboration with independent schools, the Catholic education authority and the tertiary sector. The success of LETA 94 and international recognition of South Australia as a centre of excellence in educational technology and facilities design have ensured it will become a biennial event.

Catholic schools

Curriculum support for teachers and schools is provided on a State-wide basis through the appointment of Area Education Consultants responsible for assisting schools

in whole-school planning, community planning and development of teacher networks in the eight curriculum areas. A Teaching and Learning Consultant works with advisers in the government sector to provide information, materials and professional development for school leaders responsible for curriculum development from Reception to year 12.

Religious education

Catholic schools were surveyed regarding their needs for support in developing religious education curriculum. The results of this survey have informed planning and the development of school-based resources.

English

Fourteen schools were involved in trialing whole-school professional development and reporting learning outcomes in English with support from a Language and Literacy Adviser.

The Reading Recovery Program supports the work of teachers in early intervention language programs for students experiencing difficulties. The role of the tutor was to assist schools to develop early intervention and preventive intervention programs in early literacy reading diagnosis and to provide in-service training for teachers.

Languages other than English

The School Language Program of the NEPS provided \$111,180 under the Priority Languages Incentive Element and \$124,000 under the Community Languages Element.

Eight languages were offered in Catholic schools, supported by central advisory staff and in-service training programs for teachers. Support for LOTE programs emphasised the Italian bilingual program, the Distance Education Program and development of curriculum materials to support Italian senior secondary distance education. A review of the LOTE program indicated the need to revise the existing SACCS policy and work has begun to this end.

Science

The Catholic school system liaised with the Australian Academy of Science in the trial of a science, technology and environment program called the Primary Investigations Program. Two Catholic primary schools worked with the Investigations Program materials, developed by the Australian Academy of Science, which were trialed last year.

Catholic schools continued to use the Investigator Science and Technology Centre. The SACCS provided

funds to assist with the recurrent operation of the centre. Another facility used by Catholic school students is the School of the Future, located at Technology Park.

Fifteen schools worked with staff from the University of South Australia in a program of effective science and technology teaching in Reception to year 7. This program was the second negotiated with the University which provided intensive in-service training and school-based activities and support for teachers.

Technology

The application of technology to education continued through the computerisation of libraries and administrative and other services. In addition, computing and computer-assisted learning is an essential part of secondary curricula. Technology centres were opened in two schools, bringing advanced computer and technological techniques to students and providing computer access for students working in a diverse range of curriculum offerings. The focus on technology and computing is strong in secondary schools, with limited financial support for primary schools through Commonwealth capital programs. Provision of technological equipment remains urgent and inadequate for most schools.

In 1994, technology was a major focus for primary schools which have been stimulated by the statement and profile to develop this area more fully. This meant that providing equipment ranging from classroom materials to computers became a priority. Secondary teachers have become more aware of technology across the curriculum. Teachers use multimedia programs, CD-ROMs, the Nexus bulletin board and Internet in their teaching. A number of Catholic school staff participated in the LETA 94 conference and provided opportunities for participants to visit outstanding facilities and to observe programs for students.

Mathematics

Secondary schools continue to adapt curriculum in response to the requirements of the SACE. Experienced primary mathematics educators examined materials developed by teacher professional associations with a view to providing support and advice to schools. Two six-week intensive courses for primary teachers provided mathematical background and teaching approaches appropriate for developing curriculum consistent with the statements and profiles.

Studies of society and environment

The statement and profile for studies of society and environment have been welcomed and have been the focus for a number of schools. In many primary schools these studies have been integrated across the curriculum

through the use of themes. Some schools have developed active environmental studies programs through establishing their own gardens or horticultural areas, while others have established recycling programs.

History and geography are the main disciplines in the junior secondary levels, although a number of schools have implemented Aboriginal studies and studies of contemporary social issues. Australian studies is studied by all students as part of the SACE, while elective courses attract strong interest.

The arts

The arts are a significant curriculum area in Catholic schools because of their intrinsic worth and because they relate to our spiritual selves. Most secondary schools offer art/design, music and drama. Some schools have introduced media and dance courses, although these aspects are often integrated into other courses.

Music is a strong element in primary schools, with over 40 schools participating in the annual Catholic Schools Music Festival in 1994. Twelve secondary schools provided special music items in the festival. Primary schools encourage students to take music tuition or participate in school music groups such as choirs and ensembles. For many secondary schools, bands or music groups are valued features.

Health and physical education

The Family Life Curriculum Guidelines (HIV/AIDS education) were launched in February. The provision of professional development support and in-service training to implement the guidelines has been a major project, including special support for country schools. Implementation of this curriculum and provision of intensive support will be a feature in 1995. Collaboration with the State's Health Commission and other educational bodies underpins this program.

Independent schools

English

In the early years of schooling several schools worked with Reading Recovery and First Steps. Teacher support for the development of understandings, skills and knowledge required for successful early intervention was provided in a range of settings.

Students with specific literacy and learning needs in mainstream classes were the focus of professional development programs and English teachers developed their understanding and strategies of ESL through the ESL in the Mainstream course. Literacy issues for Aboriginal students were explored through such

programs as First Steps, distribution of resource materials, English Language Acquisition (ELA) and teacher involvement in the Teaching Aboriginal Students (TAS) course.

A range of teaching strategies such as artists-in-residence programs and cross-age tutoring added depth and variety to student learning.

Languages other than English

Independent schools have a strong commitment to LOTE and in 1994, thirteen languages were taught. The range and the numbers of classes in LOTE have increased, the largest increases being in Indonesian, Japanese, Chinese and Spanish. Independent schools value the contribution of the South Australian Secondary School of Languages and the work of the Ethnic Schools Board. LOTE teachers maintain a strong support network, and intersectoral opportunities for professional development are well attended. LOTE teachers are supported in developing their LOTE expertise through participation in in-country and local language learning programs.

Science

The success and retention of girls in science was a focus of some schools. Independent schools were successful in national awards and competitions that broadened the opportunity for student participation in chemistry, physics and biology. A part-time science adviser located at the Investigator Science Centre provided expertise for independent schools, who made extensive use of this service. Primary schools continued to be a part of the program of the Australian Academy of Science.

Technology

The range of options in technology increased, with several schools upgrading their systems and facilities and offering information technology options to a range of students. Provision of electronics education is growing, with some students able to access this from year 8. The Pedal Prix was well supported by independent schools and schools used further opportunities to tailor technology programs to 'real life' situations. LETA 94 provided a forum for the involvement of independent schools and several schools hosted local, interstate and international visitors.

Mathematics

The mathematics curriculum of the senior secondary years is shaped by the SACE requirements. Independent schools continued their cross-curricular focus in mathematics and maintained developments that ensured

equitable participation. Some schools offered accelerated programs for the more capable student and an in-service training program for teachers of mathematics in the primary school was developed.

Studies of society and the environment

The development and trialing of problem-solving materials in the social sciences was commenced by a group of schools. Studies in natural resource management were added to the curriculum of several schools and history and geography for all year 8 and 9 students.

The arts

Music and visual arts are central to the arts learning area in independent schools. Music programs catered for individuals and groups through instruction in theory, music appreciation, tuition in voice and instruments and participation in orchestras, choirs and ensembles. A similar breadth was offered in visual art studies, incorporating computer graphics, textiles, painting, drawing, ceramics, photography and technological design. Productions provided a showcase for the drama performances of many schools.

Health and physical education

Physical education was a core offering in the health and physical education curriculum. Students had significant opportunities to participate in school-based activities in addition to State and national sporting events and outdoor education programs. Emphasis continued on drug education, critical incident management, protective behaviour and child protection.

Teaching and learning

Government schools

School Development Plans are now embedded within the management structure of schools. The participation of student and parent communities in reviewing the outcomes and setting the goals has been a key aspect of approval of the plans. Schools use management plans to coordinate operations in human resource management, curriculum, facilities, decision-making structures and communications.

Performance management for teachers

A performance management policy was launched in August 1994. Performance management in schools has two parts, development and assessment, which form a coherent process of shared reflection, review and planned action to improve performance. Significant

priority has been given to implementing the process in schools. Procedures in managing poor performance, introduced in 1992, continue to be used with some notable outcomes. The use of performance statements as part of the principal selection process was trialed for all new principal appointments in the second half of 1994.

Recruitment and selection

Most appointments to permanent positions occurred in country locations in a range of subjects and across all year levels. The only opportunities for recruitment in the metropolitan area were in LOTE, especially Japanese language and culture, and special education. Teachers of technical studies, home economics, library and music are in short supply in the country. Principals became more involved in the selection of school staff, although the majority of recruits were still appointed through the central placement process.

Leadership positions are filled by a selection process based on proper assessment of merit and administered by a panel including a trained chairperson, an equal opportunity representative, and a South Australian Institute of Teachers representative. In the selection of a principal a school council member is included.

Teachers and teaching

The Advanced Skills Teacher 1 (AST) classification process continued, and over 1,231 teachers have been recognised for exemplary teaching practices. The department and the South Australian Institute of Teachers have agreed on the roles and responsibilities of ASTs as the basis for the development of this new career path for teachers.

Teacher retraining

The Teacher Retraining Project assesses the retraining needs of teachers, identifies priorities and devises programs to meet long- and short-term retraining goals. Materials to assist schools in setting up local teacher retraining programs have been distributed to all worksites. Arrangements between DECS and the University of South Australia enabled workshops to be developed to meet the retraining needs of particular groups of teachers.

Education Department Schools Administrative System

In October 1994, the implementation into all schools of the Education Department Schools Administrative System (EDSAS), a new administrative system, commenced. This computer-based system allows schools to acquire, store, manipulate, analyse and distribute data relating to the administration and

management of students, staff, school activities and property. Among other tasks, EDSAS will enable the effective management of information relating to national profiles. A small project team is working on modifications required for assessment data to be entered into EDSAS and for relevant reporting.

Catholic schools

The provision of Positions of Responsibility in the teachers' award heralded a new approach to leadership in Catholic schools. Schools are allocated a number of points, based on FTEs, which determine the number of positions available. Tenure for positions can vary from one to five years. The scheme operates at primary and secondary level, with a larger number of points allocated to secondary schools. The benefits for schools are that decision making and flexibility at the school level are enhanced and leadership positions are accessible to a greater number of teachers. These leadership positions are not portable between schools.

Work on School Development Plans continued, with many schools now at the implementation stage. Statements and profiles and assessment and reporting have provided the major focus for curriculum development.

Teachers and teaching

Demand for teacher vacancies remained high with a number of graduates gaining full-time positions in country areas. Recruitment occurs at the school level, usually by a local panel. Principals and Deputy Principals in primary schools completed negotiations with SACCS for revised conditions of employment.

Increased awareness of the effects of State and Commonwealth legislation was a highlight of in-service courses, workshops, seminars and bulletins for leaders in Catholic schools. These have included matters such as anti-discrimination and equal opportunity laws.

Independent schools

The development of new schools provided opportunities for the appointment of permanent and contract teachers. The independent sector contributed to discussions with the universities on pre- and in-service training to enhance the quality of teachers and teaching in South Australia. Independent schools continued to develop and refine induction programs for new teachers and appraisal techniques that focused on teacher improvement. In-service training opportunities for teachers were diverse and many schools ensured that staff had ongoing training in the use of computers and technology.

Resourcing schools

Government schools

A School Restructure process responded to expressed needs from school communities, with the District Superintendent of Education working closely with communities seeking to amalgamate, restructure or close schools. Several restructure models have been used, including the clustering of schools using a single central administrative structure.

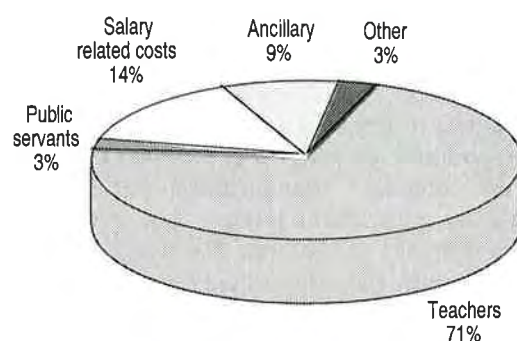
The Commonwealth contributed \$71.6 million in general recurrent funds from the General Recurrent Grants Program, an increase of \$2.4 million over the 1993 figure. The Commonwealth contributed \$17.0 million from the Capital Grants Program—General Element towards the construction of new schools and facilities, major additions to and redevelopment and upgrading of existing primary, secondary and special schools as follows:

Construction of new schools/facilities	8
Major redevelopments/upgrades	14
Major additions	3
Minor redevelopments, upgrades etc. (generally <\$100,000 estimated)	1,200

Recurrent expenditure for the 1993–94 financial year was \$1,013.8 million. Capital expenditure was \$88.8 million.

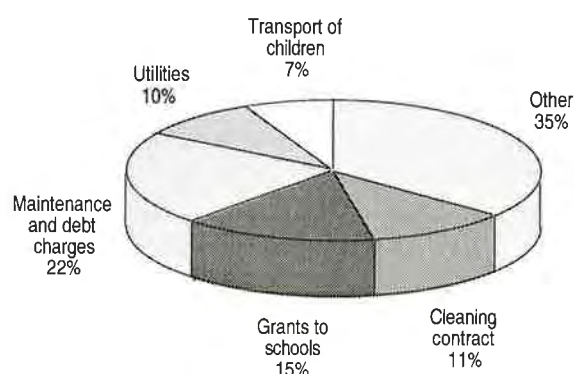
Salary, wages and related payments represent 78.4 per cent of total recurrent DECS payments in government primary and secondary schools.

Figure 6. 1993–94 salaries expenditure



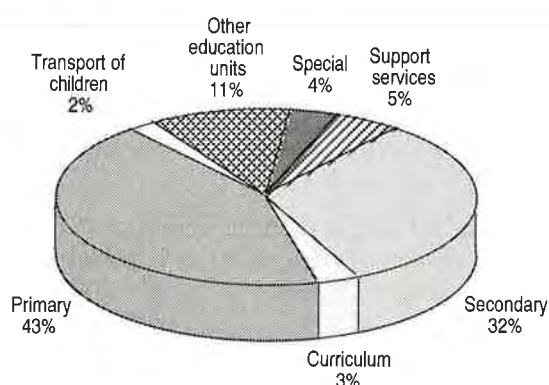
Source: DECS SA

Figure 7. 1993–94 goods and services expenditure



Source: DECS SA

Figure 8. 1993–94 program expenditure



Source: DECS SA

Total DECS (School Sector) spending as a percentage of State outlays in 1993–94 was 27 per cent, which includes government spending on government and non-government schools. Standardised per capita expenditure on government primary and secondary education was \$5,461 per student. The actual cost per student is higher than this standardised figure.

Entrepreneurial initiatives include:

- maintenance of the overseas full fee-paying student program at approximately 100 students;
- generation of approximately \$2.5 million in income from materials development and technology services;
- planning of materials and courses marketing across Australia by the Open Access College;

- prudent and cooperative investment of income and grant funds within schools and groups of schools to maximise interest return;
- attraction of subsidies from industry, particularly in the form of equipment, for specific projects.

Catholic schools

The Commonwealth contributed \$69.5 million from the General Recurrent Grants Program to Catholic Schools in South Australia. Three new Catholic primary schools were opened in new suburbs and approval was received for a new secondary school to open in 1995.

Capital grants for Commonwealth elements are administered by SACCS, who distributed over \$4.3 million to 21 schools following receipt of more than 40 applications seeking grants totalling over \$32 million. The Commonwealth contributed \$3.113 million to existing places in 11 schools for projects in excess of \$2.4 million. These projects were undertaken in schools catering for students from targeted groups. New Places projects, costing over \$2.48 million, received assistance from the Commonwealth of \$1.2 million. The provision of Commonwealth funding of \$947,500 under the Quality, Competencies and Technological Support Element of the Capital Grants Program enabled commencement of projects totalling over \$3.56 million in distance education and computers for low socioeconomic groups.

Grants are provided only to those schools which qualify for them in accordance with the objectives of the Commonwealth Capital Grants Program as specified in the *Commonwealth Programs for Schools 1994: Administrative Guidelines*. All schools receiving grants were assessed on site by members of the SACCS Capital Grants Allocation Committee. Applications placed emphasis on provision of general learning areas due to increases in enrolments, improving the participation and achievement of disadvantaged groups and provision of technology equipment and facilities. Over \$140,000 was distributed to fifteen schools with a focus on improving physical access and participation for students with disabilities.

Independent schools

The Commonwealth contributed \$36.7 million from the General Recurrent Grants Program to Independent Schools in South Australia. The Independent Schools Board Block Grant Authority (BGA) assessed applications from schools for both the General and the Quality, Competencies and Technological Support Elements of the Commonwealth's Capital Grants Program. Thirty-five applications were received for the commencement of projects in 1995. Within the grant allocations to the BGA, recommendations were carefully based on Commonwealth guidelines, which

include those associated with each of the above elements and the need to relate certain percentages of grant amounts to projects for existing and new student places.

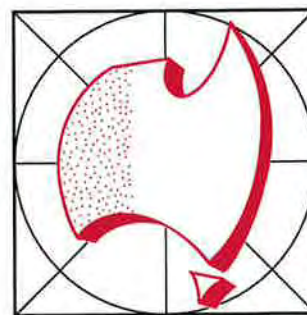
Strictly within the guidelines laid out in *Commonwealth Program for Schools 1994: Administrative Guidelines*, capital projects included school master-plan development, library automation, facilities for senior secondary which focused on changing methodologies, and construction of libraries, classrooms, laboratories, administration areas, withdrawal rooms, home economics centres, technology centres and technical studies, art and music facilities. All objectives of the program were met, with priority given to the link between maximising the competencies of students in the eight areas of learning and the competence, efficiency and confidence of teachers. Projects centred on schools which reflect socioeconomic disadvantage.

Schools undergoing capital developments or upgrading facilities ensure that the work meets the requirements of the consolidated regulations under the State's *Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act (1986)* and the requirements of the Building Code of Australia. Schools not undergoing such works provide funds from their recurrent budgets to ensure that facilities comply by the various compliance dates.

Commonwealth funding in 1994 for capital works was \$2.4 million, for projects valued in excess of \$3.1 million. Applications for grants totalling \$7.3 million were received but only from those schools which thought they may be successful in gaining a grant.

\$67,100 was spent on projects to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities by improving participation and opportunities for achievement.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Objectives and priorities for schooling

Government schools

The fundamental objective is to ensure that all students develop the understandings, skills and attitudes relevant to their individual needs, enabling them to fulfil their potential and contribute to the development of society. This objective has been pursued in the context of the devolution to schools of significant decision-making responsibility and their acceptance of greater self-management and accountability for student outcomes, enhanced responsiveness to community needs and government policies, and flexibility in structures for the delivery of schooling.

The Education Department's 1994–96 strategic plan identifies five areas in which improvement is regarded as being essential to maintaining the effectiveness of the government schooling system:

- curriculum responsiveness;
- flexibility in schooling;
- staff professionalism and working relationships;
- resource management;
- quality assurance.

In addition, schools are required, as part of their development planning processes, to identify, devise and put into place initiatives that respond to local priorities.

Catholic schools

Schools in Western Australia provide education within a Catholic context and are committed to the development of the whole person. Each student's uniqueness and giftedness is appreciated and developed within Gospel values.

In 1994, the major priority objectives were:

- professional development of teachers;
- development of a comprehensive curriculum catering for all students;
- values education;
- community (particularly parent) participation;

- provision for students disadvantaged by ethnicity, isolation or physical or intellectual disabilities;
- increased opportunities for Aboriginal students.

Independent schools

The 17 independent schools surveyed reported a strong emphasis on the review and enrichment of curriculum to enhance the development of literacy and numeracy skills, particularly among special student populations and mainstream students at the interface between primary and secondary education. The national curriculum statements and profiles were widely employed for reference during the process of curriculum review. Strategies to improve outcomes included use of the Education Department's First Steps Program, the wider availability of computers in classrooms, more effective assessment and remediation procedures and an increased emphasis on languages other than English (LOTE).

A second major priority was that of student development, with an emphasis on the physical, social and emotional aspects of this process coupled with high standards of academic achievement. Various courses addressed such issues as student health and fitness, social responsibility, career development, leadership skills and the productive use of leisure. Independent schools also sought to enhance students' creative, critical-thinking and conflict-resolution skills; self-discipline; and awareness of the advantages of a commitment to lifelong education.

Resource improvement was a third major priority, with most schools targeting the professional development of staff, increased teaching resources and the wider use of computers in relation to the science and technology key learning areas, libraries and resource centres. Some schools applied for capital grant funding to develop and improve their external environments.

In general, independent schools sought to foster closer ties between home and school and promote themselves within their communities by the increased use of home-based educational programs and greater community involvement in school management. Several sought to increase the involvement of parents and students in decision-making processes, while others reported involvement in community-based initiatives, such as

environmental awareness programs and the provision of voluntary student help at nursing homes.

Priorities related to the National Goals for Schooling

In government schools, priorities reflect a continuing commitment to the national goals, including the achievement of excellence by all students, regardless of their backgrounds, to an extent commensurate with their abilities; provisions for special groups; and vocational education.

The priority objectives of Catholic schools are consistent with the goals.

Over half of the surveyed independent schools used the goals to provide directions during their goal-setting processes, while those respondents who did not refer to the goals had either formulated their own objectives before the goals were known to them or were unaware of their existence.

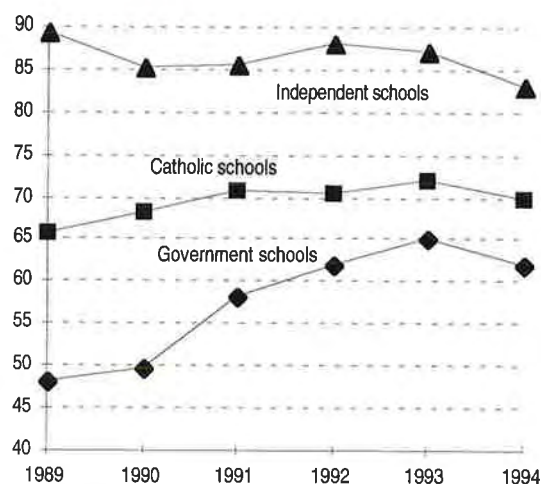
Excellence and equity

Retention and participation

Although there has been a long-term upward trend in apparent retention rates from year 8 to year 12 in each school sector, the improving economic situation in the State has encouraged more students to seek entry to the workforce without completing year 12, resulting in a slight decline in the rates for each sector: in 1994, government schools retained 66.1 per cent of girls and 58.1 per cent of boys, compared with 69 per cent and 61.6 per cent in 1993; Catholic schools' rates were 74.5 per cent for girls and 65.5 per cent for boys (75.6 and 68.7 in 1993). For independent schools, the respective rates were 87.6 and 78.1 per cent (92.1 and 82.6 in 1993). A comparison of retention rates by sector since 1989 is shown in Figure 1.

As Table 1 indicates, there was a modest increase (2,639 or 0.79 per cent) in the number of students in schools and preschools of various kinds, with 335,935 students enrolled in July 1994, compared with 333,296 in July 1993. Government schools accounted for 73.6 per cent of all enrolments, with 247,091 students, an increase of 553, or 0.22 per cent, Catholic schools 16 per cent (53,769 students, an increase of 708, or 1.3 per cent) and independent schools 8.5 per cent (28,576 students, an increase of 1,609 or 5.9 per cent). Community preschools staffed by the Education Department (5,539 students, a decrease of 173, or 3 per cent) and independent preschools (960 students, a decrease of 58, or 5.7 per cent) accounted for 1.9 per cent of enrolments.

Figure 1. Apparent retention rates^(a) to year 12 by school sector, Western Australia, 1989–94



(a) excludes senior colleges, part-time and full-fee-paying overseas students.

Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Over all, enrolments at non-government schools, community preschools and independent preschools rose by 2,086 (2.4 per cent), an increase of 2,317, being partially offset by the falls in enrolments at the preschools.

Effective schools

School–community relations

Government schools are characterised by increasingly flexible organisational structures and a growing capacity for self-management. While staffing and resourcing remain central responsibilities, educational planning and administration, financial accountability, performance reporting and curriculum delivery options have been partially transferred to schools, which are required to establish their priorities through development planning processes that reflect systemic policies, local community needs and student outcomes identified as requiring particular attention. Schools generally have accepted this increased responsibility for improving student outcomes, managing delivery options and accepting their accountability, through district superintendents, to the Director-General, Minister and Government.

Their abilities to do so have improved markedly through a growing emphasis on collecting, analysing, reporting and using quality information about student and school performance across a range of educational objectives.

Table 1. Full-time students^(a) by sector and level, July 1994

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Primary schools	153,485
District high schools and community colleges	18,246
Secondary schools	72,569
Education support schools and centres	2,175
Distance Education Centre	616
Total	247,091

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Primary schools	29,560
Primary-secondary schools	7,881
Secondary schools	16,328
Total	53,769

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Primary schools	4,670
Primary-secondary schools	21,417
Secondary schools	2,489
Total	28,576
Community preschools	5,539
Independent preschools	960
Grand total	335,935

(a) Pre-primary students attending voluntary sessional provisions are counted as having attended on a full-time basis, irrespective of the number of sessions attended. Note that these data differ from those shown in the Statistical Annex, because pre-primary students, amounting to some 36,000 persons, are not counted for the purposes of that collection.

Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Community involvement in school decision making occurs through decision-making groups, representing administrative, teaching, parent, community and, in the case of secondary schools, student interests. These groups participate in the school development planning process and in the determination of the purposes, performance indicators and priorities of individual schools. They cannot influence the teaching strategies of the school, which remain at the discretion of professional staff, who also have increased opportunities for participating in decision making.

The State is divided into 29 education districts, each of which is centred on a district education office managed by a district superintendent. Principals are accountable to district superintendents for the management of their schools and for the quality of student outcomes. District superintendents ensure that schools operate effectively and that their planning is consonant with Education Department policies and priorities.

To examine opportunities for further devolution of responsibility and accountability to schools, extensive consultation with school staffs, parents and the community is considered essential. In 1993, the Minister for Education established an independent assessment group to promote community discussion and education on the issues, examine and report on the current progress of devolution and make recommendations about possible directions that would recognise the diversity of schools and communities throughout the State and enhance the educational effectiveness, flexibility and responsiveness of schools. The group reported to the Minister in December 1994.

Its report, *Devolution of Decision-making Authority in the Government School System of Western Australia*, was released by the Minister for comment. It offers school communities the opportunity to take up wider responsibilities in school management but continues to make plain the distinction between the community's role and that of education professionals in terms of the teaching and learning program.

School boards, elected by local communities, are responsible for the financial administration of systemic Catholic schools and are accountable both to their communities and the Catholic Education Commission for ensuring the present and future viability of schools. Most Catholic schools now have approved capital development plans, which are intended to ensure that facilities are provided in the most cost-efficient and educationally effective way, that allowances are made for the most appropriate educational provisions for future students and that options for future development remain open.

Independent schools regard their communities as including parents and extended families, their parish churches, local post-secondary institutions, former students, visiting speakers, students from other (associated) schools, local businesses and community elders. Members of school management committees are drawn from these communities and deal with such issues as financial management, school development, curriculum review and development and policy formulation.

Other community members participate informally in school management through voluntary assistance in classrooms, participation in fundraising activities and school festivals and the maintenance of buildings and grounds.

Technology applications

Common to all three sectors is a realisation of the importance of computer-based management information systems to the effective and efficient operation of schools. In government schools, particular emphasis has been given to the progressive installation of unified financial management software in primary schools and the use of administrative computing technologies for storing and reporting student outcomes and absences in secondary schools. The Education Department is introducing leasing for computers and other chip-based technologies, such as fax and copiers, to improve access to rapidly changing hardware and to avoid major capital outlays and maintenance costs.

All Catholic secondary and most primary schools use computer packages for financial management and the storage of student data.

The rapid obsolescence of personal computers, with the development of faster chips, larger hard drives and CD-ROM, is a problem of serious dimensions across all school systems. On the other hand, widening access to national and international electronic mail systems and databases is contributing to significant student learning improvement.

Quality assurance

Educational outcomes in government schools are monitored at the school level through school development planning and school accountability processes. System-level student performance information is provided by Monitoring Standards in Education (MSE) cyclic sample testing in years 3, 7 and 10, with additional information coming from analysis of Unit Curriculum data for year 10 and Certificate of Secondary Education and Tertiary Entrance Examinations (TEE) data for year 12. In 1994, MSE has focused on the comparative performance in studies of society and the environment and physical and health education of female and male students, Aboriginal students and students with non-English speaking backgrounds.

In Catholic schools, educational outcomes are monitored at the school level and, at the systemic level, TEE data are analysed on a school-by-school basis. Independent schools monitor school-level outcomes for school improvement purposes and reporting to parents.

Social justice

Government school students with special needs are provided for through: a combination of central-, district- and school-based programs, including those which are intended to alleviate disadvantage arising from socioeconomic status (SES) or location; schools, centres,

units and mainstream placements for students with physical, intellectual and/or sensorimotor disabilities; hospital schools; socio-psycho-educational resource (SPER) centres for students with behavioural disorders; initiatives which identify and improve outcomes for students with learning disabilities; initiatives which support students at risk of failing to complete their education for various reasons; open learning services using telematics; programs for gifted and talented or non-English speaking background (NESB) students; and initiatives arising from the 1993–95 Aboriginal Education Operational Plan.

The Catholic Education Commission believes that if Catholic schools are to be true to their vision, it is essential that the Church's teachings on social justice be an integral part of all policies and procedures. To this end, a social justice policy has been developed during 1994.

Some independent schools have continued to receive Commonwealth funding in the areas of English as a second language (ESL), special education, socioeconomic disadvantage or disadvantage arising from remoteness, and students at risk. These schools use the funding for the employment of specialist teachers, the provision of integration aides and other similar related costs. Outcomes are evaluated by a range of techniques, including professional assessments of progress by external specialists, observation and oral testing, and include improvements in the targeted students' interest in learning as well as their levels of achievement. In addition, increased retention rates, the development of individual self-esteem and an improved awareness of the existence and needs of special student populations by both teachers and other students have been experienced. Some schools report instances of successful total integration of students from special populations as a result of these initiatives.

Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds

The Disadvantaged Schools Component (DSC) of the NEPS, known as the Priority Schools Program (PSP) has operated for 20 years in those government schools in which students are considered to suffer serious educational disadvantage as a result of their socioeconomic backgrounds. In 1994, \$5.79 million was expended on the administration and operation of the program in 139 schools enrolling 46,470 students.

Of the 708 PSP projects funded in 1994, 90.8 per cent were developed by schools, 5.8 per cent by schools/districts, 2.4 per cent by districts and 1 per cent by the central office. The most significant funding areas were social skills development (up 46.5 per cent over 1993) and literacy (up 56.4 per cent). Other major foci have been organisational skills, health and numeracy, but the lack of identified need by schools in the latter

dictates further examination in view of the National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS) requirement for numeracy to be designated as a priority over the 1994–97 period.

The incidence of student access and participation in PSP projects is difficult to describe, because those curriculum innovations that help students to improve their life chances are rarely easy to evaluate. It had been hoped that measures introduced in 1993 would allow more accurate program-wide reporting of access, but so far progress has been greater in terms of describing target populations than in reporting the extent to which projects address their specific needs. And while districts are supplying detailed data on literacy and numeracy outcomes, there are difficulties in aggregating this on a statewide basis due to the variety of instruments used to measure achievement. Nonetheless, qualitative information indicated substantial improvements in outcomes during 1994.

Professional development has remained an integral component of the PSP, but as yet there is no means of determining its effectiveness in improving student outcomes.

Positive achievements have included the wider integration of PSP activities into school development planning and a closer correlation between levels of socioeconomic disadvantage and grants per school.

The Disadvantaged Schools Component of the NEPS (DSC) in Catholic schools has similar objectives and in 1994 supported 5,421 students in 36 schools in the areas of literacy, numeracy, pastoral care, appreciation skills in music, drama and art, knowledge and skills development in health and physical education, science and technology and provided wider staff access to learning resources and cultural opportunities.

The devolution of NEPS to the separate education sectors has resulted in the transfer of part of the DSC funding to the Association of Independent Schools (AIS), which has continued services to the seven schools previously identified under the DSC. It is clear, however, that the proportion of funds allocated to the sector is not sufficient to cater adequately for more than a small number of schools with students suffering educational disadvantage.

Students with disabilities

Government mainstream schools and specialised facilities have provided educational services to 4,527 students with intellectual, physical, sensorimotor or multiple disabilities during 1994. These facilities consist of separate education support schools (delivering individualised programs to 878 students with moderate to severe intellectual difficulties and/or multiple

disabilities), education support centres (sharing mainstream school campuses and providing for 852 students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities); and education support units (single classes located in mainstream schools, catering for 1,629 students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities).

In country towns, units and centres have provided for the special placement of students demonstrating a wide range and degree of intellectual disability, while in smaller centres students with intellectual disabilities have been supported in regular classes. Some of these students have severe intellectual and/or multiple disabilities and are assisted by a central visiting teacher service, which provides specialised equipment and programming and management expertise to meet students' individual needs.

Students with physical or sensorimotor disabilities generally attend local mainstream schools and, with visiting teacher assistance, are educated in regular classes alongside their peers without disabilities. In 1994, these students included 292 with physical disabilities, 110 with impaired vision, 340 with impaired hearing and 34 with autism. A further 157 pre-primary-age students with disabilities have attended local pre-primary facilities and received both visiting teacher and additional aide support.

Some \$6 million in special funding is being provided to improve provisions for students with disabilities or learning difficulties in accordance with the endorsed recommendations of a 1993 ministerial review.

For students with disabilities moving from school attendance to adult life and community options, there is now a greater focus on policy and program development.

In 1993, the Education Department developed a curriculum framework aimed at improving their competence and confidence and equipping them with the skills to function in integrated post-school employment, recreation and leisure, and home and community living environments. The framework emphasised leisure and recreation, independent living and career education.

In 1994, the Department in conjunction with the non-government schools sector, was funded by the Commonwealth to pilot and evaluate strategies for 189 students (76 per cent of them reported by teachers as having intellectual disabilities and 16 per cent multiple disabilities) attending 28 mainstream government and non-government schools in three metropolitan and three rural clusters. Forty-one per cent were enrolled in years 11 and 12

An Edith Cowan University study of the models employed was necessarily of process rather than

outcomes, because of the short evaluation period (July–December 1994): transition programs generally focus on outcomes over a longer term (at least two years).

Ultimately, 20 schools and 135 students were admitted to the sample study, which revealed that four models for transition support were in use:

- transition support officers (TSOs), who facilitated individual transition plan meetings, networked, allocated teacher relief funds, supported work experience, provided information on relevant services, assisted with professional development and undertook parent consultation;
- class teachers performing essentially the same roles as TSOs;
- coordinators with contracted specialist agencies to provide transition support, work experience and job placement; and
- relief teachers as TSOs.

A questionnaire circulated among a sample of stakeholders found them all highly supportive of the program and convinced of the pivotal role of TSOs. Benefits for students were perceived as including improved self-esteem, greater independence and closer relationships with other students, teachers, parents and agencies.

The study report has recommended closer and ongoing funding and policy commitments, greater inter-sectoral cooperation and clarification of the role of TSOs. It has stated a strong preference for the first model described above, while recommending further development and evaluation of the third.

In 1994, 1,200 students with special educational needs arising from mild to severe levels of disability were enrolled in 128 Catholic schools, with 766 being funded through the Special Education Component of NEPS. The majority of these students were integrated into regular mainstream K–12 classes, while those with more significant disabilities were enrolled in purpose-built support units with specialist support staff.

The growing number of students with disabilities being enrolled reflects the Catholic Education Commission's respect for the rights of students with disabilities and their families within the Catholic school community and its commitment to assisting schools in meeting individuals' special needs.

Special education consultants assisted principals, teachers and school communities through a variety of professional development programs at the systemic and regional levels and through school-based in-service training, workshops and individualised student case conferences and progress reviews. Schools were also assisted in obtaining access to funding, resources and specialised equipment and in planning capital works as

well as liaising with parents and associated service providers.

Under the National Professional Development Program (NPDP), Catholic school teachers were involved in cross-sectoral initiatives such as transition support for post-compulsory students moving into the community and, in some cases, the workforce, and the development of outcome indicators and strategies for teaching foundation skills within the national outcome statement profiles.

The Teacher Assistants in Special Education (TASE) program enabled 35 teacher assistants employed to support integration to receive specific skills training and accreditation in a seven-day program held over two terms. As part of its policy of providing additional support for schools integrating students with disabilities, the Catholic Education Office encourages and trains interested community members willing to work in a voluntary capacity in the confidence and basic skills required to assist students with disabilities in both mainstream and special education settings. Some 600 persons have been trained since 1987.

While funding was sought for 300 students, about 200, with mild to severe levels of disability, were supported in 51 independent schools through the Special Education Schools Support and Intervention Support sub-components of NEPS. Sixty per cent of students were integrated into mainstream classes and 40 per cent enrolled in support units within schools. The AIS has continued to provide consultancy services to these schools and their communities to improve curriculum provisions for students with disabilities, whose enrolments continue to grow, reflecting community expectations that such students should, as far as possible, be educated in mainstream settings.

Geographically isolated students

In 1993, the Minister for Education, concerned at the apparent performance differential between students in rural and urban schools, commissioned a review of schooling in country areas. The most important finding was that country schools do not produce inferior students: student characteristics are related to the nature of the student populations, not school locations. The review has shown that SES, gender and ethnicity are responsible for the differences in rural and urban outcomes. Country students have lower educational expectations and fewer of them intend to seek university entrance, so the answer lies in lifting their self-esteem. This will be helped by teachers staying longer at rural schools, so among the 30 recommendations (including a new formula for schools' resource allocations with weightings for, inter alia, SES and location, and changes to salaries for principals and deputies with weightings for SES, location, travel and housing), there are incentives for principals to remain in country schools for

three to five years and to attract experienced staff to rural schools. The report will remain open for some months for comment.

The Education Department's educational programs for students in isolated rural and remote areas are delivered through the Distance Education Centre (DEC), five Schools of the Air, small K-7 and K-10 schools and mixed-mode delivery strategies, involving a combination of face-to-face, interactive and traditional distance education teaching and learning. Eligible students from isolated areas are assisted by the payment of a living-away-from-home allowance.

In 1994, DEC provided K-12 education for 616 students, while the Schools of the Air and their itinerant teachers delivered K-7 education to 276 isolated students. DEC clients include students who are travelling, temporarily located overseas or unable to attend mainstream schools because of, for instance, illness or pregnancy, as well as adults completing educational requirements for university or TAFE entrance. DEC also supplies learning materials for students studying years 11 and 12 courses in K-10 district high schools and years 8 to 10 courses in K-7 primary schools. Educational outcomes are comparable with those attained by mainstream students at other government schools.

Extensive upgrading of open learning provisions is being undertaken in a \$10 million project which focuses on improved student access to telematics teaching/learning systems (based on a combination of integrated satellite-based television and radio, facsimile and interactive networked computers). Distance education provisions also include use of the Westlink narrowcast service, available to any site with a dish and decoder: there are 81 Westlink centres throughout the State for community use (including schools) and 60 schools (including two in the metropolitan area) and some 3,000 private individuals use the service.

Under the Country Areas General Component of NEPS, known as the Priority Country Areas Program (PCAP), 16,000 students (over 87 per cent of them in 149 government schools) have been supported through a wide range of projects. The major thrust of the 400 PCAP projects supported in 1994 was the provision of access to an enriched range of experiences across all eight key curriculum areas. Strategies included the use of visiting experts, interaction days and special-purpose camps at which students from a number of small schools live in and undertake intensive study of one curriculum area. Students participated in courses as diverse as introductory aeronautics, sailing, photography, contemporary dance and theatre arts, which are usually denied to them because of their location. One PCAP-funded initiative, the community radio station at One Arm Point in the Kimberley education district, was nominated for a major systemic award for innovation in 1994. Other

activities included professional development for advisory support teachers and music specialists.

Through the NEPS Country Area National Component, telematics equipment was supplied to isolated schools to allow secondary students access to curriculum areas not otherwise available to them. The first Aboriginal students from a PCAP remote community school have completed year 11 schooling in 1994, as a result of a cooperative telematics venture between the government and Catholic schools sectors. Projects such as this typify the PCAP model: they are driven by need and require collaboration, planning and resource sharing among schools.

PCAP also supported the long-term practicum of over 20 teacher education students, many of whom are expected to return to remote areas to begin their professional careers in 1995. Induction courses for over 100 teachers in the Kimberley and Goldfields education districts have provided support in relation to such issues as Aboriginal health and learning styles and the concerns of inexperienced teachers living in remote communities.

Eight independent schools in areas prescribed by the State's Minister for Education have received funding under the Country Areas General Component of NEPS for initiatives involving educational and cultural visits to schools and student visits to larger population centres and the Perth metropolitan area.

Gifted and talented students

The Education Department accepts that all students have a right to the recognition and realisation of their potential; gifted and talented students possess special needs; and teacher and curriculum development activities focusing on the gifted and talented benefit the student population as a whole.

During 1994, provisions were made at two levels:

- in regular classrooms, where it is the responsibility of teachers to provide a challenging and enriched curriculum that will allow giftedness and talent to emerge, be recognised and developed;
- in specialised learning environments, which enable exceptional students to interact with their peers at higher and more specific levels of a curriculum that can be provided in the regular classroom.

At the primary level, education districts received supplementary resources for the Primary Extension and Challenge (PEAC) program. These resources provided special opportunities for exceptional students in years 5 to 7. In most districts the program operated through PEAC centres. In remote locations, however, where travel is difficult, these resources were employed for alternative supplementation programs.

At the secondary level, central resourcing was provided for the Secondary Special Placement Program (SSPP), with academic extension programs being offered at ten senior high schools, art (at three), dance (at four), theatre arts (at one), LOTE (at two), choral and instrumental music (at one) and instrumental music (at one), for highly-talented students entering year 8. In addition, 20 metropolitan Secondary Education and Challenge (SEAC) programs and 26 secondary-school-based (SSB) programs (13 of them in country areas) operated—the management of which has now been devolved to education districts.

School-based provisions have been supported by the Commonwealth-funded *Teaching TAGS* (Talented and Gifted Students) project, which focuses on the early childhood and primary years and encourages the development of strategies for the identification and encouragement of these students. It includes a range of strategies to enrich classroom learning and nurture creativity, independent learning, thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. During 1994, the draft resource file, developed by a team from the Professional Association of PEAC Teachers, has been trialled in over 50 primary schools, with particular attention being given to NEPS target groups, in accordance with DEET funding guidelines. The file will be revised, modified, published and distributed during 1995 and the associated professional development program, which emphasises the establishment of district networks and which accompanied the trial phase, will continue to support *Teaching TAGS* on its release to schools.

Implementation of the second part of the Catholic Education Commission's policy statement *Students with Special Needs*, dealing with provisions for gifted and talented children, has continued during 1994. The Commission recognises the innate dignity of each individual and acknowledges its responsibility to provide for the unique gifts and talents of all students within the Catholic education sector by encouraging and supporting school-level initiatives enabling students to develop their potential.

Programs in independent schools aim to encourage and develop students' potential in the context of their peer groups and extension programs, rather than through acceleration. Students are therefore encouraged to participate in research projects, after-school clubs, competitions and TAFE vocational education. Cross-grading, individual tuition and vertical timetabling are also used to enhance programs offered. Outcomes noted include increased interest in and motivation toward learning, less classroom disruption, enhanced leadership skills and improved self-confidence and self-esteem.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

The Education Department aims to enable NESB students to minimise the educational disadvantage to which they are subject by ensuring the development of English language skills while respecting the cultural heritage that is a vital part of each student's background.

Commonwealth funding under the Access Element has enabled the Education Department to provide services to newly-arrived NESB students in rural and remote areas. Preliminary responses from schools, students and caregivers have indicated that this innovation has improved the capacity of schools to meet the English language needs of students in the initial stages of settlement. Largely because of their location, these students require differential funding and the acknowledgment of distance and "critical mass" factors in allocative mechanisms would assist the Department in addressing this equity issue.

In 1994, it operated seven intensive language centres (ILCs) for new arrivals (1,032 students), support programs for 1,330 students in regular schools implemented by specialist ESL teachers, advisory support for teachers of regular classes with NESB students, the Critical Steps Program for NESB Aboriginal students and a resource centre with some 500 regular users.

Initiatives during 1994 included:

- trialling of a visiting teacher service for 34 newly arrived metropolitan NESB students unable to attend an ILC because of distance;
- trialling of a visiting teacher service for 235 NESB students born in Australia who commenced schooling unable to speak English;
- a school cell model of specialist services for post-intensive NESB students as a solution to the problem of providing adequate ongoing support;
- the development of strategies to encourage NESB parent participation in educational decision making.

ESL programs operated in 62 Catholic primary and secondary schools under the auspices of the NEPS Access Element; the New Arrivals sub-component supported 149 students from 28 countries and the General Support sub-component 4,399 students. Two primary and two secondary schools in the Perth metropolitan area provided intensive language centres for New Arrivals: support in country areas and in other schools was provided according to need.

Assistance under the General Support sub-component has been provided to 22 remote Aboriginal independent schools and to independent schools enrolling 243 NESB students.

Aboriginal students

Major initiatives arising from the Education Department's Aboriginal Education Operational Plan included:

- assistance to Aboriginal students in improving their access to schooling and their achievement of improved educational outcomes through the Aboriginal Support Network. Aboriginal liaison officers in 22 education districts targeted 484 schools with Aboriginal student enrolments and Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness (ASSPA) program committees, intended to facilitate Aboriginal participation in the life of schools, operated in all of the 163 schools enrolling 20 or more Aboriginal students;
- the continuing development of Aboriginal studies curriculum materials for primary and secondary schools (five cross-curriculum strands for years K–7, three secondary units and a trilogy of secondary reference books) and the use of these materials in 96 schools;
- Aboriginal languages teaching in 24 schools, involving 1,180 students;
- access and bridging initiatives focusing on literacy, numeracy and careers education in post-compulsory schooling: of those Aboriginal students who participated in this program, 36 per cent continued in mainstream post-compulsory courses;
- early childhood education intervention, which provided and supported 27 Aboriginal preschool centres for four year olds, funded bus services to these centres, supplied curriculum resources, mounted in-service support for teachers, aides and school-based Aboriginal Education Workers, and delivered parent awareness and support services. Participation increased from 643 students in 1993 to 706; two preschools were relocated from inadequate to purpose-built facilities; and a program of continuous upgrading of buildings, equipment and resources continued.

In July 1994, 12,678 Aboriginal students were enrolled in government schools (9,551 in years K to 7 and 3,127 in years 8 to 12) and 706 in community preschools supported by the Department, but access and achievement remain matters for concern. Only 18.1 per cent were retained from year 8 to year 12; on the other hand, 40 per cent of Aboriginal students in year 11 in 1993 proceeded to year 12 in 1994.

The Catholic Education Commission is committed to supporting the increased enrolment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at all levels and to the provision, for all students, of courses of study that will develop a greater appreciation of the history, culture and society of Australia's indigenous peoples. Work continued on the development of Aboriginal Studies Across the Curriculum guidelines and the provision of in-servicing to familiarise primary staff with their contents and assist them to establish appropriate structures.

Other significant achievements included:

- provision of a support structure for trialling of the Aboriginal studies guidelines;
- formation of an Aboriginal working party to consider appropriate content for Aboriginal studies;
- a continuing commitment to the provision of and support for education in nine remote Kimberley Aboriginal communities;
- an Aboriginal Speakers program, which successfully operated in schools across the south of the State;
- increased involvement by Aboriginal people in capital grants panel reviews;
- in-service training of staff in schools with predominantly Aboriginal enrolments on the First Steps Program;
- further development of FELIKS (Fostering English Literacy in Kimberley Schools), an innovative grassroots commitment to improving levels of oral and written general Australian English. Education Department and independent schools staff participated in in-servicing to assist the use of FELIKS in non-Catholic schools;
- the provision of teacher education courses in cooperation with the Edith Cowan and Notre Dame Australia universities.

The 13 Aboriginal independent community (AIC) schools represent the responses of diverse groups that share a common commitment to Aboriginal control and identity and a desire for education that will provide the skills and knowledge necessary for effective participation in the wider community. Initiatives included:

- the development of learning programs integrated with the communities' economic and social priorities and community-based teaching strategies, curriculum and resources;
- the establishment of forms of governance, community involvement, curriculum and resources that focus on the centrality of linguistic and cultural maintenance;

- the progressive Aboriginalisation of operations;
- the provision of teacher education courses in cooperation with the Edith Cowan and Notre Dame Australia universities and Batchelor College.

Gender equity

Elimination of gender-based harassment

Development of a policy and procedures for the elimination of sex-based harassment among students in government schools progressed to the draft stage and involved obtaining critical responses from district- and school-based staff and from students. A brochure was prepared for parents, with the assistance and support of the system's peak parent organisation. An interactive television program, focusing on sexual harassment, bullying and racism, was transmitted to assist the professional development of staff in rural and remote areas and a one-day workshop provided for district-based personnel.

Implementation of the prevention education supplement to the K-10 health education syllabus, which contains material relating to sexual harassment, continued in schools.

Curriculum reform

The single-sex education project, which targets girls' participation in mathematics and the physical sciences, operated in seven government secondary schools during 1993 and 1994 and incorporated professional development for teachers on such issues as gender-inclusive curriculum and the behaviour management of boys' classes.

In addition, 18 school- and district-based projects, involving 575 students and 75 teachers, were funded to develop innovations in curriculum and teaching intended to improve girls' learning environments, particularly those in secondary schools disadvantaged by SES or location. These projects included a camp for Aboriginal girls in the Kimberley education district, special mathematics and science groups, telematics provisions for small rural schools and the inter-district development of strategies for improving girls' participation in mathematics.

While curriculum reform projects have been initiated to address girls' needs, there has also been a growing recognition of the importance of developing strategies for modifying boys' attitudes and behaviours in relation to girls and this has highlighted the need for teachers to deal with discipline, achievement levels and literacy needs of boys.

Accordingly, both professional development and teacher time and expertise are increasingly focusing

on the critical review of boys' educational needs within a framework that embraces inclusive curriculum strategies and a learning environment that continues to provide specific support for girls. With respect to the achievement of gender equity, continuing support is necessary to assist teachers to achieve changes in classroom organisation and management which deal effectively with the issues of discipline and male domination. Programs such as Stepping Out (literacy and learning for years 6-10), which emphasises such strategies as cooperative group work, have the potential to be highly effective in this regard. And, as well as addressing areas in which girls under-participate, there is a need for greater school-level emphasis on key curriculum areas in which boys are under-represented: the arts, LOTE and studies of society and the environment.

Other initiatives

The Education Department continued to support the Challenges for the Future forum, which in 1994 involved over 200 rural and urban year 11/12 girl students. This forum enables girls to meet women achievers in a range of business and professional careers, helping them to broaden their career and life aspirations and add to their knowledge of how women are working toward achieving their life goals. In addition, 400 teachers and 40 year 11 girls participated in the annual Women in Education conference, which in 1994 explored gender equity in the curriculum and in the teaching profession.

To involve parents in developing understandings of the significance of gender to learning outcomes, the government schools' peak parents association is represented on the Education Department's gender equity advisory committee and some parent groups and schools were supported by the central office consultant in conducting parent and parent-teacher discussion groups on gender issues.

Commonwealth funding for the incentives element was allocated to target schools on a submission basis, resulting in a range of outcomes across the State: success indicators have been evaluated at both individual and school levels.

As many programs seek to effect long-term change, it has been difficult to establish their effectiveness.

However, some short-term outcomes have been documented. These have included increased participation by girls in science and mathematics, their improved retention into upper school, better school-community liaison and support, the development of more effective systems for monitoring achievement, attendance and other factors according to gender, and wider staff and student understanding of gender equity issues.

Student performance

In government schools, girls again exhibited consistently higher apparent retention rates to year 12 (66.1 per cent compared with 58.1 per cent for boys), higher secondary graduation rates (55.9 per cent to 45.9 per cent); and have reached, in proportionately larger numbers, expected levels of year 10 Unit Curriculum achievement (86.7 per cent to 83.8 per cent).

In Catholic schools, awareness-raising activities with students, parents and staff focused on gender equity issues. The Catholic Education Office researched the impact of schools' organisational structures on gender-related issues in a project completed early in 1994. School-based professional development and inservicing offered by the office was intended to maintain teachers' attention to gender issues.

Students at risk

In the government schools sector, the Students at Risk (STAR) Component of NEPS operates within the context of the Education Department's broader Youth at Risk Program, which aims to improve the participation and retention of students considered least likely to complete secondary schooling: persistent truants, juvenile offenders, youth with learning difficulties and/or social, emotional or behavioural difficulties, Aboriginal students and students whose school performance has been affected by such circumstances as homelessness, family dislocation, transiency, violence, abuse or substance misuse.

STAR identifies and supports students most at risk and funds schools or clusters of schools with projects considered most likely to make a significant difference to the target population and/or improve the system's ability to meet the needs of at risk students. STAR programs operated in 13 education districts and involved primary schools, district high schools, senior high schools and an agricultural school. Of the 525 targeted students in 1994, two-thirds were male and almost 40 per cent Aboriginal.

Analysis of 1993 data revealed that least success is being achieved with students experiencing moderate to severe social, emotional or behavioural problems arising from extreme home circumstances. As a result, one local program—Geraldton Youth Support—received additional resources from STAR, the Ministry of Justice and the Department for Community Development to establish an outreach service that enables schools to better meet the needs of these students. This program worked with parents, teachers, school administrators and individual students. Of the 26 students, 19 now function successfully in mainstream education, five are in partial withdrawal/mainstream programs and two are on full-time off-campus programs.

In 1994, the Catholic Education Office was allocated funding for ten school-based projects which required the identification of students at risk and the development of intervention strategies to minimise the effect of factors such as low academic performance, disruptive behaviour in class, poor emotional or social development or inadequate parent support for their children's participation in schooling on students completing secondary schooling.

In its second year of involvement with STAR, the independent schools sector received funding for seven schools and 156 students (53.2 per cent of them enrolled in four AIC schools and the remainder in three Perth metropolitan schools), for programs designed to minimise the effect of such factors as isolation, family dislocation, low SES, transiency and truancy.

The Catholic Education Office manages the Non-government Schools Guidance Service, which operates in the Perth metropolitan area and four major country centres, while AIS provides administrative and clerical support for one metropolitan centre. Just under 1,000 new referrals were processed during 1994 and important initiatives included:

- negotiation of an agreement with the new Office of Non-government Education for the continuation of the service;
- planning for extension of the service to the Kimberley region;
- joint non-government schools participation in professional development designed to improve youth suicide prevention strategies;
- staff and parent presentations;
- crisis management workshops in primary schools;
- support for schools in career education and work studies.

General and vocational education

Post-compulsory initiatives

Major changes to post-compulsory course structures and delivery systems underway include:

- the introduction of a new WA Certificate of Education;
- the accreditation of vocational programs for schools;
- the provision of vocationally relevant pathways;
- a doubling of the number of students undertaking structured work placements in government schools;
- an increased emphasis on career education;

- enhanced credit transfer arrangements;
- closer links between schools and the world of work;
- greater diversity in school organisational structures.

The new certificate is designed to provide a credible indication of students' achievements in all forms of post-compulsory schooling and ensure that these are recognised for credit purposes by post-compulsory education providers and employers. An associated initiative was the introduction of vocational programs designed to prepare students for employment as well as post-secondary education or training. These programs include courses in, for example, language and communication, career and industry awareness, industry-specific studies and structured workplace learning. They are accredited by the Secondary Education Authority, incorporate outcomes-based learning, assessment and reporting in a range of contexts and develop skills for employment which are consistent with industry standards. During 1994, they were made available in over 60 government schools.

Years 11 and 12 courses have been reorganised around centrally developed and vocationally relevant pathways of study, representing a shift from individual subjects and subject combinations to broad programs, with clearly specified content and linkage with future employment requirements. Pathways are now available in over 90 per cent of government schools offering post-compulsory education.

In the Catholic schools sector, central assistance was provided for the development, maintenance and evaluation of a catering and hospitality pilot program at one Catholic school, a BP Skills Formation Program at three schools and an administrative and clerical program operating through the Kimberley campus of the University of Notre Dame Australia. State and Commonwealth funding totalling \$298,000 was provided for these projects. Six schools were involved with the Innovative Skills, Training and Education Program (INSTEP), with a further five proposing to adopt INSTEP in 1995, indicating its success in achieving outcomes serving students' employment, training and education needs.

Piloting of pathways at Catholic schools continued and provided a valuable means of counselling students in regard to their choice of subjects in years 11 and 12.

There is evidence of widespread curriculum review and adaptation resulting from the changing composition of the post-secondary population and the main thrusts of the Finn, Carmichael and Mayer reports.

Several independent schools trialled pathways and found them useful in counselling students about their subject choices. One school introduced a range of

broadly-based vocational courses, marking a significant movement away from the view that universities or TAFE colleges are the only desirable post-school destinations. Information about Mayer key competencies had been received by most of the independent schools surveyed, through both the bulletins of the AIS and the kit which is used to introduce integration of the competencies. Most schools reported that the competencies were already included in their curriculum, while a small number participated in a key competencies audit. Some staff received professional development to enable them to modify or adapt existing units of study to reflect the competencies.

School-TAFE links

Cooperation between government schools and the TAFE system continued, with emphasis being given to developing greater understanding among teachers, students and parents of the positive implications of the relationship. Planning proceeded for the establishment of Aboriginal multicampus school/TAFE vocational programs in the Kimberley education district and new secondary schools and TAFE facilities are, wherever practicable, being co-located.

The popularity of TAFE as a post-school destination for Catholic schools students remained strong, with a significant effect on subject choices.

Almost all independent secondary schools reported positive links with TAFE institutions and commented on the availability and supportiveness of their staff. The few schools that are not associated with TAFE attribute this to timetabling, transport or location problems. The year was characterised by the strengthening of existing relationships rather than new developments.

Career education

Under INSTEP, students at government schools undertook one day per week of structured work experience, during which they were instructed and assessed by the cooperating businesses. INSTEP allows learning in non-school settings to earn credits for the new exit certificate. The ability of teachers to support students' understanding of the world of work was assisted by their participation in a range of industry placements.

Fast Track, a bridging and access program, focuses on students who lack the skills necessary to undertake post-compulsory education or training and who are looking for vocational relevance in a program. Fast Track is competency-based and integrates learning in the school and workplace within a flexible framework. Over 80 per cent of its clients have returned to mainstream learning programs, undertaken further training or entered the workforce. Thirty-five government schools offered Fast Track in 1994.

In Catholic schools, assistance took the form of in-service training and network development for career education staff and the provision of opportunities for participation in industry placement programs.

Most independent schools provided career education programs, with work experience as the major component; this was usually offered on the basis of one week for years 10, 11 and 12. Programs generally included counselling on career selection and lectures on interview techniques. Formal instruction was given on such issues as unemployment and social security, employer and employee rights and equity. In addition, factory and workplace visits were arranged. These programs are considered useful in equipping students with a knowledge on the range of opportunities available in the job market and subjects required for specific professions, and in motivating students by providing them with opportunities for making better informed subject and career choices.

Areas of learning

Student outcome statements

In government schools, 1994 was characterised by major activity in all key learning areas (KLAs) in relation to the trialling of student outcome statements, with the objective of reporting to the Minister for Education on their effectiveness by the beginning of 1996.

'Working editions' of the statements for all KLAs provided the focus and trialling was centred on 63 schools differentiated by level and location throughout the State. Some schools investigated issues specific to particular KLAs, while others explored the general use of the statements.

In the Catholic schools sector, some primary and secondary schools were involved in trialling outcome statements in the studies of society and the environment (SoSE) and health and physical education KLAs. Particular attention was given to the values inherent in the statements.

Most responding independent schools had access to the national curriculum statements and profiles, but had not implemented them in their curriculum because they had not fully reviewed them, they were already in place in systemic curriculum, or they preferred the government schools' version of the outcome statements. Factors cited as hindering access to the statements and profiles included cost, scarcity and lack of adequate communication. Professional development on the statements and profiles was not intensive.

The MSE project has data for achievement in SoSE 1994 and physical and health education 1994. MSE has

operated in government schools since 1990. It evaluates the performance of a random sample of students in a large number of schools on test instruments developed with the cooperation of nationally-recognised testing authorities, teachers and curriculum specialists against benchmarks derived from a standards framework based on student outcome statements.

The student outcome statements describe six broad levels of achievement for the compulsory years of schooling. These six levels represent key points on a continuum through which students are expected to progress during their years at schools. MSE tests include items that assess a range of outcomes along the continuum and measure the extent to which students in years 3, 7 and 10 have achieved the expected benchmarks. These year levels have been chosen because they mark the end of the early years of schooling, the end of primary schooling and the end of compulsory schooling respectively.

Sampling takes into account the achievements of students by gender, Aboriginality and non-English speaking background. Resource limitations have precluded annual testing in each key learning area, so a cyclical approach has been adopted which provides for testing in the English learning area in 1900, 1992 and 1995, mathematics in 1990, 1992 and 1996, science in 1993, SoSE and physical health education in 1994, and the arts in 1996.

Operations

In English, implementation of the new Victorian Cursive handwriting style and policy for government primary schools was completed in 1994 and it appears that it has been widely accepted.

Phased withdrawal of central support will occur as First Steps language moves from the implementation phase to the operational phase, in which schools will assume responsibility for the program: 550 teachers were trained to provide school-based curriculum expertise and a further 705 teachers to support broader literacy issues. A full evaluation of First Steps is under way and is to report in mid-1995. Meanwhile, overseas marketing of First Steps has proceeded.

Support was also provided to schools in early literacy intervention through the NEPS Literacy and Learning National Component. Action research into early literacy intervention was conducted and, as a result, a range of resources, including a CD-ROM database, an intervention strategy video, a series of professional development workshops and an accompanying print resource package will be made available through Curriculum Corporation early in 1996.

First Steps implementation continued in 105 Catholic primary schools, with 60 workshop sessions in spelling,

writing, reading and oral language being conducted in metropolitan and country areas. The associated ProStar software package, which is used to process literacy data, was introduced in 46 schools.

Additional in-service training was also provided in programming and handwriting to support initiatives in literacy.

The secondary professional development program concentrated on providing teachers with extended knowledge of literary theory as well as offering them strategies for classroom application. Seminars also focused on strategies for teaching about non-print media and the assessment of speaking and listening skills. A series of workshops was held in the Kimberley region and support provided to individual teachers in appropriate materials and strategies for use with Aboriginal students.

Responding independent schools included drama, poetry, grammar, book reviewing, report writing, creative writing and handwriting in the English learning area. Curriculum innovation was widespread, with almost all schools implementing First Steps for the whole school population and some trialling the Victorian Cursive handwriting style. Other areas of development included integration of language across the curriculum, staff development in reading, writing and spelling skills, and the use of computer technology.

Access by special student populations was enhanced through the use of appropriate resources such as computers and special programs, for example, ESL. Peer tutoring and parent support were widely employed to improve outcomes. Some schools reported that students with literacy problems were identified by specialists, parents and teachers, through testing and observation and, to a lesser extent, pre-enrolment testing. A few schools used standardised tests and students' records from previous schools. Remedial programs based on student withdrawal were favoured by most schools and education specialists were employed to formulate appropriate programs delivered by teachers, peers or parents.

Implementation in government schools of the new mathematics syllabuses for years 11 and 12 was completed and is being followed by curriculum revision in the area of post-compulsory vocational programs. Many schools identified mathematics, particularly 'working mathematically', problem solving and mental computations—as a priority within their school development plans and this was reflected in the appointment of a number of district-based school development officers in this KLA.

In Catholic schools, with the revised framework for year 11 and 12 courses ending its third year of implementation, increased familiarity with the courses

was demonstrated and analysis of the 1994 year 12 cohort is expected to indicate clear trends in student choice. In those schools trialling pathways, it is a requirement that year 12 students failing to meet the numeracy requirement for certification sit a 'safety net' test, but very few students have needed to do so.

In-service training focused on practical classroom issues and, for teachers in remote schools in the Kimberley region, the continuing development of the mathematics resource files proved valuable.

First Steps mathematics was trialled in three Catholic primary schools, with the aim of linking the primary syllabus with the student outcome statements. A teacher support policy was developed to assist implementation in schools. All primary schools will be offered the opportunity to participate in 1995.

Most independent schools favoured a 'hands-on' approach and used a range of real-life situations for the development of problem-solving and analytical skills. Areas covered included mathematics for living and concepts related to space, chance and number. Developments included the integration of computer technology, staff professional development, the use of a wide range of resources and curriculum review in terms of the outcome statements and profiles.

Target groups were assisted by the use of small-group learning according to gender and/or ability and the adoption of modified programs for groups such as females and those with deficits in mathematical literacy.

In science, levels of achievement in government schools at years 3, 7 and 10 were analysed through the MSE project, the first extensive evaluation of primary science achievement in Australia, and there was increased recognition by primary schools of the need to focus on improving student outcomes—science achievement being less satisfactory than that in either English or mathematics. The Education Department therefore declared science education a strategic priority.

While science enrolments for the TEE declined slightly, there were increases in enrolments of over 70 per cent in senior science (a non-TEE subject), partly because of its inclusion in the range of selection criteria for entry to TAFE colleges.

In general, science education increasingly emphasised more flexible forms of curriculum delivery and the construction by students of their own understandings, utilising literacy improvements achieved through initiatives such as Stepping Out.

All staff members from 15 Catholic primary schools participated in science and/or technology KLA in-service training and 19 other professional development activities were conducted, indicating the high level of support in schools. A train-the-trainers course was

provided for the Primary Investigations Program. Secondary in-service training emphasised improvements in teachers' laboratory skills.

The new year 12 physics syllabus was introduced and supported by regionally-based in-service programs offered by 'link teachers' from all education providers, while senior science continued to attract significant enrolments and trialling of outcome statements gave secondary schools the opportunity to review their science curriculum structures in years 8, 9 and 10.

In SoSE, the writing of the non-TEE course in Australian studies was completed and a series of workshops held for prospective teachers to prepare for its implementation in year 11 in 1995. There was further development of the TEE political and legal studies course, to replace politics, which had not attracted large enrolments; and in the review of the modern history course, to provide a more inquiry-based approach and include a compulsory element on Australian history.

SoSE extends the old "social studies" learning area: the study of society investigates people's interactions with one another and encompasses the complex web of social relationships and structures developed in various places over time, while study of the environment deals with the natural world and people in both the natural and built environments in various places over time. SoSE also examines the interrelationship of human societies and the environment.

The 1994 sample of SoSE consisted of 9,750 students from 350 schools. At each of three year levels, appropriate contexts were selected and students were asked to respond to a series of open-ended questions that aimed to determine the extent of their understanding of concepts and processes and their ability to apply them to other contexts. From analysis of the responses, their performance was determined against a standards framework derived from the SoSE student outcome statements. Level 4 of this framework was considered appropriate and achievable for students completing the compulsory years of schooling.

Aboriginal studies was a continuing priority in government schools and planning proceeded for the incorporation of the three secondary units into the multicampus vocational program trial to be conducted in 1995. Asian studies was another major systemic concern and, within the Magnet School Program, 52 schools (25 per cent of the national total) taught this component of studies of SoSE. In most schools, a cross-curriculum approach assisted learning in other studies of society and the environment units, while additional support was provided through the Asia Education Foundation, with seven teachers being funded to travel to India, Korea and Indonesia to improve their understanding of Asian cultures and to provide a background for the development of curriculum support packages.

Associated with this initiative was the participation by one rural high school in an Internet link with students in China, Korea and Japan, to discuss societal and environmental issues. The association with expanding LOTE provisions in Asian languages is clear and provides the necessary cultural backdrop to second-language acquisition.

While many Catholic schools retained lower secondary units from Unit Curriculum, others created school-based courses more relevant to the needs of their own students. However, the development of teacher resource materials based on Unit Curriculum (specifically for use in the Kimberley region, but capable of wider application) continued. Asian studies was given particular prominence and nine Catholic schools were involved in the Magnet Schools Program.

The study of Asian cultures was also firmly established in the curriculum of almost all independent schools and, although few offered it as a course in its own right, many schools were moving toward programs dealing specifically with Asian cultural studies.

The year marked the second phase of the LOTE Action Plan, which emphasises the provision of languages other than English in all government primary and secondary schools; encourages the teaching of Mandarin, Indonesian, Japanese, Vietnamese, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Modern Greek; promotes and supports the teaching of Aboriginal languages and develops initiatives for providing suitably qualified teachers to meet the increasing demand in K-10. The State Government provided funds to enable above-formula staffing for primary LOTE and in 1994 this meant an additional 45 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers for years 3 to 7. The department also supported language and methodology courses for 150 teachers.

Fourteen education districts were funded to accomplish the first phase of implementation of the strategic plan at the district level—the introduction of LOTE programs for years 3 to 7. The major curriculum support emphasis was on the development of materials on CD-ROM to support Japanese learning through telematics. The primary LOTE teacher development course continued to operate, resulting in the implementation of a further 40 programs and bringing the total number of primary schools offering a LOTE to 382. LOTE provisions for rural and remote schools were expanded through the use of telematics.

Aboriginal language programs continued to grow, with a centrally organised training program for classroom teachers and language specialists being conducted. 'Language nests' were started, in which speakers of Aboriginal languages attended four Aboriginal preschools to immerse young children in these languages. These were based on the successful model used for the teaching of Maori in New Zealand.

In addition, distance education materials for Unit Curriculum French were developed and years 11 and 12 courses in French, German, Indonesian and Japanese prepared and accredited by the Secondary Education Authority for implementation in 1995.

Catholic primary and secondary schools continued to offer a range of languages, including Aboriginal, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Mandarin, Japanese and Indonesian. Three teachers participated in the final primary LOTE teacher development course, which provides theoretical and practical training to enable them to implement LOTE programs in their schools. In conjunction with the Education Department, professional development was also provided for teachers under the Community Languages Element of the School Language Program.

The teaching of Aboriginal languages continued in the Kimberley region using a combination of teachers, Aboriginal teaching assistants, linguists and community members. In two schools an Aboriginal language was used as the medium of instruction in some subjects, because bilingual strategies support continued retention of students' first languages.

A total of 18,771 students studied twelve LOTE in 66 independent schools in 1994. The most popular languages were French (32 per cent of enrolments), Italian and Japanese (22 per cent each) and Indonesian (10 per cent). Assistance was provided under the Priority Languages Incentive Element of the School Language Program for the third and final year, with the funding incentive being maximised for the 16 schools which acknowledged AIS as the nominated authority for funding through aggregation of eligible students and year 12 cohorts.

In technology and enterprise, government schools' initiatives included the design of technology facilities for new and upgraded schools; district- and school-level meetings for communicating directions in this KLA and its outcome statements; the demonstration of exemplary practice (for example, integration of student learning across technology subjects) in secondary schools by means of a videotape; and development of computer education units in robotics and interactive multimedia through the NPDP.

Curriculum innovation in years 11 and 12 included the introduction of vocational programs (involving the development of competencies in language and communications, work and career awareness and industry-related knowledge and skills) in business studies, metals and engineering, manufacturing industry studies, hospitality and tourism, and primary industries natural resource studies. A framework and action plan for the revision of TEE and non-TEE accredited courses in technology and enterprise was developed.

Preparation for the implementation in government schools of the directions embodied in a 1994 ministerial statement on physical education proceeded. To occur over the 1995–98 period, implementation will include improving the linkage between school and community programs that promote physical activity; conducting train-the-trainer programs for district-based staff and providing support for district-based teacher networks; developing teacher support materials and materials for assessing fundamental movement skills in primary schools; and the designation of physical education as a curriculum priority in assessing principals' accountability by district superintendents.

The health education K–10 syllabus continued to be used by 90 per cent of government schools for the planning and assessment of health education and an HIV/AIDS supplement was produced with the assistance of the State's Health Department and distributed to schools. The Aboriginal School Health Project has developed teacher support materials for schools with significant Aboriginal enrolments, again in association with the Health Department, with implementation support planned for 1995.

The Western Australian School Health Project (WASH), which commenced in 1992 and supports schools in adopting whole-school approaches to identified school health issues, is recognised nationally as having succeeded in bringing about significant curriculum, policy and environmental change and improvement.

Studies in the physical and health education learning area provide opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, understandings, values and, in particular, skills to facilitate the voluntary adoption of behaviours and decision making conducive to the health and wellbeing of students and those with whom they interact. Students' lifelong participation is encouraged through the development of fundamental movement skills and the provision of recreation, health, fitness, dance, games and sports activities.

The 1994 sample for this key learning area consisted of 9,750 students from 350 schools. The assessment tasks focused on students' knowledge and understandings, rather than their attitudes and values. From analysis of the responses, their performance was determined against a standards framework derived from student outcome statements. Level 4 of this framework was considered appropriate and achievable for students completing the compulsory years of schooling.

The most common courses provided in independent schools were health, nutrition, sports, safety and sexuality, while others addressed drug awareness and spiritual, emotional and environmental health.

Peer support and mentor groups were commonly used to develop self-esteem in students. Awareness days were widely employed to foster understanding of current issues important to healthy living. Some schools preferred to address aspects of this curriculum area, such as human development, sexuality and community health, in gender-segregated groups.

In the arts, curriculum development was concentrated on years 11 and 12. New courses for drama (replacing theatre arts and speech and drama), dance, art and design have been developed for implementation in year 11 in 1995, but proposals for a tertiary entrance course in drama have been rejected by the Secondary Education Authority and the absence of a TEE course in each art form remains a matter for concern.

The Education Department's festivals and special projects scheme, part of the Arts Education Partnership with the Department for the Arts, continued to promote high-quality learning outcomes with 44 grants to undertake innovative projects in arts education at the school and education district levels. Twenty significant exhibitions and festivals were also supported and a resource directory, *Arts on Disc and Paper*, was produced.

In Catholic secondary schools, a series of professional development activities was offered in art, music and theatre arts and, to assist teachers to extend their expertise and enhance their teaching strategies, specialists in jewellery making, pottery and drama conducted workshops. A system-wide display of students' art, the Angelico Exhibition, was organised as an annual event.

Some 11,000 students in 96 Catholic schools participated in the annual performing arts festival, demonstrating the sector's continuing commitment to the performing arts.

Independent schools offered music, visual arts, drama, media studies and, to a lesser extent, dance. These activities were usually integrated and basic courses were generally compulsory for all students to the end of year 10.

Curriculum management

Significant reorganisation of central curriculum support structures was undertaken and the Education Department is to appoint eight KLA superintendents from the beginning of 1995 to improve teaching and learning by providing curriculum leadership, assisting central curriculum policy making and exercising a quality assurance function, as well as managing teams of curriculum consultants. The KLA superintendents will be supported by cross-curriculum and assessment and reporting branches, the functions of which are to provide general services and improve the quality of teaching and learning by helping schools collect, record,

analyse and report student achievement respectively. The assessment and reporting branch is responsible for coordinating development of student outcome statements for all eight KLAs and providing advice on their possible use in government schools (1995 is the second year of trialling); helping schools integrate relevant data into their management information systems and improve the value of these data to school development and school improvement planning; and reporting to parents, by developing and implementing a system-wide framework for reporting student progress. The report of the ministerial reference group on devolution advocated the development of a statewide curriculum framework, possibly to be based on the student outcome statements.

Teaching and learning

Quality of teaching

The Education Department measures its effectiveness in terms of the extent to which its student outcomes objectives are achieved and its efficiency in terms of the costs of achieving them. It therefore actively promotes initiatives that increase the knowledge, skills and commitment of its teaching and support employees or either contain or reduce operating costs. In 1994, the government schools sector employed an average of 23,683 FTE staff, of whom 14,939 were teachers, at a salaries cost of \$807 million. Almost 60 per cent of the recurrent budget was committed to teachers' salaries, justifying the importance of maximising effectiveness and efficiency.

Table 2. School-based teaching staff^(a) by level and gender, government schools, July 1994

Level	Female	Male	Total
Preschool ^(b)	97	—	97
Pre-primary	655	4	659
Primary	5,721	1,820	7,541
Secondary	2,920	3,286	6,206
Education support	362	74	436
Total	9,755	5,184	14,939

(a) numbers shown are full-time equivalent (FTE), rounded to the nearest whole number

(b) Education Department teaching staff at community preschools

Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Table 3. Student-teacher ratios^(a), government schools, including the Distance Education Centre and senior colleges, selected years

Level	1979	1984	1989	1994
Pre-primary FTE ^(b)	n.a.	n.a.	18.7	22.7
Primary	22.3	20.7	19.3	18.8
Education support schools & centres	8.9	7.1	5.8	5.0
Secondary, excl. part-time students	13.2	13.3	12.4	12.5

(a) For the purposes of calculation, 'teachers' are defined as 'professional staff employed on a regular continuous basis in schools', calculated on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis. Principals, deputy principals, classroom teachers, teacher librarians and remedial or resource teachers are included. Staff based in the central or district offices, teachers on paid or unpaid leave, librarians who are not teacher trained, guidance officers who are not school based, social workers or any other professional support staff, teacher aides, library aides, laboratory assistants, clerical staff, caretakers, gardeners, or any other ancillary staff are excluded from the calculation.

(b) The definition of a 'full-time equivalent' student is based on the number of sessions attended (i.e. attendance at five from a possible ten sessions per week is counted as 0.5 FTE).

Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Measures intended to improve effectiveness included merit promotion for all school-based promotional positions: a recent review recommended the trialling of superordinate reports at the short-listing stage; shorter applications; continued monitoring of selection criteria (including their number and relative weighting); better information material on merit promotion; moderation of panel ratings; improved feedback to applicants; opportunities for transfer among primary, secondary and education support positions; and improved Aboriginal representation on relevant selection panels.

Another effectiveness measure is use of the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) classification, a process which helps retain talented and experienced teachers in the classroom. During 1994, 102 AST key teachers were appointed to three-year positions and a further 17 to one-year positions. In addition, 2,584 teachers qualified for AST senior teacher allowances, having successfully met selection requirements ratified by school-based selection panels.

A 'deferred salary' scheme for teachers was developed and will be implemented in January 1995. Teachers electing to participate will be allowed to work four

consecutive years and take leave in the fifth. They will be paid the equivalent of four years' income over the five years.

Professional development support has required a substantial commitment to the training of school-based staff, encompassing school management and accountability, school-community relations, technology applications, curriculum and student outcomes, although, consistent with the concept of the self-managing school, the largest proportion of funds for professional development and training is held by schools. Centrally-coordinated initiatives included:

- the School Leadership Development Program, which assists school staff in promotional positions to develop an understanding of school leadership that is consistent with the Education Department's priorities and international best practice. During 1994, 342 school leaders participated in 15 courses and additional courses in curriculum leadership and performance management in a devolved system were trialled;
- TOPS (Teachers on Professional Study) awards, which provided financial assistance to teachers to attend conferences or investigate curriculum or teaching practices related to their current teaching areas or school programs during school breaks;
- work placement programs for teachers, including the Industry Access Scheme, under which the Education Department supported teachers able to negotiate their own industry placements for up to ten weeks in areas related to their own teaching skills, with the objective of transferring current practices in those industries into their own teaching;
- the recognition of exceptional teaching practice through the Education Innovation and Outstanding Teacher awards;
- the provision of opportunities for school-based professional staff to gain broader experience of current management issues by the negotiation of, and support for, placements in the central office and the public sector as a whole.

Efficiency initiatives were related to government requirements for public sector reform and included the reorganisation and downsizing of central support functions; consideration of outsourcing for non-core functions; movement towards performance management for all employees; and enterprise bargaining negotiations with the State School Teachers' Union. The issue of workplace agreements had not been resolved at the year's end.

Employment opportunities in government schools remained tight, with half of 1993 secondary and 28 per

cent of primary teacher education graduate applicants being appointed. New secondary appointments have remained almost constant since 1991, while primary appointments have continued to decline.

Schools rationalisation provides another opportunity for efficiency improvements. Most of the 59 schools identified for rationalisation elected to continue their reviews in 1995 before voting. By the end of 1994, seven school communities had voted, with two agreeing to close, two to amalgamate and three to remain open, meaning their future will not be reviewed again before 1998.

In non-government schools, FTE teacher numbers rose by 205, to 5,048.

The Catholic Education Commission provided 59 scholarships to assist teachers to further their studies and to attract graduates prepared to teach in rural or remote areas. A secondment program, designed to augment the scholarship system, assisted the placement of experienced teachers in country schools. The Commission also endorsed policies to promote equity in the selection and appointment of staff in promotional and other positions.

Professional development initiatives included:

- accreditation programs for new teachers, principals and others in leadership positions, as well as religious education coordinators;
- in-service provisions at the primary and secondary levels across most KLAs;
- induction courses for members of school boards;
- a peer review process for principals.

Teachers in independent schools had access to a wide range of professional development opportunities through individual schools, AIS, subject and professional associations, the Education Department and the Catholic Education Office. AIS administered the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) exemption scholarships on behalf of the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training and many schools encouraged teachers' professional growth by paying their HECS fees, despite the fringe benefits tax incurred in doing so.

Employee relations

The provisions of the State's Industrial Relations Act Amendment Act, Minimum Conditions of Employment Act and Workplace Agreements Act were opposed by the State School Teachers Union, while the State Government sought to prevent the Australian Education Union from obtaining a Federal award covering all government school teachers. The Government also introduced legislation to abolish the Government School

Teachers Tribunal, with the intention of placing all Education Act employees under the authority of the State Industrial Relations Commission on the same basis as other industries.

Following negotiation of a memorandum of agreement with salaried officers, by December 1994, six independent schools had enterprise agreements awaiting registration; the Independent Education Union had served a log of claims in 1993, but these were adjourned on the understanding that enterprise agreements would be pursued. Criteria have been negotiated for selection to Senior Teacher 2 positions.

Equal employment opportunity

The Education Department intends to repeal a regulation which prohibits temporary teachers from applying for promotional positions, following a decision by the Equal Opportunity Commission that it is indirectly discriminatory against women. As an interim measure, from November 1994, temporary teachers have been eligible to apply for positions in the central and district offices.

AIS continued to provide independent schools with information relating to their EEO responsibilities and the requirement that schools with more than 100 employees report annually on their affirmative action policies.

Teaching contexts

The development and progressive extension of an integrated human resources management information system (Personnel 2000) for the Education Department continued, with the objectives of streamlining personnel-related operations and improving access to relevant and reliable personnel management information.

Technology enabled the department to provide access to learning in a system in which there are wide differences in resources, but a corporate objective of providing a basic guarantee to all students. Various telecommunications systems were used, including interactive television. Some schools used electronic mail systems for administrative and curriculum purposes and CD-ROM, Internet and commercial databases provided useful research information for both teachers and students. In the field of telematics, many schools began working in small networks to provide a wider range of courses and about 100 schools are now linked via networks; curriculum offerings included Japanese, mathematics, science, SoSE, applied computing and ESL for Aboriginal students.

Catholic schools in the Kimberley region joined government schools in the delivery and use of educational

programs through telematics, and the Catholic Education Commission initiated a technology review which has as one of its intended outcomes the development of a long-term systemic plan for technology implementation.

National Schools Network

The Western Australian component of the National Schools Network (NSN) involved 32 government and 13 non-government schools. The participating schools explored possible ways of changing their work organisation to enhance student learning. The process involved the development of educational change models, which were made available to other schools in the State. A key strategy was the fostering of professional contact among those exploring similar work change initiatives and this extended beyond the formally participating schools.

An important aspect of the NSN examines the implications of school organisational strategies such as multi-age grouping, which focus on vertically grouped classes in years K–3. The project currently involves 13 schools in which parents are offered the option of unstreamed K, 1, 2 or 3 classes, K–1 classes or K–2 classes. Benefits noted included students being able to learn at their own levels and enhanced group and cooperative learning.

The Department prepared for the opening of two innovative high schools in 1995, one catering for students in years 7 to 12 and being known as a 'community college' and the other as a 'community high school'. They will trial new methods of meeting students' learning needs and supporting teachers:

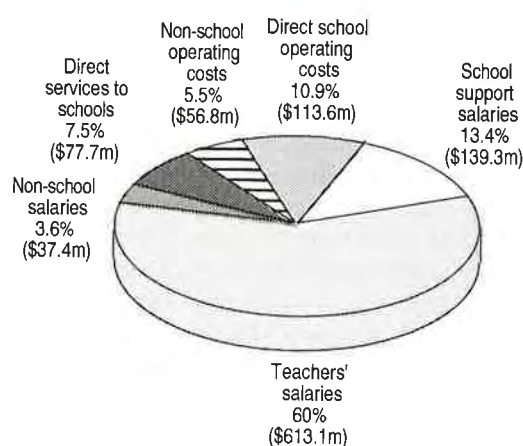
students will work mainly from home rooms, with teachers coming to them. Teaching will be on a team basis and involve the sharing of expertise and resources.

Resourcing schools

Government schools

Recurrent and capital funding includes allocations from the Commonwealth's General Recurrent Grants Program, the Students with Disabilities Component of NEPS and the Capital Grants Program. Recurrent funding for new programs is allocated in accordance with overall State Government policy and priorities frameworks, while the capital works budget is determined by government priorities and assessment of community needs. Recurrent funding is formula-driven, being based primarily on the number of students and the level and type of education being undertaken by a particular school, although consideration is being given to the introduction of differential resourcing that will more effectively recognise the differing needs of schools. At present, teachers and support staff are allocated in accordance with student enrolments and class or form numbers in each school. Recurrent non-salary costs are allocated according to student numbers or, in the case of utilities, on the basis of historical consumption levels. Again, this is changing, with the progressive introduction of school-based utilities management. Additional staffing and contingency funding is provided to schools enrolling students with special needs, such as education support schools, remote community schools and schools with students with physical or sensorimotor disabilities.

Figure 2. Major expenditure items, Education Department, 1993–94



Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Capital works expenditure in 1993–94 on new schools, improvements and additions to existing schools and asbestos rectification programs totalled \$69.5 million, apportioned as shown in Table 4.

The salaries of all full-time, part-time and casual staff have been paid by the central office. However, as part of the devolution process, there has been a continuation of the transfer of central-office non-salary items to school-site management: school grant payments direct to schools totalled \$34.4 million. Schools were also provided with \$7.9 million in school development grants for professional development, training and planning purposes.

Recurrent funding to the Education Department in 1993–94 was \$1,109.6 million. In all, Education Department funding accounted for 18.1 per cent of total State Government expenditure. For trends in per capita recurrent expenditure since 1987, see Figure 3.

Table 4. Government schools, capital works expenditure 1993-94^(a) (\$)

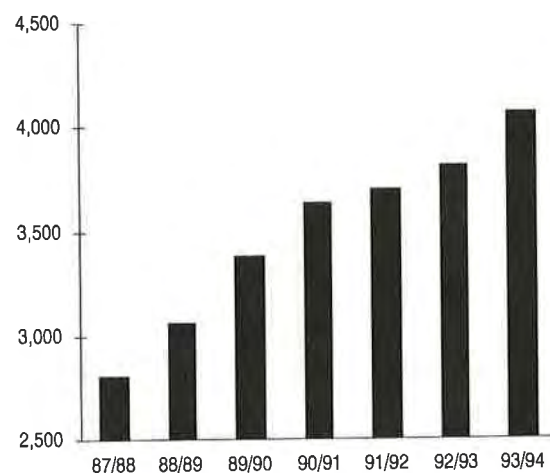
<i>Level of schooling/ type of expenditure</i>	<i>Expenditure by sub- group</i>	<i>Total expenditure by level of schooling</i>
Secondary		
New high schools	5,114,514	
Additional stages, high schools	5,336,645	
Additions and improvements, high schools	8,857,940	
Additions and improvements, district high schools	4,111,007	
Additions and improvements, agricultural schools	964,907	24,385,013
Primary		
New primary schools	17,582,976	
Additional stages, primary schools	3,520,671	
Additions and improvements, primary schools	5,880,392	26,984,039
Senior colleges		6,400
Other school facilities		10,373,814
Miscellaneous		6,580,650
Special Aboriginal program		13,845
Optional full-time schooling for 5 year olds		1,180,239
Total		69,524,000

(a) the total expenditure of \$69.524m excludes loans to non-government schools of \$14.756m.

Source: Education Department of Western Australia

In continuing its policy of devolution, the Education Department progressively incorporated within the school grant budget elements formerly controlled within the central office on behalf of schools, and many of the non-salary costs previously met by the central office are now included in the grant. Over a third of schools participated in the Utilities Management Program, which involves the transfer of funds to schools to manage their use of electricity, gas, water and telecommunications and allows them to utilise a proportion of savings achieved.

Figure 3. Government schools, per capita recurrent schools expenditure, 1987-88 to 1993-94



Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Catholic schools

Recurrent funding comes mainly from Commonwealth general recurrent grants, State per capita grants and private income, of which school fees form the major portion. The financial operations of individual schools are the responsibilities of school boards, with a monitoring role being performed by the Catholic Education Commission. Capital funding is made possible by the significant contribution of funds and voluntary assistance by local school communities. Commonwealth capital grants and the State Government's low-interest loan scheme are also major sources of assistance for capital works programs, and in July 1994 the administration process passed from the Education Department to a new Office of Non-government Education.

The Catholic Education Commission is also responsible for the allocation of Commonwealth capital grants in its role of block grant authority. This is done on a needs basis, in accordance with Commonwealth policy.

Independent schools

Independent schools are assisted by Commonwealth general recurrent grants, State per capita grants and private income, mainly fees. Additional recurrent income is provided by Commonwealth specific purpose programs and capital funding is derived from school communities, Commonwealth capital grants administered by AIS and the low-interest loan scheme.

State and Commonwealth support

Increases of 3 per cent in 1993 and 4.3 per cent in 1994 in non-government State per capita grants resulted in grants totalling \$68.3 million in 1993–94, while \$14.8 million in low-interest loans was provided to non-government schools.

The State Government also provided significant assistance through student transport arrangements, school stocks, school psychologist services, curriculum materials and assistance for students from low SES backgrounds.

Under the Commonwealth General Recurrent Grants Program funding totalled \$235 million (Catholic schools \$92.2 million, government schools \$92.2 million and independent schools \$50.6 million). Under the Capital Grants Program, government schools received \$20 million, Catholic schools \$7 million, independent schools \$3 million and schools without specific affiliation \$1.2 million.

Under the Students with Disabilities Component of NEPS, funding totalled \$0.69 million (Catholic schools \$0.09 million, government schools \$0.4 million and independent schools \$0.2 million).

Capital grants for metropolitan Catholic primary schools totalled \$2.06 million against total expenditures of \$4.116 million on the construction or upgrading of learning areas, libraries and other facilities to improve student outcomes in key learning areas; broaden girls' educational experiences by increasing their participation and achievement in mathematics, science and technology; and enhance teachers' competence, efficiency and confidence.

In rural and remote areas, total capital expenditure on primary schools was \$2.267 million, of which Commonwealth grants accounted for \$1.635 million. Objectives were similar to those for metropolitan schools, although attention was also given to improving the participation and achievement of disadvantaged groups, particularly Aboriginal students.

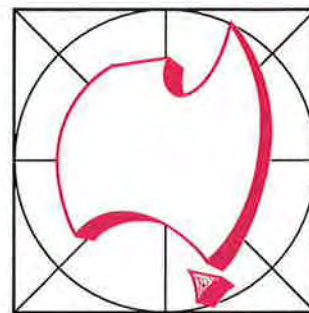
Schools enrolling primary and secondary students also focused on these objectives, but in addition sought to encourage higher retention rates to year 12. One school in the Perth metropolitan area and several campuses at Broome in the Kimberley region expended \$2.426 million on capital works, of which the Commonwealth provided \$1.621 million in grants.

Capital works to the value of \$3.349 million were undertaken at three Catholic secondary schools, and involved schools' contributions of \$1.04 million, while planning grants totalling \$60,000 were used by the Catholic Education Office to study the rationalisation of secondary schooling provisions in Fremantle and develop technology infrastructure for the sector.

In 1994, the Commonwealth paid to the AIS Capital Grants Association \$1.581 million under the Capital Grants Program General Element, \$389,673 for projects under the Quality, Competencies and Technological Support (QCATS) Element and \$1.108 million under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support (ATSIS) Element. Sixteen capital projects were completed, for which grants totalling \$1.171 million were received from the Commonwealth's Capital Grants Program against projects to the value of \$4.376 million.

These projects reflected the Commonwealth's support for building projects that will have a positive effect on the educational achievements of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students or will assist development of curriculum in keeping with the findings of Finn and Carmichael, for example initiatives intended to improve girls' participation in science and technology courses. Projects undertaken by the Anglican and Baptist communities in the northern and southern suburbs of Perth resulted in the provision of additional places in low-fee independent schools in areas of significant population growth. The provision of new or upgraded classrooms and student amenities supported objectives of improving student competencies and encouraging retention to the end of year 12.

TASMANIA



Priority objectives for 1994

Three types of schools are available in Tasmania: government, Catholic (comprising 29 systemic schools and eight non-systemic ones) and independent. In all three, kindergarten precedes the preparatory year, although not all Catholic and independent schools offer kindergarten. Compulsory schooling starts at year 1.

Government schools

In government schools, students attend primary school (kindergarten to year 6), high school (year 7 to year 10) and college (year 11 and year 12). In some country areas, students attend district high schools, which range from kindergarten to year 10 and offer some year 11 and year 12 courses.

During 1994, the Department of Education and the Arts (DEA) issued its fourth ten-year strategic plan for the period July 1994 to June 2004. The plan sets out the department's mission, values, principles, goals and priority tasks. These are in accordance with the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia.

The department aimed to undertake 24 priority tasks before June 1995. The following tasks were completed or nearing completion:

- consolidation and rationalisation of the planning and policy development processes in the Division of Education;
- an audit to clarify the status and currency of departmental documentation;
- a study of attendance rates, including the monitoring of attendance of all students across the State for one week;
- development of support materials for literacy development from kindergarten to year 8, together with a catalogue of diagnostic instruments in the area of literacy;
- development of guidelines and support materials on school councils;
- development of a guide for the use of electronic technologies in schools and colleges;

- development of an equity policy and support document which incorporates information on groups of students known to be at an educational disadvantage;
- development of a support document and set of guidelines on dealing with critical incidents in schools;
- development of a support document and set of guidelines on dealing with students' health care needs in schools;
- development of policies on balance in the curriculum; parent participation; reporting to parents; personal records; career and work education; and the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools;
- development of a support document and guidelines on outdoor education;
- a review of staffing formulae;
- an evaluation of the Australian Vocational Training Scheme (AVTS) pilot program;
- development of model teaching program outlines for each year of schooling from K–8 based on the curriculum statements and profiles.

Catholic schools

The priority objectives for Catholic schools in Tasmania in 1994 were to:

- implement the national curriculum statements and profiles progressively into primary and secondary schools and ensure that resources are readily available and documentation is carried out in terms of student performance;
- review the commonalities between the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia and the system priorities for 1994 (school mission statements corresponded reasonably well with the first and second goals);
- complete stage two of the restructuring and expansion of secondary education in southern Tasmania designed to enlarge the educational

opportunities for students and expand the subject range available to them;

- continue with the introduction and implementation of the national statements and profiles in curriculum development, particularly in the area of mathematics;
- complete the implementation of health and personal development curricula, particularly in secondary schools;
- develop the curriculum network structure so that curriculum development and teacher support were enhanced, especially in the National Professional Development Program (NPDP) areas;
- pilot an AVTS program with a view to implementation and developments in 1995.

Independent schools

The 1994 objectives were wide-ranging and included the following:

- maintenance of excellence in education;
- introduction of languages other than English (LOTE) programs, enhanced pastoral care and closer links with TAFE institutions;
- implementation of national curriculum statements and profiles;
- development of teacher competence through attendance at regular workshops;
- development and enhancement of schools' physical environments, facilities and resources;
- focus on physical, emotional and social development of students, with a special emphasis on students with learning difficulties.

Excellence and equity

Retention rates to year 12

Government schools

Year 12 retention rates for 1994 reversed the trend of recent years, which had seen a steady increase. Overall figures in government schools went from 58.9 per cent in 1993 to 56.2 per cent in 1994. This is in keeping with a national decline in retention rates of students to year 12.

Reasons for this overall drop in retention rates are speculative. A possible explanation is that more students are studying vocationally oriented courses that entail part-time education and part-time employment.

Table 1. Year 7 to year 12 apparent retention rates, 1988–94 (per cent)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Govt</i>	<i>Non-govt</i>	<i>All schools, males</i>	<i>All schools, females</i>
1988	36.1	43.2	33.7	41.6
1989	38.1	45.9	36.0	43.6
1990	43.2	50.4	39.0	50.5
1991	52.1	54.3	49.3	56.1
1992	59.5	62.7	59.9	60.6
1993	58.9	65.9	56.7	64.9
1994	56.2	64.6	55.6	61.2

Source: Department of Education and the Arts

Catholic schools

Catholic schools' apparent retention rates from years 7 to 12 remained high (refer Statistical Annex, Table 11): 69 per cent of students continued from year 7 to year 12 in the proportions: boys 67.9 per cent, an increase of 1.6 per cent, girls 71 per cent, a decrease of 1.4 per cent over the previous year.

Sixty-one per cent of targeted year 10 students at risk enrolled for further education in 1995 at either senior secondary college or TAFE. This was an increase over the previous year though there is some concern that only 50 per cent of targeted boys and 40 per cent of Aboriginal students are proceeding to further education. It is hoped that earlier intervention in years 7–9 may foster increased retention in future years.

Attendance

An attendance survey was conducted in Tasmanian State schools during 1994. Concerns about educational disadvantage underpin many educational programs. Traditional factors, including gender, socioeconomic status, Aboriginality, ethnicity and disability are being increasingly recognised in a number of programs and initiatives.

These concerns prompted an attendance survey which was conducted during one week in September. Information relating to gender, Aboriginality, disability and socioeconomic status was gathered about all government school students (preparatory to year 10). The results indicated that year 1 students were absent more frequently than other cohorts of students; the absentee rate was higher for girls than boys; Aboriginal students had a higher rate of non-attendance than non-Aboriginal students; and students in schools receiving priority project funding had a higher absentee rate by indicators of disadvantage than students in other schools.

Table 2. Age participation rates of full-time secondary students aged 15–19 years, all Tasmanian schools, 1994 (per cent)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
1990	40.6	42.9	41.7
1991	45.4	45.4	45.4
1992	47.2	47.7	47.4
1993	46.3	48.9	47.6
1994	46.2	48.8	47.5

Source: Department of Education and the Arts

Table 3. Full-time and total participation in school, 1993 (per cent)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Total participation</i>		<i>Full-time participation</i>	
	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>Australia</i>
15	98.2	95.9	97.3	92.5
16	79.1	84.7	69.5	78.8
17	67.1	67.8	50.1	58.2

Source: ABS Cat. No. 6272.0, *Participation in Education Australia* September 1993

The 1994 figure reflects the downward trend in full-time participation by 15 to 19 year olds, in common with the rest of Australia.

In Tasmania, this trend started in 1993 for males.

The figures reflect the greater part-time participation in school by Tasmanian 16 and 17 year olds than in other States.

Effective schools

Financial responsibility

In 1994, funding of \$48.8 million was provided directly to government schools and colleges as cash or for supplementary staffing through the School Resource Package. Delegated responsibilities remained similar to those in previous years, although many small refinements were implemented.

For clarity of budgeting and easier cash-flow management, the School Resource Package provided the vehicle through which all payments and supplementary staffing were made to schools and colleges. A significant number of short-term replacement staff also were financed through the package.

The package aggregated various State and Commonwealth funds and included all utilities and general support funding. However, more than 20 discrete allocations remained within the package. Examples included taxi travel for special students, assistance to student support services officers, occasional hire of facilities, and the Disadvantaged Schools Component (DSC) of the National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS).

Funding formulae varied. Major inputs (the general support grant and the maintenance and minor works allocations) were weighted by school type and allocated on the following basis: a base per capita grant; a socio-economic needs per capita grant; building maintenance needs; and a rurality grant.

The index for the needs grant was calculated for each school by using socioeconomic status derived from the national census data, together with the percentage of students receiving government financial assistance. Commonwealth funds were allocated by relevant committees. Energy funds were allocated on the basis of previous consumption, with a system of rewards and penalties linked to performance.

With the development of improved processes for school planning and budgeting, central controls on the use of resources were minimal.

Accountability procedures required schools to submit both an annual budget and a development plan. As a quarterly financial reporting mechanism, all schools prepared a standard report on the broad revenue and expenditure categories set by the DEA. These reports were included in the DEA's annual report to the Auditor-General.

Community participation

Government schools

A parent participation policy that sets out the rights and responsibilities of parents in the education of their children was developed collaboratively with the Tasmanian Council of State Schools Parents and Friends Associations.

A further key parent policy on the issue of school reporting to parents commenced.

The *Education Act 1994* made provision for school councils, defining particularly their powers and functions. Work commenced on the accompanying ministerial guidelines.

Independent schools

School communities in Tasmania comprise parents, students (present and past), teachers, siblings, local churches, friends of the school and business. Boards of management include membership from the groups integral to the school community. These boards dealt

with issues such as curriculum development and reviews, provision and maintenance of school amenities and management of school finances.

Parents and friends associations provided voluntary assistance to the schools in a variety of ways including: the provision of transport facilities during excursions; sports coaching; organisation of camps; and classroom support for teachers. Local businesses provided opportunities for work experience.

Planning and accountability

Government schools

In June 1994, the DEA established an Office for Educational Review. The office has a quality assurance function and complements policy statements contained in the documents *School Planning and Accountability*.

Its principal tasks are:

- to assist schools in evaluating their educational programs according to the objectives established for students' learning at system level;
- to monitor student learning outcomes in numeracy and literacy;
- to evaluate key curriculum learning areas and education programs to ensure continuing improvement by influencing system-level and schools' planning.

District Superintendents in each of the seven school districts provide support to schools in establishing an evaluative culture appropriate to a devolved system of schooling.

Issues affecting quality schooling

Attitudinal/perception data

The Tasmanian Education Council is a ministerial advisory body, one of the tasks of which is to convey community attitudes on education to the Minister. It aims to ensure that the issues it investigates are considered objectively and that its recommendations reflect broad community opinion. Members of the council include parents, educators and people with community and business links.

In 1994, the council completed one major report—*Inappropriate Student Behaviour*—based upon information obtained from schools, parent organisations and the wider community.

Regular meetings with the Tasmanian Council of State Schools Parents and Friends Associations resulted in wide consultation with parents on a range of important issues.

Equity initiatives

Government schools

The specific estimate of outlays for equity expenditure, including grants under NEPS and other Commonwealth programs is \$70.4 million, made up of \$13.5 million from Commonwealth sources and includes the following items:

- Commonwealth NEPS programs;
- Commonwealth General Recurrent Program funding;
- Commonwealth Aboriginal Programs funding;
- certain school transport expenditure;
- State student financial assistance schemes;
- differential staffing resources;
- differential general school resources;
- special education teachers and other expenditure;
- Equity Program officers;
- some student support service salaries and related costs;
- School of Distance Education.

The DEA finalised its Equity in Schooling policy in preparation for release and implementation in 1995. The policy outlined broad principles of equity and identified target groups known to be most educationally disadvantaged such as girls, Aboriginal students, students with language backgrounds other than English, students with disabilities in isolated areas, students from backgrounds of poverty and low social status, and other students at risk of leaving school early. During the first stage in the implementation of the policy, priority will be given to girls and students with disabilities.

The Inclusion of Students with Disabilities policy was released early in 1994 to support the education of students with disabilities in regular schools.

Gender equity

Gender equity continues to be a DEA priority over the period 1993–96. Schools and colleges are required to address the State gender equity implementation plan within their school plans. Superintendents continued to support schools to develop outcome statements that reflected the goals of the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls. Resourcing for professional development, other than the School Resource Package, was provided to the Tasmanian Education Consortium, to work with eight schools in a pilot project to support the implementation of three of the priority areas of the National Action Plan.



Gender Equity: Havenview Primary School kinder-prep pupils enjoying equal time in the classroom

Gender equity continued to be supported by a senior curriculum officer. Four gender equity implementation officers were appointed to work in districts in 1995/96.

A teaching resource aimed at broadening work education was developed in conjunction with the Department of Industrial Relations, Vocational Education and Training, with funding from the Trades Women on the Move Project. The kit *Gender Work* was developed for years K–8 to break down gender stereotypes about men and women in paid and unpaid work.

A parent statement on gender equity was developed as a pamphlet and was made available to parent groups and principals. Further consultation with parents is an intended focus for 1995.

An emerging issue within the gender equity perspective is the need to accommodate concerns about issues pertaining to boys. While the National Policy for the Education of Girls (NAPEG) always included the impact of boys' behaviour on the education of girls, a perspective for the future will be the issue of how gender impacts directly on the educational outcomes for boys as well as girls.

Eliminating sex-based harassment

The Policy Statement and Guidelines for Dealing with Sex-based Harassment, for staff and students was disseminated to all schools and colleges. Sex-based harassment contact officers were appointed statewide and received training that will continue in 1995. All schools and colleges appointed and trained sex-based harassment contact officers. Some included student officers. Professional development activities with schools and their communities continued and schools translated the guidelines into their behaviour management and supportive school environment policies.

Supportive school environment programs address gender, power and violence. The national materials currently being developed in the gender and violence project will be a valuable resource for this issue.

Reforming the curriculum

A team of implementation officers was used to support departmental priorities. Following intensive professional development, the officers used gender as a constant lens for best practice in their learning area and were an added resource to support issues of gender equity. Commonwealth funding provided under the Gender Equity Component of NEPS supported a project to assist girls from country areas to continue studies in maths and science.

Catholic schools

The Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission established an equity committee to manage the NEPS in respect of the Catholic schools in Tasmania. Gender equity initiatives which address the National Action Plan were introduced and encouraged along the following lines:

- examining the construction of gender by continuing the process of facilitating teacher attendance at professional development programs which increase teachers' understanding of gender construction in schools and colleges;
- conducting some action research through networking with gender equity contact persons in schools;
- eliminating sex-based harassment by the dissemination of policy documents and guidelines for dealing with sex-based harassment issues;
- assessing the needs of girls by encouraging and assisting schools to plan and implement policy and strategies for increasing the retention of girls at risk;
- improving the educational outcomes of girls who are least advantaged by schooling by researching literacy and numeracy programs to monitor the participation, retention and attainment of girls and resourcing career counsellors with advice about the particular needs of girls in this group;
- reforming the curriculum by encouraging the implementation of a gender-inclusive curriculum;
- encouraging the provision of physical education programs which focus on the access and participation of girls in a range of sporting activities, and developing and encouraging the creation of physical environments which support the learning needs of boys and girls;

- improving teacher practice by working with principals and staff to ensure that school discipline and other policies address gender issues, and by assessing professional development programs and materials produced by the DEA on gender issues;
- broadening vocational education by encouraging colleges to keep records of post-school pathways and destinations of boys and girls, by evaluating and reviewing work experience models, and by trialling and evaluating vocational education models to determine alternatives to academic curricula;
- changing school organisation and management practices by participation in reviews of behaviour management in schools, addressing any gender bias and strategic planning for education of single-sex groupings as required, and by exploring creative timetabling to support the flexibility of subject choice for girls and boys in non-traditional subjects.

A summary of Commonwealth grants for NEPS funding for 1994 is as follows:

Table 4 Commonwealth NEPS Grants to Tasmanian Catholic Schools, 1994 (\$)

<i>Program</i>	<i>Total</i>
Disadvantaged Schools Component	128,000
Country Areas General Component	28,000
Students at Risk Component	46,000
Special Education Component	
Schools Support—Non-Government sub-component	264,000
Non-School Support	19,000
School Support	15,800
English as a Second Language Component	
General Support sub-component	151,300
New Arrivals sub-component	11,444
Students with Disabilities Component	
Systemic	16,259
Non-Systemic	4,732
Total	684,535

Source: Department of Education and the Arts

Independent schools

The Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania (AIST) managed the NEPS for the whole non-Catholic non-government sector. Two regionally based special education consultants were employed to assist schools develop and maintain programs for students with disabilities and those targeted for assistance through the Students at Risk Component of the NEPS. In addition to this, 36 students in 18 schools received a total of \$97,546 through the special education program, 27 students in seven schools received a total of \$19,998 in English as a Second Language funding and eight schools were allocated a total of \$28,000 from the Students at Risk Component to assist with their programs for these students.

Distance education

The number of students enrolled at the department's School of Distance Education continued to increase. A program of providing tutors to support individual students with behavioural problems proved effective.

Distance education services, including materials and telephone links, were made available on a user-pays basis to schools. These services allowed small schools to offer specialist subjects—such as languages other than English—that would otherwise have been unavailable to their students.

Distance education materials continued to be made available for a fee to parents choosing home education for their children.

Home education

Home education occurs when parents choose to assume responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating their children's learning program from a home base.

A Home Education Advisory Council has been established as an independent advisory body to the Minister. The council employs a full-time executive officer who is an experienced teacher and home educator.

The council has developed an information package for home educators, and in 1994 initiated a series of seminars for parents interested in home education. The issues of student concessions and Commonwealth allowances for children being home educated have been investigated with appropriate departments.

At the end of 1994, there were 299 children from 156 families registered with the council.

Rural education

Government schools

The 1994 Country Areas General Component of the NEPS provided funding through the DEA to 38 schools in order to improve the learning outcomes of students identified as disadvantaged in their schooling.

School-based programs focused on the 1994 DEA and NEPS priorities of literacy and numeracy, particularly in the early years; professional development for teachers in order to improve delivery of educational programs to students identified as being educationally disadvantaged; parent participation in educational programs in order to enhance the outcomes of students educationally disadvantaged; and programs which focus on embedding the key competencies in student learning.

1994 was the final year of a collaborative research project involving South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania, funded under the Country Areas National Component of the NEPS. This project investigated barriers to and facilitators of rural students' continuing education beyond year 10.

In general, facilitators of students' participation in post-compulsory education centred on the level of preparation provided by the student's secondary school, and the level of support, particularly in the first weeks, provided by the senior secondary college.

Barriers to retention are diverse, some being social (making friends, adjusting to city life), some academic (preparedness for independent study) and some motivational (to do with valuing further education and community attitudes).

A telematics program funded under the Country Areas National Component was trialled by the School of Distance Education. The project focused on the delivery of a two-strand training program for teachers and their students in the specialist area of LOTE (Japanese, Indonesian, French). Professional development was provided for teachers and ongoing support in the delivery of classroom-based LOTE programs.

Favourable response has been received from schools, teachers and students involved in the project. The telematic delivery of the language programs in this project increased the curriculum choices available to rural students in terms of both access and participation.

Catholic schools

Three Catholic schools, with a total of 248 primary students (129 boys, 119 girls) were included in the Country Areas General Component of the NEPS. Funds were used to support language and literacy; to enhance educational and cultural experience by bringing specialist teachers, artists and speakers to the schools

and by taking students out of their local area; and to support professional development of staff.

Other schools in rural areas provided education for a further 2,225 students. Of these, 1,018 were primary boys, 988 primary girls, 115 secondary boys and 104 secondary girls.

Disadvantaged schools

Government schools

The Disadvantaged Schools Component (DSC) is now a recurrent funding source distributed to schools through the School Resource Package. In this process the devolution of decision-making processes has been facilitated. For accountability schools and colleges must show in school planning documentation how these resources are used and the projected outcomes to be achieved. In 1994, the DSC provided \$2.2 million funding to schools in order to enhance learning outcomes of students identified as disadvantaged in their schooling. School-based programs focused on the 1994 departmental and NEPS priorities of literacy and numeracy.

In 1994, the DEA employed an officer to support schools and districts in their planning and professional development processes, the specific focus being to address issues of equity for students associated with socioeconomic disadvantage. Within this role, the officer worked to establish links between schools and districts in order to network and share best practice. The work undertaken also supported the improvement of accountability processes.

Catholic schools

Six Catholic schools received assistance from the DSC. School-based projects addressed such priorities as literacy and numeracy development, outdoor education, computer-assisted learning, cultural experiences and the development of social skills.

Grants from DSC provided assistance for 548 primary boys, 485 primary girls, 79 secondary boys and 64 secondary girls, a total of 1,176 students.

Independent Schools

The DSC was a new component for AIST in 1994. One school qualified for funding, which was not received until early 1995. Consequently funds were "rolled over" by the school concerned. The total project/program funding was \$3,000.

Students at risk

Government schools

In 1994, seven district-based projects, each with several components, were funded in Tasmania under the STAR

Component of the NEPS, and an additional project was funded for the School of Distance Education. The STAR projects were specifically directed at meeting the needs of a wide range of students at risk of not completing their education. These included school refusers, disruptive students, students in financial hardship, rural students, homeless students, students with disabilities, slow learners and students with literacy problems.

Innovative responses to the needs of identified students at risk were trialled and included an enterprise project focused on tourism and hospitality activities relevant to the local community of Geeveston (a rural centre south of Hobart), and a program at Claremont College which concentrated on the needs of rural students and resulted in the provision of support, including a breakfast program, and the establishment of a register of approved accommodation.

All projects reported success in encouraging students to continue their education until the end of 1994. Key learning and structures established within the projects will facilitate future planning and support for students identified at risk.

Catholic schools

In 1994, the STAR Component of NEPS (\$46,000) targeted 79 students in three schools. Two of the schools were selected largely because of their rural location since the local schools provide education to year 10 only. Other criteria used to target students included Aboriginality, gender and socioeconomic background.

Activities approved for funding at the three schools included career awareness and development programs, literacy and numeracy support for under-achievers and skills development programs.

Most targeted students showed improvement in literacy, numeracy, self-esteem and self-confidence and a survey of targeted year 10 students indicated over 60 per cent intended to continue education in 1995 either at senior secondary colleges or at TAFE.

Independent schools

Eight secondary schools received funding for projects which targeted students with significant literacy problems. Seventy-seven students (68 male, nine female) participated in the programs. The major focus was on year 7 (59 students). Other year levels included year 6 (three students), year 8 (eight students), and year 9 (seven students).

AIST consultants worked closely with the schools, assisting with literacy assessments of all students. Documentation was maintained on educational programs and the results of pre- and post-testing.

Professional development was on specific learning difficulties. Of total funding of \$38,000, \$29,000 was allocated to project/program costs and \$9,000 to administrative costs.

Literacy and learning

Government schools

Literacy was a main priority of the DEA in 1994. Support material for the Key Intended Literacy Outcomes for students from kindergarten to year 8 was developed and distributed to schools. To facilitate the implementation of the literacy policy, a specialist team continued to operate in all districts. The team's central goals were to promote sustainable whole-school development in literacy education by supporting effective planning, enactment and evaluation, and to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning in literacy.

A significant initiative was the introduction of the *Kindergarten Development Check*, which provided a tool for identifying the developmental levels of all kindergarten children in Tasmania.

The *Preparatory Literacy Support Program* was introduced throughout Tasmania. The program is an inclusive, interventionist literacy program for students in their first year of full-time schooling. The program targets students who are considered to be at risk in their literacy development and includes those capable of higher achievement. All students receive extra assistance in their literacy development through dedicated, critical teaching and learning time each day. System support for the program includes professional development for all teachers and the provision of part-time teachers. Parent participation is a key element of the program. In a pilot project in one district, parents of children aged from birth to four were included.

A detailed evaluation of the Preparatory Literacy Support Program was undertaken.

In addition, a baseline literacy assessment task was conducted whereby data were collected from a sample of year 1 students.

Six disadvantaged schools participated in the Literacy and Learning - National Component (LLNC) Tasmanian Project Home School Reading: Setting Up for Success. Participating schools undertook a research program to design and trial effective models of home school reading programs. Case studies and key learnings from this project will be documented and published as a comprehensive support package which will be available to Tasmanian schools. The materials will also be published and available from Curriculum Corporation, along with other products developed during the course of LLNC.

Of particular importance in this project was the Key Teacher network. Key teachers in high schools and district high schools worked within their school to develop teachers' knowledge about the role of literacy in their learning areas and led professional development activities to develop supportive teaching strategies, curriculum and administrative practices.

A number of senior secondary colleges began catering for literacy in 1994. Activities included whole-school professional development sessions, workshops, interest groups, action research and individual classroom support. Some students with literacy difficulties were involved in volunteer tutor programs and received Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) accreditation for their work.

Independent schools

Teachers, parents and education specialists were the three main groups used to identify students with literacy problems in the sampled schools.

Remedial procedures were mainly based on withdrawal and the design of individual or group programs by specialists. These programs used peers, teacher aides, small-group activities and parental assistance at home and in school to enhance student achievement. Staff professional development and expansion of targeted resources further improved the remedial programs.

English as a second language

Government schools

The ESL ACCESS Element sub-component of the NEPS provided resources to support students in 32 primary schools, three district high schools, 12 high schools and four colleges. Fifty-eight students attended colleges, 76 high schools, four district high schools and 182 primary schools. There were 72 new arrival students and 250 general support students.

Newly arrived students came from 18 countries: the largest groups were from Laos, Bosnia and other republics of the former Yugoslavia and the Philippines.

Resources were directed to the employment of specialist teachers and bilingual assistants. Professional development centred around the introduction and implementation of ESL scales.

Catholic schools

The ESL General Support sub-component of the NEPS (\$151,300) provided additional teaching support for 131 male and 91 female primary and 31 male and 17 female secondary students in 28 schools. Some NEPS funds

were used to provide a limited consultancy service, but over 87 per cent of funds were allocated to direct in-school support.

The ESL New Arrivals sub-component (\$11,144) supported two primary and two secondary students in three schools. Three of these students were from El Salvador and one from the Philippines.

Independent schools

There were seven funded school-based projects, which occurred in one primary and six primary/secondary schools. Twenty-seven students (12 male, 15 female) participated in these programs. Proficiency levels for these students were levels 2 and 3. The AIST consultants provided assistance with developing appropriate educational programs for funded students and the ESL scales were introduced to teachers. Of total program costs of \$37,700, \$31,189 went to project costs and \$6,511 to administration.

Two new arrivals (one male, one female) received funding for intensive language programs, to the level of \$5,722.

Aboriginal education

Government schools

Staff employed to facilitate Aboriginal education programs in government schools comprised a coordinator, a retention officer, a literacy officer, six Aboriginal home-school liaison officers (plus one trainee), six Aboriginal studies resources teachers (two FTE) and three clerical officers (2.5 FTE). Throughout the year, the Aboriginal Education Unit also employed and trained seven Aboriginal teacher aides in two programs.

In 1994, all government and most private schools received copies of Aboriginal Studies guidelines K-8 and a two-day seminar was conducted for 47 teachers to assist in their implementation. At the end of 1994, the final stage — guidelines 9-12 — had been completed and were in the process of community approval. Aboriginal studies resources teachers also worked in schools throughout Tasmania to assist them in developing Aboriginal studies programs and resource collections.

A major role of Aboriginal studies resources teachers was to introduce and manage a Visiting Speakers project.

The Aboriginal retention officer planned and conducted a series of career and 'Project Hahn' camps for Aboriginal students. The retention officer also

Table 5. Aboriginal Retention Rates, Tasmania 1990–1994, (per cent)

	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
1994			
ATSI	36.22	28.00	48.08
N/ATSI	56.78	54.38	59.22
Total	56.16	53.64	58.98
1993			
ATSI	43.17	35.90	52.46
N/ATSI	59.30	55.45	63.72
Total	58.87	54.91	63.44
1992			
ATSI	41.60	36.36	45.71
N/ATSI	59.93	60.45	59.38
Total	59.52	59.99	59.03
1991			
ATSI	19.42	13.85	24.32
N/ATSI	52.88	48.54	57.87
Total	52.08	47.81	56.95
1990			
ATSI	29.11	20.25	37.97
N/ATSI	43.58	37.26	50.35
Total	43.21	36.83	50.02

Source: Department of Education and the Arts

developed a strategic plan for Vocational and Educational Guidance for Aboriginal Scheme (VEGAS) funded activities in 1995–96. The unit participated in a statewide Aboriginal Careers Exposition. Retention rates to year 12 are shown in Table 5.

The literacy officer was responsible for planning and introducing two major Aboriginal Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs. The Kindergarten Access Program of Aboriginal Students (KAPAS) involved equipping four mobile pre-kindergarten vehicles, training six aides to operate them and implementing the program statewide. The program will continue in 1995–96. The second project, the Kindergarten Early Literacy Program for Aboriginal Students (KELPAS), involved training and placing Aboriginal aides in six kindergartens. Where possible, KAPAS and Kelpas involve the same staff. Aboriginal literacy programs operated in close liaison with mainstream initiatives. An additional literacy program in operation was the Aboriginal Student Development Program. Some 106 Aboriginal primary students were funded for one to four hours of individual assistance in the classroom.

Aboriginal home-school liaison officers operated in a pivotal role of school-parent communication throughout the year. Aboriginal home-school liaison officers support over 2,500 students in government schools (4.4 per cent of the population).

Planning processes generated by Aboriginal Education Policy requirements continued in 1994 with a regular State Strategic Planning Group meeting.

Catholic schools

Just over 300 Aboriginal students were enrolled in Catholic schools in 1994 and some 4,600 students (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) were involved in some form of planned Aboriginal studies during the year. The latter figure represented approximately 35 per cent of total sector enrolments. Although this may seem a low figure, it is largely explained by the fact that specifically designed courses or units in Aboriginal studies tend to be concentrated in certain years of schooling.

One Aboriginal home-school liaison officer, a part-time consultant and a part-time coordinator were employed to assist progress towards the relevant goals of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy in 1994. Schools and teachers were given further help with incorporating Aboriginal studies and perspectives in their curricula. The Aboriginal Studies guidelines for years K–8 produced by the DEA were introduced into all schools.

The Aboriginal home-school liaison officer commenced duties in April 1994. During the remainder of the year he visited all 26 schools with Aboriginal students and many parents. He also commenced a training course at the Hobart College of TAFE.

The Catholic sector was represented on the State Strategic Planning Group and actively cooperated with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Education Council in planning a survey of the incidence of otitis media in Tasmanian Aboriginal children. This involved the attendance of the Program Co-ordinator at a national conference on the education implications of Otitis Media and Conductive Hearing Loss held in Alice Springs and his membership on a State taskforce established to plan and monitor the survey which is to be conducted early in 1995.

Grants totalling \$18,360 from Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program (AESIP) literacy strategy funds were applied by schools for the employment of remedial language aides who assisted with the provision of structured programs to develop literacy skills.

Gifted and talented students

Government schools

The DEA received funding from the National Priorities Element, Gifted and Talented Component of the NEPS. The objective of this project was to develop and trial a

professional development package which would better equip staff in schools to identify and address the needs of gifted and talented students disadvantaged by socioeconomic circumstance, isolation, or language backgrounds other than English. This project was successfully undertaken and produced a professional development package and associated teaching and learning modules which will be distributed to NEPS-funded schools in the system.

Catholic schools

Catholic schools support the concept of helping all students aspire to reach their potential, including gifted and talented students. Financial stringencies continued to make systematic provision for these students impossible. However, the Catholic sector participated in a joint initiative with the AIST and the DEA in the identification of gifted and talented students and resourcing of teachers with regard to participation of these students in schooling. The Catholic sector funded in-service training during 1994 for one teacher to work with three schools in the southern region to mount pilot programs in 1995 for gifted and talented students in those schools.

Independent schools

Most surveyed schools in Tasmania favoured extension and enrichment programs for the gifted and talented, with very few opting for acceleration. Enrichment was provided through involvement in competitions, tutoring programs and a variety of club activities.

Achievements experienced from programs for the gifted and talented included students' increased confidence and self esteem; enhanced communication skills; recognition and satisfaction.

Special education

Government schools

With the release of the government's inclusion policy early in 1994, there was a further increase in the numbers of students with disabilities enrolled in regular schools rather than special schools. This changing pattern of enrolment was evident across all sectors K-12.

In early special education the pattern was particularly evident where the majority of students who left the program enrolled in their neighbourhood school. At the other end of the continuum an increased number of students with disabilities enrolled for years 11 and 12 in the regular college system.

A major achievement was the reorganisation of support services of guidance, social work, speech pathology, curriculum and special education staff within one coordinated district management structure.

A pilot project for transition education for students with intellectual disabilities commenced in northern Tasmania.

A health care requirements document was published by the DEA to support schools in handling the health needs of students.

Cooperation between the DEA, the Department of Community and Health Services, and Tasmania Police was consolidated through the formation of an interdepartmental committee to consider the issue of young homeless people in Tasmania.

A joint community and DEA taskforce was established to consider the educational provision for autistic children living in Tasmania. As a result of the deliberations of the taskforce, the government announced the establishment of an independent special school for autistic students based on the Canadian *Giant Steps* model.

Catholic schools

The Special Education Component of NEPS provided \$264,000 schools support, a \$19,000 allocation for non-school support and \$15,600 for capital support. Eighty-four eligible students in 29 schools were funded under the Special Education Component, an increase of 20 per cent over the previous year. As funding levels, in real terms, did not change, this resulted in a significant decrease in the support given to most students with disabilities.

NEPS funds, augmented from other sources, were used to provide consultant and assessment services. Almost 84 per cent of NEPS funds were applied to direct assistance to students. Many schools also employed special education teachers—many on a part-time basis—from recurrent funds.

The grant to systemic schools from the Students with Disabilities component totalled \$16,259. Because funding is static in real terms and both the number of students with disabilities and the degree of severity of disabilities of students being included in mainstream schooling are increasing, there is a reduction in the support which can be provided for individual students.

Two regionally-based special education consultants were engaged to assist schools develop and maintain programs for students with disabilities as well as to identify problems in literacy at early intervention level.

A team of secondary principals began investigation into the possibility of setting up disability units to enable disabled students to progress from a primary school disability unit to similar units in secondary schools.

Independent schools

Eighteen schools received funding for 36 students (18 male, 18 female) ranging from kindergarten to year 10.

Documentation was maintained on all students which contained descriptive details of educational programs. AIST consultants carried out educational assessments

focusing on measurable outcomes and provided consultations for teachers and teacher aides regarding appropriate curriculum and management of funded students. Total funding of \$134,600 was allocated as follows: project/program costs \$101,976; non-school organisations \$11,000; administration \$7,604; resources \$1,820; establishment costs \$3,000; capital funds \$9,200.

General and vocational education

Government schools

In 1994, secondary colleges continued successful trialling of AVTS programs. Ten programs were conducted, compared with four pilots in 1993. Professional development and support activities led to increased understanding of the AVTS and strong interest in continued expansion of programs and coverage of new industry areas. A major research study was undertaken to ascertain the educational value of Training in Retail and Commerce (TRAC) programs, with an interim report becoming available in November 1994.

The first stage of the key competencies project jointly conducted by the Schools Board of Tasmania and the DEA was successfully concluded. Planning commenced for stage two of the project in anticipation of the implementation of the key competencies in Tasmania.

Independent schools

Almost all schools surveyed in Tasmania had received the kit and video in addition to information on the key competencies from the Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania and handouts from various workshops attended by staff. Respondent schools indicated that the kit and video were an excellent introduction to the key competencies.

Most surveyed schools in Tasmania indicated that their curriculum design and content embraced elements of the key competencies in various ways, and in addition were an integral part of staff professional development.

Catholic schools

Two schools jointly piloted AVTS in the automotive and clerical areas. This included school-TAFE-industry links and proved highly successful for the participating year 11 and 12 students.

Work studies, work experience, resource centre activities and trial interviews are included in careers education for years 10 – 12 students.

The destinations of 8.1 per cent of the total year 12 cohort are unknown, but 3 per cent returned to school

for year 13, 2 per cent entered the defence forces, 25 per cent are employed or in apprenticeships, 13.6 per cent are at TAFE and 47.6 per cent gained entry into university. Some year 10 and year 11 students also proceeded to TAFE.

Career education

Government schools

Vocational placement has emerged as a significant development in the work experience area. This program, whereby students have the opportunity for on-the-job training linked with their courses, now offers dual accreditation and lifelong education and training skills.

The *It's Working* conference attracted 200 participants in 1994. The draft Career and Work Education Policy was strengthened by the consultative process that was undertaken at this conference.

Job and Course Explorer has been more fully developed for clients in the area of training opportunities. It has a large client base in this State and the sales of this computerised database have resulted in the situation whereby it is now installed in more than 60 sites across the State. The redevelopment of this product nationally is underway and a new Windows-based system will be available for purchase in 1996.

School-TAFE links

Government schools

In government schools, credit transfer continued to be implemented between TCE syllabuses and TAFE courses. Increasing numbers of students received TCE certificates with credit transfer endorsement. The development of credit transfer continues as a priority, with emphasis on credit transfer arrangements which comply with the National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT) principles and the implementation of AVTS.

Independent schools

Almost all independent secondary schools surveyed in Tasmania had links with their local TAFE institutions, with most respondents indicating that access was easy. The few schools which reported difficulty of access mentioned the high cost of enrolment as a hindering factor.

Areas of student learning

The Tasmanian Certificate of Education

The Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE), which is issued by the Schools Board of Tasmania, is a cumulative certificate on which is recorded student

achievements from year 9 to the end of schooling. Assessment is criterion-based. Year 9 assessments are school-determined. Most year 10–12 assessments are school-determined but moderated under the supervision of the Schools Board. Some year 11/12 or year 12 subjects (74 in all) involve a combination of moderated internal assessment and external assessment. In 1994, 6,354 year 10 students received statements of results.

There were more year 11 students (5,258) than year 12/13 (4,719), a change from 1993, when there were approximately equal numbers (5,131 year 11 and 5,112 year 12/13). The proportion of females in years 11–13 remained the same (53 per cent of the cohort).

There was an increase in the number of vocational programs available to students under the TCE. There were 2,925 students (1,367 of them female) who, as a result of study in TCE subjects, received credit in individual training courses offered through TAFE or other training providers; this compared with 2,376 in 1993.

Ninety-four students undertook vocational education and training programs; the modules completed were listed in students' statements of results. These programs included modules in the areas of engineering trades, metal industry, automotive trades, processing and engineering trades, furniture production, print design, and clerical and office communication.

Catholic schools

Schools maintained their current programs in all learning areas. Systematically, emphasis is being placed on particular learning areas in a sequential manner.

Mathematics was the curriculum focus for 1994. Part-time consultants were trained for each of the regions, programs were held for principals and school mathematics co-ordinators, and cluster programs for class teachers offered an introduction to the mathematics statement and profile. Guidance was provided through the use of work samples to facilitate profile use, assistance was given with the development of Maths Centres in schools and ways of assessing and reporting student achievement were examined. Work was done with groups of coordinators to facilitate mapping exercises and curriculum writing and meetings were held with parents to explain the framework of the learning areas and particular developments in mathematics teaching, learning and assessment. Catholic secondary students participated in the 14N numeracy tests administered by the DEA.

A number of primary schools across the State introduced the Macquarie Reading Scheme in 1994. TCE syllabuses were in use in secondary schools, particularly in years 10, 11 and 12. Competency based syllabuses highlight a concern for the development of

finely-tuned language skills both in oral and written English. Negotiated studies for the needs of individual students were part of the learning provision in some English courses.

Literacy and numeracy assistance was provided to geographically isolated students, students at risk, Aboriginal students and special education students. In some instances parents were trained as tutors for a reading program and significant gains in numeracy and literacy were reported in all these cohorts.

All secondary schools and 18 primary schools offer a LOTE. Some secondary schools offer three or four of the five languages taught. The numbers of students involved in 1994 were as follows: Japanese 1,290; French 817; Italian 556; German 166; and Indonesian 120.

Seminar provision was made in conjunction with AIST in the areas of geography and primary science and cross-sectoral initiatives with AIST and the DEA in upper primary English and in technology. Secondary schools continued the development of health and personal development programs.

A consultant from the Catholic sector attended 'train the trainer' seminars in science conducted by the Australian Academy of Science with a view to assisting teachers increase science provision in primary schools and to develop comprehensive and sequential curricula in the light of the national statement and profile.

One secondary school participated in the Magnet School Program in 1994.

Tasmanian Catholic secondary school students participated in the TCE courses monitored by the Schools Board of Tasmania. Assessment is criterion based. The total number of students receiving the TCE in 1994 was 3,476. The male cohort was 47 per cent; the female 53.0 per cent.

English

Government schools

An *English Learning Area Direction Statement* was prepared and distributed to schools as part of a package developed by the Educational Programs Branch to introduce statements and profiles to schools.

A draft action plan for the English learning area was developed during the year in preparation for priority support from the DEA from 1996 to 1998.

At the end of the year, an action research program to help English teachers incorporate the English statement and profile into their work was developed for implementation in 1995 and 1996 as part of the NPDP.

TCE syllabuses for years 11 and 12 were in use for the third year in 1994. Competency-based, the syllabuses highlight a concern for the development of confident, effective language use. In cooperation with the Schools Board of Tasmania, syllabuses will be reviewed to ensure consistency between them and the English statement and profile.

Independent schools

Schools surveyed in Tasmania included the following in the English learning area: language skills, debating, reading, writing, spelling, poetry and oral communication.

Almost all surveyed schools in Tasmania reported using the Macquarie Reading Scheme to enhance achievement for special student populations. In addition, parental assistance, gender sensitivity, peer/cross-age tutoring, use of computers and education specialists were other strategies used to enhance achievement.

Languages other than English

Government schools

Overall, there was a 3 per cent increase in LOTE enrolments, which passed the 12,500 level for the first time. Of particular note was the 2.5 per cent rise in the number of students involved in LOTE studies (10,000 students). In 1994, 37 per cent of all years 7–12 enrolments took a language, the highest number since 1989. A major contributing factor to this was that more schools are deciding to offer full-year LOTE courses instead of giving students a "taste" of two or three LOTE subjects during the year.

Compared with 1993, there was a 2 per cent rise in the number of enrolments in Asian languages (almost 57 per cent of the total LOTE enrolment). Of all the languages, Indonesian is the only one to show an increase in numbers every year for the past eight years.

In senior secondary college enrolments, 15.4 per cent of all enrolments were involved in the study of another language (compared with 14.7 per cent in 1993). Asian language enrolments continued to rise, attracting 56 per cent of all LOTE enrolments.

In 1994, about 15 per cent of students continued their LOTE study from year 10 into year 11. Compared with 1993, in both Asian and European enrolments, there was a rise in female enrolments and a significant drop in male enrolments. Of all students taking a LOTE at the senior secondary level, 75 per cent were girls.

Statistics for 1994 show a substantial increase in the number of primary school children who were being exposed to LOTE programs, the majority of enrolments being in Indonesian. Asian languages commanded 74 per cent of the total primary LOTE enrolment.

Science

Government schools

Science is a priority area for support in Tasmanian government schools during the three-year period 1993–95.

In 1994, support continued through an emphasis on science as a priority in departmental planning documents and school plans. Five of the seven educational districts continued to support science as a priority through the appointment of a science senior curriculum officer, with a sixth district appointing an officer towards the end of 1994.

Statewide conferences to support primary science coordinators were continued. Secondary science coordinators' conferences were incorporated into a NPDP-funded Key Teachers in Science Program, which commenced in 1994 and will continue into 1995.

A Girls in Physics Program continued in 1994, with fifty teachers taking part in a three-day program and an additional group exploring gender-inclusive syllabus design.

Technology

Government schools

Teachers were surveyed in 1994 to establish their preferences for professional development in technology. The focus of in-service training for primary teachers was in new and emerging technologies. Twenty-one seminars were conducted on topics such as electronic books, magnetic levitation transportation, plastic vacuum forming, construction, kids' engineering kits, educational computing, solar energy, hydroponics and design-based activities.

New Futures Technology facilities were built at Elizabeth College for students studying material-based technology subjects—computer aided design, automotive studies and applied science. A comprehensive technology curriculum will be offered through the college facilities for students commencing in 1995.

The Centre for Precision Technology at TECHNOPARK developed new technology products for use by schools. These included kids' engineering kits, plastic vacuum formers, wind tunnels, CO₂ car starting gates and magnetic levitation tracks.

Computer-aided design was encouraged through the establishment of user groups. These assisted teachers meet the demands of greater student participation in computer graphics.

Four Tasmanian schools have been provided with satellite dishes and associated equipment in order to receive curriculum broadcasts from the Victorian Directorate of School Education. The programs are

designed to be interactive and currently cover a wide range of subjects.

Mathematics

Government schools

Developmental work on the K–8 mathematics guidelines was completed. The materials for the space and measurement strands were published to add to the sections on number, pattern and algebra, and chance and data.

The team of mathematics implementation officers increased in membership from eight to nine. These officers, with the team coordinator, worked in the seven districts throughout the year, assisting teachers to review and develop school mathematics programs and participating in the professional development of teachers in the K–8 sector.

Work commenced on the development of a departmental position and policy on numeracy.

Independent schools

Respondent schools in Tasmania included the following in the mathematics area of learning: business and consumer arithmetic, calculus, pattern and order, algebra, statistics, and logical thinking.

Numeracy

Since 1975, when the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) first conducted a nationwide testing program in literacy and numeracy skills, the DEA has conducted its own assessment program for all students aged 10 and 14 years in its mainstream primary and secondary schools. The numeracy tests, administered on a four-year cycle, focus on a variety of skills and are referred to as the 10N and 14N tests.

In 1994, the numeracy test for 14 year olds (14N) was administered. Comparisons of five previous 14N tests were made using an index of performance which is based on setting the 1975 figure to a value of 100.

Table 6. Student performance: 14N Test, 1975–94

<i>Year</i>	<i>Performance index</i>
1975	100.0
1978	102.0
1981	99.2
1985	102.5
1989	100.4
1994	96.5

Source: Department of Education and the Arts

The figures in Table 6 show a decline in performance from 1985 to 1994. The 1989–94 decline is statistically significant.

An analysis of patterns within the 1994 data set showed that, on average, boys performed better than girls on the whole test. However, girls performed significantly better than boys on questions categorised as ‘number’. Boys performed significantly better than girls on questions categorised as ‘measurement’, ‘space’ and ‘chance and data’.

Studies of society and environment

Government schools

The studies of society and environment (SOSE) learning area is participating in the NPDP. Twenty key teachers attended a cooperative learning workshop as part of their key teacher training during 1994. SOSE clusters have been established in most districts as a means of implementing the use of the SOSE statement and profile in schools. Teachers in high schools and associated schools are sharing ideas on effective classroom practice, and some schools are reviewing their school plans to incorporate SOSE.

The Magnet School Program, promoting teaching about Asia, continued as an effective program. Guidelines for teaching and learning about Aboriginal culture and contemporary issues were developed for years K–8 and coordinators and resource teachers continued their support to schools.

Landcare and Waterwatch continued with interest from increasing numbers of schools. The national report of the Civics Expert Group was published and reflected submissions from the DEA. The growing recognition of the importance of civics and citizenship education reflects the longstanding importance Tasmanian teachers have placed on preparing students as active and informed citizens.

The arts

Government schools

The nationally developed learning area statements and profiles continue to guide the development of K–8 arts guidelines and planning for implementation processes. Similarly they will inform the review of TCE arts syllabuses as part of a wider syllabus review process.

Current policy acknowledges the significant contribution that the arts make in the development of each student's general capabilities from kindergarten to year 12. Provision is made for all students K–8 to engage in learning in the arts.



Members of the Murray High School 1994 Rock Eisteddfod team, which won the State final of the Eisteddfod. The school's entry told the story of mining on the west coast and the changing face of the region.

In 1994, the Artists in Districts Program continued to be fully funded by the DEA, providing twenty artist days to be devolved to schools in each educational district according to local needs and priorities.

The DEA continues to support the achievement of excellence in music through the Secondary Music Scholarship program. The Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra—Musica Viva Performance Project continues to present concerts in schools, supported by a professional development program and support materials for participating teachers. In 1994 approximately 6,000 students from over 40 schools benefited from the program's activities.

The arts will become a curriculum priority in Tasmanian schools in the 1997–1999 triennium.



Tarooma High School music students play at the opening of the Australian Council for Education through Technology's 11th Biennial National Conference.

Health and physical education

Government schools

Introductory sessions for teachers on the *Statement and Profile on Health and Physical Education for Australian Schools* provided an opportunity to continue the development of the learning area philosophy rather than the subject-based perspective. The planning for major curriculum development commenced, with the aim of producing a professional development process and the necessary support material. The work will culminate in a three-year priority focus for the learning area, beginning in 1997.

In 1994, the development of an *Outdoor Education Management Handbook* commenced. Broad-ranging consultation was undertaken with specialist community activity groups, land management authorities, relevant government agencies and the general education community.

A review of the health and physical education curriculum will take place in 1995.

Funding from the National Nutrition Education in Schools Project was utilised in 1994 to identify and document innovative strategies in a range of school and school-community nutrition issues.

Teaching and learning

Catholic schools

Professional development opportunities were provided for teachers at regional, cluster group and individual school level.

Teachers attended the Sydney University Winter School and a network of secondary school coordinators provided a forum for reporting the substance of the conference/seminars to those teachers unable to attend.

A computer consultant visited all schools and was available for assistance at all times. Work was done with groups of teachers and coordinators to facilitate the introduction of various programs to assist teaching and learning. The consultant collaborated with teachers to develop recording and reporting programs.

Independent schools

Most of the independent schools surveyed in Tasmania had access to the national curriculum statements and profiles. A few respondent schools had used the statements and profiles for curriculum reviews while the majority of respondents were in the process of reviewing them.

Most curriculum reviews emphasised enhanced practical problem-solving skills. Strategies to improve achievement included:

- the use of computers;
- cross-curricular approaches;
- non-competitive approaches;
- staff professional development.

To enhance achievement by special student populations, parental assistance, individual tuition, ability groupings and use of education specialists were encouraged by respondent schools.

Recruitment and selection

Government schools

The DEA advertised and filled 60 permanent base-grade positions during 1994. Most of these positions were won by existing temporary staff. The appointments were to fill vacancies across all skill and curriculum areas.

The range and quality of applicants was very high. All appointments were made in accordance with the merit principle as established in the *Tasmanian State Service Act 1984*.

Transfer policy

Government schools

In 1994, the DEA introduced a new transfer policy which was designed to ensure that students in less favoured schools were not disadvantaged and that teachers in these schools were given the opportunity to teach in more favoured schools.

Staff development

Government schools

The Staff Development Section continued to provide a range of central programs and consultancy services to schools.

The central programs included both general and occupation-specific training for non-teaching staff in schools. Technical skill training included book repairs, display techniques, chainsaw safety and computer skills. The range of courses dealing with occupational health, safety and welfare issues was widened to include safe chemicals handling, ergonomics and hearing conservation.

A representative group of school attendants participated in a two-day Dacum exercise conducted by the DEA and their union. A structured training program based on

competency standards for school attendants is being developed from the exercise.

The section continued its induction and mentoring program for new principals and provided training for staff involved on selection panels.

A major project has been the development of a competency profile for principals. This will form the basis for planning leadership and management development for principals and aspiring principals.

Various consultancy services have been provided to schools, clusters and districts to support local training and human resource management initiatives.

Teacher development

Government schools

The Tasmanian Educational Consortium Ltd was established in 1994. Jointly owned by the DEA and the University of Tasmania, it has taken increasing responsibility for teacher development programs.

Centrally, the department has undertaken two major initiatives in professional development:

- implementation of nationally developed curriculum statements and profiles;
- initiatives in literacy, particularly at the early childhood level.

The Commonwealth-funded NPDP has been focused on in-depth implementation of statements and profiles for science, technology, and studies of society and the environment.

Independent schools

With support from the NPDP, the AIST employed a part-time consultant for the second half of the year. The consultant was able to assist schools begin the process of defining the needs for further professional development as a result of the widespread adoption of the statements and profiles. Some direct professional development activities were also funded as a result of this process before the end of the year.

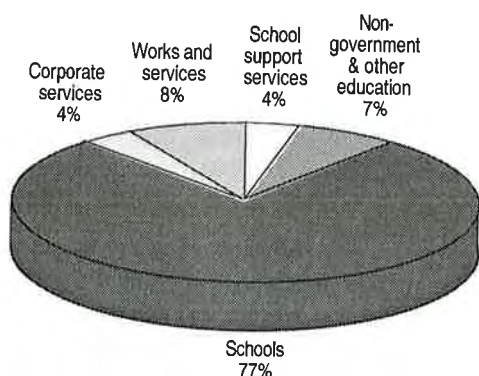
Resourcing schools

Recurrent and capital resources

Government schools

In 1993–94 the government spent a total of \$335 million on education in Tasmania. Of this, \$307 million was used for recurrent purposes and \$28 million for projects of a capital nature. This was \$3 million more than had been spent in 1992–93.

Figure 1. Expenditure by major programs, 1993–94



Source: Department of Education and the Arts

In 1994, the Commonwealth Government, through the General Recurrent Grants Program, contributed \$61.9 million to Tasmanian schools: \$26.5 million to government schools; \$25.6 million to Catholic schools; and \$10 million to independent schools.

Figure 1 provides information on the distribution of the \$335 million provided by the Tasmanian Government for educational programs.

Catholic schools

In Catholic schools financial management and accountability are the responsibility of the schools. In this task, the principals are assisted by boards of management or college councils, all of whose ordinary members are parent representatives. In 1994, the Catholic Education Office conducted regional in-service seminars for board members. The office also facilitated the development of guidelines and support materials for boards, and assisted with the writing of constitutions.

Every school has an active Parents and Friends Association which is represented on the board and which plays a significant part in school activities and fundraising.

The 1994 Commonwealth General Recurrent Grants were allocated to Tasmanian Catholic systemic schools by the system authority on a needs basis.

Systemic schools staffing levels are determined by a staffing schedule which is reviewed on a triennial basis. The majority of grants to systemic schools (approximately 76 per cent of the total income for schools) were utilised in the provision of salaries, with a further 5 per cent meeting the debt servicing needs of schools. The remaining 19 per cent of total income was used to service the needs of schools according to demand in the tuition, administration and property areas.

Non-systemic schools were funded directly by the Commonwealth and allocated their funds according to individual school needs.

The Commonwealth General Recurrent Grants, including Students with Disabilities Grants, allocated to Tasmanian Catholic schools in 1994 involved payments of \$18,152,609 to systemic schools and \$7,422,057 to non-systemic schools, a total of \$25,574,666.

Capital works

Government Schools

During 1994, the Commonwealth Government, through the Capital Grants Program, made available \$5,946,000 for Tasmanian government schools. The funds made available to Catholic and independent schools through this program in 1994 were \$1,534,069 and \$746,346 respectively.

Catholic schools

Many of the capital works projects completed during 1994 were associated with the restructuring of secondary schools in the greater Hobart area. These included upgrading home economics, power technology and other specialist facilities in preparation for the commencement of a senior secondary college in 1995, provision of manual arts and student amenities at a secondary school, conversion of former boarding accommodation to classrooms, and refurbishment of a former government primary school as a new secondary college.

Other projects completed included the building of two new classrooms and a library refurbishment at a disadvantaged school, provision of new primary classrooms and upgraded administration facilities at a school with increasing enrolments, and conversion of secondary classrooms with home economics facilities.

Of the \$1,534,069 that Catholic schools received from the Commonwealth for capital works, \$1,098,802 came from the General Element (including administration allowance) and \$435,267 from the Quality, Competencies and Technical Support Element of the Capital Grants Program.

Independent schools

In 1994, payment of Commonwealth Capital Grants by the Independent Schools' Block Grant Authority of Tasmania was completed for 12 projects. The total payment of Commonwealth Capital Grants in respect of these projects was \$720,100.

The projects aimed to assist in maximising the competencies of students in the eight key learning areas, encouraging students to stay on to year 12 and broadening the educational experience of girls in technologically orientated studies.

Entrepreneurial initiatives

Overseas marketing of educational services

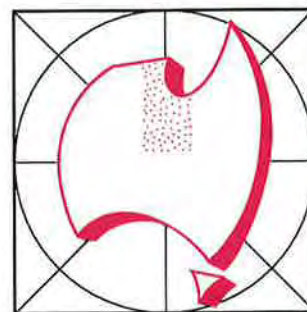
The marketing of Tasmanian educational services continued, and involved government schools and colleges and the University of Tasmania.

The number of students increased, with most coming from Malaysia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand. New markets are being established in India and Nepal.

It is estimated that the program in 1994 was worth \$20 million to Tasmania's economy.

Tanjung Bara International School in Kalimantan continued to progress. The DEA was contracted by the P T Kalim Prima Coal Company in Indonesia to design, supervise and administer the school and to provide staff for the school which was opened in 1991.

NORTHERN TERRITORY



Structure and operation of the school system

The Northern Territory, with a population of 171,440 people (1994) and land area of 1,348,000 square kilometres, has a population density of approximately 13 persons per 100 square kilometres. Educational services are provided to a diverse multicultural and multilingual population scattered over an area 30 per cent larger than the combined areas of New South Wales and Victoria. Most of the population lives in the major townships of Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy and Jabiru, with the remainder widely dispersed across the Territory. Many smaller centres are accessible only by air or sea, and others are often not accessible during the wet season. In the Northern Territory, 54.4 per cent of schools and 24.1 per cent of students are located in remote areas.

Government sector

In 1994, there were 146 government schools throughout the Territory—41 urban (Darwin, Palmerston and Alice Springs), 17 rural (Katherine, Tennant Creek, Jabiru, Nhulunbuy and Darwin rural area) and 88 remote (all other areas). The terms urban, rural and remote are under review as they are relative terms and therefore poor descriptors of relative access to services.



Student receiving lessons from Alice Springs School of the Air

These schools include one-teacher schools in geographically isolated locations, large and small Aboriginal schools, community education centres (CECs), area schools, schools of the air, a secondary correspondence school, large urban primary and secondary schools, junior high schools (years 7/8–10), comprehensive high schools and senior secondary colleges (years 11–12).

The physical and social environment imposes exceptional access and cost disabilities. School-age children comprise 22.3 per cent of the total Northern Territory population, a greater proportion than in any of the other States. As students are widely dispersed across the Territory, the provision of many small schools, which are expensive to maintain and supply, is necessary. Additional costs in curriculum and language support staff and resources are incurred due to the diverse cultural nature of the student body.

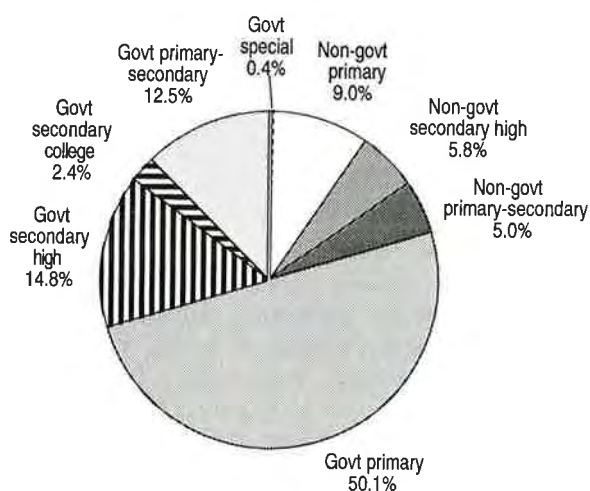
Student enrolments in government and non-government schools are shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1. Enrolments by level, school type, gender, 1994 (full-time)

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Non-government			
Primary	1,673	1,697	3,370
Secondary high	1,085	1,086	2,171
Primary-secondary	965	921	1,886
<i>Total</i>	<i>3,723</i>	<i>3,704</i>	<i>7,427</i>
Government			
Primary	9,620	9,116	18,736
Secondary high	2,832	2,725	5,557
Secondary college	471	429	900
Primary-secondary	2,376	2,301	4,677
Special	93	51	144
<i>Total</i>	<i>15,392</i>	<i>14,622</i>	<i>30,014</i>
All schools	19,115	18,326	37,441

Source: August 1994 Census

Figure 1. Students in NT schools, August 1994



Source: NT Department of Education

Non-government sector

Enrolment details are included in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Catholic system

In 1994, there were nine Catholic urban schools (Darwin and Alice Springs), one rural school (Katherine) and five remote schools (all areas). Of these, three were secondary schools. Catholic High School in Alice Springs enrolled year 11 students for the first time. The remote schools included outstations and CECs.

Independent schools

Independent schools represent 8 per cent of total student enrolments. Independent schools continued to provide the majority of school boarding places for students from isolated families and Aboriginal communities. School enrolments continued to increase, and communities requested increases in the number and type of schools.

Priority objectives for 1994

Government sector

Since self-government in 1978, Northern Territory government schools have been directed by a set of goals which correlate strongly with the 1989 Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia. The continuing mission of the Northern Territory Department of Education in 1994 was to provide the best possible education and training service sensitive to the needs of the community. This mission was pursued at

the preschool, primary, secondary and tertiary levels and supplemented by an efficient and effective professional and administrative structure.

Key objectives of school education in the Northern Territory for 1994 were to:

- strengthen and support community involvement in education;
- continue to improve access and choice in education;
- encourage excellence in education and assist all students in developing their full potential;
- continue development and adaptation of high-quality curricula and assessment programs consistent with national and international standards;
- provide for the skills development of all departmental staff in order to maximise their personal development and effectiveness within the organisation;
- manage and control the financial, physical and human resources of the department in order to maximise educational benefits;
- improve ways of assessing and reporting student performance and providing feedback to students, parents, schools, employers and the community;
- encourage the development of education programs and institutions so that the Northern Territory becomes a centre for excellence in Northern Australia, South East Asia and the South Pacific regions.

Catholic system

The major priorities of the Catholic system were to:

- prepare students for full lives as active Christian members of society;
- provide an effective educational environment which would foster positive human relationships in the school community and encourage students to develop self-esteem and a sense of social responsibility;
- improve the participation and achievements of students whose learning was affected by physical disability, material poverty, ethnicity and geographical isolation;
- improve the retention rate of Aboriginal students, both in the urban and community schools;
- support and develop the competence and confidence of teachers through professional development activities, especially those designed to support the specific ethos of Catholic education;
- provide students with the basic literacy and numeracy skills, an appreciation of creative arts, and

a framework which accommodates a reference for judgement in matters of ethics and morality;

- provide schools and facilities that would meet the educational needs of Aboriginal people, support them in their move towards self-determination and ensure cultural integrity, which provides students with the skills needed to live fulfilling lives in contemporary society;
- acknowledge and respond to parents' requests regarding educational provision for their children;
- provide a full range of educational opportunities from T-12 for students within the Catholic education system, including adult education courses offered in CECs.

Independent schools

Independent schools strive to provide students with a comprehensive education to develop their intellectual, physical, social and spiritual capabilities, and enhance their cultural awareness and participation in society.

During 1994, their major priorities were the provision of excellence in education through a diversity of curricula offerings; acquisition and extension of literacy and numeracy skills; provision of support for students from non-English speaking backgrounds; increase awareness and support of special student populations; and upgrading of facilities, including library and computer resources.

Many schools within the non-government sector are integrating national curriculum statements and profiles into their formal school curricula. Through the inservicing of staff members those schools not currently integrating national curriculum statements and profiles are developing skills and strategies which will allow them to do so.

The Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia were used by the schools, either to audit curriculum offerings or as a focal point for school-based objectives.

Table 2. Student apparent retention rates, 1992-94 (per cent)

	1992	1993	1994
Year 8 to year 9	95.5	92.1	88.2
Year 8 to year 10	90.7	85.1	82.5
Year 8 to year 11	82.5	77.7	71.7
Year 8 to year 12	73.9	64.7	53.8

Source: NT Department of Education

Excellence and equity

Student retention/participation

Details on student apparent retention rates for years 8-9, 8-10, 8-11 and 8-12 (excluding ungraded and part-time students) are provided in Table 2.

There has been a significant decline in the apparent retention rates in the Northern Territory since the peak year of 1992.

In a small system such as the Northern Territory, the apparent retention rate is a less accurate indicator of actual retention rates than in the larger State systems in Australia. The Northern Territory education scene also has some characteristics which further lessen the accuracy of this indicator.

A higher proportion of students than in other States complete their education interstate. This is a reflection of the still-developing nature of the private education sector in the Territory. In comparison to the States, the private education sector in the Territory is proportionally smaller, draws its student population from generally lower socioeconomic backgrounds and lacks depth at the 'prestige' end of the market. Parents and students therefore look towards the interstate private sector to meet their needs to a greater extent than in the other States.

The Northern Territory population is significantly younger than the population in every other State in Australia. It is also more mobile.

The introduction of the South Australian Certificate of Education (Northern Territory) (SACE (NT)) in 1993 also had a significant impact on the years 8-11 and 8-12 apparent retention rates. This is because there has been a large increase in the numbers of students in years 11 and 12 choosing to attend part-time and complete their senior secondary studies over three years. The apparent retention rate measure does not include these students as being retained.

Surveys in the past have indicated that most students who leave school prior to finishing year 12 do so to enter the labour market, many going straight into employment. Indeed, the decline in retention rates over the past few years can largely be attributed to the increasing employment prospects during that period.

During this period there has also been a discernible increase in the numbers of students leaving school to enter the TAFE system prior to completion of year 12.

The figures shown in Table 2 are not identical with those in the MCEETYA National Schools Statistical Collection (NSSC). This is because there is a large degree of arbitrariness in the grade classification of students in remote Aboriginal schools in the Northern

Territory. Many students are classified as being in years 8, 9 or 10 in the NSSC on the basis of their age rather than achievement levels. All students so classified in Aboriginal schools are excluded from the apparent retention rate calculation in order to remove this arbitrary element.

Details on the apparent retention rates for government and non-government schools, by gender, are provided in Table 3 (excluding ungraded, part-time students and schools with predominantly Aboriginal student enrolments).

Figure 2 provides details on age participation rates (15–19) and Figure 3 demonstrates the age profile of students in Northern Territory schools.

Parent participation

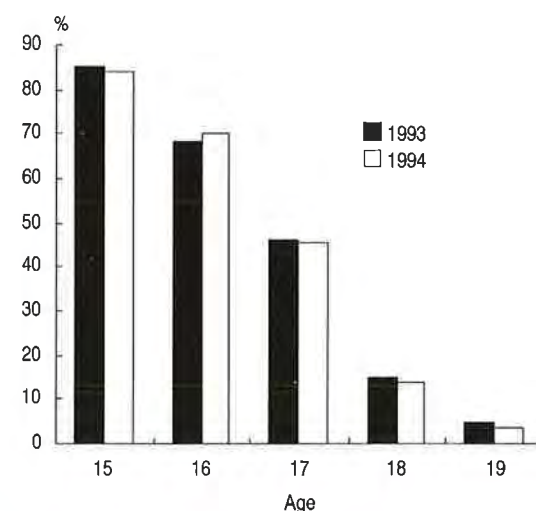
In 1994, the Hon. Fred Finch, Minister for Education and Training, launched the Department of Education's Partners in Education: Parent Policy. The policy was underpinned by the rationale that student achievement and outcomes improve when parents and schools work closely together. The policy represents a commitment to the rights of parents to participate in their children's education and outlines roles and responsibilities of all those involved in education, in promoting parent participation. The policy also provides a framework for schools to develop their own parent policies.

Table 3. Apparent retention rates by gender, government and non-government schools, 1991–94 (per cent)

	1991	1992	1993	1994
Government				
<i>Male</i>				
Year 8 to year 11	80.2	84.2	77.5	79.1
Year 8 to year 12	75.4	68.8	62.2	55.3
<i>Female</i>				
Year 8 to year 11	78.8	84.7	82.8	77.6
Year 8 to year 12	74.9	72.3	66.8	60.3
Non-government				
<i>Male</i>				
Year 8 to year 11	71.0	67.7	57.3	61.1
Year 8 to year 12	44.3	48.1	43.7	37.6
<i>Female</i>				
Year 8 to year 11	88.3	62.2	61.8	49.2
Year 8 to year 12	45.2	70.4	43.5	48.6

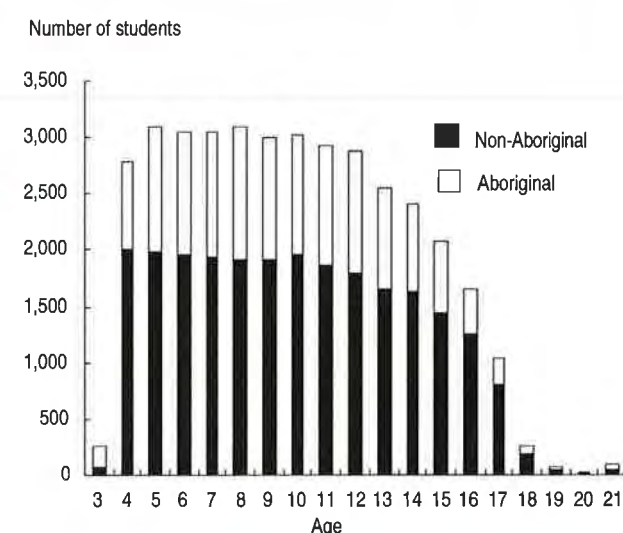
Source: NT Department of Education

Figure 2. Age participation rates (15–19-year-olds), 1993 and 1994



Source: Based on June 1994 ABS population figures

Figure 3. Age profile of students in NT schools, 1994



Source: NT Department of Education

During the consultation process, people across the Territory were asked for suggestions on how the policy should be implemented. Suggestions included training and 'in-service' for all those involved in education—parents, teachers, principals and the wider community—and recognition that, as each school is unique, they should be assisted to develop policy and practice in parent participation relevant to their school needs.

Following the consultation, a new initiative grant from the Northern Territory Government enabled school councils to apply for seeding grants totalling \$91,551, to establish initiatives to promote the newly launched policy. Forty-three school communities received grants

ranging from \$500 to \$5,500. Teachers, school council members, representatives from the Northern Territory Council of Government Schools Organisation (COGSO) and Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness (ASSPA) groups from across the Territory, provided workshops demonstrating good practice in parent participation and community involvement at two major conferences held in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Parent liaison

The Parent Liaison Officer provided a range of training programs to parents and teachers in schools in such areas as parent participation, decision making, roles and responsibilities of school councils, conflict resolution and the *Standard Devolution Package: A Practical Guide to Education Decision Making for School Councils*. Ongoing support and advice was also provided to parent groups, including COGSO and the Isolated Children's Parents' Association.

Equity initiatives

Any effort to determine the relative allocation of resources to equity target groups in the Northern Territory is difficult to determine due to these groups being dispersed throughout all schools. The Department therefore cannot report accurately on the level of resources to equity target groups.

In 1994, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders made up 33.6 per cent of the student population in the Northern Territory. Of these, 69.1 per cent lived in geographically isolated areas and 88.7 per cent attended schools which are declared disadvantaged schools (that is, the catchment areas have an Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage score which is less than the Australian average). For most of these students, including almost all of those in geographically isolated areas, English is a second or third language. Only a tiny proportion of these students complete year 12.

There is therefore a large student population in the Northern Territory who suffer from multiple educational disadvantages and this group has had a profound effect on the way resources are allocated and standards set within the Department of Education. Practically all decisions are influenced by the task of meeting the needs of these groups. Any effort to determine the relative allocation of resources to equity target groups in the Northern Territory is difficult to determine due to these groups being dispersed throughout all schools. The department therefore can only report on the allocation of additional resources to equity target groups as an estimate of total school expenditure.

Gender equity

In 1994, a permanent position, Principal Education Officer—Gender Equity in School Programs, was created and an officer appointed.

The two priority areas pursued from the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls were 'eliminating sex-based harassment' and 'reforming the curriculum'.

A draft sexual harassment policy relating to employees and students was developed for the department. Several schools have developed harassment policies and are developing school-based implementation strategies.

In response to the Northern Territory Government's Domestic Violence Strategy, the department decided to undertake an audit of its strategies and programs that support schools in addressing issues of violence.

A number of professional development activities on gender-inclusive curriculum were conducted for curriculum writers and advisory staff. Conferences held by the Home Economics Teachers Association, the Career Educators Association and the Australian Education Union (NT) included workshops on gender issues.

Three schools in Alice Springs participated in an action research project focused on improving teaching practice in relation to gender. In Darwin, a number of network meetings were held to explore ways of improving classroom interactions.

Four issues of *Gender Issues* were published in 1994. This informal newsletter, which contains updates on issues and resources, was sent to a growing network of educators.

Development of a Northern Territory Gender Equity Policy Statement began in 1994. This policy statement will provide a framework for addressing gender issues within the Northern Territory context.

Education of gifted and talented children

Commonwealth funding through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP) was used for the Aboriginal and Islander Tertiary Aspirations (AITAP) initiative. The program commenced in early 1994 and is now operating in almost all urban secondary schools. A book, *You Don't Get Degrees in Weet-Bix Boxes: True Stories of Aboriginal People in Tertiary Study and Beyond*, was launched. This book provides positive role models for Aboriginal and Islander students. It is also a resource for pastoral care, English and social education teachers, and in career counselling.

Two support documents to assist schools in implementing the Territory's policy for gifted students were produced: *Guidelines for the Implementation of Policy for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students* and *Identification of Gifted and Talented Students in Northern Territory Schools*.

In November 1994, approximately 70 delegates from across the Northern Territory attended a conference at the Northern Territory University entitled 'A Whole School Approach to the Education of Gifted and

Talented Children'. The conference was organised by the department and the Northern Territory Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented to provide support for the Northern Territory policy. Over 40 gifted and talented students attended a seminar, held in conjunction with the conference, at which they reflected on their educational experiences and identified important issues. They then worked on some strategies to successfully confront the issues.

Other programs for gifted students included the Alorpa and Dharra vacation schools; courses at Enrichment Centres based at high schools and involving feeder primary schools; and the third National Tournament of Minds competition. Fifty schools received seeding funds to assist in implementing school-based programs. Professional development programs for gifted students in mainstream classrooms were conducted.

Credit towards studies

Students entering the Northern Territory education system during their senior secondary years can obtain credit towards their studies for formal senior secondary studies completed elsewhere. It is also possible for adult students and students who have studied vocational and education training modules to gain credit.

Education of students from non-English speaking backgrounds

The Northern Territory school population includes a high proportion of students from non-English speaking backgrounds who are located in urban and non-urban areas. The focus of support for these students was the provision of services to provide access to learning English. These services included provision of Intensive English Units (primary and secondary) for new arrivals, support for students in mainstream classes, development of curriculum support materials and professional development programs for teachers.

Of the students already receiving assistance in urban schools, approximately 40 per cent are Aborigines. With the implementation of recommendations from the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP), additional funding was made available to the English as a Second Language (ESL) General Support Component of the National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS). This increase was directed towards providing assistance for Aboriginal students in a number of urban and non-urban schools, thus expanding ESL provision.

Commonwealth funding through the ESL New Arrivals sub-component (\$383,374) and the General Support sub-component (\$884,000) supplemented the substantial support provided by the department. As well as the employment of a number of ESL teachers in urban schools, the department provided regional ESL

coordinators to support teachers of Aboriginal students in non-urban schools.

A review of ESL was completed in 1994 and the following recommendations are currently being considered based on the findings from the 1993 survey.

The survey focused on: numbers of identified ESL students; principals, general staff and ESL staff; and submissions from schools and officers.

Key recommendations from the review focused on: the need to develop a language policy for the Northern Territory incorporating ESL; system-wide professional development of ESL and mainstream teachers; and the need to recognise that first language development is integral for students with backgrounds other than English.

Other recommendations covered the need for guidelines implementing ESL programs; identification of language requirements across the curriculum; need for research on successful strategies and the need for policy on recruitment and deployment of ESL teachers.

Specific curriculum support for Aboriginal ESL learners also included the development of student support materials for both primary and secondary levels.

Aboriginal education

Education programs continued to be provided for a range of learning contexts such as English-medium schools, schools with bilingual literacy programs and homeland centres. Bilingual education programs operated in 20 communities, covering 34 languages and dialects. To meet community expectations, some programs expanded from bilingual (English and one community language) to multi-language and culture maintenance programs. The process of appraisal and accreditation of schools continued. Milngimbi CEC, Docker River School and Yuendumu CEC bilingual programs received accreditation for the next three years.



ESL teacher with students at Darwin High School

During 1994, AEP funding through the Support for Aboriginal Languages in Schools initiative supported 31 additional projects (school and regional) focusing on Aboriginal language and culture maintenance.

The department continued to co-host and provide input into the national Australian Indigenous Languages Framework (AILF) project for senior secondary students, under the management of the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA) and funded by the Commonwealth through the Innovative Languages other than English (ILOTES) program. Representatives from Alice Springs participated in the Professional Development for Teachers of Aboriginal Languages workshops for schools and personnel trialling the implementation of the AILF project.

The major focus of the Aboriginal Involvement in Decision Making initiative, funded through AEP, was the Aboriginal Education Standing Committee of the Board of Studies, which met to consider and provide advice on a range of areas relating to curriculum and assessment. Committee members commenced drafting policies for Aboriginal studies and Aboriginal languages for Northern Territory schools. The initiative also substantially developed an information and in-service kit to assist Aboriginal people involved in educational decision-making bodies.

Multilevel Assessment Program

The Multilevel Assessment Program (MAP) consists of system-wide writing moderation and the tests of reading comprehension and mathematics. Results of the reading comprehension and mathematics tests only are reported in the following section.

The MAP tests are administered in two programs: non-urban (Aboriginal) schools and urban schools.

Non-urban schools have a predominantly Aboriginal student population. Students aged 11–16 are tested each year using multi-stage tests of reading comprehension and mathematics.

Urban schools have a predominantly non-Aboriginal student population. Students from year 5 and year 7 are tested each year using multi-stage tests of reading comprehension and mathematics.

Each test spans several stages of the Board-approved curriculum. The rationale for adopting a multi-stage structure is to provide for the wide range of performance levels in the target populations.

Performance on the MAP tests is reported using an arbitrary linear scale with values ranging from approximately 400 to 1100. These values are not absolute and should be interpreted relative to each other.

Table 4. Estimated student achievement for the 1994 Urban MAP reading test

<i>MAP Reading Test</i>	<i>No. of participants</i>	<i>Average student achievement</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>No. of zero scores</i>	<i>No. of perfect scores</i>
Aboriginal year 5	310	777	61	—	—
Non-Aboriginal year 5	1,708	831	55	—	4
<i>Total year 5</i>	<i>2,018</i>	<i>823</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>4</i>
Aboriginal year 7	238	827	70	—	—
Non-Aboriginal year 7	1,606	887	57	—	—
<i>Total year 7</i>	<i>1,844</i>	<i>879</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>—</i>

Table 5. Estimated student achievement for the 1994 Urban MAP mathematics test

<i>MAP Mathematics Test</i>	<i>No. of participants</i>	<i>Average student achievement</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>No. of zero scores</i>	<i>No. of perfect scores</i>
Aboriginal year 5	313	743	52	—	—
Non-Aboriginal year 5	1,790	795	52	—	2
<i>Total year 5</i>	<i>2103</i>	<i>787</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>2</i>
Aboriginal year 7	244	793	62	—	—
Non-Aboriginal year 7	1,664	860	61	—	—
<i>Total year 7</i>	<i>1,908</i>	<i>851</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>—</i>

Note: The average student achievements reported above are based on an arbitrary scale (400–1100) used to report the MAP tests of reading and mathematics. Do not interpret the averages as an absolute score but relative to each other.

Source: Curriculum and Assessment, NT Dept of Education

Table 6. Estimated student achievement, by age, for the 1994 non-urban MAP reading test

<i>Age</i>	<i>No. of participants</i>	<i>Average student achievement</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>No. of zero scores</i>	<i>No. of perfect scores</i>
11	266	624	100	4	4
12	313	634	87	2	4
13	236	647	86	3	—
14	189	652	92	1	—
15	125	664	97	—	1
16	79	676	93	—	1
Unknown	175	648	87	2	2
Total	1,383	644	92	12	12

Table 7. Estimated student achievement, by age, for the 1994 non-urban MAP mathematics test

<i>Age</i>	<i>No. of participants</i>	<i>Average student achievement</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>No. of zero scores</i>	<i>No. of perfect scores</i>
11	294	650	57	—	—
12	343	658	57	1	1
13	233	662	59	1	—
14	194	665	56	—	1
15	137	666	67	1	—
16	80	683	56	—	—
Unknown	252	650	59	—	—
Total	1,533	659	59	3	2

Note: The average student achievements reported above are based on an arbitrary scale (400–1100) used to report the MAP tests of reading and mathematics. Do not interpret the averages as an absolute score but relative to each other.

Source: Curriculum and Assessment, NT Department of Education

Table 8. JSSC English results (grades) by gender, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, 1994

<i>Achievement grade</i>	<i>Number of students</i>			
	<i>Aboriginal</i>		<i>Non-Aboriginal</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
A*	—	—	1	—
A	—	—	15	26
B	4	21	163	276
C	27	46	312	292
D	27	39	118	49
E	36	30	86	32

Source: Curriculum and Assessment, NT Department of Education

Table 6 shows the student achievement estimate statistics for the 1994 non-urban MAP reading test. The number of students in each age group, each group's average and standard deviation of their achievement estimates, and the numbers of students with zero and perfect scores are shown.

Junior Secondary Studies Certificate

Students who complete year 10 studies at an approved secondary school may qualify to receive the Junior Secondary Studies Certificate (JSSC). The JSSC signifies completion of the Board-approved curriculum for junior secondary schooling during years 8, 9 and 10.

The performance of female Aboriginal students was generally superior to that of male Aboriginal students. This was also the case for non-Aboriginal students.

Table 9. JSSC levels 1, 2 and 3 mathematics results (grades) and number of students completing each level of JSSC mathematics, by gender, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, 1994

<i>Maths level</i>	<i>No. students</i>	<i>A*</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>
Level 1							
<i>Aboriginal</i>							
Male	6	—	—	1	2	1	2
Female	13	—	—	1	6	6	—
<i>Non-Aboriginal</i>							
Male	255	—	23	69	97	46	20
Female	260	3	19	83	84	57	14
Level 2							
<i>Aboriginal</i>							
Male	30	—	—	8	13	5	4
Female	55	—	1	4	20	21	9
<i>Non-Aboriginal</i>							
Male	296	—	12	79	120	62	23
Female	308	—	14	101	107	66	20
Level 3							
<i>Aboriginal</i>							
Male	55	—	—	5	22	17	11
Female	63	—	2	11	19	21	10
<i>Non-Aboriginal</i>							
Male	130	—	6	47	38	27	12
Female	83	—	5	38	21	15	4

Source: Curriculum and Assessment, NT Department of Education

The number of female Aboriginal students completing level 1 mathematics was much greater than the number of male Aboriginal students (level 1, 13 compared to 6; level 2, 55 compared to 30; level 3, 63 compared to 55). The performance of male Aboriginal students in level 3 mathematics was generally superior to that of female Aboriginal students.

Of the Aboriginal students who completed a JSSC mathematics subject, 9 per cent completed level 1 mathematics, 38 per cent completed level 2 and 53 per cent completed level 3. For non-Aboriginal students, the percentages of students who completed each level were: level 1, 39 per cent; level 2, 45 per cent; and level 3, 16 per cent.

Performance on the South Australian Certificate of Education

Thirteen Aboriginal students, ten of whom were female, achieved an A grade and 50 Aboriginal students, of whom 38 were female, achieved a B grade for SACE (NT) stage 2 courses in 1994.

The two A* grades for SACE (NT) stage 1 courses achieved by Aboriginal students in 1994 were both received by female students (see Table 10). The 76 A grades for SACE (NT) stage 1 courses achieved by Aboriginal students were received by 52 females and 24 males.

Awards issued

Table 11 shows the numbers of male and female Aboriginal students who received a JSSC and SACE (NT) in 1992, 1993 and 1994. It also shows the number of students who obtained a SACE (NT) aggregate score of 50 per cent or higher and who were eligible for entry to the Northern Territory University (NTU).

For each award in 1994, female Aboriginal students receiving awards outnumbered their male counterparts. This was also the case in 1992 and 1993. The total number of JSSCs issued to Aboriginal students in 1994 increased by 10.8 per cent when compared with 1993.

Table 10. Comparison of grades achieved by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students for all SACE (NT) stage 1 and stage 2 courses, by gender, 1994

	<i>A*</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>
Stage 1						
<i>Aboriginal</i>						
Male	—	24	118	219	133	265
Female	2	52	212	314	173	211
<i>Non-Aboriginal</i>						
Male	15	655	2,073	2,410	1,188	1,379
Female	23	1,041	2,450	2,024	855	902
Stage 2						
<i>Aboriginal</i>						
Male	—	3	12	29	19	44
Female	—	10	38	61	64	35
<i>Non-Aboriginal</i>						
Male	—	187	643	684	399	288
Female	—	305	865	778	317	193

Source: Curriculum and Assessment, NT Department of Education

Table 11. Number of Aboriginal students who received awards in school, by gender

	1992			1993			1994		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
JSSC	76	119	195	81	95	176	78	117	195
SACE (NT)	8	22	30	12	18	30	6	20	26
50 per cent or higher aggregate on SACE (NT)	4	17	21	6	14	20	5	14	19
Year 12 students eligible for entry to NTU (higher education)	3	10	13	4	9	13	4	11	15

Source: Curriculum and Assessment, NT Department of Education

Special education and students with disabilities

In 1994, the Northern Territory Government received \$140,932 in funding under the Students with Disabilities Component of NEPS.

In March 1994, the Northern Territory Board of Studies Special Education Policy—Provision for Students with Disabilities in Northern Territory Schools—was officially launched by the Minister for Education. To facilitate the implementation of the policy, the Special Education Advisory Committee of the Board of Studies prepared the first draft of the supporting document, *Implementing the Special Education Policy*, which will be widely circulated for comment in early 1995. In addition, Curriculum and Assessment Division was lobbied extensively to gain approval for a project officer position to develop special category curriculum and broaden existing curriculum in order to better cater for the wide range of abilities of students within Northern Territory schools. This senior position will be available in 1995.

During 1994, special education teachers and teacher assistants were appointed to support new special education programs at two urban primary schools, and two remote Northern Territory primary schools were provided with a shared special education teacher position, to assist with the planning and implementation of educational programs in those schools for students with high support needs.

Plans were developed for a new special education facility designed to be able to cater for the growing number of severely disabled students in the Palmerston and rural region. In the interim, an additional special education program was planned, to provide assistance for students with high support needs from within the rural area. The program will commence in 1995 with an appropriate facility already in place.

The School-to-work Transition Program (for secondary age students with disabilities) is a Commonwealth - and

Territory - funded Territory-wide initiative. School-to-work transition programs have provided students with broader curriculum options, and the opportunity to extend their skills and to gain further experience in the work environment.

To ensure equitable services throughout all regions within the Northern Territory, five new therapy positions were approved by Cabinet. These were allocated on the basis of an additional occupational therapy and an additional physiotherapy position in Darwin, a speech pathology position in Katherine and an additional speech pathology and occupational therapy position for Alice Springs to assist in the Southern Region. All therapists located in urban areas provide a consultancy service and rural and remote communities throughout the Northern Territory have benefited from a resulting improved service.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy

Implementation of AEP was extended in the Northern Territory through funding from the Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program (AESIP). Approximately \$12 million was allocated to the department to increase involvement, extend access, raise participation and enhance outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

During 1994, there were 23 projects which addressed these areas and they included:

- employment of 29 Aboriginal Education Liaison Officers to support Aboriginal students through extending school-home links;
- support for 34 submissions to extend Aboriginal language and cultural maintenance;
- production of video and explanatory materials as part of the Aboriginal hearing program;

- school and regional office support for 11 mentor training programs;
- development of primary-level curriculum materials for use in remote schools and the development of secondary-level materials for mixed-mode delivery;
- construction of new or upgraded school facilities at five remote area locations;
- further refinement of primary assessment instruments to provide feedback on Aboriginal students' academic attainment;
- education and training programs for Aboriginal inmates in prisons or detention centres in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Outcomes from these activities are being assessed through a formal appraisal program. Appraisals, which involve the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET). Feppi. (the Northern Territory Aboriginal Education Consultative Group) and the department, have resulted in highly valuable feed-back being provided to initiatives. After one appraisal, an initiative had its funding significantly increased to accelerate the development of curriculum materials on CD-ROM for Aboriginal secondary students. Another initiative has been restructured to provide a greater focus on curriculum implementation in remote schools.

Catholic system

Retention and participation

The Northern Territory Catholic education system is moving over the next three years towards having three secondary schools with senior classes. Senior secondary classes were available for the first time in Alice Springs in 1994 and will be available in Darwin in 1995.

There is one Catholic senior secondary school in the Northern Territory which provides education to year 12. Of the other two secondary schools, one is offering year 11 for the first time, and it is projected that the other school will do so in 1995. The five community schools/centres provide post-primary classes to year 9. This causes difficulty in providing detailed information that can be used to some purpose to indicate the reality of retention rates in the age group 15–19 years.

There was an overall increase in the number of students in initial secondary studies at Xavier CEC. An additional on-site theology course and training scheme for intellectually disabled adult students was offered in 1994. Fourteen students from Wadeye attended St John's College in Darwin, while 28 girls commenced foundation studies, general studies and secondary correspondence courses at Wadeye.

The Kumamadjiin unit at Sacred Heart School continued to provide educational facilities for students from Aboriginal communities and—along with the units at Catholic High School and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Alice Springs—supported students and families accessing education and remaining at school.

Decision making and community participation

Catholic schools operated with assistance from school boards and/or parent organisations. Through its staff members, the Catholic education system was represented on Feppi. Discussions continued with Aboriginal people concerning the formation of a Catholic Aboriginal education group.

Parent groups and ASSPA committees accepted greater responsibility for school initiatives and contributed to discussions with school staff on school initiatives and school programs.

In October, a general assembly on Catholic education was held with parent/teacher representatives, principals, Catholic Education Office and church personnel, from around the Territory. The assembly was a consultative process in articulating the vision, mission and goals of Catholic education in the Northern Territory.

Student mobility

The mobility of students, both from interstate and within the Territory, continued to be an important issue. Of particular concern was the effect of this mobility on students with special learning needs and disabilities.

Aboriginal communities

Schools in homeland centres associated with St Francis Xavier's School at Daly River continued to cater for the needs of local children who returned to their homeland area for a period of time.

Aboriginal students benefited from the work of the Aboriginal Resource Officers in several urban schools. The coordinator of Aboriginal education worked closely with these resource persons and also supported the coordinator of the Tardis Centre, which provides an alternative education program for adolescent Aboriginal students who are not accessing secondary education in Darwin.

Aboriginal teacher education

The number of teachers studying increased, as teachers returned to upgrade qualifications or obtain their initial teaching qualification. All Catholic Aboriginal community schools now have at least two trained Aboriginal teachers and school communities support others in training. The Mentor Program, for those moving into teaching positions and administration, continued. In the future, as schools move to Aboriginalisation, careful

consideration needs to be given to funding to provide adequate ongoing professional support for beginning and recently qualified teachers and administrative staff operating in extremely isolated communities.

Equity initiatives

NEPS funding provided to the Catholic education system enabled initiatives in special education (including integration), ESL, disadvantaged schools programs and country areas programs to be implemented. Catholic Aboriginal schools now have access to NEPS funding; however, the needs are always greater than the funding available.

In 1994, the Catholic systemic sector received \$53,423 in funding under the Students with Disabilities Component of NEPS. The total amount for the non-government sector was \$95,812.

In 1994, funds from the NEPS Special Education Capital Support—Non-government sub-component were broadbanded with the Schools Support—Non-government sub-component. These funds were allocated to schools to provide specialist teacher and teacher assistant support for targeted students in the individual schools.

Funding to schools enabled more intensive English language support programs to be mounted. There is an ever-growing need for the support of students with non-English speaking backgrounds in the Catholic schools.

Services for supporting the integration programs in urban schools continued with NEPS funding. In addition, some schools accessed funding for teachers to assist with language programs. Funding was made available to schools on a submission basis.

Independent schools

Community participation

Schools in the independent sector consider the following groups to be part of a school's community: past and present students and their families; sister schools; and members of the surrounding geographical community. The community interacts with the schools in a variety of ways, including parental assistance in the classrooms, regular newsletters and meetings to discuss educational issues and curriculum reviews.

Territory issues affecting quality schooling

Distance and isolation are two factors which still impact on education in the Territory. Visits between sister-schools and student language exchanges help overcome such factors.

It is costly to develop the individualised programs and support personnel required to help the increasing

number of children with disabilities and impairments enrolling in independent schools.

Education of girls

Independent schools continued to endorse and implement the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls. While many Aboriginal girls still do not make the transition from primary to secondary schools, at the secondary level, schools reported that in 1994 girls were predominantly in leadership roles within the school community.

Gifted and talented

The Commonwealth-funded Gifted and Talented Project, which commenced in 1993, was concluded. Four independent secondary boarding colleges undertook individual studies/programs which sought to identify and support gifted and talented students from isolated rural areas and traditional Aboriginal communities.

Programs for gifted and talented students undertaken during 1994 employed a variety of strategies aimed at enabling students to achieve high levels of understanding and skills. In some cases, gifted and talented students remained within class with their peers. Others were involved in withdrawal programs for the completion of specific projects. In a few cases, schools employed specialist teachers to provide programs for gifted and talented students.

The program highlighted gifted and talented students in classes and the need to provide a diversity of curriculum options. It also revealed the importance of peer acceptance of the gifted and talented and the value of wider school involvement in programs.

Students experiencing literacy problems

Identification of students with literacy problems was achieved through diagnostic testing, teacher observation and monitoring and pre-enrolment tests. Strategies to enhance achievement included use of peer tutoring; composite classes based on mixed-ability levels; assessment based on ability grouping; and the use of special programs, for example, the Macquarie Program.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

For the majority of Aboriginal students in independent schools, English is a second language. Commonwealth funding to independent schools under the ESL General Support sub-component has been vital in helping to address needs, especially at the secondary level. It has enabled schools to provide additional support for students and to develop intensive ESL needs-based programs.



Teacher instructing a hearing impaired student

Special education and students with disabilities

The number of children with disabilities and impairments who require special or intervention programs is increasing. In 1994, funds from the Special Education Schools Support sub-component of NEPS were allocated to three schools. These schools were able to cater for students with special needs, mainly through the employment of part-time instructors (PTIs), enabling the individualisation of programs, one-to-one and small-group teaching and integration of special needs children into the mainstream.

Six schools which received Special Education Capital Support sub-component funding under the NEPS program purchased specialised education equipment, including computers, and built ramps to provide wheelchair access for disabled students.

General and vocational education

Changing arrangements for post-compulsory schooling

The first cohort of students to successfully complete the requirements for the new two-year minimum senior secondary certificate, SACE (NT), received their certificates in January 1994 for studies completed in 1993.

Investigations were made and planning undertaken for the provision of assistance to, and an advisory service for, students and their parents following receipt of year 12 results in January 1995.

During 1994, it was announced that the Northern Territory Certificate of Education (NTCE) will be awarded to students who successfully complete their senior secondary studies from 1996 onwards. The

certificate will replace the SACE (NT). This change will reflect the fact that the certificate is issued to Northern Territory residents who have been taught at Northern Territory schools by Northern Territory teachers, and who have largely followed Northern Territory Board of Studies courses and assessment programs.

Students studying for the NTCE will need to meet the same requirements as those who have been awarded the SACE (NT); and the higher education pathway will still be through South Australian stage 2 courses.

School-TAFE links

Policies enabling schools to offer vocational education and training modules, and for these to contribute toward requirements for the SACE (NT), remained. A considerable amount of work and consultation was undertaken to update the range of policies that could be applied and to bring them together into a single Recognition Policy for certification studies.

An updated *Credit Transfer Handbook* was published, outlining some 70 senior secondary courses for which credit is given for particular vocational education and training programs in the tertiary area.

Liaison with the vocational education and training sector was facilitated through Board of Studies representation on the Northern Territory Employment and Training Authority Board (NTETA) and its accreditation committee.

Key competencies

The Commonwealth-funded key competencies pilot project commenced with the appointment of a project officer to coordinate activities. The project has a curriculum focus and aims to identify and develop key competencies in senior secondary curriculum and develop materials to support their implementation.



Automotive class at Casuarina Secondary College

Australian Vocational Training System pilot

The two institution-based Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS) pilot programs which commenced in 1993 continued, with increased student enrolments. In Darwin, the Training for Retail and Commerce (TRAC) Program experienced an increase in its level of community support and in the number of participating schools. A feasibility study on expansion of the TRAC Program into the tourism and hospitality area was undertaken. The Alice Springs Youth Partnership—a cooperative venture between the Central Australia Group Training Company, Alice Springs High School and Centralian College—continued to meet the needs of students at risk of discontinuing their schooling and attracted wide community support.

A new institution-based AVTS pilot program focusing on the metals industry was developed, approved and introduced as a partnership between the Northern Territory University and Casuarina Secondary College.

Career education

A wide range of activities continued to be provided to support and promote career education. Additional careers counsellors were appointed to all government secondary schools to assist students with career and subject choices. The Job and Course Explorer computer database was installed in an additional five sites and its use promoted. A teachers-in-industry program, which was trialled in 1993, was implemented. The program enabled ten teachers to be placed in industries relevant to their teaching areas for full-time work for up to ten weeks. A career education curriculum module and teaching guide was developed for use with non-urban Aboriginal students.

Catholic system

Adult education courses were expanded to include courses for mechanics, literacy and numeracy courses for health workers, money management and budgeting. Work experience exercises led to the full- or part-time employment of students. Young people who had left school sought re-entry to classes.

Independent schools

Key competencies

Schools within the non-government sector have received, and are using, the kit and video on key competencies from DEET. A number of schools are also employing material on key competencies from the Australian Association of Christian Schools. Staff in-service courses are being used to identify and develop key competencies and implement them into the curriculum.

School-TAFE links

The difficulty of effective articulation of Aboriginal students into the tertiary sector continues to be a concern, but strong links and easy access to local TAFE institutions have been established. In 1994, there were increased enrolments by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in TAFE courses, although many were for short-term courses.

Schools continued to use private training providers to provide school-based courses, while visits to local industries and tertiary institutions provided other linkages.

Areas of student learning

Government sector

English

English remained a key learning area for students in the Territory. It comprises a set of communication skills and a field of knowledge, and is also the medium of schooling. A major issue continues to be the challenge of providing the opportunity for students in remote educational contexts to achieve the outcomes of the curriculum.

The *English Subject Curriculum Statement*, incorporating material from *A Statement on English for Australian Schools*, was published. The curriculum support books—*English for Stages 7–10, its Scope and Sequence*; *English for Stages 3–7, its Scope and Sequence*; and *English for Stages T–3, its Scope and Sequence*—were further developed.

Six senior accredited stage 1 English courses were revised and reaccredited. Four more schools undertook stage 1 senior accredited English courses than in 1993.

Professional development focused primarily on the development of school-based programs of study, in primary and junior secondary schools, which ensure that all students are given access to the whole scope of the English curriculum in contextually appropriate ways. A professional development program for teaching reading was trialled, for system-wide implementation in 1995.

The MAP continued to assess aspects of the reading comprehension of students enrolled in years 5 and 7 in urban primary schools, and of students aged 11–16 in Aboriginal schools. System-wide moderation of classroom assessment of student writing, using moderation instruments, was carried out in a sample of schools.

At the year 10 level, 1994 was the sixth year in which completion of a common instrument of assessment contributed to the students' English grade for the JSSC. At all levels, the system-wide assessment program allows identification of students by gender, language

and Aboriginality so that performance by sub-groups can be monitored for equity purposes. Details are published annually.

English as a second language

To assist students to achieve the outcomes of the Northern Territory Board of Studies approved English curriculum, support for ESL students focused on the development of English materials and applying ESL principles to the development of materials across the curriculum. Curriculum support also included:

- Commonwealth-funded AEP primary stage 4 English modules;
- continued participation in the MAP assessment of reading comprehension and moderation of writing at the primary levels for both urban and non-urban schools;
- distribution of ESL scales to all schools as preparation for implementation in 1995;
- revision of the AEP-funded Foundation Studies and General Studies courses for secondary-age Aboriginal students and their approval by the Board of Studies as special category curriculum;
- AEP secondary English years 8, 9 and 10;
- implementation of the revised Northern Territory senior secondary course, ESL parts 1 and 2.

Projects underway in mathematics, social education, health and science for primary and secondary levels are based on the learning outcomes identified in the Board of Studies approved courses but incorporate ESL teaching/learning principles.

Languages other than English

At the curriculum level, the major focus for languages other than English (LOTE) teaching was on rewriting of courses of study T-10 for a range of languages taught in Northern Territory schools, and consultation and input from senior secondary teachers of languages for the revision of the stage 1 Senior Secondary Accredited Courses for the 1996-2000 period. The Northern Territory, in cooperation with the North Australian Film Corporation and Curriculum Corporation, completed the Indonesian Video Project. This project comprises two videos and teachers' notes, *A Look at Indonesia* and *Mari Menonton*, which support the Indonesian curriculum, *Suara Siswa*.

At the operational level, regional professional development activities were held for the Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese national curriculum guidelines. The project officer for Indonesian curriculum conducted a series of workshops in major centres. Professional

development activities were also conducted for teachers of German and French at both primary and secondary levels.

A number of teachers were successful in gaining awards for short-term intensive 'in country' study, mainly in Indonesia; and the Northern Territory - Indonesian exchange program continued to attract participants, thereby providing experienced exchange teachers to support the local Indonesian language programs. The Territory continued its participation in the Japanese Monbusho Rex Program, with a teacher from Japan working in the Alice Springs region.

Statistics regarding student participation in programs in the eight identified priority languages funded under the Priority Languages Incentive Element (PLIE) (\$28,122) of the School Language Program are included in Table 12, along with other languages taught in Territory schools.

Funding under the Community Languages Element (CLE) (\$32,000) of the School Language Program was used to support after-hours programs in Cantonese, Mandarin, Tamil, Tetum and Modern Greek and the Italian insertion program. Subsequent to the per capita allocation, remaining funds were distributed among the organisations conducting these programs for the

Table 12. Students undertaking particular LOTE subjects, 1994

	Transition-7		Years 8-10		Years 11-12	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Aboriginal	1,272	1,205	231	246	—	—
Chinese	102	85	56	29	12	11
French	22	30	55	74	5	6
German	114	135	69	57	1	10
Greek	—	—	45	33	15	17
Hakka	—	—	3	2	—	—
Indonesian	2,169	2,025	743	818	30	86
Italian	538	548	27	21	—	—
Japanese	254	262	127	181	6	22
Modern Greek	4	7	—	—	—	—
Portuguese	7	2	—	—	—	—
Tagalog	2	4	1	3	—	—
Vietnamese	5	3	3	6	—	—
Total	4,489	4,306	1,360	1,470	69	152

Source: NT Department of Education

acquisition of material resources and to support professional development activities for their teachers.

Science

Curriculum development focused on two levels of documents, a T-10 science subject curriculum statement and two Board-approved courses of study, one for early childhood and primary and the other for junior secondary. The course documents emphasise the integration of the 'working scientifically' strand with the other conceptual strands. Production of a scope and sequence document related to the primary course commenced in 1994.

Assessment in year 10 for the purposes of the JSSC focuses on moderation of a number of school-based tasks. An evaluation of these tasks commenced in 1994 to increase the emphasis on outcomes related to 'working scientifically'.

Development of science curriculum resource materials continued, with development of materials for foundation and general studies in CECs. The development of primary and secondary school materials for Aboriginal students continued through the Implementing the Common Curriculum in Aboriginal Schools Project. Some of the secondary-level materials have been converted to multimedia format on CD-ROM and are being trialled.

Access by students to informal education centres—the CSIRO Science Education Centre, Channel Island Field Study Centre, Territory Wildlife Park—continues with the support of the department. These centres also offer professional development programs. Students also have access to the Science Drop-in Centre in Alice Springs.

Technology

Technology is not offered as a subject in its own right, but aspects of it are taught in science, agricultural studies, media studies, computing, home economics, business education and technical studies.

Science is a compulsory subject in years T-10 and technical studies, home economics and business education all have compulsory introductory units in years 8 and 9. During the years of compulsory schooling, computing is listed as a key learning area and is integrated across the curriculum.

In senior school, all of the above areas offer a range of semester-length units at SACE (NT) stage 1, leading to semester- or year-length courses at stage 2. Many students who may previously have been denied access to some technology units because of their subject commitments in senior school, now have access to some of these in the later years of junior high school. A major issue at the senior level has been the articulation of courses with the vocational education and training

(VET) sector. Many senior courses were substantially revised to include competencies, where appropriate. Mapping of the key competencies for these courses has been completed.

The main issue in implementing technology in all schools is the provision of trained teachers and equipment in schools. A \$2 for \$1 subsidy scheme exists to help schools expand and upgrade computer systems and software.

The use of technology in delivering distance education programs to people in remote areas is being extended after a lengthy trial in 1994. The use of this technology, to enhance learning in all areas, greatly enhances the use and understanding of technology and its applications.

Specific trials included the use of video conferencing to one remote school at an average of five hours per week and electronic classroom (interactive audio and white-board) tutorial links with approximately 12 remote Aboriginal schools and a small number of urban schools. Early results have been promising. Trials of interactive television (one-way TV, two-way voice) proved successful in delivering a range of lessons to primary school-of-the-air students and secondary science support materials. However, the trials have not continued, due largely to recurrent cost problems arising from preparation requirements and delivery charges. Work has started on the development of CD-based lesson materials for remote Aboriginal students commencing secondary studies and trials are due to commence shortly. The challenge in this area is to find personnel with appropriate Aboriginal teaching qualifications, and junior, secondary and advanced computing skills.

Mathematics

The implementation of *Learning Mathematics*—the primary maths curriculum used in the Northern Territory—and of the Northern Territory Board of Studies approved course of study in years 8-10 mathematics continued.

The Mathematics Teaching, Learning and Assessment Project continued. This project involves teacher professional development between the Department of Education and the Mathematics Teachers Association of the Northern Territory. It focused on exemplary classroom delivery strategies and the key messages of the *National Statement on Mathematics for Australian Schools*.

System-wide assessment continued, through the MAP, of student understandings of the Board-approved mathematics courses. This assessment was conducted in years 5 and 7 in urban schools and at stages 2 to 4 for students between the ages of 11 and 16 in non-urban

(Aboriginal) schools. In addition, the program is used to monitor the performance of sub-groups, for equity purposes, on the basis of gender and Aboriginality.

In primary schools, 1994 was the first year in which exploratory work was carried out at the system level, focusing on mathematical investigations. In addition, preparation continued for the trialling of profiling in selected primary and secondary schools during 1995.

At the year 10 level, 1994 was the sixth year in which a common instrument of assessment was combined with externally moderated school-based assessments to obtain the mathematics grade for the JSSC. A substantial change was made to the structure of the level 1 paper, i.e. for the top one-third of students studying this course.

The Commonwealth-funded project, Task Centres in Aboriginal Schools, continued most successfully in selected non-urban schools.

Studies of society and environment

Studies of society and environment includes two subjects in the Northern Territory curriculum—social education and business education—with aspects of environmental studies also being covered in science.

Social education has separate guidelines for years T–7 urban, rural and remote schools. The rural and remote document is designed specifically for use in predominantly Aboriginal communities.

In years T–7, social education has a time allocation of two hours per week and in years 8–10, 360 hours over three years. In both settings it comprises a number of units which are informed by disciplines underlying the subject area; however, units do not necessarily have a single-discipline focus. In the senior years, specialised courses and subjects appear. Some 16 subjects are offered in stage 2.



Maths class at Bradshaw Primary School

Business education in years 8–10 has a compulsory element, focusing on an individual's interaction with Australian legal and economic systems. It has a time allocation of 80 hours. Opportunity is also provided for students to undertake electives in areas such as keyboard skills. In the senior years, 19 semester-length units are offered at stage 1, and 23 units at stage 2, covering a range of specialist areas including economics, legal studies, business management and office skills.

Moderation of stage 1 subjects is a major ongoing focus for the business curriculum area. Preliminary work is currently being carried out on investigating the need for expansion of vocational education within the post-compulsory business education curriculum.

In the area of assessment, the main development has been the consolidation of moderation at year 10 level in social education. Assessment activities and work requirements continued to be developed and documented for SACE (NT) courses in history, geography and social studies.

The arts

The arts include the learning areas of dance, drama and music (performing arts) and art, craft and design (visual arts). The subject area forms part of the compulsory Board-approved curriculum for years T–10, with a time allocation of two hours per week in primary schools and 240 hours over three years in years 8–10. Students are required to engage in three performing and three visual arts units over these three years.

In senior school, there are 28 semester-length courses available at stage 1 of the SACE (NT). These include courses in each of the learning areas. Moderation procedures for these courses are based on Territory-wide group moderation of work programs and assessment plans.

Revision of the arts curriculum documents for the years of compulsory schooling commenced in 1994. The arts statements and profiles for Australian schools are being used as the guidelines for revision. The area of design is being more clearly delineated and added to the curriculum in line with national trends.

Health and physical education

Health and physical education is compulsory for all students in years T–10. Students are also required to undertake a minimum of two introductory units in home economics during years 8 and 9.

A subject curriculum statement and Board-approved courses of study (T–10) in health and physical education are being developed in line with the statement and profile for Australian schools. The subject curriculum statement and the course in home economics were approved for distribution to schools in mid-1995.

A series of three *Outdoor Education Leadership and Safety Guidelines* booklets continued to be developed in 1994 to assist teachers of outdoor education plan and implement outdoor education programs in accordance with prescribed safety procedures.

Health education curriculum support materials are being written to supplement the *Health Is Life* resource currently being used in Aboriginal schools and communities throughout the Territory.

A health and drug education school resources survey, completed in 1994, highlighted the need for teacher education and professional development, particularly in drug and alcohol education.

Following requests for training in the Protective Behaviours Program, a protective behaviours coordinator position was established. This position is responsible for the efficient use of existing trainers and resources, accreditation of trainers and development of suitable resources for Aboriginal and Islander students and communication with members of the Protective Behaviours Forum.

An initiative to provide professional development for health and physical education teachers in the Australian Sport Drug Agency *Drugs in Sport* resource materials was also successfully undertaken in 1994.

Two stage 1 courses, Catering 1 and Catering 2, were revised for re-accreditation in 1995 to facilitate credit transfer into the VET sector. These courses include three Australian Hospitality Review Panel modules, Introductory Unit 3: Introduction to Food and Beverage, Introductory Unit 4: Food Production—the Kitchen and Introductory Unit 8: Occupational Hygiene.

A publicly examined subject, nutrition, which was accredited in 1994, has been accepted as a higher education entrance subject by the University of South Australia and will be offered at stage 2 for the first time in 1995. Home economics courses were rewritten for CECs, modelling the relevant teaching–learning sequences whilst focusing on the language required in the subject areas. Nutrition is being highlighted in primary schools with the introduction of the recently developed *Hands on Food* kit. The kit focuses on the food cycle as a way of introducing choice in food selection. The approach is integrated with health and physical education, English, science, and studies of society and the environment course content.

Catholic system

English

There was a continued emphasis on English as a written and oral form of communication. Testing included students from Catholic schools. The Board of Studies indicated that appropriate standards have been achieved.

There is still a need for increased support for students who have disabilities or for whom English is a second language. At Murrupurtiyanuwu School, support was received from the Menzies School of Health Research to assist students with hearing impairments. At Xavier CEC, staff attended the department's professional development programs to discuss appropriate protocols for English.

The staff from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Wadeye, combined with the staff from two other remote schools for in-service days on the In-service Training in the English Curriculum Program. Ltyentye Apurte are using the Making a Difference scheme in their teaching of English.

Languages other than English

Arrente, Greek, Italian, Indonesian and Japanese languages were available to students in Catholic urban primary schools. Arrente, Chinese (Mandarin), French, Indonesian and Japanese languages were available in Catholic urban secondary schools. In Aboriginal community schools, Arrente, Murrinhpatha and Tiwi languages were taught within the context of bilingual programs. To support these programs, cultural exchanges continued, with a group of secondary students travelling to Indonesia and interchange occurring between urban primary/secondary schools and a local Aboriginal school.

Bilingual education programs in community schools were broadened to include the latest resources in computer technology. Literacy programs continued in Aboriginal schools and have proved to be effective. Maximum use is not being made, at a national level, of the expertise and resources developed.

Mathematics

Mathematics continued to be a significant part of the curriculum. All primary schools participated in testing in mathematics. Secondary schools are also involved in the Northern Territory testing programs and moderation procedures. In some primary schools there was a new thrust in mathematics with the introduction of more appropriate course material supporting the required program of study.

English as a second language

Funding from the Commonwealth, under the General Support sub-component, was used to provide ongoing support for students of non-English speaking backgrounds. The ESL needs of Aboriginal children is gaining greater recognition and hence efforts are being made to address the English language teaching of these students from the perspective of it being a second language for them and in many cases a foreign language.

Science

The interest in teaching science in the years T–7 is continuing and staff are gaining access to teaching strategies focusing on problem solving. This year they began to develop ‘hands on’ science in the years T–2 with teachers working collaboratively on programming and teaching.

Senior students took part in excursions interstate, where they were able to participate in science and technology workshops and broaden their experiences in language use and exposure to other cultures. Science is a core subject from years T–10.

Technology

Schools have made greater use of information technology by investing in computers and there is a trend to network computers. Courses in years 8–10 use computers and other technologies to facilitate learning and encourage students to broaden their experience of the subject matter and gain insight into the futuristic directions of technology.

Studies of society and environment

The studies of society and environment learning area includes social education and business education subjects in the Northern Territory curriculum. Aspects of environmental studies are part of the science curriculum.

Initiatives during 1994 were in the direction of a living history approach in year 7, the taking on of the MAGNET program at one of the schools and student involvement in a tree-planting and care-for-plants program.

The arts

The arts include the areas of visual and performing arts. Schools access these areas in a comprehensive way, with the focus on student-centred learning.

In several community schools art teachers produced programs which incorporated the traditional arts and crafts. Community members assisted students with screen printing and batik.

Health and physical education

In health, current social health issues are addressed and the physical education programs range from the development of skills to playing competitive sports. A number of schools participated in the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program and other life education programs including AIDS education and alcohol awareness. In one school, nutrition cooking classes were used for teaching mathematical concepts, health and hygiene. A health program funded by the Commonwealth was commenced. The school-based

curriculum has been established, focusing on providing the students with experiences in health education and requiring them to take responsibility for their own health and that of their community. Staff and students were instrumental in promoting weekly health awareness exercises for the wider community.

Asian studies

A number of schools teach Asian languages in years T–10. Several other schools are planning to add Asian languages to their curriculum offerings. Some schools are using the distance education mode for the delivery of these programs. One school was involved in the MAGNET program.

Independent schools

English

Independent schools continued to develop and trial programs in English based on the Northern Territory Board of Studies curricula. The development of literacy skills is of high priority, especially as English is the language of communication and instruction. The acquisition of such skills is critical where English is a second language. The implementation of early literacy programs and continuing professional development courses for teachers are seen as essential in enabling children to acquire and use language.

Primary and secondary English programs emphasised the importance of students developing appropriate reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. In many schools, especially at the secondary level, tutoring programs were offered to students experiencing difficulty.

Languages other than English

Schools follow an interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of languages. At the primary level, for example, students are introduced to languages through cultural experiences such as music and dance. Several schools include the study of Aboriginal languages as an essential part of their curriculum. At the secondary level, schools offer a variety of LOTE programs and reinforce language and cultural acquisition through student exchanges and contacts with sister schools, especially in Indonesia.

Science

Schools are continuing to use a network approach to the teaching of science, thereby encouraging creative thinking and problem-solving. Coeducational instruction in sciences has been found to encourage active participation by all students. Science fairs and extended problem-solving have expanded opportunities for students, especially those who have been identified as gifted and talented.

Technology

At the secondary level, schools are involved in ongoing programs of computer instruction. The majority of primary schools also provide students with computer education. Technologies are being used to enhance many courses and educational topics. Through a plan of careful acquisition, schools are acquiring a diverse range of technological resources which will broaden the perspectives of students and enrich instruction.

Mathematics

Northern Territory Board of Studies approved curriculum materials provide the basis for the development, revision and extension of school-based programs. Teachers at both primary and secondary levels are aware of changes in the teaching of mathematics and use a variety of educational materials, including computer programs to enrich and enhance the subject.

Learning areas of importance at both primary and secondary levels include the acquisition of subject vocabulary, and basic mathematical skills and more importantly, the understanding of mathematical concepts. As in the case of English, in many schools students experiencing difficulty were able to undertake special tutoring programs. Informal parent/teacher in-services and interviews have been used to provide parents with a better understanding of the mathematics curriculum.

Studies of society and environment

Studies of society and the environment focus on developing in students a care for, and love of, the land and an understanding of other cultures. Environment activities included tree planting and other experimental nature studies.



International night at Karama Primary School

Studies of society are enhanced through visits by local community groups who provide special assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The establishment of special relationships with other schools, both intrastate and interstate, as well as visits from various artists and sportspersons, have helped to overcome the disadvantage of distance and remoteness.

The arts

Music and drama are considered important areas of learning by all schools. Several schools offer dancing, media studies and art and craft to enhance their art curriculum. Students have been encouraged to participate in local artistic competitions and the arts have been used to instil an awareness of culture and an understanding of other societies. Special efforts have been made to enable special schools' populations to participate in this learning area.

Asian studies

Most schools have incorporated Asian studies into their social studies and humanities curriculum. Students have been able to gain a personal understanding of Asia and its people through active student exchange programs. Topics in Asian food, music, dance and cultural studies have also been interwoven into mainstream programs.

Health and physical education

Courses in the health and physical education area include sport, health, science, home economics, athletics and a variety of related topics. Most schools hold an annual sports day at which all students are encouraged to participate, particularly students with special needs.

Some schools offer individualised instruction for selected special needs students while others seek to integrate these students into the mainstream programs using integration aides.

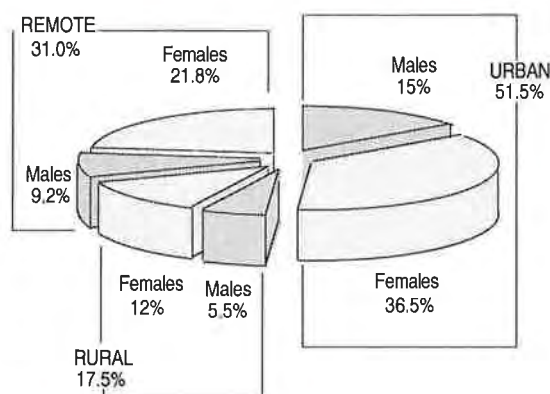
Teaching and learning

Government sector

Recruitment

In 1994, the majority of teacher vacancies in urban areas were filled from local applicants, including graduates from the Northern Territory University. It was again necessary, however, to recruit staff for some specialist teacher positions and positions in remote Aboriginal community schools from interstate.

Figure 4. Location of government schools teaching staff, 1994



Source: NT Department of Education

Local selection panels

During 1994, the department's *Selection Procedures Handbook* was finalised. This handbook is designed to provide guidance to all selection panels, including those for teacher vacancies, through the whole selection process to ensure that the department gets the best possible staff into vacant positions.

Master Teacher

The Master Teacher Program continued to provide recognition for outstanding classroom practitioners. The department's scheme is fully implemented across three levels and is a personal award, not dependent on the availability of positions or constrained by quotas. Teachers are assessed against an established criteria set out in the *Master Teacher Handbook*. The award is initially for a period of four years and teachers must undergo reassessment to renew. However, once it is reconfirmed, it is permanent, subject to maintenance of performance consistent with the award.

Teacher appraisal programs

In response to the requirements of the new *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993*, the department introduced a new probation policy which, for the first time, standardised probation reports for all its employees. A new handbook outlining the policy and procedures was introduced on 1 January 1994. The main change for teachers is that a probation period is no longer applicable to temporary employees. A new program was established to ensure these temporary employees were provided with the support and supervision they required.

The development of a Performance Management Program for all departmental employees, including teachers, continued. A non-schools model was completed and its trial commenced with senior employees. This trial will be reviewed early in 1995. It is envisaged the schools model will be finalised and trialled in 1995.

Table 13. School-based teaching staff, by level and gender, 1994 (full-time equivalent)

Major activity	Government		Non-government		All schools
	Males	Females	Males	Females	
Preschool	5.0	82.2	—	6.4	93.6
Primary	314.0	986.5	59.7	235.8	1,596.0
Secondary	313.5	357.3	105.4	123.5	899.7
Special	15.5	147.0	—	—	162.5
Total	648.0	1,573.0	165.1	365.7	2,751.8

Source: NT Department of Education

Table 14. Government staff by sector, type and gender, school-based and non-school-based, 1994

	School-based		Non-school-based		Total
	M	F	M	F	
Teaching	648.0	1,573.0	—	—	2,221.0
Non-teaching	147.4	534.8	127.1	511.1	1,320.4
Total	795.4	2,107.8	127.1	511.1	3,541.4

Source: NT Department of Education

Table 15. Non-government staff by sector, type and gender, school-based and non-school-based, 1994

	School-based		Non-school-based		Total
	M	F	M	F	
Teaching	158.4	354.7	n.a.	n.a.	513.1
Non-teaching	58.5	145.9	*	*	204.4
Total	216.9	500.6	—	—	717.5

n.a. not applicable

* data not available

Source: NT Department of Education

Professional development in ESL

The Northern Territory ESL Review in 1994 highlighted the need for continued professional development of teachers working with ESL students. Awareness of ESL students' needs, cultural understandings and development of skills required in teaching another language have been the focus of activities for professional development.

The role of the ESL General Support teacher has included assisting mainstream teachers to provide English language support across the curriculum, and working cooperatively with mainstream teachers to plan and teach together.

During 1994, a number of ESL teachers and officers were trained as tutors for the professional development courses developed in South Australia, English in the Mainstream (for urban schools) and ESL in Anangu Schools (for teachers in Aboriginal communities). Implementation of this professional development activity is planned for 1995.

Networks set up through meetings and teleconferences provide ongoing support for primary and secondary ESL teachers in Darwin, Alice Springs and for regionally based ESL coordinators. Staff also had access to professional development activities arranged by the Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (Northern Territory), or ATE SOL (NT).

Developments associated with teachers and teaching (industrial)

During 1994, teachers were included with other public sector employees for the first time in the inaugural public sector enterprise bargaining agreement. This agreement provided all employees with a 4 per cent salary increase in return for productivity and efficiency gains. Gains for teachers were achieved through dispute resolution procedures, the ability to link increments to satisfactory performance and ongoing consultation on a range of issues relating to the effectiveness and efficiency in the education industry.

Human resource development

The range of professional development programs included staff and organisational effectiveness training and management programs in leadership, personal development and career planning.

Teacher and student exchanges continued in South East Asia, and the draft National Guidelines for Teacher and Student Exchanges between Australia and Indonesia were developed. A National Indonesia Exchange Network consisting of nominated education officials from each State and Territory was also formed.

Regional programs are coordinated through the Local Staff Development Advisory Committees. The executive officers of these local committees met three times during the year to monitor expenditure, evaluate and coordinate programs, and discuss policy. A major evaluation of the Orientation Program for new recruits was conducted.

The third Leadership in Action Program was conducted for South East Asia and Pacific Region and Northern Territory educators.

Catholic system

Recruitment

The recruitment of suitable staff for a wide variety of isolated schools is particularly important for quality teaching and learning. Principals, individually and as a team, travelled to interstate cities to interview applicants. The results proved the worth of this initiative on the part of the principals and Catholic Education personnel.

Ongoing professional development

Staff in schools continued to undertake professional development studies through the Department of Education and tertiary institutions around Australia. The National Schools Network facilitated whole-school development in three schools and some teachers were involved in the Innovative Links Program.

Teaching and learning at Wadeye

Ten Aborigines completed their third year of training through Batchelor College and took up teaching positions in the school. Six students began or continued their teacher education training course. One student commenced the Broadcasting Remote Area Communities communication training course. Four students began or continued the language and literacy courses through Batchelor College. Three students, through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission funding, commenced training courses for literacy workers and secretarial studies. In conjunction with the local council, manual arts was commenced for the male and female students and the wider community.

Independent schools

Developments associated with teaching and learning

Teachers demonstrated a commitment to undertake teacher development activities and participated in programs with colleagues from the government sector on conducting in-service activities in the areas of gifted and talented, education and students at risk.

Recruitment

Independent schools are proud of the quality of their teachers and commitment to their vocation. Recruitment of staff, especially at the secondary level, remains an expensive undertaking, particularly with the recruitment of teachers from interstate.

Resourcing Territory schools

Government sector

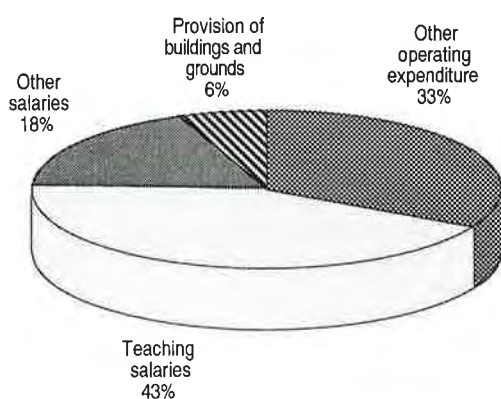
Resource distribution and management

The Northern Territory school population has a majority of students of low socioeconomic status and the highest per capita ethnic population in Australia. Over one-third of the students are Aboriginal, mainly traditional Aborigines. These factors significantly impact upon the cost of delivery of education. This is further compounded by the remoteness and dispersion of Aboriginal students.

During 1993–94, the total expenditure for the department (excluding TAFE) was \$238 million (increased from \$221 million in 1992–93). The Commonwealth provided funding totalling \$10.5 million under the General Recurrent Grants Program. Details on government expenditure on schools and salaries are provided in Figures 5 and 6.

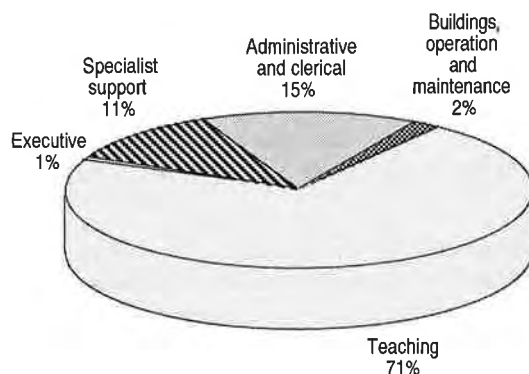
Under the Capital Grants Program for government schools in 1994, the Northern Territory Government received a total of \$2.4 million from the Commonwealth (General Element).

Figure 5. Government expenditure on schools by major category cost, 1993–94



Source: NT Department of Education

Figure 6. Salaries expenditure, 1993–94



Source: NT Department of Education

Non-government schools

Recurrent expenditure

Grants were received from both the Territory Government and the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth contributed \$14.4 million to non-government schools in 1994 for all programs, including \$11.3 million in general recurrent grants, and the Territory Government \$6.7 million. In addition, fees paid by parents and fundraising activities contributed to the total revenue of schools.

Capital outlays

In 1994, non-government schools in the Northern Territory received \$2.4 million from the Commonwealth and \$0.3 million from the Northern Territory Government for capital works.

Catholic system

As in previous years, grants were received from the Territory Government (\$3.2 million in recurrent and \$0.2 million in capital grants). The Commonwealth also contributed general recurrent grants to the Catholic system totalling \$5.3 million. Fees paid by parents and fundraising organised by school communities contributed to the total school revenue.

The Catholic Education Council received \$472,800 under NEPS and \$617,000 under AESIP. The priority to improve the literacy and numeracy levels of all students in the target groups has been a major focus. Initiatives for students in the target groups have addressed the key competencies in student learning and promoted student participation and retention.

Independent schools

Grants totalling \$1.6 million were received from the Commonwealth Capital Grants Program during 1994 and 18 capital projects were completed. Twenty-seven per cent of these projects were designed to improve the participation and achievement of students who are educationally disadvantaged as a consequence of their Aboriginality and 22 per cent were designed to increase student participation in key subjects in senior secondary school.

The provision of 36 new or upgraded classrooms and amenities buildings support the objectives of maximising student competencies in key learning areas while encouraging them to complete year 12 schooling. Two residential facilities for Aboriginal students were designed to improve the participation and achievement of students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds.

Specific purpose programs

Government sector

Disadvantaged Schools Component

Under the Disadvantaged Schools Component of NEPS, the majority of funds (\$1,243,500) were allocated to six regions for distribution, with the balance being allocated to projects of Territory-wide significance. Proposals were considered by Regional Program committees and the Education Advisory Council Specific Purpose Programs Committee. Submissions were recommended and funding was approved according to system and regional priorities.

Schools were encouraged to identify projects which were whole-school community oriented and aimed at improving educational outcomes for students disadvantaged by socioeconomic circumstances. Priority was given to projects which addressed literacy and numeracy levels of all students with particular emphasis on the early years, the professional development of teachers, learning through technology, curriculum development and better understanding of cultural issues.

Projects of Territory-wide significance included the Northern Territory Outdoor Education Unit, communications programs for students studying through Schools of the Air, the Travelling Science Education Centre, Mathematics Task Centres for Aboriginal students and professional development of staff in protective behaviours themes and strategies.

A variety of distinct projects were implemented and covered areas such as music, sport, technology and cultural studies. Funding also provided full-time and part-time staff and resources to undertake projects such

as course writing for distance education and literacy and numeracy remediation.

Disadvantaged Schools Component Index of Disadvantage

The Northern Territory continually made representations to DEET to have the national Index of Disadvantage reviewed before the introduction of NEPS in 1994, to address the longstanding inequities produced by the current program formula. The formula discriminates against the poorest students in Australia, most of whom are Aborigines in remote areas. A graphic example of the skewed nature of the data used in the current formula is demonstrated by the identification of Mamaruni as the least socioeconomically disadvantaged school in the Northern Territory. Mamaruni, a remote Aboriginal community, is still ranked in the bottom five per cent, using the 1991 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSED).

It is hoped that recommendations of the Ashenden and Milligan review of allocative mechanisms will be adopted, and tighter focus be given to target the poorest students in Australia. A resolution of the problems with the index has proved elusive over the last decade. It is hoped that these problems will be addressed in the current review of the NEPS allocative mechanisms.

In the Northern Territory, the Disadvantaged Schools Component funding is allocated in proportion to the relative poverty of its students on the basis of the ABS IRSED. The Disadvantaged Schools Component Index has been reviewed by the MCEETYA Taskforce on School Statistics and recommendations will be made that DEET use IRSED with weightings to reflect different levels of socioeconomic disadvantage to allocate Disadvantaged Schools Component funding.

Country Areas General Component

Under the Country Areas General Component of NEPS, funds were allocated to six regions for distribution, and to projects of Territory-wide significance. Projects targeted students in remote areas who were disadvantaged by restricted access to educational services. Proposals were considered by Regional Program Committees and the Education Advisory Council Specific Purpose Programs Committee. Submissions were recommended and funding was approved according to system and regional priorities.

Funding provided support for projects such as health education, teleconferences, professional development, literacy and numeracy remediation, and inter-school liaison and support services for remote schools. Projects provided staffing and resources for a variety of curriculum areas.

Country Areas General Component resource allocation formula

Unfortunately, recommendations of the DEET working party which was established to review the Country Areas formula (referred to in the 1991 *National Report on Schooling in Australia*) were not progressed. The Ashenden and Milligan report, undertaken in 1993 in consultation with States and Territories, acknowledged that the Country Areas General Component uses 'an inefficient weighting system to take account of marked differences in levels of need within the target group'.

State allocations in 1996 will again be distributed using 1976 census data (now 20 years old), and as a result significantly underfunding those States that have experienced population growth in that time. The formula that has been found to be inequitable by the Tomlinson review (1985) and Ashenden and Milligan (1993), will continue to allocate funding to students in close proximity to major population centres at the same level as those with much greater access disadvantage. For example, persons 151 kilometres from 10,000 population centres are resourced at the same level as persons who live in excess of 1,000 kilometres from that size of centre. Students in remote areas in all States and the Northern Territory are disadvantaged by this formula. Many of these remote communities also have significant numbers of the most socioeconomically disadvantaged populations in Australia, including Aborigines.

The Northern Territory allocates its Country Areas General Component funding on the basis of relative access disadvantage using the Griffith Service Access Frame (GSAF), thus ensuring that those students with the greatest access disadvantage receive the most assistance. The GSAF has now been put forward as the preferred option for allocating Country Areas General Component funding to Ministers and to DEET by the MCEETYA Taskforce on School Statistics.

Country Areas National Component

The Northern Territory and Western Australia worked together and shared ideas and expertise in this national component for activities that were implemented.

The Support Network

The Support Network for remote secondary education provides assistance through moderation, consultation, program evaluation, student projects through the use of electronic mail and facsimile. Support is available for schools from most areas of the department and links to other government departments are being established.

Telematics

Electronic classroom (telematics) is now available to students in all the project schools and has expanded to other schools throughout the Territory. Through telematics, schools can now offer a wider choice of curriculum to students.

Interactive television

The SCIFAX television show (interactive) was put to air by Imparja, Alice Springs and covered the Northern Territory, South Australia and western New South Wales. The show was produced by media studies students and staff from Centralian College with assistance from the West Australian Department of Education. Ten shows were presented during semester 2.

CD-I/CD-ROM

CD-I (Compact Disk-interactive) production is still being pursued but progress is limited by market forces and the limited number of trained personnel.

English as a Second Language New Arrivals sub-component

The Department of Education provides intensive English language instruction for primary and secondary students at two Intensive Language Units in Darwin. These units provide a comprehensive cross-curriculum program which focuses on the language demands of schooling and prepares students for mainstream classes. These programs are delivered by specialist and bilingual staff. Students living outside the Darwin area also receive intensive English instruction, on a needs basis, through the employment of specialist ESL staff. Commonwealth funding was used to provide specialist ESL teachers, teaching and learning resources, and in-service activities. The New Arrivals sub-component provides intensive English language support to migrant children. Aborigines who require the same level of intensive English language support are not provided for under current Commonwealth ESL programs. Recent attempts to have this situation remedied by the Commonwealth have met with a negative response.

English as a Second Language General Support sub-component

Commonwealth funding (\$884,000) for the ESL General Support sub-component supplemented the Northern Territory Government's significant financial commitment to support ESL students in mainstream classes. A high proportion of these students are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders from rural or remote schools. Funds were used primarily for the employment, on a needs basis, of above-establishment specialist ESL teachers in schools. They provided ESL instruction for non-English speaking background

students across the curriculum, and professional development for mainstream teachers working with ESL learners. The reallocation of ESL funds by the Commonwealth has enabled the Territory to provide in excess of \$500,000 as school-based funding to support Aborigines in non-urban areas.

Gender Equity Program

Commonwealth funds (\$14,715) were used in all eligible schools to supplement expenditure on staff development, student career development, staff and student travel and equipment.

Special Education Component, Schools Support—Government sub-component

Commonwealth funds (\$332,000) from this sub-component continued to support projects which involved the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream educational activity. Funds were used to provide inclusion support, professional development and specialist equipment.

The majority of funds under this component were allocated to six regions for distribution. Regional committees considered submissions from special schools and regular schools with eligible students according to Territory and regional priorities.

Projects which aimed at integrating students with disabilities into regular classrooms were given top priority closely followed by projects aimed at students in remote areas which allowed for an increase in the provision of specialist services through the use of advisory officers from central and regional offices.

Special Education Component, Intervention Support sub-component

The Intervention Support Committee considered proposals for students with high support needs or early intervention needs including direct inclusion support, professional development activity and specialist equipment.

Students with disabilities

In 1994, the Northern Territory Government received \$140,932 in funding under the Students with Disabilities component of NEPS.

Priority areas for students with disabilities in 1994, within the Northern Territory educational regions included: the provision of supplementary funding to schools to support the inclusion of students with special needs into regular school settings; the widening of support services to incorporate rural and remote communities; provision of a range of professional development options for staff; the re-establishment of School

Counsellor positions in all high schools and school-to-work transition programs.

Students at Risk Component

In 1994, the Commonwealth provided \$109,000 through the Students at Risk (STAR) Component. This funding enabled the department to employ an advisory teacher and a special assistant in the Behaviour Management Service to provide meaningful educational/social programs for students deemed to be 'at risk' behaviourally, socially, emotionally and academically. The major focus for the STAR team was 'ownership of the problem' through self-control and self-responsibility, leading to markedly enhanced self-esteem. The success of the program has been evidenced in improved academic performance of students in the program, and students opting to remain at school past year 10.

During 1994, the STAR team worked with 90 students; 17 families; 60 parents (in groups); 82 staff (individually and in groups) and ran four ongoing Whole School Student Management Training for Change programs. The key goals for the STAR program were (as always) 'attitudinal and behavioural change to learning and authority figures' and 'accepting responsibility, developing self-control and a positive self-concept'. Teaching staff, parents and students have provided feedback through verbal and written evaluations which have clearly indicated the outstanding success of this program.

Literacy and Learning National Component

Viewing for Learning is a collaborative project involving the department, Catholic Education Office and the Australian Capital Territory Department of Education and Training. During 1994, project officers in each Territory worked with teachers in disadvantaged primary schools, collecting material which demonstrated effective classroom practice and incorporating the use of visual texts.

The materials are currently being used to produce a video and handbook package which will provide teachers with professional development on the use of visual texts in the classroom. It is expected that Curriculum Corporation will publish this material in July 1995 for distribution to schools in all States and Territories.

Independent schools

Disadvantaged schools

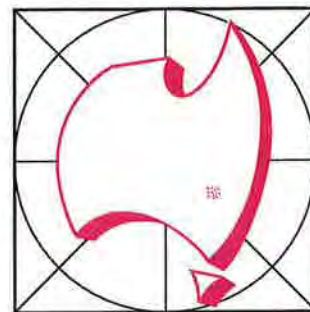
In 1994, funding under the Disadvantaged Schools Component went to two independent schools, allowing students to undertake enriched school-based programs and experience new community activities. It also allowed them to practise their language skills.

Students at risk

Six independent schools were funded for projects under the 1994 STAR Component of NEPS. This funding made possible the implementation of a variety of measures to improve attendance and retention. Measures

included the appointment of home liaison officers and mentors, and a school-to-work project which highlighted the importance of education as a prerequisite to employment. Schools reported a positive attitudinal change in students and a willingness to become engaged in learning activities.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



Introduction

The Australian Capital Territory is the self-governing territory for Canberra, the capital city of Australia, and comprises 2,367 square kilometres of the surrounding region in south-east Australia. The population of the ACT in June 1994 was 300,900. Its principal economic activity is government.

Students attend a diverse range of government, Catholic and independent schools. On 30 July 1994, there were 65,656 individuals enrolled in schools and preschools in the ACT—32,672 primary students, 18,867 high school students, 9,225 secondary college students and 439 special school students (Figure 1). There were 4,453 students enrolled in 85 government and non-government preschools.

Approximately two-thirds, or 40,166 students, of the ACT school population were enrolled in 96 government schools, which are divided into four districts. The other

third, a total of 21,037 students, were enrolled in 41 non-government schools. Of non-government enrolments, 75 per cent were in Catholic schools, 17 per cent in Anglican schools and 8 per cent in other schools.

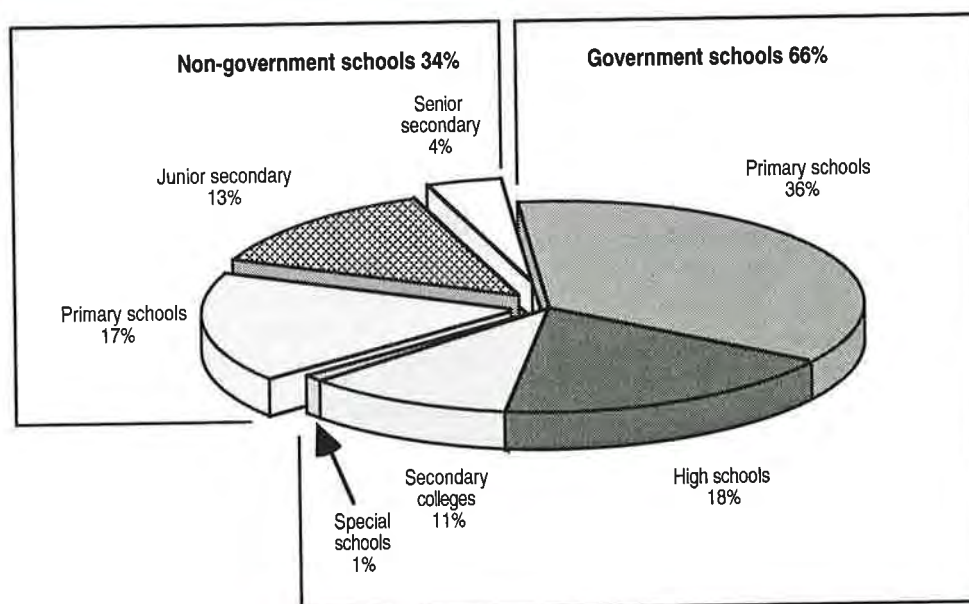
Priority objectives for 1994

Government schooling

The purpose of the ACT government school system is to seek to ensure successful learning outcomes for all students.

The *Education Plan for ACT Government Schooling 1995–97* was developed in 1994 after broad consultation with schools and the education community and will be implemented from the start of 1995. The Education Plan is based on the core principles of high expectations, social justice, community participation, future orientation and accountability. Major goals include the development of a set of specific learning

Figure 1. Enrolment by sector and level, all schools, July 1994



Source: ACT Schools Census, July 1994

outcomes in each key learning area against which student progress can be measured; more diverse approaches to the organisation of learning; and improved transition support for students between school, further education and employment.

In 1994, there were major achievements in curriculum, the organisation of learning and vocational education, and early childhood education.

Teachers' approaches to teaching, learning and assessment have been significantly and positively affected by the trial of profiles to a much greater extent than expected. Year 11 and 12 vocational courses have been developed in line with the Australian Qualifications Framework. An Early Childhood Services Unit was established to strengthen learning outcomes in the early years and provide support for preschool staff.

Non-government schooling

Priority objectives for non-government schools in 1994 were to:

- maximise the competence, efficiency and confidence of teachers;
- provide better feedback to the school community and involve the community in school operations;
- maximise the general competencies of students, particularly in literacy and numeracy skills;
- maximise learning for all students;
- increase participation in key subject areas, particularly physical education, computer science, languages other than English (LOTE) and science;
- increase the participation and achievement of disadvantaged groups of students;
- broaden the educational experiences of girls, especially in ways which increase their subsequent education, training and employment options;
- facilitate the transition of students between levels of education and from education to employment;
- provide opportunities for the continuing development of teachers;
- develop a range of skills, including reasoning, inquiry, problem solving and independent learning skills;
- provide better support services, for example, counselling.

Curriculum development and reviews were a major focus during 1994 for the two independent schools surveyed in the ACT. Both schools aimed to maximise competency in literacy and numeracy through improved standards of teaching. One school reported using statements and profiles as a guide to developing teaching programs for years 7–8. Strategies to achieve these aims included increased parent–teacher involvement in

curriculum development processes and review of assessment procedures.

As with all other States, staff professional development was a major focus of resource improvement in the ACT. Initiatives developed aimed to increase competence, efficiency and subject area expertise of teaching staff. One of the schools following the Steiner philosophy reported using Steiner educators to conduct staff in-service courses, while the other augmented staff professional development with the recruitment of specialised staff to run additional programs, for example, LOTE. One school in particular had as a priority objective the expansion of both enrolments and buildings.

Programs for student development aimed to provide more extensive opportunities for the physical and personal development of students, including creative use of leisure time.

Other general objectives included the development of LOTE programs and recognition of special student populations. One of the sampled schools aimed to secure more funding either from government or through increasing donations and building fund fees.

Additional priority objectives set by the Catholic Education Office for their systemic schools in 1994 were to:

- affirm the dignity of the human person, created in the image of God, by promoting the full development of each person's potential within communities where genuine personal relationships grow in a climate of faith, freedom, peace, justice and love;
- present the Catholic Christian message, centred in the person of Jesus Christ, in ways appropriate for our times, through the renewal of religious education in schools and the revision of religious education guidelines;
- continue to assist school communities to base their organisation and curriculum on the teaching of Jesus and His church;
- further improve the quality of communication between the Catholic Education Office, schools and their communities, so that a service model pervades the relational and professional interactions of those partners.

Additional objectives identified for independent schools in 1994 were to:

- develop students' self-esteem and discipline;
- prepare students for life;
- improve instructional facilities and materials;
- enhance parental and community involvement in the process;

- review curriculum from kindergarten through to and including year 12 to ensure each subject was presented in a manner which built on materials presented in prior years;
- analyse the contribution of integrated information technology to studies at the senior school level.

Excellence and equity

Retention and participation rates

A very high proportion of students complete the full six years of secondary schooling in the ACT (Figure 2). The 1994 apparent retention rates in each of the sectors were: government 113 per cent, Catholic 65 per cent and Anglican 96 per cent. Care is needed in interpreting apparent retention rates. The seemingly low retention rate in the non-government sector is the result of some secondary schools not offering a year 11 and 12 curriculum. On the other hand, the high retention rate in the government sector is partly the product of the influx of students from non-government schools, repeating students and attendance by non-ACT resident students from New South Wales and overseas. About 3 per cent of government and 7 per cent of non-government ACT school students come from the surrounding NSW area.

Age participation rates for ACT students in the post-compulsory years of schooling, 15 to 19 year olds, are above the Australian average, and for some age groups, exceed 100 per cent due to enrolment in ACT schools of non-ACT residents, which results in a slightly inflated participation rate.

Certification and credentialling

The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies provides course accreditation and certification services to government secondary colleges, non-government schools (except for one school, which uses the New South Wales Higher School Certificate), the Canberra Institute of Technology Year 12 Program and two international schools in Papua New Guinea.

Students completing an approved course of study in years 11 and 12 are awarded a Year 12 Certificate. At the end of 1994, 91 per cent of year 12 students received a Year 12 Certificate.

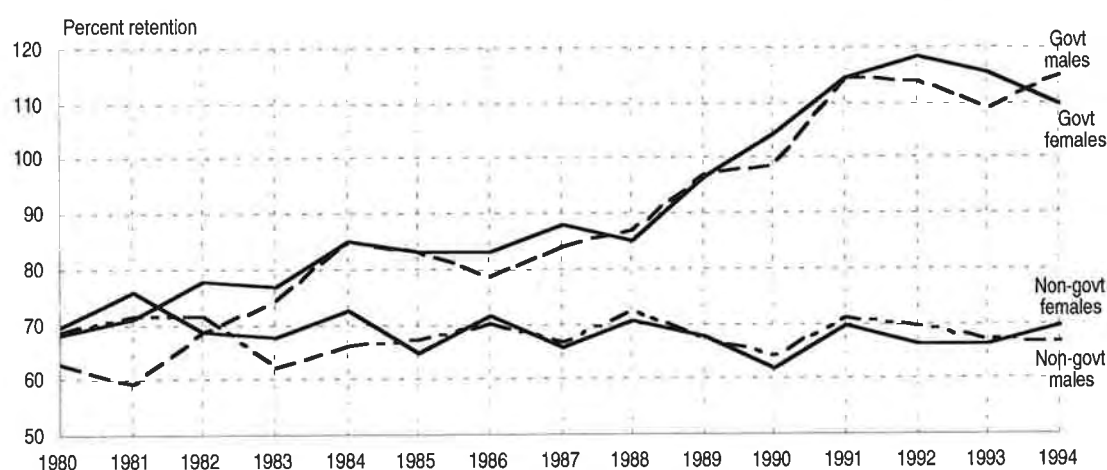
Students completing the required number of major and minor units in tertiary-accredited courses and the Australian Scholastic Test (AST) receive a Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER). Sixty per cent of students received a TER at the completion of 1994.

Table 1. Year 12 Certificates issued, 1994

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Persons</i>
Government schools	1,529	1,392	2,921
Non-government schools	635	532	1,167
Other	81	166	247
Total	2,245	2090	4335

Source: Year 12 Study, 1994

Figure 2. Apparent retention rates for students by gender, year 7 to 12, all schools, 1980 to 1994



Source: Derived, ACT Schools Census, July 1980–94

Table 2. Students awarded a Tertiary Entrance Rank, 1994

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Persons</i>
Government schools	1,026	800	1,826
Non-government schools	538	393	931
Other	73	156	229
Total	1,637	1,349	2,986

Source: ACT Dept of Education and Training, A Data File on ACT School Systems, 1994

Fifteen per cent of students received a Secondary College Record summarising units and courses completed in years 11 and 12.

Community participation

The Ministerial Advisory Council on Public Education, with members drawn from parent, teacher and student organisations, provided advice to the Minister on the provision of quality government school education at a time of shifting student populations and reduction in resources for education. The School Board Forum; Parents and Citizens Associations, including the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens; and the School Performance, Review and Development process were other avenues for parental participation in government schools.

The Ministerial Consultative Committee on Non-government Schooling in the ACT provided advice to the Minister on a number of educational issues, especially those related to funding. The Association of Parents and Friends of ACT Schools (APFACTS) was a further avenue for parental participation in non-government schools. Community involvement also included school administration via elected management committees, which dealt with financial management, future planning, building maintenance, curriculum audit and design, provision and management of amenities and changes in school philosophies. The wider community was involved in fundraising, social activities, school festivals, fairs, excursions, camps and classroom assistance.

Accountability and perception data

Accountability for the effectiveness of schooling in the ACT is achieved through School Performance, Review and Development (SPRAD) in government schools, School Registration in independent and Catholic schools and, additionally, School Renewal in Catholic schools.

School Performance, Review and Development

The SPRAD process for government schools emphasised school improvement, future planning, accountability and public confidence. The first cycle of SPRAD was completed in 1994. A review of SPRAD itself was begun in 1994 to examine its effectiveness and to make recommendations to ensure it continues to assist in the development of teaching and learning. It is intended that a new cycle of review will commence in 1996.

Results of the 1994 SPRAD process continue to show high overall community satisfaction with government school education.

Non-government School Registration

The registration process for non-government schools, in fulfilling the requirements of the *ACT Education Act 1937*, uses panels of education experts drawn from government and non-government schools and the wider education community to ensure balanced and equitable evaluation. The registration process encompasses the educational, physical and administrative aspects of schools. Registration for nine schools was renewed (three Catholic and one independent primary school, one Catholic and four independent high schools). Three schools (one Catholic primary and two independent secondary schools) applied for and gained provisional registration in 1994.

Catholic School Renewal

Twelve schools were involved in the School Renewal Program in 1994. The program involved a comprehensive renewal of schools' purpose and achievement and the implementation of a developmental action plan addressing identified key areas for action.

Equity issues

Equity objectives are to maximise educational outcomes for all target groups of disadvantaged students and to ensure that the range of schooling outcomes for these students approaches the same range of outcomes as for the non-target group.

In government schools the ACT Department of Education and Training provided \$13.5 million for equity target groups. Funds provided by the Commonwealth for equity target groups included \$1,822,900 through NEPS agreements and \$326,900 under the Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program.

The Catholic sector expended \$1,254,263 on equity target groups of which \$1,059,021 was provided by the Commonwealth under NEPS agreements and \$38,428 under general recurrent funds (category 12).

Gender equity

The major focus for government schools in 1994 was implementing the *National Action Plan for the Education of Girls 1993–97*. The final stage of Implementing the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls Through the School Organisational Structures Project was completed. Participating schools explored the relationship between organisational structures and the construction of gender and the resulting educational implications for school management and for students.

Consultation on the ACT Gender Equity Curriculum Statement was completed with publication due in 1995. Professional development on curriculum reform through implementing gender equity as an across-the-curriculum perspective was provided for teachers.

A set of modules to inform girls and boys in high schools about issues of gender and violence was trialled during 1994, with further refinement planned for 1995. Networks for Sexual Harassment Contact Officers for students were established in districts to support the work of Contact Officers. Ninety additional School Contact Officers for students were trained. Discussions on sexual harassment issues and guest speakers from related agencies such as ACT Department of Health were featured in meetings. Courses dealing with homophobia, gender, sexuality, violence and boys' educational issues were also offered for staff.

In the Catholic sector initiatives in girls education continued to be focused on curriculum reform and improved teaching practice. The Catholic Education Office Gender Equity Committee assisted adoption of the Gender Inclusive Language Guidelines in schools and finalised guidelines for staff selection.

Schools developed strategies for dealing with gender issues. In one school, staff examined the academic performance and behaviour of a group of boys and developed programs to cope with conflict and enhance their self-esteem. Other schools developed programs to assist girls in developing awareness of future options. An action-research project examined the effect of ethnicity on girls' choices about the level of mathematics they will study. The interacting attitudes of students, parents and staff were investigated together with the resulting policy implications for the education of girls.

Distance and rural education

ACT students who met specific criteria accessed the NSW Distance Education Program through Karabar High School and Queanbeyan Primary School. In 1994, 35 government and nine non-government students were approved to access this program.

Rural primary school students may attend one of three rural primary schools or a Canberra primary school. Rural secondary students attend schools in Canberra.

The Catholic Education Office Distance Education Centre provided in-service opportunities for non-government and government teachers and administrators in the use of technology in distance education. The range of subjects offered to NSW students through this program in 1994 included Indonesian, mathematics and art.

Disadvantaged schools

A Joint Government and Non-Government Priority Schools Forum which encompassed eight schools—five government and three non-government—from low socioeconomic areas received limited NEPS funding. Wide support was given to staff and school communities through resource sharing, expanding student social and educational opportunities and developing students' self-esteem.

Two government schools and one Catholic school received funding under the NEPS Disadvantaged Schools Component. These funds were used to establish a computer lab to develop students' computing skills; to establish a whole-school Reading Recovery/library-centred literacy program based on cooperative learning which resulted in enhancement of skills across all key learning areas (KLAs); and to operate a program which was successful in raising the awareness of teachers, students and their families about gender stereotyping in primary school and which challenged many accepted practices. Parent involvement was central to the success of these programs. Resources were shared with neighbouring primary schools from the Catholic sector.

Gifted and talented students

Programs for gifted and talented students, including academic studies, physical education and the arts, were developed in ACT schools. Community members and organisations assisted with many programs to provide additional stimulus for students. Teachers formed regional networks to enable them to collaborate on working with gifted students. These networks were a key source of ideas and strategies in developing enrichment groups based on clusters of schools.

Funding was received under the NEPS Gifted and Talented Component to develop teacher skills in identifying gifted and talented students in the Introductory English Centres (IECs) and providing programs to meet their special needs. A district-based NEPS-funded project on professional development to facilitate provision for gifted and talented students in the mainstream was completed, with four modules written on identification of giftedness, school organisation, curriculum and strategies for teachers and the implementation of training programs.

The Catholic sector used NEPS funds to provide a system-based consultant for the first half of 1994. Work continued on a pilot program for gifted and talented students across diocesan schools, on assistance for schools with identification of gifted and talented students and on professional development support for school staff, which included a conference, Giftedness—a Parent–School Partnership.

In independent schools, resource teachers developed programs for gifted and talented students which supplemented curriculum offerings and provided peer tutoring opportunities. Achievements included increased involvement in extra-curricular activities, enhanced social relationship skills and the development of confidence and self-esteem, resulting in increased acceptance by peers and improved emotional well-being for students.

Students learning English as a second language

During 1994, 519 students were enrolled at four Introductory English Centres (IECs) where they received intensive English language teaching prior to entering mainstream schools. These centres were largely supported with funding received through the New Arrivals Component of NEPS. A further 3,116 students in government schools were identified as needing specialist teaching in English as a second language (ESL). Of these, 1,800 students were taught in mainstream schools by specialist ESL teachers. The Language for Understanding Across the Curriculum (LUAC) Project supported the remaining students. Through this project, government school teachers participated in professional development on meeting the needs of ESL learners in mainstream settings. Case studies during the year showed improved student outcomes.

Trialling the ESL scales, which are equivalent to the curriculum profiles, assisted government school teachers to review the ACT ESL curriculum statement. Professional development centred on using the scales and evaluating ESL curricula. Research funded by the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia demonstrated the effectiveness of IECs for kindergarten ESL learners and investigated the ESL profiles of IEC students. National Professional Development Program (NPDP) funding supported action research and professional development to deepen cultural understanding across the curriculum. A multicultural project resulted in workshops on anti-racism and multicultural issues.

In the Catholic sector, approximately 1,700 non-English speaking background (NESB) students were identified as needing specialist ESL assistance. Of these, three students were provided with intensive English language programs and 770 students received specialist ESL

assistance through NEPS funding. Initiatives centred on profiling ESL learning and learners' outcomes. Professional development activities were directed to using the ESL bandscales to assess student outcomes, including examining the bandscales, reviewing the ESL Framework of Stages, moderating student work samples, trialling reporting formats and developing cross-cultural awareness. The *ESL Teachers' Kit* was distributed to archdiocesan schools to assist mainstream teachers in assessing students' needs and providing appropriate teaching resources.

Action research projects by teachers in two Catholic secondary schools examined cross-cultural understandings in the key competencies and profiles. Exploration of the effects of long-term hospitalisation on NESB students and continuation of the school-based ESL Parental Tutoring Program were additional initiatives undertaken by ESL teachers.

Two independent schools received NEPS funding to provide assistance for 13 ESL students. Programs were developed to support students with oral and written tasks in the classroom and for individual and small-group specialist tuition.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

The Commonwealth-funded Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program (AESIP) has enabled the provision of a number of programs by the ACT Department of Education and Training and the Catholic Education Office.

Programs in government schools included the employment of three Home School Liaison Officers (one working in the Early Childhood area), four Aboriginal Education Assistants and two part-time Aboriginal mentors by the department. Other support included an Aboriginal artist-in-residence, two specialist teachers in Aboriginal early childhood and

Table 3. Full-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students in ACT schools, July 1994

School Level	Govt		Catholic		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Primary	167	149	30	28	374
High	52	51	11	15	129
College	23	19	2	2	46
Special	5	3	—	—	8
All levels	247	222	43	45	557

Source: ACT Dept of Education and Training

behaviour management, and a project officer. An extensive in-service training program on issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education was available to staff. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children at government preschools increased to 65. Two additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preschool sessions were funded through AESIP to implement recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The department also implemented a Preschool Early Entry Policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, enabling them to access preschool education a semester earlier than usual.

Following the introduction of the Aboriginal Education Policy in 1993 the educational progress of Aboriginal students in Catholic schools and the implementation of the policy was monitored by the Catholic Aboriginal Education Team. The Team facilitated in-service programs and staff meetings, provided resources to schools conducting Aboriginal education programs and assisted with parents' enquiries. Three Aboriginal Education Assistants were employed through AESIP funding in seven primary schools and three secondary schools where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attend in significant numbers. An AESIP funded whole school in-service package was available to schools which aimed to improve the quality and effectiveness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Programs. Outcomes include increased awareness of Aboriginal culture in schools and improved attendance rates for Aboriginal students.

National Literacy Strategy funds enabled teachers and Aboriginal Education assistants from government and Catholic schools to develop knowledge and skills in literacy and to participate in the *Teaching Aboriginal Students* in-service kit. This kit will be introduced in schools in 1995.

Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness Program (ASSPA) committees operated in 41 ACT

government schools and 24 Catholic schools. They encouraged greater parental participation in all school activities which affected their children.

The School Speakers Program, funded by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET), provided for the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander speakers and performers in government and Catholic schools throughout the year.

Students with disabilities

Education of students with disabilities in ACT schools is flexible and supportive to ensure assistance is related closely to the nature of students' disabilities and needs.

In the government sector, in July 1994, 439 students attended six special settings and annexes, with a further 611 students attending special classes within regular settings. Students gained functional, academic, social, recreational and vocational skills to enable them to function as independently as they are able in the wider community. Students in special classes were able to maintain social interaction with their peers while receiving extra support in their education program.

Seven Early Intervention Units operated in government preschools. A total of 143 three and four year old children were given early intervention support to address identified needs, including developmental delays, diagnosed disabilities and specific language delays. The needs of children with specific language delays were catered for by an Early Intervention Unit and the Language Preschool, funded through the NEPS Intervention Support sub-component. Over 80 per cent of children from these early intervention programs entered mainstream schools. An early childhood autistic unit helped eight children acquire communication and social skills to enable them to cope in larger group settings on completing the program.

Table 4. Completion levels for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in ACT schools, December 1994

<i>School level</i>	<i>Government</i>		<i>Catholic</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Numbers completing year 6	28	24	4	3	59
Numbers completing year 10	10	9	1	—	20
Numbers receiving a Year 12 Certificate	2	3	1	—	6
Numbers receiving a Tertiary Entrance Ranking	—	2	1	—	3

Source: ACT Dept of Education and Training

Thirty-nine vision-impaired students and 109 hearing-impaired students were supported in mainstream schools by itinerant teachers. Slightly increased levels of resourcing within the Hearing Impaired Units facilitated further opportunities for students to be integrated into regular classes and their educational opportunities maximised.

A review of services to students with disabilities in government schools was conducted during 1994, involving community and school consultation. A draft strategic plan, which includes a range of education program options delivered across a variety of settings, was developed for implementation over the next three years.

NEPS funding was used to develop transition education for government and non-government students with disabilities who were moving into post-school options. Activities included collecting and disseminating information to schools, parents and community organisations; establishing networks between service agencies, secondary schools and tertiary institutions; publishing a directory of transition services available in the ACT; and developing and presenting training courses and information meetings to secondary school staff.

The Integration Program provided additional resources to government schools for effectively meeting the educational and social needs of 21 students with disabilities. Participating students made significant gains in social and emotional maturity through placement in mainstream settings. In addition, other students with disabilities in government and Catholic schools were integrated into regular classes through NEPS Special Education Component funding. Part-time teachers' assistants enabled 67 students with disabilities to achieve greater mobility and improved educational outcomes within regular settings in government schools. In Catholic schools, 134 students were integrated into regular class settings.

The Special Needs Education Services Team provided program and consultancy support for staff in Catholic schools enrolling students with disabilities. Other initiatives in Catholic schools included maintenance of resource teacher networks to support disabled students; professional development for teacher assistants and teachers of disabled students; monitoring of student outcomes through Individualised Education Programs and annual case reviews.

In independent schools, NEPS funding provided limited support to three schools with students who had a severe disability. Funding was used for teacher aides, a resource teacher and a physical education assistant so that students could remain in mainstream classrooms.

Students with learning difficulties

A Reading Recovery Program in 62 government primary schools provided intensive individual assistance to students experiencing difficulty in learning to read. The Learning Advancement Program operated in 65 government primary schools to provide assistance to students with marginal learning difficulties in numeracy and literacy. The Parents as Tutors Program, which is part of the Schools and Community Centre, is operated as a joint initiative for all ACT schools by the Department of Education and Training and the University of Canberra. It assists parents help their children develop literacy skills, with 34 per cent of places for non-government schools and 66 per cent for government schools.

The Learning Assistance Program operated in all government high schools and provided support and assistance to identified students in the areas of numeracy and literacy. A needs-based K-10 program with an emphasis on early intervention was developed for implementation in government schools in 1995. Working parties developed literacy and numeracy assessment tools, which were trialled during 1994.

In independent schools, students with learning difficulties were assisted through remedial strategies involving additional tuition by resource teachers and through specialised programs developed by schools and education specialists.

General and vocational education

New initiatives

In response to national initiatives related to outcomes-based education and vocational education, the development of year 11 and 12 course frameworks and the expansion of vocational education were key issues for all schools in the Territory in the post-compulsory years. Initiatives in this area were undertaken on a shared basis between the government and non-government sectors and, in the case of vocational education, with the Industry Training Advisory Boards and Canberra Institute of Technology. Initiatives were also developed to raise awareness by younger students of future employment issues and possibilities.

Courses in senior secondary colleges for years 11 and 12, including senior secondary courses in the non-government sector, will be designed under course frameworks from 1994 onwards and now cover 40 different subject areas. Course frameworks are based on

the national statements and profiles and relate to key competencies. They include standards which will form the basis of student assessment and a statement on across-curriculum perspectives. They will enable reporting of industry standards as required. New Year 12 Certificates are being developed to meet reporting requirements.

Piloting of seven Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS) courses began in 1994. These courses included automotive studies, contemporary music, clerical and office administration, information technology/user support, fashion production, hospitality and childcare. Courses were dual accredited—by the Board of Senior Secondary Studies for the purposes of issuing a Year 12 Certificate and through the ACT Accreditation Agency for the purposes of issuing a Certificate I under the Australian Qualifications Framework. All students undertaking AVTS courses, with the exception of hospitality, are required to undertake structured work placements averaging 240 hours over two years. Students are assessed for the on-the-job achievement of industry competencies.

With the assistance of NPDP funding, teachers undertook professional development relating to the national training reform agenda and its implications for schooling in the ACT, and participated in return-to-industry placements.

Initiatives in career education and work experience

Seventeen careers advisers were assisted in commencing postgraduate qualifications in career education through NPDP funding obtained by the ACT Career Education Association. The association also provided students with greater access to the Job and Course Explorer database and to a vocational guidance package which is integrated with individual career counselling. The annual Canberra Careers Market was organised by the Careers Display Society with practical support from careers advisers. It attracted approximately 7,500 visitors from the ACT and the region.

Work experience programs operated under the policy and guidelines developed by a Tripartite Advisory Committee for Work Experience. During 1994, there were approximately 8,000 student work experience placements of secondary students, including students with disabilities and students undertaking vocational courses. Students participated in individual and team placements, work shadowing, research projects and practical tasks.

As part of the initiative to increase girls' awareness of, and experience in, non-traditional work areas, ACT schools participated in the Trades and Technical Women on the Move Project, Women Try a Trade

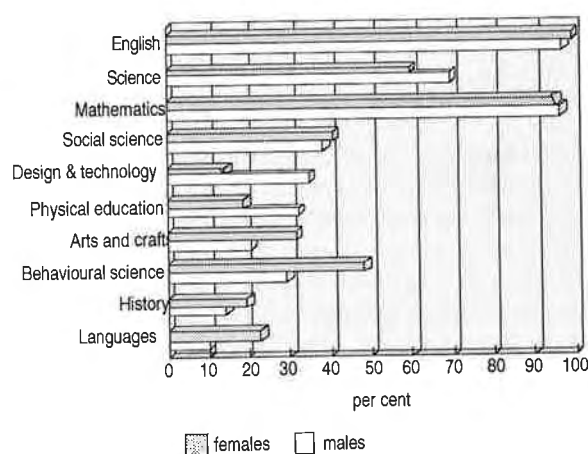
Week and Trades and Technical Women in Residence. Undertaking trade-oriented projects at school and attending pre-vocational courses at Canberra Institute of Technology provided girls with enhanced opportunities to explore non-traditional work. Students in years K–3 and years 10–12 were targeted in the Working Opportunities for Women Project. The NEPS Transition Support Component operated by the department assisted students with disabilities in their transition from school to work and training, aided by practical strategies devised by work experience organisers.

Transition from school to tertiary education

Of the 4,096 ACT students who received a Year 12 Certificate in 1993, 2,749 received a tertiary entrance rank. In addition, 142 students received a NSW Higher School Certificate.

It is estimated that 62 per cent of Year 12 Certificate recipients undertook further studies in 1994, 35 per cent at university and 27 per cent at TAFE. A total of 2,400 students applied for admission to universities in 1994 in NSW and ACT and approximately 1,800 ACT students were offered a place. An estimated 1,400 actually enrolled in ACT or NSW universities, with 1,037 enrolled in ACT universities. Approximately 100 students enrolled at universities in States other than ACT and NSW. At the beginning of 1994, 1,300 school leavers from the 1993 cohort enrolled in the Canberra Institute of Technology. Of these, 1,200 had completed their Year 12 Certificate.

Figure 3. Year 12 course participation rates by gender, all schools, 1994



Source: ACT Year 12 Study

Areas of student learning

Profiles describe the progression of learning typically achieved by students during the compulsory years of schooling. All schools, government and non-government, were involved in considering the profiles for K–10 during 1994. Profiles were made available to schools for teachers to use in their teaching areas.

Teachers in government primary and secondary schools commenced a two-year profiles trial across all key learning areas (KLAs). This was a major focus during the year. Trialling revealed that, while teachers expressed concerns about a number of issues, profiles received a positive response in terms of their validity and usefulness as a resource for curriculum review and reporting on student learning. Feedback from 1994 trialling teachers was used to enhance data collection mechanisms for 1995. Primary schools began to use the language of the profiles in reporting to students and parents. Major foci for each KLA are reported under the relevant area below.

In Catholic schools, developments included a concentration on pedagogical practices across the curriculum; learning styles and the learning process; multiple intelligences; and cooperative learning. A major conference, attended by two curriculum leaders from each Catholic school, presented an outline of the national agenda relating to profiles and outcomes. Subsequently, school staff were involved in follow-up in-service programs initiated by school communities.

Curriculum development and review were major issues for schools in the independent sector. These schools aimed to maximise competency in literacy and numeracy through improved standards of teaching, with some using frameworks and profiles as a guide to developing teaching programs for junior secondary students. Strategies to achieve these aims included increased parent/teacher involvement in curriculum development processes and review of assessment procedures.

Key learning areas

ACT curriculum frameworks, finalised in 1994, provide broad curriculum guides in the eight KLAs. An extensive professional development program, delivered primarily to staff in government schools, familiarised teachers with the ACT curriculum frameworks and profiles. Two full-day workshops were held in each of the eight KLAs, each with approximately 25 participants. Nineteen projects funded by the NPDP in each KLA and in vocational education involved the participation of 2,222 teachers and 210 other participants from both government and non-government sectors. A total of 250 days were spent on these professional development activities.

English

Sixteen teachers were trained as facilitators for an Assessment and Evaluation Module for English using NPDP funding. This module, which examines the implications of outcomes-based education for assessment in English, forms part of the graduated implementation of the framework and profile. Programs on the module will be delivered in 1995.

The government sector continued its involvement in the national collaborative project, Literacy and Learning National Component, relating to the special needs of early childhood students, particularly those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage. Professional development material was developed during the year to assist K–3 teachers. An Early Literacy Project was conducted in two primary schools which aimed to improve literacy skilling through professional development for the Early Childhood team. The resulting report recommended extending the program to one primary school in each district in 1995.

The Catholic sector provided consultancy expertise to promote a deeper appreciation of the English KLA. An examination of the outcomes of national collaboration on literacy raised concerns about the lack of consultation in the development of the model; the time frame for the development of an outcomes approach; and the level of resource support. Through the Literacy and Learning National Component, the Catholic sector addressed intervention reading programs for years 2 and 3.

Independent schools offered a cross-curriculum approach in the delivery of the English program to enhance achievement by all students. This was supplemented by the improvement of resources and enrichment via performances and involvement in festivals. Students with literacy problems in independent primary schools were mainly identified through testing and observation. Remedial strategies mainly involved extra tuition by resource teachers on an individual or group basis. Special programs were developed by resource teachers or education specialists.

Languages other than English

An action plan, *Setting Directions for LOTE 1994–2006*, was published for government schools, incorporating guidelines for implementing programs. Professional development concentrated on trialling the LOTE profile and familiarisation with the curriculum framework. The Modern Language Teachers' Association of the ACT used NPDP funds to produce language-specific booklets of annotated work samples across all profile levels for teacher use in government and non-government schools.

Government schools used Priority Language Incentive Element (PLIE) funds for the Language Inservice for Teachers (LIFT) Program, an accredited tertiary program, to enable teachers to upgrade language skills and methodology and to introduce LOTE programs in schools. The Asia Education Foundation Magnet Schools Program to increase student understanding of Asia was also supported by PLIE funds. In 1994, this program was expanded from nine to 18 government schools and one independent school. Support for program articulation through PLIE funds enabled students to continue study of a language from primary school to college. Non-government schools used PLIE funding for professional development, attendance at conferences and resource and program development to encourage greater participation in LOTE. PLIE funding was used to encourage greater sensitivity to cultural and language differences in independent primary schools as well as encouraging greater participation in LOTE.

Twenty-three after-hours Community Language Program schools were funded in 1994 through the Community Language Element, enabling children from diverse backgrounds to study a community language.

Science

In 1994, 1,900 science students in government and non-government schools were involved in club activities and research programs coordinated by CSIRO, and an additional 107 participated in competitions both at local and national level. The ACT Science Fair attracted over 1,000 entrants. Teachers and students provided displays and activities which contributed to the success of the National Science Festival held in April. NPDP funds were used for two programs supporting the development of leadership skills in science teaching in primary schools.

The Green Machine Education Centre, which is a joint project of CSIRO, the Australian National University, the ACT Department of Education and Training and Catholic Education Office provided a wide range of science extension activities including in-service programs for teachers and workshops for students. Community involvement in science education was encouraged through the ACT Family Science Project.

Technology

Schools were involved in a number of technology events, including a supercomputer night at the Australian National University, a teachers and engineers evening, and participation in the Shell Mileage Marathon, the Solar Car Challenge, the Technology Challenge and Engineering Games. A successful residential conference, using NPDP funds, was held to discuss design in technology education. Ideas from the

conference highlighting the use of design as a process will be incorporated in in-service courses to operate in 1995.

As part of Technology Month in September, the Department of Education and Training organised the 'Technology Shop' in a regional shopping centre to promote technology in schools to the general public.

Mathematics

NPDP funds were used to run a series of workshops on Maths Works Packages. These packages, developed by the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers, cover topics such as Equity and Social Justice in Mathematics and Fostering Mathematical Thinking and Learning, and are adaptable for any level of schooling. Evaluations indicated a very positive response, with teachers immediately implementing strategies with students.

A mathematics trail developed by a group of ACT teachers at the National Botanic Gardens is a popular and effective resource with mathematics classes and this success will be built upon with the development of further trails.

Independent primary schools favoured a cross-curricula approach in mathematics with programs including maths of populations and maths languages.

Studies of society and environment

As part of the coalescence of the studies of society and environment (SOSE) key learning area from its diverse sources, representatives of the five relevant professional associations, supported by NPDP funding, planned a SOSE summer school for 100 teachers, to take place in 1995. The conference will aim to provide teachers with models for developing and implementing practical approaches for outcomes-based education in this disparate area. A facilitating conference on linking Asian materials to the SOSE profile was attended by over 60 teachers. Following this conference, writing teams drawn from the different disciplines prepared units of work with examples relating the profile to studies of Asia. These units were trialled and unit drafts responded to in workshops. Professional development on the implementation of these units is planned for 1995.

The arts

Professional development programs in all strands of the arts were funded by NPDP. These programs were delivered through professional associations, community arts groups and tertiary institutions to over 200 teachers. They served to familiarise teachers with the arts framework and profile and enabled discipline renewal for these teachers.

In schools, students were involved in many projects, including exhibitions, festivals, performances, the Instrumental Music Program, the Canberra Live on Milk Dance Festival, the Rock Eisteddfod, the Shakespeare Festival, the Schools Art Exhibition and others. The Music Education Program, a joint program of the ACT Department of Education and the Canberra School of Music, operates at a government primary school and high school. The department also sponsored a Theatre in Education Program operated by Jigsaw Theatre Company. The departmental Aboriginal Artists in Schools Program has resulted in a number of impressive art works by Aboriginal school children.

Health and physical education

NPDP funding enabled over 200 teachers to participate in programs on nutrition and on resources in health and physical education. These funds were also used for a Train-the-Trainer workshop for 25 primary teachers, operated in collaboration with the Australian Council on Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER). Its purpose was to build the confidence and skills of primary teachers in physical education programs. Professional development in health and physical education for government and non-government teachers was conducted on topics such as HIV/AIDS, sport education, motor coordination and safe exercise. Three drug education projects were conducted during the year, with funding and expertise provided by ACT Department of Health: the Alcohol Awareness/Binge Drinking Prevention Project was for secondary students and teachers from government and non-government schools; the Drugs in Sports Project informed teachers and students about this topic; and the School Development in Health Education Project concentrated on drug education in government primary schools.

In independent primary schools programs for student development aimed to provide more extensive opportunities for the physical and personal development of students including the creative use of leisure time.

Information literacy

The Information Literacy Project Team developed a kit to assist government schools when they implement the Information Literacy Curriculum Support Paper in 1995. This area is seen as underpinning all other areas of student learning.

Across-curriculum perspectives

Curriculum statements for eight of the nine across-curriculum perspectives were developed by the department after consultation with teachers and community groups and will be launched in 1995. These statements, and associated professional development, demonstrate ways to include perspectives on such matters as Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander issues, the environment and gender equity in all KLAs. They explain the nature and role of each perspective in the curriculum and strategies for its implementation. The perspectives enable matters of social importance and social equity to be included in a curriculum that promotes equity of outcomes for students in equity target groups.

Teaching and learning

Aspects affecting the quality of teaching

Recruitment

A merit-based recruitment campaign for government school teachers was conducted which resulted in 206 teachers being recruited from the start of the 1994 school year. Twenty-four of these teachers were from interstate.

Teachers for independent schools are recruited by individual schools through advertisement. The majority are recruited from the ACT.

Professional development

A major focus of professional development for all schools was on statements and profiles and on the provision of programs which addressed the impact of technological, economic, social and cultural change in schools and work places. Apart from profiles and information technology courses, Professional Development Officers from the Department of Education and Training arranged for 328 courses attended by 3,909 participants from government and non-government schools. Courses were provided either at no charge or on a user-pays basis. The program included equal employment opportunity, occupational health and safety and sexual harassment issues. Courses on cultural diversity, career-path planning, leadership, change management, communication and supervision skills, and effective teaching strategies were also available. Resources were not always sufficient to meet demand from the non-government sector. University accreditation has been gained for Project TEACH and Patterns for IDEAS. Other key programs are being investigated for possible accreditation in 1995.

Staff in all schools had opportunities to participate in professional development provided by professional associations and other organisations, and in university courses as undergraduate and postgraduate students. Exchange programs offered an additional avenue for expanding professional knowledge for government school teachers. Parents and community members participated in a number of specially designed programs.

During government school planning days, district school clusters fostered a collaborative approach to staff

development, and district funds for Teacher Review and Development (TRAD) were made available to schools for staff development. Recommendations from the department's Professional Development Review (1993) were put in place with the gradual introduction of devolution of funds to government schools and the development of an entrepreneurial arm for the department's Professional Development Section.

Professional development in Catholic schools concentrated on religious education through the adoption of the Parramatta Guidelines: *Sharing Our Story*. Using the associated draft units, teachers sought to clarify the philosophic base of shared praxis; develop an appreciation of the principles behind the program; refine and develop new units in accord with the program and develop cross-curriculum links.

Some independent schools developed professional development programs which aimed to increase competence, efficiency and subject area expertise of teaching staff. Some schools used specialised staff educators to reflect the school's philosophy in staff development courses.

Teaching context

Use of technology

To ensure information technology (IT) is incorporated in the learning/teaching process and in school administration, various initiatives have been introduced in ACT government schools.

Satellite transmissions for the teaching of Japanese and Indonesian were trialled in 15 government primary schools. The potential of this technology for education, particularly in curriculum areas with a shortage of teachers, was demonstrated by most schools opting to keep their earth stations beyond the trial, and three additional schools establishing earth stations.

IT training programs offered by Department of Education and Training were well attended. Training facilities were substantially upgraded and an extra trainer was employed. Through TRY IT days, departmental staff could attend workshops and demonstrations related to information technology ranging from available training programs to census software. The four IT District Networks, which provided an opportunity for shared advice and ideas on IT and education, each received funding of \$4,000 to facilitate professional development for teachers.

A school administration system which included modules for financial management, timetabling, student and staff records and assessment was trialled in five schools, with further trials planned for 1995. Implementation of the *IT Strategic Plan (1993-95)* focused on completion, with the *Tactical Plan for the Integration of Information* being developed during 1994

to ensure continuity. A network strategy and operating standards were established to support schools installing Local Area Networks. A review of student record databases resulted in the proposed development of a Central Student Information System which will be a data warehouse for all student data.

The ACT Education Information Network pilot program was established in 16 government and non-government schools and at the O'Connell Information and Resource Centre. It introduced the Internet to local schools and addressed the issue of how the Internet can operate in the classroom as a significant resource in all years of school education. One school also participated in the Global Schoolhouse Project.

Audiographic technology was used to enable one teacher to teach commerce concurrently to two groups at two Catholic secondary schools in the Secondary Open Learning Area Network pilot project. Issues of timetabling, responsibility for assessment, management techniques and growth in technical knowledge were all faced and solved to varying degrees. While the educational value of the project was recognised, it was not developed further because of expected changes in hardware and transmission costs.

O'Connell Information and Resource Centre

The O'Connell Information and Resource Centre provided an information and consultancy service for members of the education community. Research services, including online searches and bibliographies, were also available. Services were expanded to include access to new computer software for evaluation, colour photocopying and laminating facilities and Internet demonstrations and access. The non-government sector funded one staff member to assist in library operations.

Developments associated with teachers and teaching

Industrial issues

On 1 July 1994, the ACT Government Service was created as a separate public service. The implementation of the ACT Public Sector Management Act brought government school teachers into the same legislative framework as other public-sector employees in the ACT.

The ACT Government and the Australian Education Union entered into a second closed enterprise agreement for teachers in December 1994. The agreement sought efficiencies through changed sick and special leave arrangements; removal of the beginning teacher allowance; changed arrangements for professional development provision and permanency of such tenured classifications as Advanced Skills Teacher 1 (AST1).

A review of the AST1 classification in the ACT Department of Education and Training during 1994 resulted in strengthened selection criteria, improved moderation during selection, and changes to tenure of the classification.

The second round of the Catholic systemic schools enterprise agreement for teachers was finalised, resulting in improved conditions for maternity leave, family leave and long service leave and agreement on the introduction of a developmental appraisal program for teachers.

Recent moves in enterprise bargaining allowed for enterprise agreements to be negotiated separately in the independent sector. An agreement has been finalised with one union involving efficiencies in family leave, grievance procedures and changed AST1 arrangements.

National Schools Network

The National Schools Network (NSN) involved 14 ACT government schools and three Catholic schools in 1994. The partnership between the Department of Education and Training and the unions on this project has given participating schools the opportunity to change the way they work. Schools have challenged old assumptions about teaching and learning and more flexible approaches to schooling are being tried.

Resourcing ACT schools

Capital and recurrent expenditure data

Total government expenditure on school education for both government and non-government schools for the 1993–94 financial year was \$285 million, of which \$219.8 million was funded by the ACT Government. An increase of 4 per cent on the previous year was almost entirely attributable to an extra pay period falling within this period.

Expenditure on ACT government school education services was \$223.1 million. The Commonwealth contributed \$16 million in general recurrent grants and \$6.6 million in capital grants to this sector during the 1994 calendar year, including funds from the Commonwealth Capital Grants Program. Small amounts were received through fee-for-service arrangements, hirings and specific purpose grants.

Commonwealth Capital Grants Program funds for 1994 were used by the Department of Education and Training to partially fund construction of the first primary school in the developing Gungahlin region, which will open in 1995. In addition, funds from the program were used to provide a library facility at Koomarri School, to upgrade playground equipment at six primary schools, to

provide additional toilet facilities at two schools, and to undertake a range of minor new works at many primary and secondary schools. The projects reflected a commitment to provision of adequate facilities and resources for government schools.

Non-government school education services accounted for \$61.9 million expenditure, of which \$37 million in recurrent grants and \$2.4 million in capital grants was contributed by the Commonwealth in the 1994 calendar year.

Trends in expenditure

Education (including preschool education) accounted for 18.5 per cent of government expenditure.

Apparent increases in per capita expenditure in all sections of government school education in the financial period 1993–94 occurred because of the extra pay period referred to above. Expenditure per student was \$2,170 for preschools, \$4,630 for primary schools, \$5,920 for high schools and \$6,340 for colleges.

Community use of government schools

After-hours use of schools is an integral feature of school use in the ACT. Evening classes operated for community members in all curriculum and recreational areas at a number of colleges. High school facilities were used by community groups for language and cultural classes and other purposes. Reflecting changing social needs, 50 primary schools now offer out-of-school hours child-care programs, and holiday programs operated at a number of schools. Approximately 10,500 bookings were made for the hire of government schools' facilities for after-hours use. After-hours surplus space was also leased to community and commercial groups and individuals for long-term use. Income from hiring and long-term leasing was \$820,000 for 1994.

Capital works (non-government)

The Commonwealth, through the Block Grant Authority, provided \$2.374 million in financial assistance for capital works in the non-government sector. Of this, a commitment of \$1.264 million constituted the final year allocation of capital projects previously approved by the Commonwealth for the non-government schools sector. This consisted of ten projects of which six were at Catholic schools (systemic and non-systemic) and four were at independent schools. The projects reflected the Commonwealth's commitment to improving the educational outcomes in schools catering for students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and for other disadvantaged groups. The majority of funds provided were for projects which enable schools to use advances in technology and to raise the technological standard

of facilities so that curricula can be effectively implemented. For example, 90 per cent of these projects provided assistance to upgrade existing science and technology facilities to enhance and broaden curriculum offerings. The projects also reflected the Commonwealth's objectives of maximising the competencies of students in the eight KLAs and assisting in broadening the educational experience of girls in technologically oriented studies.

The ACT Interest Subsidy Scheme provides assistance to non-government schools by offsetting interest on loans for capital projects up to a maximum of 10 per cent. There are limits on the number of applications a body may make in a specific time frame and the scheme is currently capped at \$2 million per annum.

Other initiatives

New government schools

The design process for Nicholls Primary School in the developing area of Gungahlin centred on the sharing of facilities between the government primary school and the Catholic primary school planned for the adjoining site. Facilities to be shared include the general purpose hall, canteen, library resources centre and car parking. Construction will commence in 1995.

Extensive planning was undertaken for Lanyon High School in 1994. This school, which will open in 1996, will have a different approach to junior secondary education. It is developed from the cluster of primary schools supporting it and will feature a vertical student grouping structure, a daily timetable based on the principles of quality and cooperative learning and a

school week which allows interaction with the feeder primary schools for joint activities such as band, LOTE, peer tutoring and peer support.

ACT Catholic Schooling into the 21st Century

In 1994, the Catholic Education Commission released details of proposed changes to Catholic secondary schools in the ACT for consideration by the community through the report *ACT Catholic Schooling into the 21st Century*. The proposals seek to utilise existing facilities and explore a structured change that divides the secondary years into two divisions: years 7 to 9 and years 10 to 12. Planning and consultation on the implementation of the report will continue in 1995.

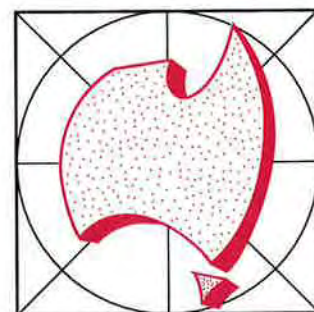
ACT Junior Secondary Bursary Scheme

This scheme, which helps students aged 14 and 15 years from low-income families to complete their compulsory schooling in government and non-government schools, assisted 1,048 students in 1994.

Overseas students

The International Private Students Program expanded to 132 overseas students in ACT schools at July 1994—112 in government schools and 20 in non-government schools. Most students came from Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand and Indonesia. China is an emerging market for this program. A consortium approach to overseas recruitment operated for government schools. This included ACT tertiary institutions, the Canberra Institute of Technology and the Department of Education and Training.

COMMONWEALTH



Addressing national priorities and goals for schooling

The Commonwealth's interest in primary and secondary education stems from its commitment to ensure the well-being of Australia's young people through the achievement of national social and economic goals.

The Commonwealth recognises that the States and Territories and non-government education authorities have the main responsibility for the delivery of primary and secondary education services in Australia. It seeks to work cooperatively with these authorities to ensure that the quality of schooling for all students at all levels is second to none, and it plays a key role in addressing the national priorities for schools by providing leadership in collaborative efforts with government and non-government education authorities.

The Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) administers the Commonwealth's policies and programs for students and schools.

The Schools Council of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) provides information to the Commonwealth Government on matters relating to primary and secondary education in Australian schools. Two other councils of NBEET, the Employment and Skills Formation Council (ESFC) and the Australian Language and Literacy Council (ALLC) have responsibilities which concern schools.

In April 1989, State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers for Education, meeting as the Australian Education Council, agreed to work cooperatively towards the achievement of the ten Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia.

Within the context of these goals, the Commonwealth's objective is to strengthen Australian schools by assisting schools and systems to provide educational services of the highest quality. Its specific objectives for schooling are:

- to prepare students for life in general and full participation in society, including participation in a skilled and adaptable workforce;

- to promote equity both within schools and within society;
- to maximise school retention, especially among groups which currently have low retention;
- to maximise the competence, efficiency and confidence of teachers through various means, including in-service training and improved career paths;
- to facilitate the transition of students from primary to secondary schooling, from one school system to another, and from schooling to further education and training or employment;
- to provide better feedback on schooling to parents, students, teachers, employers and the general community.

It seeks to do this through leadership in areas of national priority and through the provision of some \$3 billion in supplementary funding to both government and non-government schools:

- to assist with the recurrent and capital costs of schooling;
- to improve the educational access, participation, learning outcomes and personal development of young people who are educationally disadvantaged;
- to promote Australia's multicultural society;
- to promote projects and programs directly related to national priorities for schooling, including fostering collaborative curriculum development; introducing the Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS); trialling the key competencies; recognising and promoting excellence; improving gender equity; and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

The Commonwealth also provides financial assistance directly to individual students and their families through AUSTUDY, for financially disadvantaged secondary students; through ABSTUDY, for students of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin; and through the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme for students living in remote areas.

Focus and major developments

Key developments in 1994 included the Prime Minister's establishment of a Civics Expert Group, the development of a National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) strategy, and initiatives arising from *Working Nation*, including the announcement that the Commonwealth would fund a survey of school literacy attainment.

For a number of existing Commonwealth initiatives in schooling, 1994 was also a year of consolidation and steady progress. This included the areas of quality schooling, education of girls and the National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS).

Civics and citizenship education

In June 1994, the Prime Minister established a Civics Expert Group to develop a strategic plan for a non-partisan program of public education on civics and citizenship issues. The members of the group were Professor Stuart Macintyre (Chair), Professor of History at the University of Melbourne; Dr Ken Boston, Director-General of the New South Wales Department of School Education; and Ms Susan Pascoe, Coordinating Chairperson (Policy) of the Catholic Education Office, Melbourne.

The Civics Expert Group presented the report *Whereas the people...* to the Prime Minister in December 1994. Among other measures, the report recommended that comprehensive curriculum materials to support civics and citizenship education in Australian schools be developed through Curriculum Corporation. A recommendation was also made to support professional development activities to assist the implementation of this initiative.

The Prime Minister announced that the Government would allow three months for public comment on the report, after which time the Government would consider its response.

National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools strategy

In December 1992, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) discussed the importance of proficiency in Asian languages and an understanding of Asian cultures to the enhancement of Australia's economic interests in the Asia-Pacific region. In this context it was agreed that Asian language development is a matter of national importance, requiring urgent and high-level attention. The report of this working group, *Asian Languages and Australia's Economic Future*, led to the NALSAS strategy, which was considered and endorsed by COAG in February 1994.

The NALSAS strategy aims to support improved and enhanced teaching and learning of four Asian languages—Japanese, Chinese (Mandarin), Indonesian and Korean—and Asian studies. The Commonwealth contribution to the NALSAS strategy totals \$67.7 million over four years (\$2.8 million in 1994–95, \$10.3 million in 1995–96, \$20.9 million in 1996–97 and \$33.7 million in 1997–98), amounting to 50 per cent of the cost of the strategy in those four years.

The recently established Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) NALSAS Taskforce will oversee implementation of the Strategy. The NALSAS Taskforce has representation from the Commonwealth, all government school systems and the peak bodies of Catholic and independent schools.

Working Nation initiatives

The training initiatives set out in *Working Nation*, the Commonwealth's White Paper on Employment and Growth, are about improving the employment opportunities and prospects of the unemployed and young people. This training will provide for a sustained improvement in the skill base of Australia's workforce and will also integrate further a competency-based approach to training in Australia.

Through *Working Nation* the Commonwealth Government is to expand the number of entry-level training places, and in doing so will accelerate the development of structured and competency-based training arrangements. The target of 50,000 additional entry-level training commencements has been set for apprentices, trainees, pre-vocational places, and placements in accredited labour market programs. There have been promising developments and a positive commitment by industry to achieving these commencements.

The Australian Student Traineeship Foundation (ASTF) is another important *Working Nation* initiative to encourage young people to undertake vocational training. The ASTF was launched in August 1994. Its aim is to promote a broadening of senior school education to include opportunities for students in years 11 and 12 to gain workplace experience and develop vocational competencies before they graduate from school. To achieve this aim, the ASTF will develop a network of regional training brokers who will encourage the development of school–industry programs by providing advice, support and, where necessary, seed funding.

Working Nation identified the need for better data on both literacy and numeracy in Australian schools and allocated approximately \$2.6 million to collect literacy data at three significant stages in schooling by the end

of 1996. The aims of the National Schools Literacy Survey are:

- to obtain a clear view regarding English literacy levels among Australian school students, identifying those student characteristics associated with different levels of literacy;
- to provide employers and the community with reliable information about the literacy skills of Australian school students;
- to enable governments to assess literacy needs so that resources can be targeted more effectively;
- to establish national benchmarks against which teachers, schools and systems can assess the effectiveness of current programs and can adjust their goals and programs to improve literacy levels.

The Commonwealth sought the full involvement of key stakeholders through membership of a steering committee which is responsible for shaping the direction of the project. The first meeting of the steering committee was held in December 1994 and was chaired by Mr Greg Black, Director-General of Education in Western Australia. The steering committee viewed 1995 as a planning year with the survey being implemented in mid-1996.

Quality schooling

The Commonwealth built on earlier initiatives in quality schooling during 1994. The National Professional Development Program (NPDP) completed its first year of operation and there was further development of the AVTS.

Links were strengthened between the school sector and the vocational education and training sector, particularly through the pilot projects for the AVTS. In 1993, 68 institution-based pilot projects were funded by the Commonwealth. Schools were involved in all but 12 of the projects. In 1994, an additional 34 institution-based pilot projects were funded; 27 of these projects were directed at school-vocational education training partnerships.

The Commonwealth continued its substantial financial commitment to the Australian Teaching Council, providing \$250,000 in 1994-95.

Progress achieved in the target areas of the Teaching Accord was reviewed during 1994. It was found that partnerships developed between the Commonwealth and the teacher unions helped to provide real benefits to teachers through projects funded via a range of national programs. Commonwealth schools programs will provide approximately \$30 million over 1993-95 to fund Teaching Accord projects.

The Commonwealth continued its study of initial teacher education practices in Australian universities. The study includes an examination of course structures; employment and industrial issues; partnerships between universities, schools, teachers and employers; and the unique problems of education faculties within the university context, and will be used as a basis for discussion with the university sector. Work on the study will continue in 1995.

National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools

The Commonwealth, in cooperation with State and Territory governments and major non-government bodies, continued its commitment to implementing the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools. A focus for 1994 was the provision of Projects of National Significance Program funding for the MCEETYA Gender Equity Taskforce secretariat, administered by the ACT Department of Education and Training. The Commonwealth also funded the Promoting Gender Equity Conference, to be held in early 1995. Conference outcomes will inform further development of the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls to include gender equity.

National Equity Program for Schools

The National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS) became fully operational in 1994.

The NEPS has introduced a new kind of funding agreement between the Commonwealth and education providers covering objectives, targets, funding arrangements and levels, mechanisms for community participation, accountability and evaluation. Greater flexibility for education authorities in the use of funds is accompanied by more outcomes-focused accountability, including information about equity inputs. All NEPS funding agreements for the year were published in the *NEPS Compendium of 1994 Agreements*.

During 1994, the NEPS benefited from regular consultation with NEPSAC, the National Equity Program for Schools Advisory Committee, which comprises representatives of parent groups, teacher organisations, Catholic and independent school authorities, and special interest and community groups. NEPSAC provides advice to the Commonwealth Minister on the implementation and development of the NEPS.

In addition, consultation was a key part of three reviews of aspects of the NEPS in 1994:

- the Review of Allocative Mechanisms for Commonwealth Equity Funds for Schools, based

on the report by consultants Ashenden Milligan. After consultations with education authorities and interest groups in the States and Territories, recommendations were made to MCEETYA regarding priorities for improving the way NEPS funds are allocated. These include revision of the mechanisms for allocating Disadvantaged Schools Component (DSC) and Country Areas Components funds, simplification of the English as a Second Language (ESL) General Support mechanism and work on target group definitions;

- a review of clients' perceptions of the changed administrative arrangements for the Special Education Component in 1994 (reported later in this chapter);
- the Assessment of Administrative Arrangements survey, which sought clients' comments on the implementation of the NEPS, particularly with respect to program structure, consultations, payment arrangements, administrative expenditure cap and client service.

Two issues of the newsletter *Equity Matters* were published during 1994 and distributed to education authorities, interest groups, schools and the general community. The first dealt with issues of access and equity for rural and isolated students; the second sought community views on the revision of NEPS allocations as part of the consultation process referred to previously.

The program structure of the NEPS expanded in 1994, with the introduction of a Transition Support Component, and Budget provision for a new Early Literacy Component from 1995.

The Transition Support Component was introduced in the 1993–94 Budget as part of the Commonwealth's Social Justice Strategy for people with disabilities. The component aims to assist the transition of students with disabilities from mainstream schooling to further education, employment and adult life through the employment of school transition officers. Funding of over \$5 million will be provided during the 1994–96 triennium.

Funding is provided in the form of project-based grants directly to State government education departments (not to individual schools) to support school transition officers located in government schools and supporting regions and/or clusters of both government and non-government schools. The role of school transition officers is to improve access to a range of post-school options for students with disabilities.

The 1994–95 Budget provided funding of \$8.7 million for the new Early Literacy Component for the 1995 program year, as part of Commonwealth initiatives

to support literacy development. Government, Catholic and independent education authorities will receive funding to foster the development of literacy and learning for children from low socioeconomic backgrounds in the early years of schooling (K–3) by supporting intervention strategies and the delivery of professional development programs for teachers.

Review of resource levels in government primary schools

The review of resource levels in government primary schools is examining the effectiveness of recurrent resourcing levels from the point of view of learning outcomes, and the contribution resourcing arrangements might make towards maximising effectiveness, with a particular focus on literacy.

The review is being conducted in several stages. Stage 1 produced an independent consultant's report, *Resource Levels for Government Primary Schools*, which was released in August 1994. This report considered several broad options for the Commonwealth in terms of its General Recurrent Grants Program for government primary schools but indicated that drawing links between funding levels and learning outcomes would require major additional study. The report's preferred option was to cap general recurrent funding and introduce a new targeted program specifically to improve literacy in the early years.

In December 1994, the Schools Council commenced Stage 2 of the review with the distribution of a discussion paper, *Improving Commonwealth Funding Arrangements for Government Primary Schools*. This paper canvassed a series of possible approaches to determining Commonwealth general recurrent funding levels for government primary schools. It also proposed six literacy initiatives relating to literacy programs in the community and in schools, and outlined four propositions on monitoring and accountability arrangements for education funding. Following consultations, the Schools Council will present a report to the Government in the first half of 1995.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

1994 marked the mid-point of the second triennium (1993–95) of collaborative action by State, Territory and Commonwealth governments under the 21 long-term national goals of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP). Progress in the five years since the AEP was agreed to by all governments was assessed in the National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Following extensive public consultation during

1994 and the receipt of over 180 written submissions, the reference group overseeing the review presented its *Summary Report and Recommendations* to Commonwealth Ministers in October 1994. The *Final Report* has subsequently been released. The review made 44 recommendations for consideration by all governments and education providers in all sectors. The accompanying *Statistical Annex* provides a comprehensive picture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' involvement in, access to, participation in, and outcomes from education. The Commonwealth's response to the review will be announced in 1995. Those recommendations which call for a cooperative approach between State and Territory governments and the Commonwealth are being pursued through MCEETYA.

The Commonwealth contributed to the 1993–95 triennium of the AEP through a variety of programs. In addition to providing access under mainstream education programs, the Commonwealth makes a major contribution through the Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program (AESIP). This program is described in detail later in this chapter.

Youth policy

The Australian Youth Initiatives Grants Program (AYIG), encompassing the National Youth Grants (NYG) and the Youth Strategy Action Grants (YSAG) programs, continued in 1994. The NYG Program focused on assisting disadvantaged young people in rural and remote localities and funded 14 projects. The YSAG Program funded 101 organisations to deliver projects to disadvantaged young people. The Youth Bureau also reviewed the overall approach to programs and services covered by the AYIG Program for the 1994–95 grant year. The AYIG program ceases at the end of the 1994–95 financial year.

The Youth Bureau considered new directions in the context of the initiatives in *Working Nation*, in particular, joint ventures between the private sector, community organisations and the Commonwealth.

The Educational Counselling for Young People Program is intended to improve educational participation and outcomes of secondary students who are experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage and who are at risk of not completing secondary schooling. In 1994, the program continued to fund three organisations to provide counselling and support for students and their families in metropolitan areas. In addition, pilot schemes were introduced in 1994, under which four organisations were funded to assist students and their families in rural and remote areas. In total, over 3,000 students and their families were assisted under the program in 1994.

Under the Rural Youth Information Service Program, DEET provides funding to organisations in rural and isolated areas (where there are no similar Commonwealth services) to provide information, advice and referral services to young people, on employment, education, training and other related issues. Funding has been provided for the program from 1990 to June 1995 on a cost-sharing basis whereby the Commonwealth provides \$25,000 per location per year. There were 23 services operating during 1994.

In 1994, the Youth Bureau initiated a small number of pilot projects to address the needs of young homeless people. The aim of these projects is to provide the most efficient service delivery to homeless young people. The projects are being developed at the local level to react to community needs and encourage local ownership of the problem with facilitation by the Commonwealth.

The 1994 Rock Eisteddfod gave 50,000 students at 500 schools the opportunity to produce a piece of live entertainment set to contemporary music. The Rock Eisteddfod allows students to develop self-esteem, communication skills and team work.

National Board of Employment, Education and Training

A number of Schools Council reports were published or completed in 1994. These included:

- *The Role of Schools in the Vocational Preparation of Australia's Senior Secondary Students*—this report formed part of the Council's project on Pathways from the Post-compulsory Years of Schooling to Further Education and Training. It analysed how effectively schools were providing for the broader range of purposes now served by upper secondary education;
- *Compendium of Good Practice*—an adjunct to the previous report, this volume described some of the most encouraging developments occurring across Australia to expand young people's vocational education and employment options;
- *Education and Training for 16–18 Year Olds: Some Reflections from Europe*;
- *Post-compulsory Education and Training Arrangements in the Australian States and Territories*;
- *Improving Commonwealth Funding Arrangements for Government Primary Schools: Discussion Paper*—this paper formed part of the review referred to in an earlier section of this chapter;

- *Meeting the Educational Needs of Aboriginal Adolescents*—this report examined the developmental tasks of contemporary Aboriginal young people; the characteristics of schools which are successful in recognising and meeting the needs of Aboriginal students; and the factors which Aboriginal students believed were important to their own success;
- *Adequacy of Education Expenditure Reporting Arrangements for Accountability, Efficiency and Effectiveness; Approaches to Measuring Efficiency and Effectiveness in School Education; The Elements of Successful Student Outcomes—Views from Upper Primary Classroom Teachers; and The Costs of Schooling Study*—these reports were part of a series of commissioned reports on the costs and quality of schooling. It is expected that several of these reports will be published.

Another activity involved two projects on the attitudes of Australian secondary school students to the economic future of their country and to their own careers. One involved a review of relevant literature and the other a series of focus group discussions. Both projects were completed in 1994. The Schools Council has commissioned a final report which will synthesise all its work on young people's views on the role of schools and their effectiveness in preparing students for their future lives.

During 1994, the ALLC undertook work relating to schools in the following areas:

- a review of pre-service and in-service teacher education, in both school and adult education contexts, in the field of English literacy and English and ESL;
- an investigation of teacher quality and supply in the area of languages other than English (LOTE);
- a review of current developments and an assessment of needs in plain English and accessible reading materials in the public and private sectors.

Other work relating to schools was undertaken by the NBEET in 1994. This included an investigation into measures (including dissemination of existing best practice) whereby collaboration between higher education, vocational education and training, and senior secondary education might be improved and extended to maximise the benefits to industry and the wider community of existing funding, without distorting the respective missions of the sectors.

The NBEET also commenced work on the contribution which education and training sectors should make to the development of lifelong learning skills and attitudes, while the ESFC began an examination of current and emerging employment, education and training issues associated with the convergence of technologies in the telecommunications and computer industries.

International involvement in education

During 1994, Australia was an active participant in a range of international activities. These included the education activities of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) through the OECD's Education Committee and Centre for Education Research and Innovation. A particular focus was participation in a study of curriculum and assessment, which is part of a broader study, *Teachers and Curriculum Reform in Basic Schooling*.

Australia continued to contribute to the OECD's major publication of international education indicators, *Education at a Glance*. The third edition of this publication is expected to be released in early 1995, and there will be a major international conference in Finland in June 1995 to discuss future directions.

The Commonwealth Government and the Australian Education Union hosted a major international conference, *Partnerships in Education Reform*, during 1994. The outcomes and recommendations of this conference will inform discussion at an OECD conference, *Better Schools: New Roles, Responsibilities and Partnerships in Education*, to be held in Paris in 1995.

Work by the Asia Education Foundation continued in 1994. A draft national framework for the study of Asia was published as *A Study of Asia: A Statement for Australian Schools*, and is available from Curriculum Corporation. The National Magnet Schools Program has been expanded, and now involves nearly 200 schools in all States and Territories.

Australia also plays an active part in UNESCO educational activities. In 1994, DEET was involved in a distance education and open learning program, comprising two weeks of study visits in Australia followed by an international seminar in Victoria. Several project proposals were generated from this program for further consideration by UNESCO.

In the Asia-Pacific region, Australia participates (through DEET) in a number of collaborative activities with the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Education Forum. The first phase of Australia's project for the Education Forum was successfully completed during 1994 with the publication of a report entitled *School Education Statistics in the Asia-Pacific Region*. The second phase of the project is now being developed with other members. It is likely to involve additional data items, with a report to be produced in 1997.

Australia also participated in the APEC study, *Teacher Training and Professional Development*. This study investigated the trends, issues and challenges of teacher preparation and professional development in APEC member countries. The second phase of the study, on teacher induction, will take place in 1995.

Monitoring achievement

The Commonwealth seeks to monitor progress towards the goals for schooling in Australia through program evaluations, participation in and funding of sample studies, funding of other research studies focused on improving data availability, and monitoring and analysis of key school statistics.

Evaluations

The Commonwealth began one major program evaluation during 1994, relating to the Country Areas National Component of the NEPS. The evaluation is being undertaken by Coopers and Lybrand and is due for completion in the first half of 1995.

Another important activity in the area of evaluation was the production, for the first time, of an evaluation strategy for the Schools and Curriculum Division of DEET. This document sets out the factors to be taken into account in deciding which programs to evaluate, and includes an indicative schedule of evaluations to the year 2001.

Sample studies and other Commonwealth-funded research

A common theme underlying recent sample studies and a number of other Commonwealth-funded studies has been the need to improve the reporting of student outcomes, especially for those students in recognised disadvantaged groups. In this regard, the Commonwealth welcomes the new format for the *National Report* from 1995, with its increased emphasis on reporting student outcomes.

Four sample studies have included aspects relating to the definition of disadvantaged groups or outcome indicators. The earliest of these was the sample study on education provision for students with disabilities, the report of which was published during 1994 as *Schooling for Students with Disabilities*. This study included a discussion of the problems associated with defining students with disabilities.

The report of the second sample study, *Subject Choice in Years 11 and 12*, was also published during 1994. This report included some suggested indicators of subject choice patterns in schools as a contribution to the process of monitoring student outcomes.

A third study, still in progress during 1994, was the 1993 sample study on education provision for students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. An important objective of this study was to recommend the most appropriate definition and method of measurement of socioeconomic status (SES) for school students. A report on this study is included in the national overview chapter of this report.

A new sample study on the definition of 'non-English speaking background' (NESB) was begun in 1994, funded by the Commonwealth. A report on this study is also included in the national overview chapter.

The Commonwealth is funding a follow-up to the Year 12 Data Comparability Project completed during 1993 and endorsed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA). The new study, which is being undertaken by the New South Wales Board of Studies, aims to develop a data dictionary to assist States to develop year 12 data sets that contain nationally comparable information on students. Work began in late 1994 and is scheduled for completion in the first half of 1995.

Along with the States and Territories, the Commonwealth continued to support Australia's participation in the major international study of school students' achievement in mathematics and science, known as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, or TIMSS. The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) is managing the study for Australia, and during 1994 surveyed and tested the two younger cohorts in the study. Final year students will be tested in 1995, with first results expected midway through 1996.

Analysis of key statistics

To ensure that its objectives for schools are being achieved, the Commonwealth also monitors key outcomes statistics. A number of outcome measures are available at present, including retention to year 12, subject choice at upper secondary level, and transition to further study.

Year 12 retention declined for the second year in a row to 75 per cent in 1994 (Table 1). Rates for boys and girls in 1994 were 70 per cent and 80 per cent respectively. The decline in the retention rate in 1993 and 1994 is reflected in the proportions of 15, 16, 17 and 18 year olds attending school, as Table 2 shows.

One of the Commonwealth's objectives for schooling is to increase the participation of students who are

Table 1. Apparent year 12 retention rates, 1992-94 (per cent)

Sector	1992	1993	1994
Government	74	73	71
Catholic	76	77	76
Independent	101	98	97
Total non-government	85	84	83
Total	77	77	75

Source: Commonwealth DEET

Table 2. Age participation rates, 1992–94 (per cent)

Age	1992	1993	1994
15	93	93	92
16	81	81	80
17	60	61	60
18	15	14	13
19	3	3	2
Total 15–19	49	49	49

Source: Commonwealth DEET

educationally disadvantaged by ethnicity, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background, socioeconomic circumstances, geographic isolation or physical or intellectual disability.

Information on year 12 completions for two of these groups, students from SES backgrounds and students whose home is in a rural or remote area, has been collected by the Commonwealth from State secondary accrediting authorities since 1984. Summary results at the national level have been included each year in the *National Report*.

In 1994, DEET commissioned Dr Roger Jones (Australian National University) to undertake a review of completion rates, including providing advice on which indicator of SES and which classification of geographic region should be used for rate calculations in future, and on any technical issues relating to the calculation and interpretation of State-level data. He was asked to take account of the 1991 Census data, work by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) on a series of socioeconomic indicators, and the revision of the classification of geographic regions by the ABS and the Department of Primary Industries and Energy (DPIE).

This review recommended that the 1991 Census Index of Education and Occupation replace the 1986 Census SES index for the calculation of year 12 completion rates for SES, and that the DPIE *Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Areas Classification 1991 Census Edition* be used for geographic location. Completion rates contained in this *National Report* and the *Statistical Annex* have been revised back to 1991 on the basis of these recommendations.

Table 3 indicates that there has been an improvement since the late 1980s in the proportion of students from the lowest SES backgrounds staying on to year 12. However, this proportion (63 per cent in 1994) remains below the corresponding rate for higher SES students (79 per cent in 1994).

The updated classification of geographic location has been incorporated into Table 3. The new classification produces a slightly different picture to that reported previously.

The table shows that the year 12 completion rate for students from rural home locations has declined since peaking in 1991, and at 64 per cent is now some 7 percentage points below the urban rate (71 per cent). The completion rate for remote students (58 per cent) is still below that for both rural and urban students, but it has held up over the period since 1991 when rural completion rates have been falling. (Rates for urban students have remained stable over the same period.)

Table 3. Estimated year 12 completion rates by socioeconomic status and home location^(a), 1989–94 (per cent)

	1989	1990	1991 ^r	1992 ^r	1993 ^r	1994 ^p
Low SES	53	53	63	64	65	63
High SES	72	70	79	77	78	79
Urban	62	63	71	70	71	71
Rural	58	60	68	67	67	64
Remote	47	47	57	58	58	58
Total	60	61	70	69	69	69

r: revised

p: preliminary—subject to finalisation of 1994 estimated resident population

(a) The basis of SES and home location has been updated. See *Statistical Annex* for details.

Source: Commonwealth DEET

In terms of monitoring outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, Table 4 shows that the 1994 apparent year 12 retention rate for these students is significantly below that for all Australian students. (While enrolment data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has been collected as part of the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) for all States and Territories for some years, 1994 is the first year for which retention rates for Australia can be calculated.)

Table 4. Apparent year 12 retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and all Australian students, 1992–94 (per cent)

	1992	1993	1994
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	25 ^(a)	25 ^{(a)(b)}	33
All students	77	77	75

(a) These rates exclude Queensland. (b) Estimated rate including Queensland was 33 per cent.

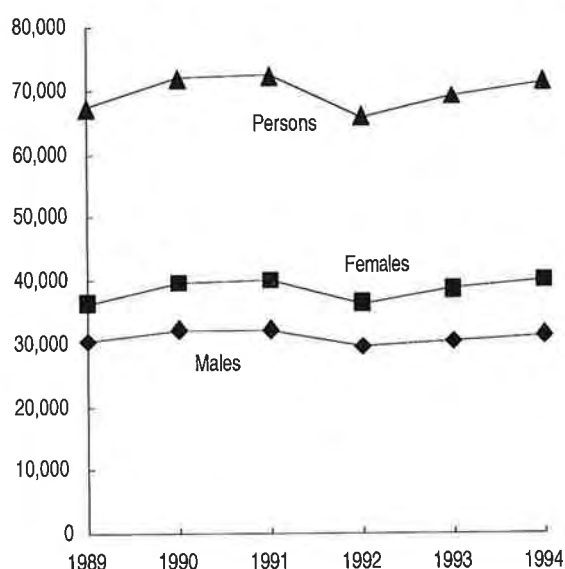
Source: Unpublished data from MCEETYA NSSC, 1990–94

Table 5. Year 12 enrolments in tertiary-accredited subjects, 1989 and 1994

	1989		1994	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	145,727	19.3	166,755	18.8
Science	143,312	19.0	128,105	14.5
Mathematics	135,213	17.9	166,445	18.8
Humanities and social sciences	118,703	15.7	126,010	14.2
Economics and business	84,604	11.2	99,592	11.2
Arts	40,802	5.4	53,004	6.0
Languages	20,373	2.7	26,939	3.0
Physical education	13,823	1.8	25,255	2.9
Technical studies	17,198	2.3	52,069	5.9
Other	34,376	4.6	41,676	4.7
Total	754,131	100.0	885,850	100.0

Source: Commonwealth DEET from information supplied by secondary accreditation authorities

Figure 1. Year 12 school leavers who continued on to higher education, Australia, 1989-94



Source: Commonwealth DEET

Another of the Commonwealth's objectives is to increase student participation in key subject areas. As Table 5 shows, the areas of mathematics, arts and languages increased their share of total enrolments between 1989 and 1994. In addition, there has been a large increase in enrolments (in both numbers and share) in physical education and in the technical studies area, which includes computing studies.

In 1994, 71,108 year 12 students continued on to higher education, 3 per cent more than in 1993. As Figure 1 shows, the number of female school leavers who continue on to higher education exceeds the number of males. School leavers who commenced higher education in 1994 represented 38 per cent of 1993 year 12 students.

ABS survey data (Table 6) show that some 62,300 school leavers from years 10, 11 and 12 continued on to technical and further education in 1994. Of these, over 65 per cent had completed year 12.

Comparison with other countries is another indicator of the performance of the Australian school system. The third edition of *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators* (EAG3) reports on 49 indicators covering 1991-92 school year data provided by participating members, including Australia.

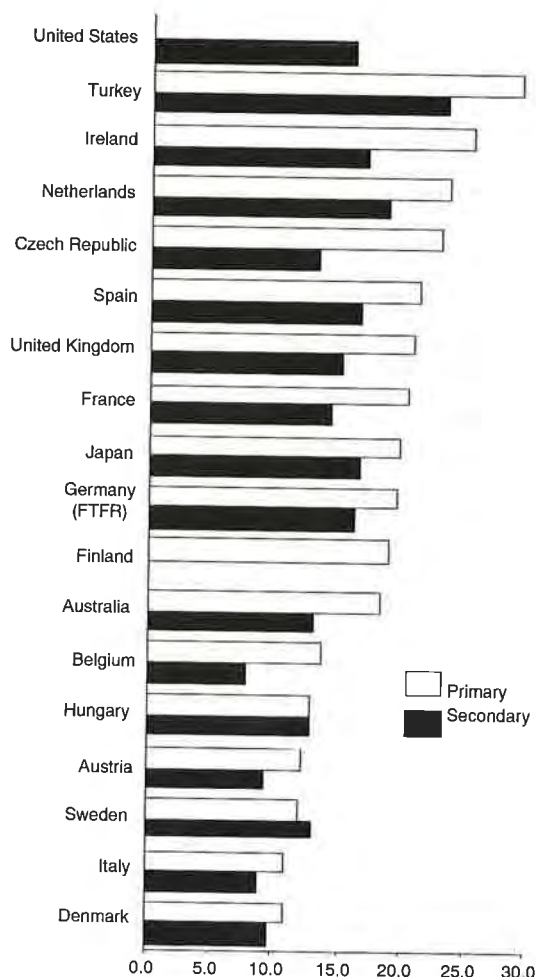
Table 6. School leavers who continued on to TAFE in 1994

Highest year of secondary school completed	1994
Year 12	
Government	26,300
Non-government	14,400
Total (b)	40,800
Year 10 or 11	
Government	17,000
Non-government	2,800
Total (b)	19,900
Total (a)	
Government	44,800
Non-government	17,500
Total (b)	62,300

(a) Includes a small number of persons not asked type of school last attended. (b) Any discrepancies in totals are due to figures being rounded.

Source: ABS Cat. No 6227.0 *Transition from Education to Work, Australia*, unpublished tables

Figure 2. Ratio of primary and secondary students to teaching staff, government and non-government education, 1992



Source: OECD, *Education at a Glance*, 1995

As Figure 2 shows, in the area of pupil-teacher ratios (PTRs), Australia is in the middle of the field with ratios of 18.4 at primary level and 12.9 at secondary level.

The report shows that in regard to the percentage of the population that has completed tertiary education, Australia was outperformed by only five of the 20 countries contributing to this indicator (Figure 3).

Commonwealth funding for schools and students

The Commonwealth plays a key role in addressing the national priorities for schools by providing a variety of funding programs for schools and students. For 1994, the Commonwealth spent \$3 billion on schools programs (including \$2.4 billion in General Recurrent Grants) and \$635 million on income support for school students (Figure 4).

Figure 3. Educational attainment of the population^(a) 1992



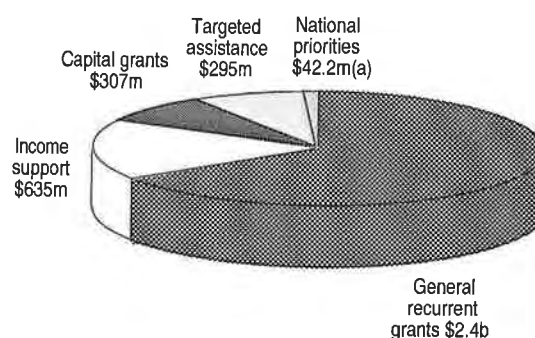
* 1993 data

** 1991 data

(a) Percentage of the population 25 to 64 years of age that has completed tertiary education (non-university and university).

Source: OECD, *Education at a Glance*, 1995

Figure 4. Commonwealth expenditure on schools and students, 1994



(a) Indicates allocated funds for 1994-95 financial year, except for Education Centres and Projects of National Significance, which are allocated on a calendar-year basis.

Source: Commonwealth DEET

Schools programs

Schools and Curriculum Division of DEET administers the majority of the Commonwealth's schools programs. Late in the year, responsibility for administering the AESIP was moved to Student, Aboriginal Education and Youth Division.

Schools programs administered by these two divisions fall into two broad areas: general assistance and targeted assistance. In total, in 1994, \$1,291 million was provided to government schools; \$1,698 million to non-government schools; and \$57.3 million was provided jointly to the two sectors under these programs. Details of the Commonwealth's expenditure are provided in the *Statistical Annex* to this report. The *Statistical Annex* includes information, for relevant programs, on the numbers of schools and students assisted.

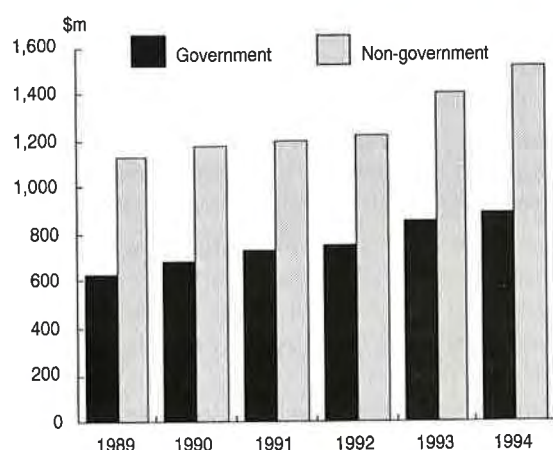
General assistance

General Recurrent Grants Program

In 1994, approximately \$2.4 billion in general recurrent grants was allocated by the Commonwealth to support the ongoing costs of Australian schooling, including teachers' salaries. Of this, \$893.5 million was allocated for 1,390,112 primary and 862,039 secondary students in government schools, and \$1,516.9 million for 469,281 primary and 408,873 secondary students in non-government schools.

In the government sector, general recurrent grants are provided as block grants; that is, funds are provided in one single payment to State and Territory governments for distribution and the Commonwealth is not directly involved in the allocation of funds to individual schools.

Figure 5. Commonwealth general recurrent grants, 1989–94



Source: Commonwealth DEET

Table 7. Non-government schools and students funded by the Commonwealth, 1989–94

Year	Number of funded schools	Number of funded students
1989	2,481	833,802
1990	2,473	843,370
1991	2,453	852,574
1992	2,449	859,128
1993	2,447	866,858
1994	2,455	880,308

Source: Commonwealth DEET

In the non-government sector, the level of Commonwealth funding is needs-based, with schools and systems being categorised into one of 12 funding categories (category 1 receiving the least financial support and category 12 the most).

Commonwealth general recurrent grants are made on a per student basis. Table 19 in the *Statistical Annex* shows the per capita rates for both government and non-government sectors.

In 1992, 31 new schools, with projected maximum enrolments of 11,400, received funding approval to commence in 1994. Nine proposals were not approved for funding for 1994 because they were not considered to be consistent with the planned provision of education in the proposed locations. Table 8 shows the outcomes of proposals for new schools in 1993 and 1994.

In the context of the 1992–93 Budget, the Government announced some revisions to the New Schools Policy. These changes are reflected in the decline in the number of applications between 1993 and 1994, particularly in 'other' applications, which are those proposals no longer requiring assessment in terms of planned educational provision.

Table 8. Outcomes of the Commonwealth's New Schools Policy, 1993 and 1994

Type of proposal	1993		1994	
	Proposed	Approved	Proposed	Approved
Commencement	50	39	40	31
Extension of school years	27	24	17	13
Relocation of school	22	22	29	25
Other	69	65	35	34
Total	168	150	121	103

Source: Commonwealth DEET

Capital Grants Program

In 1994, the Commonwealth provided nearly \$307 million for school building projects under the Capital Grants Program. This included funds made available under special purpose elements to focus on issues of national significance (such as the curricular developments recommended by the Finn and Carmichael reports) and to help improve the participation and achievement of students of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background.

In the government sector, \$201 million funded 376 major projects and over 1,500 minor projects at government schools, with an average grant of \$491,200 for major projects. In the non-government sector, \$105 million funded 524 projects at non-government schools and hostels, with an average grant of \$202,000.

Hostels for Rural School Students: Staff Training, Development and Community Liaison Program

The Hostels for Rural School Students: Staff Training, Development and Community Liaison Program aims to increase access to schools for students from isolated rural areas by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the management and operation of non-government hostels for rural school students.

In 1994, the program provided some \$1.6 million, which was spent mainly on training for hostel staff, equipment for office management and student support and hostel promotion. Three forums for hostel staff were funded, in Cairns and Roma (Queensland) and Hay (New South Wales). A national hostels project assisted by a National Hostels Working Party was established to investigate the needs of hostels and to recommend appropriate solutions.

National priorities

A total of \$31 million was provided in 1994 to support a range of programs and projects considered to be national priorities.

Projects of National Significance Program

Projects funded by the Projects of National Significance Program in 1994 supported change and innovation contributing to quality outcomes in primary and secondary education. Research and activities funded under the program addressed nationally important educational issues and helped expand the experience, knowledge and skills of teachers and others involved in school education.

Under the 1994 program, \$2.7 million was allocated to 45 projects. Topics included the middle years of schooling, equity issues in the delivery of education,

and the collection of data on students with disabilities. Specific projects included Alienation During the Middle Years of Schooling in South Australia, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory; Promoting Gender Equity; and Management Information Systems projects associated with the NEPS.

Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project

The Commonwealth allocated \$288,000 to the Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project in 1994, the final year of the project. The funding has supported the publication of a series of reports and curriculum and support materials which provide teachers with information and assistance in the development of gender inclusive curriculum.

National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools

The Gen newsletter, which is funded by the Commonwealth, aims to promote the objectives of the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools and strategies for its implementation. Distribution of the newsletter reached 38,000 per month during 1994.

Gender and Violence Project

The Gender and Violence Project commenced late in 1992 as part of the Prime Minister's Community Education: Stop Violence Against Women strategy and provided \$0.9 million over two years to focus on gender and violence issues at school level. In 1994, the project has supported the development of a range of materials to assist schools in developing their own definition of violence and a school-based approach to the issue. These include:

- materials which support a whole school approach to dealing with issues of gender and violence in the school context and in relevant areas of the curriculum;
- two videos, one on gender and violence issues for primary students and one for the professional development of teachers, which will complement the curriculum and school management materials;
- a framework and support materials for dealing with gender and violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school communities.

The materials, which are to be published in 1995, will be targeted at different age levels and audiences within the school and include materials for primary students. They will enable schools to access the material from a range of entry points.

Australian Students Prize

The Australian Students Prize rewards excellence and provides public recognition and support for outstanding

Australian students. Five hundred prizes were made available to senior secondary students across Australia in recognition of their outstanding level of achievement in 1994 senior secondary studies.

The prize is awarded on a pro rata basis according to States' and Territories' year 12 population. In 1994, 12 prizes were reserved from the national allocation of 500 for winners of medals in international science and mathematics Olympiads. The prize consisted of a cheque for \$2,000 and a Certificate of Excellence signed by the Commonwealth Minister.

Quality Schooling Program

In 1994, \$2.1 million was provided to projects under the Quality Schooling Program. The program aims to improve the quality of education in Australian schools by supporting developments in educational leadership, school organisation, student welfare and teacher professionalism.

Major activities in 1994 included promoting professional development for principals through the Australian Principals' Associations Professional Development Council, informing parents of national education initiatives, and investigating aspects of schooling and school organisation which affect learning through the National Schools Network.

Curriculum Corporation

The Commonwealth contributes a core fee to Curriculum Corporation on an annual basis, along with other member States and Territories, and in 1993–94 paid an establishment grant of \$458,700, being the final contribution of a five-year grant.

The Commonwealth also provided funding in 1994 to Curriculum Corporation for the development of teaching and learning materials which support the implementation of curriculum profiles. This funding was provided through the Curriculum Development Projects Program.

Curriculum Development Projects Program

The Curriculum Development Projects Program (CDPP) provides \$1.0 million each financial year to support curriculum development and implementation at a national level. The specific objectives of the program are:

- to continue to support national consistency in curriculum, assessment and reporting mechanisms for Australian schools and curriculum initiatives in gender equity and other priority areas, consistent with Commonwealth policy directions;
- to undertake Commonwealth implementation of the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools and its National Action Plan

for the Education of Girls 1993–97, and to address gender issues in a way that is consistent with the National Policy and the terms of reference of the MCEETYA Gender Equity Taskforce.

Assessment and the Use of Profiles was a major project funded in 1994 under the CDPP. The project, which is being undertaken by the ACER with the support of the National Schools Network, is developing an assessment resource kit for teachers on different approaches to assessment using the curriculum profiles for Australian schools. The purpose of the kit is to assist teachers to assess and report student progress against the curriculum profiles, and to stimulate discussion on the different options and issues in assessment. A range of expertise will be called upon throughout the development of the materials: existing literature; Australian and overseas experts working in the field; and classroom teacher input and expertise.

Other 1994 CDPP projects funded through Curriculum Corporation addressed a range of areas, including home economics, family studies, implementation of the profiles in primary schools, and implementation of the viewing strand of the English profile. Other projects supported the development of gender-inclusive curriculum guidelines, guidelines for curriculum materials development, and teaching and learning materials for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies.

Key Competencies Program

In January 1993, the Commonwealth announced that it would provide \$21 million over the three years 1993–94, 1994–95 and 1995–96 under the Key Competencies Program. The latest revised financial year allocations, including indexation, are \$3.7 million in 1993–94, \$13.6 million in 1994–95 and \$3.2 million in 1995–96. This program is described in detail in the national overview chapter.

Vocational Education in Schools Project

The Commonwealth has provided \$1.4 million over the 1992–94 financial years to support vocational programs in Australian schools through the Vocational Education in Schools Project. The project is managed by Curriculum Corporation.

The principal focus of the project is to develop curriculum resources for programs which have the potential to gain recognition under the National Framework for the Recognition of Training. The project also fosters national collaboration in vocational education and supports the introduction of the AVTS.

A report on stage 1 of the project, *Vocational Education in Australian Schools*, was published in April 1994. Products of the project will include a booklet on training reform in Australia and its implications for schools, a

series of publications on school-based pathways in a range of industry areas, and curriculum support packages for hospitality, electronics and enterprise. These publications are to be distributed to system authorities in 1995.

National Professional Development Program

The NPDP seeks to promote partnerships between teacher employers, universities and teacher organisations in the provision of relevant, quality, professional development activities. These activities support national initiatives in education involving the curriculum statements and profiles for Australian schools, the key competencies and accredited vocational education in schools.

The program provides Commonwealth funding under two elements:

- the Strategic Initiatives Element for projects which have national significance or applicability and involve teachers from more than one State or Territory;
- the General Element for projects which involve teachers from one State or Territory only.

In 1994, \$5.2 million was provided for 39 projects conducted under the Strategic Initiatives Element and \$8.9 million for 30 projects conducted under the General Element. Under the Strategic Initiatives Element, the Commonwealth continued its support for pilot projects intended to renew teachers' discipline knowledge. The projects were undertaken by teacher education faculties, in conjunction with discipline faculties, in the areas of primary science, English, technology, and health and physical education.

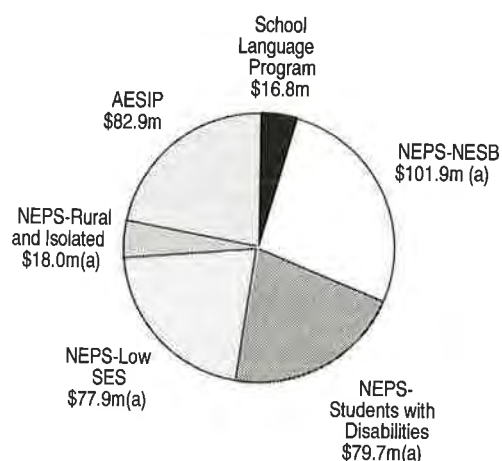
Education Centres

In 1994, funding of \$2.5 million was provided to support the operation of 22 Education Centres in city and rural locations throughout Australia. Education Centres are autonomous bodies managed through local committees, which have a majority of teachers as members. The major focus of the centres is improving the quality of school education through the provision of curriculum and professional development support.

Targeted assistance

In 1994, the Commonwealth provided \$383.8 million for targeted assistance, which comprised expenditure under the NEPS, the School Language Program and the AESIP. This expenditure is aimed at improving the educational outcomes of disadvantaged young people and at expanding and improving the learning of LOTE.

Figure 6. Commonwealth expenditure on targeted assistance, Australia, 1994



(a) These \$ amounts are calculated from the relevant components of the four NEPS elements.

Source: Commonwealth DEET

National Equity Program for Schools

Under the NEPS the Commonwealth provided \$284.1 million in 1994. The NEPS aims to improve the access, participation and educational outcomes of young people who are disadvantaged by: poverty and low socio-economic background; being an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; isolation and rurality; disability; non-English speaking background; poor literacy; and family breakdown, violence or abuse, homelessness and substance abuse.

Access Element

Under the Access Element, the Commonwealth provided a total of \$176.1 million, comprising \$101.9 million for the ESL Component and \$74.2 million for the Special Education Component.

The ESL Component comprises two elements:

- the New Arrivals sub-component, which provides a once-only grant (\$2,861 per student in 1994) to assist education authorities with the provision of intensive English language programs for newly arrived students with minimal or no English language skills;
- the General Support sub-component, which assists education authorities to provide ongoing English tuition for students of non-English speaking backgrounds who can already participate in the mainstream classroom but still require special assistance.

In 1994, the Commonwealth provided \$35.2 million in respect of 12,296 newly arrived students under the New Arrivals sub-component. This represents a marginal decrease of 0.8 per cent over the number of students (12,400) assisted in 1993. The amount provided under the General Support sub-component in 1994 was \$66.7 million.

The Special Education Component of the NEPS aims to improve the educational access, participation and outcomes of young people with disabilities. There are four main sub-components:

- The Schools Support Government and Non-Government sub-components assisted children with disabilities in government schools (\$27.6 million) and non-government schools (\$25.0 million). Funds could be spent on teachers, aides, equipment, curriculum and consultants, and for essential services, such as therapy to assist the access of these students to education.
- The Intervention Support sub-component (\$17.6 million) supported education and therapeutic and other essential services for children with disabilities not enrolled at schools, for example, young children with disabilities and children with severe disabilities. Children with or without disabilities in residential care were also assisted, as were school children whose needs were so great that funding in addition to that available under Schools Support sub-component was required.
- The Capital Support Non-Government sub-component (\$4.0 million) assisted non-government special schools, regular schools and centres to provide capital facilities integral to improving educational outcomes for children and students with disabilities.

In mid-1994, consultations took place nationally to review clients' perceptions of the changed administrative arrangements for the Special Education Component in 1994. This was a year of transition to procedures which gave greater autonomy to authorities and quarantined funding for non-school organisations. Initial analysis of this review data shows general satisfaction with the new arrangements, with support for ongoing reduction in the complexity of the component's structure.

As noted earlier, the report by the ACER entitled *Schooling for Students with Disabilities* was published in August 1994. It emphasised that the Special Education Component has a significant impact on the quality of educational provision for students with disabilities, particularly in assisting the integration of students with disabilities in primary and secondary schools, and in enabling non-government schools to enrol students with disabilities.

Equity Element

Under the Equity Element, the Commonwealth allocated \$81.7 million, comprising \$66.3 million for the DSC, \$15.4 million for the Country Areas General Component (CAGC). The Gender Equity Component (GEC) of the Incentives Element was provided with \$0.7 million of the CAGC funding.

Under the DSC, funds are provided to education authorities in each State and Territory to address the needs of students who are from a low socioeconomic background or living in poverty. Under NEPS arrangements, the government, Catholic and independent school administering authorities in each State and Territory are responsible for the detailed administration of the component. Education authorities have the flexibility to determine how best to allocate funds and implement NEPS programs and are responsible for ensuring funds are distributed equitably and to those most in need. The principles for distribution of funding are contained in a NEPS agreement with the Commonwealth, along with agreed objectives and reporting requirements.

The DSC supported a range of activities in the areas of literacy and numeracy, the development of skills to enable students to function effectively in society, curriculum development, professional development of staff associated with DSC schools, and parent, school and community interaction.

The CAGC assists school communities to improve the delivery of educational services in rural and isolated regions. Allocations are made to education authorities representing government, Catholic and independent schools for use in prescribed country or geographically isolated areas.

The CAGC supported a range of activities, including the development and extension of curriculum programs; involvement of local people, industries, employers and resources in school programs; and community programs to enrich the cultural, social and recreational life of country students. The CAGC has strong support in rural communities, and parents and community members are actively involved in its operation.

National Priorities Element

Under the National Priorities Element, a total of \$16.4 million was provided in 1994: \$3.7 million for the Country Areas National Component (CANC), \$1.8 million for the Literacy and Learning National Component (LLNC), \$7.6 million for the Students at Risk (STAR) Component, \$1 million for the Gifted and Talented Component (GTC) and \$2.2 million for the Transition Support Component. Of this, \$1.6 million was allocated to the GEC of the Incentives Element.

The CANC supported initiatives to encourage young people in rural areas to complete year 12, to improve levels of student achievement and to reduce gender bias in subject choice, particularly among students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The focus for the component was on cost-efficient technology and innovation, and on interstate, cross-sector and interschool collaboration.

Projects were funded in the areas of: access to education through technology, particularly the delivery of curriculum via telematics; research into the barriers to participation and retention to year 12; development of curriculum materials and non-traditional curriculum in the areas of mathematics, science and technology; and increasing the awareness of vocational education as a post-school option. As 1994 was the final year of the CANC, it involved the completion of projects continuing from 1992 and 1993. An evaluation of the CANC commenced in late 1994 and is due for completion in 1995.

The LLNC focuses attention on the importance of the early years of schooling (K–3) in students' literacy development, and aims to develop strategies which particularly address the special needs of students disadvantaged by socioeconomic circumstances.

Funding was provided for seven major projects which contributed to collaborative outcomes at the national level and to the development and delivery of collaborative professional development programs for teachers. An eighth project involving the development of an interactive multimedia software resource in CD-ROM format will, when completed, incorporate the outcomes of earlier projects funded under the component, including effective teaching strategies identified as part of these projects, and the professional development materials produced.

The STAR Component targets disadvantaged young people, with the objective of identifying those students most at risk of not completing secondary school and encouraging their continuation through a range of school-based projects at, or in connection with, government and non-government schools. These are young people up to 19 years of age who are at risk of leaving school, or who have already left school, before completing year 12, or whose achievement or behaviour at school is adversely affected by circumstances such as family dislocation, itinerancy, violence or abuse, homelessness, truancy or substance abuse.

STAR funding was provided for projects to assist students at risk in areas such as literacy and numeracy development; transition to further education, training or employment; development of links with parents/care givers; counselling and support for development of social and life skills; professional development to assist teachers to identify and assist students at risk; and development of flexible curriculum and innovative

organisational arrangements within schools. The 1993–94 Budget extended STAR to 1996.

The objective of the GTC, which commenced in 1993, is to assist schools and systems in enriching the learning experience of gifted and talented students, particularly those who are disadvantaged by poverty, isolation, poor English proficiency or disability.

Priority areas for funding were the identification of students, professional development of teachers, and development of models of support for gifted and talented students. In 1994, funding of \$1 million was provided to support 26 projects nationally.

Some of the projects funded in 1994 under the GTC include:

- a project conducted by the NSW Department of School Education which investigated cultural variance in identifying and nurturing giftedness and talents within the disadvantaged groups—in particular, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from non-English speaking backgrounds, and low SES English-speaking students;
- a Catholic Education Commission of NSW project which provided identification strategies and curriculum materials for teachers of rural and isolated gifted and talented students;
- the Zigzag project conducted in the Northern Education Region of Queensland by the Department of Education, which resulted in curriculum provision, identification methods and professional development of teachers to meet the needs of underachieving gifted and talented students in the NEPS target groups, but in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from a non-English speaking background and rural girls;
- the Teaching Tags project conducted by the Western Australian Education Department, which trialled a kit for the identification and provision of models of support for gifted and talented students in the target groups.

The Transition Support Component aims to support the transition of students with disabilities from mainstream schooling into further education, employment and adult life. School transition officers provide a coordination point between the students, teachers, parents, education institutions and potential employers throughout the secondary schooling years. The objective of the transition officer is to improve access for students with disabilities to the range of post-school options.

Funding is project-based, and paid directly to State education departments, not to individual schools. Departments provide the transition officers to regions and/or clusters of both government and non-government schools.

Incentives Element

Under the Incentives Element, the Commonwealth provided a total of \$9.9 million, comprising \$1.6 million for the GEC and \$8.3 million for the Students with Disabilities (SWD) Component.

The GEC provides funding for initiatives to enhance the learning experiences of girls in schools which are isolated or characterised by concentrated levels of students disadvantaged by low SES.

In 1994, a per capita grant of \$327 was paid to State education authorities, non-government systems and non-systemic schools in respect of girls attending eligible schools who recorded an achievement in highest level mathematics or physics in years 11 and 12 in 1993. Eligible schools were those which were declared disadvantaged schools for the purposes of the 1993 DSC of the NEPS, or which were located within a prescribed country area for the purposes of the 1993 Country Areas Component.

Under the SWD Component, recurrent funding is provided to schools and school systems for students with disabilities. This is additional to the basic recurrent funding provided under the General Recurrent Grants Program. It is also made on a per student basis. In the government sector the per capita rates in 1994 were \$68 per primary student and \$100 per secondary student. In the non-government sector the per capita rates were based on the difference between the per capita rate applicable to the school's funding category and the category 12 per capita rate.

Table 9. Female students who attracted GEC funds by sector, 1994

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Government</i>	<i>Catholic</i>	<i>Independent</i>	<i>Total</i>
Year 11 Maths	1,656	169	17	1,842
Year 11 Physics	1,282	71	9	1,362
Year 12 Maths	635	37	1	673
Year 12 Physics	956	65	7	1,028
Total Maths	2,291	206	18	2,515
Total Physics	2,238	136	16	2,390
Total Students	4,529	342	34	4905

Source: Commonwealth DEET

School Language Program

The School Language Program is based on the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) and supports expansion of and improvement in the learning of LOTE, including support for professional development of language teachers.

The program consists of two elements: the Priority Languages Incentive Element (PLIE) and the Community Languages Element (CLE).

The PLIE aims to improve national proficiency in languages other than English by providing financial incentives to education authorities to increase the numbers of students studying priority LOTE at year 12. State and Territory Ministers with responsibility for education declared eight priority languages from the following fourteen: Aboriginal languages, Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Russian, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese.

In 1994, a grant of \$327 was paid in respect of each eligible student, up to a ceiling of 25 per cent of total year 12 enrolments in each eligible educational institution. A total of over \$6 million was paid under the PLIE in 1994, covering eleven of the fourteen languages.

The NALSAS strategy, announced in the 1994 Budget, will concentrate on four key Asian languages: Chinese (Mandarin), Indonesian, Korean and Japanese. The

Table 10. Students who attracted PLIE funds by State and language, 1994

<i>Language</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>%</i>
Aboriginal	—	—
Arabic	339	1.8
Chinese	1,412	7.7
French	4,241	23.0
German	2,472	13.4
Indonesian	644	3.5
Italian	2,105	11.4
Japanese	4,498	24.4
Korean	—	—
Modern Greek	1,516	8.2
Russian	12	0.1
Spanish	72	0.4
Thai	—	—
Vietnamese	1,101	6.0
Total	18,412	100.0

Source: Commonwealth DEET

Government therefore decided that the PLIE would cease at the end of 1994 and a new element, the Priority Languages Support Element (PLSE), would commence in 1995. Some \$2 million which was previously applied to Chinese (Mandarin), Indonesian, Korean and Japanese under the PLIE is to be transferred to the NALSAS. The remaining \$4 million has been allocated to the PLSE.

The CLE is designed to assist students of non-English speaking backgrounds to maintain their respective languages and cultures and to increase awareness among all students of the differing community languages and cultures in Australian society. In 1994, total funding of \$10.7 million was provided under the CLE.

Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program

AESIP provides funding to support strategies agreed within the AEP framework to improve indigenous people's educational opportunities and outcomes. As in 1993, some AESIP funds were earmarked in 1994 for specific national priorities arising from the report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, and in response to the ALLP. AESIP funds appropriated in 1994 totalled \$83 million, which included \$3.7 million for the employment of additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers; \$2.9 million for extra preschool places; and \$5.6 million for the Aboriginal Literacy Strategy and Aboriginal Languages Education Strategy.

The Commonwealth also provides income support for indigenous students via ABSTUDY (see below) and funds the Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness Program (ASSPA) to encourage parent participation and involvement in decision making in schools; the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS) to provide supplementary individual and small group tutorial assistance to school, TAFE and higher education students, and the Vocational Education and Guidance for Aboriginals Scheme (VEGAS) to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students make informed education and career choices.

Income support for students

As part of its Social Justice Strategy and to increase participation in education and training among targeted groups, the Commonwealth provided \$634.7 million in 1994 directly to disadvantaged school students and their families through three schemes. These are:

- AUSTUDY, which helps needy, full-time students who are 16 years and over or who, if homeless, have reached minimum school leaving age;

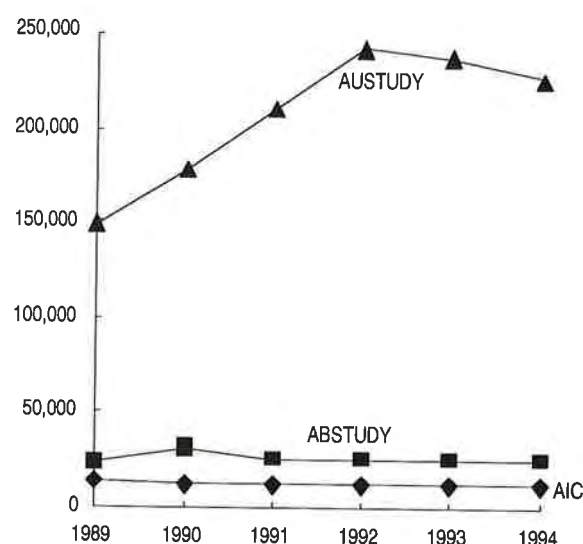
- ABSTUDY (Schooling), which encourages all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities at secondary school that are available to other Australian students;
- the AIC scheme which gives financial help to the families of children who, because of geographic isolation or disability, must live away from home to attend school, study by correspondence or live in a second family home to attend school.

As shown in Figure 7, there was a small drop in the number of school students receiving AUSTUDY in 1994. This follows steady growth in numbers from the inception of the scheme in 1987 until 1992 and a small drop in 1993. The numbers of ABSTUDY and AIC students have remained fairly constant over the period 1989–94.

In the context of the 1994–95 Budget, the Government announced a number of changes to ensure that assistance goes to those most in need. The changes included:

- rent assistance for recipients of the AUSTUDY/ABSTUDY Student Homeless Rate;
- family mediation for some AUSTUDY/ABSTUDY Student Homeless Rate cases;
- better income test administration for AUSTUDY beneficiaries.

Figure 7. School students who received Commonwealth income support, by type of assistance, Australia, 1989–94



Source: Commonwealth DEET