NATIONAL REPORT ON SCHOOLING IN AUSTRALIA

1995

Special focus in this issue on:

Vocational education

Gender education and achievement of gender equity

Literacy

Physical development and health

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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.

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 seventh 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 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 1995 were:

New South Wales	The Hon. John Aquilina, MLA
Victoria	The Hon. Don Hayward, MP
Queensland	The Hon. David Hamill, 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. Steve Hatton, MLA
Australian Capital Territory	Mr Bill Stefaniak, MLA
Commonwealth	The Hon. Simon Crean, MP The Hon. Ross Free, MP

The Chair of MCEETYA in 1995 was Mr Bill Stefaniak, MLA.

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COMMON AND AGREED NATIONAL GOALS FOR SCHOOLING IN AUSTRALIA

Ten national goals for schooling provide a framework for cooperation between schools, States, Territories and the Commonwealth. The goals are intended to assist schools and systems to develop specific objectives and strategies, particularly in the areas of curriculum and assessment.

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; and
- 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.

Providing a sound basis for a collaborative effort to enhance Australian schooling, the agreed national goals will be reviewed from time to time, in response to the changing needs of Australian society.

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

1 The context of Australian schooling

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of the *National Report on Schooling in Australia: 1995* is to inform the Australian people about the schooling that was provided during 1995 to the more than 3.1 million students in approximately 10,000 schools in Australia's eight States and Territories.

The organisation of the schooling provided for the young people of Australia in 1995 has grown out of the history of the States and Territories of which the nation is comprised and from Australia's unique geography. Most of the interior of Australia is sparsely populated and more than 80 per cent of the population is concentrated in a narrow strip along the eastern, south-eastern and south-western coasts. Australia is also highly urbanised, with nearly three-quarters of its population living in cities of over 100,000 people. It is a country of great cultural and linguistic diversity.

In Australia, primary and secondary schooling is delivered through both government and non-government providers. Approximately three-quarters of all students enrol at government schools, while a quarter choose non-government schooling. This choice may be made for educational, religious, cultural or other reasons. This year's *National Report* contains information provided by each State's government, Catholic and independent schooling sectors.

The first *National Report on Schooling in Australia: 1989* contained detailed statistical information on the context and the structure of schooling. In subsequent years, many of those data were published separately in a statistical annex companion volume. The *Statistical Annex* was made available on request to education researchers and writers and other interested persons. The 1995 *National Report* again includes significant detailed statistical information in its revised, single-volume format.

This first section of the *National Report* provides an overview of schooling in Australia, including its structure and scope, its agreed goals and the objectives identified by education authorities for concentrated development in 1995. In subsequent chapters, the States and the Commonwealth further develop their own specific priority objectives for 1995 and chart highlights of their progress towards achieving the Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia. (Note: the term 'State' is used throughout the *National Overview* to refer to both 'State' and 'Territory'.)

The *National Overview* also seeks to broadly quantify aspects of Australian education. A range of key statistics serves to provide an understanding of the extent of schooling in Australia in terms of schools and students, as well as the resourcing of teaching and learning and physical facilities.

Off to a good start - literacy activities at Ballarat (Pleasant Street) Primary School, Victoria.

The *National Overview* provides information detailing national progress in four focus areas linked closely to the ten national goals for schooling. The agreed focus for Goals 1, 2, 4 and 5 which relate to excellence, is vocational education. Goal 3, which relates to issues of equity, has as its 1995 emphasis reporting on gender education and the achievement of gender equity. The two focus areas for Goals 6–10, relating to skills and knowledge, are outcomes in the areas of literacy and the provision for the physical development, personal health and fitness of Australian students.

1.2 Responsibility for schooling in Australia

State governments have major financial responsibility for State school education and contribute substantially to funds for non-government schools. They are required to ensure the provision of schooling to all students of school age, each administering and providing substantial funding for primary and secondary schooling. Within each State, Ministers, departments, statutory authorities and individual schools determine policies and practices 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 irrespective of their social background or geographic location.

The Commonwealth has several roles with respect to schooling; in 1995 its responsibility was exercised by the Commonwealth Minister for Employment, Education and Training. In cooperation with State and non-government school authorities, the Commonwealth has a 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 (ATSI) peoples and immigrants, for whom the Commonwealth has particular responsibilities.

In addition, the Commonwealth has specific responsibilities for the provision of financial assistance to students and 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.

1.3 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs

MCEETYA comprises the State, Commonwealth and New Zealand Ministers with responsibility for the portfolios of education, employment, training and youth affairs. Papua New Guinea has observer status. It is 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 national and State levels to obtain the views of the non-government school sector and, wherever possible, extends membership of its working parties and committees to the national bodies representing the non-government education 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 Education Union of Australia (IEU), representing government and non-government school teachers respectively; and
- 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; and
- Curriculum Corporation, which commenced full operation in 1990 in the development and publication of curriculum materials resulting from national collaboration. It 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 1995, supplemented by teleconferences. Its ongoing work is undertaken through a number of taskforces which have clearly defined terms of reference and are subject to annual review. The Council is supported by a small, independent secretariat, which is funded by all governments and is located in Melbourne.

During 1995, national collaboration under MCEETYA resulted in a number of key initiatives to enhance schooling outcomes across the nation.

National Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education

Ministers agreed that education and training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be made a national priority and in 1994 a taskforce was established to develop a strategy to promote education and training outcomes for them. During 1995 priority areas for action were determined and implementation guidelines and strategy frameworks were developed by the taskforce in order to focus efforts on ensuring significant, continuous improvement, to make outcomes for indigenous Australians similar to those for non-indigenous Australians.

The Commonwealth secured additional funds to provide supplementary assistance and strategic support from 1996 to 1999.

Civics and citizenship education

Ministers agreed to implement a civics and citizenship education program. This program centres on the schools sector, but also includes higher education, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and adult and community education, a public education program and a citizenship applicant program.

The Commonwealth provided funding, with a significant proportion of it being allocated to school curriculum development and teacher professional development.

Interactive communication network

An interactive communication network for educational services in Australia, Education Network Australia (EdNA), was established. The Open Learning Technology Centre (OLTC) Board provides governance.

This initiative will provide a range of education- and communications-related services to the Australian education community, including schools, vocational education and training, higher and further education. The service will be available to government and non-government institutions, agencies and enterprises.

The purpose of EdNA is fivefold:

- to provide and enhance quality educational resources and services for learners and teachers in all sectors, including educational institutions, industry training and community-based education;
- to enhance education and training provision through an agreed delivery platform;
- to provide a premium marketing tool for educational services in the global Internet marketplace;
- to provide benefits to shareholder governments by avoiding duplication and non-standardisation and through the increased availability of services and products; and
- to provide a quality framework within which Australian content and expertise can flourish in the face of global competition.

1.4 Objectives for schooling in Australia: national goals and 1995 priorities

Although schooling is provided to students in Australia through eight separate and distinct State government systems, and through large numbers of non-government providers in each jurisdiction, there exists a national agreement about its underlying objectives. Ten goals for schooling, listed at the beginning of this chapter, have been agreed nationally as a means of providing a framework

for cooperation among schools, the States and the Commonwealth and to assist in the development of specific objectives and strategies, particularly in the areas of curriculum and assessment.

The Common and Agreed National Goals are acknowledged as an appropriate basis for the collaborative efforts required to enhance Australian schooling. They will be reviewed from time to time, to ensure they continue to reflect the changing needs of Australian society.

Individual States' and authorities' priority objectives for 1995 were all closely related to the national goals. In those objectives, providers sought to reflect the needs of the communities they were serving and to contribute to the high quality education which was the focus of their expressed missions.

Nationally, States and authorities determined a broad range of objectives in 1995, all aimed at improving the quality of learning and teaching in Australian schools. Major foci included:

- curriculum issues – to increase the responsiveness of curriculum to the needs of children in a world of change, enhancing opportunities for access to a broad range of employment and lifestyle options;
- the learning environment – to ensure the provision of safe, secure and positive learning environments, including the management of student behaviour; and to provide clear and useful information to parents about their children's learning;
- equity issues – to ensure that schooling provides appropriate responses to children with particular needs, with emphases on areas such as early assistance for children with learning difficulties, support for students from non-English speaking backgrounds, an increased focus on meeting the particular needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the educational provision for students with disabilities;
- parent and community involvement – to increase responsiveness to community needs and to ensure that parents and other members of the community have a real say in the teaching and learning programs offered at their local schools;
- educational services – to improve efficiency through changed structures or the application of information technology and to develop accountability through the improvement of quality assurance; and
- staff in schools – to develop the expertise of teachers as a means of ensuring the continuing improvement of educational quality, with professional development a target; to increase the involvement of staff in decision-making and leadership; and to accommodate the potential impact of industrial issues on teaching and learning.

In addition to these broadly-supported objectives, Catholic and independent schools also tended to express a commitment to the moral and spiritual development of children, in such areas as ethics and values.

The independent sector indicated that there was a far greater focus on principles of Christian philosophy in 1995 than in previous years, with the majority of schools reporting their priority objectives against a background of specific religious or educational philosophies.

1.5 The structure of schooling in Australia

There are two broad categories of schools in Australia: government schools (which enrol the large majority of students) and non-government schools, the latter including schools with religious affiliations and others independent of such links. Government schools operate under the direct responsibility of the State education Ministers. Non-government schools, however, operate under conditions set by State government registration authorities and are required to provide certain minimum educational standards and satisfactory premises. Most non-government schools have a religious affiliation, most commonly with the Catholic church (each State has substantial numbers of Catholic schools and 67.4 per cent of full-time non-government students are enrolled in Catholic schools). Non-Catholic, non-government schools, totalling approximately 830 schools nationally, are hereafter referred to as independent schools in this report.

There is no single national pattern determining the structure of primary and secondary education in Australia. All States acknowledge year 12 as the completion of secondary education, but there are three distinct patterns evident in reaching that final level.

Schooling is compulsory from age 6–15 in all States except Tasmania, where compulsion extends to 16. However, in most States, children start primary school at the age of five, when they enrol in a preparatory or kindergarten year, after which primary education continues for either six or seven years, depending on the State.

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

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
Year 6	PRIMARY		
Year 5			
Year 4			
Year 3			
Year 2			
Year 1			
Pre-year 1	(a)	(b)	

(a) Pre-year 1 is known as Kindergarten (K) in NSW & ACT and Preparatory (Prep or P) in Vic. & Tas.

(b) Pre-year 1 is known as Reception (R) in SA and Transition (T) in NT.

In 1995 there were more than 1.8 million full-time primary school students in Australia, of whom 74.2 per cent were enrolled in government schools. All government primary schools and most non-government primary schools are coeducational. The sparse rural population in Australia originally led to the establishment of a large number of small rural primary schools, although their number fell significantly in some States in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Secondary education is available for either five or six years, depending on the State and the length of primary education provided. Students usually commence their secondary schooling when aged 12 or 13, reaching year 12 at 17 or 18. In 1995 almost 1.3 million full-time secondary students were enrolled in Australian schools, with 66.4 per cent of those enrolments in government schools. Most government secondary schools are coeducational, but a significant number of non-government schools are single-sex.

1.6 Key statistics on schooling in Australia in 1995

Combining information presented in tables and figures elsewhere in this *National Overview*, Table 1 provides a 'snapshot' view of education in Australia in 1995. It clearly identifies the relative sizes of the government and non-government sectors and, by means of a range of selected indicators, presents a statistical summary of their contribution to schooling in 1995.

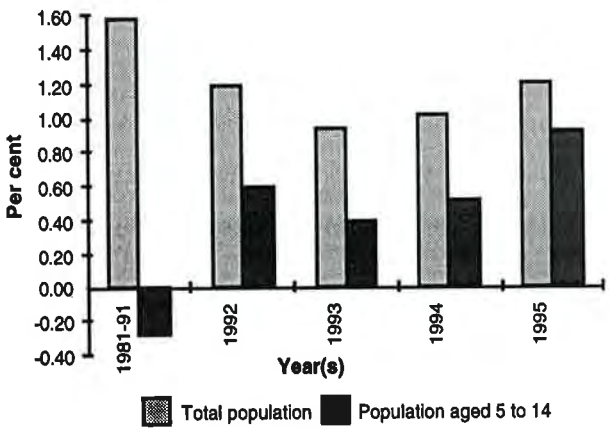
From 1994 to 1995 the Australian population grew by approximately 1.2 per cent. The number of persons within the age range most closely approximating that for compulsory schooling (ages 5–14) grew more modestly, increasing by 0.9 per cent. That growth rate, however, was greater than that which had prevailed earlier in the 1990s and was contrary to that from 1981 to 1991, when there was an average annual decrease in this age group.

More notable, perhaps, than the actual growth in the cohort of 5–14 year olds, has been the changed relative size of that group within the total population. From Figure 3 it is evident that the relative size of the group aged 5–14 has declined steadily over more than 20 years. This relative contraction continues in the 1990s, although more slowly than in the previous two decades.

With the increasing emphasis placed on senior secondary education, the continued decreasing relative size of the 15–19 age group is also notable.

Although the relative size of the 5–14 year old cohort is of national interest, there was significant variation between the States in the relative sizes of that cohort in 1995, as shown in Figure 4. The population of the Northern Territory, for example, had a noticeably larger cohort of persons aged 5–14 (17.8 per cent) than the other States, while New South Wales (14.1 per cent), Victoria (13.8 per cent) and South Australia (13.8 per cent) had the smallest cohorts.

Figure 2. Percentage change in Australian population



Source: ABS Cat. No. 3101.0 *Australian Demographic Statistics*, September 1995 and earlier publications

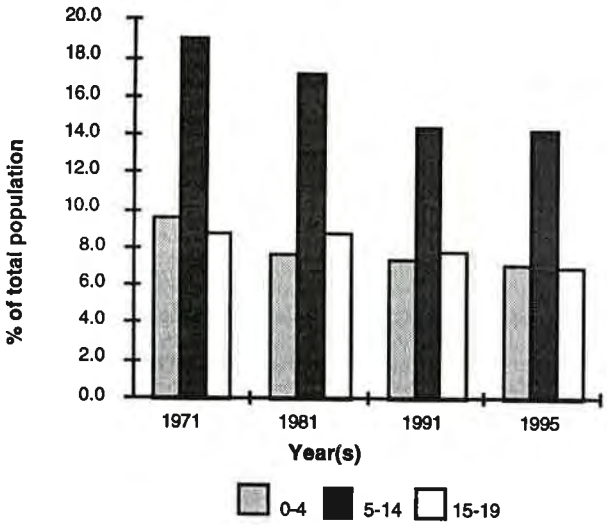
Table 1. Key features of Australian schooling, 1995

	Govt	*Non-govt*	*Total*
Schools	7,122	2,526	9,648
Students (full-time)			
All students	2,207,853	901,484	3,109,337
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	76,400	10,841	87,241
Full-fee paying overseas students	1,412	8,530	9,942
Staff (in schools)	180,119	75,474	255,593
Teachers (in schools)	143,787	58,614	202,400
Expenditure (1994–95) – government schools	$10,507 million	n.a.	n.a.
Apparent retention rates (to year 12) (per cent)			
Males	61.0	79.0	66.7
Females	73.8	86.4	77.9
Persons	66.7	82.7	72.2
Participation rates (per cent)			
16 year olds	—	—	78.8
17 year olds	—	—	58.5
Full-time student/teaching staff ratios			
Primary	17.9	18.9	18.1
Secondary	12.5	12.8	12.6

Note: Components may not add to totals due to rounding.

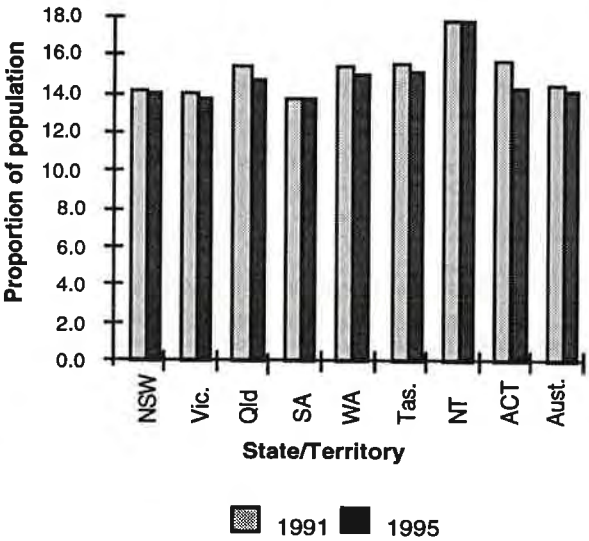
Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0 *Schools, Australia*, 1995

Figure 3. Percentage of population aged 0–19, by age groups, 1971–95



Source: ABS Cat. No. 3101.0 *Australian Demographic Statistics*, September 1995 and earlier publications

Figure 4. Percentage of population aged 5–14, 1991–95



Source: ABS Cat. No. 3101.0 *Australian Demographic Statistics*, September 1995 and earlier publications

Figure 4 also indicates the varying rates at which the relative size of that cohort had contracted in different States from 1991 to 1995. The relative change in that cohort was most evident in the Australian Capital Territory during those years, continuing a trend which began in the early 1970s.

While demographic factors affect the provision of schooling across Australia, other social developments and shifts in community expectations of schooling are also of major importance. The ability of the States to react to the demands made on them for the provision of appropriate schooling is the focus of the later sections of this Report.

A comparison of some of the indicators of the scope of schooling in Australia with their 1994 equivalent figures confirms a continuing pattern of change impacting on schools, students and staff.

Schools in Australia in 1995:

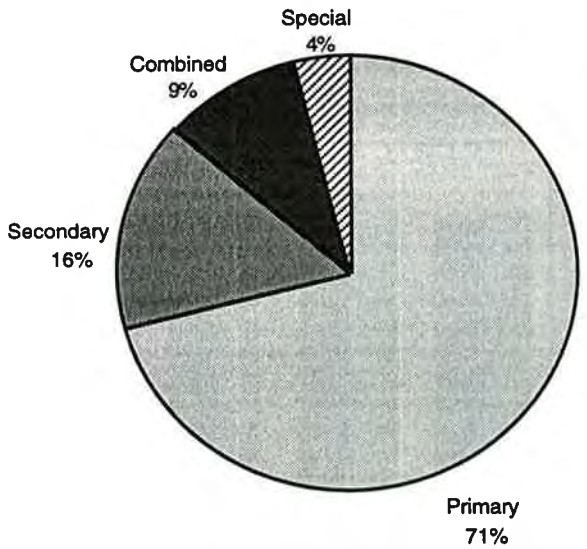
There were 9,648 schools in Australia, a fall of 31 since 1994. There were fewer government schools in 1995, but the number of non-government schools grew marginally. The changes did not occur consistently across the States, reflecting differences in policy and, in some cases, amalgamation procedures.

In Australia, 70.8 per cent of the schools were primary schools, 15.9 per cent were secondary schools, 9.3 per cent were combined primary/secondary schools and 4.0 per cent were special schools. Those relative percentages remained virtually unchanged from 1994.

The *National Schools Statistics Collection,* 1995 provided a range of information on the sizes of primary and secondary schools. Almost 50 per cent of Australia's primary schools had enrolments of less than 200 and barely 10 per cent had more than 500, while fewer than 10 per cent of secondary schools were smaller than 200 and almost 70 per cent had more than 500.

In terms of the number of schools in Australia, 1995 was a year of comparative stability. The total number of schools fell by 31 compared with 1994 (0.3 per cent decrease), with the number of government schools down by 37 (0.5 per cent decrease) and the number of non-government schools up by 6 (0.2 per cent growth). Within the non-government sector there was a net increase of 12 independent schools (1.5 per cent growth) while the number of Catholic schools fell by six (0.4 per cent decrease). It should be noted, however, that the number of Catholic schools was mostly affected by systems rationalisations.

Figure 5. Percentage of schools, by category, 1995



Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0 *Schools, Australia,* 1995

Table 2. Percentage change in number of schools, by State and sector, 1994–95

State	*Govt*	*Non-govt*	*Total*
New South Wales	0.1	0.3	0.2
Victoria	−1.2	−0.6	−1.0
Queensland	−0.5	0.5	−0.2
South Australia	−2.1	2.1	−1.2
Western Australia	0.1	−0.4	–
Tasmania	−1.3	2.9	−0.3
Northern Territory	0.7	–	0.6
Australian Capital Territory	1.0	–	0.7
Australia	−0.5	0.2	−0.3

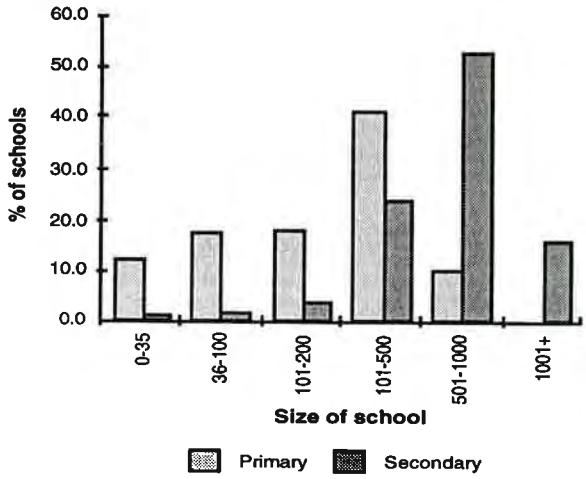
Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0 *Schools, Australia,* 1995

There are major differences in the relative sizes of the schooling sectors in the eight States. In Australia 31.7 per cent of the schools are located in the single most populous State (New South Wales) and a further 24.7 per cent in the second most populous (Victoria). The least populous (Northern Territory) has only 1.8 per cent of all schools.

Settlement patterns within the States help to determine the relative numbers of schools of different types and levels. South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory, for example, have high proportions of sparsely populated rural areas and relatively fewer secondary schools. Those same States, along with Tasmania, have a greater proportion of smaller towns and centres and a significantly higher proportion of combined primary/secondary schools.

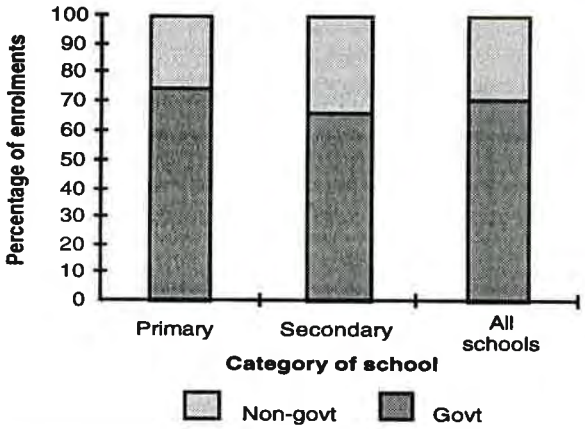
A legacy of the different religious backgrounds of early settlers in the various States are the schools associated with particular denominations. The Catholic schooling sector, for example, is proportionally far larger in New South Wales and Victoria than in South Australia, where a higher proportion of early immigrants were Protestant.

Figure 6. Schools, by size and level, 1995



Source: MCEETYA, *National Schools Statistics Collection*, 1995

Figure 7. Percentage of enrolments, by sector and level of schooling, 1995



Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0 *Schools, Australia*, 1995

Students in Australia in 1995:

There were 3,109,337 full-time students attending Australian schools, representing an increase of 9,957 (0.3 per cent) over the 1994 total. Enrolments in non-government schools increased by 1.9 per cent.

Seventy-one per cent of all full-time students in Australia attended government schools, slightly less than in 1994. The proportion was 74.2 per cent in primary and 66.4 per cent in secondary, each a slight decrease from 1994.

National data were published for the first time on enrolments of part-time secondary students. 24,008 students attended part-time, equivalent to 8,967.1 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. Sixty-eight per cent of part-time students were in the final two years of secondary schooling and 97 per cent attended government schools.

Part-time enrolments were particularly significant in South Australia, which had more part-time students in both government and non-government schools than any other State: 6,402 part-time students, representing 3,031.6 FTE students, comprised 3.5 per cent of total secondary enrolments.

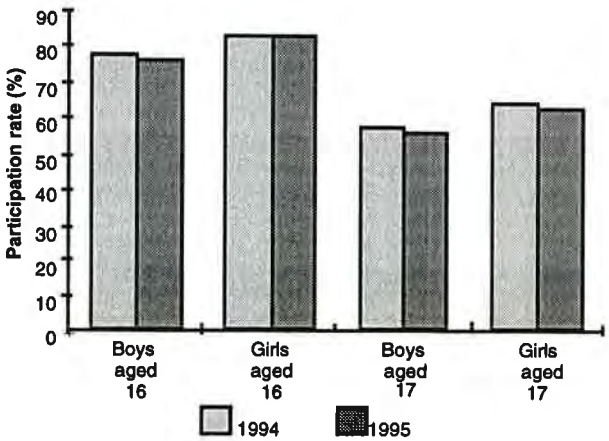
Queensland and Western Australia also had significant numbers of part-time students in 1995. In Queensland 5,535 part-time students, representing 1,962.1 full-time equivalent students, comprised 0.9 per cent of secondary enrolments, while in Western Australia, 5,012 part-time secondary students, representing 1,303.8 full-time equivalent students, comprised 1.1 per cent of secondary enrolments.

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students grew by 4.1 per cent in government schools and by 8.1 per cent in non-government schools, increasing in both primary and secondary schools for students of both genders. The greatest growth (7.3 per cent) occurred in the number of girls undertaking secondary education.

Apparent retention rates to year 12 decreased in 1995 for both boys and girls in both government and non-government schools. The overall rate for girls was 77.9 per cent, while that for boys was significantly lower at 66.7 per cent.

The participation rate for 16 year olds fell from 80.0 per cent in 1994 to 78.8 per cent, while the rate for 17 year olds fell from 59.7 per cent to 58.7 per cent. Rates for both genders fell, but the rate for boys fell further for each age group. Participation rates were higher for girls than for boys in each age group in both 1994 and 1995.

Figure 8. Participation of 16/17 year olds, by gender, 1994 and 1995



Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 1994 and 1995

Table 3. Number of schools by category (and non-government affiliation) and level of education, by State, 1995

		Government	*Non-government*			*All schools*	
			Catholic	*Independent*	*All*	*Total*	*Per cent*
New South Wales							
Primary		1,652	422	106	528	2,180	22.6
Secondary		387	130	23	153	540	5.6
Combined prim/sec		63	33	122	155	218	2.3
Special		88	6	23	29	117	1.2
Total		**2,190**	**591**	**274**	**865**	**3,055**	**31.7**
Victoria							
Primary		1,305	382	61	443	1,748	18.1
Secondary		287	94	15	109	396	4.1
Combined prim/sec		36	11	98	109	145	1.5
Special		83	6	8	14	97	1.0
Total		**1,711**	**493**	**182**	**675**	**2,386**	**24.7**
Queensland							
Primary		1,002	193	47	240	1,242	12.9
Secondary		188	62	14	76	264	2.7
Combined prim/sec		73	16	74	90	163	1.7
Special		54	0	2	2	56	0.6
Total		**1,317**	**271**	**137**	**408**	**1,725**	**17.9**
South Australia							
Primary		489	75	47	122	611	6.3
Secondary		85	14	11	25	110	1.1
Combined prim/sec		65	17	25	42	107	1.1
Special		21	2	2	4	25	0.3
Total		**660**	**108**	**85**	**193**	**853**	**8.8**
Western Australia							
Primary		515	105	44	149	664	6.9
Secondary		95	26	11	37	132	1.4
Combined prim/sec		96	15	47	62	158	1.6
Special		62	1	1	2	64	0.7
Total		**768**	**147**	**103**	**250**	**1,018**	**10.6**
Tasmania							
Primary		150	27	11	38	188	1.9
Secondary		41	5	2	7	48	0.5
Combined prim/sec		28	7	17	24	52	0.5
Special		11	0	1	1	12	0.1
Total		**230**	**39**	**31**	**70**	**300**	**3.1**
Northern Territory							
Primary		94	7	7	14	108	1.1
Secondary		11	2	2	4	15	0.2
Combined prim/sec		36	6	2	8	44	0.5
Special		7	0	0	0	7	0.1
Total		**148**	**15**	**11**	**26**	**174**	**1.8**
Australian Capital Territory							
Primary		67	21	2	23	90	0.9
Secondary		25	5	1	6	31	0.3
Combined prim/sec		1	3	7	10	11	0.1
Special		5	0	0	0	5	0.1
Total		**98**	**29**	**10**	**39**	**137**	**1.4**
Australia							
Primary		5,274	1,232	325	1,557	6,831	70.8
Secondary		1,119	338	79	417	1,536	15.9
Combined prim/sec		398	108	392	500	898	9.3
Special		331	15	37	52	383	4.0
Total all schools	**1995**	**7,122**	**1,693**	**833**	**2,526**	**9,648**	**100.0**
	1994	**7,159**	**1,699**	**821**	**2,520**	**9,679**	**100.0**
	1993	**7,366**	**1,696**	**803**	**2,499**	**9,865**	**100.0**

Note: Components may not add to totals due to rounding.

Sources: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia,* 1995 and earlier related publications

Table 4. Proportion of full-time students enrolled in government and non-government schools by level of education, by State, selected years (per cent)

	1986			*1991*			*1995*		
Level of education	*Govt*	*Cath.*	*Indep.*	*Govt*	*Cath.*	*Indep.*	*Govt*	*Cath.*	*Indep.*
New South Wales									
Primary	75.2	20.7	4.1	74.1	20.5	5.4	74.0	19.8	6.2
Junior secondary	72.7	20.2	7.1	69.8	21.2	8.9	69.2	21.3	9.5
Senior secondary	66.6	22.4	11.0	66.9	21.9	11.1	65.5	22.8	11.7
Total secondary	71.5	20.6	7.9	69.0	21.4	9.5	68.2	21.7	10.1
Total	**73.6**	**20.7**	**5.7**	**72.0**	**20.9**	**7.2**	**71.5**	**20.6**	**7.9**
Victoria									
Primary	70.6	23.5	5.9	69.9	23.6	6.5	69.9	23.3	6.9
Junior secondary	67.6	20.1	12.3	65.3	21.2	13.5	63.8	21.9	14.4
Senior secondary	61.5	22.1	16.4	63.3	20.6	16.1	61.0	21.9	17.0
Total secondary	66.1	20.6	13.3	64.7	21.0	14.3	63.0	21.9	15.1
Total	**68.6**	**22.1**	**9.3**	**67.6**	**22.4**	**10.0**	**66.8**	**22.7**	**10.5**
Queensland									
Primary	80.0	16.8	3.2	78.7	16.1	5.2	77.4	15.8	6.8
Junior secondary	72.1	17.8	10.1	70.1	17.2	12.8	66.8	18.0	15.2
Senior secondary	66.7	20.1	13.3	67.8	18.3	13.9	63.9	18.9	17.2
Total secondary	70.6	18.5	11.0	69.2	17.6	13.2	65.8	18.3	15.8
Total	**76.2**	**17.4**	**6.3**	**75.0**	**16.7**	**8.3**	**72.9**	**16.8**	**10.3**
South Australia									
Primary	80.2	13.0	6.9	78.3	13.6	8.1	75.7	14.5	9.8
Junior secondary	77.2	13.6	9.2	72.1	15.2	12.6	69.0	16.9	14.1
Senior secondary	73.7	14.8	11.5	69.9	15.9	14.2	64.2	18.3	17.5
Total secondary	76.1	14.0	10.0	71.3	15.5	13.3	67.5	17.4	15.2
Total	**78.5**	**13.4**	**8.1**	**75.7**	**14.3**	**10.0**	**72.9**	**15.5**	**11.6**
Western Australia									
Primary	80.4	15.4	4.2	79.1	15.6	5.4	77.8	15.8	6.4
Junior secondary	74.1	16.6	9.3	70.6	18.0	11.4	68.3	18.3	13.5
Senior secondary	70.2	17.5	12.3	68.1	18.3	13.6	66.5	18.2	15.3
Total secondary	73.0	16.9	10.1	69.8	18.1	12.1	67.7	18.3	14.1
Total	**77.5**	**15.9**	**6.6**	**75.5**	**16.5**	**7.9**	**73.9**	**16.8**	**9.3**
Tasmania									
Primary	80.4	14.0	5.5	77.7	15.2	7.0	76.4	15.9	7.8
Junior secondary	78.3	12.7	9.0	74.5	14.4	11.1	72.8	15.4	11.8
Senior secondary	72.6	14.8	12.6	77.8	12.2	10.0	72.2	15.2	12.6
Total secondary	77.4	13.0	9.6	75.3	13.9	10.8	72.7	15.3	12.0
Total	**79.1**	**13.6**	**7.3**	**76.7**	**14.6**	**8.7**	**74.8**	**15.6**	**9.6**
Northern Territory									
Primary	84.0	12.8	3.2	82.4	13.5	4.1	81.0	13.8	5.2
Junior secondary	84.6	13.0	2.4	75.6	14.7	9.7	69.4	14.9	15.7
Senior secondary	83.8	12.9	3.3	85.7	8.2	6.1	79.1	10.7	10.3
Total secondary	84.4	13.0	2.6	78.6	12.8	8.6	71.9	13.8	14.3
Total	**84.1**	**12.8**	**3.0**	**81.2**	**13.3**	**5.5**	**78.3**	**13.8**	**7.9**
Australian Capital Territory									
Primary	68.0	27.0	5.0	68.3	26.1	5.6	68.5	25.6	5.9
Junior secondary	62.4	27.4	10.2	60.0	28.5	11.5	58.3	29.3	12.4
Senior secondary	69.8	22.5	7.7	71.4	19.8	8.8	71.0	19.6	9.4
Total secondary	64.4	26.1	9.5	63.8	25.6	10.6	62.4	26.2	11.4
Total	**66.4**	**26.6**	**7.0**	**66.2**	**25.8**	**7.9**	**65.7**	**25.9**	**8.5**
Australia									
Primary	75.9	19.4	4.7	74.9	19.2	5.9	74.2	18.9	6.8
Junior secondary	71.6	19.0	9.4	68.7	19.9	11.3	67.2	20.3	12.5
Senior secondary	66.6	20.4	13.1	66.9	19.6	13.4	64.4	20.7	14.9
Total secondary	70.4	19.3	10.3	68.3	19.8	12.0	66.4	20.4	13.2
Total	**73.6**	**19.4**	**7.1**	**72.1**	**19.5**	**8.4**	**71.0**	**19.5**	**9.4**

Note: Components may not add to totals due to rounding.

Sources: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 1995 and earlier related publications

Table 5. Full-time students (a), by level of education, category of school (and non-government affiliation), and sex, by State, 1995

	Primary	*Junior secondary (b)*	*Senior secondary yr 11 12*	*Total secondary*	*Total*
Government					
New South Wales	448,325	230,305	76,622	306,927	755,252
Victoria	301,515	153,448	59,842	213,290	514,805
Queensland	264,567	95,573	45,410	140,983	405,550
South Australia	122,582	38,453	17,436	55,889	178,471
Western Australia	145,561	52,442	25,088	77,530	223,091
Tasmania	36,341	20,549	6,394	26,943	63,284
Northern Territory	19,930	5,275	2,075	7,350	27,280
Australian Capital Territory	22,466	11,229	6,425	17,654	40,120
Australia	***1,361,287***	***607,274***	***239,292***	***846,566***	***2,207,853***
Males	*701,782*	*312,895*	*114,922*	*427,817*	*1,129,599*
Females	*659,505*	*294,379*	*124,370*	*418,749*	*1,078,254*
Catholic					
New South Wales	120,207	70,712	26,723	97,435	217,642
Victoria	100,431	52,583	21,518	74,101	174,532
Queensland	53,980	25,815	13,455	39,270	93,250
South Australia	23,503	9,425	4,954	14,379	37,882
Western Australia	29,651	14,053	6,863	20,916	50,567
Tasmania	7,547	4,336	1,346	5,682	13,229
Northern Territory	3,401	1,134	280	1,414	4,815
Australian Capital Territory	8,407	5,634	1,779	7,413	15,820
Australia	***347,127***	***183,692***	***76,918***	***260,610***	***607,737***
Males	*176,446*	*92,725*	*36,930*	*129,655*	*306,101*
Females	*170,681*	*90,967*	*39,988*	*130,955*	*301,636*
Independent					
New South Wales	37,527	31,740	13,705	45,445	82,922
Victoria	29,665	34,577	16,698	51,275	80,940
Queensland	23,397	21,677	12,238	57,312	57,312
South Australia	15,852	7,833	4,754	12,587	28,439
Western Australia	11,909	10,339	5,775	16,114	28,023
Tasmania	3,698	3,334	1,114	4,448	8,146
Northern Territory	1,285	1,193	269	1,462	2,747
Australian Capital Territory	1,934	2,384	850	3,234	5,168
Australia	***125,267***	***113,077***	***55,403***	***168,480***	***293,747***
Males	*63,459*	*57,470*	*27,294*	*84,764*	*148,223*
Females	*61,808*	*55,607*	*28,109*	*83,716*	*145,524*
Total non-government					
New South Wales	157,734	102,452	40,428	142,880	300,614
Victoria	130,096	87,160	38,216	125,376	255,472
Queensland	77,377	47,492	25,693	73,185	150,562
South Australia	39,355	17,258	9,708	26,966	66,321
Western Australia	41,560	24,392	12,638	37,030	78,590
Tasmania	11,245	7,670	2,460	10,130	21,375
Northern Territory	4,686	2,327	549	2876	7,562
Australian Capital Territory	10,341	8,018	2,629	10,647	20,988
Australia	***472,394***	***296,769***	***132,231***	***429,090***	***901,484***
Males	*239,905*	*150,195*	*64,224*	*214,419*	*454,324*
Females	*232,489*	*146,574*	*68,097*	*214,671*	*447,160*
All schools					
New South Wales	606,059	332,757	117,050	449,807	1,055,866
Victoria	431,611	240,608	98,058	338,666	770,277
Queensland	341,944	143,065	71,103	214,168	556,112
South Australia	161,937	55,711	27,144	82,855	244,792
Western Australia	187,121	76,834	37,726	114,560	301,681
Tasmania	47,586	28,219	8,854	37,073	84,659
Northern Territory	24,616	7,602	2,624	10,226	34,842
Australian Capital Territory	32,807	19,247	9,054	28,301	61,108
Australia	***1,833,681***	***904,043***	***371,613***	***1,275,656***	***3,109,337***
Males	*941,687*	*463,090*	*179,146*	*642,236*	*1,583,923*
Females	*891,994*	*440,953*	*192,467*	*633,420*	*1,525,414*

(a) As from 1990, students in special schools have been allocated to either primary or secondary education on the basis of age primary if aged 12 or under and secondary if over 12.

(b) Junior secondary comprises years 7 10 in NSW, Vic., Tas. & ACT and years 8 10 in Qld, SA, WA & NT.

Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 1995

Table 6. Full-time primary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, by level of education and category of school (a), by State, 1995

	PreYr 1	*Yr 1*	*Yr 2*	*Yr 3*	*Yr 4*	*Yr 5*	*Yr 6*	*Yr 7*	*Ungr.*	*Total*
New South Wales										
Government	2,294	2,301	2,090	1,990	1,845	1,895	1,821	n.a.	486	14,722
Non-government	235	199	202	165	184	157	139	n.a.	6	1,287
All schools	2,529	2,500	2,292	2,155	2,029	2,052	1,960	n.a.	492	16,009
Victoria										
Government	339	379	310	302	305	315	286	n.a.	15	2,251
Non-government	23	27	24	23	16	22	17	n.a.	4	156
All schools	362	406	334	325	321	337	303	n.a.	19	2,407
Queensland										
Government	n.a.	2,441	2,135	2,020	2,048	2,033	1,981	2,062	114	14,834
Non-government	n.a.	279	204	203	219	215	172	233	17	1,542
All schools	n.a.	2,720	2,339	2,223	2,267	2,248	2,153	2,295	131	16,376
South Australia										
Government	497	477	502	496	455	479	454	398	31	3,789
Non-government	45	43	30	37	25	33	26	20	1	260
All schools	542	520	532	533	480	512	480	418	32	4,049
Western Australia										
Government	n.a.	1,357	1,333	1,247	1,201	1,176	1,118	1,083	4	8,519
Non-government	n.a.	303	295	306	253	258	230	209	133	1,987
All schools	n.a.	1,660	1,628	1,553	1,454	1,434	1,348	1,292	137	10,506
Tasmania										
Government	256	286	236	182	237	286	226	n.a.	8	1,717
Non-government	46	31	40	27	46	38	39	n.a.	2	269
All schools	302	317	276	209	283	324	265	n.a.	10	1,986
Northern Territory										
Government	1,341	1,164	1,126	1,057	988	826	773	664	122	8,061
Non-government	160	93	103	95	118	96	103	98	242	1,108
All schools	1,501	1,257	1,229	1,152	1,106	922	876	762	364	9,169
Australian Capital Territory										
Government	41	50	46	48	46	57	55	n.a.	4	347
Non-government	11	5	10	10	9	9	10	n.a.	0	64
All schools	52	55	56	58	55	66	65	n.a.	4	411
Australia										
Government	4,768	8,455	7,778	7,342	7,125	7,067	6,714	4,207	784	54,240
Non-government	520	980	908	866	870	828	736	560	405	6,673
All schools	5,288	9,435	8,686	8,208	7,995	7,895	7,450	4,767	1,189	60,913

n.a. not applicable.

(a) As from 1990 students in special schools have been allocated to either primary or secondary education on the basis of age – primary if 12 years of age or under and secondary if over 12.

Source: MCEETYA, *National Schools Statistics Collection*, 1995

As well as showing the number of full-time students in 1995, Table 5 provides a perspective on the gender balance of Australia's school students. 50.9 per cent of students in schools in 1995 were male (compared with 49.8 per cent of the total resident population) and 49.1 per cent were female (compared with 50.2 per cent of the total resident population). Gender relativity was not maintained across all levels and providers of schooling. For example:

- total enrolments at government schools included a higher ratio of male students (51.2 per cent) than were enrolled at non-government schools (50.4 per cent); and
- the relative balance between the genders which existed in each of the sectors at primary level was maintained into junior secondary. In all sectors that relative balance was reversed in senior secondary with girls a majority at that level. The change at senior secondary was greatest in the Catholic sector.

Schools, Australia, 1995 (ABS Cat. No. 4221.0) also provides a similar analysis of the gender balance of the population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in terms of school enrolments:

- there was a higher ratio of male students (50.9 per cent) among those attending government schools than among

Table 7. Full-time secondary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, by level of education and category of school (a), by State, 1995

	Yr 7	*Yr 8*	*Yr 9*	*Yr 10*	*Yr 11*	*Yr 12*	*Ungr.*	*Total*	***Total primary & secondary***
New South Wales									
Government	1,747	1,737	1,550	1,114	708	454	468	7,778	**22,500**
Non-government	140	117	94	83	50	38	8	530	**1,817**
All schools	1,887	1,854	1,644	1,197	758	492	476	8,308	**24,317**
Victoria									
Government	290	229	226	187	115	60	21	1,128	**3,379**
Non-government	25	31	36	34	21	14	1	162	**318**
All schools	315	260	262	221	136	74	22	1,290	**3,697**
Queensland									
Government	n.a.	1,542	1,440	1,240	882	630	86	5,820	**20,654**
Non-government	n.a.	348	323	225	212	168	19	1,295	**2,837**
All schools	n.a.	1,890	1,763	1,465	1,094	798	105	7,115	**23,491**
South Australia									
Government	n.a.	393	303	213	124	65	25	1,123	**4,912**
Non-government	n.a.	22	22	15	17	11	1	88	**348**
All schools	n.a.	415	325	228	141	76	26	1,211	**5,260**
Western Australia									
Government	n.a.	956	924	740	348	141	7	3,116	**11,635**
Non-government	n.a.	237	159	157	105	48	59	765	**2,752**
All schools	n.a.	1,193	1,083	897	453	189	66	3,881	**14,387**
Tasmania									
Government	299	260	274	225	120	70	7	1,255	**2,972**
Non-government	40	34	28	30	9	7	0	148	**417**
All schools	339	294	302	255	129	77	7	1,403	**3,389**
Northern Territory									
Government	n.a.	281	226	183	115	30	943	1,778	**9,839**
Non-government	n.a.	257	169	149	58	32	462	1,127	**2,235**
All schools	n.a.	538	395	332	173	62	1,405	2,905	**12,074**
Australian Capital Territory									
Government	42	28	27	24	21	20	0	162	**509**
Non-government	15	7	15	7	6	3	0	53	**117**
All schools	57	35	42	31	27	23	0	215	**626**
Australia									
Government	2,378	5,426	4,970	3,926	2,433	1,470	1,557	22,160	**76,400**
Non-government	220	1,053	846	700	478	321	550	4,168	**10,841**
All schools	2,598	6,479	5,816	4,626	2,911	1,791	2,107	26,328	**87,241**

n.a. not applicable.

(a) As from 1990 students in special schools have been allocated to either primary or secondary education on the basis of age – primary if 12 years of age or under and secondary if over 12.

Source: MCEETYA, National Schools Statistics Collection, 1995

those attending non-government schools, where the ratio was 49.5 per cent;

- in both government and non-government sectors, boys comprised a larger percentage of the population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at primary level than was the case at secondary level; and
- considering enrolments across all year levels at all schools, boys comprised 51.2 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at primary level, 50.3 per cent at junior secondary level and 46.8 per cent at senior secondary.

A comparison of information in Tables 5, 6 and 7 quantifies the relative size of the population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Australia and within sections of that school community.

It indicates that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students comprised 2.8 per cent of total students in 1995 with the percentage being the same for both boys and girls. These students made up 3.5 per cent of students in government schools and 1.2 per cent of students in non-government schools.

Table 8. Number of full-time students, actual and projected (a), by level of education and category of school, Australia, selected years ('000 as at July each year)

Year	*Primary (b) (c)*			*Secondary (c)*			*Total*		
	Govt	*Non-govt*	*Total (d)*	*Govt*	*Non-govt*	*Total (d)*	*Govt*	*Non-govt*	*Total (d)*
1981	1,485	386	1,871	814	302	1,116	2,299	688	2,987
1986	1,290	410	1,700	918	384	1,301	2,208	794	3,001
1990	1,323	441	1,763	871	407	1,278	2,193	848	3,042
1991	1,339	448	1,787	879	410	1,289	2,217	858	3,075
1992	1,352	453	1,804	882	412	1,295	2,234	865	3,099
1993	1,359	457	1,816	869	414	1,282	2,228	870	3,098
1994	1,361	465	1,826	854	419	1,274	2,215	884	3,099
1995	1,361	472	1,834	847	429	1,276	2,208	901	3,109
1996	1,364	480	1,844	848	441	1,289	2,212	921	3,133
1997	1,366	487	1,853	853	452	1,306	2,220	939	3,159
1998	1,369	493	1,863	857	463	1,320	2,227	956	3,183
1999	1,374	499	1,873	857	471	1,328	2,231	970	3,201
2000	1,381	504	1,885	854	478	1,332	2,235	982	3,217
2001	1,387	508	1,895	853	484	1,337	2,240	992	3,232
2002	1,394	511	1,905	853	492	1,346	2,247	1,003	3,251
2003	1,397	512	1,910	857	502	1,359	2,255	1,014	3,269
2004	1,402	513	1,915	862	511	1,372	2,263	1,024	3,288
2005	1,408	515	1,923	866	518	1,384	2,274	1,033	3,306

(a) The projections are based on 1994 and 1995 actual enrolments and the maintenance of 1995 grade progression ratios. They will not reflect such factors as the effects of future changes in education and immigration policy, Government policy and social and economic conditions.

(b) Prior to 1984 ungraded students were classified as primary students.

(c) From 1984 students in special schools have been allocated to either primary or secondary education.

(d) Components may not add to totals due to rounding.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Table 8 presents a valuable historical perspective of the changing number of students in Australia, as well as a view of the future. For example, it shows that:

- total enrolments in government schools do not follow the continuous growth trend evident in the non-government sector. In the years 1981 to 1986, total government sector enrolments fell an average of 0.8 per cent per annum. The total continued to fall between 1986 and 1990, grew slightly in 1991 and 1992 but then decreased in each of the three years until 1995, when total government enrolments in government schools were again at 1986 levels. Total government sector enrolments are expected to grow slightly each year from 1995 to 2005; and
- the rapid growth of enrolments in non-government schools is evident – an average of 3.1 per cent per annum from 1981 to 1986, 1.6 per cent per annum in 1986–91 and 1.3 per cent per annum during 1991–95. This growth is expected to continue until at least 2005, with the average rate of growth expected to be higher in the period from 1995 to 2000 than after 2000.

Teaching and non-teaching staff in Australia in 1995:

The number of teaching and non-teaching staff (in full-time equivalents) in both government and non-government schools increased in 1995. The total number of teachers increased by 1 per cent to 202,400. The increase of total staff (to 255,593) was of the order of 2 per cent.

Full-time student/teaching staff ratios fell at primary in government and non-government schools and at secondary in non-government schools. The overall primary ratio fell from 18:5 in 1994 to 18:1 in 1995, while the overall secondary ratio remained at 12:6.

Females comprised 76.1 per cent of primary teachers in 1995 (74.7 per cent in 1994) and 52.3 per cent of teachers in secondary (51.0 per cent in 1994). Of non-teaching staff 79.7 per cent were female.

Table 9. Percentage of the population aged 5 to 29 years enrolled in various levels of education, OECD countries (a), (b), 1994

OECD country	*Primary and lower secondary*	*Upper secondary*	*Tertiary*	*Undefined*	*All levels*
Australia	**43.2**	**14.4**	**14.0**	**—**	**71.6**
New Zealand	40.4	14.9	12.7	—	68.0
Canada	35.1	11.9	17.2	—	64.2
Belgium	33.9	20.3	9.8	—	64.0
Finland	35.9	15.5	12.0	—	63.4
United Kingdom	33.3	21.7	8.4	—	63.4
United States	37.0	10.7	15.4	—	63.1
Iceland	39.9	16.2	6.7	—	62.8
Netherlands	37.1	14.2	10.1	—	61.4
Spain	29.7	20.5	10.1	—	60.3
Norway	31.4	17.0	11.9	—	60.3
France	37.3	12.4	10.3	—	60.0
Ireland	40.1	11.8	7.8	0.3	60.0
Sweden	34.5	16.1	8.4	—	59.0
Portugal	39.2	12.0	7.6	—	58.8
Poland (c)	35.8	15.9	5.1	—	56.8
Denmark	32.5	13.2	10.0	—	55.7
Japan	32.3	12.6	9.1	1.0	55.0
Germany	34.1	11.5	8.4	0.2	54.2
Korea (c)	33.2	10.6	10.3	—	54.1
Switzerland	33.3	11.7	6.6	0.3	51.9
Greece	31.8	11.3	8.6	—	51.7
Russian Federation (c)	34.8	7.9	8.4	—	51.1
Austria	28.0	14.5	8.3	—	50.8
Hungary	29.5	17.1	4.0	—	50.6
Italy	25.5	15.5	9.3	—	50.3
Czech Republic	30.3	15.7	4.3	—	50.3
Mexico	39.5	4.6	2.8	—	46.9
Turkey	29.9	6.0	3.7	—	39.6

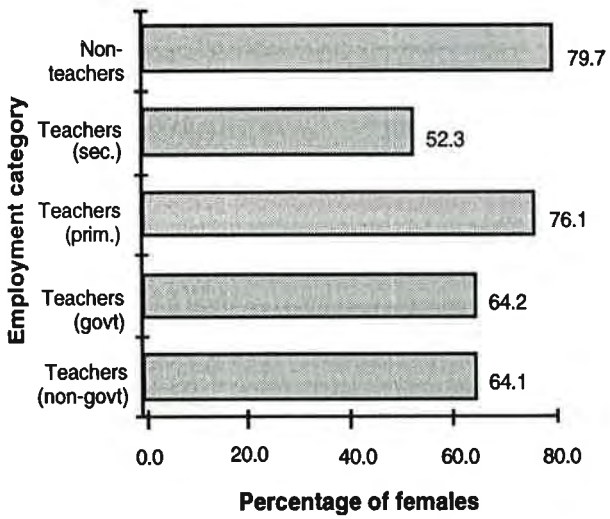
(a) Some countries did not provide information for the table.

(b) Excludes early childhood education.

(c) Non-OECD country included in original data.

Source: *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators,* Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, OECD, Paris, 1996

Figure 9. Percentage of female staff, by sector, level and function, 1995



Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0 *Schools, Australia,* 1995

1.7 International comparisons

An international perspective on the performance of the Australian school system can be gained from the comparisons published in the fourth edition of *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators.* This reports on the education systems of 29 countries using 43 indicators which describe such aspects as costs of education, access and participation, features of the school and classroom environment, student achievement, adult literacy and the labour market outcomes of education. Data in the latest edition relates to the period 1993–94 to 1995–96, depending on the indicator.

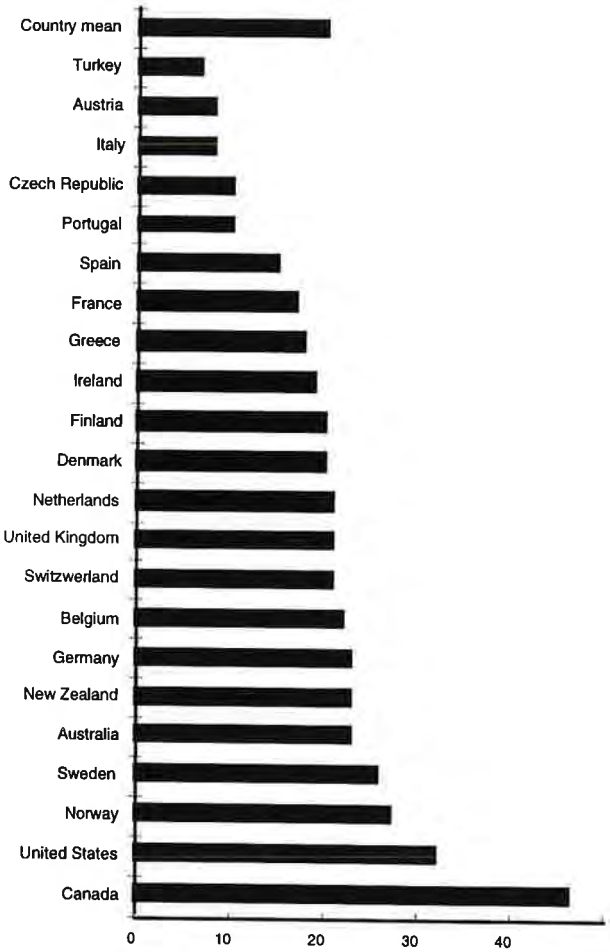
As Table 9 indicates, at nearly 72 per cent, Australia led the OECD countries in percentage of population 5 to 29 years old enrolled in primary, secondary or tertiary education in 1994. When the proportion of the population that has completed tertiary education is considered, only four

countries of the 22 which contributed to this indicator outperformed Australia (see Figure 10).

The Australian primary school student-teacher ratio in 1994 lay at around the middle of the field at 18.5; our secondary school ratio of 12.6 was the lowest third (see Figure 11).

In 1993, Australia spent 3.6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on direct public expenditure for educational institutions compared with an OECD total of 3.5 per cent. When total expenditure from public, private and international sources is considered, together with public subsidies for households, Australia spent 4.4 per cent of GDP compared with an OECD total of 3.9 per cent.

Figure 10. Educational attainment of the population (a), (b) 1994

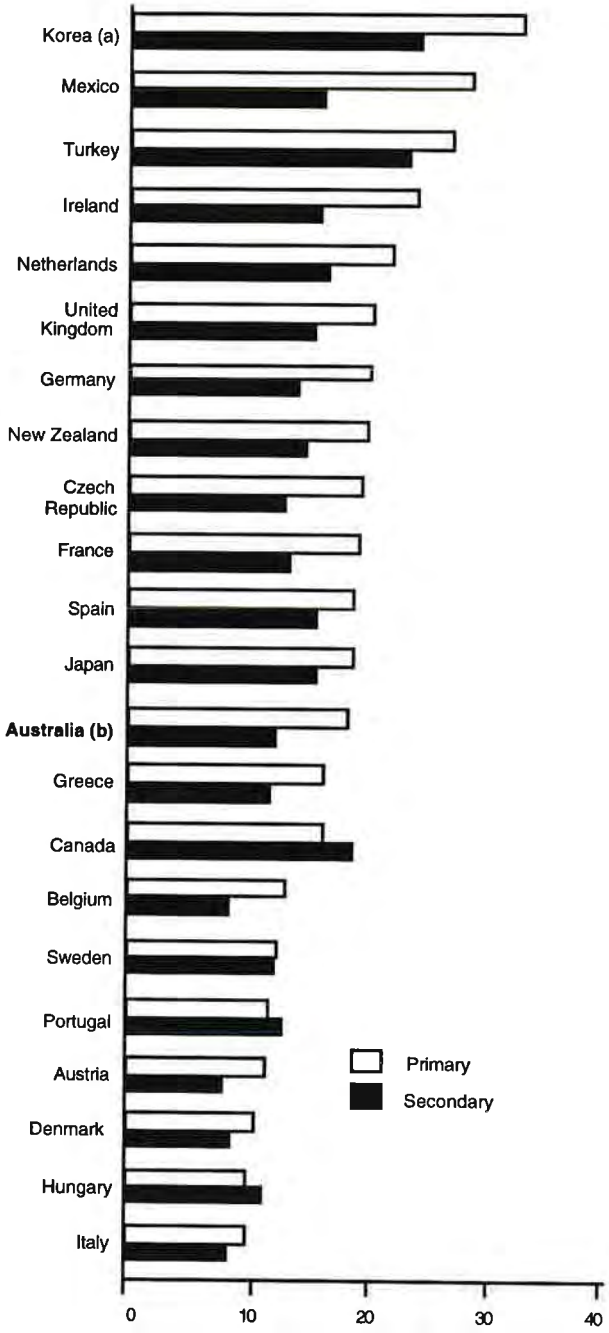


(a) Percentage of the population 25 to 64 years of age which has completed tertiary education (non-university and university).

(b) Some countries did not provide information for the table.

Source: *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators*, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, OECD, Paris 1996

Figure 11. Ratio of primary and secondary students to teaching staff, government and non-government education,1994 (c), (d)



(a) Non-OECD country included in original data.

(b) The source for Australia's secondary student to teacher ratio is ABS Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 1994.

(c) Some countries did not provide information for the table.

(d) Some countries may also include vocational education.

Source: *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators*, Centre for Education Research and Innovation, OECD, Paris, 1996

2 Resourcing Australian schools

2.1 Overview

Schooling in Australia is resourced by State and Commonwealth governments, enabling schools to address the Common and Agreed National Goals. State governments provided recurrent and capital funding for schooling in their jurisdictions. Funding from the Commonwealth was also provided to assist government and non-government education providers in each State improve outcomes for students. In addition to funding from governments, schooling in the non-government sector also relied on significant levels of income from private sources such as fees.

Within each State, recurrent funding was allocated in accordance with government policies and priorities to support the education of students in both government and non-government schools. That funding was generally allocated on the basis of the number of students and the level and type of education being provided. State governments provided funding for capital projects in government schools and some also assisted non-government providers financially in undertaking capital projects.

Although the primary constitutional responsibility for schooling in Australia rests with the State governments, supplementary funding provided by the Commonwealth also contributed $3,198 million through a variety of programs to support education in 1995 (and a further $600 million in income support). Program funding was provided to support a wide range of school activities, affecting both government and non-government schools, and all of which were aimed at improving learning outcomes for students.

The Commonwealth provided supplementary funding for government and non-government schools through a range of general and specific purpose grants programs which aimed to improve student's learning outcomes in key educational competencies and across the curriculum. General Recurrent Grants (GRG) supported the recurrent costs of schools, while capital grants assisted in the provision of school facilities.

Targeted specifically at educational disadvantage, the National Equity Program for Schools (NEPS) provided funding for instruction in English as a Second Language, (ESL) special education programs for students with disabilities, programs for schools serving socioeconomically disadvantaged and remote areas and programs for students at risk of leaving school prematurely. In 1995 NEPS also provided funds to foster literacy and learning, to promote the participation of girls in senior mathematics and science, and to support programs for gifted and talented students from the priority equity groups.

Commonwealth funds were also directed at projects of national significance in education, programs to improve the quality of education in schools and promote the professional development of teachers, and programs to support national priorities including nationally consistent curriculum, assessment and reporting mechanisms for schools and curriculum initiatives in gender equity. In the area of language learning the Commonwealth provided funding for the collaborative National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) strategy as well as assistance for the teaching and learning of community languages and identified 'priority' languages.

The Commonwealth contributed to the education of indigenous students through the Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program (AESIP) and funded programs which encourage parent participation in schooling and which provide tutorial assistance and vocational guidance for indigenous students. The Commonwealth also provided direct income support for students in need, indigenous students and students who, because of isolation or disability, must live away from home to attend school.

More information about these activities can be found in the Commonwealth chapter of the *National Report*.

2.2 Principal areas of expenditure

As indicated in Figure 12, 94.0 per cent of the total expenditure in government education systems in Australia in 1994–95 was spent directly in schools. In-school primary education received 49.9 per cent of total expenditure, while in-school secondary education received 44.1 per cent.

A comparison with the corresponding figures for 1993–94, in the *Statistical Annex* of 1994, reveals that the relative level of out-of-school expenditure in 1994–95 decreased slightly from 6.2 per cent in 1993–94. In-school secondary education also saw a slight decrease for 45.5 per cent of total expenditure in 1993–94. However, these relative decreases were matched by an increase in relative expenditure on in-school primary education, which rose from 48.3 per cent of the total in 1993–94.

Table 10. Expenditure by government education systems, by level of education, by State, 1994–95 financial year ($'000)

	NSW	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Australia*
In-school, primary education									
Teaching staff salaries	1,026,515	703,911	581,100	346,670	326,390	90,133	52,201	57,395	3,184,324
Non-teaching staff salaries	154,992	72,549	104,216	63,684	59,686	15,870	11,604	11,637	494,238
Non-salary costs	610,734	290,738	298,796	125,760	160,065	41,043	49,229	25,180	1,601,545
Sub-total	1,792,241	1,067,198	984,112	536,114	546,141	147,046	113,034	94,212	5,280,107
In-school, secondary education									
Teaching staff salaries	1,025,309	763,912	454,540	252,118	257,584	88,250	31,659	65,546	2,938,918
Non-teaching staff salaries	144,455	73,422	67,258	43,267	51,992	12,930	8,807	10,180	412,311
Non-salary costs	529,071	282,104	206,900	75,864	127,312	48,729	19,697	24,387	1,314,064
Sub-total	1,698,835	1,119,438	728,698	371,249	436,888	149,909	60,163	100,113	4,665,293
Out-of-school									
Teaching staff salaries	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Non-teaching staff salaries	82,313	40,897	78,812	30,614	37,454	11,917	17,075	11,981	311,063
Non-salary costs	88,621	67,408	53,132	40,463	40,868	12,278	9,260	7,990	320,020
Sub-total	170,934	108,305	131,944	71,077	78,322	24,195	26,335	19,971	631,083
Total	**3,662,010**	**2,294,941**	**1,844,754**	**978,440**	**1,061,351**	**321,150**	**199,532**	**214,296**	**10,576,483**

n.a. not applicable.

Note: Non-salary costs include goods and services, cleaning and the provision of buildings and grounds. Users wishing to publish this data should provide suitable explanatory notes and be aware that the data do not represent total government expenditure on school-level education. They specifically exclude items such as:

i) Commonwealth direct payments to parents and/or students, e.g. AUSTUDY;

ii) pre-schools and TAFE establishments;

iii) superannuation, payroll tax, long service leave provisions, depreciation and sinking fund payments, interest on Commonwealth loans, teacher housing;

iv) student hostel provisions; and

v) funds raised by schools, school councils or community organisations.

Source: MCEETYA, *National Schools Statistics Collection*, 1995

A more extensive national perspective on levels of expenditure by government education systems, categorised into key operational areas, is provided in Table 10. This Table makes it possible, for example, to assess the relative levels of in-school expenditure on primary and secondary schooling, or to assess the relationship between in-school and out-of-school expenditure. However, as detailed in the Table's footnotes, the exclusion of a number of items from this Table prevents its use to indicate total expenditure from State and Commonwealth sources in government schools in 1994–95.

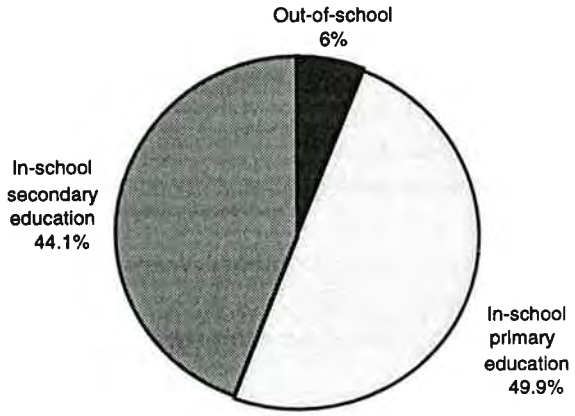
While allowing comparison between the States of relative expenditure levels on the areas summarised nationally in Figure 12, Table 10 also enables other relationships between categories of expenditure to be identified. Nationally, for example:

- 69.4 per cent of total expenditure by government education authorities in 1994–95 was directed to the payment of salaries (both teaching and non-teaching staff);
- teaching staff salary costs represented 87.1 per cent of total salary costs and 57.9 per cent of the total expenditure in government schools in the 1994–95 financial year;
- expenditure on in-school primary education increased in all States except Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, while expenditure on in-school secondary education increased only in New South Wales, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. The level of out-of-school expenditure increased in Queensland, Western Australia, Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory;

- total expenditure on salaries fell by $74.51 million or one per cent from 1993–94 to 1994–95. At the same time the non-salary component of expenditure by government education systems increased by $83.39 million (a 2.6 per cent increase); and
- the relative share of total expenditure in government schools directed to the payment of non-salary costs grew from 29.8 per cent in 1993–94 to 30.6 per cent in 1994–95.

While further detail of specific areas of expenditure in government education systems is provided elsewhere in this *National Overview* and in individual State chapters, an additional perspective on over-all expenditure is available through per capita expenditure on government schools during 1994–95, as presented in Table 11.

Figure 12. Areas of expenditure by government education systems, Australia, 1994–95



Source: MCEETYA, *National Schools Statistics Collection*, 1995

Table 11. Per capita expenditure (a) (b) on government schools, by level of education, by State, 1994–95 financial year ($ per student)

State	*Primary*	*Secondary*	*Total*
New South Wales	4,229	5,747	4,847
Victoria	3,741	5,407	4,434
Queensland	4,061	5,500	4,561
South Australia	4,742	6,937	5,434
Western Australia	4,112	5,961	4,767
Tasmania	4,388	5,935	5,044
Northern Territory	6,667	9,258	7,361
Australian Capital Territory	4,698	6,203	5,358
Australia	**4,165**	**5,772**	**4,783**

(a) Expenditure on provision of buildings and grounds is included. It is estimated that this amounts to $277 per student for Australia overall; primary $260; secondary $305.

(b) Expenditure on superannuation is employer liability excluded. It is estimated that this amounts to $394 per student for Australia.

Note: The expenditure base used to derive the per capita figures specifically excludes:

- expenditure on sessional pre-schools and technical and further education;
- private expenditure, i.e. funds raised by schools, school councils or community organisations;
- expenditure on superannuation, payroll tax, provision for long service leave, depreciation and sinking fund payments, interest on Commonwealth loans, staff accommodation (including all payments to housing authorities);
- expenditure on accruals, provisions, commitments and liabilities;
- direct payment of allowances by the Commonwealth to individual students and/or parents;
- salaries of staff and operating expenses of student hostels, including hostel subsidies;
- expenditure on children in residential care programs; and
- all known and clearly identifiable expenditure by government school systems on non-government schools.

Specific inclusions in the base used to derive the per capita figures are:

- expenditure on special schools;
- Commonwealth grants for education;
- expenditure on behalf of the Director-General of Education (or equivalent) by other State Government agencies;
- expenditure financed from DEET joint programs apportioned where possible between the government and non-government systems and only that portion expended on the government school system included; and
- payments to staff in the form of allowances for accommodation.

Source: MCEETYA Summary 1994–95 Finance Statistics from the Government Section of the *National Schools Statistics Collection*, 1995

Table 11 enables an assessment, on a consistent basis, of levels of educational expenditure across Australia. However, full consideration of the accompanying footnotes must accompany any consideration of the information in the Table.

Calculations based on data in Table 11 reveal that nationally, per capita expenditure in government schools averages 38.6 per cent more for a secondary student than for a primary student. This ratio was not nationally consistent. In the Australian Capital Territory, for example, average secondary expenditure was 32.0 per cent above the primary figure, whereas in South Australia the figure was 46.3 per cent greater.

When compared to the equivalent figures presented in the *Statistical Annex* of 1994, Table 11 indicates that per capita expenditure in primary increased in all States except Victoria, growing nationally by 2.9 per cent. There was less consistency about per capita expenditure in secondary, with five States increasing expenditure and three decreasing. Total per capita expenditure, across both primary and secondary, increased by 0.5 per cent from 1993–94 to 1994–95.

Also contributing to the financial costs of providing education in government schools in the States, the Commonwealth provided general recurrent per capita grants, as indicated in Table 12. Payment levels had increased, in real terms, during 1991–95, following other increases in the period 1986–91. Further Commonwealth funding inputs to the States are detailed in the Commonwealth chapter.

From the information presented in Table 12 on levels of Commonwealth general recurrent funding of non-government schools, it can be seen that:

- as was the case with Commonwealth per capita support for government schools, the level of per capita grant paid to schools in the non-government sector was almost 50 per cent greater for secondary students than for their primary equivalents;
- schools assigned a higher category of need received a higher level of Commonwealth funding than those assessed at a lower category;
- per capita funding for each category of non-government school increased in the period 1991–95, following increases for most school categories from 1986–91; and
- the increases in per capita grants to non-government schools in the period 1991–95 were significantly greater for schools assessed at higher categories of need than for those assessed at lower categories.

Non-government schools in each of the States also received funding support from their respective State governments. The extent of that support in each of the States in 1994–95 is summarised in Table 13. This Table also details the differing methodologies adopted by the States in funding of non-government schools and the different funding levels provided by States.

Table 12. Commonwealth general recurrent per capita grants to schools, by funding category, selected years ($ estimated at final 1995 prices)

	Primary			*Secondary*		
	1986	*1991*	*1995*	*1986*	*1991*	*1995*
Government schools	259	311	343	304	460	507
Non-government schools						
Category 1	445	446	454	707	707	721
Category 2	595	595	606	942	942	957
Category 3	622	732	759	967	1,084	1,109
Category 4	898	898	923	1,428	1,429	1,455
Category 5	922	1,029	1,085	1,443	1,521	1,580
Category 6	942	1,131	1,201	1,473	1,680	1,753
Category 7	961	1,240	1,319	1,504	1,837	1,926
Category 8	1,252	1,362	1,449	1,957	2,013	2,121
Category 9	1,263	1,430	1,575	1,978	2,119	2,308
Category 10	1,279	1,502	1,683	2,002	2,225	2,458
Category 11	1,292	1,575	1,800	2,021	2,329	2,626
Category 12	1,305	1,645	1,918	2,039	2,431	2,802

Note: Non-government schools are classified into 12 funding categories according to need. Special schools are funded at category 8 and Aboriginal community schools are eligible for funding up to category 12, according to need.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Table 13. State government per capita grants to non-government schools, by category, 1995 ($ per student) (a)

C'wealth funding category	*NSW (b)*	*Vic. (c)*	*WA (d)*	*ACT (e)*
		PRIMARY		
1	347	274/328	616	220
2	351	382	616	—
3	520	491	616	366
4	555	527	674	—
5	590	529	674	—
6	624	550	698	573
7	659	553	698	—
8	694	572	734	690
9	728	628	734	—
10	763	632	762	783
11	798	636	762	—
12	902	638	788	880
		SECONDARY		
1	538	403/482	934	349
2	699	563	934	—
3	806	725	934	536
4	860	832	1,094	—
5	914	834	1,094	—
6	968	868	1,150	836
7	1,021	872	1,150	—
8	1,075	900	1,202	1,010
9	1,219	988	1,202	—
10	1,183	990	1,242	1,144
11	1,237	992	1,242	—
12	1,318	994	1,286	1,286

Rates for other States	
Tasmania	
Primary (f)	690
Junior secondary	966
Senior secondary	1,519
Northern Territory	
Primary	983
Secondary	1,517
South Australia (g)	
Primary	347
Secondary	482
Queensland (h)	
Primary	582
Secondary	933

(a) All amounts rounded to the nearest dollar. Rates are expressed in 1995 prices. Rates for some States may be subject to cost supplementation.

(b) Calendar-year figures for NSW are calculated by adding two payments which are made each half-year for each category, each payment falling in a different financial year. Special schools and children with disabilities (in terms of the Commonwealth's definition) are paid category 12 rates.

(c) Victoria splits category 1 into 1A and 1B for schools with an Education Resources Index over 100.

(d) Also pre-primary rates of $616 (cat. 1–3), $674 (cat. 4–5), $698 (cat. 6–7), $734 (cat. 8–9), $762 (cat. 10–11), $788 (cat. 12), for each full-time equivalent student.

(e) ACT figures represent the average of two distinct half yearly payments across financial years 1994/5 and 1995/6.

(f) Primary includes kindergarten.

(g) SA also pays a needs component which comprises 47 per cent of total grants available in 1995. Total amount of needs component is distributed amongst schools using 35 per cent according to a number of needs of schools and 65 per cent according to a number of needs of students.

(h) Queensland also pays a needs component according to school and student needs. The needs component comprised approximately 16 per cent of the total funding in 1995.

Source: State Departments of Education

Table 14. Per student expenditure (a) of non-government schools, by affiliation and level of education, by State, 1995 ($ per student)

	NSW	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Aust.*
Catholic									
Primary	3,516	3,306	3,392	3,438	3,378	3,112	4,161	3,676	3,418
Secondary	5,609	5,651	5,542	6,399	6,233	5,869	(b)	5,541	5,690
Combined prim/sec	5,234	6,449	4,979	5,193	5,468	4,771	(b)	5,292	5,317
Total	**4,495**	**4,360**	**4,323**	**4,507**	**4,563**	**4,268**	**4,967**	**4,575**	**4,437**
Independent									
Primary	4,797	4,920	4,651	3,803	4,061	4,336	5,517	(b)	4,488
Secondary	8,725	9,332	7,328	6,794	6,492	(b)	(b)	(b)	8,124
Combined prim/sec	8,170	7,958	6,555	6,309	7,064	6,116	(b)	7,198	7,452
Total	**7,821**	**7,836**	**6,455**	**5,571**	**6,689**	**5,984**	**6,724**	**7,252**	**7,157**
Total non-government									
Primary	3,617	3,399	3,524	3,553	3,446	3,216	4,514	3,684	3,522
Secondary	5,850	5,960	5,876	6,519	6,255	5,848	7,743	5,900	5,958
Combined prim/sec	7,427	7,804	6,169	5,829	6,598	5,644	6,141	6,289	6,930
Total	**5,400**	**5,462**	**5,134**	**4,961**	**5,288**	**4,925**	**5,691**	**5,231**	**5,317**

(a) Excludes expenditure on special schools.

(b) Data not provided where fewer than three schools are involved.

Note: Expenditure at system office level is allocated across the schools in systems in proportion to enrolments.

Includes:

- capital expenditure;
- expenditure of funds raised through fees or obtained from church or parish grants;
- either expenditure on, or allowance for, superannuation and long service leave;
- Commonwealth and State grants for education; and
- payments to staff of salary-related allowances including motor vehicle allowances.

Excludes:

- direct payment of allowances by the Commonwealth and States to individual students and/or parents; and
- salaries of staff and operating expenses of the boarding house components of schools.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Although the government funding reported in Tables 12 and 13 represented a major component of the total funding available to non-government schools, the financial operations of individual non-government schools were the responsibilities of school boards and councils, with monitoring roles being performed by education authorities for their member schools.

Catholic and independent schools faced ongoing requirements to generate private income, mainly through fees, for the support of their education programs.

On the expenditure side, Table 14 enables a broad assessment, on a consistent basis, of levels of educational expenditure in Australia's non-government schools during 1995. However, it must be stressed that the figures presented represent average expenditure only and cannot be taken to reflect the expenditure levels of particular schools.

2.3 Provision of recurrent funding

Recurrent funding for Australian schools was provided by governments to meet the operating expenditure of schools and education authorities as they implemented strategies to meet the agreed objectives. In addressing those objectives, recurrent funding was directed to the payment of salaries, development of curriculum initiatives, professional development of staff and a broad range of maintenance and general operating costs.

State governments made major commitments to the support of government sector schools in 1995 by way of recurrent expenditure. The per capita expenditure detailed in Table 10 provides comparative information about the various levels of recurrent expenditure undertaken by State governments in 1994–95.

Table 15. Income and expenditure per student of all non-government schools, by affiliation, by State, 1995 ($ per student)

	NSW	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Australia*
				Total Catholic schools					
Fees and charges	870	965	931	1,058	961	825	663	1,085	930
Private donations and income	435	229	315	287	224	163	359	520	326
Total private income	1,305	1,194	1,246	1,345	1,185	991	1,022	1,605	1,255
State grants	1,008	845	1,016	914	966	895	1,592	1,000	954
Commonwealth grants	2,196	2,251	2,121	2,140	2,369	2,224	2,566	2,170	2,214
Total income (a)	**4,509**	**4,289**	**4,383**	**4,399**	**4,520**	**4,110**	**5,179**	**4,775**	**4,424**
Recurrent expenditure (a) (b)	4,028	3,799	3,887	4,006	3,898	3,735	4,218	4,154	3,926
Capital expenditure (a)	466	561	437	501	665	533	749	421	511
Total expenditure	**4,495**	**4,360**	**4,323**	**4,507**	**4,563**	**4,268**	**4,967**	**4,575**	**4,437**
Loans at end of year	*827*	*814*	*831*	*1,236*	*1,681*	*1,011*	*1,381*	*591*	*927*
Loans at start of year	*772*	*786*	*839*	*1,115*	*1,578*	*987*	*1,520*	*566*	*884*
Annual movement in borrowing	*55*	*28*	*-7*	*121*	*102*	*24*	*-139*	*25*	*43*
				Total independent schools					
Fees and charges	4,325	5,140	2,908	2,931	3,407	3,246	1,966	4,340	3,994
Private donations and income	774	520	405	322	470	345	336	682	540
Total private income	5,099	5,661	3,313	3,253	3,877	3,591	2,302	5,022	4,534
State grants	893	605	1,014	802	938	942	1,908	859	844
Commonwealth grants	1,326	1,218	1,683	1,540	1,733	1,400	3,177	1,372	1,447
Total income (a)	**7,319**	**7,484**	**6,010**	**5,595**	**6,547**	**5,932**	**7,387**	**7,253**	**6,825**
Recurrent expenditure (a) (b)	6,193	6,633	5,161	4,936	5,417	5,171	5,915	6,189	5,882
Capital expenditure (a)	1,628	1,203	1,295	635	1,272	814	809	1,063	1,274
Total expenditure	**7,821**	**7,836**	**6,455**	**5,571**	**6,689**	**5,984**	**6,724**	**7,252**	**7,157**
Loans at end of year	*3,603*	*2,030*	*3,584*	*2,071*	*3,227*	*1,811*	*2,887*	*2,662*	*2,907*
Loans at start of year	*3,165*	*1,937*	*3,204*	*2,037*	*2,964*	*1,662*	*2,768*	*2,958*	*2,656*
Annual movement in borrowing	*437*	*93*	*380*	*33*	*264*	*148*	*118*	*-296*	*251*
				Total non-government schools					
Fees and charges	1,811	2,289	1,683	1,856	1,796	1,753	1,201	1,884	1,922
Private donations and income	527	321	349	302	308	233	350	559	395
Total private income	2,338	2,610	2,032	2,158	2,103	1,986	1,550	2,443	2,317
State grants	977	769	1,015	867	956	913	1,722	965	918
Commonwealth grants	1,959	1,923	1,954	1,884	2,152	1,909	2,818	1,974	1,966
Total income (a)	**5,274**	**5,303**	**5,001**	**4,909**	**5,212**	**4,807**	**6,090**	**5,383**	**5,201**
Recurrent expenditure (a) (b)	4,617	4,697	4,371	4,402	4,416	4,285	4,918	4,653	4,559
Capital expenditure (a)	783	765	763	558	872	640	774	578	758
Total expenditure	**5,400**	**5,462**	**5,134**	**4,961**	**5,288**	**4,925**	**5,691**	**5,231**	**5,317**
Loans at end of year	*1,583*	*1,200*	*1,878*	*1,592*	*2,208*	*1,317*	*2,002*	*1,099*	*1,568*
Loans at start of year	*1,424*	*1,151*	*1,738*	*1,508*	*2,051*	*1,245*	*2,035*	*1,153*	*1,458*
Annual movement in borrowing	*159*	*49*	*140*	*84*	*157*	*72*	*-33*	*-54*	*111*

(a) Excluding amounts relating to boarding facilities.

(b) Includes debt servicing of loans for capital and operating purposes.

(c) Data not provided where fewer than three schools are involved.

(d) Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between the sums of component items and totals.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

The recurrent costs of non-government schools were also extensively supported through the provision of State government per capita grants. Table 13 details the level of those grants to non-government schools.

A total of $2,513 million in additional support for the recurrent costs of schooling, in both government and non-government schools, was provided in 1995 through the Commonwealth's GRG Program.

Commonwealth recurrent funding support for government schooling in the States was provided through block grants, calculated on the basis of student numbers at each level of schooling. The rates for government school students in 1995 were $343 per primary school student and $507 per secondary school student. Table 12 provides further details.

Support for the recurrent costs of non-government schools was also provided on a per capita grant basis. Non-

government schools are classified into twelve funding categories according to need and the level of per capita grant to any non-government school is determined by that funding category. Category 1 schools receive the lowest level of per capita funding and category 12 schools receive the highest level. Special schools are funded at category 8 and Aboriginal community schools are funded up to category 12, according to need.

2.4 Capital expenditure

Most capital funding for schools in Australia is provided through the combined inputs of the Commonwealth Capital Grants Program and funds committed from State governments. In the case of non-government schools (and, occasionally, government schools) school communities also provide substantial funds for capital development.

Capital expenditure, as reported by State governments, significantly exceeded the levels of capital funding provided by the Commonwealth. The majority of State government funding served to provide capital facilities at government schools.

The nature and extent of State government support for capital projects in non-government schools was determined by the policies of the various State governments.

In New South Wales, an interest subsidy totalling $29.45 million was provided to non-government schools in 1994/95.

In Queensland, the government provided $8.48 million towards capital projects at non-government schools associated with the Queensland Catholic Education Commission. The funding enabled a total of 51 Catholic schools to undertake capital works and equipment-related projects.

Table 16. Capital expenditure by State governments in government schools, 1994–95 ($ million)

New South Wales	202.9
Victoria	173.6
Queensland (1995–96 figures)	213.3
South Australia	58.6
Western Australia	60.6
Tasmania	30.2
Northern Territory	12.2
Australian Capital Territory	11.3

Source: State Departments of Education

Table 17. Summary of Commonwealth capital expenditure, all schools, by State, 1995 ($ million) (a)

New South Wales	105.9
Victoria	81.0
Queensland	55.4
South Australia	24.5
Western Australia	32.8
Tasmania	9.1
Northern Territory	4.6
Australian Capital Territory	6.3
Total	**319.6**

(a) Does not include NEPS Special Education Capital Support funding.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Non-government schools associated with the Independent Schools of Queensland Block Grant Authority were provided with $4.2 million towards capital projects. Thirty-six projects were supported, mainly for the provision of primary and secondary classrooms, libraries and secondary specialist facilities.

In Tasmania, support for capital development in non-government schools is provided in the form of a subsidy on loan interest. In 1995/96 this amounted to $915,000.

In the Northern Territory, the Capital Assistance and Subsidy Scheme provides assistance to non-government school authorities of up to 50 per cent of capital repayments on loans at the rate of 5 per cent per annum over a period of up to ten years and/or an interest subsidy paid over a period of up to ten years in respect of up to ten per cent of a loan used to finance an approved project.

The Australian Capital Territory makes no direct grants to non-government schools; however, an interest subsidy of up to ten per cent is paid to schools that take out loans for capital expenditure. In 1995 a total of $1.97 million in interest subsidies was paid to the non-government sector. South Australia also makes no direct grants to non-government schools for capital purposes.

2.5 Commonwealth-funded capital projects completed during 1995

Capital Grants Program funding provided by the Commonwealth in 1995 came principally through the General Element, which provided funds in the form of block grants to both government and non-government sectors to

A new gymnasium was provided at Cunderdin Agricultural College, WA.

help to improve educational outcomes for Australian students through the provision of better school facilities. Additional support was also provided to non-government schools through elements of the Capital Grants Program: Quality, Competencies and Technological Support (QCaTS), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support and Hostels for Rural Students.

Capital expenditure by the Commonwealth during 1995 is summarised in Table 17.

Commonwealth guidelines require at least 50 per cent of capital funding to be applied to facilities for existing student enrolments. Of the capital projects funded by the Commonwealth and completed both physically and financially during 1995, most common were those providing upgraded facilities for existing student enrolments. In some instances significantly greater than the minimum 50 per cent of Commonwealth funding was used for the benefit of existing enrolments. For example, over 60 per cent of funds directed to New South Wales government schools and 75 per cent of funds directed to Queensland government schools were used in that way.

The most common types of work undertaken and facilities provided in the States included:

- the provision of new schools, individual classrooms and specialist teaching/learning facilities;
- the construction or refurbishment of administration and staff facilities;
- the refurbishment and upgrading of existing learning areas and specialist teaching/learning areas; and
- the construction or upgrading of student toilets and other amenities.

Although a major part of the Commonwealth's capital input was directed to overcoming the effects of age and extensive use on school facilities, the demands for new schools in growth areas and the changing demands of school curriculum also led to capital projects. In the area of curriculum-specific needs for new/upgraded facilities, provisions for technology-related subjects were most commonly reported across the States.

Further details of capital expenditure can be found in the State chapters.

2.6 Expenditure as a proportion of GDP

The full range of data necessary to permit analysis of total school expenditure as a percentage of GDP is not available. Data are therefore provided only in respect of expenditure on government schools.

Total government outlays on primary and secondary education totalled 2.7 per cent of GDP in 1994–95, a marginal decrease from the levels of 2.9 per cent in 1992–93 and 3.0 per cent in 1991–92 and a return to the levels which prevailed prior to 1991–92.

Table 18. Government outlays on primary and secondary education as a percentage of GDP, 1988–89 to 1994–95

Year(s)	*Per cent*
1988–89	2.8
1989–90	2.7
1990–91	2.8
1991–92	3.0
1992–93	2.9
1993–94	2.8
1994–95	2.7

Source: Derived by Commonwealth DEETYA from ABS Cat. No. 5510.0, *Australia*, Table 3 *Expenditure on Education*

3 Teachers and teaching

3.1 Overview

Issues relating to teachers and teaching helped establish the general climate within which schooling occurred in 1995 and provided a focus and impetus for the learning occurring in schools. Recruitment of new teachers and the demography of the current teaching force were broad issues of national relevance, as was a range of industrial matters and the pursuit of professional development opportunities. The changing demands on teachers stemming from social changes and the development of new and more relevant curriculum continued to make teaching challenging.

The Chalk Circle, an advisory committee whose members represented the peak organisations in teacher education – school systems, professional organisations, unions, universities and parent groups – was established to provide advice on the supply and maintenance of a quality teaching force for Australia. In November 1995 the Chalk Circle presented its report, *Education Industry Partnerships for Quality Teaching*, to the Commonwealth Minister. The report made recommendations on issues such as teacher supply and demand, national standards for the teaching profession, teacher education and professional development.

A 1994 study by the Australian Council of Deans of Education suggested that demand for teachers would substantially outstrip supply in the period to 2001. Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET)[1] labour market information indicates a shortage in the supply of secondary teachers only in some specialist areas – for example, mathematics and science, languages other than English (LOTE) and physical education – in some States. *Australia's Workforce 2005*, published by DEET in 1995, projects increasing school enrolments into the next decade but forecasts little change in the labour market outlook for teachers.

The *National Competency Framework for Beginning Teaching* was finalised during 1995. It describes in generic terms what a beginning teacher should know and be able to do and provides a common language to facilitate dialogue. It could provide a basis for standard setting to guide entry to the profession and teacher probation. The development of the framework was a co-operative initiative involving all key stakeholders in education, originally under the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning.

In 1995, the Australian Teaching Council (ATC), a national professional association for teachers, undertook work relating to its strategic priorities of national advocacy on teacher professional issues, teacher professional development and standards and registration. The last included collaborative activities with universities and teacher registration boards on teacher education guidelines and teacher standards and work related to the development of the National Competency Framework for Beginning Teaching. The Commonwealth supported the ATC with $250,000 of core funding for 1995–96, and the Council received a grant of $750,000 in 1995 under the National Professional Development Program (NPDP) to manage, in conjunction with the National Schools Network, professional development for teachers from across Australia.

Activity under the Teaching Accord, a national agreement between the Commonwealth and teacher unions, was concluded in October 1995. The Accord identified a set of ten broad educational priorities which were to be pursued over a two year period through a range of nationally funded programs.

During 1995, teachers from both government and non-government sectors in a number of States obtained salary increases. Some States offered teachers above-award agreements which included professional matters relating to teacher performance, sabbatical leave and commitment to minimum levels of professional development. A significant number of teachers accepted these agreements.

3.2 Teacher numbers and characteristics

In 1995, 202,401 FTE teachers were employed in Australian schools, making up 79.2 per cent of the total school staff of 255,594. Further information provided in Table 19 indicates that:

- 71.0 per cent of teachers taught in government schools;
- 49.9 per cent of all teachers in 1995 taught at the primary level; and
- males in the teaching force were outnumbered by females, who comprised 64.2 per cent of all teachers.

1995 FTE teacher numbers increased by 2,243, or 1.1 per cent, from the 200,158 active in schools in 1994. The increase in teacher numbers was only 0.4 per cent in the

[1] DEET was renamed the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA) in March 1996.

Table 19. FTE (a) of school staff (b), by area of activity, sex, category of school and major function, Australia, 1995

	Primary			*Secondary*			*Total*		
Major function	*Males*	*Females*	*Persons*	*Males*	*Females*	*Persons*	*Males*	*Females*	*Persons*
Government									
Teaching	18,687	57,308	75,996	32,785	35,006	67,791	51,472	92,315	143,787
Special support	601	1,718	2,319	785	1,309	2,095	1,386	3,027	4,413
Administrative & clerical (including teacher aides)	572	15,823	16,396	836	10,888	11,724	1,409	26,711	28,120
Building operations, general maintenance & other	2,043	175	2,218	1,431	151	1,582	3,473	326	3,799
Total	**21,903**	**75,024**	**96,929**	**35,837**	**47,354**	**83,192**	**57,740**	**122,379**	**180,119**
Non-government									
Teaching	5,473	19,567	25,040	15,584	17,990	33,574	21,057	37,557	58,614
Special support	60	311	371	268	509	777	328	820	1,148
Administrative & clerical (including teacher aides)	350	4,755	5,105	1,141	5,991	7,132	1,491	10,746	12,237
Building operations, general maintenance & other	771	266	1,037	1,937	502	2,439	2,708	768	3,476
Total	**6,654**	**24,899**	**31,553**	**18,930**	**24,992**	**43,922**	**25,584**	**49,891**	**75,475**
All schools									
Teaching	24,160	76,875	101,036	48,369	52,996	101,365	72,529	129,872	202,401
Special support	661	2,029	2,690	1,053	1,818	2,872	1,714	3,847	5,561
Administrative & clerical (including teacher aides)	922	20,578	21,501	1,977	16,879	18,856	2,900	37,457	40,357
Building operations, general maintenance & other	2,814	441	3,255	3,368	653	4,021	6,181	1,094	7,275
Total 1995	**28,557**	**99,923**	**128,482**	**54,767**	**72,346**	**127,114**	**83,324**	**172,270**	**255,594**
1994	**29,121**	**95,395**	**124,516**	**55,508**	**70,612**	**126,120**	**84,629**	**166,007**	**250,636**
1993	**29,209**	**93,992**	**123,201**	**56,690**	**71,593**	**128,282**	**85,899**	**165,585**	**251,483**

(a) Since FTE figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between the sums of component items and totals.

(b) See the glossary for further details.

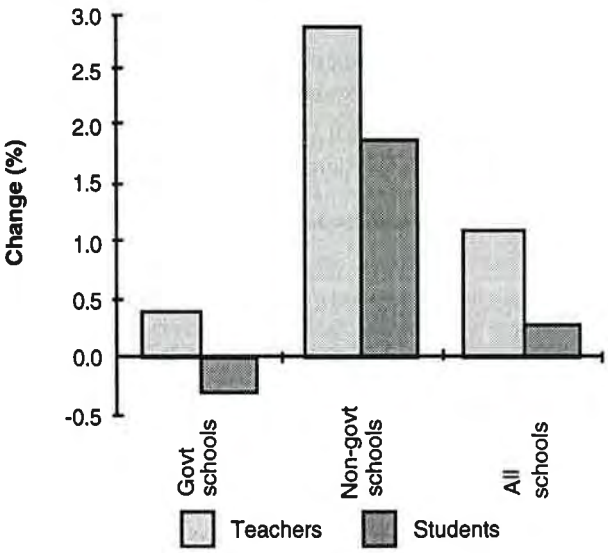
Source: *ABS Cat. 4221.0, Schools, Australia*, 1995, 1994, 1993

government sector, being concentrated in the non-government sector, where the increase was 2.9 per cent and accompanied a 1.9 per cent growth in student numbers from 1994 to 1995. Figure 13 documents the changes occurring in teacher and related student numbers from 1994 to 1995, by sector and category of school.

As the growth in overall teacher numbers from 1994 to 1995 was relatively small, opportunities for people to enter the teaching force for the first time in 1995 were limited.

Reporting from government sectors in some States indicated that appointments in 1995 to permanent positions as teachers were largely limited to country locations, with a range of specialist areas experiencing a shortage of teacher supply. Temporary replacement staff, rather than permanently appointed teachers, enabled some government systems to better manage their longer-term staffing needs. In the Northern Territory, for example, only 20 per cent of commencing staff in 1995 were permanent appointments.

Figure 13. Percentage change in teacher and student numbers, by sector, 1994–95



Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0 *Schools, Australia*, 1995

The experience profile of teachers was an area of concern to some non-government schools, although most were apparently satisfied with their mix of very experienced and relatively new teachers.

Most independent schools indicated that their teachers had either between five and 15 years of teaching experience or greater than 15 years experience.

Independent schools reported a high degree of concern with respect to recruitment of staff. Access to teachers with a variety of experience levels was a commonly stated need. Schools found it was difficult to recruit and retain staff who were adequately experienced or met specific school requirements. The fact that the older teachers at their schools were moving less frequently and continuing to work until they were older meant that the small number of staff retirements had decreased promotion prospects at many schools and this in turn added to problems of staffing and recruitment. In addition, younger staff were perceived to move too frequently and thus leave schools with a continuing group of younger, less experienced staff. Only a small number of schools indicated that they had no problems with retention and recruitment of staff.

The change in teacher numbers during the year did not occur evenly across Australia, with four States recording an increase in teacher numbers and four a decrease. The non-government sectors in all States did employ more teachers than in 1994, which is at least a partial reflection of the increased student numbers in the non-government sectors in all but the Australian Capital Territory.

Changes in teacher numbers occurring from 1994 to 1995 reflected changes in the relative enrolment levels in the States and resulted in minor changes to the full-time student/teaching staff (FTE) ratios. Table 22 summarises those ratios for the different States in 1995 and provides limited trend data for the period 1993–95.

Such variations in ratios among the various jurisdictions are also clear in Table 23, which also includes other staff involved in the education of Australian children and presents the full-time student/total staff (FTE) ratios applying in the different States.

The number of non-teaching personnel increased from 50,647 in 1994 to 53,193 in 1995, representing an overall increase of 5.0 per cent in the year. The increase was 5.7 per cent in the government sector and 5.8 per cent in the non-government sector. Table 20 provides a perspective on the increasing relative numbers of non-teaching staff in Australian schools from 1994 to 1995.

Enthusiastic Tasmanian students respond to their teacher.

The Gender and School Education Study undertaken in 1995 on behalf of the Commonwealth surveyed a statistically representative sample of teachers in Australia. From information contained in the report of that study, it is possible to provide some perspectives on teachers in 1995. For example:

- most teachers are middle-aged, with around 45 per cent of primary teachers and nearly half the secondary teachers over 40 years of age. Younger teachers (those aged 30 and under) comprised only about 20 per cent of the total. This result compares with the age profile of teachers reported in the 1989 study of *Teachers in Australian Schools*, (Australian College of Education, 1990), which found that 37 per cent of teachers were over 40 and 26 per cent under 30 years;
- nearly all primary teachers were in coeducational schools, compared with about 80 per cent of secondary teachers;
- teachers at single-sex schools were more likely to be teaching at all-girls' schools than at schools enrolling only boys; and
- analysis of the main teaching areas of secondary teachers indicated that English, mathematics and science tended to predominate.

Table 20. Non-teaching staff as a percentage of total staff, by sector, 1994–95

	1994	*1995*
Government schools	19.4	20.2
Non-government schools	21.9	22.3
All schools	20.1	20.8

Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0 *Schools, Australia*, 1995

Table 21. FTE (a) of school staff (teaching and non-teaching) (b) (c), by category of school and level of education, by State, 1995

	NSW	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Australia*	*Males*	*Females*
						Government					
Teaching											
Primary	24,912	16,376	15,070	7,026	7,919	2,122	1,353	1,218	75,996	18,687	57,308
Secondary	23,927	17,730	10,735	5,027	6,254	2,032	675	1,412	67,791	32,785	35,006
Total	48,839	34,106	25,805	12,053	14,173	4,154	2,028	2,630	143,787	51,472	92,314
Non-teaching											
Primary	5,827	3,026	5,916	2,237	2,283	882	403	358	20,932	3,216	17,716
Secondary	5,122	2,904	2,953	1,375	1,802	639	272	334	15,400	3,052	12,348
Total	10,949	5,930	8,869	3,612	4,085	1,521	675	692	36,332	6,268	30,064
Total	**59,788**	**40,036**	**34,674**	**15,665**	**18,258**	**5,675**	**2,703**	**3,322**	**180,119**	**57,740**	**122,378**
						Non-government					
Teaching											
Primary	8,216	6,999	4,065	2,082	2,317	592	257	512	25,040	5,473	19,567
Secondary	11,412	9,560	5,363	2,090	2,921	781	257	790	33,574	15,584	17,990
Total	19,628	16,559	9,428	4,172	5,238	1,373	514	1,302	58,614	21,057	37,557
Non-teaching											
Primary	1,701	1,596	1,268	539	973	193	158	85	6,513	1,181	5,332
Secondary	2,951	3,288	1,819	675	1,043	214	101	256	10,348	3,346	7,003
Total	4,652	4,884	3,087	1,214	2,016	407	259	341	16,861	4,527	12,335
Total	**24,280**	**21,443**	**12,515**	**5,386**	**7,254**	**1,780**	**773**	**1,643**	**75,475**	**25,584**	**49,892**
						All schools					
Teaching											
Primary	33,128	23,375	19,135	9,108	10,236	2,714	1,610	1,730	101,036	24,160	76,875
Secondary	35,339	27,290	16,098	7,117	9,175	2,813	932	2,202	101,365	48,369	52,996
Total	68,467	50,665	35,233	16,225	19,411	5,527	2,542	3,932	202,401	72,529	129,871
Non-teaching											
Primary	7,528	4,622	7,184	2,776	3,256	1,075	561	443	27,445	4,397	23,048
Secondary	8,073	6,192	4,772	2,050	2,845	853	373	590	25,748	6,398	19,351
Total	15,601	10,814	11,956	4,826	6,101	1,928	934	1,033	53,193	10,795	42,399
Total all schools											
1995	**84,068**	**61,479**	**47,189**	**21,051**	**25,512**	**7,455**	**3,476**	**4,965**	**255,594**	**83,324**	**172,270**
1994	**81,596**	**61,616**	**45,705**	**21,324**	**24,992**	**7,193**	**3,337**	**4,873**	**250,636**	**84,629**	**166,007**
1993	**80,803**	**63,840**	**45,195**	**21,448**	**24,816**	**7,163**	**3,172**	**5,047**	**251,483**	**85,899**	**165,585**

(a) Since FTE figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between the sums of component items and totals.

(b) As from 1990, staff employed in special schools have been allocated to either primary or secondary education on a pro-rata basis.

(c) Teaching staff are staff who spend the majority of their time in contact with students and have teaching duties, that is, are engaged to impart the school curriculum or are engaged in the provision of services for the direct benefit of students. Non-teaching staff include specialist support staff (e.g. counsellors); teacher aides and assistants; administrative and clerical staff; and building operations, general maintenance and other services staff.

Source: MCEETYA, *National Schools Statistics Collection*, 1995, 1994, 1993

Table 22. Full-time student/teaching staff (FTE) ratios (a) (b), by level of education, category of school (and non-government affiliation), by State, 1995

Level of education		*NSW*	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Australia*
Government										
Primary		18.0	18.4	17.6	17.4	18.4	17.1	14.7	18.4	17.9
Secondary		12.8	12.0	13.1	11.1	12.4	13.3	10.9	12.5	12.5
Total		15.5	15.1	15.7	14.8	15.7	15.2	13.4	15.3	15.4
Catholic										
Primary		20.3	20.3	19.7	20.0	19.2	20.9	18.9	21.1	20.1
Secondary		13.5	13.8	14.0	13.3	13.4	13.7	10.7	14.1	13.6
Total		16.6	16.9	16.8	16.8	16.3	17.0	15.4	17.1	16.7
Independent										
Primary		16.3	14.5	17.6	17.4	15.5	16.0	16.7	17.1	16.1
Secondary		10.8	11.2	13.3	12.5	18.9	12.2	11.7	12.3	11.7
Total		12.8	12.2	14.8	14.8	13.2	13.6	13.6	13.7	13.2
Total non-government										
Primary		19.2	18.6	19.0	18.9	17.9	19.0	18.2	20.2	18.9
Secondary		12.5	12.6	13.6	12.9	12.7	13.0	11.2	13.5	12.8
Total		15.3	15.1	16.0	15.9	15.0	15.6	14.7	16.1	15.4
All schools										
Primary		18.3	18.5	17.9	17.8	18.3	17.5	15.3	19.0	18.1
Secondary		12.7	12.2	13.3	11.6	12.5	13.2	11.0	12.9	12.6
Total	**1995**	**15.4**	**15.1**	**15.8**	**15.1**	**15.5**	**15.3**	**13.7**	**15.5**	**15.4**
	1994	**15.8**	**15.1**	**15.8**	**14.7**	**15.7**	**15.3**	**13.9**	**15.8**	**15.5**
	1993	**16.0**	**14.5**	**15.9**	**14.6**	**15.6**	**15.3**	**14.1**	**15.5**	**15.3**

(a) Full-time student/teaching staff (FTE) ratio was calculated by dividing the number of full-time students by the FTE of total teaching staff.

(b) Teaching staff includes principals, deputy principals, librarians and senior teachers mainly involved in administrative duties together with some guidance, counselling and careers advisers.

Note: These ratios are not measures of class size.

Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0 *Schools, Australia*, 1995 and earlier related publications

3.3 Teacher education

Teacher education courses are conducted through universities in the various States, each seeking to meet the pre-employment needs of beginning teachers or the demand for postgraduate education from those possessing initial qualifications. Courses tend to be specialised, aiming to best prepare students for roles in particular fields or levels of teaching. At the same time, the institutions in question are keenly aware of the need to prepare the teachers they are educating for the rapid and ongoing change which will characterise teaching in the decades to come.

Table 24 provides a range of detailed information about enrolments by areas of specialisation and the levels of courses. It makes very clear the differences in relative importance assigned to particular areas of specialisation when comparing the initial courses of those seeking entry to teaching with the post-initial options chosen by those seeking further qualifications. For example, while more than 72 per cent of initial education programs were directed at primary or secondary specialisations, only 21 per cent of post-initial enrolments had those areas as their specific foci.

Enrolments in teacher education courses fell by 3.4 per cent from 1994 to 1995, with enrolments in initial teacher education courses, undertaken by those not previously qualified as teachers, showing a 4.2 per cent decline.

Against the background of falling enrolments in teacher education it is important to note that in the early childhood area, the number of persons undertaking initial teacher education increased by 11.0 per cent in 1995. There was also an increase in enrolments for courses in such areas as TAFE teaching, but early childhood education stands out, there being a very significant increase (39.2 per cent) in those undertaking postgraduate teacher education in 1995.

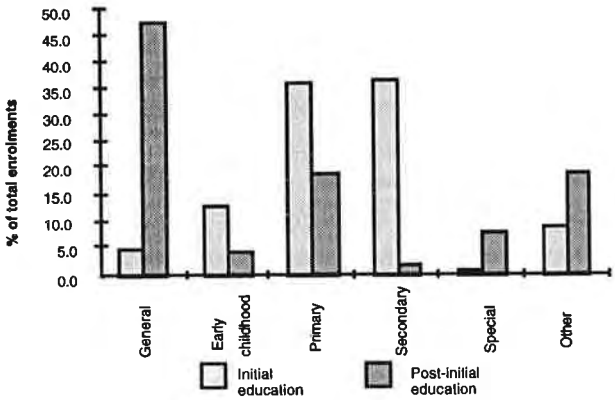
Table 23. Full-time student/total staff (FTE) ratios, by level of education, category of school (and non-government affiliation), by State, 1995

Level of education		*NSW*	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Australia*
Government										
Primary		14.6	15.5	12.6	13.2	14.3	12.1	11.4	14.3	14.0
Secondary		10.6	10.3	10.3	8.7	9.6	10.1	7.8	10.1	10.2
Total		12.6	12.9	11.7	11.4	12.2	11.2	10.1	12.1	12.3
Catholic										
Primary		17.4	17.2	15.8	16.2	13.6	16.5	11.5	18.2	16.5
Secondary		10.9	10.8	10.7	10.2	10.1	10.9	7.8	10.8	10.7
Total		13.8	13.7	13.2	13.3	11.9	13.5	10.1	13.8	13.4
Independent										
Primary		12.5	10.8	12.2	13.5	10.8	11.3	10.9	14.3	11.9
Secondary		8.3	8.1	9.7	9.3	8.5	9.4	8.2	8.9	8.6
Total		9.8	8.9	10.6	11.2	9.4	10.2	9.3	10.4	9.8
Total non-government										
Primary		15.9	15.1	14.5	15.0	12.6	14.3	11.3	17.3	15.0
Secondary		9.9	9.5	10.2	9.8	9.3	10.2	8.0	10.2	9.8
Total		12.4	11.7	12.0	12.3	10.8	12.0	9.8	12.8	11.9
All schools										
Primary		14.9	15.4	13.0	13.6	13.9	12.6	11.3	15.1	14.3
Secondary		10.4	10.0	10.3	9.0	9.5	10.1	7.8	10.1	10.0
Total	**1995**	**12.6**	**12.4**	**11.8**	**11.6**	**11.8**	**11.4**	**10.0**	**12.3**	**12.2**
	1994	**12.9**	**12.5**	**12.0**	**11.5**	**12.0**	**11.9**	**10.2**	**12.5**	**12.4**
	1993	**13.0**	**12.2**	**12.0**	**11.5**	**12.0**	**12.0**	**10.7**	**12.2**	**12.3**

Note: Full-time student/total staff (FTE) ratio is calculated by dividing the number of full-time students by the FTE of total school staff.

Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 1995 and earlier related publications, MCEETYA, *National Schools Statistics Collection*, 1995

Figure 14. Areas of specialisation in teacher education courses, 1995



Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

In addition to the changes in the numbers of persons undertaking teacher education courses from 1994 to 1995, the number of graduates from those courses also changed significantly, falling by 6.7 per cent compared with 1994, the decline being 10.3 per cent for initial teacher education courses and 3.1 per cent for postgraduate courses.

Although the tertiary teacher education courses are the initial and certainly most concentrated focus of professional education for teachers, much attention was also given in 1995 to the ongoing education needs of teachers in the years following their initial tertiary preparation. Continuing professional development and the introduction and maintenance of programs of in-service education were important issues for teachers in Australia in 1995.

Demand for professional development which had Statewide or system-wide application was generally met through programs arranged at that broader level. The most widely used and successful form of in-service education reported was that provided through in-school sessions, with region-based or larger-scale activities dealing with broadly applicable issues also being reported. The retraining needs of teachers were also addressed in 1995, with programs and support strategies devised to meet both long-term and short-term goals. The Commonwealth helped meet professional development needs of teachers at the national level through the NPDP.

Table 24. Number of enrolments in teacher education courses, by level of course and field of study, Australia, 1995

Area of specialisation	*Higher degree (a)*	*Other post-graduate (b)*	*Bachelor (c)*	*Other (d)*	*Total*
Initial teacher education (e)					
General	61	311	1,316	83	1,771
Early childhood	8	94	4,614	165	4,881
Primary	0	486	12,704	262	13,452
Secondary	5	3,030	10,570	30	13,635
Special	0	5	256	44	305
Other (g)	0	627	1,955	895	3,477
Total	74	4,553	31,415	1,479	37,521
Post-initial teacher education (f)					
General	3,783	1,791	5,181	11	10,766
Early childhood	88	354	578	0	1,020
Primary	27	510	3,671	74	4,282
Secondary	1	284	193	0	478
Special	410	949	468	0	1,827
Other (g)	1,083	2,511	722	1	4,317
Total	5,392	6,399	10,813	86	22,690
Total enrolments	**5,466**	**10,952**	**42,228**	**1,565**	**60,211**

(a) 'Higher degree' includes Higher Doctorate, Doctorate by research, Doctorate by coursework, Master's by research and Master's by coursework.

(b) 'Other postgraduate' includes postgraduate qualifying or preliminary and graduate/postgraduate diploma, graduate certificate.

(c) 'Bachelor' includes Bachelor's graduate entry, Bachelor's honours and Bachelor's pass.

(d) 'Other' includes diploma, associate diploma, other award, enabling courses and non-award courses.

(e) Initial teacher education students are people not previously qualified as teachers.

(f) Post-initial teacher education students are people already holding teaching qualifications and seeking further teaching qualifications.

(g) 'Other' includes TAFE.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Independent schools indicated that the most effective and efficient form of professional development for their staff was in-service training. It was found to be the most cost-effective form and improved student learning outcomes as the sessions addressed the specific needs of the school and encouraged staff to share their skills.

Teachers from a large number of independent schools attended seminars and courses conducted by subject associations. Membership of such associations provided valuable cross-school contacts and other benefits which enhanced the career opportunities for teachers. Continued university studies were another common source of professional development and upgraded qualifications were considered an important factor in the long-term career prospects for teachers.

Participation by independent schools in NPDP-funded activities varied between States, but overall a high number of teachers accessed these programs.

Ongoing curriculum reforms and refocusing occurred across Australia, creating a need for a fresh round of in-service education for teachers. Issues at the centre of those programs ranged from traditional focus areas such as literacy and numeracy, assessment and reporting, to national statements and profiles, and areas of new attention such as gender education, vocational education, applying technology and school management and accountability.

As well as fulfilling a vital role in the development of teachers' knowledge and classroom skills, professional development activities also led to:

- the development of networks of key teachers, able to play ongoing, active roles in curriculum focus areas;
- establishment of the Australian Principals Centre as an initiative in school leadership for current and prospective school principals;

Table 25. Number of persons graduating in teacher education courses, by level of course and field of study, Australia, 1994

Area of specialisation	*Higher degree (a)*	*Other post-graduate (b)*	*Bachelor (c)*	*Other (d)*	*Total*
Initial teacher education (e)					
General	3	370	295	36	704
Early childhood	1	68	829	227	1,125
Primary	0	237	3,526	328	4,091
Secondary	0	2,161	2,389	15	4,565
Special	0	0	76	30	106
Other (g)	0	219	498	178	895
Total	4	3,055	7,613	814	11,486
Post-initial teacher education (f)					
General	846	976	2,211	2	4,035
Early childhood	7	82	131	0	220
Primary	0	204	1,787	71	2,062
Secondary	19	197	73	0	289
Special	64	537	142	0	743
Other (g)	296	1,156	254	2	1,708
Total	1,232	3,152	4,598	75	9,057
Total persons graduating	**1,236**	**6,207**	**12,211**	**889**	**20,543**

(a) 'Higher degree' includes Higher Doctorate, Doctorate by research, Doctorate by coursework, Master's by research and Master's by coursework.

(b) 'Other postgraduate' includes postgraduate qualifying or preliminary and graduate/postgraduate diploma, graduate certificate.

(c) 'Bachelor' includes Bachelor's graduate entry, Bachelor's honours and Bachelor's pass.

(d) 'Other' includes diploma, associate diploma, other award, enabling courses and non-award courses.

(e) Initial teacher education students are people not previously qualified as teachers.

(f) Post-initial teacher education students are people already holding teaching qualifications and seeking further teaching qualifications.

(g) 'Other' includes TAFE.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

- the development and use of mentoring as an integral part of in-school professional development programs;
- a focus on the specific needs of women through a comprehensive range of targeted professional development programs;
- the establishment of specific teaching/learning teams to help teachers assimilate new concepts and directions in schooling; and
- the use of a 'key group' approach in which teams of teachers and parents planned, developed and implemented curriculum projects.

The level of commitment to professional development programs for teachers was also reported as extending to other members of school communities, (such as administrators and school councils/boards), providing a broad range of opportunities for the improvement of educational outcomes for children in schools.

3.4 Issues affecting teaching in Australia

The range of issues impacting on teachers and on the quality and effectiveness of their teaching in 1995 was broad in scope, covering those of a contextual, industrial and professional nature.

Among the issues establishing the context in which teachers worked and impacting on their capacity to interact effectively with their students were:

- the complex economic, social and cultural framework, which established the basic climate in which schooling occurred, affecting all members of school communities;
- the demands for increasing levels of accountability and the growing importance of quality assurance;
- a growing complexity of education at the senior secondary level, with greater demands being made for

schools to more effectively prepare their students for taking their place in the community after their schooling was completed;

- the ageing staff profile evident nationally, which presented opportunities and challenges to teachers and school administrators alike;
- an increased emphasis on student outcomes, impacting on areas from curriculum planning to classroom practice; and
- the continuation of significant curriculum reviews, leading to broad-based curriculum developments in key learning areas, which helped determine much of the focus of teaching activity in 1995.

Industrial issues continued to be of concern for school communities. As examples:

- there was widespread and ongoing industrial disputation, with salaries, conditions and class sizes among the areas in dispute;
- the industrial climate was characterised by enterprise bargaining and the associated concept of workplace reform; and
- the wider introduction of merit promotion continued to be seen as a means of both improving the general level of teacher effectiveness and also meeting government requirements for public sector reform.

In addition to the emphasis on professional development activities, which was the central focus for many teachers, issues relating to the professional aspect of teaching included:

- the steps necessary to provide classroom teachers with a more clearly defined career pathway as practising teachers as well as providing benefits in the form of enhanced student outcomes, became more common, with the appointment of key teachers/advanced skills teachers/master teachers to positions of educational leadership within their school communities;
- performance management policies which were adopted or proposed in a number of States, as a means of ensuring improved teacher performance and the flow-on of benefits to students;
- through professional development activities teachers were helped to develop an increasing awareness of the various learning styles and capacities of students as well as a wider range of responses and methodologies to enable them to better address the individual needs of all students;
- in a similar manner many schools investigated and adopted more flexible ways of organising teaching in order to improve both student learning and working conditions for teachers – approaches included varied working hours/weeks, altered lesson lengths, classroom reorganisation and the institution of tutorial programs;
- the increasing focus on information technology in Australian society and particularly on the role of schools in the education of children in the effective integration of that ongoing revolution into their lives, presented major challenges for schools and education authorities in seeking to provide the financial and personnel resources to address this need; and
- concern at the implications of State and Commonwealth legislation (for example, anti-discrimination, freedom of information) for teacher-pupil and teacher-parent relationships.

4 Focus on vocational education

4.1 Implementing vocational education in schools

Vocational education was chosen as the special focus area in the 1995 *National Report* relative to those national goals concerned with education excellence, high learning standards and relevance to the current and future needs of both students and their community. This choice of focus was an outcome of increasing concern expressed during the 1970s and 1980s at the difficulties faced by young people in making a smooth transition from school to work, while recognising that significant steps had been taken in Australian schools to address those difficulties.

A number of reports, including the Deveson, Finn and Carmichael reports, have addressed the issue of school-work transition. The Finn Committee recommendations in particular provided a basis for widening vocational options in upper secondary school and reforming entry level vocational training.

On the basis of such reports and while re-assessing the role of secondary schooling to recognise the changed needs of senior secondary students and community demands for a more appropriately educated workforce, schools in all States have become more involved in offering post-compulsory students programs which include an element of workplace-based learning.

Assisting with that process has been the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) Agreement, which seeks to improve cross-sectoral links among schools, higher education and vocational education and training and remove barriers to students moving across the education and training spectrum. This has meant expanding course articulation and credit transfer for students, widening the range of vocational programs available in schools and adult education and increasing opportunities for school leavers to enter vocational education and training.

The States have developed arrangements for credit transfer from schools to TAFE and from TAFE to universities. It is anticipated that the number of school students seeking credit transfer into vocational education institutions will reach 70,000 by the year 2000.

Ministers responsible for employment, education and training decided at their meeting in November 1994 to implement the Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS) in schools from the start of 1995. The decision meant that students in years 11 and 12 were provided with the opportunity to study vocational subjects and obtain certification by both educational and vocational training authorities for those subjects successfully completed at the end of year 12. MCEETYA established a taskforce to report at the end of 1995 on the implementation of the AVTS in schools.

A commitment to increasing the immediate vocational relevance of senior secondary schooling and the support of State Ministers for the implementation of the AVTS began a process of significant change in the provision of vocational education in Australian schools in 1995. At the State/system level, for example:

- reports such as the *Framework for Vocational Education and Training of 16–18 Year Olds in the Australian Capital Territory 1995*, and South Australia's *The Implementation of the AVTS in DECS Schools* sought to provide a coordinated framework for the implementation of vocational education within schools;
- radically new student programs and curriculum innovations were proposed, developed and funded in a number of States;
- under the AVTS pilot program, over 100 institution-based pilots operated in schools across Australia, involving full-time students undertaking unpaid vocational placements; and
- there were a number of AVTS pilot projects to trial a 'middle-pathway', involving full-time senior school students working as part-time employees, undergoing on- and off-the-job training and entering into contracts for traineeships and apprenticeships.

Underlying the development in systems and in individual schools of vocational programs responding to the formal introduction of AVTS, system authorities:

- facilitated the cultural and structural changes needed to improve the status of vocational education in schools;

- encouraged schools to provide vocational education opportunities to increased numbers of students in upper secondary years;
- supported the modification of existing vocational education programs to become consistent with AVTS principles;
- encouraged the phased, sustained increase of AVTS activities in schools;
- sought to ensure equitable access to vocational education and training in all geographic locations and among all student groups; and
- provided information for school communities and professional development opportunities for staff.

A key issue in 1995 was counteracting the perception that vocational programs in senior schools were an option for the academically less able, rather than being for all senior students. Other issues included strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration in country areas, the impact of cross-sectoral collaboration on the training needs of industry and the movement of higher education students to TAFE colleges.

The development of vocational education courses was based on combining education with training and workplace experience to maximise the real benefit to students. The courses needed to be seen as part of an integrated curriculum which incorporated a broad general education and sought to prepare students for a broad range of post-school options. Courses were also to be based on nationally endorsed industry and enterprise competency standards, conform to the National Framework for Recognition of Training (NFROT) Principles and, wherever possible, lead to formal accreditation within the Australian Qualifications Framework.

4.2 The nature and structure of vocational education courses

In 1995 most Australian secondary schools offered their senior secondary students some vocational subjects/programs. Many of those subjects incorporated national training modules to level 1 or level 2, with programs aimed increasingly at providing opportunities for dual accreditation and credit transfer to later TAFE courses. Schools also continued to develop their links with industry, cooperative programs with TAFE, industry placements for teachers and work experience/placement programs for students. Patterns of study requirements for senior secondary certificates increasingly allowed students to undertake accredited vocational courses while maintaining the desired breadth of post-school options.

Vocational education programs have attracted greater notice in recent years because of high retention rates and a restructuring of work which has reduced employment and on-the-job learning opportunities for inexperienced school leavers. The common aim for courses has been to offer some means of incorporating workplace learning into school programs. Courses have increasingly presented vocational learning as an integral part of senior secondary studies and allowed students to spend time learning in the workplace as a recognised part of their normal study program. Programs have combined school- and TAFE-based studies with work placements in industries ranging from hospitality to construction, and attendance has usually contributed to both school and training certificates.

It is envisaged that courses offered to students under this umbrella would:

- be available to senior secondary students as part of a broad-based program of study, including programs leading to a senior secondary school certificate;
- increasingly take the form of accredited training programs, including some leading to nationally-recognised, entry-level vocational qualifications;
- involve significant school/industry links, as well as links with TAFE; and
- be delivered either by TAFE personnel or by school personnel who had received recognised training.

The benefits of vocational programs were widely acknowledged as including enhanced student motivation, improved retention of students, enhanced career planning and access to a wider range of career choices and demonstrable improvements in key competencies among students from special populations.

In August 1995, ACER undertook, on behalf of the Australian Student Traineeship Foundation (ASTF), a survey of all Australian schools with years 11 and 12 students to find out about the workplace learning partnerships they operated. The results were published in *School-Industry Programs National Survey 1995, ASTF, 1995.*

Table 26. Percentages of schools providing school-industry programs, by State, 1995

	School sector			*All schools*
	Government	*Catholic*	*Independent*	
New South Wales	74	62	19	60
Victoria	45	16	8	33
Queensland	55	41	23	45
South Australia	38	14	17	32
Western Australia	61	73	6	52
Tasmania	46	29	0	27
Northern Territory	58	0	0	41
Australian Capital Territory	90	(a)	50	67
Australia	**58**	**38**	**16**	**46**

(a) ACT reported that 50 per cent of Catholic schools provide school-industry programs.

Source: Ainley, J & Fleming, M, *School-Industry Programs National Survey 1995*, ASTF, 1995

Table 27. Level of educational attainment of the labour force (aged 15 to 64 years), by sex, Australia, selected years

Educational attainment	*M*	*F*	*P*	*M*	*F*	*P*	*M*	*F*	*P*	*M*	*F*	*P*
	1989			*1991*			*1993*			*1995*		
With post-school qualifications	48.9	40.5	45.4	50.3	43.5	47.4	48.6	41.6	45.7	49.7	43.0	46.8
Degree or higher	10.6	8.2	9.6	11.8	9.8	11.0	12.1	12.7	12.4	13.6	15.1	14.3
Other post-school qualifications	38.4	32.3	35.9	38.4	33.7	36.4	36.5	28.8	33.3	36.1	27.9	32.6
Without post-school qualifications	49.2	56.1	52.1	47.8	53.5	50.2	49.7	55.5	52.1	48.4	53.3	50.5
Completed highest level of school available	14.3	16.6	15.3	15.9	18.9	17.1	16.6	20.4	18.2	16.8	19.3	17.8
Did not complete highest level of school available	34.6	39.0	36.4	31.7	34.3	32.7	33.1	35.1	33.9	31.6	34.0	32.7
Never attended school	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Still at school	1.9	3.4	2.5	2.0	3.0	2.4	1.7	3.0	2.2	1.9	3.6	2.7
Total in labour force ('000)	4,775.8	3,374.7	8,150.5	4,906.3	3,542.5	8,448.8	4,968.2	3,582.6	8,550.7	5,037.4	3,824.5	8,861.8

Source: ABS Cat. No. 6227.0, *Transition from Education to Work, 1995*

The ASTF, founded in 1994 to promote the broadening of senior school education to include workplace knowledge and experience, encourages schools and employers to develop best practice workplace learning partnerships which give students the opportunity to develop recognised academic skills and vocational competencies. The ASTF supports joint school-industry programs which form part of the curriculum of years 11 and 12, require substantial learning and assessment to occur in the workplace, combine on- and off-the-job training, reflect industry and local community requirements and receive school accreditation and industry recognition.

The survey, which had an 83 per cent response rate, identified 1,065 school-industry programs, around half of which commenced in 1995. These programs have grown quickly in recent years. Nearly half of the schools

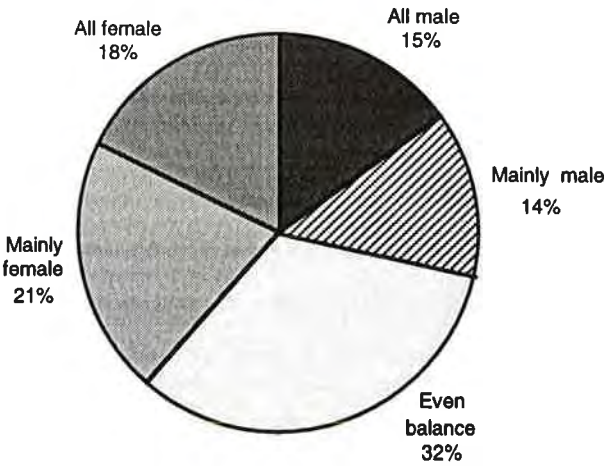
surveyed (see Table 26) offered school-industry programs, with another quarter indicating that programs were planned for the future. Government schools were more likely to have school-industry programs than non-government schools. The survey found that 9 per cent of years 11 and 12 students took part in school-industry programs in 1995 and 3 per cent – about 8,700 students – took part in extended programs, which involved more than 20 days of work placement. In some States, participation by students was high but contact with the workplace was minimal; in others the opposite was true.

ACER found that participation and provision seemed to be influenced by:

- school size: larger schools were more likely to offer programs;
- location: rural and remote schools were more likely to have programs than urban schools;
- social area: schools in the highest socioeconomic status (SES) areas were least likely to offer programs; and
- gender: girls were under-represented in the 'extended' programs, although they constituted 56 per cent of students participating in these programs.

The survey findings included other aspects of the gender composition of the school-industry programs offered in Australian schools. Figure 15 indicates the overall gender balance in programs.

Figure 15. Balance of male and female students in school-industry programs, 1995



Source: Ainley, J & Fleming, M, *School-Industry Programs National Survey 1995*, ASTF, 1995

Extended programs, on average, included 20 students per program, lasted a year or longer and tended to concentrate in hospitality, retail, manufacturing, office, health and community services and construction. Students' knowledge and skills were assessed in both the school and the workplace in 60 per cent of cases. About half of all programs were separately accredited subjects and another third were embedded in another accredited subject, so results appeared on a student's senior secondary certificate in 80 per cent of cases. Three-quarters of the programs were accredited by State vocational training authorities. A similar proportion led to advanced standing or credit transfer in TAFE.

In the independent sector, secondary schools offered a variety of general vocational courses including tourism and hospitality, commerce, building and construction, metal/engineering, furnishings and arts/entertainment. These courses are offered to students in years 9 to 12 inclusive.

In addition, courses relating to similar industry areas were offered to year 11 and 12 students as part of recognised vocational programs which lead to qualifications accredited by State Vocational Education and Training (VET) accreditation authorities or by education authorities on behalf of VET authorities, or towards credit of accredited qualifications. These courses were located both at TAFE and individual schools. A large number of schools considered that links with TAFE colleges, universities, professional firms and local industry were important and tried to provide flexible timetabling options to encourage students to undertake the TAFE and industry linked courses provided. A small number of schools did not have vocational programs in place or accessible at their schools.

Generally schools faced a variety of issues with respect to vocational education including:

- scarcity of appropriate staff;
- problems with timetabling or scheduling restrictions or shortages of resources; and
- the need to educate parents to accept vocational courses as suitable alternatives.

Vocational education was reported as providing a number of benefits including enhanced student motivation, improvements in the development of key competencies and improved links with the labour market.

South Australian independent schools were reported as investigating organisational, industrial, administrative, curriculum and assessment issues relating to vocational education in schools.

A number of independent schools reported that professional development for teachers was specifically targeted at vocational education. These opportunities ranged from in-school sessions to time releases for specific courses, although not many schools encouraged their teachers to take part in commercial or industrial work experience to complement the vocation education offered at their schools. Students' work experience opportunities were typically limited to one to two weeks in year 10 and arranged by the student and/or their parents.

4.3 Industry areas involved in vocational education programs

The extensive development of vocational courses as part of senior secondary studies in Australian schools, incorporating delivery in school, by TAFE, or through private providers, has meant that a wide range of industry areas has been available for study. The industries on which particular schools have focused their courses have been those to which their students are most able to gain access for study and workplace experience, but there has also been a recognition that industries showing a trend towards future employment growth are those to which particular attention should be directed. Industries with smaller geographical spread, or limited potential for future employment growth, were the subject of limited course development.

The detailed reporting provided by some of the States and systems indicates that the major industry areas in which vocational courses were developed in schools and were operating in 1995 included the following, with the first two areas listed being the most widely offered nationally:

- tourism and hospitality (important nationally, but especially so in Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania);
- business, clerical and retail (taken collectively, these areas represent a major focus for all States);
- metals and engineering;
- automotive;
- electronics; and
- building and construction.

The industry areas identified in 1995 for greater course development in future years are expected to include small business, telecommunications, information technology and marine industries, contributing to a significant increase in the range of industry options available to students for study in future years.

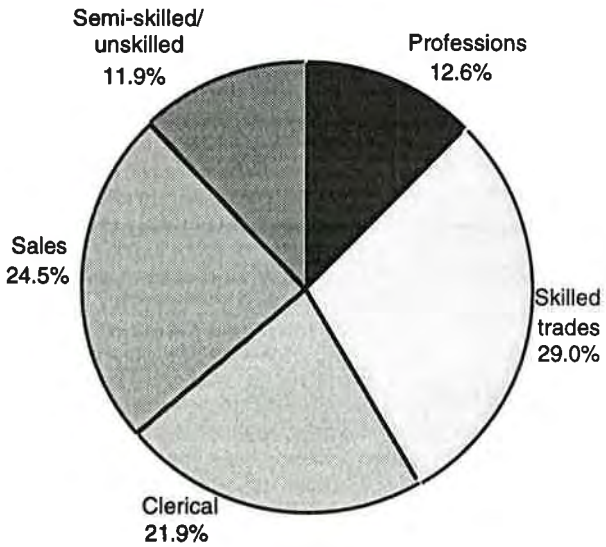
It is also possible to identify the range of occupational areas most commonly associated with those programs (Figure 16). The predominance of clerical and sales positions, which coincides with information reported by States, is evident.

4.4 Students involved in vocational education

Although vocational education programs have been the focus of major developmental activity and have grown significantly in perceived importance, they are not yet part of the educational programs of all senior secondary students. However, the availability in schools of such programs is growing rapidly and the number of students accessing them is increasing similarly.

Based on reporting in the national survey, Table 29 provides a summary of the scope of student involvement in school-industry programs in 1995. Table 28 provides an indication of the length of time those students spend in the workplace.

Figure 16. Occupational areas for school-industry programs, 1995



Source: Ainley, J & Fleming, M, *School-Industry Programs National Survey 1995*, ASTF, 1995

Table 28. Percentage of schools providing school-industry programs, by level of workplace time, by State, 1995

	Program workplace time (days)					
State/sector	*None*	*Unspecified*	*<5*	*5–10*	*11–20*	*>20*
New South Wales	40	5	1	19	11	24
Government	26	7	1	23	13	30
Catholic	38	3	0	22	9	28
Independent	81	1	1	7	5	5
Victoria	68	2	0	8	9	13
Government	55	2	0	12	10	21
Catholic	84	1	0	1	9	4
Independent	92	1	0	2	4	1
Queensland	55	3	3	17	7	15
Government	45	3	5	21	8	18
Catholic	59	4	0	14	6	16
Independent	77	1	1	9	6	6
South Australia	68	2	6	16	4	4
Government	62	2	8	20	4	4
Catholic	86	0	0	5	0	10
Independent	83	4	0	4	4	4
Western Australia	48	2	1	4	6	39
Government	39	2	1	5	8	45
Catholic	27	4	0	4	4	62
Independent	94	0	0	0	3	3
Tasmania	70	4	0	0	0	26
Government	54	8	0	0	0	39
Catholic	71	0	0	0	0	29
Independent	100	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Territory	59	6	0	0	6	29
Government	42	8	0	0	8	42
Catholic (a)	100	0	0	0	0	0
Independent	100	0	0	0	0	0
Australian Capital Territory	33	6	0	6	11	44
Government	10	10	0	0	10	70
Catholic	100	0	0	0	0	0
Independent	50	0	0	17	17	17
Australia	**54**	**3**	**2**	**13**	**8**	**20**
Government	42	4	2	17	10	25
Catholic	62	2	0	10	7	20
Independent	84	1	1	5	5	4

(a) ACT reported that the small size of the secondary school population results in any sampling process having a high level of statistical unreliability.

Source: Ainley, J & Fleming, M, *School-Industry Programs National Survey 1995*, ASTF, 1995

Table 29. Participation rate in school-industry programs by year 11–12 students, all schools, by State, 1995 (per cent)

New South Wales	10.2
Victoria	4.5
Queensland	10.0
South Australia	12.7
Western Australia	12.0
Tasmania	1.9
Northern Territory	9.6
Australian Capital Territory (a)	3.0
Australia	**8.8**

(a) ACT reported that the small size of the secondary school population results in any sampling process having a high level of statistical unreliability.

Source: Ainley, J & Fleming, M, *School-Industry Programs National Survey 1995*, ASTF, 1995

State reporting reveals a range of additional information about the overall numbers of students participating in vocational education courses in 1995:

- New South Wales reported an increase of 270 per cent (from 2,484 to 8,923) from 1994 to 1995 in the number of students undertaking vocational Higher School Certificate (HSC) courses delivered by schools; in addition nearly 22,000 students studied mainstream TAFE subjects taught by TAFE teachers, with 119 TAFE colleges providing 1,600 courses;
- in Victoria, the number of students enrolled in dual accredited courses increased from less than 300 in 1994 to approximately 1,400 in 1995;
- in Queensland, a total of 193 schools worked with the ASTF to involve 5,308 students in traineeships at a cost of $880,000; some 35 per cent of students graduating from Catholic secondary schools had earned accredited VET outcomes;
- 943 students in South Australian government schools completed accredited VET modules in 1995, with 287 students from non-government schools achieving similar outcomes;
- approximately 1,000 Western Australian students obtained recognition for work-based learning as part of their senior secondary studies;
- 174 year 11 or year 12 students in Tasmania received a result in an accredited vocational course in 1995, an increase of more than 180 per cent over 1994;
- in the ACT 13 per cent of students included a nationally-recognised vocational education course in their year 12 package in 1995 and a further nine per cent of students included a pre-AVTS vocational education course; and
- in the Northern Territory only one government secondary school provided VET accredited courses and there were 607 enrolled in these courses.

In addition to overall numbers, information provided by States identifies key features of student participation in vocational education courses in 1995. For example:

- equity of access to vocational education resources and outcomes was promoted for girls, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with disabilities, students from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) and students in rural and remote areas, although statistics to demonstrate this commitment were not generally provided;
- as part of its commitment to isolated students, South Australia became the first State to offer VET by means of distance education; and
- the ABSTART mentoring program in Tasmania, which provided senior high school students at risk with a workplace-based mentor, had significant early success in providing students with an outcomes-focused approach to their schooling.

4.5 Partnership arrangements in vocational education programs

In setting up and operating courses of vocational education for senior students, schools and systems have been required to work with TAFE, various unions, industry training boards and employers, in order to ensure not only the relevance of the courses to industry, but also their acceptance. While partnerships for all schools were developed at the local school level, and for many schools those local links were perhaps of greatest importance, larger-scale cross-sectoral links were forged in all States. Comprehensive links with TAFE and peak industry bodies were widely reported.

Other partnerships at the local level were far more comprehensive, with local initiatives developed to support linkages among various sectors. Examples of important developments reported during 1995 were:

- the establishment of the ASTF, which provided funding for 126 school-industry programs of workplace training for senior school students; Aboriginal multi-campus school/TAFE vocational programs in the Kimberley district of Western Australia, with that State's policy now being to co-locate new secondary schools and TAFE facilities, wherever possible;
- the location of skills centres on TAFE institute campuses, for example, the Telecommunications Skills Centre at Lidcombe TAFE College, NSW and the Plastic and Rubber Technical Education Centre at Mt Gravatt TAFE College, Queensland;
- a cross-sectoral VET pilot project in South Australia established mechanisms to ensure the maintenance of standards of assessment in VET modules so that articulation and credit transfer into TAFE courses was assured;
- in Victoria, a business-initiated residential program in conjunction with Deakin University and the government sector for over 60 senior secondary students to attend the university to undertake a program in which student teams developed enterprise skills, made a series of business decisions, and participated in other business initiatives;
- the joint development of a site with a TAFE college, a campus of the University of Newcastle and an Adult Education College at Ourimbah on the New South Wales central coast; and
- the joint use of open education facilities by universities, TAFE and schools, for example:
  - the Access Australia Cooperative Multimedia Centre (CMC) Learning 21 project was a joint arrangement between Telstra, the NSW Department of School Education, the NSW TAFE Commission, five metropolitan and regional universities and a number of multimedia companies. The program offered a range of education, training and professional services, and access to state-of-the-art equipment and facilities; and
  - Ngapartji CMC's Education Advisory Panel was a joint venture based in South Australia involving three universities, TAFE, the SA Department for Education and Children's Services and private providers. The objective of the advisory group was to be a key contributor to the development of world class skills in interactive multimedia (IMM). Ngapartji's aims included strengthening and accelerating the uptake of IMM technology into education and training institutions at all levels.

Table 30. Number of full-time year 12 students, by sex, by State, selected years

Year	*NSW*	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Australia*
Males									
1986	18,354	15,174	12,142	6,250	5,979	1,130	346	1,663	61,038
1991	25,174	23,497	17,454	8,272	8,009	1,926	710	2,356	87,398
1993	27,605	23,218	17,494	7,980	8,845	2,057	603	2,237	90,039
1995	25,932	21,130	15,968	5,829	8,254	1,957	531	2,150	81,751
Females									
1986	19,559	18,200	13,025	6,728	6,201	1,283	443	1,635	67,074
1991	28,135	27,135	18,508	8,484	8,660	2,012	684	2,241	95,859
1993	30,133	25,909	18,522	8,088	9,252	2,142	589	2,242	96,877
1995	28,925	24,358	17,341	6,400	8,819	2,101	564	2,098	90,606
Persons									
1986	37,913	33,374	25,167	12,978	12,180	2,413	789	3,298	128,112
1991	53,309	50,632	35,962	16,756	16,669	3,938	1,394	4,597	183,257
1993	57,738	49,127	36,016	16,068	18,097	4,199	1,192	4,479	186,916
1995	54,857	45,488	33,309	12,229	17,073	4,058	1,095	4,248	172,357

Sources: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 1995 and earlier related publications

4.6 The role of work placements

Many schools have long-established work experience programs which have enabled thousands of secondary students, typically at year 10, to gain experience of the workplace while still at school. Such programs have varied according to local demand, geographic circumstances and available resources, the models in use including research work experience, work shadowing, work sampling and negotiated work experience. Many of the work-based components of subjects offered to senior students in 1995, were offered this last model. This was consistent with a philosophy favouring the convergence of general and vocational education.

There have been major initiatives to significantly expand the notion of work experience, which is frequently a once only opportunity for students, to include vocational placements which are more likely to allow more regular contact with a workplace or occupy an extended period of time. Development of these programs for senior students has stemmed from the belief that greater involvement of industry in the training process would help students better undertake and apply learning in real workplace settings, making schooling more personally relevant and increasing the skill-base and level of experience perceived by the community as necessary for young people about to enter the Australian workforce.

The developments which occurred in the area of work placements have had legal as well as practical implications and have led to an updating of legislation in some jurisdictions, for example Victoria's *Work Experience Act* and the *Education (Student Work Experience) Act* in Queensland. Schooling authorities have become more flexible in their acknowledgment of the broad variety of industry arrangements being entered into for student work placements, which must meet the needs of employer, school and students. For example, a vocational placement can be for a half or one day at a time, or it may involve a block placement. Under some circumstances, it can concentrate on after-school hours and even involve a student's existing part-time work, if other program requirements are met.

Work placements played a significant role in AVTS programs, which are built on the undertaking of structured workplace training to supplement school learning. Work placements are also a required component of many courses which embed VET modules, with competencies learnt on

A South Australian technology student at a CNC milling machine.

the job integral to the learning taking place in the classroom and assessed in the workplace by a supervisor or workplace assessor. Some VET curriculum, such as units delivering the national communication or office skills modules, do not require the completion of a vocational placement (although it is highly desirable) but do require that the learning and the assessment of student competence is related to the workplace. Simulated work placements may also be acceptable approaches in some areas of hospitality and construction industry courses.

All States reported the involvement of both government and non-government schools in work placements for senior students, although the nature of those programs varied. There was also extensive cooperation between sectors in the development of programs to help incorporate work placements into the curriculum. Developments in government schools have generally been at the forefront of moves to adopt such new approaches to work placement. Reports indicated that Catholic schools were also well-placed, through their systemic support structures, to provide access for large numbers of students to these programs. There was less detailed reporting of work placement programs in independent schools, although those schools were involved in the provision of such programs for their students.

Reports from States indicated that the major problems impacting on work placement programs stemmed from the increasing demands on employers to provide work placement opportunities for secondary students. Some schools had difficulty finding enough suitable placements to satisfy student demand at particular points in the school year, while meeting the requirements of guidelines established for such programs. There was also a need to continue close

liaison with employers and to provide guidance as to the expectations for work placements which form part of vocational courses and require outcomes to be addressed. Workplace assessment and coordination and the professional development of workplace supervisors were particular concerns for independent schools in South Australia.

4.7 Accreditation and articulation arrangements for vocational education courses

An important requirement for all vocational courses offered to senior secondary students has been that they be dual accredited, that is, accredited by a State's secondary assessment authority as units of study for the certificate awarded on the successful completion of year 12, and also accredited as meeting industry requirements. Credit transfer arrangements for courses at year 11 and year 12 broadened significantly in 1995, allowing vocational courses offered in schools to achieve widespread industry recognition and to provide advanced standing in further vocational studies. As an example, by the end of 1995 the Victorian Board of Studies had approved dual recognition program courses in ten industry areas, involving approximately 1,400 students, compared with less than 300 students involved at a similar time in 1994.

Central to the outcomes of dual accreditation has been dual credentialling. As well as being reported on a student's secondary certificate, vocational courses are reaching a stage where they can be credentialled as meeting industry requirements, leading to perhaps a Transcript of Academic Record, Statement of Attainment or TAFE Certificate, depending on the course studied. Secondary courses which attract such dual recognition can be expected to become more common.

In most instances schools themselves are not registered to deliver vocational training curriculum. Therefore, when delivering a course containing embedded VET curriculum, a link must be made with a registered training provider such as TAFE to ensure the completion of the necessary quality assurance procedures for certification of the students and articulation to further courses. Schools in the Northern Territory, however, are required to become registered providers in order to offer VET-accredited programs. A school in South Australia has also been granted recognition by the Accreditation and Recognition Council (ARC) to provide one particular certificate course, while 25 schools in Queensland were granted private provider status to deliver accredited vocational programs.

4.8 Training teachers of vocational education

Professional development and training activities were provided in 1995 through teacher networks, conferences and seminars, vocational skills pilot programs and key competency support materials. Programs also sought to improve the training of teachers to deliver vocational education and training programs in a range of industry areas, and aimed to ensure that the teachers could provide students with the skills to meet the needs of industry. Training in the embedding of VET curriculum into the school curriculum framework and workplace assessor training was also undertaken.

In 1995, States were at different stages of program development and undertook the training of teachers in a variety of ways. In Queensland, the first phase of the Vocational Skills for Teachers Project neared completion. This project is designed to assist teachers in the self-identification of their professional development needs and aims to have a comprehensive set of teachers' guides to professional development on a range of industry areas in every school by early 1995. In the Australian Capital Territory, NPDP funding of $65,580 was used to improve the industry skills of teachers of vocational education through a program including industry placements, competency-based training and assessment, and consultation with industry. Vocational training for teachers is expected to become more generally available in all States in coming years.

Prior to delivery of any nationally-accredited VET curriculum, teachers were required to participate in professional development activities designed to meet the requirements of the particular industry. Training programs developed in the States in consultation with representatives of such groups as industry training advisory authorities, TAFE and education providers, prepared teachers to deliver programs in each of the industry areas available for study. The length and type of training required varied according to the industry and curriculum chosen. Programs typically included orientation, training in competency-based teaching, learning and assessment, industry-specific training, occupational health and safety issues and industry visits. Industry-specific elements of the programs were delivered by either TAFE or industry.

Table 31. Teachers receiving vocational education training, all schools, by State, 1995

	Nature of training	
	VET-accredited courses	*Other training*
New South Wales	1,539	0
Victoria	100	n.a.
Queensland	n.a.	n.a.
South Australia	1037	n.a.
Western Australia	n.a.	n.a.
Tasmania	40	(a) 140
Northern Territory	(b)	(b)
Australian Capital Territory	31	76

n.a. not available.

(a) This figure does not include any professional development delivered internally by schools and colleges. There are no figures available from the non-government sector.

(b) This information is not collected in the Northern Territory.

Source: State Departments of Education

Programs in some States which gave teachers an opportunity to spend time in industry placements were important in developing links between the world of work and effective learning/teaching. Such placements enabled teachers to develop expertise for use in planning and implementing school programs.

Placements were often only for a few days, such as those undertaken by 72 government sector teachers in South Australia, and many of the placements of independent school teachers in Victoria and New South Wales. The Department of School Education in New South Wales funded 80 Teachers in Business placements, each of three weeks duration. Longer-term placements were also trialled. In Victoria, the Teacher Release to Industry Program (TRIP) enabled 66 teachers to spend a year in industry placements and, based on that model and a NPDP initiative, long-term placements of teachers in industry have commenced in Queensland. Six- or twelve-month placements have been recognised in that State as a preferred model of teacher placement in industry, as such periods allow teachers to develop significant resources to support the curriculum being taught in the schools.

Increasing numbers of teachers became involved with vocational education programs in 1995. Levels of involvement among government sector teachers appear in Table 32.

Table 32. Teachers of vocational education, government schools, by State, 1995

New South Wales	1,142
Victoria	n.a.
Queensland	n.a.
South Australia	90
Western Australia	n.a.
Tasmania	(a) 30
Northern Territory	(b)
Australian Capital Territory	(c) 50

(a) This only accounts for one teacher coordinator per program. Each program may be delivered by up to five teachers.

(b) This information is not readily available from the Northern Territory. Most teachers involved in delivering VET courses also deliver non-VET courses in schools.

(c) This figure applies to teachers of vocational education courses under the AVTS. There were many more involved in general vocational education teaching. No figures are available for this wider definition.

Source: State Departments of Education

5 Effective schools and quality schooling

5.1 Introduction

In addition to the focus area of vocational education, reporting on other initiatives relating to the national goals concerned with educational excellence, learning standards and educational relevance was identified as integral to the objective overview of schooling which is the domain of this *National Report*.

In addition to reporting on some of the national issues and projects which impact on students of all ages, this Section provides a perspective on a number of matters relating principally to senior secondary students. It provides a statistical and textual overview of aspects of senior and secondary schooling and discusses factors relating to post-secondary education.

5.2 Review of Commonwealth/State service provision

Late in 1995, the review of Commonwealth/State services established by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) produced the *Report on Government Service Provision*, which examined the effectiveness and efficiency of a range of government-funded social services, including government school education. The review is seeking to develop effectiveness indicators for student learning outcomes, social and other outcomes and equity objectives. Its efficiency indicators have focused on costs per student.

The report notes the lack of nationally comparable data on student learning outcomes. Although most States test student performance, differences among jurisdictions in the timing of Statewide testing, year levels at which this is done, testing methodologies, curriculum content, learning areas covered and reporting frameworks all mean that results are not readily comparable across systems. Trends within States, however, suggest no marked change in student literacy and numeracy performance over the last few years. Where recorded the learning outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are lower than those recorded for the population as a whole.

In considering social and other objectives of schooling which deal with the attitudes and well-being of students and their preparation for participation in further education, the workforce, society and active citizenship, the review notes that systems have done little to define the objectives beyond broad generalities and the data available through student attitude surveys and post-school destination and experience surveys are limited.

The review also looked at the equity objectives of schooling which relate to meeting the needs of groups identified as facing disadvantage. It reported that results from Statewide tests in five jurisdictions show lower than average achievement for students in identified equity target groups, most notably for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students at schools in low socioeconomic neighbourhoods.

In examining expenditure per student as an efficiency measure, the review found that the Australia-wide average of $5,100 for 1993–94 varied across jurisdictions. Expenditure tended to be lower in larger schools and higher in schools facing socioeconomic disadvantage. The report pointed out that expenditure per student is influenced by factors such as different population densities and the provision of schooling to disadvantaged groups, and as such is an imperfect measure of efficiency.

The review saw its future tasks as aggregating comparable student learning outcome data by establishing equivalences among State testing programs; developing a coherent framework of indicators to address the full range of school system objectives and collecting data on achieving these outcomes; and providing information on outcomes by target groups.

5.3 Some issues affecting quality schooling

A belief in effective learning and teaching is a long standing core value of all State providers of schooling, frequently reaffirmed in vision statements and corporate planning documents. Activities in all schools are directed towards achieving the highest standards of quality for the schooling offered to young Australians. Following are details of some of the activities in 1995 which were directed to that goal.

Quality assurance

Issues of quality assurance increased in importance in a number of jurisdictions reflecting national concerns over accountability and the pursuit of best practice.

In Queensland, as one example, the government sector's quality assurance policy was approved in 1995, defining accountabilities for quality assurance procedures for all employees, principals and other senior managers. To help achieve policy goals, 23 Quality Assurance Officers (Curriculum) were appointed in April 1995. Since then they have conducted workshops, undertaken evaluation activities to assist in monitoring the implementation of Shaping the Future initiatives and been involved in the Effective Learning and Teaching Review and in the development of other long-term evaluations.

In South Australia the Department for Education and Children's Services has been developing its internal review mechanism, the Quality Assurance Framework, since 1994 and in 1995 it was introduced for trialling in a central administrative unit, in 60 schools and in 20 children's services sites. The framework has a dual focus of accountability and improvement, involving site-based self-evaluation supported by external validation processes and providing a structured system within which individual sites retain the flexibility necessary to meet local needs. The framework is to be implemented in all sites by 1997.

The Victorian accountability framework, Achieving Quality in Victoria's Schools of the Future, placed a strong emphasis upon the planned improvement on student's learning achievements; monitoring and evaluating the performance of government schools individually and as a sector; the establishment of standards to be used as benchmarks by schools in assessing their own performance in key areas and public reporting on performance in achievements at both school and Statewide level.

There were three mechanisms, the school charter, the school annual report and the triennial school review, through which schools focused upon improving their performance which forms an integral part of the Department of Education's policy concerning school accountability. They allowed schools to develop their own agreed educational plans and priorities within the boundaries of Government policies and programs and enabled school's progress to be monitored and reported upon according to the objectives articulated in the school charter.

Table 33. Age participation rates (a) of 15–19 year olds, by sex, all schools, by State, 1995 (per cent of relevant population)

Age	*NSW*	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Australia*
Males									
15	93.2	93.7	87.6	91.5	87.9	99.2	79.7	111.5	91.9
16	74.5	82.4	72.7	75.9	68.4	65.2	64.8	102.1	75.7
17	61.0	67.0	43.8	41.0	36.2	49.6	39.1	88.2	55.2
18	15.5	16.2	7.6	7.9	6.6	12.2	12.6	36.8	13.0
19	2.1	3.0	1.6	2.1	2.1	2.9	2.9	3.8	2.3
15–19	49.0	51.7	42.1	43.3	40.0	46.5	40.2	64.2	47.1
Females									
15	94.3	95.3	91.0	93.7	90.7	96.6	84.5	107.6	93.7
16	80.4	88.9	79.7	81.8	75.3	74.4	70.2	101.3	82.1
17	69.8	78.7	45.6	42.5	39.6	56.3	43.8	92.6	62.0
18	14.1	15.1	6.3	6.4	6.4	10.5	11.6	24.9	11.6
19	1.8	2.4	1.4	2.1	1.8	1.4	4.2	2.9	1.9
15–19	51.7	55.2	44.1	44.5	42.4	48.8	42.5	61.5	49.7
Persons									
15	93.7	94.5	89.3	92.6	89.3	98.0	82.0	109.6	92.8
16	77.4	85.6	76.1	78.8	71.8	69.7	67.2	101.7	78.8
17	65.3	72.7	44.7	41.7	37.8	52.9	41.3	90.4	58.5
18	14.8	15.6	7.0	7.2	6.5	11.4	12.1	30.9	12.3
19	2.0	2.7	1.5	2.1	2.0	2.2	3.5	3.4	2.1
15–19	50.3	53.4	43.1	43.9	41.2	47.6	41.3	62.9	48.4

Note: Age participation rates represent the number of school students of a particular age and sex expressed as a proportion of the estimated resident population of the same age and sex. They do not include people in these age groups who may be attending forms of education other than those delivered in schools (e.g. TAFE). Due to interstate movement (i.e. students resident in one State and attending school in a different State) participation rates may be either slightly underestimated or overestimated, thereby making possible participation rates greater than 100 per cent. Differences in State policies on entry age into schooling and alternative provisions for school-age students (i.e. TAFE) can also affect participation rates.

Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 1995

Table 34. Apparent retention rates (a) of secondary school students to year 12, by sex, category of school (and non-government affiliation), by State, selected years (per cent)

State	School category	1991			1993			1995		
		M	*F*	*P*	*M*	*F*	*P*	*M*	*F*	*P*
New South Wales	Government	51.1	61.8	56.3	61.9	71.5	66.5	58.6	70.7	64.5
	Catholic	63.3	69.0	66.1	70.3	76.0	73.2	70.5	77.4	74.0
	Independent	91.9	101.3	96.6	94.1	101.0	97.6	90.0	95.2	92.5
	Total non-govt	70.7	77.3	74.0	76.9	83.0	80.0	76.2	82.6	79.4
	All schools	**56.6**	**66.4**	**61.4**	**66.3**	**75.0**	**70.6**	**63.9**	**74.5**	**69.1**
Victoria	Government	63.6	79.5	71.1	67.6	84.4	75.6	61.0	79.8	69.8
	Catholic	65.0	78.4	71.9	70.5	81.8	76.2	69.6	81.1	75.4
	Independent	99.2	113.4	106.4	97.2	104.1	100.6	94.2	102.3	98.2
	Total non-govt	77.9	90.8	84.4	80.7	89.9	85.3	79.1	88.9	84.0
	All schools	**66.3**	**83.5**	**75.7**	**72.2**	**86.5**	**79.1**	**67.3**	**83.2**	**75.0**
Queensland	Government	70.6	80.4	75.4	74.7	83.8	79.2	64.1	75.5	69.7
	Catholic	78.6	86.4	82.3	82.6	87.1	84.8	81.0	88.1	84.4
	Independent	97.7	108.3	102.8	98.7	104.1	101.3	97.9	104.1	100.9
	Total non-govt	85.8	94.6	90.0	89.1	94.0	91.4	88.1	95.1	91.5
	All schools	**75.1**	**84.4**	**79.6**	**79.1**	**86.8**	**82.9**	**71.5**	**81.5**	**76.3**
South Australia	Government	72.3	81.9	76.8	76.8	84.4	80.5	57.1	69.1	62.9
	Catholic	89.6	100.4	95.1	97.1	100.1	98.6	79.1	86.7	83.0
	Independent	107.9	118.0	112.9	103.9	108.8	106.2	102.3	104.5	103.4
	Total non-govt	97.8	107.9	102.8	100.4	104.0	102.1	89.6	94.5	92.1
	All schools	**78.7**	**88.9**	**83.5**	**83.0**	**89.7**	**86.3**	**66.3**	**76.7**	**71.4**
Western Australia	Government	63.2	71.2	67.1	69.0	77.1	72.9	62.4	72.9	67.5
	Catholic	67.1	77.2	72.2	70.1	76.6	73.3	64.7	75.9	70.2
	Independent	91.6	101.7	96.4	93.6	100.5	97.0	93.0	97.3	95.0
	Total non-govt	76.3	85.8	81.0	79.0	85.4	82.2	75.9	84.0	79.8
	All schools	**66.9**	**75.5**	**71.1**	**71.9**	**79.6**	**75.6**	**66.5**	**76.3**	**71.2**
Tasmania	Government	47.8	57.0	52.1	54.9	63.4	58.9	55.8	59.6	57.7
	Catholic	49.0	47.1	47.9	61.9	65.6	63.8	56.6	61.4	59.2
	Independent	61.7	64.5	63.0	63.8	73.9	68.9	68.2	80.8	74.2
	Total non-govt	54.9	53.7	54.3	62.7	69.0	65.9	61.9	69.1	65.6
	All schools	**49.3**	**56.1**	**52.6**	**56.7**	**64.9**	**60.6**	**57.3**	**62.1**	**59.7**
Northern Territory	Government	60.6	61.3	60.9	49.1	52.6	50.7	42.1	46.7	44.4
	Catholic	30.4	38.3	34.5	42.6	35.0	38.7	32.4	34.0	33.2
	Independent	73.5	57.1	66.1	30.7	37.9	34.2	44.4	42.9	43.7
	Total non-govt	37.9	41.0	39.5	37.5	36.1	36.8	37.8	37.5	37.7
	All schools	**57.1**	**57.9**	**57.5**	**46.4**	**48.6**	**47.5**	**41.0**	**44.4**	**42.7**
Australian Capital Territory	Government	114.5	114.8	114.6	109.4	115.8	112.6	111.6	108.7	110.2
	Catholic	67.2	64.4	65.9	66.0	64.2	65.1	58.9	66.5	62.5
	Independent	77.0	72.9	75.0	70.9	72.1	71.5	66.0	71.3	68.5
	Total non-govt	70.0	66.8	68.4	67.4	66.5	67.0	61.0	67.9	64.3
	All schools	**95.8**	**95.4**	**95.6**	**92.2**	**96.3**	**94.2**	**90.1**	**92.2**	**91.1**
Australia	Government	61.5	72.7	66.9	67.9	78.7	73.1	61.0	73.8	67.2
	Catholic	67.6	76.0	71.9	73.3	79.9	76.6	71.0	79.5	75.3
	Independent	95.5	106.3	100.8	95.0	101.3	98.1	92.5	98.8	95.6
	Total non-govt	77.2	86.0	81.6	81.0	87.4	84.2	79.0	86.4	82.7
	All schools	**66.1**	**76.7**	**71.3**	**71.9**	**81.4**	**76.6**	**66.7**	**77.9**	**72.2**

Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 1995 and earlier years

The quality of schooling offered to students was also a focus for non-government schools. Modifications to existing forms of administration and organisation were investigated and many reviews of curriculum occurred. Continuous improvement of school operations, based on best practice concepts and processes, typified the efforts of many schools to remain relevant and effective in the eyes of students and the broader society.

The Catholic Education Office (CEO), Melbourne, for example, has a five-year cycle of primary school review. This entails self-review by the school community followed by observation and validation by a panel of five people, who spend up to five days in school. The process of school review is associated with a school's development plan which outlines its curriculum and policy priorities for the coming five years. The panel report is forwarded to the principal and parish priest and to the Director of Catholic Education. The review process thus involves a cycle of school development and review which is aimed to ensure quality education in the school.

Local participation and responsibility

Significant advances occurred during 1995 in several States with respect to local participation and responsibility in schooling. For example, in New South Wales:

- more than 70 per cent of all government schools had established school councils;
- over 65,000 parents and community members had participated in training and development activities;
- a brochure, *Parents' Guide to Schools*, was developed in consultation with parents and published in 14 community languages; and
- schools focused on encouraging the participation of students in processes of consultation within schools and as participants in their communities.

Both South Australia and Queensland reported a strong emphasis on collaborative contribution by the main sectors of the school community and the Australian Capital Territory reported the following approaches to community involvement:

- the establishment in late 1995 of a widely representative Ministerial Advisory Council on Government Schooling to provide advice on the delivery of quality government school education;
- the newly-established Student Representative Network, the School Board Forum, and parents and citizen's associations were important means of communication and participation; and
- the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Non-government Schooling in the Australian Capital Territory provided advice to the Minister on educational issues such as sources of funding and school registration.

Reporting on the devolution of responsibility for the day-to-day management of schooling in the Australian Capital Territory and elsewhere helps to stress the increasing commitment to localising responsibility for schooling.

In South Australia, significant local line-management and support responsibility was vested in district superintendents of education and in the role of the manager of Anangu Education Services. Anangu Education Services is a Department for Education and Children's Services unit whose role is to provide infrastructure and support for education services on Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara lands as determined by the local community.

In Victoria, 1995 saw the intakes of schools into the Schools of the Future program completed. School-based management within a central curriculum, standards and accountability framework has been implemented in all but two Victorian government schools. More than 90 per cent of the schools sector education budget is under local control and supporting policy frameworks now exist for curriculum, personnel, resources, and accountability. A cooperative research project has published two reports – *One Year Later* and *Taking Stock* – indicating overall confidence in the objectives of Schools of the Future and reported that expected benefits were being realised.

In addition to many of the links existing between government schools and their communities, in non-government schools there was frequently a wider-ranging reliance on the support and involvement of parent and school community organisations in school activities.

5.4 National survey of year 9 students

In 1995, ACER surveyed more than 13,500 year 9 students across Australia as part of the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) program. This program includes four cohorts born in 1961, 1965, 1970 and 1975 which have been surveyed almost annually since their members were 14 years old. LSAY also includes the Australian Youth Surveys (AYS), the administration of which has recently been transferred from DEET to ACER.

The program studies the pathways from schooling to higher education and training and the labour force, including outcomes such as frequency and duration of unemployment, and income. It is ACER's intention to select a new cohort of year 9 students every three years up to 2004. The selected students will be contacted annually until they are at least 25 years old.

Among the data collected in the 1995 survey were literacy and numeracy achievement tests and students' attitudes to school. Student background variables included gender, measures of SES, language spoken at home, students' perception of their ability, and students' educational plans.

In an analysis of achievement in the areas of literacy and numeracy, the survey found that:

- on average, girls performed marginally better than boys on the literacy test, whereas boys did better (by a similar margin) on the numeracy test;
- students who spoke mostly English at home performed significantly better on both the literacy and numeracy tests than those who mostly spoke some other language, and this difference was particularly marked for the literacy test;
- on the combined results from both tests, students from 'upper-class' occupational backgrounds performed better, on average, than students from 'lower-class' backgrounds, and similarly students whose parents were highly educated performed better on the tests overall;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students with disabilities performed less well than comparison groups, even after controlling for socioeconomic background and type of school attended; and
- performance on the tests was positively related to students' perception of their ability and to future plans. Students who planned to study full-time generally out-performed students who intended to work full-time after leaving school.

An analysis of the attitudes expressed by the students to their schooling provided a range of key perceptions:

- generally, students expressed positive attitudes to school, seeing their learning as useful and relevant. They were less positive about their relationships with their teachers and the actual work they did: only 35 per cent liked to go to school each day and only 23 per cent were enthusiastic about their school work;
- compared with boys, girls expressed significantly higher levels of satisfaction with school in general, with their relationships with their teachers, and (by a smaller margin) with their school achievement; and
- in contrast to their literacy and numeracy test results, students who mostly spoke a language other than English at home were markedly more satisfied with school in general, were keener to go to school each day, and were more enthusiastic about the work they did at school than their English-speaking peers.

5.5 Key competencies

The key competencies are a response to the current and emerging economic, social and cultural needs of Australia and enable young people to apply knowledge and skills in an integrated way in the workplace. Under the Key Competencies Program, $20 million has been provided over the three years 1993–94 to 1995–96 to support the development and trialling of a set of key competencies in Australia's education and training systems. Under the program, most pilot projects focus on the post-compulsory school years and address curriculum, teaching and learning practice, and assessment and reporting issues in both general and vocational education. A professional development package for teachers and trainers is planned for delivery in 1997. A number of projects have been established to support the development and integration of the key competencies and their integration into vocational education and training.

At its meeting in mid-1995 MCEETYA asked its Schools Taskforce to report on key competencies at the conclusion of the pilot phase. The report, which is due in late 1996, will describe what has been learnt from all the pilot projects in four broad areas of inquiry: curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment and reporting and the interpretation of the key competencies; and in terms of benefits to stakeholders.

Key competency pilot projects in the school sector have been running since early 1994, with a focus on mapping the teaching, assessment and reporting occurring in vocational education courses. Some States reported that individual schools were still grappling with the implications and definitions of key competencies and the AVTS, but most systems and schools are well advanced in the process of identifying the key competencies included in their curriculum, with some proceeding to the stage of a key competencies audit. Widespread professional development has assisted teachers to better understand the practical

application of key competencies, as well as enabling them to modify existing units of study, or to develop new units, to reflect the competencies.

Because of the diverse nature of vocational education programs and the student populations for which they are provided, particular efforts are being made to ensure the capacity to report on the key competencies in a range of contexts, including teaching situations outside of the normal classroom and work placements for students. It has also been noted that particular effort is required to ensure that the key competencies underlie the programs developed for students in particular target groups, such as those in special schools.

The areas of concern for schools appeared to be more complex than comprehension of the theoretical concepts underlying key competencies, or of identification through audit the key competencies in the subjects or patterns of study undertaken by their students. Issues of major interest included aspects of assessment and reporting of students' performance in terms of the key competencies.

In 1995 principal activities relating to the key competencies spanned several stages, commencing with their identification, proceeding through the stage of mapping competencies to specific curriculum, encompassing teaching practices and extending to assessment and reporting practices. Professional development assisted teachers to analyse current practices, assess the types of learning environment and assessment methodologies most appropriate to the development of various key competencies and helped the development of appropriate resource and support materials.

Several States reported projects addressing aspects of the key competencies. For example, the Australian Capital Territory referred to its Key Competencies Project 94–96, which seeks to ensure incorporation of the key competencies into more than 40 course framework documents, and the development of arrangements to assess and report on student outcomes in the key competencies within those frameworks.

In its cross-sector report, South Australia referred to a number of elements of its key competencies pilot:

- a special school was selected to participate in the key competencies project, leading to the production for trialling of a detailed document to map key competencies for students with disabilities at school, in work experience placement/vocational training and with agencies outside of education; and
- 19 government, four independent and four Catholic schools were involved in the Statewide pilot, a component of which was the focus and support for examining the explicit nature of key competencies from R–10, as well as years 11–12.

5.6 Initiatives in the post-compulsory school years

In addition to developments in vocational education, the schooling provided to students of post-compulsory ages also saw other efforts to re-examine and even re-orientate programs and several major reviews related to post-secondary education and certification took place.

New South Wales announced a review of the HSC in August 1995. Led by the Director of ACER, the Review was established to advise on how to ensure the State's HSC program incorporated:

- a coherent, comprehensive policy and framework across years 11 and 12;
- fair and valid assessment practices;
- clear reporting on what students know, understand and can do; and
- a clear and acceptable basis for gaining access to future learning.

While it explored options for the future, underlying the Review were principles requiring the HSC to:

- remain a rigorous, competitive, externally-based end-of-school credential;
- involve a fair, transparent and clearly explainable scaling system;
- be a reporting system that accords with contemporary community understandings of what marks mean; and
- be a broadly-based qualification, providing a quality grounding in knowledge and skills for further study while being an appropriate platform for vocational or on-the-job training.

A Green Paper outlining the Review findings will be the basis for public consultation in 1996 and for the subsequent production of a White Paper.

In Queensland, government sector initiatives to address the particular needs of years 11 and 12 students included:

- development of the School Enhancement Program to improve school-community links with respect to curriculum choice and vocational skills;

Table 35. Destination of school leavers (aged 15 – 19 years) from government and non-government schools, by labour force status/type of tertiary institution attended (a), Australia, 1990 and 1995 (per cent)

Completed year 12 in 1989

Labour force status/tertiary institution in 1990 (b)	*Government*			*Non-government*			*Total*		
	Males	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*
Employed	36	33	34	21	18	19	31	28	29
Unemployed	(d)	(d)	5	(d)	(d)	(d)	(d)	5	4
Higher education institution	35	32	33	52	54	53	41	40	40
TAFE/technical college	18	20	19	19	16	17	18	18	18
Other	(d)	(d)	8	(d)	(d)	8	7	9	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students	50,000	54,700	104,700	26,300	31,100	57,400	76,300	85,800	162,100

Completed year 12 in 1994

Labour force status/tertiary institution in 1995 (c)	*Government*			*Non-government*			*Total*		
	Males	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*
Employed	23	26	25	(d)	(d)	12	18	22	20
Unemployed	14	(d)	12	(d)	(d)	(d)	9	9	9
Higher education institution	32	35	34	47	56	52	38	42	40
TAFE/technical college	25	23	24	39	(d)	29	31	22	26
Other	(d)	(d)	(d)	(d)	(d)	(d)	(d)	(d)	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students	49,500	58,800	108,300	28,900	31,600	60,500	78,400	90,400	168,800

(a) Includes full-time and part-time study.
(b) Numbers as at May 1990.
(c) Numbers as at May 1995.
(d) Estimate too small for most practical purposes.

Source: ABS Cat. No. 6227.0 *Transition from Education to Work, Australia*, unpublished tables

- school reviews of post-compulsory curriculum, subject content and teaching approaches;
- $3.5 million being allocated to the Senior Schooling Support Program and a further $1.5 million to the Cooperative Program, to address the changing needs of senior school students; and
- provision of funding specifically to enable schools to provide programs accredited with the State Training Council or with TAFE colleges.

South Australia reported the integration of vocational education into the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) as the major state initiative and all sectors reported broadening student access to appropriate vocational education programs. Also impacting was the development by the State's Senior Secondary Assessment Board (SSABSA) of a new policy for special provisions in curriculum and assessment, an Aboriginal education strategy and the redevelopment of some stage 2 (year 12) syllabuses. A SACE improvement strategy was initiated in 1995, with a range of aspects of SACE to be considered in detail during 1996–98.

Reporting from individual sectors indicated that efforts in 1995 were focused on:

- the development in the government sector of a draft framework for the senior years of schooling to guide policies and practices in relation to senior secondary students' curriculum and learning programs; and
- the Post Compulsory Taskforce of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools completed its initial work and presented its recommendations to the commission after analysis of the future needs of senior students in Catholic schools. The Catholic sector was also involved in the Key Competencies Pilot Program and its schools are well placed to implement key competency assessment and reporting.

Table 36. Year 12 school leavers continuing on to higher education, key statistics, Australia, selected years, 1981–95

Year	Males	Females	Persons	Annual growth rate	Females (a)	School leavers as a proportion of total undergraduate commencers	School leavers as a proportion of year 12 enrolments in the preceding year
				(per cent)			
1981	19,200	19,400	38,600	-2.3	50.3	36.3	43.4
1986	23,200	25,900	49,100	7.2	52.7	41.1	42.2
1991	32,300	40,100	72,400	1.0	55.4	43.1	42.7
1993	30,400	38,500	68,900	5.1	55.9	45.3	35.8
1995	31,876	40,888	72,764	2.3	56.1	40.2	40.4

(a) Proportion of school leaver undergraduate commencers who were female.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

In Western Australia, changes to post-compulsory course structures and delivery systems continued, with the most far-reaching being the phased introduction of a new WA Certificate of Education. A key element of the design of the new certificate has been to ensure it would provide a credible indication of students' achievements in all forms of post-compulsory schooling and ensure that these were recognised for credit by post-secondary compulsory education providers and employers.

Other notable changes reported in Western Australia in 1995 included:

- the accreditation of schools' vocational programs;
- the inclusion of national modules in accredited curriculum;
- articulation within the Australian Qualifications Framework for students undertaking vocational education;
- the provision of wider opportunities for students to undertake structured work placements and better coordination of placements across the schools sectors;
- improved credit transfer arrangements linking school curriculum and TAFE courses;
- closer links between schools and workplaces; and
- greater flexibility for schools in the selection of appropriate curriculum.

Developments in the Australian Capital Territory in 1995 included extending the course frameworks for years 11 and 12 to incorporate outcomes-based assessment and reporting. The criteria for assessment and five standards of achievement for each strand were added to each course framework to facilitate this process. Assessment and reporting under the course frameworks will be trialled in schools during 1996.

Although senior secondary schooling for many students represents the completion of formal education, for many others it represents also a phase of preparation for the range of options available after schooling is completed. Activities and programs existed in 1995 in all States to link senior school students with those post-schooling options, providing a school program of more immediate relevance to students and ensuring their better preparation for participating fully in community life after the completion of schooling.

Again, the links among schools, providers of post-secondary education and the workforce were developed, particularly in the context of vocational education, but they extended beyond the formalities of accredited classroom programs, providing a range of methodologies for addressing the transition options of senior secondary students. Initiatives reported included:

- the provision by schools of extensive counselling programs to support choice of subjects, courses and post-schooling options, often linked to other career counselling activities involving industry, education providers and parents;
- a specific counselling initiative in South Australia (the Vacation Counselling Service) again provided a cross-sectoral program of assistance to students and their families at the critical time when decisions about future options were being made on the basis of the release of year 12 results; and

Table 37. Year 12 school leavers continuing on to higher education, by sex and field of study, Australia, 1995

	Males		*Females*		*Persons*	
Broad field of study	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Number*	*Per cent*
Arts	5,174	16.2	12,936	31.6	18,110	24.9
Business	7,484	23.5	7,613	18.6	15,097	20.7
Education	1,239	3.9	4,498	11.0	5,737	7.9
Engineering	6,158	19.3	1,069	2.6	7,227	9.9
Health	1,812	5.7	5,381	13.2	7,193	9.9
Science	7,295	22.9	6,876	16.8	14,171	19.5
Other (a)	2,714	8.5	2,515	6.2	5,229	7.2
Total	**31,876**	**100.0**	**40,888**	**100.0**	**72,764**	**100.0**

(a) 'Other' includes agriculture, animal husbandry, architecture, building, law, legal studies, veterinary science and non-award courses.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

- in Western Australia, Fast Track, a bridging and access program offered in 35 schools, focused on students lacking the skills necessary to undertake post-compulsory education or training and who were looking for vocational relevance in a program.

Partnership models came into existence as a means of helping develop increasingly relevant programs for senior secondary students. Schools, the community, industry and providers of post-secondary education supported programs helping students to understand and to negotiate the labour market as they developed:

- knowledge and understanding of themselves as individuals who work in paid/unpaid situations;
- knowledge and understanding of the world of paid/unpaid work;
- the capacity to analyse and plan alternatives, career decisions and pathways;
- an understanding of the decision-making processes which can be applied in making career choices; and
- the skills necessary to implement career decisions and to manage work transitions.

5.7 Beyond senior secondary schooling

Examination of the options pursued by senior secondary students following the completion of their formal schooling which is summarised in Table 35, provides insights into some of the outcomes of Australian schooling and perhaps of the relative levels of success of the transition programs operating in schools. From that Table, for example, it is possible to determine that:

- approximately two-thirds of 1994 school leavers went on to further education and training in 1995, an increase on the 58 per cent of 1989 school leavers who had taken that option in 1990;
- slightly more than a quarter of 1994 leavers were attending TAFE in 1995, again an increase from the 18 per cent evident in 1990; and
- a larger percentage (81 per cent) of leavers from non-government schools undertook further education and training in 1995 than did so from government schools (58 per cent). The percentages of both groups taking this option in 1995 had increased substantially from the respective 1989 figures.

The most notable change evident during the five years 1990–95 was the clear indication that the path direct from school to work had declined in importance as an option for school leavers, as a growing proportion of students continued beyond secondary school to further education and training. The majority of those who leave school on completion of year 12 seek further education and training as a means of entry into the primary labour market. That additional preparation provides a far greater chance of obtaining full-time longer term employment.

While 168,800 (66.4 per cent) of the 254,100 students leaving school in 1994 had completed year 12, available figures indicate that 44,100 (17.4 per cent) could be classified as early school leavers, having completed only

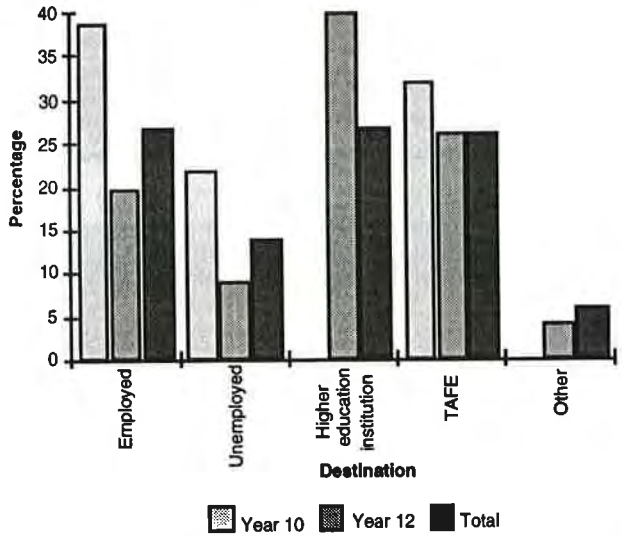
Table 38. Destination of school leavers aged 15–19 years who attended school full-time in 1994, by labour force status/ type of tertiary institution attended in 1995, by State (per cent)

Labour force status/tertiary institution in 1995	*NSW*	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Australia*
Employed	26	15	28	43	41	(a)	(a)	38	27
Unemployed	13	14	17	(a)	(a)	36	(a)	(a)	14
Higher education	20	38	29	26	23	(a)	(a)	(a)	27
TAFE	36	27	18	(a)	22	(a)	(a)	(a)	26
Other	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	10	(a)	(a)	(a)	6
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

(a) Estimate too small for most practical purposes.

Source: ABS unpublished data

Figure 17. Destination of school leavers, 1994, by highest level of schooling, year 10 or year 12



Source: ABS unpublished data

year 10. Figure 17 indicates that the post-secondary destinations of the two groups of school leavers and their options for employment were markedly different. It can be noted, for example, that persons completing only year 10 were more likely to have been direct entrants to the labour force. In addition, the year 10 leavers who had entered the labour force were more than twice as likely to be unemployed as persons who had completed year 12. While year 10 and year 12 school leavers tended to have different post-secondary destinations, males and females within those groups also showed different patterns. The ABS data already referred to indicate the higher overall percentage of boys attending TAFE (31 per cent) compared with girls (21 per cent), with that difference being particularly apparent for year 10 leavers, where 41 per cent of boys and a tiny percentage of girls were attending TAFE. Female leavers, on the other hand, were more likely to be employed (28 per cent) when compared with males (25 per cent), with the early leaver group again the source of major contrast (49 per cent of females employed, compared with 33 per cent of males). Proportionally, twice as many early school leavers from 1994 were in the workforce compared to their fellow leavers who had completed year 12.

Table 39 helps to identify those leaving school at the end of 1994 to enrol at TAFE. It can readily be seen that nearly two-thirds of that group had completed year 12 in 1994. It is also evident that almost 70 per cent of the school leavers enrolling at TAFE in 1995 had attended government schools, and that almost 90 per cent of those enrolling from years 10 or 11 were from government schools.

Table 39. Number of students who completed school in 1994 and attended TAFE in 1995

Year 12	Government	26,200
	Non-government	17,300
	Total	*43,500*
Year 10 or 11	Government	20,200
	Non-government	(a)
	Total	*22,500*
Total (b)	Government	46,900
	Non-government	19,600
	Total	***66,500***

(a) Estimate too small for most practical purposes.

(b) Includes a small number of persons not asked type of school last attended.

Source: ABS unpublished data

Table 40. Destination of school leavers aged 15–19 years who attended school full-time in 1994 and completed year 12 in 1994, by labour force status/type of tertiary institution attended in 1995 and type of school last attended (per cent)

Labour force status/ tertiary institution in 1995	*Completed year 12 in 1994*								
	Government			*Non-government*			*Total*		
	Males	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*
Employed	23	26	25	(a)	(a)	12	18	22	20
Unemployed	14	(a)	12	(a)	(a)	(a)	9	9	9
Higher education	32	35	34	47	56	52	38	42	40
TAFE	25	23	24	39	(a)	29	31	22	26
Other	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	4
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

(a) Estimate too small for most practical purposes.

Source: ABS unpublished data

Although standard errors of estimates for the smaller jurisdictions were too high to allow meaningful use of some figures, from the information presented in Table 38, there were clearly varying patterns of destinations for school leavers from different States. For example:

- there was a significantly higher rate of TAFE participation in New South Wales, where 13.4 per cent of persons aged 15–19 attended TAFE in 1995 (ABS Cat. No. 6272.0, *Participation in Education, Australia*, 1995); and
- the rate of participation in higher education for school leavers from Victoria was more than 30 per cent higher than for any other State and almost 41 per cent above the national average.

With similar limitations acknowledged with respect to the smaller States, it is possible to identify differences in destination for students from government and non-government schools.

The main differences evident from Table 40 are reflected in the relative proportions of persons attending a higher education institution (proportionally more from non-government schools) and those who were employed (proportionally far more for those from government schools).

Gender-based differences were particularly noticeable among students leaving non-government schools, with a significantly higher proportion of girls undertaking higher education. Few girls leaving non-government schools after completing year 12 enrolled at TAFE, whereas 39 per cent of their male counterparts did so.

6 Focus on gender education and achievement of gender equity

6.1 National trends

1995 was a significant year in national work on gender equity. The *National Action Plan for the Education of Girls 1993–97* (NAPEG) was at the mid-point of its implementation period. Systems were consolidating past work in the development of strategies to help teachers implement those aspects of the NAPEG which required the most significant shifts in school and classroom practice. A number of projects of national significance which aimed to support this work were conducted or completed during this time.

While working to implement policies on the education of girls, some systems also faced growing community disquiet about the educational experiences and outcomes for boys. Boys predominated in remedial reading programs and there was a concern that they were not improving at the same rate as girls in retention to year 12 and in tertiary entrance rankings. Attention also focused on significant indicators of alienation and depression, including school detention and suspension figures, truancy, violence, criminality and delinquency, suicide and other forms of premature death among young men.

A significant focus in 1995 was a consideration of the extent to which the broad strategies of the NAPEG might already provide direction for school systems wanting to work on gender issues as they impacted on the education of boys as well as of girls.

6.2 The national action plan

The NAPEG was developed by the Review Committee for the 1987 National Policy for the Education of Girls and was to provide a practical addition to the policy, offering eight priority areas for action at a school or system level, and setting out key strategies, questions for schools to use in self-assessment, and system level indicators which systems could use in reporting on outcomes.

The priority areas of the NAPEG were divided into pairs for staged annual reporting; although schools and systems were encouraged to work on all aspects of the NAPEG in an integrated way every year.

The staging of reporting sought to focus attention on each of the priority areas in turn, and thus encourage the employment of limited available resources towards changes in depth across systems and authorities. The sequence of reporting reflects, in part, systems' perceptions of those areas which remained most problematic and therefore most in need of research and professional development initiatives.

The priority areas to be reported on for 1995 are:

- improving the educational outcomes of girls who benefit least from schooling; and
- addressing the needs of girls at risk.

6.3 The Gender Equity Taskforce

In April 1994, concerns about progress in delivering gender equity to both girls and boys led to the establishment of the MCEETYA Gender Equity Taskforce which comprised senior representatives of government education systems in all States and New Zealand, as well as from independent schools, parent organisations, the education unions, women's advisory groups and other professional organisations. The Commonwealth provided funding for the Taskforce. Its terms of reference struck a balance between monitoring, reporting and advising on issues relating to gender equity.

Collaboration among States was further enhanced by the establishment of a Gender Equity Reference Group, consisting of officers responsible for gender equity or the education of girls from each State, and the Chair of the New South Wales Inquiry into Boys' Education 1994.

6.4 The Promoting Gender Equity Conference

In 1994, the Gender Equity Taskforce commenced planning for a national conference in 1995 which would enable its members and key stakeholders in each State to consider the most recent findings on gender issues.

The conference reviewed some of the progress achieved through the National Policy and the NAPEG. It also highlighted some perspectives about developing strategies to address issues in the education of boys.

Education academics and expert practitioners were invited to present papers and lead workshop discussions in response to specific topics within four broad themes:

- the construction of gender in curriculum and school practice;
- gender and difference;
- boys and girls and the costs of gendered behaviour; and
- gender and the impact of schooling on life pathways.

In addition to the papers presented at the conference, academics and expert practitioners contributed over 100 further papers. These were made available to Taskforce members, conference delegates and the public on request, and greatly extended the base of informed debate within the education community. The proceedings of the conference were printed and disseminated by the Australian Capital Territory Department of Education and Training.

6.5 Gender Equity: A Framework for Australian Schools

Gender Equity: A Framework for Australian Schools was developed by the Taskforce and the Gender Equity Reference Group as a means of providing advice to Ministers and giving broad parameters for the next generation of work on gender equity in schools.

The Framework was to extend work already undertaken through the National Policy and the NAPEG. It was to provide the theoretical and philosophical basis for the development of specific strategies by individual States and was to operate in tandem with the NAPEG (operational until 1997) which would continue to be the subject of reporting by States through the 1996 *National Report on Schooling in Australia*.

The Framework sought to extend understanding of areas of the NAPEG, which were determined as focus areas for reporting in 1995 and 1996 and include understanding gender and difference, changing school organisation and management practice and examination of the construction of gender. A notable development was the focus on understanding the construction of gender.

The principles for action which are outlined in the Framework draw on current understandings of the issues central to gender equity. They include:

- provision of equal access to education for all girls and boys;
- acknowledgement by schools of their responsibilities for achieving increased equality for girls and boys;
- development of understanding on gender construction should include knowledge about the intersection of gender and other factors, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, SES, ethnicity, isolation, disability, cultural background, religion and sexuality;
- development of effective partnerships among schools, education and training systems, parents, the community and a range of other agencies and organisations to improve educational outcomes; and
- direction of intervention programs and services towards reducing differences in participation in and outcomes of schooling for girls and boys.

Five strategic directions are identified in the Framework. These are:

- understanding the process of gender construction;
- curriculum teaching and learning;
- violence and school culture;
- post-school pathways; and
- supporting change.

Performance indicators are included within each strategic direction.

At the end of 1995, the Framework was nearing the end of the consultation period in the States. Some systems reported that the broad directions of the Framework were already being incorporated into work on gender equity policies and programs, along with those provided by the NAPEG.

6.6 Collection and analysis of data on gender and outcomes of schooling

While all systems collected data about gender and school outcomes, there was growing debate in 1995 about the categories, methodologies, analysis and reporting of data on gender. Increasingly, systems identified limitations in using data on academic achievement at the end of year 12, with one State commenting that "while these data are useful, academic achievement is not a major indicator of relative advantage or disadvantage: boys have a competitive advantage on leaving school."

A major policy initiative in New South Wales in 1995 arose from data on gender and school outcomes. The Department of School Education addressed the recommendations of two reviews of gender education, the Evaluation of Educational Outcomes of Girls in New South Wales Secondary Schools and the report on the Inquiry into Boys' Education 1994. This led to the system, in consultation with peak educational groups, beginning to develop a gender equity strategy to address the needs of all groups of girls and all groups of boys.

As part of its commitment to the gender equity focus area, the New South Wales Board of Studies established a Gender Equity Committee to examine the effect of gender on school participation and outcomes, including differences in male/female performance in the HSC over time. This study showed that female students had made very strong gains in scholastic achievement since 1982, with improvement particularly marked since 1991: of the major subjects, the largest differences were in English. These substantial improvements by females occurred in all parts of the State, in all school systems, and in both coeducational and single-sex schools within these systems.

6.7 Major projects and studies

Gender and school education sample study 1995

ACER undertook this sample study, aimed at enabling States and the non-government sector to report progress against selected goals from the NAPEG.

The study surveyed a representative sample of primary and secondary schools in Australia and provided reliable and valid national data on issues relating to gender in schools by State and by sector - government, Catholic and independent. The study sought information on system and school programs, policies and guidelines relating to gender; staff development; the views of principals and teachers on behaviour management policies and gender-inclusive teaching practices; perceptions of boys and girls on the school environment; and extra-curricular activities, including sport, television watching and computer use.

The study brief was to examine the role of peer group relations, teacher practices, school structures and policies in the construction of gender through the school environment.

In addressing the question "How do young people experience gender at school?", the study posed questions in relation to:

- the overall peer climate, including the treatment of students who were perceived to be 'different';
- sex-based harassment including, for secondary students, experience of serious physical harassment;
- handling bodily functions, including safe access to school toilets and, for secondary girls, easy access to sanitary pads and tampons;
- personal concerns about gender construction, particularly comments about body image;
- disrupting and dominating classroom behaviours, particularly by boys in coeducational settings;
- equal access to resources and teacher time; and
- consideration of gender-appropriateness in choice of subjects, extra-curricular activities and out-of-school activities.

The study questioned teachers and school principals at the primary and secondary level about policies and procedures including:

- awareness of the NAPEG and other State policy documents;
- professional development and the dissemination of materials about the construction of gender;
- processes and staff resources for girls and boys who are at risk;
- monitoring of girls and boys who may benefit least from schooling;
- policies and procedures for dealing with sex-based harassment;
- implementation of single-sex classes and activities;
- specific strategies focusing on the education of boys; and
- strategies which focus on equity issues in post-school life, including teaching about paid and unpaid work, gender issues in language, and setting priorities for the future.

An important overall finding was that attention to gender issues by systems, schools and individual teachers does make a difference. In particular, the proportion of students reporting sex-based harassment at school was clearly lower in States which had given continuous and careful attention to this issue.

Other key findings of the study were that:

- sex-based harassment is a frequent occurrence in schools, especially verbal harassment, which was reported as part of school life by 90 per cent of respondents. Boys are the most common perpetrators of harassment, both of girls and of other boys;
- disruptions of the learning process were reported by most students as happening in their school. Boys were reported two to three times as often as girls as the perpetrators;
- boys tend to undertake a much narrower range of activities than girls in both their school work and extra-curricular activities tend to be confined to sport, television and home computer use;
- most, but not all, government and Catholic systems have gender policies in place and informed schools of them. However, the existence of a policy at any one level does not guarantee its effective use at another level. For example, there was a significant gap between the principals' and teachers' perceptions on one hand and students' perception on the other of the effectiveness of behaviour management policies in schools.

The study identified key areas of schooling which need to be addressed by systems, principals and individual teachers including:

- developing and implementing strategies that will ensure that documented polices and guidelines are made available to and effectively implemented by schools;
- developing effective professional development courses on gender issues;
- monitoring outcomes for the most vulnerable groups of students (those who benefit least from schooling and those at risk of not completing a full secondary education);
- resistance by boys to school work and school leadership responsibilities; and
- for both sexes, focusing not just on a future in paid work but also on unpaid, skilled work in parenting, consuming, taxpaying, community tasks and citizenship as well as changes in employment patterns over their work life.

The Student Pathways project

In parallel with its work on the Framework, the Gender Equity Taskforce commissioned a major investigation of the national data collections to shed light on gender and disadvantage in Australian schools. The Student Pathways project was conducted by a La Trobe University team, in conjunction with ACER, with Commonwealth funding.

The project was a response to growing recognition of the need for a more sophisticated way of describing and responding to complex equity issues in schools. Tertiary Entrance Rankings (TERs), together with retention rates, had been used in media reporting and in debate in the education community as crude indicators of progress in addressing equity issues. However, it was increasingly recognised that the use of TERs in this way could pose a number of problems. It focused the debate on the 'gateway' function of senior schooling and its role in ranking, sorting and selecting students for work and further education. It did not address data which showed that even significant improvements in retention and in elite tertiary entrance scores for girls did not translate into success in later life relative to the equivalent cohort of boys.

A focus on TERs made it harder to generate public debate about other broad goals of schooling, including the role of schooling in creating an equitable, safe and productive society: issues raised in public debate about student alienation, sexual harassment, violence and suicide. Little work had been done to measure the impact of violence, bullying and sex-based harassment on students' progress and outcomes. Moreover, the media emphasis on male/female competition deflected attention from other factors associated with disadvantage, which combine with gender in complex ways: SES, race and ethnicity, and geographic isolation.

The overall brief for the project was:

> *To identify and analyse current national data collections and research projects with regard to what information they contain about the impact of gender on students' post-school pathways and how this collection might be enhanced.*

Other aims included two with shorter time-frames:

- to produce a greater awareness of the databases and studies which can provide short-term and long-term information on gender and post-school pathways; and
- to create awareness of a more sophisticated set of indicators with which to describe progress and/or

continuing disadvantage in the education outcomes of groups of girls;

and two long-term aims:

- to achieve improved liaison between each of the groups involved at a national level in the collection and analysis of student data, particularly in the context of gender equity; and
- to provide an opportunity for researchers to refine and focus the questions asked of data collections.

The project report reflects a wide range of perspectives on gender and methodological issues related to data collection. The project team reached a number of conclusions which have implications for further work in State and national data collection and data analysis, and for thinking and practice in schools and systems. Some of the findings were:

- what girls learn in school about themselves and each other and about their future, and not just what they achieve there in terms of final results, is relevant to their pathways beyond school;
- many data categories start from the standpoint of what has been important to men and implicitly construct the issue of how well girls and women rate or are able to catch up on those measures. This framing disadvantages both genders. This is reflected in how the area is reported and reviewed;
- there has been an over-emphasis on the public (as opposed to the private) experiences of women and men: issues such as child-bearing and child-raising patterns, responsibility for unpaid work and domestic living arrangements are all important gender-equity pathway concerns;
- greater attention has been given to the gendered patterns of girls' subject choices than to boys', with a continuing emphasis on increasing girls' entry into what were traditionally considered male work domains by increasing their participation in higher level mathematics and science subjects;
- major concerns arise in relation to the collection, analysis and reporting of large-scale numerical data on gender equity and more work and funding is necessary for the analysis of existing data collections, with a greater diversity of those commissioned to analyse and report on data;
- there is a lack of data enabling good longitudinal comparisons to be made and more use could be made of the existing databases of State assessment bodies;
- there must be more consideration of categories and research relating to the experiences of those who do not suceed in the system, rather than on those who do suceed;
- the use of databases to help with an understanding of ethnicity, sexuality, types of disability, and Aboriginality must be supplemented by more qualitative and focused work on these groups; and
- better statistics are needed about gendered experiences in non-university forms of further education and training, and about the non-linear educational and career pathways of mature-age students.

Who Wins at School

Two major projects provided the material for a significant examination of school and post-school outcomes which was titled *Who Wins at School: Boys and Girls in Australian Secondary Education* and was commissioned by DEET and published in 1995. The *Gender Equity in Senior Secondary School Assessment* project was conducted by SSABSA. Its extensive report provided 500 pages of detailed tables on State-by-State trends in participation and performance for the period 1987–91, and provided significant findings related to gender bias in assessment instruments. The second project, which was funded by DEET, was the *Educational Outcomes for Disadvantaged Groups* project.

Who Wins at School built on the curriculum and assessment data provided in these two large studies, to direct attention to some of the complex and sometimes paradoxical issues emerging from a multi-dimensional approach to analysing school outcomes, such as:

- SES exercises a large influence over participation and performance for both boys and girls;
- improvement in girls' retention rates in participation in once-male subject areas and in tertiary entrance scores is not universal;
- girls' greater participation rates in school and tertiary education are partly driven by labour market forces and by the structure of workplace training;
- girls' staying at school longer does not necessarily confer on them a long-term economic advantage;
- a tendency for boys to leave school earlier than girls does not mean that all boys who remain are better off than those who leave, or that they all have better opportunities than girls who stay on;

- girls can be disadvantaged by under-enrolment in higher mathematics, but boys can also be disadvantaged by over-enrolling in this subject;
- the disadvantages for boys are most evident in English, depending on family origins and geographical location. Poor performance in English weakens boys' attainments in other areas, including mathematics;
- girls do not necessarily gain advantage over boys from superior performance in English, as relative advantage from success in a subject depends on where the subject is situated in the curriculum hierarchy;
- the subjects which girls take more frequently than boys often have the weakest vocational content, or the least certain outcomes; and
- schools contribute to shaping student and teacher expectations about which subjects are relevant, which learning styles and classroom behaviours are most appropriate, and what kinds of performance can be expected of different groups of students.

The Gender and Violence Project

The Commonwealth provided $0.9 million to produce curriculum and school management materials promoting a whole-school approach to addressing gender-based violence in schools. The Gender and Violence Project developed kits for primary and secondary schools which included teaching and learning materials, professional development materials and materials for school leaders and parents. The materials resulted from consultation with all education systems and many teachers and principals contributed to their development. The kits, titled *No Fear: a whole school approach towards creating a non-violent school community* were published by DEET in December 1995.

The release of the *No Fear* kit was welcomed as a significant professional development resource, one State identifying it as "a particular support to the education of boys." A number of schools in that State also used the kit to work with their school communities, as the kit pays particular attention to the need for parent participation when addressing the issue of gender and violence.

What's Going On? Experiences of educational disadvantage

The *What's Going On?"* book and video kit was the result of a research project funded by DEET under the Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project. In developing the video and discussion materials, the research team filmed interviews with girls and their teachers about the girls' struggle to succeed in school in the face of personal, social and structural barriers, including domestic violence, poverty, rural isolation, racial taunts, family breakdown, sexual harassment and the operation of sexual double standards.

6.8 Priority areas for reporting

Improving the educational outcomes of girls who benefit least from schooling

An outcome of the Promoting Gender Equity Conference was a reframing of ideas about difference and disadvantage, including the use of the phrase 'girls who benefit least', seen to shift the locus of the problem to the girls themselves. It was noted that girls "were not 'torn between two worlds' but were negotiating the two, embracing the values of either while rejecting others that were inappropriate to their personal identity." Schools had a focus role in assisting this cultural synthesis.

In New South Wales, over 80 schools were exposed to the latest gender equity research and its overlap with the differing needs of girls, particularly those who benefit least from schooling. The State identified the need for ongoing in-service support in this area, and for a whole-school/ community approach.

In Victoria, gender equity funding to schools in the Country Education Program and the Disadvantaged Schools Program aimed to improve the learning experiences of girls, particularly those taking high-level mathematics and physics in senior secondary classes.

Queensland gave special attention to rural and isolated girls, developing specific project components to address access to services for this group. Commonwealth-funded projects focused on issues such as sex-role stereotyping, body image and eating disorders. Queensland also extended advice on sexual harassment to girls from non-English speaking backgrounds by translating brochures into a number of languages other than English, for distribution to education regions early in 1996.

South Australia provided a range of programs aiming to improve educational outcomes for girls who benefit least from schooling. Initiatives include:

- the collection of achievement data by gender, which will contribute to the identification in future of girls likely to benefit least from schooling, and the collection by gender of information about subject choice and achievement in the SACE;

- the collection of information for students with disabilities by gender which led to an increase in the use of single-sex girls' classes and groups in special schools in response to the ratio of girls with disabilities to boys with disabilities;
- the production of the Poverty and Education package of training and development materials for whole-school use;
- the production of training and development materials about girls' subject and career choices: *Subject and Career choice: issues for girls in secondary schools;* and
- a project specifically targeting girls within a program aimed at retaining Aboriginal students at school.

The State's distance education provisions also help to improve outcomes for girls who benefit least from schooling.

In Tasmania, the Department of Education and the Arts and the Tasmanian Education Consortium conducted a series of seminars entitled Class, Culture and Gender, with public lectures and specific school-based seminars. A professional development program to consider issues of inter-weaving disadvantage, including interactive workshops presented by the Aboriginal Education Unit, is planned. Emphasis will be on how curriculum is implicated in the creation of disadvantage and on improving school organisation, management and teaching to enhance the educational outcomes of girls who benefit least from schooling.

The Northern Territory implemented the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tertiary Aspirations Program (AITAP) which is a school and community-based support program aimed at enhancing not only academic achievement but also personal and cultural identity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Addressing the needs of girls at risk

Work to support girls at risk of failing to complete schooling varied considerably across the States. Some systems gave a special focus to indicators of risk, such as high rates of absenteeism. Others focused on environmental factors which can place girls at risk, including sexual abuse, pregnancy, violence and homelessness. Two systems reported initiatives to improve inter-agency cooperation relative to these issues.

In a number of States, schools in all sectors reported using the Students at Risk (STAR) Program to support students who were at risk or who might benefit least from schooling. However, all States surveyed in 1995 by the Gender Equity Taskforce reported that boys made up the majority of those identified for the STAR Program.

In New South Wales, a Young Mothers in Education Project was conducted with a professional development package for the school community comprising posters, pamphlets, a video entitled Only a Lunch Pass? and a fold-out cover with activities for students and staff. A second project, Body Image, developed curriculum materials dealing with issues of specific relevance to girls and boys in the middle years of schooling. Professional development materials on homeless students were designed to assist school communities to better understand and meet the needs of both boys and girls living in these circumstances.

The Queensland Department of Education continued work on an inter-agency project to develop and support curriculum and behaviour management practices which promote a supportive school environment for girls at risk of not completing a full secondary education. The project, targeting 12 schools across a number of education regions, aimed to:

- map the range of other agencies which are or might be involved in anti-violence education within schools (with a special focus on gendered or sexual violence);
- collaboratively develop consistent messages which the community will support regarding appropriate responses to violence;
- document the procedures which schools will apply to respond to gendered and sexual violence, particularly those which will include support or input from other agencies; and
- develop a resource kit to enable schools to involve students, parents and community agencies in the promotion of anti-violence awareness programs within their local communities.

Other initiatives in Queensland included:

- the development and delivery of professional development on girls at risk;
- participation in the Queensland University of Technology Prevention of Homelessness Among Young People Research Project Reference Group;
- the development and submission of a draft School Aged Pregnant and Parenting Students Policy; and
- provision of advice and strategies for the retention of school-aged pregnant women and young parents.

In South Australian government schools, the STAR Component of NEPS supported secondary students in 12 metropolitan and country schools who were at risk of leaving schools early with no career pathways. The schools had separate programs for girls at risk and boys at risk. Other State initiatives included:

- a girls' high school supported pregnant girls and teenage mothers by providing flexible access to and participation in schooling;
- training and development sessions for primary and secondary teachers;
- a program for pregnant girls at an adult re-entry campus;
- participation of a group of young mothers in Business Studies, Stage 1 of SACE as part of the Vocational Pathways Rural and Isolated Students' project, and in vocational placements; and
- metropolitan regional services offices directed more attention to specific groups of girls at risk. For example, a program targeting Aboriginal girls at risk was conducted by Aboriginal attendance officers and behaviour management team personnel.

In South Australian Catholic schools, programs and policy addressing the needs of girls at risk provided support for initiatives such as gender groups for mathematics lessons, protective behaviours courses, programs based on Glasser's reality therapy, and programs on assertiveness and dealing with sexual harassment.

Independent schools in South Australia were active in STAR programs, and their protective behaviours and personal safety programs involved not only students and staff but also the parent community.

In Tasmania, research focused on high school absenteeism of year 9 and 10 girls, which was twice that of boys. Interviews indicated that the reasons for absenteeism were very complex and the research formed the focus for professional development and school improvement throughout 1995.

In senior secondary colleges (years 11 and 12), research focused on retention and patterns of behaviour characterising girls at risk of not completing year 12, and the development of intervention strategies, including the appointment of a curriculum implementation officer to work with schools to implement approaches and strategies that minimise risk factors, such as fostering home-school partnerships.

A Statewide research project surveyed high schools and colleges in relation to adolescent pregnancy and retention in schooling. It aimed to develop an awareness of the need for the provision of education for young pregnant women, and to promote strategies that had been proven successful.

In the Northern Territory, the Protective Behaviours Program in Schools presented learning opportunitities for students concerning assertive language, safe and unsafe behaviours (including safe sexual practices), domestic violence, teasing, harassment and issues of stereotyping.

The Australian Capital Territory conducted professional development activities concerning girls at risk, offering courses by local agencies and field workers to school staff, managers and community members on the factors associated with being 'at risk' for girls and boys in schools, eating disorders, sexual harassment and sexual and ritual abuse.

The impact of the intersection of gender, race and class emerged as a key issue for further attention in relation to the needs of girls at risk, as well as the requirements of rural and isolated girls.

6.9 Partnerships with parents

The Promoting Gender Equity Conference provided a significant opportunity for parents from all States and from the government and non-government parent organisations to develop strategies in relation to gender issues in schools. Following the conference, the Gender Equity Taskforce developed a recommendation that systems be asked to include parent involvement in gender issues in their annual reporting.

Parent organisations have been active in the development of State and national policies relating to gender equity, and have drawn attention to school or system projects in which parent partnerships with schools have made a critical difference. A key recommendation arising from parent workshops at the conference and in subsequent input to the Framework was that the most effective work with parents is conducted by parents themselves.

A number of schools and systems conducted awareness-raising activities which included information to parents, some reporting initiatives in 1995 that specifically targeted parents:

- in New South Wales, parents have been active in commenting on departmental proposals for the

development of a gender equity strategy and in the early stages of drafting the new document;

- in Victoria, parents participated in two interactive television sessions that focused on issues for girls studying technology and science at primary and secondary schools;
- all South Australian schools work with their communities, including parents and care-givers, in partnership and in a number of ways best suited to local, family and school priorities and concerns. Independent schools reported that protective behaviours and personal safety programs had been extended to involve the parent community.

  In Catholic schools, the family is an integral part of schooling so parents are active as a matter of course in committees such as school-based gender equity committees.

  In government schools parents were involved, for example, in planning for the transition from school of girls with disabilities, in homework centres for Aboriginal students through ASSPA, in student development plans as part of student behaviour management. Parents were also involved in the State-wide consultation on *Gender Equity: a Framework for Australian Schools* and the review of single-sex schooling in Australian government schools;
- in Tasmania, attention was paid to community interest in sessions focusing on gender issues for boys, particularly in relation to implementation of the *No Fear* kit which emphasises the need for parent participation in addressing gender and violence. Staffing resources were also allocated to foster home-school partnerships to address issues for students at risk of not completing school; and
- in the Northern Territory, the AITAP included parents, students and teachers in sharing knowledge and understanding about barriers to students' participation in higher education.

6.10 Reforming the curriculum

A number of States undertook or cooperated in projects designed to achieve more equitable outcomes through curriculum reform.

Gender Issues in the Curriculum, a joint project between Victoria and New South Wales, was funded through the NPDP. The project provided teachers, principals and other key curriculum leaders with knowledge and understanding of current development on gender issues in the curriculum, through a two-stage professional development program. The first stage was conducted for 100 key curriculum people who then became a resource and support for the participants in the next phase, when a series of 12 sessions was broadcast on the SOFNet (interactive television). Over 450 principals, curriculum leaders in schools and teachers participated in 84 primary and secondary schools.

In South Australia, the Department for Education and Children's Services implemented wide-ranging initiatives to address gender issues in the mainstream curriculum to support the education of girls and boys and to promote positive gender relations. They included the following:

- the development of Quality Assessment Tasks (QATs) as an initiative to promote best practice focuses on literacy, social skills, collaborative learning, sexual harassment and understanding gender construction;
- QATs in topics in all areas of study will meet the needs and interests of all groups of students and gender will be taken into account;
- the Health and Physical Education Focus and Resource Schools Project 1994–1995 had a focus on improving gender relations;
- one of the objectives in Aboriginal studies for all students is to show understanding of the diversity and dynamic nature of past and present day Aboriginal cultures including roles of women and men;
- distance education programs through the Open Access College include teaching about sexual harassment, the implementation of the policy and grievance procedures. All distance education course materials have been reviewed, revised and rewritten to ensure they are gender inclusive; and
- materials addressing gender issues were developed including:
  - sexuality and HIV/AIDS education and classroom guides targeting both boys and girls in primary and secondary schools; and
  - curriculum materials developed with schools to address issues such as construction of gender, sexual harassment and domestic violence using the statements and profiles.

In Tasmania, gender curriculum officers worked with learning area curriculum officers to embed gender issues into

A student at Noble Park Secondary College, Vic., working with a router.

pedagogy and curriculum content. This process was informed by the draft gender equity monographs, written during the development stage of the learning area statements and profiles. There was a focus on gender issues for boys, including the use of texts to deconstruct masculinity, which was a particular focus in English teacher professional development. In planning for the Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) implementation, a planning grid was developed which included a gender perspective. Questions within each of the strands focus on issues of power, exclusion and inclusion. The grid is expected to be a powerful tool within the mainstream curriculum for deconstructing issues of gender.

Tasmanian Catholic schools have identified and are addressing discrepancies between the technical aptitude and competency of boys and girls and the greater development of girls' study habits. The number of girls enrolling in traditionally male-dominated areas is reportedly increasing, as is the number of boys entering clerical and catering classes. Some schools are researching best practice for the education of boys within the mainstream curriculum and specific behaviour management strategies to support boys' learning.

6.11 Eliminating sex-based harassment

A number of projects were undertaken at the national and State levels to improve school environments, with a special focus on reducing sex-based harassment and increasing awareness of the links between gender and violence. The most significant of these was the Commonwealth-funded national Gender and Violence Project which resulted in the *No Fear* kit.

In response to concerns about the impact of harassment on girls' educational outcomes, many schools, both government and non-government, examined options for single-sex groupings and for the creation of girls-only access times for key resources and girls-only spaces.

In New South Wales, the Eliminating Sex-Based Harassment Primary School Pilot Project was expanded to include a case study analysis, before distribution to schools in 1996. A kit, *Procedures for Resolving Complaints About Discrimination Against Students,* provides advice and strategies for developing learning and working environments which are free from discrimination and vilification. This initiative includes professional development sessions for all members of the school community and information sessions for all students.

In South Australia the government system's School Discipline Policy and support documents address the nature of school violence and the impact of sexual and racial harassment on students' experience of school and the quality of their outcomes. Personnel from Catholic schools were involved in anti-bullying and harassment policy development workshops.

Independent schools in South Australia reported that the development of grievance guidelines and policies had been successful in promoting change in staff attitudes and behaviour, which in turn has had an impact on changes to more positive classroom behaviour and attitudes of students in relation to gender equity.

In 1994, seven schools in Western Australia conducted a single-sex education pilot project, targeting girls' participation in mathematics and the physical sciences. A 1995 Curtin University report on the project found that girls in coeducational classes had less favourable attitudes and perceptions towards mathematics and science. Girls felt less able to participate, less extroverted, to have less interaction with teachers and to be more harassed by other students than girls in single-sex classes. Single-sex classes appeared to most benefit girls who were experiencing a great deal of harassment from boys in coeducational classes. However, they were of least benefit to high-achieving girls and boys, and boys in some classes that were particularly difficult to discipline. Single-sex classes provided environments in which teachers could address some of the apparent shortcomings of students' previous education. Girls' improved attitudes to science and mathematics in single-sex classes were reflected in improved performance, and Western Australia plans to extend the project to other key learning areas in 1996.

In Tasmania, a central initiative of the Key Teacher Behaviour Management Program was the inclusion of a gender perspective examining the gendered nature of violence in schooling, using the *No Fear* kit.

In the Northern Territory, an audit was undertaken of the strategies and programs in place within the Department of Education to support schools in addressing gender-based violence. A submission to establish a gender and violence project over three years was successful. The project will begin in 1996 and will focus on assisting schools to deal with gender and violence issues through the curriculum. In response to recommendations in the 1994 report, *Sticks and Stones*, which resulted from the House of Representatives inquiry into violence in schools, DEET funding was provided to support a forum to identify principles of good practice in dealing with violence in schools. The Sexual Harassment Policy, which was released in 1995, and implemented through a series of school-based professional development days, strongly emphasises the importance of teaching about harassment in the curriculum.

In the Australian Capital Territory, 20 teachers participated in a train-the-trainer course to provide the skills to implement the Preventing Abuse in Relationships (PAIR) Program in high schools, and five schools participated in trialling the *No Fear* gender and violence materials. Networks and training courses to support Sexual Harassment Contact Officers for Students (SHCOs) were also established.

6.12 Homophobic school environments

The Promoting Gender Equity Conference provided an opportunity for workshop participants from school systems and parent groups to discuss increasing concerns relating to the impact of homophobic school environments on student outcomes, including:

- harassment of boys and girls who elect subjects outside those identified as appropriate to their gender;
- a perception that reading, and subjects including literature, the arts and the humanities are 'girls' subjects' and are to be avoided; and
- violent and aggressive behaviour, particularly harassment of male students who fail to conform to local norms of masculinity.

In some States, students and their parents raised the issue of the legal responsibility of systems to ensure that student outcomes were not affected by homophobic harassment in schools.

6.13 Broadening work education

A number of school systems and schools in the independent sector gave special attention to work education, careers counselling and work experience placements, with an increased emphasis on broadening the range and mixture of experiences for both boys and girls. Preparation of students for post-school life increasingly included preparation of both boys and girls for civic, family and work responsibilities.

In conjunction with the Queensland University of Technology, independent schools in Queensland developed and trialled a careers education program for primary school students, with action research demonstrating a marked influence on redressing preconceived gender stereotypes associated with particular occupations. It was expected that this program would be widely integrated within schools' broad curriculum offering.

In the Australian Capital Territory, year 10 students participated in the Women into Trades and Technology Week, jointly funded by the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) and the Australian Capital Territory Business and Regional Development Bureau, which offered the opportunity for young women to participate for a week in TAFE courses with low female participation rates, including the electrical, construction, automotive engineering and scientific fields.

Areas identified by the States as needing further attention including gender and life pathways, and work and family education.

6.14 Changing school practices

Recommendations from the Gender Equity Taskforce and other reviews focused on the need for schools to address equity matters on a whole-school basis, involving teachers, administrators, parents and students and encompassing all aspects of school policy and practice. Areas identified by States as needing further attention include gender and behaviour management and the positioning of gender issues within the curriculum. Behaviour management is increasingly being seen by systems as a whole-school issue with strong implications for gender equity.

The New South Wales Department of School Education commenced work in 1995 on a strategy called Girls and Boys at School: Gender Equity Strategy 1996–2001. The strategy will encourage teachers to become familiar with issues surrounding the construction of gender and encourage schools to look carefully at the full range of school activities to determine which groups of girls and which groups of boys benefit least from schooling. The strategy will focus on teaching and learning issues, school climate and organisation, and parent, care-giver, community and school interactions.

Victoria commenced a two-year pilot project with an emphasis on whole-school strategies, Primary Foundations for the Future. Thirty-eight primary schools and two associated secondary schools formed clusters, supported by regional equal opportunity consultants, to develop curriculum materials and conduct professional development programs focused on whole-school issues to support cooperative and supportive relationships among girls and boys.

In South Australia, a cross-sectoral project on adolescent alienation investigated the construction of gender and the effects on schooling of socially imposed notions of gender. The government system appoints women to designated leadership positions according to Section 47 of the *Equal Opportunity Act, 1984* (SA). Single-sex secondary schools provide leadership for the system in girls' education. In independent schools, there have been challenges in respect of the management of resources to promote girls' only space to ensure equitable use. The NAPEG has refocused the need to appoint staff in independent schools who will provide appropriate education for girls and in the case of boys, develop programs which will produce appropriate changes in attitudes and behaviours. In the Catholic school system additional personnel were provided to achieve the priorities of gender equity and improving outcomes for girls.

In Tasmania, government schools address the Tasmanian Gender Equity Implementation Plan in their school plans, reflecting the NAPEG priorities. Procedures for dealing with sexual harassment incidents are clearly understood. Staff are aware of role stereotyping and take explicit steps to address this in the classroom and the administrative structures within the school. However, there was a perception that community attitudes, particularly in more isolated areas, remained a significant barrier. In 1995 there was less emphasis on specific gender equity programs and more on schools examining their policies and procedures to determine how the construction of gender impacts on teaching and learning. Principals participated in professional development in district forums to examine the role of schools in the current construction of gender. Follow-up work occurred on planning for gender equity across the breadth of the school plan.

In the Northern Territory, regional teams of behaviour management personnel worked with teachers, students and their parents in managing students' difficult behaviour, including individual behaviour management programs, group and classroom programs which support student's self esteem and the learning of new behaviours. Where issues of gender and behaviour management arose in group or class work, they were dealt with within the general context of a protective behaviours model, linked to concepts of rights and responsibilities. This model dovetails with class and school rules and school ethos.

In the Australian Capital Territory, the project, Power, Knowledge, Desire: Changing School Organisation and Management, concluded. Funded by the Commonwealth Quality Schooling Program (QSP) and the Curriculum Development Projects Program, this project required teachers and principals to research their school and management practices relative to the NAPEG.

A number of Catholic school systems reported that increasing attention was being given to behaviour patterns of boys, particularly those which disrupt the activities of the majority of the class. A number of programs addressing disruption by boys and boys' capacity to learn to deal with aggression were successfully initiated in Catholic schools. In Tasmania, Catholic schools also gave attention to school uniform and the provision of unisex physical education programs.

6.15 Improving teaching practice

Projects in all States included significant components aimed at changing teaching practice, and curriculum and behaviour management projects routinely included professional development materials.

In Queensland, the Department of Education continued its partnership with the Association of Women Educators in the NPDP aimed at the development and implementation of gender inclusive teaching kits. Teachers developed and implemented units, utilising the national statements and profiles, across all key learning areas.

In South Australia, the Department for Education and Children's Services produced and distributed *We can make a*

difference: an annotated bibliography of gender inclusive classroom texts and professional development materials for teachers R–12, and gender-inclusive materials across the learning areas, in addition to conducting professional development activities.

Tasmanian Catholic schools directed professional development programs towards the promotion of positive gender relations, and there was a focus with staff on consciousness-raising approaches to methodology, language and inclusion.

In the Northern Territory, teachers from a number of schools participated in action research to address gender issues in their classes and schools, including single-sex classes and methodology, improving classroom interactions and addressing gender issues in the curriculum. Professional development days held during 1995 focused on girls at risk and those who benefit least from schooling, putting gender equity policy into practice, gender inclusive curriculum and understanding the construction of gender.

6.16 Examining the construction of gender

A number of States developed professional development courses and classroom-based projects designed to extend teachers' understandings of the construction of gender. Attention was given to the development of curriculum and teaching practices to help students examine forms of masculinity and femininity prevailing in their school and local community, and to recognise and resist those that limited their choices and outcomes.

A number of systems, both government and non-government, reported that boys continue to dominate programs in behaviour management, early literacy and remedial reading. Many local and national research projects focused on the way in which boys' early experiences with the construction of masculinity in a school setting can contribute to problems with literacy and with disruptive and aggressive behaviour.

In 1994, both South Australia and New South Wales began to take a special interest in the education of boys. There had been pressure from interested local groups and the media had drawn attention to the improved retention rates of girls and the increasing number of subjects in tertiary entrance examinations in which boys excelled. Boys were portrayed as a new disadvantaged group needing the attention in policy and program work previously directed towards girls. For some States, the conflict implied was less, as there were already well-developed strategies in place focusing on gender equity, encouraging students and teachers to consider the limitations imposed by socially-constructed ideas of masculinity and femininity. In other States, the new focus on boys raised significant questions in relation to the limited resources allocated for girls' equity programs, and a fear that inappropriate strategies for boys would set back the cause of girls in education.

In New South Wales, the Education Minister requested the Government Advisory Committee to investigate the issue of the gender equity policies in education in that State. The committee of the Inquiry into Boys' Education 1994 received submissions from parents, teachers and principals, education unions, education administrators and researchers and interested members of the public, and visited a number of schools in Sydney and regional New South Wales. Its report, *Challenges and Opportunities: A Discussion Paper*, was the first significant response by a State government to the issue of boys' education.

A number of its broad findings were consistent with or were extended by parallel work under way in other school systems and by the work of the MCEETYA Gender Equity Taskforce. Some of those consistent findings are that:

- work must still be done to address girls' educational disadvantage and improve their chances of success in later life. Girls were still under-represented among high-level performers in subjects most strongly linked to employment in high-income, high-status professions;
- life at school remains unsatisfactory for many girls, including the experience of physical and verbal harassment by male students;
- boys' problems are inter-related with the problems girls face in schools, and strategies for boys should complement efforts made for girls;
- problems experienced by boys and men are linked to perceptions of acceptable masculinity;
- socially constructed ideas of masculinity help to narrow boys' subject choices, lead to the view that some activities such as reading are for girls and are of lesser value and contribute to patterns of violence and aggression, risk-taking and resistance to authority;
- central to all work on gender equity in schools must be an understanding of the social construction of gender, and a recognition that schools themselves help create gendered beings; and

- work on gender equity should be undertaken on a whole-school basis, including parents and the wider community. It should include curriculum reform, re-assessment of discipline policies, and changes in the way in which the education community deals with gender issues.

A significant initiative undertaken by the Queensland Department of Education in 1995 was its involvement with the Queensland Department of Health in planning and staging a successful national forum on issues such as sex-role stereotyping, body image and eating disorders. Queensland also reviewed a draft construction of a gender module for use in school communities, together with the delivery of professional development to support the use of the module within schools.

In Tasmania, several groups of teachers were in the early stages of researching and trialling programs and strategies for boys (and some girls) to contest current constructions of masculinity. All gender equity work in schools in 1995 was inclusive of the particular needs of both boys and girls, and gender curriculum officers working in districts used the principles of the draft national gender equity Framework as a basis for professional development of teachers.

In the Northern Territory, student workshops explored the constructions of femininity and masculinity, constructions of mathematics and science, and the impact of these on girls' participation.

In the Australian Capital Territory the Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform project report, *Learning to be Girls in English and Language Arts,* was provided to schools. The report examines the relationship between the construction of femininity and the teaching and learning in English in schools. It is based on the research of teachers in Australian Capital Territory and South Australian schools and contains practical recommendations about the teaching of English.

A number of systems, both government and non-government, identified the professional development of staff in relation to the construction of gender as an area needing further attention. The NCEC's 1989 *Statement on Girls* was under review in 1995 with a view to issuing a gender equity statement in 1996.

In Western Australia, five schools participated in a project, Challenge and Change: Issues for Boys, intended to raise awareness of the specific educational needs of boys and to develop program models for meeting boys' needs, complementary to those seeking improved outcomes for girls. In reported examples:

- year 8 students in one senior high school examined gender stereotypes and value systems;
- one high school provided group work on cooperation and positive peer support for year 9 boys and counselling for boys at risk in the language arts area;
- an agricultural college targeted year 12 student counsellors and prospective leaders in year 11, with the aim of overcoming aspects of the original male culture of the college;
- a remote district high school targeted boys in years 7–11 with the aim of reducing sex-based harassment and developing gender-inclusive teaching strategies and curriculum; and
- a metropolitan primary school involved 135 students in developing boys' motivation and participation in reading, exploring gender constructions in the school environment and devising strategies for addressing violence, gender and power.

The Boys and Literacy Project was a DEET-funded NPDP project aimed at improving teachers' understanding of the issues concerning boys and literacy and at developing strategies to improve literacy outcomes for boys. The project involved two-day workshops held in Brisbane, Townsville and Darwin, focusing on gender construction, social theory, critical literacy and planning and preparation of units or research. Following the workshops the teacher-researchers worked on a wide range of teaching units and research projects intended to address a range of problems some boys have with literacy. Central to the project was the development of 'critical literacies' by students: strategies which would help them recognise, reflect on and sometimes resist the values inherent in text. The project, to be published in 1996, will include a professional development package for teachers, a collection of teaching units designed by the participants, and bibliographic resources.

7 Other equity issues and achievements

7.1 National Strategy for Equity in Schooling

Although gender education and the achievement of gender equity were identified as the principal focus of reporting on gender in 1995, major efforts also occurred in providing for a range of students with special learning requirements, in line with the established goals of the National Strategy for Equity in Schooling (NSES). Endorsed by Commonwealth and State Ministers in 1994 and released in 1995, the NSES supports common and agreed priorities for strategic action and provides a means of assessing the nation's progress towards meeting those priorities. The NSES identifies six categories of student whose participation and range of educational outcomes are 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 disabilities, difficulties in learning and/or emotional or behavioural disorders;
- students at risk of dropping out of school;
- students from backgrounds of low SES or living in poverty;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- students from non-English speaking backgrounds who need assistance in the area of English as a second language; and
- students who are geographically isolated.

These six groups are not mutually exclusive and specific strategies are required to help counter the cumulative effects on students' learning of multiple disadvantage.

The NSES aims to improve access, participation and educational outcomes for students who are disadvantaged, so that by the year 2001 all Australian school students will be sharing fairly in the benefits of a high-quality school system.

In addition to the two goals of improving access, participation and completion for all identified priority groups and maximising their outcomes, the NSES identifies five priority areas for strategic action:

- curriculum and assessment;
- teaching;
- awareness and commitment among the education community;
- supportive school environment; and
- optimal use of resources.

The NSES includes a two-stage formal review process, to enable its effectiveness to be assessed and reported on to the nation. The review comprises two components:

- as part of their commitment, school authorities participate in annual reporting and monitoring of agreed performance measures which are consistent with the framework developed for the annual *National Report*; and
- in 1998, MCEETYA will conduct a mid-term review of the overall strategy, using available data. This will be repeated in 2001. Annual monitoring and reporting will provide data to enable informed decisions to be made about the nature of, and priorities for, that evaluation. The 1998 evaluation may result in the NSES being refined and refocused for further development beyond the initial period.

7.2 Equity baseline survey

An equity baseline data study, which was commissioned by DEET in 1994, aimed at providing information on the kinds of equity outcomes data currently available from education authorities in the States and from national research and statistical organisations. *The Availability of Baseline Data on Equity in Australian Schools,* which was published in 1995, indicated that although data is available on equity outcomes, problems with identifying target groups as well as incompleteness and definitional inconsistencies in the data lessen its overall usefulness. The report stressed the need for improved coordination in data collection at national, State and systems levels.

7.3 Definition of target groups

Work is under way on the development of nationally-agreed definitions of the six identified priority categories of students. During 1995 further work took place and some interim decisions were reached.

Students with disabilities, difficulties in learning and/or emotional or behavioural disorders

At the MCEETYA meeting held in December 1995, the Commonwealth was asked to establish a working group to determine an agreed definition of disability for funding and reporting purposes. It began by considering the outcomes of a Project of National Significance carried out by the Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities. That project investigated how to allocate resources for the education of students with disabilities according to curriculum need, and it was anticipated that some work on the definition of disabilities could result from it. However, the project's outcomes have not included work on national definitions relevant to this task and the Commonwealth will now establish a working group with representation from New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania to determine an agreed definition of disability.

Students at risk of dropping out of school

Research undertaken by ACER in 1995 (*Students at Risk: A Review of Australian Literature 1980–1994*) suggested that a definition of 'at risk' needed to encompass both the concern with retaining students at school to completion of year 12 and also concerns about student achievement (and noted also the possibility of including eventual employment as a factor). A further element required in definition was the age group: students of secondary school age were the focus of the ACER review.

The report drew together factors associated with students being considered to be at risk, noting the complexity of relationships and distinctions between risk factors and indicators. It concluded that it was highly desirable that the search for the best means of identifying students at risk investigate both quantitative and qualitative approaches, with the latter based on observation and experience.

An evaluation of aspects of the STAR Component of NEPS in 1995 found consensus that a definition of 'at risk' should include those judged to be at risk of not continuing in education and of not accessing vocational pathways.

Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds or living in poverty

In 1995 the report of the sample study on students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds was published. Called *Socioeconomic Status and School Education* (ACER, published by DEET, June 1995), the report proposed a definition of SES in relation to school students. The definition is based on three characteristics of students' families: educational attainment; employment and occupational status; and income and wealth.

The report also discussed various approaches to measuring and collecting data on the SES of school students, for the purposes of reporting student outcomes. The principal finding was that data on individual students (and their parents) were preferable to any measure based on the aggregated socioeconomic characteristics of the area in which students live (area-based measures). Should area-based measures be needed, however, the study found that the ABS Index of Education and Occupation provided the best match with data from individual students.

In the context of discussion about resource allocation, the MCEETYA Taskforce on School Statistics (TOSS) also considered the issue of defining and collecting data on this group of students during 1995. This Taskforce came to the view that the Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage (IRSED), with a differential weighting based on descending IRSED scores should be proposed to DEET as a basis for allocation of the Disadvantaged Schools Component of NEPS. Further discussion on the definition of this group of students is expected during 1996.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

As a definition was already in place for this group of students, no further work was required. (The ABS defines an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student as a student of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin who identifies as an Aborigine or Torres Strait Islander. This definition is used in the National Schools Statistics Collection.)

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds who need English as a second language assistance

Some progress was made during 1995 in relation to this priority group of students with the completion of the sample study on the definition of non-English speaking background. The report of the sample study is expected to be published in 1996.

The report notes the difference between students of non-English speaking background (an inherent characteristic)

and students requiring ESL assistance (a transitory characteristic). Nevertheless, the sample study provides a basis for the definition of the priority group. For national reporting purposes the definition proposed was 'those who speak or understand a heritage language other than English used in the home'.

The MCEETYA Schools Taskforce referred the sample study report to TOSS in 1995 for specific advice on implementing the recommended definition and, to enable useful reporting by sub-groups, the development of a classification of heritage languages. TOSS is expected to report back to the Schools Taskforce during 1996.

Students who are geographically isolated

A considerable amount of work has been undertaken in recent years on defining concepts related to geographical isolation, including a 1993 AEC-funded study, *Rurality and Participation in Schooling*, work by the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy and the Department of Human Services and Health (*Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Areas Classification*, 1991 Census Edition, in collaboration with the ABS) and work arising from a research project undertaken by TOSS in Queensland, Tasmania and the Northern Territory applying and testing the Griffith Service Access Frame (GSAF). The Queensland assessment of the project was positive and as a result of the outcomes in all three States, TOSS recommended the GSAF as its preferred model for allocating the Country Areas General Component of NEPS funding nationally.

In the context of resource allocation, the *Review of Methodology for the Distribution of Funding Under the Country Areas General Component of the National Equity Program for Schools* by the Victoria University of Technology also looked at various approaches to defining rurality and isolation.

In June 1995, TOSS agreed that systems should generally use the ABS definitions of 'metropolitan' and 'non-metropolitan' when reporting on the geographic location of schools, until a more satisfactory definition could be agreed on. This approach has been adopted in statistics in this report.

One of the focus areas for the 1996 *National Report on Schooling in Australia* is to be 'geographically isolated' students. It is expected that school education authorities will develop an agreed definition, so that States and the non-government sectors can report on a consistent basis.

7.4 Towards achieving equity

System and other authorities in all States continued to provide and promote a range of programs relating to equity groups identified by the NSES. The NSES goals have been adopted, examined and progressed through professional development activities in systems and school communities and embedded in the planning and documentation guiding schools.

Progress towards the NSES goals is assessable by reference to particular indicators, as has occurred in some States. Reporting from Western Australia of progress towards the NSES goals in government schools was specific, indicating that access and participation for all target groups continued to improve as a result of the wider application of technology, revised program delivery strategies and allocative mechanisms and the development of management information systems. In New South Wales, the Board of Studies' adoption of a Statement of Values, supported by equity principles, to guide all curriculum development, was cited as an indicator. It aims to ensure that curriculum and assessment fully develop the talents of all students, are of significance and value to all students and that bias is minimised.

Evidence of progress towards NSES goals also comes through considering the type of activities taking place to promote equitable outcomes. States indicated that schools are actively seeking to promote equity of access and outcomes for all their students and particularly those in target groups by such actions as:

- providing support structures which are appropriate and responsive to their specific students and help to develop the confidence to access a full range of curriculum offerings and to remain at school longer;
- offering curriculum inclusive of the needs of students attending and valued by the school community, further encouraging participation and increasing the likelihood of improved outcomes;
- ensuring that teachers are aware of the need to select teaching materials and teaching methodologies inclusive of all student groups, particularly those in the target groups who may otherwise be less likely to achieve optimum outcomes from their schooling;
- actively fostering improved communication with families, raising their awareness of and support for the educational programs offered and seeking to involve

them as active contributors to the schooling available to their children; and

- managing available staffing resources to provide optimum levels of support for students in target groups and for those teaching them.

The documenting of 1995 activities in each of the five priority areas for action provides a national perspective of progress towards the NSES goals.

Curriculum and assessment activities

There was a high degree of commitment to meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. New South Wales reported on programs in curriculum, community education and juvenile justice centre education and classroom curriculum development, home-school liaison programs and the targeting of P-12 campuses were key events in Victoria. Queensland extended the range of activities in support of this group through inclusion of the relevant perspectives in curriculum frameworks and schooling policies, as well as developing syllabus units and providing extensive in-service training for teachers. Additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies programs were offered in South Australia and elsewhere. The Northern Territory conducted programs to teach English to speakers of Aboriginal languages.

Activities to support students from non-English speaking backgrounds, for whom intensive English tuition formed the most common specific provision, were reported. However, also reported were funding supplementation, implementation of ESL Scales, a trial of a Certificate in Written and Spoken English and targeted early intervention programs.

Programs designed specifically to address the needs of students at risk and involving both Catholic as well as government schools were evident in various States. All aimed at fostering improved attendance, participation and outcomes. Curriculum initiatives to assist geographically isolated students existed nationally, but were most evident in Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. South Australia reported on a number of activities targeting equity groups and most particularly on curriculum programs for students with disabilities.

In South Australian government schools, the Social Justice Curriculum Development (SJCD) program, funded under the Disadvantaged Schools Component, supported school-based curriculum development to improve educational outcomes for students living in poverty. Resources and responsibility for decision-making were devolved to clusters of schools, with participating schools providing leadership and direction to all schools about best practice. The priorities for 1994–95 were literacy and implementing the statements and profiles. A total of $1.2 million was allocated to the program each year for 1994 and 1995, with 87 declared schools and 16 clusters involved.

Teaching

The development and trialling of a broad range of teaching strategies aimed at best meeting the needs of students from target groups occurred nationally. Schools and teachers networked to share good practice and to facilitate their own professional development. Formal programs of professional development also provided impetus to the improvement of the schooling experience for students from target groups.

Programs in New South Wales were devised to focus on strategies for teaching socioeconomically disadvantaged students, those needing ESL assistance and gifted and talented students, particularly those from NSES targeted groups.

Teaching programs and initiatives in Victoria targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. In particular, a range of professional development activities were conducted to help Koorie educators and cross-sectoral coordinators, as well as other classroom teachers, to contribute to student learning. Special teaching initiatives also sought to improve outcomes for newly-arrived students.

Queensland reported a significant teaching focus on programs for gifted and talented students, including pilots of an electronic learning centre, while another project trialled the use of electronic technology to enhance the teaching of geographically isolated students. Key initiatives in independent schools included several targeting early literacy, including Aboriginal literacy.

The three sectors in South Australia conducted a range of professional development programs with a focus on developing or improving strategies for teaching students from all targeted groups. One such project, Sharing Good Practice, which was funded under the STAR Component, enabled the findings of three school-based projects to be disseminated to teachers in all non-government and Catholic schools. In each of the funded schools there were opportunities for teachers to be involved in professional development in teaching strategies and program options for students at risk.

Northern Territory school-based programs, workshop activities and a focus publication assisted the education programs of gifted and talented students. Other key teaching activities had students with disabilities as their focus, including the continuing inclusion of children with disabilities into regular classrooms, professional development programs in the area of speech pathology, the targeted extension of physical education and the increased involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disabilities in schools in their home communities.

Other reporting from several jurisdictions indicated the extent of professional development activities with a focus on target groups. Programs ranged from inter-cultural understanding to language-focused teaching strategies and methodologies designed to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classrooms.

Awareness and commitment among the education community

A continuing commitment to communication with parents, widespread consultation and extensive community involvement in key advisory groups and committees were nationally reported as key elements of the relationships schools sought to develop with their communities.

To help achieve this goal, education authorities published a range of advisory and other materials in community languages and fostered the participation of community members in classroom programs. Schools and authorities in all States also made major efforts to encourage parents of students in target groups to participate in school decision-making.

Supportive school environment

Fostering a school environment where students from target groups feel safe and happy was accorded priority in all States. The range of initiatives designed to support this goal included:

- the translation of anti-discrimination procedures into community languages and their wide distribution among community members, while anti-racism resource materials were widely distributed in schools;
- the provision of homework and drop-in facilities, which were of benefit to students at risk and to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Victoria and in other States;

Students at Driver High School, NT, work under supervision at school on their homework.

- the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and community members in decision-making processes through ASSPA committees in South Australian schools, in 1995 representing of 95 per cent of Aboriginal students;
- strategies to involve parents as active contributors to the success of their children's education, particularly emphasised by independent schools, to strengthen the relationship between home and school by involving parents in negotiations about individual students;
- providing information sessions and enhancing parental awareness on a range of issues and supporting parents with advocacy and counselling;
- the maintenance and extension of pastoral care programs, with Catholic schools reporting such programs as strong features;
- enhancing access to schooling for students with disabilities by improving the provision of appropriate physical facilities, establishing a range of early intervention initiatives and arranging specialised transport;
- the development of extensive behaviour management programs; and
- the support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through language and culture programs in numerous remote and urban schools, as well as the Northern Territory's far-reaching AITAP, aimed specifically at improving educational outcomes.

Optimal use of resources

High levels of demand for support of target groups of students increased the awareness of the need to optimise resource use. There was also an increased sensitivity to the multiple disadvantages of some students and the impact of this situation on resource allocation.

The States sought to promote the most efficient use of resources, providing the greatest benefit to the most students. As examples, Western Australia reported that best practice in the education of targeted students was promoted through established networks and the use of technology. The Australian Capital Territory reported the start of a wide-ranging review of special education in government schools to provide advice on the most cost-effective and efficient options for provision of services to students with disabilities.

The need for special programs to continue and the success of initiatives already in place can be assessed by means of the limited reporting of educational outcomes for some target group students. For example:

- the performance of students from low socioeconomic areas tended to be below the performance of the general student population;
- test groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were reported as performing below State mean levels in literacy and numeracy, although some improvements over time were also reported; and
- students from non-English speaking backgrounds generally performed at close to or above average levels for numeracy, with improvements in literacy a result of concentrated inputs.

7.5 Expenditure on equity target groups

Expenditure by system and school authorities on equity target groups in each State included funding provided by the Commonwealth through elements of NEPS which is summarised in Table 44. There was also significant additional expenditure from within system/authority resources on initiatives to benefit target group students.

Although some States and individual school sectors have been able to provide a breakdown of the additional expenditure applied to the education of target groups, compartmentalisation of funding in this manner was not possible for all authorities. The information which follows reports in the detail available from each of the relevant authorities in the States.

New South Wales

Over $458 million was allocated to Department of School Education equity programs in 1995–96. Commonwealth specific purpose payments to the State under the 1995 NEPS Agreement formed a component of this funding.

Table 41. Expenditure (all sources), target groups, government schools, New South Wales, 1995-96 ($ million)

Special education	(a) 277.9
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	16.8
NESB students	63.5
Geographically isolated students	52.4
Socioeconomically disadvantaged students	41.5
Other equity	(b) 6.1

(a) Includes significant additional funding for initiatives not covered by NEPS, e.g. students with learning difficulties.

(b) Includes funding to support students at risk as well as gifted and talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Source: Department of School Education, NSW

The Department is committed to fairness in the distribution of resources and work commenced on a Fairer Schools Funding project to investigate more equitable distribution of funds to schools.

The Commonwealth contributed almost $22 million in equity funding to New South Wales Catholic schools and over $6 million to independent schools and special education centres. Diocesan and congregational schools contributed additional funding for equity programs from their own resources as did independent schools and associated groups.

Victoria

In 1995 the vast majority of Victorian government schools were Schools of the Future and were provided School Global Budgets (SGB). There were six components of the SGB:

- core, (79 per cent of all school funding) which comprises funding for salaries and allowances for teaching, administrative and other non-teaching staff in the core funding component, operating expenses and premises costs;

Table 42. Recurrent school funding, government schools, Victoria, 1995–96 ($ million)

	Total	*C'wealth provision (%)*
SGB components		
Core	1,804	11.7
Non-English speaking background	33	42.1
Special learning needs	30	54.7
Disability and impairments (a)	152	4.7
Rurality and isolation	21	0.0
Priority programs (b)	56	16.6
Outside SGB (c)	194	11.5
Total	2,290	11.5

(a) Funding for integration in mainstream schools and special schools.

(b) Priority programs include Commonwealth CAP funding.

(c) Includes student transport, education maintenance allowances, relief teacher costs and school support.

Source: Department of Education, Victoria

- special learning needs, which provides additional support for Victorian government schools with high concentrations of students whose readiness to learn is impaired for a range of reasons including prior educational experiences and family or other circumstances;
- non-English speaking background, which provides support for new arrivals and multicultural programs for students with a language background other than English;
- disability and impairments, which includes funding for integration of students with disabilities in mainstream schools and special schools;
- rurality and isolation, which provides support for small rural schools and extra support for schools suffering location-based disadvantage; and
- priority programs, which includes resources that are allocated to a very small number of schools. They include mobile shared resources for small rural schools, instrumental music, Koorie programs, LOTE grant, Country Areas Program (CAP), science and technology, teacher professional development, sport and physical development.

During 1995 Commonwealth equity funding to the independent sector in Victoria totalled $5 million. The Association of Independent Schools of Victoria Inc. (AISV) administered NEPS for independent schools. Total funding of $3.81 million was received and directed to assist students from non-English speaking backgrounds (26.7 per cent of total), students requiring special education support (61.7 per cent of total) and other NEPS-identified target groups.

Catholic schools in Victoria received NEPS funding as detailed in Table 44 to support the educational programs of target group students in 1995.

Queensland

Support for target groups in government schools involved significant levels of funding from State government sources, in addition to the funding provided by the Commonwealth.

Although expenditure in non-government schools also involved significant amounts in excess of those provided by the Commonwealth, only the details of the latter source are available for reporting. See Table 44.

Table 43. Expenditure (all sources), target groups, government schools, Queensland, 1995 ($ million)

Students with disabilities	16.4
Students at risk	1.4
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander students	14.0
NESB students	7.3
Disadvantaged gifted and talented students	0.3
Geographically isolated students	7.8
Socioeconomically disadvantaged students	6.9

Source: Department of Education, Queensland

South Australia

The Department for Education and Children's Services has a commitment to maximising educational outcomes for all students. This was one of the objectives informing all the Department's operation in 1995, including school resourcing. Therefore, all expenditure undertaken in support of students' learning included an implied equity component, which could not be reasonably separated from other spending. An added complexity was the high incidence of multiple educational disadvantage applied to students in target groups. Any attempt to calculate total funding for initiatives to improve outcomes for specific target groups over and above mainstream funding could at best only arrive at broad estimations.

Table 44: National Equity Program for Schools, funding by program, sector and State, 1995 ($'000)

	NSW	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Australia*
Government schools									
ESL	33,895	22,961	6,418	6,642	6,417	629	1,317	1,310	79,591
Special education (a)	15,373	13,389	10,964	5,040	4,354	1,520	567	587	51,794
Disadvantaged schools	20,744	14,601	6,966	5,181	5,865	2,572	1,252	56	57,237
Country areas	3,421	1,984	3,284	1,598	2,333	522	571	0	13,714
Students at risk	2,026	1,152	813	344	516	202	103	0	5,156
Early literacy	2,430	1,718	877	594	663	190	127	68	6,666
Transition support	501	418	475	209	185	88	209	137	2,222
Gender equity	376	536	63	245	78	0	19	0	1,316
Students with disabilities	1,626	866	700	697	407	229	152	124	4,802
Total	**80,391**	**57,625**	**30,560**	**20,550**	**20,818**	**5,952**	**4,318**	**2,282**	**222,497**
Catholic schools									
ESL	9,691	8,621	1,845	1,402	2,004	181	161	450	24,355
Special education	5,321	4,057	1,246	475	1,964	307	228	441	14,038
Disadvantaged schools	3,123	3,641	747	408	591	131	56	19	8,716
Country areas	456	290	411	9	288	29	5	0	1,488
Students at risk	572	400	206	65	136	44	31	0	1,454
Early literacy	678	601	161	90	177	24	17	32	1,780
Gender equity	23	29	0	9	8	0	0	0	69
Students with disabilities	929	430	303	166	90	19	61	32	2,031
Total	**20,794**	**18,068**	**4,919**	**2,625**	**5,258**	**735**	**559**	**973**	**53,932**
Independent schools									
ESL	540	1,019	370	140	483	41	134	4	2,731
Special education (b)	4,419	2,545	789	376	681	258	79	347	9,493
Disadvantaged schools	323	145	37	29	69	3	28	0	633
Country areas	6	23	43	6	124	0	0	0	203
Students at risk	202	142	87	33	78	36	31	0	609
Early literacy	174	131	41	18	47	8	9	0	428
Gender equity	4	32	1	0	0	0	6	0	44
Students with disabilities	930	956	304	343	232	65	32	63	2.925
Total	**6,599**	**4,993**	**1,673**	**946**	**1,713**	**410**	**318**	**414**	**17,066**
Joint govt & non-govt									
Literacy and learning	105	937	417	188	162	73	94	49	1,754
Gifted and talented	411	118	216	174	108	27	7	27	1,088
Total	516	1,054	363	361	270	100	101	76	2,842
Total	**108,300**	**81,741**	**37,515**	**24,482**	**28,059**	**7,198**	**5,296**	**3,746**	**296,337**

Note: This table summarises assistance granted in respect of calendar year 1995. Discrepancies between this table and Table 1 in the Commonwealth chapter are due to the following: (i) funds paid to non-school organisations under the Special Education Schools Support component are treated as non-government payment in this table; (ii) figures in Table 1 in the Commonwealth chapter, which are derived from accountability reports supplied by clients, include offsets from previous years' funds not accounted for in this table. Totals may differ slightly from the sum of component elements due to rounding.

(a) Includes Special Education Intervention funding managed on behalf of the ACT by the Commonwealth.

(b) Includes Special Education Capital Support funds paid to centres.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Independent schools and centres in South Australia received a total in excess of $1.0 million in NEPS grants in 1995 of which $0.54 million was provided through the Independent Schools Board. All NEPS-funded schools contributed significant amounts from their own resources, in dollar terms and in kind, to support initiatives for students in target groups. Total project costs in 1995 amounted to $1.21 million.

Expenditure in Catholic schools undertaken specifically to support equity initiatives in 1995 amounted to some $4.7 million. Key targets of this funding were special education (35 per cent of total) and programs providing ESL support (31 per cent).

Western Australia

The Education Department sought to ensure, through the provision of supplementary support, that students with special educational needs and interests fulfilled their potential by achieving the outcomes expected of all students. Programs and facilities were funded to meet those needs and help alleviate student disadvantage.

Commonwealth funding, as outlined in Table 44, made up part of the total funding applied to assist target groups in government schools.

Although other funding to target groups cannot be fully identified, some specific reporting has occurred:

- during 1995–97, special funding totalling $6 million will improve provisions for students with disabilities or specific learning difficulties; and
- in 1995, seeding grants of $983,000 were made to 110 projects addressing the needs of students with disabilities or learning difficulties.

Independent schools in Western Australia received a total of $1.88 million in NEPS grants in 1995 to assist the range of target groups, as detailed in Table 44. Catholic schools undertook initiatives to assist target groups based on the receipt of $5.26 million in NEPS grants. All non-government schools receiving NEPS funding also contributed significant additional funding towards the equity initiatives undertaken.

Tasmania

In 1995, the total funding available to NEPS target groups in Government schools was $77.6 million. Of this figure, the State contributed $63.9 million, and the Commonwealth $13.7 million. The Commonwealth contribution comprised $5.96 million in specific equity funding together with $22,000 for community languages, $27,200 gifted and talented funding, $812,000 AESIP funding and $41,394 Vocational Education and Guidance for Aboriginals Scheme (VEGAS) funding. $6.8 million Commonwealth recurrent funding was specifically earmarked within the Department of Education and the Arts' allocative mechanism for distribution to schools on the basis of socioeconomic disadvantage and rurality measures.

Table 45. Expenditure (all sources), target groups, non-government schools, Tasmania, 1995 ($ million)

	Cath.	*Ind.*
Students with disabilities	0.37	0.15
Students at risk	0.05	0.04
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander students	0.11	n.a.
NESB students	0.18	0.04
Disadvantaged gifted and talented students	n.a.	n.a.
Geographically isolated students	0.12	n.a.
Socioeconomically disadvantaged students	0.26	0.01

n.a. not available.

Source: Department of Education and the Arts, Tasmania

Expenditure on equity programs in non-government schools in Tasmania in 1995 is summarised in Table 45.

Northern Territory

The relative allocation of resources to equity target groups in 1995 was difficult to determine due to those groups being dispersed throughout all schools. In addition, there is a large student population suffering from multiple educational disadvantages and this group has a profound effect on the way resources are allocated and standards set. For example, all geographically isolated students in the Northern Territory are also socioeconomically disadvantaged students and most are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and students from non-English speaking backgrounds. The Northern Territory therefore cannot report accurately on the level of resources to equity target groups.

Australian Capital Territory

Reporting on behalf of government schools in the Australian Capital Territory indicated that approximately $27 million was spent in 1995 to support the needs of students in target groups. Individual program expenditure was as indicated in Table 46.

Table 46. Expenditure (all sources), target groups, government schools, Australian Capital Territory, 1995 ($ million)

Students with disabilities	12.6
Students at risk	8.7
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	0.7
NESB students	3.8
Disadvantaged gifted and talented students	0.3
Geographically isolated students	0.04
Socioeconomically disadvantaged students	0.5

Source: Department of Education and Training, Australian Capital Territory

Expenditure on equity projects in Catholic schools in the Australian Capital Territory in 1995 was $1.25 million, of which more than 35 per cent was directed to assisting students from non-English speaking backgrounds, while more than 40 per cent was directed towards helping special needs students.

7.6 Access and participation of students in target groups

Of the targeted student groups supported by equity funding and specially developed programs, currently only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can be clearly identified and reported on in terms of nationally agreed definitions and data collection schedules. Tables 6 and 7 detail enrolment data for this group. In terms of the other target groups, significant progress has already been made in achieving of greater compatibility of data among the States.

In New South Wales, there were 22,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in government schools in 1995, an increase of 5.3 per cent since 1994. The group represented 3 per cent of all enrolments. There were 1,817 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in non-government schools.

Since 1986 enrolments of students from non-English speaking backgrounds in government schools have increased by 29 per cent compared with an increase of only 0.2 per cent in total school enrolments. Schools enrolled the equivalent of 148,148 full time students of non-English speaking backgrounds. This represented 19.6 per cent of all government school enrolments compared with 18.7 per cent in July 1994. There were large regional differences in enrolment of students of non-English speaking backgrounds. Nearly 93 per cent of these students attended school in one of the four Sydney metropolitan regions, although those regions have only 56 per cent of total enrolments in government schools.

Some 129,000 students in all New South Wales schools were assisted through funding provided under the ESL Component.

Approximately 6,000 students participated in the New Arrivals Program in 1995. One-third of these students was catered for in 17 secondary Intensive English Centres while the remainder received intensive English support in their local schools.

Some 174,000 students disadvantaged by socioeconomic circumstances were assisted through funding provided by the Disadvantaged Schools Component. Over 31,000 students participated in programs funded under the Country Areas General Component.

Reporting from Victoria indicated that 3,382 Koorie students were enrolled in government schools in 1995, an increase of 297 students from 1994. From this target group 318 students attended non-government schools. This group represented 0.7 per cent of all government school enrolments and 0.12 per cent of enrolments in non-government schools.

20,654 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in government schools in Queensland and 2,837 were enrolled in non-government schools. These totals represented 5.1 per cent of government school enrolments and 1.9 per cent of non-government enrolments. Information about the achievement levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in year 12 subjects indicated that they were under-represented in the 'Very High' achievement category.

Figures also showed that 30,945 geographically isolated students were enrolled at government schools (7.6 per cent of all students) and 4,112 were enrolled in non-government schools (2.4 per cent of all students).

The 4,982 students from non-English speaking backgrounds receiving support made up 1.2 per cent of enrolments in government schools, while the 5,375 students in non-government schools receiving that support comprised 3.6 per cent of all enrolments.

State reporting indicated that 53,086 students in the government sector (13.1 per cent of all students) received support calculated according to their low SES.

South Australia reported that 4,936 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in government schools in 1995, representing 2.8 per cent of all enrolments. Enrolments in non-government schools totalled 348 students or 0.5 per cent of all enrolments.

ESL support was provided under the ESL General Support Program in 344 government schools to 8,741 students and under the New Arrivals Program support was provided in ten government schools to 1,069 students. In South Australian independent schools, 833 students in 38 schools were eligible for ESL support under the ESL General Support Program and New Arrivals support was provided for four students in three schools. In Catholic schools in South Australia, 3,136 students in 33 schools were supported under the ESL General Support Program and 32 students in 12 schools were eligible for New Arrivals support.

Details of participation by target group students in Western Australia indicate that 13,002 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in government schools, with 3,158 receiving extensive English language assistance under the Critical Steps program. There were 2,752 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in non-government schools.

In government schools, 50,060 students received extra support because of low SES backgrounds (22.4 per cent of enrolments). A further 21,612 students were supported because of geographical isolation, 4,545 as students with disabilities, 418 as students at risk, and 3,646 as ESL students. Commonwealth support for the Teaching TAGS resource was conditional on provision being made for those from NEPS target groups among some 2,200 gifted and talented students.

A total of 12,531 students attending Catholic schools were assisted by NEPS projects in 1995, including 4,918 receiving assistance through the General Support and New Arrivals ESL Components, 5,572 based on low SES backgrounds, 1,797 because of their geographical isolation and 244 as students at risk.

Tasmania reported on the sizes of the various equity target groups in government and Catholic schools.

Of the students attending government schools 744 were students with disabilities, 600 were reported as students at risk and 261 were from non-English speaking backgrounds and receiving ESL assistance. Each of these groups represented less than one per cent of the total student population. The 18,273 students attending disadvantaged schools (25.4 per cent), the 5,814 geographically isolated students (8.1 per cent) and the 2,972 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (4.0 per cent) made up significantly larger proportions of total government school students.

Of total enrolments in Catholic schools, 105 students were deemed to be at risk, 271 were from non-English speaking backgrounds and receiving ESL support, 220 lived in geographical isolation, 1,198 came from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds and 341 were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The last two groups represented 8.9 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively of the total student population in Catholic schools.

Northern Territory figures showed there were 16,739 students enrolled at government schools supported through the Disadvantaged Schools Component, 11,290 at schools supported by CAP funding and 3,028 students assisted by ESL funding support. In addition, staff funded under the STAR Program worked with 160 students and students with disabilities funding enabled 161 students to be included in mainstream educational activity.

Within Catholic schools in the Northern Territory, 290 students were enrolled at schools assisted under the Country Areas General Component, 3,914 under the Disadvantaged Schools Component and 524 students received support under ESL.

Independent schools received funding under the Disadvantaged Schools Component and four schools received ESL General Support.

The Australian Capital Territory detailed government school enrolments in terms of the target groups. There were 3,188 students of non-English speaking backgrounds who received assistance (8.9 per cent of all students), 1,536 students with special needs (3.8 per cent of students), 643 students enrolled in schools receiving Disadvantaged Schools Program funding (1.6 per cent of students) and 509 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (1.3 per cent of students).

Catholic schools supported 1,716 students from non-English speaking backgrounds with ESL, 109 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 64 students with special needs and 157 students attending a school assisted by the Disadvantaged Schools Program.

7.7 Attendance and retention of students in target groups

Information on school attendance and retention for target group students was not generally reported by the States as it was not centrally aggregated.

The attendance information which has been made available is included below:

- in New South Wales, referrals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-attenders to a program designed to restore regular attendance remained proportionately higher than for other equity target groups, although effective liaison was helping to redress this imbalance;
- in Western Australia, 63 per cent of those targeted by STAR programs in government schools maintained or improved their records of satisfactory attendance; and
- Tasmania provided information about attendance of some target groups at government and Catholic schools, which indicated identical trends. The information provided indicated significantly higher rates of absence from school for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and for those who were socioeconomically disadvantaged. Although attendance information about students with disabilities was not available for mainstream schools, students in special schools had a significantly higher average rate of absence than did students in other types of school.

A valuable overview of attendance rates of students in the target groups as against those of other students resulted from a sample survey undertaken in Catholic schools in South Australia. The sample involved 16 per cent of secondary schools and 12.5 per cent of primary schools, although the primary sample provided insufficient data to calculate the attendance rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students or for those from non-English speaking backgrounds. The results of the sample indicated that:

- students with disabilities had marginally better attendance rates than other students; this outcome applied to both primary and secondary levels and to male as well as female students;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at secondary level displayed attendance rates equal to or marginally better than other students;
- students from non-English speaking backgrounds who were enrolled at secondary level had significantly better attendance rates than students not in that target group;

Table 47. Year 12 completion rates (a), by locality (b), by State and sex, 1995 (per cent)

	Metropolitan			*Non-metropolitan*			*Total (c)*		
	Males	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*
New South Wales	64	72	68	51	67	59	60	71	65
Victoria	64	80	72	51	72	61	61	78	69
Queensland	62	71	66	59	69	64	61	70	65
South Australia	73	85	79	61	83	72	70	85	77
Western Australia	58	65	61	47	56	51	55	63	59
Tasmania	75	92	84	54	69	61	62	79	70
Northern Territory	54	61	58	29	41	35	40	50	45
Australian Capital Territory	78	82	80	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	78	82	80
Australia	**64**	**75**	**69**	**53**	**69**	**60**	**61**	**73**	**67**

n.a. not applicable.

(a) Figures are estimates only. They express the number of year 12 completions (year 12 certificates issued by State education authorities) as a proportion of the estimated population that could attend year 12 in that calendar year.

(b) Metropolitan and non-metropolitan. Metropolitan includes Darwin, Townsville/Thuringowa and Queanbeyan.

(c) These totals differ slightly from the State totals in Table 2 because there are postcodes which do not attract an SES value. These include postcodes at GPOs, postcodes indicating roadside mailboxes, and developing areas which have recently been given postcodes.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA (derived from data provided by State education authorities and the ABS)

- among students from low SES backgrounds, primary students showed marginally worse attendance rates, while secondary students showed better attendance rates than their peers; and
- secondary students who were considered at risk had significantly worse rates of attendance than other students, with the difference being much greater for males than for females.

Another means of judging the success of the schooling process for target group students is to assess the apparent retention rates for members of target groups, particularly relative to the rates for non-target group students. (The apparent retention rate is the number of students in year 12 in a particular year as a proportion of the cohort which began secondary school some years earlier).

Information on retention to year 12 of students from target groups could not be reported in sufficient detail to enable national analysis. Specific examples of retention rates as reported by the States follows:

- in New South Wales, apparent retention rates for students in schools receiving Disadvantaged Schools or CAP support have decreased since 1994, as they have for all students. Apparent retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students showed a different pattern. For that group, the year 7–12 rate increased by 4.8 per cent in 1995 to a new high of 35.2 per cent. The year 7–11 rate remained stable and the year 7–10 rate decreased by 2.1 per cent;
- information reported from Queensland indicated that the apparent retention rate from year 8 to year 12 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 40 per cent in 1995. Available data also showed that 48 per cent of Aboriginal students enrolled in year 10 in 1993 were still at school in year 12 in July 1995;
- in Western Australia, almost 90 per cent of students targeted as being at risk were expected to continue at school or enter an alternative education or training program in 1996; and
- Tasmanian Catholic schools reported a continued improvement in the retention of targeted students to completion of year 12. In addition, based on a survey of student intentions, 67 per cent of year 10 students targeted as being at risk in 1995 planned to continue their education in 1996. Of concern, however, is that only 33 per cent of Aboriginal students in that group intended to continue at school.

7.8 Completion to year 12 of students in equity groups

The completion rate is the number of students receiving a certificate at the end of year 12 in a particular year, as a proportion of the potential year 12 population in that year. The general pattern of completion rates is consistent with apparent retention rates, but does not show the recent decline of apparent retention rates.

Data collected by the States do not permit a national perspective on completion to year 12 by students in NEPS target groups. However, the information presented below with respect to completion by location and SES provides a perspective closely allied to the criteria identifying two of the target groups.

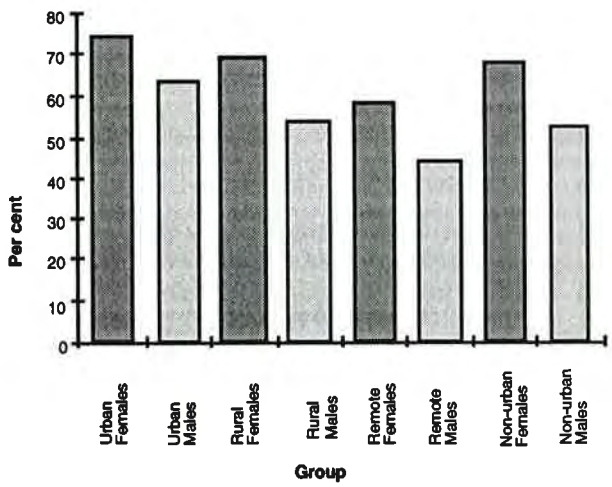
Completions by gender

In 1995, 67 per cent of the potential year 12 population received a year 12 certificate. This percentage is referred to as the year 12 completion rate. The overall completion rate for females was higher than for males (73 per cent versus 61 per cent) although the difference varied across the States.

Completions by location

Information has also been assembled to report on the levels of student completion in 1995 according to location (see Table 47).

Figure 18. Year 12 completions, selected groups, 1995



Source: Commonwealth DEETYA (derived from data provided by State education authorities and the ABS)

From Table 47 it is evident that students from rural and remote locations tended to complete year 12 at lower rates than did urban students. Non-urban rates tended to be around ten percentage points lower than urban rates.

On average, the completion rate for rural students at 61 per cent was midway between urban at 69 per cent and remote at 52 per cent. However, this masked a lack of uniformity of urban and non-urban completions across the States. Some States, such as Queensland and South Australia, tended to have similar completion rates in urban and non-urban areas, whereas others, such as Tasmania and the Northern Territory, showed divergent rates for urban and non-urban areas. The remaining States tended to mirror the national pattern.

Students living in the capital cities had the highest completion rates at 71 per cent. Other metropolitan areas tended to have completion rates more similar to rural completion rates, with their inclusion in urban completion rates having the effect of lowering the overall rate by around two percentage points.

Table 47 also provides the base information from which Figure 18 has been compiled, as an illustration of the intersection of gender and location on completion rates. That Figure clearly indicates that for each of the locality categories, the completion rates for females are higher than for their male counterparts. It makes particularly clear that around half (47 per cent) of non-urban males, (those living outside major cities) did not complete year 12. The comparable rate for their female counterparts was around 30 per cent.

Completions by socioeconomic status

Table 48 indicates that students from high SES backgrounds tended to complete year 12 at a higher rate than did students from low and medium SES backgrounds. In 1995, around 80 per cent of students from high SES backgrounds completed year 12 compared with around 60 per cent of other (medium and low SES) students.

The pattern of completions across SES deciles was not a continuum of gradually increasing completion but can be represented as a baseline from the first decile to the seventh decile and a series of steep steps up to the top decile.

Table 48. Year 12 completion rates (a), by SES (b), State (c) and sex, 1995 (p) (per cent)

	Low socioeconomic status deciles			*High socioeconomic status deciles*			*Total*		
State	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*
New South Wales	56	65	60	73	81	77	60	71	66
Victoria	52	69	61	71	87	79	61	79	70
Queensland	56	66	61	72	79	76	61	71	66
South Australia	61	80	70	86	95	90	70	85	77
Western Australia	43	51	47	65	72	68	53	61	57
Tasmania	52	67	59	87	105	96	62	78	70
Northern Territory	18	18	18	(d)	(d)	(d)	34	41	37
Australian Capital Territory	(e)	(e)	(e)	79	85	82	78	82	80
Australia	**53**	**65**	**59**	**73**	**83**	**78**	**61**	**73**	**67**

(p) Preliminary - subject to finalisation of 1995 estimated resident population.

(a) These figures are estimates only. They express the number of year 12 completions (year 12 certificates issued by State education authorities) as a proportion of the estimated population that could attend year 12 in that calendar year.

(b) The IRSED has been used to calculate SES on basis of postcode of students' home addresses. 'Low' SES is the average of the lowest three deciles and 'high' is the average of the top three SES deciles.

(c) For the completion rates presented in this Table, population deciles are calculated from the national 15–19 year old population. State SES completion rates are based on national population deciles. For example, first decile rates are calculated for those postcode districts in a State which are part of the first national decile.

(d) On the basis of this index, Northern Territory has no high SES deciles.

(e) On the basis of this index, Australian Capital Territory has no low SES decile.

(f) Some States have higher TAFE participation rates which affects their year 12 completion rates.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA (derived from data provided by State education authorities and the ABS)

Looking at the pattern of completions by SES and gender, it is apparent that the difference between male and female completion rates is affected by SES. Thus, the difference between completion rates for low SES males and females tended to be larger than the difference between high SES males and females. It was only at the highest SES decile that the completion rates of males and females tended to converge. However, on average and in most States, even at the highest SES decile, females retained their advantage.

Trends over time

Tables 49 and 50 provide completion rates by locality and SES from 1991 to 1995, during which time overall completion rates declined slightly.

Most of this decline is attributable to the falling completion rate in non-urban locations. For example, in rural areas (which contribute most to the non-urban rates) completion rates for 1995 at 61 per cent were down from 68 per cent in 1991.

In terms of SES, the decline appears to be evenly distributed over all SES deciles.

Transition

While it has not been possible to present a comprehensive view of the transition of target group students to post-completion options, reporting from New South Wales with regard to the destinations of 1994 year 12 students provides some insight.

TAFE enrolments in New South Wales tended to more closely reflect the proportion of equity groups in the year 12 population. However, a check of school leavers among university enrolments in New South Wales in 1995 showed clearly that certain equity groups in that State were under-represented:

- the transition rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from year 12 to university was 16 per cent, compared with 35 per cent for all students. (The true gap is wider, due to the substantially lower retention rates of students in this target group);
- students from non-metropolitan areas represented only 16 per cent of school leavers commencing university, although they comprised 24 per cent of school leavers; and
- university enrolment rates for school leavers from higher socioeconomic areas continued to be significantly higher than from other areas.

7.9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

ABS national survey

The ABS 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey provided detailed information on the education and training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. The findings concluded that:

- school participation rates declined significantly with age. For 14 year olds the rate was 98 per cent, while for 17 year olds the rate had fallen to 31 per cent (in contrast to 60 per cent for all Australian students in 1994);
- among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders with children attending primary or secondary school, 86 per cent were satisfied with their children's education, 84 per cent were made to feel welcome at their children's school and 39 per cent were involved in decision-making at the school; and
- similarly, most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (85 per cent) aged 13 years and over were happy with the education they were receiving. A higher proportion (10 per cent) of students attending government schools were dissatisfied with their education than were students attending non-government schools.

In terms of access to school, most households were within ten kilometres of the nearest pre-school (93 per cent), primary school (95 per cent) and secondary school providing classes up to year 10 (82 per cent). However, the level of access to secondary schools providing classes up to year 12, to TAFE colleges and to universities was lower.

The level of access to educational institutions was lower in rural areas than in capital cities and other urban areas, particularly for secondary schools, TAFE colleges and universities. Fourteen per cent of households were over 100 kilometres from the nearest secondary school providing classes up to year 10 and 32 per cent were over 100 kilometres from the nearest secondary school providing classes up to year 12.

National Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education

The MCEETYA meeting of December 1995 supported the general direction of the Final Report of the MCEETYA Taskforce on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples'

Table 49. Year 12 completion rates (a), by SES (b) and sex, 1991–1995 (p) (per cent)

	Low SES status deciles			*High SES status deciles*			*Total*		
Year	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*
1991	55	64	60	75	87	81	63	75	69
1992	55	65	60	74	84	79	64	74	69
1993	57	66	61	74	85	80	64	75	69
1994	55	66	60	74	85	79	63	74	68
1995 (p)	53	65	59	73	83	78	61	73	67

(p) Preliminary - subject to finalisation of 1995 estimated resident population.

(a) These figures are estimates only. They express the number of year 12 completions (year 12 certificates issued by State education authorities) as a proportion of the estimated population that could attend year 12 in that calendar year.

(b) The ABS's IRSED has been used to calculate SES on basis of postcode of students' home addresses. 'Low' SES is the average of the lowest three deciles and 'high' is the average of the top three SES deciles.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA (derived from data provided by State education authorities and the ABS)

Table 50. Year 12 completion rates (a), by locality (b) and sex, Australia, 1991–1995 (per cent)

	Urban			*Rural*			*Remote (c)*			*Total*		
Year	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Males*	*Females*	*Total*
1991	66	77	71	61	76	68	50	64	57	63	75	69
1992	65	74	70	61	74	67	52	65	58	64	74	69
1993	66	76	71	60	74	67	54	64	58	64	75	69
1994 (r)	66	76	71	57	71	64	51	65	58	63	74	68
1995 (p)	64	75	69	54	70	61	45	59	52	61	73	67

(r) Revised.

(p) Preliminary - subject to finalisation of 1995 estimated resident population.

(a) These figures are estimates only. They express the number of year 12 completions (year 12 certificates issued by State education authorities) as a proportion of the estimated population that could attend year 12 in that calendar year.

(b) Definitions of urban, rural and remote in this table are based on Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Areas Classification (1995) developed by the Department of Primary Industries and Energy. Urban includes Darwin, Townsville/Thuringowa and Queanbeyan.

(c) Remote comprised approximately 3 per cent of the 15–19 year old population in 1995 and, as a result, relatively small changes in the estimated resident population or in the numbers of completions annually can lead to apparently substantial changes in the completion rates from year to year.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA (derived from data provided by State education authorities and the ABS)

Education. The Taskforce had been established at the end of 1994 to develop priority areas for action, implementation guidelines and strategy frameworks arising from the National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

7.10 Achieving equity goals for students with disabilities

Four States reported on activities undertaken in 1995 to improve the equity of the educational outcomes of students with disabilities.

In New South Wales, arrangements were made to ensure that students with special needs could access the School Certificate credential through generic curriculum frameworks. Students with special education needs receive a School Certificate Testamur, a Record of Achievement and a Student Profile which is based on generic life skills courses developed by the Board of Studies for each key learning area.

The Board also ordered a review of existing curriculum documents to identify areas that require new support material to meet the needs of the full range of students in each key learning area. The initial focus of this review was in K–6 English and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. A primary curriculum pilot project

developed two support documents for K–6 English targeting groups of students with specific needs.

The Early Learning Program of the Department of School Education continued to promote effective early learning for students with disabilities or severe difficulties in learning or behaviour in regular classrooms. This program involved support to teachers, school executives and families of these students in their transition from early childhood and early intervention settings to school. Ten coordinators worked across districts to support this process.

Thirty additional teacher positions supported the transition from school to further education, training and/or employment for students with disabilities. These additional positions focused on assisting students with high support needs across a range of settings and complemented provisions already available in this area. Teachers from all systems participated in NPDP-funded training to improve the transition process for students.

A variety of strategies were employed by independent schools to integrate students with disabilities; including individualised programs and small groups for learning. The number of students with disabilities integrated in mainstream schools increased by 29 per cent.

Victoria participated in a cross-sectoral project funded by the National Priorities Element of NEPS to assist with transition of students with disabilities from mainstream schooling to further education, employment and adult life. Three metropolitan and three country intersystemic school clusters were involved.

Some of the initiatives taken in government schools in Queensland to achieve equity goals for students with disabilities were:

- the making of special provisions in schools, using Shaping the Future funding, for students to participate in the Year 6 Test;
- the use of Special Initiatives Funding, which totalled $4.4 million in 1995, to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities in primary and secondary schools through the provision of 70 additional teachers and 1,440 additional teacher aide hours per week;
- the creation of additional positions to support autistic students and to establish a Statewide network for educational provisions for hearing/vision impaired students;
- continuing procedures which have seen more than 5,000 students pass through the ascertainment process to identify educational needs; and
- the establishment of specialised support transitional arrangements to ensure a coordinated government approach and consistency in program delivery.

In 1995 Queensland Catholic education continued to increase enrolments of students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. Ascertainment guidelines were monitored and improved as meetings of special needs support officers from each diocese were held to support the ascertainment process. Mainstreaming itself caused a number of difficulties, given that the level of support available to classroom teachers remained below an acceptable standard.

Because enrolments were increasing at the same time as anti-discrimination actions were mounted against a small number of Catholic schools, enrolment procedures guidelines were developed and distributed around Catholic schools in Queensland. These guidelines help to ensure that the support procedures for students with disabilities are developed in response to the specific needs of the individual student.

Most diocesan Catholic Education Offices reported a major shortfall in funding required to address adequately the burgeoning costs in meeting the needs of the special needs students. This shortfall was reflected in the caution exercised by schools at the point of enrolment of special needs students, and in the far from satisfactory allocation of human and material resources to support these students. So often only the students at the extreme end of the range of identified needs received this limited support.

Independent schools in Queensland are committed to the philosophy of integration of students with disabilities in the regular classroom. Students with severe or multiple disability require both human and physical resources which far exceed support funding through Commonwealth government programs for schools. Despite this, the individual education programs are developed to ensure that all enrolled students in independent schools have access to quality education programs. Students with disabilities are monitored to ensure that they are part of a determined inclusive school curriculum and environment.

Achievements in all three schooling sectors in South Australia stemming from the input of NEPS funds to improve the transition from school for students with disabilities included:

- training and development for cluster schools involved in the project (in 1995, 30 schools from the three schooling sectors). Six transition support officers were appointed to work in cluster arrangements, two of which were in the country regional area;
- the incorporation of transition plans into the negotiated curriculum plan (or its equivalent in independent and Catholic schools);
- the development of materials to assist schools in making links with other agencies to support the transition of students with disabilities;
- an evaluation of teachers from schools involved in the first stages of the transition support project: this was compiled and sent to participating schools;
- the collection of data from student interviews from the first stage of the transition support project for compilation into an evaluation report;
- most students with disabilities who had attended the commercial kitchen-hand course at TAFE have had success with employment pathways;
- the development of service plans with non-school agencies which provide support to schools for students with disabilities;
- the development of a Statewide process for the distribution of resources to students with disabilities on the basis of curriculum access and participation;
- the outsourcing of educational psychology services in country areas; and
- the review and trialling of a set of negotiated curriculum plan proformas, pre-school to year 12+ to assist teachers in planning and programming curriculum for student with disabilities. Planning for each level of education included transition arrangements.

On behalf of independent schools in South Australia, the Independent Schools Board Special Education Network Team facilitated a variety of professional development opportunities for personnel in independent schools. The focus of these activities was to:

- provide information about specific types of disability;
- assist all school personnel in understanding special education policy and their role in the enrolment and ongoing support of students with disabilities;
- support teachers in the development of curriculum for students with disabilities at various levels of schooling. There was a particular emphasis on assisting schools with the development of curriculum for the SACE; and
- assist teachers in networking between schools.

The elements targeted under the NEPS agreement for South Australian Catholic education relating to the National Strategy for Equity in Schooling were school support, capital support and the non-school organisational component.

Through these elements access and participation support has been provided in the areas of curriculum, personal and health care, and social and behavioural intensive support. Visiting teacher support has been provided; in-service training in specialist methodology has been made available; advice has been provided concerning appropriate technology; and positive parent/school liaison has been developed.

A focus of the special education program was the creation of a database on the educational outcomes and experiences of students with disabilities. This database will enable reporting to be made on student needs, in conjunction with targeted action plans, and provide a basis for informing families on student progress and meeting accountability requirements.

Professional development initiatives for teachers was another focus priority in Catholic schools and activities were conducted to assist teachers, support groups and school assistants.

In the Australian Capital Territory support for students with disabilities in regular settings in government and non-government schools included itinerant teaching services, special teachers' assistants, building modifications and professional development for principals and staff.

The Integration Program in government schools provided support for students with disabilities moving from special to mainstream settings. This included the *Learning in New Classes (LINC) Team.* A report on the Integration Program was released in 1995. The recommendations of the report are being considered in the context of a wider review of all special education services to be carried out in 1996.

The Department of Education and Training employed two school transition liaison officers to provide students with disabilities in government and non-government schools with information on agency support and post-school options. Initiatives undertaken in 1995 included updating a directory of services; supporting schools and students with transition, career path and skills planning; developing the

ACT Work Experience Guidelines on support for students with disabilities; organising a display at Careers '95; and facilitating special needs meetings for high school and college teachers. The program assisted students in transition from college to the CIT. A project linking key competencies to work experience was trialled in 1995.

In Catholic schools progressional development programs included: Strategies for Managing Inclusive Classrooms offered as a joint initiative of the Catholic Education Office, University of Canberra, Department of Education and Training and Australian Association of Special Education (ACT Chapter) with NPDP funding; Transition Education offered through Macquarie University with NPDP funding; and a certificate course on Working with Students with Special Needs for special needs teachers' assistants.

8 Focus on literacy

8.1 Introduction

In 1995, student outcomes in literacy and related areas is the agreed focus for reporting relative to the national goals particularly concerned with aspects of student learning and with the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding.

At present there are no nationally comparable data available by which to measure learning outcomes for students in Australian schools. Significant levels of time and resourcing have been devoted in the States to measuring outcomes, but the results to date provide neither a comprehensive picture of student outcomes across all learning areas, nor the basis for a meaningful national overview.

8.2 English literacy survey

Recognising the lack of reliable, up-to-date national baseline data on the literacy performance of Australian school students, the Commonwealth, with the support of the States, is funding the National School English Literacy Survey, to take place in 1996. The survey aims to assess the literacy performance of a random sample of 4,500 Australian students in year 3 and the same number in year 5, with over-sampling of indigenous students. Data on reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing is being collected, as well as information on students' backgrounds and the learning environments to which they have been exposed.

The methodology for the survey uses assessment by teachers of the performance of a sample of their students on the basis of portfolios of student work. A portfolio consists of a set of common tasks and examples of students' best work. Specially trained external assessors support teachers in their assessment. The methodology was successfully trialled in government and non-government schools across Australia during 1995.

Although feedback on the survey trial has not generally been reported in the context of this *National Overview*, New South Wales teachers indicated that there were benefits from their participation in the trial, stating that the knowledge gained from their participation would improve their teaching and assessment practices.

8.3 Early literacy conference

A national conference on the Early Literacy Component (ELC) of NEPS was held in Adelaide in December 1995. The conference, funded by the Commonwealth as a national dissemination activity and organised by the University of South Australia, brought together government and non-government authorities from around Australia to share the outcomes of the projects funded under the ELC. Participants outlined further plans for the support of early literacy teaching, discussed issues associated with the program and made a series of related recommendations. A national report, to be published in 1996, will outline ELC projects, summarise the plenary addresses and list issues and recommendations discussed at the conference.

8.4 Student outcomes in literacy-related areas

It is not possible to directly compare the outcomes of literacy testing in the States, as each administered its own test instruments to its own selected student population and according to its own predetermined conditions. However, based on the State reports following, some summary comments can be made about national literacy outcomes:

- girls generally performed better than boys in the aspects of literacy tested;
- where separately identified, students from low SES backgrounds performed at a level below the norm for their State;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved at a level below that of other students; and
- those from non-English speaking backgrounds achieved lower results than those for whom English was the first language.

New South Wales

Early literacy was targeted by strategies ranging from developing teaching kits and increasing parent involvement in children's language development, to intensive assistance for students having difficulties in learning to read and write. At the other end of the schooling continuum, the importance of literacy in the senior years was demonstrated by at least one unit of English being the compulsory element of the HSC TER aggregate for all students.

The outcomes of this focus on literacy in the early years of schooling are evident from the results of the Basic Skills Test (BST) in government schools.

The mean New South Wales government school BST scores have remained relatively stable over the past five years, with improvements in some sub-groups. From information in the accompanying Tables it is evident that:

- the average literacy scores for girls have been consistently higher than those of boys;
- the gap between years 3 and 5 students from non-English speaking backgrounds and the State literacy mean score was further reduced;
- the performance of students from low socioeconomic areas tended to be stable but was significantly below the performance of the rest of the population;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' scores were consistently below the State mean; and
- students from non-English speaking backgrounds showed some improvement in literacy scores.

Non-government schools were involved in a range of literacy initiatives, with the early years of schooling a major focus for Catholic schools. Activities to increase literacy across the curriculum in years 7–10 were a feature of activities in many independent schools.

Table 51. Mean literacy scores, year 3, government schools, New South Wales, 1990–95 (BST scale 25–65)

	State	*Girls*	*Boys*	*ATSI*	*NESB*
1990	48.9	50.1	47.7	43.2	47.5
1991	50.4	51.6	49.3	44.1	48.8
1992	49.8	50.7	48.9	44.7	48.1
1993	49.2	50.4	48.1	44.5	48.4
1994	49.3	50.5	48.2	44.1	48.6
1995	48.8	49.9	47.7	43.6	48.3

Source: New South Wales Department of School Education

Table 52. Mean literacy scores, year 5, government schools, New South Wales, 1994–95 (BST scale 25–65)

	State	*Girls*	*Boys*	*ATSI*	*NESB*
1994	47.9	49.3	46.6	42.2	46.8
1995	47.3	48.5	46.1	41.8	46.5

Source: New South Wales Department of School Education

Table 53. Student achievement in English, by year level, relative to CSF expectations, all schools, Victoria, 1995, per cent

Year 3			*Year 5*		
Below	*At*	*Above*	*Below*	*At*	*Above*
8.6	58.0	33.4	12.0	65.6	22.4

Source: Department of Education, Victoria

Victoria

In Victorian government schools, resources were committed to extending programs in early literacy and early intervention for students whose readiness to learn was impaired. Reading Recovery was the chosen strategy of many schools to address early literacy needs, with a State goal being to ensure that all government schools had access to this program by the end of 1997. Schools also investigated literacy intervention programs, identification strategies, parental involvement and organisational structures to support early literacy.

A DEET-funded collaborative project between the Department of Education, the CEO, Melbourne and Canberra-Goulburn, the Education Department of Western Australia, and the Catholic Education Office, Western Australia (CEOWA) produced outcomes including a resource book, a professional development program, a SOFnet program and major extensions to a national curriculum information database.

All schools cited the importance of laying an appropriate foundation to improve literacy outcomes, with formalised reading programs designed to increase students desire to read being followed up by other strategies. However, parents were an integral part of literacy learning outcomes in almost all Victorian schools in 1995, their role varying according to the type of school, the ages of students and parental availability.

In 1995, years 3 and 5 students across all sectors participated in the Learning Assessment Project (LAP). The achievement of students at each year level across the key learning area of English compared to Curriculum Standards Framework (CSF) expectations appear in Table 53. Approximately 90 per cent of students at both year levels were achieving at or above year level expectations in English.

Queensland

Achieving high standards of literacy is a key goal of all schools in Queensland. Monitoring the success in achieving that goal occurred at three levels in 1995.

The outcomes of the Year 2 Diagnostic Net provided an insight into literacy levels of younger students attending government schools. Those operating in phases A and B of the reading developmental continuum and phase A of the writing continuum (see Table 54) were identified as needing additional support.

An analysis of the net data indicates that reading is the area in which most children have been identified as requiring additional support. Significantly fewer children were identified in the area of writing as needing additional support.

A significant feature of a detailed analysis is the wide variation of results across school support area clusters.

To address this variation, additional resources from Shaping the Future funds were provided to schools on the basis of the number of children identified as operating in the phases previously indicated.

Other important patterns which have emerged are:

- the number of boys identified is greater than the number of girls; and
- school clusters with a high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have a higher proportion of students identified.

Literacy outcomes were also assessed for a sample of approximately 45,000 year 6 students in both government and non-government schools. The results are summarised in Table 55.

The data indicate that:

- girls performed better than boys in literacy areas of the test, especially the writing task;
- the performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was significantly below that of other students in both literacy and numeracy; and

Table 54. Year 2 net outcomes, percentage of students in each phase, government schools, Queensland, 1995

	Phase A	*Phase B*	*Phase C*	*Phase D*
Reading	5.0	20.5	72.6	1.2
Writing	5.1	39.2	54.7	0.2

Source: Department of Education, Queensland

Table 55. Literacy performance of year 6 students, Queensland, 1995

		Reading & viewing	*Writing*
All students	number	45,017	44,778
	average	34.8	34.3
Boys	number	23,169	22,999
	average	33.4	31.8
Girls	number	21,660	21,597
	average	36.2	37.0
NESB students	number	4,551	4,535
	average	33.8	34.3
ATSI students	number	2,189	2,104
	average	25.4	27.0

Note: Means are based on separate scale scores for reading and writing, with a range of 15 to 55.

Source: Department of Education, Queensland

- students from non-English speaking backgrounds performed as well as the general population, but students in government schools whose first language was not English did not.

The data on student sub-groups must to be interpreted with some caution. For example, interpretation of the mean scores for those from non-English speaking backgrounds needs to be informed by consideration of the number and type of exemptions from the test granted to students for whom English is not their first language.

Statewide data on the achievement levels in more than 30 subjects by year 12 students attending government and non-government schools in 1995 provided a detailed view of outcomes. That source of data indicates that:

- in English, girls outperformed boys including among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- there were much lower proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students than the population in the higher levels of achievement; and
- participation in literacy-related subjects by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was not high and achievement was generally lower than population trends.

In the Queensland Catholic sector literacy remains one of the fundamental goals for all children and during 1995 schools continued to improve their efforts to raise literacy levels.

These efforts focused around a major trial of the Year 2 Diagnostic Net materials with a view to all Catholic schools participating in the near future as resources became

available. The trial of the processes was successful and was supported by additional resources in the forms of specially appointed teachers to assist classroom teachers, and the provision of dedicated professional development programs.

In a further effort to monitor and develop literacy levels, the majority of Catholic schools participated in Year Six Test (of literacy and numeracy). An analysis of results, provided by ACER, indicated the following:

- the average score for Queensland Catholic school students was approximately 37, on a scale of 16 to 54. This indicated a creditable performance for Catholic schools;
- on a comparison between Catholic schools and all Queensland schools, Catholic school students, as a group, scored approximately two points higher on average than all Queensland students. This difference was consistent for both boys and girls, and a similar difference occurred with non-English speaking background students. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students the difference in favour of Catholic schools was approximately three; and
- within Catholic schools, girls out-performed boys by four points on average. The average score for non-English speaking background students was, approximately, one below the average for the group, and that for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was approximately eight below the average.

Given the uncertain state of the year 10 certificates, it is not possible to draw any conclusions based on exit levels of achievement in English for students at this year level. Reports from individual schools indicated an overall satisfaction with literacy levels, while recounting specific innovations designed to enhance pupils' literacy developments.

At year 12, an analysis of exit levels of achievement in English by gender was developed by the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies (BSSS). Catholic Schools reported that there has been no significant change in the data and that literacy levels remain at a satisfactory level. Attention to the key competencies in each syllabus highlighted the central role of literacy and specific attention has been focused on these key competencies in academic and vocational subjects.

Independent schools in Queensland maintained a strong commitment to the major objective of improved literacy and numeracy outcomes. All NEPS administered by the Association of Independent Schools in Queensland have this priority objective as the focus. Programs with declared outcomes as part of the evaluative and accountability process include STAR, Early Literacy, the Disadvantaged Schools Program and ESL - General Element. Outcomes were modest for some projects but reflected very positive involvement and improvement given the extremely low level of funding support available, particularly when a whole-school approach was required.

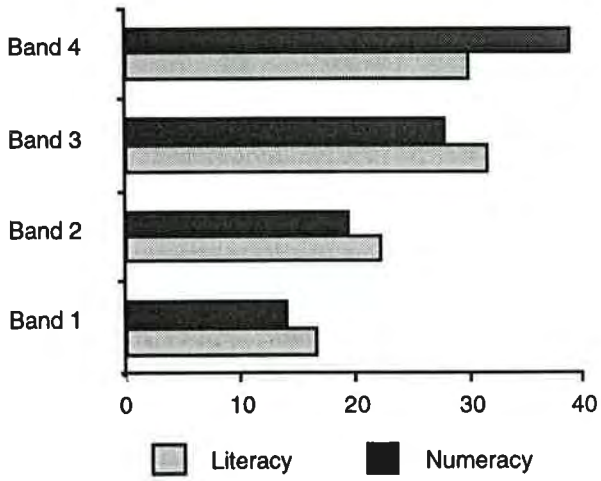
South Australia

In 1995 the Early Years Strategy was implemented to improve literacy teaching and learning in the early years and provide early assistance for children with learning difficulties. As part of that strategy, students in year 3 (10,274) and in year 5 (10,666) in government schools were involved in BSTs consisting of approximately 70 items designed to test skills in some aspects of literacy and numeracy.

The results of the BST program provide some information on the achievement of individual students, groups of students and the State cohort of students:

- the tests placed approximately 66 per cent of students in year 3 and year 5 in the two highest skill bands in literacy and numeracy; and
- girls in both year 3 and year 5 demonstrated strength in literacy.

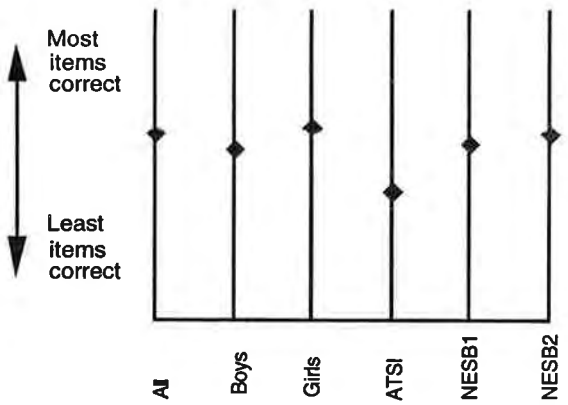
Figure 19. Year 3 literacy and numeracy, all students in skill bands (per cent)



Note: The four bands are groupings of scores: band 4 is the highest skill band and band 1 the lowest.

Source: Department for Education and Children's Services, South Australia

Figure 20. Year 3 overall literacy, Basic Skills Tests

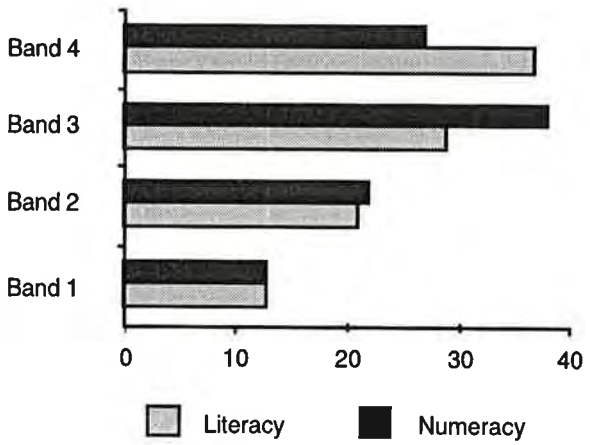


NESB1: Students from homes where a language other than English is spoken.

NESB2: Students in Australia four years or less who never or sometimes speak English at home.

Source: Department for Education and Children's Services, South Australia

Figure 21. Year 5 literacy & numeracy, all students in skill bands (per cent)



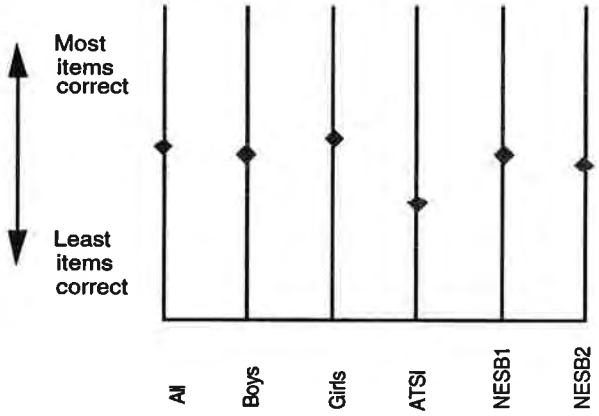
Note: The four bands are groupings of scores. Band 4 is the highest skill band and band 1 the lowest.

Source: Department for Education and Children's Services, South Australia

Year 3 literacy results highlighted the following:

- girls demonstrated marginally stronger skills in this key area than boys;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students did not achieve at the same level as other identified groups; and
- boys and girls who have lived in Australia four years or less and who rarely speak English at home performed equally with the other groups.

Figure 22. Year 5 overall literacy, Basic Skills Tests



NESB1: Students from homes where a language other than English is spoken.

NESB2: Students in Australia four years or less who never or sometimes speak English at home.

Source: Department for Education and Children's Services, South Australia

The year 5 results of the BSTs parallel the year 3 results. It is expected that over time the year 5 results will show some progression from year 3, especially for students who have been identified as most at risk in literacy and numeracy.

Some students with disabilities took part in the BST in years 3 and 5 (this amounted to approximately one-third of the total numbers of students with disabilities in each of the year levels).

As the BST achievement results are collected over time, analysis of student achievements trends will complement teacher assessment and provide another measure of the effectiveness of literacy programs in schools and so enable programs to be adapted to improve student learning outcomes.

Testing data, along with other important student achievement information such as teacher assessment in the curriculum profiles, will inform future decisions about the allocation of resources, the design of learning programs and curriculum planning and development.

The BST program is being independently evaluated with a report due for release in 1996.

At the senior secondary level, all students completing the SACE are required to participate in a practical demonstration of their literacy capabilities. The Writing Based Literacy Assessment (WBLA) is a compulsory requirement of the SACE. Students must submit four pieces of writing to a

Table 56. Students who completed the WBLA, all schools, South Australia, 1992–94 (per cent)

Year	*Females*	*Males*	*All students*
1992	66.4	54.0	60.1
1993	68.1	56.6	62.3
1994	70.1	60.3	65.1

Source: Department for Education and Children's Services, South Australia

school-based literacy panel which assesses each piece according to specific criteria. Students must gain a satisfactory grade in all four pieces to satisfy requirements. If students have any unsatisfactory pieces, they may submit others during either stage 1 or 2 of their SACE studies. In 1995, statistics became available for the 1992–94 results.

Western Australia

Major support continued in all schools for the development of student literacy. Programs of early identification and intervention, professional development of teachers and the adoption of a focus on language as a tool in all subject areas helped further literacy goals.

Monitoring Standards testing in September 1995, which collected systemic data from samples of government school students on reading, writing and, for the first time, speaking and listening, provided information that is directly comparable with the 1992 English data, both having used outcome statements as the reference point.

In addition, student achievement in literacy is measured annually by the proportion of students who pass at the stage 4 level in Unit Curriculum, regarded as the standard which should be achieved by students before leaving school.

Table 57. Students in years 3, 7 & 10, achieving at/above specified levels in reading, by student category, government schools, Western Australia, 1992 and 1995 (per cent)

Year level	*Year 3*		*Year 7*		*Year 10*	
Year	*1992*	*1995*	*1992*	*1995*	*1992*	*1995*
Outcome level	*≥2*	*≥2*	*≥3*	*≥3*	*≥4*	*≥4*
Female	94	93	96	95	94	91
Male	94	88	93	94	90	84
ATSI	67	69	71	74	61	59
NESB	90	87	89	88	85	82
All students	94	91	94	95	92	88

Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Table 58. Students in years 3, 7 & 10, achieving at/above specified levels in writing, by student category, government schools, Western Australia, 1992 and 1995 (per cent)

Year level	*Year 3*		*Year 7*		*Year 10*	
Year	*1992*	*1995*	*1992*	*1995*	*1992*	*1995*
Outcome level	*≥2*	*≥2*	*≥3*	*≥3*	*≥4*	*≥4*
Female	99	98	99	99	97	97
Male	99	96	99	99	90	89
ATSI	95	83	97	91	73	77
NESB	99	97	97	96	87	89
All students	99	97	99	99	91	93

Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Table 59. Students in years 3, 7 & 10, achieving at/above specified levels in speaking and listening, by student category, government schools, Western Australia, 1995 (per cent)

Year level	*Year 3*	*Year 7*	*Year 10*
Outcome level	*≥2*	*≥3*	*≥4*
Expository speaking			
All students	62	76	58
Narrative speaking			
All students	95	86	75
Listening			
Female	91	95	90
Male	86	93	77
ATSI	66	78	44
NESB	90	93	73
All students	88	94	83

Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Table 60. Students in years 3, 7 & 10, achieving at/above specified levels in listening, government schools, Western Australia, 1995 (per cent)

Year level	*Year 3*	*Year 7*	*Year 10*
Outcome level	*≥2*	*≥3*	*≥4*
All students	88	95.5	63

Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Table 61. Passes in English at stage 4 or higher, year 10 students, by gender, government schools, Western Australia, 1993–1995

Student category	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*
Female	95.9	94.2	93.6
Male	91.6	90.9	90.6
All students	93.7	92.5	92.1

Source: Education Department of Western Australia

Tasmania

Initiatives to foster literacy in government schools continued, including the development of support materials for the Tasmanian Key Intended Literacy Outcomes (KILOs). Support material for schools K–6 has now been disseminated, but work on support materials for years 7 and 8 will continue in 1996. In addition a team of literacy officers worked with schools K–12 in each of the education districts to promote a range of initiatives seeking to encourage sustainable whole school development in literacy education.

The provision of four years of early childhood education in Tasmania provides an opportunity to ensure that each year makes a particular contribution to early literacy acquisition. Two specific literacy intervention programs, in Prep and year 2, deliberately target the end points of the first two bands of the KILOs.

The Prep Literacy Support Program is a highly focused literacy intervention program which concentrates on all Prep students attaining the Kinder-Prep strand of the KILOs, within a classroom setting. The program will extend into year 2 in 1996.

A two-year study, based on the performance of year 1 students on a two-sentence dictation task and on observations by guidance officers who administered the task, suggested that there were significant improvements in literacy performance. The task was administered to a random sample of students in year 1. Those in 1994 received no preparatory literacy support while those in the 1995 cohort had been involved in the Prep Literacy Support Program scheme.

Table 62. Mean overall literacy scores for year 1 students, government schools, Tasmania, 1994–95

	1994	*1995*
All students	71.99	76.42
Boys	67.99	72.05
Girls	76.64	81.01
Disadvantaged schools (a)	65.75	71.26
Rural schools (b)	68.98	80.73

(a) Schools supported by the Disadvantaged Schools General Component.

(b) Categorised by distance, not by support through Country Areas Program Component.

Source: Department of Education and the Arts, Tasmania

These results are all statistically significant. In addition, the distribution of scores for all groups had a shorter 'tail' in 1995, indicating that students who in 1994 would have been categorised as 'low-performing' made larger gains than those categorised as 'high-performing'.

The study indicated that:

- there was a significant improvement in the composite literacy scores from 1994 to 1995 for both girls and boys;
- girls performed better than boys in both years;
- there were significant improvements in the literacy scores of students from schools in rural areas;
- there were significant improvements in students from both socioeconomically advantaged and disadvantaged schools;
- there were greater relative gains among students who would have been categorised as 'low-performing'; and
- there were significant improvements in the literacy scores of both left- and right-handed students. Left-handed students appeared to make greater gains than right-handed students.

The literacy programs in early childhood appear to be particularly effective at improving attainment for students in the target equity groups.

The Kindergarten Development Check incorporates a checklist of key aspects of children's early development. The kindergarten teacher completes the Check with each student by the end of term 1. It includes gross and fine motor skills, social and emotional development, and listening, speaking and understanding.

After administering the Check, the teacher identifies individual children who require specific intervention, and plans an individual program of eight weeks duration. Following this program, the Check is re-administered and, if necessary, a further individual education program is developed.

All children entering kindergarten in 1994 and 1995 have been monitored against the key indicators on the Check and appropriate follow-up intervention has been sought for those students requiring specific programs.

Northern Territory

The Northern Territory Board of Studies monitors the performance of government school students in years 5 and 7 annually in the areas of reading and mathematics. Tests

include a range of content and skills spanning more than one stage or year level of the Board Approved Curriculum and form the Multilevel Assessment Program (MAP).

The MAP reading comprehension test covers stages from before stage 5 or pre-stage 5 (stage 5 is equivalent to curriculum for year 5) to beyond stage 7 (stage 7 is equivalent to curriculum for year 7). It is made up of two strands at each stage — a factual strand and a literary strand. The reading comprehension test includes a variety of multiple-choice, open-ended and cloze questions which can broadly be classified as literal and interpretive. These questions test outcomes such as locating information, making inferences, determining word meanings, identifying cause and effect relationships, drawing conclusions and identifying sequences of events.

Instead of reporting students' results in percentage scores, a procedure using Item Response Theory (IRT) is adopted, which converts the number of test items answered correctly into student 'achievement estimates'. A student's individual achievement estimate, which is obtained from the results in the testing program, is placed on an arbitrary scale continuum, which makes it possible to determine the curriculum stage at which the student is achieving in the subject tested.

Table 63 provides an aggregated summary of the performance of year 5 and year 7 students in reading.

1,577 students, representing 72 per cent of those in year 5, were within one standard deviation of the mean. The results show that the performance of the majority of students ranged from pre-stage 5 to stage 5, which was within the expectation of teachers. There were 1,326 year 7 students (or 71 per cent) within one standard performance deviation of the mean. The performance of the majority of students ranged from stage 5 to stage 7, which was also within the expectation of teachers.

Under the MAP, the attainment of year 5 and year 7 urban students in writing was monitored by system-level moderation of samples of student's writing each year. The results reported below are based on a sample of urban schools.

Analysis of the results indicates that of 336 students in the year 7 sample, (75 per cent) demonstrated attainment that was below stage 7, and the remaining 25 per cent showed attainment at stage 7 or above. Of the year 5 students in the sample, 67 per cent showed attainment which was below stage 5, and the remaining 33 per cent showed attainment at stage 5 or above.

Table 63. Summary of student performance in reading, selected year levels, government schools, Northern Territory, 1995

	Number	*Mean*	*Std Dev*	*-1 SD*	*+1 SD*
Year 5	2,185	644.26	58.324	585.93	702.58
Year 7	1,860	718.32	66.564	651.76	784.89

Source: Department of Education, Northern Territory

Table 64. Attainment in writing of year 7 students, government schools, Northern Territory, 1995

School	*Number of students*	*% below stage 7*	*% at stages 7 and 7+*
A	39	69	31
B	74	90	10
C	4	75	25
D	104	67	33
E	20	50	50
F	39	87	13
G	53	75	25
Total	**336**	**75**	**25**

Source: Department of Education, Northern Territory

Table 65. Attainment in writing of year 5 students, government schools, Northern Territory, 1995

School	*Number of students*	*% below stage 5*	*% at stages 5 and 5+*
A	28	86	14
B	49	50	50
C	13	62	38
D	No year 5 students		
E	26	81	19
F	44	89	11
G	64	53	47
Total	**224**	**67**	**33**

Source: Department of Education, Northern Territory

A further 30 per cent of year 7 students demonstrated attainment in the stage 7 range if borderline cases were included, and a further 42 per cent of students demonstrated attainment in the stage 5 range if borderline cases were included.

Analysis of other MAP reporting reveals that the performance of girls significantly exceeded that of boys in both year 5 and year 7 testing programs. It was evident that students in both year levels for whom English was a second language performed for a lower average level than students

whose main language was English. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students also tended to perform to a lower level than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

It had previously been assumed that most students in any year would be capable of achieving at the equivalent stage of the English curriculum. However, information gained from moderation over the past three years indicates that this is not so. The results suggest that relatively few students in years 5 and 7 produce writing of a standard that matches the expectations of teachers, based on their interpretation of stages 5 and 7 of the English curriculum. The standards of expectation derived from the curriculum reflect what the more able students can do, rather than what was done by the majority.

For secondary students, literacy assessment is available through the year 10 assessment program in English and mathematics. This was conducted under the auspices of the Board of Studies and comprises a school-based component and an external component known as the Common Instruments of Assessment (CIA).

Table 66. Summary of English achievement data, Northern Territory, 1995

	All students	*Males*	*Females*	*Aboriginal*
English Mod.				
A	136	27	109	2
B	541	214	327	24
C	624	369	255	88
D	76	59	17	13
E	209	112	97	49
Total	**1,586**	**781**	**805**	**176**
English CIA				
A	44	4	40	0
B	433	150	283	12
C	644	320	324	60
D	317	222	95	49
E	106	65	41	40
Total	**1,544**	**761**	**783**	**161**
English JSSC				
A	83	12	71	1
B	518	189	329	17
C	643	376	267	78
D	158	100	58	33
E	120	71	49	34
Total	**1,522**	**748**	**774**	**163**

Source: Department of Education, Northern Territory

The CIAs contribute 30 per cent towards each student's final grades on the Junior Secondary Studies Certificate (JSSC) awarded by the Northern Territory Board of Studies; the remaining 70 per cent is derived from the school-assessed component which is moderated externally across schools.

The mark distributions show that performance on the CIA was lower than that on the school-based component. The average for the CIA was 59.4 per cent and the average for the moderated school-based component was 62.5 per cent. Consequently, proportions of students in the higher grades (As and Bs) were lower for the CIA, as indicated in Table 66.

In 1995 girls comprised 50.7 per cent of the year 10 cohort. Of the six questions which comprised Papers 1 and 2 in the English CIA, five showed a highly significant statistical difference between the performance of girls and boys, in favour of girls. In both the CIA and the moderated component, girls outperformed boys in English, the differences being statistically significant.

Catholic and independent schools took part in the government testing program.

Australian Capital Territory

In 1995 the Department of Education and Training commenced work on a strategy for assessing and reporting student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy. Ultimately, implementation of this strategy should lead to more effective use of resources and improved reporting to parents.

The strategy included the establishment of the Student Outcomes and Reporting Section within the central office to investigate the development and trialling of an assessment instrument for schools in the Australian Capital Territory. Preliminary work was done in primary and secondary schools, where teachers had trialled the curriculum profiles for Australian schools.

As a result of preliminary investigations, it was decided to introduce system-wide reporting on student achievement in literacy in late 1997, focusing on two key points in the primary years of schooling. Processes for numeracy assessment will be trialled in 1997.

During 1995 continued emphasis on improved outcomes in literacy in Catholic schools was promoted through in-service training at both regional and school levels, with assistance from $32,000 provided through the ELC. Schools continued to develop and implement English curriculum documents, incorporating the national

statement, Australian Capital Territory Frameworks and Curriculum Profiles for Australian Schools and other system documents. Teachers participated in the NPDP Linkages project which enabled teachers across systems to network and share best practice across the key learning areas. English was a significant part of this program. Development of literacy skills across K–12 is an ongoing focus of the school improvement program and will be enhanced in 1996 by the implementation of the Western Australian First Steps literacy development program.

In independent schools, literacy-related initiatives included professional development sessions, which in 1995 examined strategies such as Spalding phonics, a Launch into Literacy program for years 1 and 2 and a Readers Theatre.

Independent schools used a wide range of strategies to encourage early literacy. These included:

- participation in the First Steps program;
- provision of focused in-service training sessions for teachers;
- replacement of a whole-language approach by a phonics-based approach;
- use of student profiles;
- participation in diagnostic testing;
- use of a primary resource centre; and
- provision of opportunities for Reading Recovery in years 1 and 2.

Strategies identified by schools as being most effective in enhancing literacy included the provision of improve resources, fostering a love of reading and recruitment and retention of good staff.

Other strategies and procedures to monitor and improve literacy outcomes included:

- identifying students with difficulties and designing courses to improve their individual literacy outcomes;
- interrelationships of speaking, reading and writing and integration of these skills into other subject areas;
- developing shared literature programs;
- continuous assessment, especially for students with special needs;
- tutoring in small groups; and
- fostering of the enjoyment of reading with the provision of suitable resources.

Quite a number of schools participated in Statewide basic skills testing during 1995. The results were to be used to evaluate curricula and to discuss student progress with students and parents.

9 Focus on physical development and health

9.1 Changing perceptions

The development of courses of study in health and physical education has been significantly influenced by the profiles and statements. The outcomes of projects such as the National Initiatives in Drug Education (NIDE) and Home Economics in Junior Secondary School have impacted on the content and methodologies of courses. Other national initiatives in the learning area have also affected the provision of health and physical education to some extent.

The health and physical education learning area has traditionally been delivered in discreet subjects such as health, home economics and physical education. However, teachers have developed a broader understanding of the nature of this learning area and have moved towards a more holistic and social (as well as individual) approach to health and physical education. Movement and skill development, physical well-being, fitness, nutrition and social interaction are being seen as part of a whole developmental program.

The holistic approach has led to a significant shift of focus towards fostering the practices and understandings which will serve as the basis of a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle. Programs focus on both the individual's healthy lifestyle and personal safety, as well as the individual as a member of groups in the community.

The three key principles of social justice, diversity and supportive environments underpin the health and physical education learning area and are now included by teachers in their planning and programming.

From the perspective of physical education, the senior syllabus in Queensland exemplifies the changes which have occurred at the senior secondary levels. It takes as its guiding principle the concept of the physically-educated person, according to which students may be considered to be physically educated when they are able to:

- demonstrate competence in thinking and performing about, through and in physical activity, across the range of the learning experiences provided and subject matter within the syllabus; and
- reflect on and challenge established views about physical activity in all its forms and contexts.

The focus of physical education has broadened immensely from a performance-dominated approach with a focus on sport and now commonly offers students the opportunity to select from a broad range of subject matter within the syllabus. Courses are more readily able to cater for a broad range of abilities and interests than was once the case. Variation and choice within subject matter enable students to continue to learn a range of physical skills, but generally from a wider variety of options than previously. They are now more likely to add to that skill development an examination of the biological bases underpinning their physical development and training and a perception of the place of physical activity and sport in Australian society. Even within those broader areas a further range of student options may be available.

Syllabus approaches emphasise the developmental nature of learning, viewing learners as decision makers engaged in the active construction of meaning through the processing of information relating to physical activity. Student performance is judged not by the attainment of benchmark physical performances, but within the categories of acquiring, applying and evaluating. These general objectives are linked to the criteria of acquiring, applying and evaluating knowledge, understanding, values, attitudes, capacities and skills about, through and in physical activity. Processes include gathering and comprehending information, interpreting, analysing and synthesising information, and hypothesising, justifying and appraising information.

Programs of health education in schools are related to a social view of health. They recognise and address the health realities of living in contemporary Australia and the many health-related decisions that face young people. An emphasis is placed on participation and empowerment, assisting students to reach their individual health potential and contributing to the health of the society in which they live.

9.2 Significant achievements and emerging issues

The definition of health and physical education in Australian schools has been a result of significant changes in perceptions among teachers and within the wider community. There are demands on schools to address a growing range of requirements for successful life in an

increasingly complex community, including the development of the personal and interpersonal skills.

Among the achievements reported by States as significant in the teaching of health and physical education in schools were:

- the developing ability of students to make informed choices about a range of health issues;
- improved school links with parents with respect to the teaching of a range of socially sensitive aspects within the health education strand;
- improved links between school and community programs promoting health and physical activity;
- the development of a team approach among staff in schools to the delivery of complementary teaching strategies and to addressing the breadth of the curriculum area; and
- the availability of a wider range of course options in the health and physical education area, including the increased provision of year 12 options.

Recent national initiatives have helped to focus attention and commitment on this curriculum area. These include:

- the development of a national curriculum philosophy, as outlined in the national statement;
- the general integration of relevant components of the national HIV/AIDS strategy into secondary school programs and increasingly into primary schools;
- the collaboration of significant educational and other community resources, as part of the NIDE, to provide a focus for drug education in the States, as well as strategies and resources to enhance those programs;
- the practical adoption of the National Junior Sport Policy, which has helped shape the future directions for junior sport; and
- initiatives stemming from the National Nutrition in Education Project, which have begun to document current practices and plan action in schools.

The significant changes in focus in the health and physical education area led to a need to upgrade teacher expertise. Many teachers are required to teach in an area which is either completely outside their initial training or significantly extends the boundaries of their expertise. Participation in appropriate professional development increased markedly for teachers at all levels of schooling and in all States aimed to provide them with the additional skills and knowledge to teach more effectively and to better promote health in their schools.

Professional development activities were conducted through a range of professional associations as well as State education authorities. The focus for professional development activities included human relationship education, life skills, ethics and values, HIV/AIDS education, drug education, nutrition, health promoting schools, physical education, and sport within the key learning area.

In common with trends in other curriculum areas, issues of assessment and measurement of outcomes emerged from work occurring in schools in 1995. Although most States have not reported significant activity in the area of assessment or of collecting outcomes data, the report from Western Australia gives one perspective on measuring outcomes in relation to this curriculum area.

Monitoring Standards in Education 1994, the analysis of which was completed in 1995, was the first system-level assessment of physical and health education in Australia. The project assessed sample groups in years 3, 7 and 10 in four areas: health education; physical education movement skills and games strategies; fitness performance; and physical education knowledge.

The project revealed a relative shallowness in students' health education knowledge. Girls' overall knowledge was significantly higher than that of boys, replicating a situation found in other learning areas and suggesting the need for curriculum-wide rather than subject-specific attention. The knowledge of Aboriginal and non-English speaking background students was lower than that for non-Aboriginal English speakers.

The physical education movement skills of year 3 students were below desirable levels in throwing, catching, running and dodging. This possibly could be attributed to a sedentary, technology-based urban lifestyle, coupled with a reluctance on the part of parents to allow children to play outside as they once did. Strategies to help early childhood teachers identify children with poor movement skills and a curriculum model to include them are under development.

Years 7 and 10 were assessed in physical education skills. Boys' overall performance was significantly higher than that of girls, Aboriginal students performed better than non-Aboriginal students in some areas and there was no significant difference associated with students from non-English speaking backgrounds. The girls' performance deficit which was apparent may stem from less

encouragement to take vigorous physical activity, or from the media depiction of girls and women in sport. The involvement of girls in planning programs more relevant to their needs was seen to address this.

Overall student performance in fitness tasks was inferior to norms published in the 1985 Australian Health and Fitness Survey, particularly in terms of cardiovascular endurance. In order to raise student performance, the Physical Steps program provides a range of strategies to encourage students to take more, and more vigorous, exercise.

In physical education cognitive skills, girls performed better with age, Aboriginal students achieved at a lower level than non-Aboriginal students and there was little difference associated with non-English speaking background.

9.3 Courses in physical education and health

Physical education and health are the specific foci of one of the Common and Agreed National Goals. Evidence from the States indicates that this goal has been adopted, with there being a general recognition of the central role of learning in this curriculum area, not only to the physical growth and well-being of students, but also to their emotional and social growth. Formal time allocations for programs are more generally beginning to reflect a perception of the need for relative equity across key learning areas, but the allocation of adequate lesson time to ensure appropriate curriculum balance may never be fully resolved in all schools.

Australian students had a wide range of courses in physical education and health available to them in 1995, appropriate to their age and stage of development, with States reporting increased diversity. The position for students in non-government schools had much in common with what occured in government schools. Although the necessary re-alignment of courses has yet to be fully implemented nationally, courses at all levels are expected to increasingly reflect the national statement and profile.

While the details of course provisions varied from State-to-State, health and physical education was included in the course of study for all primary students, in some instances with a minimum time input mandated. In South Australian government schools, for example, students in government schools had at least 100 minutes per week in this area of study from R–10, and 100 minutes of sport and physical activity. In New South Wales, access of primary students to personal development, health and physical education (PDHPE) must be 'substantial'. In New South Wales and Victoria, government schools must allocate 60 minutes weekly to sport in years 3–6.

In the Australian Capital Territory, time allocations for health, physical education and sport were established in 1995. See the ACT chapter for details.

At junior secondary levels, schools incorporated health and physical education in a variety of ways, with some study in the area typically a part of core curriculum to year 10. Programs varied greatly in scope and name, but included health, physical education, outdoor education, dance, gymnastics, life skills, protective behaviours, home economics and sport. There appears to be a trend to broadening options at this level.

The average weekly time accorded this curriculum area in junior secondary was not fully reported. However, South Australia indicated that in government schools time spent was approximately 140 minutes at year 8, increasing to just over 180 minutes at year 10; Catholic school students spent mostly around 10 per cent of their time on this area. In New South Wales, a minimum of 300 hours must be allocated to PDHPE over years 7 to 10.

At senior secondary level, studies in the area of health and physical education typically became more varied and demanded greater time commitment. In South Australia, for example, year 12 students typically spent more than 220 minutes per week in health and physical education subjects. Queensland reported a year 12 Board course and as many as 23 other Board-registered subjects in this curriculum area, along with other core programs for senior students. Other States, such as South Australia, had fewer different year 12 courses in the health and physical education learning area. Time commitment for each individual subject at year 12 would typically be 17–20 per cent of lesson time each week.

Rates of student participation in physical education and health subjects at year 12 are difficult to compare nationally. In New South Wales, 11 per cent of all HSC students studied the PDHPE course, compared with 23 per cent of Queensland students taking the Board course in health and physical education.

Other programs and initiatives associated with this curriculum area were also offered in some jurisdictions:

- in New South Wales the road safety education program conducted with the Road Traffic Authority of NSW continued to be significant in government and non-government schools;
- it was mandatory for senior students in New South Wales government schools to complete a 25 hour personal development and health course; and
- in Queensland, a number of individual schools, designated as Centres for Athletic Development, provided in-depth courses in which a particular sport (including athletics, the two rugby codes, golf, dance and surfing) could be studied as a subject.

Potential future developments include the provision of level 1 and level 2 certificate courses. Schools may also offer their senior students AVTS-accredited modules on an elective basis.

Programs addressing a range of physical education and health areas operated in non-government schools. As in government school programs, topics typically addressed included personal health and fitness, creative use of leisure, development of self-esteem and self-reliance, teamwork, leadership skills and analytical and decision-making skills. However, in Catholic and other schools with close religious affiliations there was also likely to be a close relationship between this learning area and religious education, with values and ethical issues at the heart of the teaching and learning.

In independent schools, the development of self-confidence, self-esteem and respect for others were particularly noted as permeating schools' programs in this learning area. Emphasis in 1995 had changed to a concern with general fitness and thus several schools have sought to involve students in a wider range of sporting and recreational opportunities. This broadening of activities was also perceived of as enabling students to use leisure time more productively.

Many schools undertook ongoing refinement of curriculum in this area. In particular, progress was achieved in outdoor education activities during 1995 with parents becoming involved by providing assistance with camps, carnivals and coaching of sporting teams.

Although it was noted that there was sometimes a need for individualised programs and instruction most schools sought to have an all-embracing approach with an emphasis on total student involvement.

9.4 Uptake of the statement and profile

National initiatives, including the statement and profile, have brought about a changed emphasis in the provision of health and physical education in schools. Although the statement and profile has yet to be adopted by all schools and acceptance by all States' government school sectors is a goal for the future, it continued to provide the directions for future planning and development of curriculum guidelines in this subject area.

Reporting from the States indicates a range of positions relative to the uptake of the statement and profile in 1995:

- in Australian Capital Territory government schools all teachers were required to participate in trialling of the national profile;
- all government schools in South Australia implemented the statements and profiles and in the health and physical education learning area the process provided a focus for curriculum review and reform. A significant number of independent schools investigated the alignment of existing health and physical education programs with the statement and profile, while among Catholic schools surveyed, 44 per cent of the sampled secondary schools and 36 per cent of the sampled primary schools had implemented it;
- in New South Wales the introduction of national profiles was halted following a Government review; and
- system-wide implementation in Queensland's government schools has not yet occurred as major curriculum emphasis in 1995 was given to other previously developed syllabuses in mathematics and English.

Where it has occurred, it appears the uptake of the statement and profile has been a challenge, although it is perceived as making the curriculum area more accountable. The new focus has required the provision of strategies and support for teachers to ensure a 'seamless delivery' of the components of the learning area, namely health education and physical education, rather than the more fragmented approach of the past, with curriculum delivery in discreet subject components. Secondary teachers appear to have found it more difficult to address the holistic nature of a comprehensive curriculum than those teaching in primary.

9.5 Role of ethics and values

Non-government schools with religious affiliations have had a focus on ethics and values underpinning their curriculum. However, because of changes in thinking about curriculum and the role of schools in helping to develop the social aspects of the health of young Australians, ethics and values are now seen as playing an increasingly significant role in the health and physical education key learning area for students at all schools.

Schools with a religious affiliation readily articulate significant formal curriculum connections with spiritual and emotional 'wellness', with community values and with a more holistic and developmental life perspective. For other schools, the more general integration of ethics and values into the curriculum has received support, but this is reliant on teachers becoming more confident about dealing with these issues in their everyday teaching.

All schools currently give students some opportunity to consider issues relating to ethics and values. Through Child Protection, teachers are addressing the ethics of touch and body space in classroom and school settings. Consideration of what is involved in living a healthy and active lifestyle may readily lead to classroom discussions and teaching about respecting one's body. Putting into effect equitable treatment of all, as well as respect for the dignity of each person, is as much a part of the fostering of values as more clearly targeted activities such as discussion of personal relationships, drugs and other health issues.

In some schools, the treatment of making moral and ethical judgements will flow as a logical extension from work in developing self-confidence and respect for others, and from learning analytical and decision-making skills. For students in other schools the role of ethics and values may be approached specifically as an aspect of sexuality and HIV/AIDS education.

As an example of a specific focus on ethics and values, the Queensland Department of Education developed and trialled a set of resources for the Study of Ethics (Primary). Further details on these resources are provided in the Queensland chapter.

10 Other areas of curriculum and student achievement

10.1 Subject enrolments and participation

An examination of participation information for key subject areas in 1995 (see Table 67), reveals that enrolments in English and mathematics accounted for a significant proportion of total year 12 tertiary-accredited subjects being studied. In those two subject areas:

- the majority (89 per cent) of students participated in an English subject at year 12; and
- nearly 90 per cent of boys and nearly 80 per cent of girls participated in at least one mathematics subject. Of the students doing mathematics, twice as many boys as girls did more than one mathematics subject.

There are differences between male and female students in the subjects enrolled in. Males are more likely to take physical sciences, technical studies and computer studies, while females are more likely to be enrolled in humanities and social sciences, creative and performing arts and languages. The arts and languages, for example, had approximately twice as many females as males, while in technical studies there were approximately twice as many males as females.

In terms of participation in key learning areas, other gender differences in year 12 subject enrolments made clear by Table 67 were:

- 13 per cent of boys did no English subjects in 1995, compared to eight per cent of girls;
- 46 per cent of boys did no humanities and social sciences subjects (such as history, geography and economics), compared to 34 per cent of girls;
- 21 per cent of girls did no mathematics subjects in 1995, compared to 13 per cent of boys;
- only a quarter of girls did chemistry or physics in 1995, compared to nearly 40 per cent of boys; and
- of the chemistry/physics students, only 22 per cent of girls did both subjects, compared to nearly 30 per cent of boys.

Approximately 15 per cent of year 12 students participated in a subject from the physical education subject area including health education, sport science and outdoor education. Girls favoured subjects with a health focus, while boys tended to take subjects with a physical/outdoor focus. Another eight per cent of students undertook a home science subject, which included food technology and human development and society.

These figures are likely to under-represent the uptake of subjects in these two subject areas as States vary as to the proportion of subjects in this key learning area which are tertiary-accredited. Some States, in particular South Australia and Northern Territory, offer few tertiary-accredited subjects in this area.

Shifts in the relative levels of enrolments in particular subject areas over time should serve as a useful indicator of the shifts in community expectations of outcomes from schooling. Table 68 provides the following comparison of enrolments in 1990 and 1995:

- computer studies, physical education and technical studies attracted increasing shares of total subject enrolments;

Dissection activity in a science classroom.

- English, mathematics, humanities, the arts and languages all enjoyed stable shares of total subject enrolments; and
- the biological and physical sciences experienced a declining share of total subject enrolments.

The relative shares in subject area enrolments between males and females remained fairly stable over the period.

10.2 Achievement in key learning areas

Achievements in the focus areas aside, not all States reported in detail on student outcomes. From the States' reports which were submitted, however, significant work is occurring to increase the capacity to measure and then to document student achievement.

In its report, New South Wales referred to recommendations from the Eltis Review about the basis on which outcomes should be assessed and indicated that work continued at a system and school level on identifying, recording and reporting student outcomes.

Over the past five years the mean New South Wales government school BST scores have remained relatively stable with improvements in some sub-groups. In numeracy, no differences were found between boys and girls at lower primary levels. Upper primary girls, who were previously performing less well than boys in numeracy, were performing better in 1995. The performance of students from low socioeconomic areas tended to be stable but significantly below the performance of other students. Numeracy scores for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students remained below the State mean. Students from non-English speaking backgrounds performed at close to or above the State mean averages for numeracy in recent years. Year 3 students of non-English speaking backgrounds continued to perform below the State average in numeracy. In upper primary school the trend shows that this gap is diminishing.

Table 67. Participation by year 12 students in tertiary-accredited subjects, by sex, Australia, 1995

	Males			*Females*			*Total*		
		Students			*Students*			*Students*	
Subject Area	*Subject enrolments*	*No. (a)*	*Per cent (b)*	*Subject enrolments*	*No. (a)*	*Per cent (b)*	*Subject enrolments*	*No. (a)*	*Per cent (b)*
English	71,798	70,845	87	86,229	83,302	92	158,027	154,147	89
Mathematics	77,232	71,114	87	74,455	71,508	79	151,687	142,622	83
Humanities and social sciences	50,471	44,420	54	70,021	59,597	66	120,492	104,017	60
Economics and business	41,118	29,406	36	48,806	35,816	40	89,924	65,222	38
Physical sciences	40,911	31,575	39	26,219	21,445	24	67,130	53,020	31
Biological and other sciences	28,280	27,814	34	41,331	40,940	45	69,611	68,754	40
Creative and performing arts	16,342	15,864	19	31,492	30,367	34	47,834	46,231	27
Languages	8,177	8,066	10	16,037	15,485	17	24,214	23,551	14
Home science	1,873	1,855	2	12,314	11,314	12	14,187	13,169	8
Technical studies	18,253	17,722	22	7,234	7,003	8	25,487	24,725	14
Physical education	13,469	13,419	16	11,920	11,830	13	25,389	25,249	15
Computer studies	18,698	16,747	20	12,987	12,728	14	31,685	29,475	17
Total subject enrolments	**386,622**	**n.a.**	**n.a.**	**439,045**	**n.a.**	**n.a.**	**825,667**	**n.a.**	**n.a.**
Total year 12 students	**n.a.**	**81,751**	**n.a.**	**n.a.**	**90,606**	**n.a.**	**n.a.**	**172,357**	**n.a.**

n.a. not applicable.

(a) Number of year 12 students studying at least one subject in each listed subject area.

(b) Percentage of year 12 students studying at least one subject in each listed subject area.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA, derived from data supplied by State secondary accreditation authorities

Table 68. Number (a) and proportion (b) of year 12 enrolments in tertiary-accredited subjects, by sex, Australia, 1990 and 1995

	Male		*Female*		*Total*	
Subject	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Number*	*Per cent*
			1990			
English	65,387	18.3	80,208	19.8	145,595	19.1
Mathematics	70,911	19.9	65,613	16.2	136,524	17.9
Humanities and social sciences	49,701	13.9	66,254	16.4	115,955	15.2
Economics and business	42,783	12.0	47,138	11.7	89,921	11.8
Physical sciences	49,050	13.8	28,419	7.0	77,469	10.2
Biological and other sciences	30,328	8.5	46,508	11.5	76,836	10.1
Creative and performing arts	11,999	3.4	28,404	7.0	40,403	5.3
Languages	6,409	1.8	13,671	3.4	20,080	2.6
Home science	1,594	0.4	15,629	3.9	17,223	2.3
Technical studies	14,040	3.9	2,106	0.5	16,146	2.1
Physical education	8,049	2.3	6,280	1.6	14,329	1.9
Computer studies	6,103	1.7	4,131	1.0	10,234	1.3
Total subject enrolments	**356,354**	**100.0**	**404,361**	**100.0**	**760,715**	**100.0**
Total year 12 students	**79,150**		**90,321**		**169,471**	
			1995			
English	71,798	18.6	86,229	19.6	158,027	19.1
Mathematics	77,232	20.0	74,455	17.0	151,687	18.4
Humanities and social sciences	50,471	13.1	70,021	15.9	120,492	14.6
Economics and business	41,118	10.6	48,806	11.1	89,924	10.9
Physical sciences	40,911	10.6	26,219	6.0	67,130	8.1
Biological and other sciences	28,280	7.3	41,331	9.4	69,611	8.4
Creative and performing arts	16,342	4.2	31,492	7.2	47,834	5.8
Languages	8,177	2.1	16,037	3.7	24,214	2.9
Home science	1,873	0.5	12,314	2.8	14,187	1.7
Technical studies	18,253	4.7	7,234	1.6	25,487	3.1
Physical education	13,469	3.5	11,920	2.7	25,389	3.1
Computer studies	18,698	4.8	12,987	3.0	31,685	3.8
Total subject enrolments	**386,622**	**100.0**	**439,045**	**100.0**	**825,667**	**100.0**
Total year 12 students	**81,751**		**90,606**		**172,357**	

(a) These figures refer to enrolments in all subjects which are publicly examined and/or tertiary-accredited. As each student may be enrolled in several subjects, the total number of enrolments shown in this Table far exceeds the total number of year 12 students.

(b) The proportion of enrolments in a particular subject is the number of enrolments in that subject divided by the number of enrolments in all subjects.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA, derived from data supplied by State secondary accreditation authorities

Table 69. Numeracy mean scores, year 3, government schools, New South Wales, 1990–95 (25–65 scale)

	State	*Females*	*Males*	*ATSI*	*NESB*
1990	51.0	51.3	50.7	44.1	49.0
1991	52.7	52.8	52.6	46.5	51.2
1992	52.6	52.3	52.9	46.2	51.2
1993	52.2	52.0	52.3	45.6	50.4
1994	51.9	51.9	51.9	46.1	51.0
1995	52.1	52.3	52.0	45.8	51.0

Source: New South Wales Department of School Education

Table 70. Numeracy mean scores, year 5, government schools, New South Wales, 1994–95 (25–65 scale)

	State	*Females*	*Males*	*ATSI*	*NESB*
1994	47.1	47.3	47	40.6	46.3
1995	47.3	47.5	47.1	40.3	46.8

Source: New South Wales Department of School Education

In the area of language learning, over 65 per cent of government primary schools offered programs in languages, almost 600 providing learning through the Access to Languages via Satellite (ALS) programs. This is a significant increase from 1992 when less than 40 per cent of primary schools had language programs.

At the senior secondary end of the age scale, detailed analyses were undertaken of the participation and achievement in English, mathematics and science at the 1995 HSC, as part of the review of the HSC. These found that:

- in all areas of the State, girls had average English results around 25 per cent higher than those for boys. At higher levels of performance, the gap widens: two out of every three students in the top 30 per cent of all English candidates were girls;
- differences in SES and family education background were also reflected in the level of success in English. There are differences in English results across statistical divisions which match socioeconomic differences, overall and separately for boys and girls;
- girls from low socioeconomic areas performed as well as well as males in much higher socioeconomic areas;
- the differences in mean results in mathematics for girls and boys were almost indistinguishable. At higher levels of performance, 31.5 per cent of males were in the top 30 per cent compared with 28.5 per cent of females;
- in mathematics, metropolitan success rates tend to follow the pattern of SES and educational background;
- in high socioeconomic areas, there was a tendency for females to outperform males, having a higher rate of representation than males in the top 30 per cent of mathematics candidates;
- science had just over 34,000 students compared with 56,000 in English and 54,600 in mathematics. It is a more selective group, with smaller regional differences;
- the metropolitan success rate in science was very similar to that for mathematics. Some rural areas performed at the State average or better;
- the differences in mean results in science for females and males were almost indistinguishable, but favoured females. In the top 30 per cent, females had a slightly increased representation: 31.0 per cent of females were in the top 30 per cent and 29.0 per cent of males; and
- for students in the top 30 per cent of achievement in science, there is evidence of a greater gap between females and males resident in high socioeconomic areas. Typically, this was about five percentage points in favour of females.

Students who took the HSC examinations in 1995 were the first to have studied under the Pathways provisions, introduced for year 11 in 1994 to increase access to the HSC and allow greater choice in patterns of study. A preliminary evaluation of the flexible progression provisions revealed strong support within the educational community. Opportunities for accumulation and acceleration, part-time study, the ability to spend more time on particular subjects, increased choice of non-TER options, the opportunity to repeat courses and the ability to more readily combine school with outside commitments were all highly valued.

Changes were made to tertiary entrance requirements, with English, a component of mathematics-science-technology and a component of humanities-social science included in all students' TERs.

Participation in design and technology and computing studies courses at the HSC level increased and high enrolments in contemporary English continued.

Table 71: Unit enrolments for the HSC, New South Wales, 1995

Key learning area	*Percentage of total units*	*Number of Students*
English	18	54,129
Maths	20	53,088
Science	14	33,162
Human society and its environment	25	48,161
Technology and applied studies	9.5	26,238
Modern and classical Languages	3	7,523
Creative arts	6	15,545
PDHPE	3.5	12,814

Note: Figures represent the number of students satisfactorily completing one or more Board of Studies Developed, Centrally Endorsed or Content Endorsed courses within the key learning area at the 1995 HSC.

Source: New South Wales Department of School Education

In 1995, 2,400 year 11 students or four per cent were completing at least some HSC courses, 59 of them taking 11 or more units. There were also 105 year 10 students taking HSC courses, 95 of whom were taking just one or two units.

Reporting from Queensland on the attainment levels of year 12 students indicated two general trends. Firstly, that girls generally outperformed boys, particularly at the higher levels of achievement and secondly, few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students performed at the higher achievement levels.

In year 12 mathematics, a subject area which was specifically reported, results varied only marginally from the over-all trends. There were slightly greater proportions of girls performing in the higher achievement levels for Mathematics A, Mathematics C, Mathematics II , and Mathematics in Society. For Mathematics B and Mathematics I, the tendency was for boys and girls to perform equally well. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students tended to perform at much lower levels than other students.

Performance in numeracy was assessed on a Statewide basis by means of the Year 6 Numeracy Test. On all strands of that test:

- there were no gender differences;
- the mean for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was lower than the population mean; and
- students from non-English speaking backgrounds performed as well as the total population, although subsequent analyses of students in government schools showed that ESL students did not.

Reporting from Western Australia on the participation of students in subjects at year 10 and year 12 indicated that in year 12 accredited tertiary entrance examination (TEE) subjects, the five most selected subjects were English (51.5 per cent of TEE students), discrete mathematics (35.4 per cent), geography (30.3 per cent), human biology (27.2 per cent) and applicable mathematics (25.4 per cent). English and discrete mathematics were the most commonly selected subjects by both genders. Boys then opted for applicable mathematics, geography and physics, while girls chose human biology, geography and history. Girls' participation rate in physics was one-third of the rate for boys, but in art the rate was more than double the boys' rate.

Significant senior secondary curriculum developments were reported by way of courses in Australian studies, political and legal studies and modern history. Other areas where a degree of priority was noted included Aboriginal studies and Asian studies. The latter is of particular importance for providing a background to Asian LOTE acquisition, the subject of rapid expansion resulting from additional funding through the NALSAS strategy.

10.3 Key curriculum developments

Government schools in New South Wales recognised the changing needs of their student populations and made significant changes to accommodate a more diverse HSC candidature. School review reports during 1995 indicated that there was almost universal satisfaction with school initiatives to increase the number of courses offered to senior students. In geographically isolated areas, parents were grateful for the additional opportunities provided for students to gain access to quality courses through telematics and distance education.

Quality assurance reviews of government schools also found that students, teachers and parents were generally satisfied with the outcomes achieved by students. The reviews showed that parental and community perceptions of schools, teachers and school programs were positive; the learning environment in schools was safe, caring, supportive and conducive to student learning; and schools had broadened their base for planning and decision-making to take account of the views of staff, parents and students

with parent involvement in the day-to-day operation of schools widespread, particularly in primary schools.

After the release of the Eltis Report on the review of outcomes and profiles in New South Wales schooling in August 1995, work began on implementation of the recommendations, which included:

- that the pace of curriculum changes and its effect on classrooms and teacher workloads;
- that outcomes need to be firmly based on the content of the Board's syllabuses, and that the number of outcomes needs to be reduced;
- that the Board is no longer required to incorporate the national profiles in syllabuses;
- that outcomes will be organised in stages rather than levels;
- that schools will need to have more useful support materials and work samples; and
- that the timeline for the release of some syllabuses should be clarified and extended.

The Board consulted extensively on the redevelopment of outcomes for K–10 syllabuses. Work continued in primary schools in all systems on improving the measurement and reporting of syllabus outcomes.

Key 1995 developments and achievements reported from the Queensland government school sector included work in a broad range of curriculum areas, with the potential to impact on students at all levels. These included:

- development of *Workplace Health and Safety Curriculum (Policy and Guidelines);*
- development of a policy on drug education and its distribution to schools;
- redrafting of the Student Performance Standards in English;
- preparation of distance education materials in LOTE for years 6, 7 and 8 students;
- development of a framework for a year 3 LOTE program;
- completion of science safety modules;
- development of a CD-ROM for teacher professional development to support the implementation of Student Performance Standards in mathematics;
- completion of work on the marine studies senior syllabus;
- development of a media curriculum guide for years 1–10; and
- development of an art program, Living by Design, for primary schools.

Western Australia reported on a range of initiatives which had been implemented in mathematics:

- trialling of the mathematics component of the outcome statements, with one trial giving valuable information on the relationship of the statements to the needs and experiences of Aboriginal students and communities;
- First Steps in Mathematics started in January 1995 and aimed to produce significant improvements in outcomes for primary students in a similar manner to First Steps in Literacy, which has been operating since 1989; and
- work began on a numeracy strategy to support schools as they sought to improve students' capacities to use mathematics effectively and efficiently in a wide range of contexts.

A similar range of initiatives was evident in science and these included:

- emphasis during the first year of the $5.5m Science Project, which aimed to improve science provision in schools, was on establishing structures, training leaders and trialling programs ready for 1996–98;
- in secondary schools, the focus was on providing professional development for experienced teachers and supporting them in generating change in teaching practices through reflection and school-based action;
- there were increases in enrolments of 44 per cent in year 12 senior science (a non-TEE subject), partly because of its inclusion in the range of selection criteria for entry to TAFE colleges; and
- as a result of trialling, the Working Scientifically strand and four conceptual strands of the outcome statements are to be further developed.

In the Australian Capital Territory implementation of course frameworks in government colleges and the assessment and reporting arrangements under those frameworks will address the need to report on student outcomes across the learning areas. Courses accredited under the frameworks include agreed standards by which student performance is assessed. These standards will be used to report outcomes on a system-wide basis through the *Year 12 Study*, which is published annually by the Department of Education and Training.

Implementation of the new system is planned for 1997, with reporting to commence from 1998. Initially data will be stored and reported at the college level, but system-wide reporting is expected by 1999. The introduction of student assessment and reporting on literacy and numeracy in primary schools will provide data on student outcomes in those learning areas. The data will be used at the system, school and class levels to inform curriculum development and to identify professional development needs.

10.4 Third International Mathematics and Science Study

1995 saw the completion of the testing program in Australia for the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Australia is participating in this large and ambitious study of comparative educational achievement along with 44 other countries. The broad objective is to identify curriculum, instructional and other variables related to differences in student achievement in school-level mathematics and science.

The two younger cohorts of Australian students participating in TIMSS, 9 year olds ('Population 1') and 13 year olds ('Population 2'), were tested in late 1994. The older cohort, year 12 students ('Population 3'), was tested in 1995. Overall, more than 30,000 Australian students from all States and from both government and non-government schools took part in the tests and completed a questionnaire about themselves and their studies.

A smaller group of Population 1 and 2 students, (approximately 1,100), also took part in performance assessment (or hands-on) tasks. This was quite an innovative aspect of TIMSS compared with earlier international studies. Teachers and schools also provided information on curriculum and teaching practice which will be analysed with the student results.

The first Australian reports on the study are to be released in November 1996, and the first international reports are scheduled for publication at the same time.

10.5 Establishment of the NALSAS strategy

While the proportion of students enrolled in a LOTE as a percentage of the total year 12 population has been stable for many years at around 12.0 to 14.5 per cent (reflecting enrolments of around 20–25,000 students each year), there have been changes in the relative popularity of the main languages. In particular, the European languages (French, German and Italian) have declined while Asian languages, particularly Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian and Vietnamese, have increased their enrolments both numerically and as a proportion of the total LOTE enrolments (see Table 71). Since 1993, Japanese has been the language with the highest number of enrolments.

Table 72. Percentage of year 12 LOTE enrolments in the five most popular languages, 1991–1995

Subject	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*
French	24	20	19	17	18
Japanese	15	18	19	20	21
German	14	12	11	10	11
Italian	12	10	9	9	9
Chinese	9	11	10	11	10
Other	26	29	32	33	31

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

The NALSAS strategy was developed in response to the COAG Working Party 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 the learning of four key Asian languages: Chinese (Mandarin); Indonesian; Japanese; and Korean – as well as to promote the study of Asia 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 is funded jointly by the Commonwealth and the States.

The MCEETYA 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 the Catholic and independent sectors. A Secretariat, hosted by the Department of Education, Queensland has been established. During 1995 the Taskforce developed a detailed implementation plan which identified all recommendations of the COAG Working Party report and outlined the actions planned for each. Projects undertaken included:

- an audit of materials available for the studies of Asia in the key learning areas of English, the arts, and SOSE;

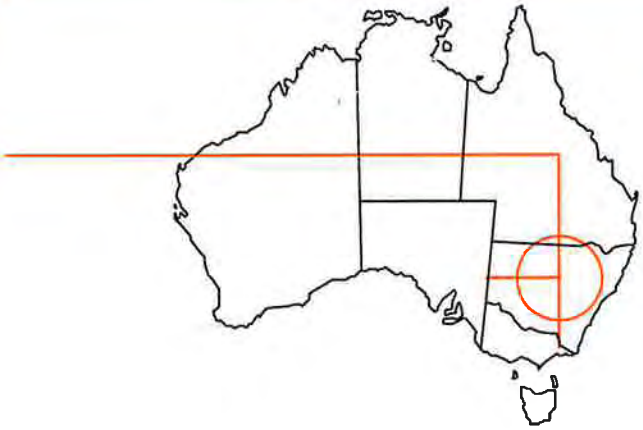
Students at Driver Primary School, Palmerston, NT, participate in an Indonesian lesson in the school's Indonesian classroom.

- an Asian studies symposium, which provided an opportunity for academics and all schools education
- jurisdictions to have input into the Asian studies aspect of the NALSAS strategy;
- letting of National Priority (Reserve) Fund tenders for the development and piloting of distance mode courses for teachers of Japanese, Indonesian and Korean; and
- letting of a tender for the development of generic student proficiency outcomes and Japanese descriptors.

Work has also commenced on the Information and the Young Australians in Asia aspects of the strategy and the investigation into the curriculum materials needed to support Asian languages and the studies of Asia in schools.

It is anticipated that the future work of the Taskforce will investigate numerous issues, including the development of a distance mode course for teachers of Chinese, curriculum materials to support the effective learning and teaching of Asian languages and the studies of Asia in schools and the professional development needs for teachers of the studies of Asia. Furthermore, student proficiency outcomes for Indonesian, Chinese and Korean, issues relating to teachers language proficiency, teacher exchange/placement programs and the concept of levels of Asia literacy and pointers to these are to be investigated.

NEW SOUTH WALES



Introduction

In New South Wales, the *Education Reform Act, 1990* legislates compulsory school attendance for children from the age of six years 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 years 7 to year 12. Although schooling is compulsory for children only from the age of six until they turn 15, most begin school at age five.

In 1995 there were 1,055,866 full-time students attending 3,055 schools in New South Wales. This represented 34 per cent of all Australian school students, an increase of 4,017 students since 1994. There were 68,146 teaching staff, an increase of 2.9 per cent on 1994.

Department of School Education

The Department of School Education administered 2,190 government schools serving 755,252 students which was some 72 per cent of all New South Wales students.

The Department produced an annual priorities document to communicate its plans to the education community. Schools incorporated the priorities as appropriate in their own plans. In this way, the priorities became the key element in system-wide planning and guided schools and administrative units in the development of their annual plans, the application of budgets and the monitoring of progress. The priorities for government schools were:

- 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; and
- happy and safe schools: ensuring schools are ordered, happy and secure places, where effective teaching and learning can take place.

Catholic schools

There were 591 Catholic schools serving 217,642 students. Catholic schools, whether diocesan administered (systemic) or congregational (non-systemic), expressed a common purpose to offer an education which fosters the growth of the person towards full realisation of their total potential. This included the dimensions of intellectual, cultural, social, physical and spiritual development and sought to transmit a wholesome appreciation of the past and establish a value system for the young, preparing them for adult life and growth to full stature in Christ. Particular attention was paid to assisting students in need and providing opportunities for them to achieve confidence, self-esteem and full development of their talents. Catholic schools shared actively in the evangelising mission of the Church through structured teaching of doctrine, the integration of faith and culture in their whole curriculum and through the influence of teachers who strove to exemplify the Gospel values for their students. The priority objectives included:

- to support each school as a Catholic faith community in which practices and the school climate are conducive to ongoing faith development;
- to make central to the policies and practices of each school, principles of social justice, particularly those embodied in the Church's preferential option for the poor;

- to develop each student's ability to learn, to think critically and creatively and to communicate effectively;
- to develop, implement and regularly evaluate curriculum which is focused on the student and structured around key learning areas and their stated outcomes;
- to develop, in each school, programs and structures which cater for students with special needs;
- to develop, in each school, programs and structures which cater for the pastoral needs of all students; and
- to make provision for post-compulsory students in the context of the changing roles and relationships between secondary and tertiary education and industry.

Independent schools

There were 274 independent schools (including Anglican systemic schools) serving 82,922 students. Independent schools framed their priority objectives against a background of specific religious or educational philosophy. They aimed to provide a foundation for further learning, to foster an independence of mind and create opportunities for problem solving. Other priority objectives included the development of school facilities, the enhancement of staff skills through training and appraisals, reduction in class sizes and increased overall enrolments. A number of schools were, however, having difficulty putting strategies into place to achieve some of these objectives owing to the financial impact of drought and economic conditions on the families of their students.

Most schools focused on curriculum development, improvements in literacy and numeracy learning outcomes and cross-curricular development of competence in the key learning areas, as priority objectives for the year. The individual development of each student was considered germane to the majority of schools and they tended to focus on specific projects such as peer tutoring and self-confidence improvement schemes as well as conversion of school structure from year levels to stages as a means of achieving their objectives. Almost one-third of independent schools indicated that improved discipline and motivation were priority objectives which they elected to achieve by, amongst other things, improving student study habits.

New South Wales Board of Studies

The New South Wales Board of Studies is responsible for the development of K–12 curriculum and curriculum support materials, the conduct of the School Certificate and the HSC examinations and the registration of non-government schools.

The Board's priority objectives for 1995 included:

- an evaluation of flexible progression under HSC Pathways;
- the implementation of recommendations from the Eltis Report on the review of outcomes and profiles in New South Wales schooling;
- completion of a curriculum and credentialling package for students with special needs;
- the introduction of new courses and related initiatives in the area of vocational education;
- the development of a primary curriculum framework and a set of guiding principles for the primary curriculum;
- project-based syllabus development; and
- endorsement of a Statement of Equity Principles to guide curriculum development.

These priorities of the different systems and of the Board of Studies had been influenced by the Common and Agreed National Goals.

Initiatives undertaken by the State in 1995

A new Labor Government was elected in March 1995. The portfolios responsible for education and training were combined under a single portfolio for Education and Training headed by the Hon. John Aquilina, MP. The first year of the Government was characterised by the establishment of a series of comprehensive reviews designed to establish the foundation for substantial improvements in the provision of public education.

Review of outcomes and profiles

A review of the implementation of outcomes and profiles in New South Wales schools was undertaken by a panel chaired by Professor Ken Eltis. The panel was asked to look at the quality of the outcomes statements, the amount of work involved for teachers and the timelines for implementation.

Consultation by the review panel was extensive. Its members visited schools, held public forums and received 568 submissions from individuals, schools and organisations.

The report of the review, *Focusing on Learning: Report of the Review of Outcomes and Profiles in NSW Schooling,*

was released by the Minister in September, 1995. The findings showed widespread support for the focus on outcomes to improve teaching and learning. They also revealed concern about the pace of change and the workloads of teachers.

The main findings of the report, which is commonly referred to as the Eltis Report, were:

- outcomes, content and standards: New South Wales syllabuses should be the foundation for curriculum content in New South Wales. A manageable number of outcomes should be developed for each syllabus and these outcomes are to be related to the five stages of compulsory schooling in New South Wales and are to describe explicitly the content expected to be learned by students at each stage;
- national curriculum framework: the report recommended that the Board of Studies be no longer required to incorporate national profiles directly into New South Wales syllabuses. New South Wales is to continue to participate in and provide leadership for national curriculum projects, and support documents are to show how student work in stages can be linked to the national levels;
- primary curriculum: considerable support was generated for the English K–6 syllabus, but teachers generally expressed concern about the terminology of functional grammar. The report recommended that the English syllabus should continue to be implemented in 1996–97 with functional grammar terminology no longer a mandatory component. The multiple demands placed on primary teachers were noted and recommendations made on the publication of a timeline for primary syllabus development. First priority is to be given to revising the English K–6 syllabus, which is to be revised by 1998, and to developing a limited number of outcomes for the mathematics K–6 syllabus; and
- secondary curriculum: secondary syllabuses, as they come up for review, should be re-written to include outcomes in stages. Priority for this development is to be given to English, mathematics, science, history and geography.

The Government, which had made election commitments to review the vague curriculum content and unnecessary paperwork involved in profiles and outcomes reporting, welcomed the Eltis Report and its recommendations.

Review of the Higher School Certificate

In August the Minister announced that there would be a Government review into the HSC. The review is based on the following principles:

- the retention of the HSC as a rigorous, competitive, externally based end-of-school credential;
- a scaling system that is fair, transparent and capable of being clearly explained;
- a reporting system that is free of bias against particular subjects, groups of subjects or candidates; and
- a qualification that is sufficiently broad-based to provide a quality grounding in knowledge and skills for tertiary study while, at the same time, providing an appropriate platform for students wishing to pursue vocational training.

Following the first phase of the review, a Green Paper will be released.

Restructuring of the Department of School Education

The Minister announced a restructuring of the Department in August 1995 which began immediately and is to be fully in effect by December 1996. The restructure was designed to eliminate administrative duplication and waste, and to improve the quality and range of services provided locally to schools. The restructure involved changing the existing organisational structure of clusters, regions and State office into a simplified structure of districts and State office. Schools have been grouped into 40 school districts, each with a district office, a superintendent and support staff. The districts will provide significantly enhanced support for teachers and schools.

The number of staff directly providing training and development, curriculum advice and other support to schools has been increased substantially. District offices have an average of 20 staff, including at least four curriculum consultants, a district guidance officer, a technology adviser, a home-school liaison officer, special education support staff, a staff welfare officer, salaries and personnel enquiries staff, and a school buildings and maintenance officer. The provision of additional personnel is dependent upon the particular needs of a district's schools. For example, Aboriginal education consultants

will be distributed among districts according to need. Staff supporting the creative arts and sport are located in State and district offices and will play an important role in the build up to the Sydney Olympics and the Cultural Olympiad.

The change process will be implemented in full consultation with unions, affected parties and all interest groups. District offices were established with a core staff from the start of term 4, 1995.

Developments in the use of technology

In 1995 the Government announced its Computers in Schools Policy, which is a major initiative aimed at preparing schools and students for the 21st century. It is a four-year program to ensure that students, teachers and parents have the knowledge and skills to use technology effectively to enhance teaching and learning. Equitable access will be provided to computer resources, and computer education will be integral to all key learning areas. The policy is supported by a comprehensive, co-ordinated strategy for the use of technology to support teaching and learning. Key aspects include the connection of schools to the Internet, training for teachers in the use of technology, the development of curriculum support materials, additional staff resources to support technology and the provision of additional computer resources to schools.

The use of computers in NSW schools is expanding, including the introduction of a program to connect all schools to the Internet.

A comprehensive curriculum structure exists for students to learn about technology. Science and Technology K–6 provides a foundation for the study of technology in secondary schools. In years 7–10, 200 hours study of design and technology is a core requirement for the award of the School Certificate and the course includes a mandatory study of computing. Enrolments in the technology and applied studies key learning area have grown in recent years to 12 per cent of all units studied for the HSC.

The connection of all government schools to the Internet began in the second half of 1995 when a pilot involving the connection of 66 schools was established. The pilot was designed to assess technical and policy issues relating to schools accessing the Internet. The information obtained through the pilot will form the basis for the expansion of Internet access to all government schools. All other government schools will be connected to the Internet by the end of 1996.

Development began on a 30 hour training program for teachers in the use of computers and associated communication technologies across the key learning areas and 15,000 teachers will have completed the course by the end of 1998.

Technology adviser positions were established in each of the 40 district offices. These advisers will lead the training and development of teachers in the use of computers in the classroom and will provide technical advice to schools. Additional staff resources will be provided to schools to assist them in the integration of technology across the curriculum.

The distribution of additional computer resources, other than those involved with the Internet program, will begin in the second half of 1996. The additional resources will be targeted at schools most in need, having regard to existing resource levels, each school's socioeconomic and cultural context, the level of community support and the Department's strategic priorities.

The program to provide 1,200 non-metropolitan schools with access to satellite and telecommunications technologies was completed in 1995.

Education Reform Amendment (School Discipline) Act

This amendment relates to the discipline of students in government and non-government schools and, in particular, ensures that official school policies relating to discipline do not permit corporal punishment of students in those schools. The amendment comes into force on 21 December 1996.

The removal of the option of corporal punishment was balanced by allowing students to undertake tasks as restitution for inappropriate behaviour. The amendment

permits reasonable forms of punishment or correction including requiring students to perform any reasonable work or service for the school.

Capital projects

In the 1994–95 financial year, expenditure of $202.9 million on an accrual basis and $201.8 million on a cash basis was incurred by the Department on capital projects. These funds were applied toward building works, land acquisitions and the purchase and installation of equipment. The Commonwealth provided $70.28 million to government schools of which $21.53 million was used for new student places and $47.96 million was used to improve existing places. Of the capital projects funded by the Commonwealth, eight were completed both physically and financially during 1995. The most common types of work undertaken were the replacement of old or outdated facilities by the provision of whole replacement schools, the provision of multi-purpose centres in secondary schools and the upgrading of older primary schools with new toilets, classrooms and staff facilities.

The Commonwealth provided $27.41 million in capital works funding to Catholic schools. This included $8.63 million under the QCaTS Element to help broaden the secondary curriculum. Of the 57 projects in the Catholic sector completed both physically and financially during 1995, the most common types of work undertaken and facilities provided were the provision of classrooms, science laboratories, and technology and design work areas in secondary schools; upgrading of libraries in both primary and secondary schools and the installation of networks linking schools to improve curriculum implementation and school administration. The Commonwealth provided $8.01 million towards capital projects in independent schools where 21 projects were completed.

Focus areas

Major developments occurred in New South Wales schools in each of the four focus areas during 1995. The rapid expansion of vocational education continued as part of moves to make the provision of post-compulsory education more meaningful and relevant to all students and to provide a wider variety of pathways in education and training.

In the area of gender equity, attention shifted towards the needs of boys although it was recognised that despite significant improvements in outcomes, the needs of all groups of girls were still not being met.

Literacy and the development of basic skills have been long term goals of all systems and major advances were made during the year, particularly in the targeting of early literacy programs.

The PDHPE key learning area continued to expand with emphasis on the provision of a wider range of senior courses. There was increased participation of students in programs to maintain and improve fitness.

Vocational education

New South Wales has traditionally had a larger TAFE sector than other States and the developments during 1995 in school-based vocational education further expanded young people's opportunities for training.

In making provision for vocational education in post-compulsory schooling, the Board of Studies has been concerned to ensure that vocational courses are undertaken as part of a broad general education. Pattern of study requirements for the HSC are designed to allow students to develop a variety of post-school options, while also undertaking accredited vocational courses.

A key requirement of all vocational courses offered for the HSC is that they be dual accredited, that is, accredited by the Board of Studies as units of study for the HSC, and accredited by the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) as meeting industry requirements. This means that vocational courses offered in New South Wales schools have widespread industry recognition and dual credentialling, and they provide advanced standing for further vocational studies.

Additionally, results from some vocational courses are able to be included in the calculation of the TER. Three of these courses: accounting, electronics technology and travel, are delivered to secondary students by TAFE under the Joint Secondary Schools/TAFE (JSSTAFE) Program. Another course, industry studies, is delivered by schools and examined as part of the HSC.

Wherever possible, vocational HSC courses are based on national training curricula. Industry areas are selected on the basis of factors such as likely student demand, availability of national modules, capacity of schools to deliver (for example, teacher qualifications, physical resources, availability of work placements), geographical spread of the industry, labour market prospects, and suitability for secondary students.

Most vocational HSC courses are centrally developed by the Board or TAFE. This ensures that consultation occurs with relevant parties and that all VETAB requirements can be met.

Procedures have been established to maintain equity in the provision of vocational education. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have absolute preference for enrolment in JSSTAFE courses provided they meet entry requirements. Subsidies for travel to JSSTAFE courses are provided for students in rural areas.

Students with disabilities are accommodated in school vocational courses and JSSTAFE courses. There are also transition education programs in which students complete specially adapted TAFE vocational courses as part of individually designed vocational education programs.

A Vocational Education Directorate was created when the Department restructured during 1995. The Directorate focuses on key issues in vocational education such as teacher training, equity and work placement issues. It has Statewide responsibility for the implementation of vocational education courses in government schools and all monitoring and quality assurance requirements. The JSSTAFE Program remained the largest category of vocational education provision in government schools although school-based course delivery expanded rapidly. There was also a small number of schools using private training providers to deliver part or all of a vocational HSC course.

The growth of vocational education continued in Catholic schools at a significant rate. For example, in the Broken Bay Diocese, the growth was reflected in the level of teacher training provided at senior schools and the excellent results of candidates in the HSC. Many students involved in vocational education courses were offered full-time employment as a direct result of their work placement experience. Enthusiastic participation by teachers in training programs enabled schools to expand their provision of vocational education courses.

Independent schools offered a wide range of both general and recognised vocational education programs, mainly through TAFE. For some students the distance from TAFE locations made access time consuming and costly.

The benefits of vocational education for senior students in all systems were many and varied. They included: enhanced student motivation; improved links between schools and the labour market; students remaining at school through years 11 and 12 who would not otherwise have done so; and clarification in career planning among students as well as better access to a wider range of career choices. There were improvements in key competencies among students from special populations.

Increasing numbers of students elected to undertake school-delivered vocational education courses which placed extra demands on the resources of schools. Workplace co-ordination remained a significant issue, as did coordination of on-the-job and off-the-job training.

Gender equity

Programs to address gender equity imbalances were put in place by schools in all systems. The government system, in consultation with peak educational groups, commenced development of a gender equity strategy to address the needs of all groups of girls and all groups of boys. This strategy will be released in the first half of 1996.

Work was undertaken on a number of initiatives to support girls at risk of not completing their schooling. These included a Young Mothers in Education Project with a professional development package for the school community comprising posters and pamphlets.

Other resources developed for gender equity programs included a video entitled Only a Lunch Pass? and Body Image curriculum materials. The Eliminating Sex-Based Harassment Primary School Pilot Project provided examples of good practice in this area.

Work in Catholic schools included a significant paper published by the Parramatta Diocese. The paper recommended that gender equity issues be addressed comprehensively at the school level through the school review and development cycle.

Most independent schools reported that by emphasising the individual, equity issues were minimised. Participation in school subjects and programs was driven more by student needs and interests than by gender and many schools noted that traditional views of gender roles in their communities were gradually shifting. Several schools actively encouraged girls to participate in non-traditional subjects and areas in order to facilitate their choice of further studies beyond those previously chosen. A number of schools offered non-gender specific sports to increase female participation in sporting activities.

The Board of Studies completed a study of the difference over time in male and female performance at HSC. This indicated that females have made strong gains in scholastic achievement since 1982, with improvement particularly

marked since 1991. Of the major subjects, the study found that the largest differences were in English. Females also outperformed males in human society and its environment, LOTE, the creative arts, and PDHPE. In mathematics, science and technological and applied studies, females obtained a higher mean score in the majority of courses. The substantial improvement by females had occurred in all parts of the State, in all school systems, and in both co-educational and single-sex schools within these systems.

The Board subsequently established a Gender Equity Committee to examine the effect of gender on school participation and outcomes.

The Board's Statement of Equity Principles requires that syllabus and support materials should:

- encourage all students to reflect critically upon social institutions and processes, including those associated with gender;
- provide opportunities to increase student understanding of how gender and sexuality are constructed;
- include knowledge and skill content that equally values the achievements of males and females; and
- enable girls and boys to acquire an understanding about sex-based harassment.

A Department paper, *Reaching for Consensus on Gender Equity: The NSW Experience,* was presented to the national Promoting Gender Equity Conference. The paper highlighted the complexities associated with developing a gender equity strategy and programs that would address the needs of all groups of girls and all groups of boys within the system. It provided a model that acknowledged the interrelated nature of gender, SES, ethnicity, indigenous background, disability and sexuality in the lives of students.

Students, teachers and consultancy staff within the Department were introduced, through a series of activities, to the latest research in gender equity. There was a focus on the construction of gender and its educational impact on mathematics and physics. Evaluation of this work identified the need for ongoing in-service support, a whole school-community approach to gender equity and 'backlash' concerns about boys.

Parents have been actively involved in providing comments on Department proposals for the development of a gender equity strategy. Several local networks included parent members who contributed to the overall direction of gender education in their part of the State. Many schools invited parents to participate in school development days with a gender equity focus. Planning took place in some independent schools to expand the role of parents in gender equity initiatives.

Catholic dioceses and schools increasingly addressed the issues of gender equity within the broad curriculum framework. Lighthouse projects were undertaken to address the perceived equity imbalances within boys education, including some which involved primary and secondary schools along with tertiary institutions.

A problem area for male students in independent schools was perceived to be the detrimental impact on boys' self-esteem arising from poor academic results. This problem was partially addressed by early identification and remediation of literacy difficulties and more immediately by encouraging sporting achievement to redress the balance. To counter a poor image among boys of non-achievement and anti-cooperation in the creative arts, many schools encouraged boys' participation in the humanities and communication subjects and recognised the need for male role models by recruiting male teachers, counsellors and other staff.

Some independent schools introduced behaviour management programs that provided skills in non-violent conflict resolution to address feelings of alienation and disenfranchisement among boys affected by the unemployment of their parents (particularly fathers) and the resultant disintegration of family roles and structures. Many schools encouraged parental attendance at seminars such as parenting boys and involvement in professional development programs at the school. Parental recognition of student achievement was perceived as a critical factor in achieving gender equity and reports on achievements and the ongoing progress of students were formally communicated in regular parent-teacher interviews.

The Department's new gender equity strategy will encourage teachers to become familiar with issues surrounding the construction of gender and encourage schools to look carefully at the full range of school activities to determine which groups of girls and which groups of boys benefit least from their schooling.

The strategy will focus on teaching and learning issues, school climate, school organisation and parent, care-giver, community and school interactions. Thus the strategy will guide schools in:

- addressing the need for education about gender issues in the mainstream curriculum;

- collecting data relating to the impact of gender construction on the educational performance of both girls and boys, including their inclusion in remedial programs of both an academic and behavioural nature;
- initiating programs relating to gender issues and best practice; and
- engaging parents, care-givers and community members in dialogue with schools and State office about gender issues and their impact on the educational outcomes of both girls and boys.

Literacy

Following the change of government in March 1995, a pause was announced on the new English K–6 syllabus while a review of outcomes and profiles was conducted by the Eltis Committee. The review recommended to the Minister that the English K–6 syllabus should be implemented. However, it will be revised so that there are fewer outcomes and the outcomes are in stages rather than the national levels. The functional grammar terminology is to be replaced by conventional terminology.

As a result of the Eltis Review, the Board of Studies established a committee to investigate teachers' experience of using the English K–6 syllabus. This committee will report to the Board in the second half of 1996 with recommendations relating to the revision of the syllabus document and its accompanying support materials.

A writing brief was developed for the revision of the English 7–10 syllabus. This will take into account the revisions of the English K–6 syllabus and the final draft of the English Stage 6 syllabus. The draft English Stage 6 syllabus is a comprehensive document based on a core study which includes literature, non-fiction and film, and an extensive range of electives which provides for study of literature in various forms: media, film and multimedia. The draft syllabus also provides for students to work at a higher level, developing a major work which may be a creative work or an extended piece of critical analysis.

The importance attached to literacy in the senior years of schooling was demonstrated by the determination that English would be the only mandatory subject to be included in a student's HSC Tertiary Entrance Score.

Early literacy support was a priority area in all systems. In the Department early intervention programs, parent training and teacher development formed part of the overall strategy to address early literacy development. Early intervention programs for students at risk provided specific support early in their schooling. The Early Learning Program ensured the participation of students with disabilities or severe learning or behaviour difficulties (K–2) in mainstream classes.

Early learning profiles were developed to assist teachers to recognise and address the early literacy and numeracy of students and to better support children's learning in the transition from home and pre-school to kindergarten. These were used by kindergarten teachers to improve the teaching and learning process and to provide information about student achievement.

Parent training programs provided links between home and school literacy development. The Parents as Teachers program helped parents to promote children's language development (0–3 years). The Talk to a Literacy Learner (TTALL) program increased parent participation in children's literacy activities (0–12 years).

English K–6 support material provided to teachers included models of exemplary teaching practice and literacy strategies to support the needs of diverse learners. The Learning Assistance Support Team (LAST) project assisted teachers to identify and provide for students with difficulties in learning.

The Reading Recovery program assisted government school students experiencing difficulties in learning to read and write after one year at school. Students selected for the program received 30 minutes of individual teaching daily with a Reading Recovery teacher.

Over 550 Reading Recovery teachers had been trained by the end of 1995 and over 9,000 children were involved in the program. An evaluation of students who had completed the program showed that some 90 per cent completed the program having reached average class levels or above, and ten per cent were referred to other services for further support.

Under the Government's commitment to increase access for targeted schools to Reading Recovery, an additional 400 teaching positions will be provided in government schools over the next four years. These will be introduced at the rate of 100 each year, commencing in 1996.

In Catholic schools, the Reading Recovery and First Steps programs, together with some early literacy programs developed by individual dioceses, continued to be significant. Schools emphasised students participating in appropriate learning experiences for their phase of development. There was a greater emphasis on integrating educational experiences from year to year, and parents were

empowered to become more effective in assisting their children in developing literacy skills. In the secondary area, a three-month project in reviewing assessment and reporting was carried out. The purpose of the review was to map existing practice in order to determine how schools are assessing literacy in the compulsory years. The resultant paper will serve as a basis for working with secondary schools on literacy enhancement.

Over half the independent schools reported a major focus on literacy, English communications and related topics. The importance of early intervention in improving literacy outcomes was a recurring theme. Parents played an integral part in literacy initiatives in most schools and their roles varied from classroom participation to active encouragement of students at home.

Schools from all systems were involved in literacy initiatives through the NPDP. In the 1995 BST in government schools, 60 per cent of year 3 students were in the top two skill bands for literacy. In the year 5 tests 68 per cent of students were in the top two skill bands for literacy. The gap between year 3 and year 5 students from non-English backgrounds and the State literacy mean score was further reduced. The Parramatta Diocese participated in the BST program which is administered by the Department. Approximately 20 per cent of independent schools participated in the BST. The schools used the information for a variety of program and informational purposes and to discuss the test results with parents.

Physical development, health and fitness

A Ministerial discussion paper, *Physical Activity in the School Curriculum,* was developed. The paper canvassed the opinions of teachers and experts in the health and fitness fields concerning strategies to best develop student fitness. The paper examined the relationship between physical education and sport in the school curriculum; the mix of theory and exercise within the PDHPE curriculum, and the minimum hours of physical activity that should be specified within the study of PDHPE for primary and secondary school students.

Schools in New South Wales are required to offer significant programs of study in PDHPE. The Board's Consultation Draft Syllabus 1992 was used extensively as the basis for primary school programs. Work began on the development of a fitness syllabus module for distribution to all schools. This module will act as a consultative trial to inform the development of the final K–6 PDHPE syllabus. The Board of Studies commenced work on a teaching kit containing a series of books with teaching strategies suitable for K–6 teachers. This kit is designed to support programs related to safe living, interpersonal relationships, and growth and development.

The 1995 year 10 cohort was the first cohort to complete 300 hours in PDHPE as a mandatory School Certificate requirement for all year 7–10 students. The syllabus requires a comprehensive treatment of all areas, and students must study PDHPE in each of years 7–10 to allow for student maturation and to maintain physical fitness.

A volume of the years 7–10 teaching kit to support teaching of the content strand, Active Lifestyle, was published. Development commenced of a Content Endorsed Course in exercise and sports studies to enable schools to give additional study options to year 9 and 10 students. This course aims to reflect the best features of school-developed courses currently submitted to the Board for endorsement and provides a curriculum context for increased physical activity in schools.

At the 1995 HSC 5 per cent of all units studied were in the PDHPE key learning area. This was in line with the expansion of courses in the area. The HSC courses attracted equal numbers of boys and girls. Available options included the two unit PDHPE course and the Stage 6 Content Endorsed Courses: Skills for Living; and Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation.

Catholic schools implemented a range of approaches including increasing the professional development of teachers in areas such as skills teaching, the games approach, programming for primary teachers, drug education and road safety.

The development of physical education, sport and lifestyle programs was a major initiative in NSW in 1995.

In Catholic secondary schools, the Handle with Care package for years 10, 11 and 12 was introduced and a modified 25 hour course focusing on young driver issues was piloted for use in 1996. All systems benefited from the support given to road safety education by the Roads and Traffic Authority, NSW.

Almost all independent schools addressed the following topics in courses relating to this learning area: personal health and fitness; creative use of leisure; development of self-esteem and self-confidence; respect for others; analytical and decision-making skills; and moral and ethical judgements. The last five topics were also covered in courses from other learning areas and frequently formed a part of the hidden curriculum that underpinned the ethos of a school. Moral principles and related issues were specifically addressed in religious and philosophical courses with health topics frequently included as topics in science and social studies. Creative use of leisure was also developed in after-school activities such as sport, special interest clubs, craft and recreation generally.

Increased emphasis was given in independent schools to fitness (remediation for motor skills through the integration of physical education, health and sport), safety (drug education, HIV/AIDS) and life skills (death and dying, risk taking and personal awareness). Professional development covered physical education/sport, health management and personal development and included activities such as obtaining national coaching accreditation in swimming and attending workshops and seminars on Rethinking Drinking, and asthma management.

Teachers from all systems upgraded their skills in Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and first aid in order to adequately supervise students on excursions and at sport.

New South Wales was involved in a number of national initiatives. A New South Wales reference group for the National Nutrition Education in Schools project provided advice on professional development materials. The NIDE project involved collaboration of the Department, NSW Police Service, NSW Department of Health and parent groups. A needs assessment conducted nationally as part of this project indicated a requirement to provide professional development for teachers in a harm minimisation approach to drug education and the development of cannabis education materials.

The Government has a strong commitment to preventative drug education and announced an increase in funding of $1 million per year for the next five years. Initiatives will be developed that will better target special groups such as students at risk of harmful drug use, Aboriginal students and their communities and isolated and rural students.

Teacher professional development in drug education in Catholic schools focused on raising the awareness of teachers of the harm minimisation approach to drug education. An important initiative was the promotion of the resource, Rethinking Drinking.

HIV/AIDS education was a mandatory component of the PDHPE curriculum. The Department continued HIV/AIDS education programs in every secondary school and increasingly in primary schools.

The Department supported the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation in drafting a NSW Junior Sport Policy, based on the National Junior Sport Policy.

The Department managed a joint project across the education systems and the NSW Department of Health to raise awareness of the health promoting school framework. A document, *Towards a Health Promoting School,* included strategies and case studies to support schools in adopting the health promoting school concept.

The Government commitment to improving student fitness and drug education has raised the need to review minimum time allocations for physical activity in the school curriculum. Issues that emerge as a result of this include targeting teacher support to these areas of the PDHPE curriculum, especially for primary schools; the need to collect accurate information on the levels of student fitness and skill development; establishing a minimum time allocation for physical activity within the PDHPE curriculum; and identifying and supporting students at risk (for example, Aboriginal students and drug use, girls and fitness).

The introduction of syllabuses containing outcomes in stages will be an issue demanding significant attention in the PDHPE key learning areas. This will involve guidance and support to schools about planning, teaching, assessing and reporting using outcomes.

VICTORIA

The three school sectors in Victoria share many policy directions, strategies and activities. Although the information contained in this chapter mostly relates specifically to each sector, the extent of cooperation between sectors is at a high level and has contributed considerably to the success of many educational initiatives.

Government sector

Mission

The mission of the Department of Education is to help all young Victorians achieve their full potential at school so that they can create the best future for themselves.

Goals

In order to improve practices in school education in line with worldwide benchmarks, five goals have been identified. They are to:

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

Major achievements in 1995

The major achievements of the Directorate of School Education during 1995 included:

- induction of 1,715 of 1,717 schools into the Schools of the Future program;
- enhancement of Schools of the Future by application of major business process re-engineering. This has resulted in the development of CASES (Computerised Administration Systems Environment for Schools) into a fully functioned school-based administrative system. This has reduced the level of tasks performed by the centre on behalf of schools and has enabled schools to take control of their administrative tasks. The implementation of the system is supported by extensive training;
- development of a CSF which has links to national standards and provides a comprehensive basis for development of curriculum from Prep to year 10 within schools;
- introduction of the LAP to enable assessments to be made of students' achievement in the key learning areas of years 3 and 5 of primary education. These results can be used to report to parents about students' progress and develop special programs for those students in need;
- introduction of programs to assist particular groups of students in schools including:
    - students from a language background other than English;
    - students at educational risk;
    - students with disabilities and impairments;
    - rural and isolated students;
    - gifted students;
    - girls; and
    - Koorie students;
- development of dual recognition programs for vocational education at post-compulsory level. These programs provide students with both a Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and a training sector credential in the areas of automotive, electronics, engineering, hospitality, office administration and retail;
- implementation of performance-based workforce management which included:

- the Professional Recognition Program as a major reform in the way teachers' performance is recognised and rewarded; and
- a program to accredit principals in relation to key competencies and a performance assessment program for Principal Class officers.

The operational environment

The Schools of the Future program is central to Victoria's plan for improving opportunities for students. The key principle of the program is the location of responsibility, authority and accountability at the school level. At December 1995, 99.9 per cent of schools had joined the Schools of the Future program.

Schools of the Future are supported through four policy frameworks relating to curriculum (the CSF), personnel (the Professional Recognition Program), finance (the SGB) and accountability (the school charter, annual report and triennial review).

The personnel framework

Under Schools of the Future, responsibility for most personnel functions has been delegated to principals. A school workforce plan is developed by each School of the Future. The introduction of the Professional Recognition Program for teachers in 1995 established a structure and process to provide teachers with enhanced career opportunities.

The Personal Professional Development Program provides for every teacher in the State to have an individual development program that reflects their school's priorities.

The curriculum framework

The CSF developed by the Board of Studies has been published and describes the eight key areas of learning to be taught in schools and the levels of skills and knowledge students are expected to acquire from Prep to year 10.

The eight key learning areas of the CSF are consistent with the nationally agreed key learning areas.

The LAP has been introduced to assess how students in years 3 and 5 are performing against the CSF. Information provided will help improve curriculum for individual students and schools and give parents more information about their children's performance.

The accountability framework

The Schools of the Future Accountability Framework consists of the school charter, the school annual report and a triennial school review. It assists schools to improve their performances by:

- allowing them to develop their own education plans and priorities, having regard to Government policies and programs;
- providing a monitoring and reporting framework which allows them to check on their progress and to establish whether their objectives are being met;
- providing guidelines for developing and revising their charter;
- providing performance information to schools' local communities; and
- forming an integral part of the accountability of the Victorian government school sector.

The financial framework

The SGB maximises the resources directly under the control of the school and provides schools with the flexibility to allocate their resources – human, financial and physical – to meet the learning needs of each student. SGBs are divided into six elements – core funds, students at educational risk, students with disabilities and impairments, students with non-English speaking background, rurality and isolation, and priority programs.

Over 90 per cent of the school education budget is provided to schools through SGBs.

School Global Budget research and policy development

A School Global Budget Research Project was established to develop indices for the allocation of funds for students with special learning needs and for schools in rural and isolated settings. The project also provided a framework for monitoring and evaluation of school global budgeting.

Catholic sector

Mission

Catholic schools seek to provide a rounded education for children that is based on Christian principles and practices.

Structure of Catholic education in Victoria

Parish primary schools are established and operated by parishes. Secondary schools operate under the governance of a particular religious order or of a parish or group of

parishes or a diocese. The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) oversees the planning of schools and ensures that they operate according to agreed policies. The bishop in a diocese assists the good running of schools through his CEO. Schools have a high degree of autonomy and appoint principals and staff locally under guidelines produced by the CECV and diocesan CEOs.

Major developments in 1995

The decision of the CECV in late 1995 to cooperate with the State authorities in the LAP meant that the majority of primary schools were involved. Children in years 3 and 5 were assessed in English and mathematics using a mixture of teacher-assessed and centrally scored items. The results were given to schools, which used them as one dimension of their reports to parents.

Schools were encouraged to use the CSF in all eight key learning areas. Schools were given freedom to concentrate on aspects of the CSF according to their school development plan. In-service training was conducted to assist schools and teachers with their use of the CSF.

All primary schools and some secondary schools were provided with the assessment and reporting software package, KIDMAP, and considerable resources were allocated to assist teachers with its use.

The Pastoral Care Unit of the CEO, Melbourne, provided assistance to schools with their policies in pastoral care. Sessions on mandatory reporting of child abuse were conducted in some schools, together with sessions on the management of critical incidents. The Pastoral Care Unit provides support to schools in such areas as death, grief and loss, suicide, bullying, communication skills and time management, as well as in student behaviour and discipline issues. Similar activities were undertaken in the Dioceses of Ballarat, Sandhurst and Sale.

The student support services of the Department of Education have been available to the Catholic schools over many years. With the placement of some such services within individual State schools or their redeployment, the Catholic system, assisted by the State Government, has proceeded to establish its own set of support services. These had been included under the Visiting Teacher Services (physical/health impaired, visual impaired) as well as Psychology and Speech Pathology Services. These student support services provide direct assistance to students, consultancy services to teachers and parents as well as professional development to school communities. The personnel are deployed in the area offices of the CEO. In some cases, services are provided through brokered, outsourced agreements with other agencies. The Dioceses of Ballarat, Sandhurst and Sale have established student support services through a variety of arrangements that suit the particular locality. The CECV is committed to ensuring access to services and equity in their distribution, so that all students are treated fairly.

Professional development concentrated on the implementation of the revised Religious Education Guidelines, leadership issues in relation to secondary school principal selection and all key learning areas associated with the CSF, especially literacy.

Implementation of an information technology strategy and computing platform designed to store, retrieve and analyse data collected from schools was undertaken during the year.

Independent schools

Objectives

The AISV elected to have the Commonwealth prepare educational accountability information in relation to independent schools on its behalf by means of a survey. Most Victorian independents school included in their priority objectives for 1995 improvements to the curriculum, the development of self-esteem, self-motivation and preparation of students for life after school. The strategies used to achieve objectives ranged from providing improved resources, to targeted professional development and a broader choice of course offerings. Schools based on particular religious or educational philosophies focused on the spiritual or philosophic perspectives of their priority objectives.

Resourcing schools

In 212 government schools 234 capital projects were funded at a total cost of $108.35 million, 48.7 per cent of which was provided by the Commonwealth. Table 73 indicates that the major area of expenditure was maintenance.

Under the Commonwealth Capital Grants Program, Catholic Capital Grants (Victoria) Ltd received $24.20 million consisting of $16.36 million under the General Element and $7.84 million under the QCats Element. Forty-one projects were completed from 1994 and 1995 funds. Of these, 24

Table 73. Capital expenditure on government schools, by type of project, Victoria, 1995

Project type	*Cost ($'000s)*
Maintenance	57,868
New schools and campuses	30,010
General refurbishment	8,091
Administration and staff facilities	5,707
Specialist facilities	3,108
Fire re-instatement	3,181
Toilet facilities	1,208
Security systems	875
Planning	100
Total	**108,348**

Source: Department of Education, Victoria

were funded from the General Element and 17 from the QCaTS Element. Twenty-two of the projects were in primary schools and 19 were in secondary schools. Of the 24 projects funded under the General Element, four were targeted at the provision of facilities for schools in growing areas, while the other 20 were for the refurbishment and upgrading of facilities in existing schools.

The government provided $190,000 to independent schools in the form of subsidies on loan interest for capital projects. A total of 37 independent schools received assistance under the scheme in relation to 57 projects.

The Victorian Independent Schools Block Grant Authority Ltd allocated $7.62 million under the Commonwealth Capital Grants Program and, during 1995, 37 projects were completed.

Projects included the refurbishment of existing facilities, the provision of new facilities and the purchase of technological equipment to assist in expanding and improving curriculum. A number of projects supported the development of science and technology centres and the construction of classroom and administration facilities. Many of the projects involved capital works at schools in rural locations.

Students with disabilities

The Schools Support - Government sub-component of the Commonwealth Special Education Component funding provided $6.53 million in 1995 which contributed to the government sector's annual recurrent expenditure on special education in support of its specialist school and integration programs.

The Schools Support - Non-government sub-component funding was $2.31 million and these funds were provided for services to government schools from non-school organisations.

The government sector was provided, jointly with the CEO and the AISV, with funding of $418,000 in 1995 through the National Priorities Element of NEPS to assist with the transition of students with disabilities from mainstream schooling to further education, employment and adult life.

This transition program has continued to be piloted in three metropolitan and three country intersystemic school clusters which were established to develop independent and autonomous regional structures aimed at enhancing transition outcomes for students with disabilities.

The six clusters have met regularly and developed the following initiatives:

- liaison between employment agencies and training providers for students with disabilities;
- the establishment of protocols for referrals between agencies;
- the development of manuals which assisted in transfer of students to post-school options;
- the publication of best practice models of transition based upon transition plans;
- the establishment of a questionnaire which reviewed the needs of parents of students with disabilities in regard to services;
- planning for a CD-ROM to be developed on transition planning to provide information on employment pathways; and
- development of newsletters for regional distribution.

Catholic sector

The CECV Integration Program continued to provide support for students with disabilities. Funding to supplement this program is made available from GRG funds for the purpose of supporting those students who, without such support, would not be able to attend a regular school.

During 1995, applications were received on behalf on 2,164 students enrolled in 442 Victorian Catholic schools

(338 primary and 104 secondary). Of these applications, 2,107 students were confirmed as being eligible to be supported under the program, an increase in the number of eligible students of 537 over the previous year.

Under the NEPS agreement with the CECV, the 11 Catholic special schools and settings were funded. NEPS funding also assisted in the provision of therapy and other services available through non-school providers such as the Spastic Society and the Yooralla Society.

Independent sector

Over 440 students with disabilities were supported by provision of NEPS funding in 110 regular schools and 280 students in ten special schools or units were assisted. Three non-school organisations providing services to these students were also assisted by NEPS funding.

Schools reported that the highest priority was the employment of integration aides to assist students.

Eight school received NEPS assistance for the provision of capital facilities for students with disabilities.

Details of Commonwealth funding for Special Education - Schools Support, Intervention and Capital Support are provided elsewhere within the *National Report.*

Vocational education

Development of vocational education programs

Development and provision of a greater number of accredited vocational education programs in secondary schools in 1995 resulted in more students enrolled in vocational education and training at VCE level than in 1994. The programs were developed within the context of national principles agreed by MCEETYA at its meeting in December 1995, for implementation of accredited vocational education and training in schools.

A large number of networks have been established to enable teachers from the Government, Catholic and independent sectors to meet together to share their experiences in the development and delivery of VET programs in schools. A pilot program to train secondary teachers to deliver vocational education and training programs in industry areas was also established late in 1995. The aim of the program was to match course content with the needs of industry.

Dual recognition: programs for students

The Board of Studies now provides the opportunity for students to obtain an accredited training credential at the same time as they obtain their VCE and a TER. By the end of 1995 the Board of Studies had approved dual recognition program courses in ten industry areas: electronics, office administration, hospitality, engineering, automotive, retail, agriculture, horticulture, information technology and food technology. A number of new programs areas were also under development with a view to approval in 1996. At the beginning of 1995 preliminary enrolment figures from the Board of Studies indicated that approximately 1,400 students from all three sectors were enrolled in dual recognition programs, compared with less than 300 students at a similar time in 1994.

Links with industry: vocational placement programs

Schools in Victoria provide workplace experience through work experience programs for secondary students while still at school. These arrangements have been formalised through the work experience component of the *Education Act, 1958* Part IV(a). Vocational placements allow more regular and extended contact with the workplace by fostering one-day per week contact rather than a one-off experience. The nature of the placement is negotiated with the employer and is often closely linked to the student's VCE curriculum. Programs of this type are planned jointly with industry and are likely to increase in future years.

Industry-organised programs

The following key organisations assisted with special programs for schools during 1995:

- Know Biz – Business Education Association Inc. operated tours of industry for students and teachers;
- Young Achievement Australia established teams of students to develop and market a product that related to the curriculum they were studying;
- the Australia Quality Council expanded its placement of groups of students in companies on work experience for a week, and through a structured learning program, set students the task of solving an identified problem within each company;
- Australian Business Week initiated a residential program with Deakin University and the Department for over 60

secondary students to develop enterprise skills, make a series of business decisions and participate in other business initiatives; and

- the ASTF supported school/industry links.

Key Competencies Program

Three initiatives began under the pilot element of the Key Competencies Program:

- an audit of key competencies in the compulsory and post-compulsory curriculum and in the most common patterns of study;
- an audit and report on key competencies in apprenticeships; and
- a pilot program involving 60 schools from all three sectors that examined how the concepts underpinning the key competencies can be delivered within elements of the curriculum and in some workplaces.

This program will be completed during 1996 and will provide examples of methods which schools might use to assist students to gain key competencies.

Teacher Release to Industry Program

Through an agreement with the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI), TRIP will continue for a further three years. TRIP provides an opportunity for teachers to spend a year in an industry setting and for schools to use their industry expertise in development of school programs. In 1995, 66 teachers were involved in the program.

Gender education & achievement of gender equity

Government sector

In 1995, strategies to improve educational outcomes and opportunities for girls and to develop and initiate new approaches for the education of boys were developed.

The Primary Foundations for the Future pilot project was in its second year. Thirty-eight primary schools and two associate secondary schools have formed clusters to develop curriculum materials and professional development programs. The clusters are supported by regional equal opportunity consultants. The clusters addressed whole-school issues to support cooperative and supportive relationships amongst girls and boys. Professional development has been provided to teachers to support this work. In 1996 the focus will move to the classroom and the key learning areas to increase opportunities for all students to participate in all aspects of the curriculum.

The national professional development program, Gender Issues in the Curriculum, a joint project between Victoria and New South Wales, was completed in 1995. The project provided teachers, principals and other key curriculum leaders with knowledge and understanding of current developments on gender issues in the curriculum. The first part was conducted in both Victoria and New South Wales for 100 key curriculum people who then became a resource and support for the State participants in the second program. The second program was a series of 12 sessions broadcast on the SOFNet to Victoria and New South Wales. The target audience for the second program was principals and curriculum leaders in schools. Eighty-four primary and secondary schools in Victoria and New South Wales participated in school teams with a total of over 450 participants.

Schools and their communities were supported in their implementation of the Girls: School and Beyond policy through continued access to regional equal opportunity resource centres and consultants. Three SOFNet programs were screened for teachers and for parents through the Maths, Science and Technology Education Centre for Girls: Hypatia's Place. In 1995 the McClintock Collective provided support to teachers of mathematics and science.

Catholic sector

A pilot project to address the educational and social concerns of boys in Catholic schools was developed during 1995. This project was designed to establish school-based projects on relevant themes covering the areas of adolescent health, cultural questions, literacy, construction of gender conflict resolution and communication strategies. Both primary and secondary networks also worked on a range of issues including bullying, harassment and literacy.

Literacy

The 1994 report of the Education Committee (Caldwell Report) commissioned by the State government recommended that available additional resources be committed to an extension of programs in early literacy

and early intervention for students whose readiness to learn is impaired for a range of reasons. Two programs were launched as a result of this report: the Keys to Life Initiative and the Early Literacy Research Project.

Keys to Life Initiative

Elements of the Keys to Life Initiative include:

- a strengthened classroom literacy program – Teaching Reading in the Early Years is the first stage of a strengthened classroom program. It complements the CSF and the English Course Advice, and addresses the key issues facing literacy teachers in the early years in schools in Victoria;
- support for students requiring special assistance – the Reading Recovery program was expanded in 1995 to 21 tutors across the State who train and support teachers in 650 schools. Four new training facilities have been opened and another eight tutors will be trained in 1996. Additional information and advice has been prepared to help teachers to identify strategies for students requiring additional assistance and possible intervention strategies;
- Making a Difference is a program that provides students with intensive instruction in literacy in one-to-one teaching and learning. It provides support for years 5–10 students who have experienced difficulty with literacy. This included a SOFNet program for Making a Difference and a Statewide one-day briefing and training session for teams of teachers in July 1995;
- parent participation in their children's education - a Statewide network of district-based parent participation coordinators supports schools in developing whole-school strategies for parent participation in their children's education and home–school liaison officer links;
- translations of the Opening Doors Parent Information Kit for the Early Years of Schooling have been published in 13 languages other than English and will be distributed to schools early 1996. Teachers use the kit with parents to inform them of current curriculum developments in the eight key learning areas of the CSF. It offers helpful hints in each key learning area for parents to encourage children's learning at home; and
- professional development for teachers – a program was developed to assist teachers working in the classroom at the early years to enhance their skills and understanding of current theory and practice.

The Early Literacy Research Project

The Early Literacy Research Project examines the effectiveness in the Victorian context of the Success for All program developed in the United States. In October 1995, 52 schools were selected on the basis of high need in the area of early literacy to take part in this project. Schools appointed a coordinator for this project who received additional professional development. Extensive pre-testing of Prep and year 1 students provided comprehensive data on the literacy standards of these students. Elements being evaluated in trial schools are professional development of teachers, the Reading Recovery program, regular assessment, parent–home programs and transition from pre-school.

Literacy and Learning National Component

The Department of Education collaborated with the CEOs in Melbourne and Canberra–Goulburn, the Education Department of Western Australia and the CEOWA to:

- produce a resource book, *Successful Intervention K–3 Literacy,* published by Curriculum Corporation;
- produce a professional development program conducted for teachers from 88 schools across Victoria, including a SOFNet program; and
- make a considerable contribution to a national curriculum information database of recent Victorian publications.

Catholic sector

The literacy program for 1995 was concentrated on primary schools through funding from the ELC of NEPS. The program was directed to key school-based literacy personnel and implemented through four major strategies:

- literacy leadership – this strategy consisted of a series of regional seminars entitled Literacy for the New Millennium and a spaced-learning program, Professional Development for Key Leaders;
- teacher effectiveness – seven programs were offered under this strategy, all focusing on proven methods for the teaching of early literacy, including the identification of particular literacy needs and students at risk. The programs were: WA First Steps; Reading Recovery; Reading Discovery; Literacy and Learning National Component (LLNC) Implementation – Literacy

Intervention in years 2 and 3; Frameworks – Assessment and Evaluation Module; Writing; and LLNC products;

- parent participation – three programs that involved regular shared reading with family members and leading to improved reading outcomes were implemented. The selected programs were: Readers, Writers and Parents Learning Together; Parents and Reading Tutors; and Paired Reading; and
- student attentiveness – the two programs offered in this strategy used the interest created by well-designed science and technology activities to increase student attentiveness and assist student literacy through the speaking, listening, reading and writing that accompanied the activities. The programs were Technology – Computers and the Concept Keyboard and Literacy Development through Science and Technology.

Independent sector

Independent schools generally place significant importance on the improvement of literacy outcomes. A wide range of programs, such as early Reading Recovery, First Steps, parental and home support, and perceptual motor programs, are used by independent schools. During 1995, a total of 22 schools involving over 2,900 students in years Prep–3 were assisted through the ELC of the NEPS. The majority of funded schools conducted specific early literacy programs such as Reading Recovery. A number of schools supported teacher professional development and the purchase of additional literacy resources.

Physical development, health and fitness

Government sector

Physical education for students from Prep–10 is now compulsory in government schools in Victoria while compulsory sport education must be implemented for years 4–10 by the end of 1996.

The teaching of Physical and Sport Education (PASE) has been enhanced by professional development courses provided for primary and secondary teachers. These PASE teaching courses have been successfully completed by more than 9,000 teachers across the State and will continue to be offered during 1996. The courses are provided free to all teachers on a needs basis and have enjoyed high attendance from all districts throughout Victoria.

The Fundamental Motor Skills Program has been implemented following research commissioned by the Department. This program assists primary classroom teachers to improve the teaching and learning of fundamental motor skills, particularly for students in the formative years of schooling. Strategies include an innovative manual, an instructional video and an extensive Statewide professional development program. More than 600 teachers have enrolled in the professional development program.

The CPR in Schools program, a joint project with the Royal Life Saving Society, was introduced in 1995. This program has enabled teachers across the State to become CPR instructors who are qualified to train and accredit teachers, parents and students in CPR, at greatly reduced cost to schools. The CPR in Schools program has trained 1700 teachers to instructor level.

The Sportsperson in Schools project offers teachers the opportunity to engage elite athletes to promote the benefits of healthy, active lifestyles to students in government schools. The 1995 program, coordinated through the Victorian Institute of Sport, reached 14,000 students at 170 schools. Media coverage generated by the program assists the promotion of PASE through national and local press, the *Victorian School News* and the ABC S'cool Sport program.

The Exemplary PASE School Network covers 48 ABC S'cool Sport primary and secondary schools across the State and meets once a term to promote and share best practice. Schools from the Network contribute regularly to the *Victorian School News* and are involved in planning and implementing PASE conferences within the State.

The School Sports Awards were initiated in 1994 to recognise sporting excellence of students and the contribution made to school sport by teachers and parents. The Awards program is published through the *Victorian School News*, monitored by the Victorian Primary and Secondary Schools Sports Associations (VPSSA, VSSSA) and has gained national coverage and promotion through the ABC S'cool Sport program.

The Department continues its partnership with the New South Wales Department of School Education in production of the weekly ABC S'cool Sport program which features and

promotes highlights and initiatives in school sport. It has been extended in 1996 to 30 minutes.

The promotion of school sport has been further enhanced by introduction of the 0055 School Sportsline. This telephone service features regularly updated school sporting information.

Catholic sector

Both primary and secondary schools have a strong commitment to health issues and all aspects form an integral part of Catholic schools' curriculum. To strengthen this commitment, professional development programs in the areas of health, physical education and sport were conducted during 1995, and links established with a number of organisations that foster and support work in these areas, such as the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) and VicHealth. In addition, a number of Catholic schools participated in the STD/AIDS and Drug Education for Support of Schools projects.

The Catholic sector favours an integrated approach to this key learning area of the curriculum that embraces parental involvement, and further developmental work is being undertaken through its Pastoral Care Unit.

NALSAS strategy

As a result of adopting NALSAS recommendations in 1995, a range of activities occurred. In terms of direct program support, a coordinator and consultants for Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean and Asian studies were employed to support the implementation of the NALSAS strategy. LOTE consultants and advisers provided over 50 professional development activities in the four targeted Asian languages and studies of Asia across the curriculum in 1995 for approximately 1,000 teachers.

Studies of Asia across the curriculum were enhanced by the participation by 45 Victorian government schools in the Magnet Schools Program. In addition, two teachers were funded to attend the Consortium for Teaching about Asia Pacific in Schools Summer Institute at the University of Hawaii and five teachers were funded to undertake a cultural studies course in Indonesia. A total of 359 teachers from government schools also participated in a range of professional development activities conducted by the AEF.

In the area of Asian languages teaching and learning, 92 per cent of government primary schools (1,228 schools) provided a LOTE program and of these 810 or 66 per cent provided the four targeted Asian languages. A LOTE program was offered in 99 per cent of government secondary colleges (315 of 318 secondary colleges) in 1995 and of these, 229 or 72 per cent, offered one of the four targeted Asian languages.

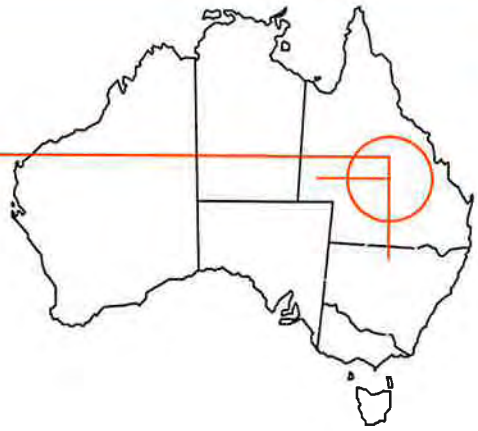
The LOTE Training and Retraining Project of the Department provides credit-bearing training and retraining opportunities in cooperation with Victorian universities for current and potential LOTE teachers to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of trained LOTE teachers available to schools. In 1995, approximately 400 teachers undertook one of 32 language and two methodology courses. Of these 245 teachers (25 Chinese, 156 Indonesian and 64 Japanese) undertook language training in the targeted Asian languages and 13 teachers with skills in those languages (four Chinese, six Indonesian and three Japanese) undertook LOTE method training. In addition, ten teachers were supported to attend courses in China, 30 in Indonesia, and four in Japan.

Students at Newport Primary School learn Arabic.

Independent schools

In 1995, the AISV supported a large range of activities in independent schools with funds provided through the NALSAS program. These included professional development for teachers including in-country study and language upgrading courses; seminars in LOTE methodology and curriculum; development of curriculum materials and grants to schools for language programs and curriculum development.

QUEENSLAND



Major initiatives

During 1995, Shaping the Future initiatives introduced new measures for increasing educational accountability in Queensland government and non-government schools. A new structure, the Queensland Curriculum Council, was established to be responsible for the development of syllabuses in years 1–10 and for monitoring and reporting on educational standards across the State.

To assure the quality of the curriculum and to monitor and report on educational standards in literacy and numeracy, a Year 2 Diagnostic Net and a Statewide Year 6 Test were implemented, and Quality Assurance Officers (Curriculum) and Education Advisers and Key Learning Areas Regional Coordinators were appointed.

Only one initiative, the Year 6 Test, involved the use of measures that were largely external to schools, with the Test being set, marked and analysed by a contractor (ACER) with system-level input from the Department of Education. The Year 2 Diagnostic Net made use of teachers' professional judgment, confirmed by a collegial moderation process, and required teachers to assess student performance against an established framework of learning outcomes. Teachers plotted students' progress over time on continua for reading, writing and number skills. Initial judgements were validated by teachers through the administration of a range of 'validation tasks' selected from a bank of standard assessment items. Teacher judgments were moderated before decisions were confirmed and system-level data were used to determine intervention resources to schools.

Initiatives in government schools

In government schools, major activity centred around the implementation of Shaping the Future and devising sets of plans to strengthen all aspects of the development, management and evaluation of curriculum in Queensland State schools.

Concurrently, the Department of Education embarked on a major review of the Corporate Plan. The review process, titled Partners for Excellence, began with an environmental scan, and continued with a series of consultative and collaborative direction-setting activities. The process sought to:

- provide all stakeholders with an opportunity to participate in determining and creating the Department's future directions;
- improve and broaden the understanding of the Department's purpose, vision and values;
- reach agreement on the Department's future directions; and
- coordinate and align corporate strategies to reflect the needs and aspirations of students and school communities in both local and global contexts.

A second major initiative was the finalisation of two enterprise agreements, which will change the nature of industrial relations, and ways in which Departmental personnel, both in school and non-school locations, will work.

Other Departmental initiatives included:

- the management of student behaviour, which requires each school community to develop its code of behaviour (following the abolition of corporal punishment), standards of behaviour, and a planned systematic approach to implementation;
- the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, which focused on the transition of students to secondary education, the improvement of student achievement, and the increase of cultural awareness and acceptance by all students;

Students and teacher in a computer class at Warraber Island School in the Torres Strait.

- information technology planning, which extended the trial of the School Management System, and preparation for new modes of learning, service delivery and the information superhighway;
- educational provision for students with disabilities, which sought to increase participation of such students in their school communities, and the decentralisation of services to meet local needs;
- rural initiatives, which extended Departmental commitment to providing non-contact time for teachers in small schools, provided for the continuation of the Parent Liaison Officer (Drought) Program, and investigated the range of options for senior schooling in rural areas; and
- professional development, which focused on the establishment of the Centre for Leadership Excellence with a view to coordinating, promoting and developing professional training for school principals and aspiring principals.

Specific challenges faced by the government sector in 1995 included:

- generating consensus on a student performance reporting framework;
- overcoming difficulties experienced by schools in replacing key teachers with supply teachers, and the management of this process to avoid disruption to learning programs;
- maintaining the momentum of desired changes in the convergence of vocational and general education and resourcing this initiative;
- providing clarification for schools on matters relating to core curriculum and new syllabus development, under the auspices of the Curriculum Council;
- planning for the future management and operation of State pre-schools and early education classes; and
- accommodating the increased complexity of senior schooling, and the extensive networking and cooperation between schools to achieve best results.

Initiatives in non-government schools

Many of the contextual factors affecting the provision of educational services to government schools were also common to non-government schools. Characteristic of non-government schools was a primary concern for the spiritual aspects of education, mostly within religious traditions.

Specifically, the major objectives which were addressed by non-government schools during 1995 focused on improving the skills of students, developing the expertise of teachers, and addressing a number of equity-related issues as they affect teaching and learning. In addition, considerable attention was given to structural elements of the senior secondary curriculum in an attempt to provide multiple pathways for students to access higher education and the world of work.

During 1995, there were three major challenges for non-government schools.

The first of these was enterprise bargaining and the associated notions of workplace reform. An increased emphasis on student outcomes and teacher appraisal, together with enhanced opportunities for professional development, accentuated the quality aspects of learning and teaching.

Secondly, participation in the curriculum reforms, following the review of curriculum in Queensland, resulted in the appointment of key teachers and educational advisers, and a fresh round of in-service education for teachers on matters to do with literacy, numeracy, assessment, and reporting of student outcomes. In similar vein, the developments towards convergence of vocational and general education in the senior secondary years generated structural changes in the provision of education at that level.

Finally, the increased influence of the NEPS was significant in affecting teachers' awareness of, and informed response to the various learning styles and capacities of students, particularly of those with special needs.

Capital works in government schools

A total of $195.28 million was allocated for capital works in government schools in 1995–96, of which $37.49 million was Commonwealth funding. State funds were provided for the construction of four new primary schools, two special education units, one secondary school and other enrolment growth related projects such as classroom blocks, science, manual arts and home economics facilities. Additionally, major upgrading projects including the replacement of sub-standard demountable buildings in both primary and secondary schools were undertaken.

Over 75 per cent of the Commonwealth funds was directed to capital projects providing upgraded facilities to classrooms, resource centres, home economics and science blocks, conversion of manual arts facilities, student covered areas, and administration and amenities blocks.

Capital works in Catholic schools

In 1995, the State Government provided $8.48 million towards capital projects at non-government schools which are associated with the Queensland Catholic Education Commission. The funding enabled a total of 51 Catholic schools to undertake capital works and equipment-related projects.

The Commonwealth provided $11.87 million to the Catholic school sector under the Capital Grants Program. Whilst most funds were used on the general capital needs of schools, there were other funds which were specifically targeted. An amount of $523,695 was used to improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and $3.68 million was used to further developments in open learning and for the application of recent technological advances to school education. Projects completed during 1995 included new primary and secondary schools in growth areas, the establishment of resource centres, the provision of early childhood facilities and the enhancement of information technology.

Capital works in independent schools

The State Government provided $4.2 million towards capital projects at non-government schools which are associated with the Independent Schools of Queensland Block Grant Authority. Thirty-six capital projects were supported by the State, mainly for the provision of primary and secondary classrooms, libraries and secondary specialist facilities.

The Commonwealth provided $5.1 million towards capital projects in schools which are associated with the Independent Schools of Queensland Block Grant Authority. A total of $3.3 million was used by schools to assist with general building projects and $1.6 million was paid to schools to assist with the provision of buildings and equipment aimed at broadening the curriculum. In addition, $201,000 was allocated to one school with a high population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, for a general building project.

Of the 22 capital projects that were supported by the Commonwealth and completed both physically and financially during 1995, the most common types of facilities provided were for the provision of primary and secondary classrooms, libraries and secondary specialist facilities, as well as for the purchase of computer and related equipment.

Vocational education

Developments in 1995

The Vocational Education Division of the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies (BSSSS) was established in the first half of 1995 to be responsible for overseeing the development, in consultation with curriculum advisory committees, of industry framework courses consisting of vocational modules/training programs. Advanced standing was negotiated with TAFE Queensland for the modules/training programs within these Board subjects.

During 1995, the majority of Queensland secondary schools offered some vocational subjects. Many of these subjects were the national training modules to level 1 and, increasingly, to level 2, as either stand-alone offerings or embedded in other subjects. These provided students with opportunities for dual accreditation and credit transfer to later TAFE courses.

Major developments included:

- the establishment of school/industry links, cooperative programs with TAFE, industry placements for both teachers and students and work education programs, with

30 per cent of secondary teachers being qualified to teach vocational subjects or courses;

- new guidelines for work experience under the updated *Education (Student Work Experience) Act 1978* which are consistent with the philosophy of the convergence of general and vocational education;
- 211,698 hours of work experience provided for secondary students;
- the introduction of a Teacher Placement in Industry Policy to develop closer links between schools and industry;
- the conduct of an audit of teachers' skills by a management committee made up of representatives of the Department of Education, the Catholic sector, the independent sector and with the BSSSS and industry representation, with teacher professional development guides produced in eight priority industry areas and a process established for teachers to identify their own professional development needs;
- Queensland schools working with the ASTF to deliver school-based programs for senior secondary students;
- over 25 non-government schools acquiring private provider status under the Vocational Education, Training and Employment Commission (VETEC) to deliver accredited vocational programs;
- over 90 per cent of Catholic schools offering an accredited vocational program either through cooperative programs with TAFE (school- and/or TAFE-delivered) or through private provider registration under VETEC;
- an increase in the number of schools appointing senior school teachers to coordinate the curriculum tasks associated with the delivery of vocational education;
- Catholic, independent and government schools working cooperatively in regional funding arrangements for delivery of school-industry programs under the ASTF;
- approximately 35 per cent of students in Catholic secondary schools graduating with accredited VET outcomes, and certified by either TAFE colleges (extended registration/cooperative programs) or the schools (private provider registration); and
- almost 6,000 students in independent schools involved with at least one VET subject in 1995.

Plans for future years

The BSSSS will be responsible for accreditation, recognition, registration and certification of both general and vocational education for the full range of students in post-compulsory education. There will be a reduction in the number of Board-registered subjects from 1,700 to approximately 20 groups, and development of syllabuses for these groups.

A specific five-year operational plan for the systematic implementation of vocational education in Queensland government schools with post-compulsory students is under development after extensive consultation.

Eight broad industry areas have been prioritised for the further offering of national industry training modules. They are: tourism and hospitality; business, clerical, retail and wholesale; community services and health; engineering and metals; building and construction; primary industry; fitness, sport and recreation; and arts, media and entertainment. The aim is to offer a subject in at least two of these areas in every secondary school by 1998. By 2001, approximately 20 Board-registered subject syllabuses and 18 Board subject syllabuses with vocational components will be available for general implementation.

Gender education and achievement of gender equity

Initiatives to promote gender equity in schools were taken in government and non-government schools. Many were intersystemic and required cooperation, participation and support of all three education sectors. The Department of Education was the prime instigator of many projects, some with support from other government departments, that involved non-government schools and teachers as well. However, there were specific initiatives that were undertaken by each sector.

Government schools

The education of girls

During 1995, resourcing was specifically targeted towards projects which related to improving the educational outcomes for girls who benefit least from schooling. An interagency project has been working across a number of education regions to:

- map the range of other agencies which are or may be involved in anti-violence education within schools (with a particular focus on gendered or sexual violence);
- collaboratively develop consistent messages which the community will support regarding appropriate responses to violence;
- document the procedures which schools engage to respond to gendered and sexual violence, particularly those which involve support or input from other agencies; and
- develop a resource kit to enable schools to involve students, parents and community agencies in the promotion of anti-violence awareness programs within their local communities.

Other initiatives related to:

- the development and delivery of professional development on girls at risk;
- participation in Queensland University of Technology Prevention of Homelessness Among Young People Research Project Reference Group;
- the development and submission of a draft School Aged Pregnant and Parenting Students Policy;
- advice and strategies for the retention of school-aged pregnant women and young parents;
- the review and revision of a draft construction of gender module for use in school communities in Queensland, and the development and delivery of professional development to support the use of the module within schools;
- the development and delivery of professional development on critical literacy; and
- the provision of support for, and coordination of policy implementation through, the regional Gender Equity Officers' Network.

Specific attention was given to gathering data about the issues in relation to rural and isolated girls, including the development of specific project components to address access to services for this group. The Department also continued its partnership with the Association of Women Educators in the NPDP aimed at the development and implementation of gender-inclusive teaching units.

Gender equity initiatives

A number of projects actively sought the participation and involvement of parents at all stages of development and implementation. A significant initiative of the Queensland Department of Education in 1995 was the appointment of parent information and liaison officers to provide an immediate link with parents and the community. A number of education regions initiated parent workshops with university representatives, parent liaison officers and community education counsellors on issues relevant to the educational outcomes of girls who benefit least from schooling. Parents were involved in processes for subject selection, and parents and citizens associations have been involved in a range of decision-making structures and in strategy development for improving educational outcomes for girls.

The Department was involved in significant initiatives in the area of family and work education, including a DEET-funded project involving mapping the profiles and statements in several curriculum areas, and developing strategies to be used in the classroom for family and work studies curriculum. The Department also participated in Curriculum Corporation's Family Studies Curriculum Units Project.

In association with James Cook University, the Department was involved in the 1995 NPDP Boys and Literacy Project, aimed at the development of appropriate teacher professional development materials to successfully enable teachers to implement a wide variety of literacy strategies for boys.

Some of the key emerging and continuing issues requiring attention were:

- further exploration of gender in relation to the construction of difference and disadvantage;
- gender and behaviour management;
- positioning of gender issues within the curriculum;
- gender and life pathways;
- gender and violence;
- work and family education;
- educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls; and
- the intersection of gender and race in producing educational disadvantage, particularly with respect to the specific needs of rural and isolated girls.

Non-government schools

Initiatives in non-government schools for 1995 included the development and dissemination of sexual harassment

policy and grievance procedures in most schools and the appointment of trained sexual harassment referral officers in schools. There was also the implementation of the Personal Development Education Program in the early years of schooling, which will eventually extend from pre-school through to year 12, and which is designed to deal with social, physical and emotional issues, including the social construction of gender.

Brisbane Catholic Education established a Gender Equity Liaison Person (GELP) network and also hosted a gender equity forum which was attended by both interstate and intrastate participants. The forum provided an opportunity to share resources and to discuss the collaborative development of additional resources.

Action research of the development and trial of a careers education program for primary school students through the independent school sector in conjunction with the Queensland University of Technology demonstrated a marked influence on redressing preconceived gender stereotypes associated with particular occupations. It is expected that as this program becomes widely available many schools will integrate it within their broad curriculum offering.

Noticeable trends in schools were the increase in retention rates for girls in the senior years in the mathematics and science areas that have been traditionally been male dominated. There was evidence that girls are equalling and surpassing the achievements of boys in a number of subject areas, including those traditionally dominated by boys (for example physics and chemistry).

The behaviour patterns of some boys, particularly where these behaviour patterns disrupt the activities of the majority, came under increased scrutiny in schools. A number of programs addressing these disruptive behaviour patterns and boys' capacity to deal with aggression were instituted successfully.

Gender equity forums were held in various regions around the State. These forums allowed for the development of new resources, the sharing of useful current resources and the discussion of possible intersystemic projects in the area of gender equity.

There was an increased emphasis across non-government schools on involving parents in strategies to implement gender equity policies. Parents appeared more frequently on gender equity committees, there was increasing participation in workshops and seminars, and parent groups had access to materials and resources relating to gender equity.

Schools were encouraged to develop appropriate management programs for students so that there was recognition of the needs of both sexes. Programs that focused exclusively on girls have made way for those that deal with issues for both girls and boys.

Student outcomes in literacy-related areas

Curriculum development

Curriculum development achievements in the government sector in 1995 included:

- the redrafting of Student Performance Standards in English;
- completion of distance education materials in LOTE for years 6, 7 and 8 students;
- the development of a framework for a year 3 LOTE program; and
- the development of a CD-ROM for teacher professional development to support the implementation of student performance standards in mathematics.

Attainment in numeracy skills by Queensland students

Performance by students from government and non-government schools on the Year 6 Test in numeracy showed that:

- there were no gender differences overall;
- the mean for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was much lower than the population mean; and
- students from non-English speaking backgrounds performed as well as the total population but students with English as a second language did not.

Students from urban, government schools performed better than those in rural schools, although students enrolled with the Schools of Distance Education scored higher, on average, than students in other government schools.

Data on the performance of year 12 students in all sectors for mathematics subjects showed that there were slightly greater proportions of girls performing in the higher achievement levels for Mathematics A, Mathematics C,

Mathematics II, and Mathematics in Society. For Mathematics B and Mathematics I, there was a tendency for boys and girls to perform equally well. In general, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students performed at much lower levels than other students.

The data for year 12 student achievement in other key learning areas showed two major trends:

- girls generally outperformed boys, particularly at the higher levels of achievement; and
- few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students performed at the higher achievement levels.

Physical development, health and fitness

Curriculum context

The Senior Health Education Syllabus is based upon a social view of health and the key principles of enabling, mediating and advocating as they operate in a context of diversity, social justice and supportive environments. It recognises and addresses the health realities of living in contemporary Australian society and the many health-related decisions this context may entail. Through this recognition, the syllabus emphasises participation and empowerment and, in so doing, assists students in reaching their individual health potential and contributing to the heath of the society in which they live.

These two curricular statements illustrate expected educational outcomes after 12 years of schooling, and guide much of what is taught and learned in Queensland schools, both government and non-government.

Achievements and priorities in 1995

The appointment of Health and Physical Education Key Learning Area Coordinators has extended the opportunities for disseminating the health and physical education national statement and profile, and for raising awareness Statewide. The key components of the role include supporting schools and teachers in the implementation of syllabuses and curriculum materials, supporting and coordinating the moderation of student outcomes, and providing networks and professional development for teachers.

Professional development programs for teachers were organised on a regional basis. Such programs included human relationship education, lifeskills, ethics and values, HIV/AIDS education, drug education, nutrition, health promoting schools, physical education, and AUSSIE SPORT within the health and physical education key learning area.

Specific achievements included: the continuation of a trial in a number of school-based and classroom-based projects to provide examples of school programs linked to the health and physical education statement and profile for Australian schools; the third year of a trial senior Board syllabus in physical education years 11–12 and a trial senior Board syllabus in health education years 11–12; and the Queensland Junior Sport Action Plan combining sport and education was formulated.

Attention has been given to specific aspects of the Health and Physical Education key learning area in both Statewide and regional professional development programs. Professional associations have conducted in-service training programs in certain aspects of the key learning area in response to the audit of current practice which has clearly identified areas of need in subject discipline knowledge renewal. These professional associations included ACHPER, Home Economics Teachers Association, Association of Health Promotion Professionals, Aussie Sport, Australian Association for Religious Education, Catholic Education Commission, Independent Schools Association and the Board of Teacher Registration.

Certificate courses in Recreation at Level 1 and Level 2 for years 11–12 are currently being developed for submission to the BSSSS for approval as Board-registered subjects. It is proposed that, where possible, schools provide AVTS accredited modules from the Certificate in Recreation as electives for students in years 11–12.

Since the Queensland launch of Willing and Able in 1995, a number of in-service training programs have been held involving both physical education and classroom teachers. These programs have been delivered by Health and Physical Education Key Learning Area Regional Coordinators, and AUSSIE SPORT Development Officers. In some regions joint delivery of these programs has occurred. Programs have focused on the utilisation of the Willing and Able resource to cater for the needs of children with disabilities in physical education and sport situations. The continual

strengthening of the working relationship between the Health and Physical Education Key Learning Area Regional Coordinators and the regional AUSSIE SPORT Development Officers, is enhancing both the service delivery and accessibility of AUSSIE SPORT to teachers. Another example of collaboration relates to sports leadership. Recent projects have involved regional coaching directors and sporting club personnel assisting with the training of leaders for SPORTSFUN and AUSSIE SPORT programs.

The Queensland Health Promoting Schools Project has been operating for over two years, and currently a project officer has been appointed to expand the network of health promoting schools throughout the State. A quarterly newsletter is distributed to members of the network, and professional development workshops are being held for school community members, including administrators, teachers, parents, and community health organisations.

The workshops also included in-service training using the Nutrition Success Kit and Sun Safety Resources, developed in cooperation with the Queensland Department of Health, the Department of Education and The University of Queensland. Both resources incorporate the principles and processes of the health promoting schools approach.

The Department of Education's SunSmart campaign includes five components: the distribution of hats, sunscreen and educational materials to over 100,000 children in pre-school and year 1; the development of educational resources for primary schools and a professional development program for teachers; grants for all schools to implement the sun safety strategies in school communities; a public education campaign including television, radio and print media; and an evaluation component.

Continued State and Commonwealth funding has supported the development of projects to assist schools in the implementation of the Drug Education in Schools Policy. There is a particular focus on drug education program development as a component of school health education, interpersonal skills resources and teacher training, and rural, remote and parent education. Resources have been developed to specifically address the management of drug-related incidents and the provision of student counselling.

Support for HIV/AIDS education, in the form of seminars, workshops and resources, has been provided to schools through the regional coordinators for health and physical education.

Emerging and continuing issues

A range of issues emerged from the work with schools in 1995. These issues included assessment and outcomes-based education, collaboration within and across school, changing practice, and working with the national curriculum statements and profiles.

Implications include the need for further professional development of teachers and teacher educators focusing on approaches to assessment, recording and reporting on student outcomes, structures to be established through school systems and professional associations to facilitate communication and collaboration particularly between primary and secondary schools. The three key principles of diversity, social justice and supportive environments need to be given serious consideration in all program development using the statement and profile. Schools need assistance in examining their organisational structures to implement programs drawing on the statement and profile. Teachers need time to reflect and collaborate and to accommodate the demands of new pedagogies in health and physical education.

Issues identified that relate specifically to teachers working with the statement and profile include strengthening the developmental approach to learning integral to the design of the statement and profile. In particular, the strands indicated by the audit to have non-sequential learning outcomes need to be reviewed.

The Queensland Curriculum Council has recommended to the Minister for Education a timeline for the development of new syllabuses. It is anticipated a new year 1–10 syllabus in health and physical education will be developed by the Queensland School Curriculum Office in 1996, and trialled in schools for implementation from 1999.

It is proposed that a health and physical education syllabus be developed for years 1–8 for use in all Queensland schools based on the national statement and profile. Subject syllabuses drawn from appropriate sections of the health and physical education key learning area statement and profile, together with relevant material from other key learning area statements and profiles for years 9–10, will also be developed in 1996. Support materials and a professional development kit will be produced to assist teachers develop school work programs based on the various syllabuses. The issue of core and elective material within these syllabuses will need to be identified.

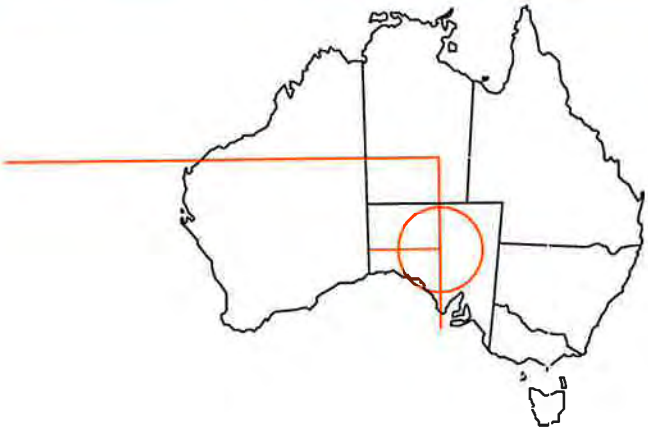
It is also proposed that further professional development programs relating to subject discipline renewal will be conducted in conjunction with professional associations to meet a need identified by teachers working in the area of health and physical education.

The Pilot Senior Board Syllabus in both physical education and health education for years 11–12 will continue in 1996–97 with additional schools and teachers involved following the previous three years trial phase.

The role of ethics and values in the health and physical education key learning area has also received attention. During 1995 the Department developed and trialled a set of resources for the Study of Ethics (Primary). These resources incorporated the student learning outcomes set out in the ethics sub-strand of the human relations strand from *Health and Physical Education – a Curriculum Profile for Australian Schools* (Curriculum Corporation, 1994). It is hoped to make these materials generally available to schools during 1996.

While reports from the trial schools indicated positive responses from the teachers, students and parents involved, other surveys suggest that a significant number of teachers feel inadequately trained to engage students in any explicit study of ethics. Consequently, it is planned to include training sessions on ethics in future professional development opportunities linked to curriculum development initiatives in Queensland.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Introduction

South Australia covers an area of 984,377 square kilometres, approximately one-eighth of the area of the Australian continent. In 1995 the State had an estimated resident population of 1,473,966 and 244,792 full-time students attending government, Catholic and independent schools. Education in South Australia continues to benefit from collaboration between the three schooling sectors on projects such as Special Education Transition Support, the CAP, Key Competencies Program, NPDP, AEF, Reading Recovery, statements and profiles, alienation of adolescents, the new work experience guidelines, and on behaviour management issues.

Planning future directions for schools was a major focus for education in South Australia in 1995. Two significant conferences were organised by the Catholic Education Office with participants representing education, the church and the wider community, while the Department for Education and Children's Services (DECS) planning was spearheaded by the Futures Forum and the design of an information technology strategy.

The Futures Forum

Early in 1995 DECS began a new planning process to establish key strategic directions to guide the Department's work to 2010. In April the Futures Forum was established, involving a series of forums designed to include stakeholders at every level in developing the vision for education into the 21st century. In particular the students' Futures Forum drew 250 year 5 to year 11 students from around the State. A discussion paper, *Creating our Future: towards a charter 1996–2010*, was produced for consultation a-cross the State until mid 1996. It was decided to produce, in the first instance, a charter, a set of annual priorities, action plans and key organisational statements.

Information technology

The DECS information technology plan, Creating the Information Society, was the first stage of a strategy developed to ensure that by the year 2001 South Australians have a technologically-rich education and child care service and that all schools have a curriculum that ensures information literacy. A trial of 27 schools using desktop video conferencing for delivery of curriculum and training and development was very successful and is to be extended in 1996. The Open Access College extended video conferencing, electronic delivery and non-print based support for distance education and the Technology School of the Future provided new services in outreach and multimedia developments.

The Independent Schools Board created an Information Technology Group late in 1995 to assist its schools with a wide range of technological and curriculum matters.

Early Years Strategy

The Early Years Strategy is a broadly-based and rigorously resourced government strategy to improve literacy teaching and learning in the early years and provide early assistance for children with learning difficulties. The first of a range of significant initiatives was implemented in 1995. These included the development of curriculum frameworks which focus on the early years of learning, the Cornerstones literacy training and development program, the intensive, one-to-one Reading Recovery programs and the BST program in Aspects of Literacy and Numeracy.

As part of the Early Years Strategy, early intervention to assist children with learning difficulties was facilitated by significantly increased resource allocations to speech pathology, psychology and disabilities services.

Gifted children and students

In 1995 DECS released a policy for the education of gifted children and students and guidelines for early school enrolment for gifted pre-school age children. Over 100 schools were involved in the networking phase of a focus school program for R–7 students with high intellectual potential. 1995 was the second year of a R–10 focus school program, funded from the Gifted and Talented Component of the NEPS, and involving ten schools from the Disadvantaged Schools Program. Both programs help teachers identify students with high intellectual potential and deliver appropriate programs within the class setting and in the whole school context.

Special interest secondary schools continued, four specialising in music and one each in languages, agriculture and sport. One primary school caters for students who demonstrate high potential in gymnastics.

Teachers in Catholic schools interested in the education of gifted and talented children held a series of meetings leading to a recommendation that a policy be developed for Catholic schools.

Independent schools were involved in workshops and hub groups for teachers to share ideas and good practice. Workshop topics included:

- identification of gifted and talented students;
- mainstream classroom strategies;
- cluster group guidelines and organisation; and
- accelerated and early entry. A booklet, *Establishing Pathways - Specific Strategies for Teachers and Families of the Young Gifted Child* was prepared.

South Australian government school students at work on their writing skills.

Curriculum development projects

The Curriculum Statements and Profiles Implementation Support Plan 1995–97 underpins the coordinated implementation of statements and profiles in years 1–10 in all DECS schools, supported by a teaching and learning team working with central and school-based personnel and with Catholic schools personnel. DECS officers also worked with parent associations to develop materials for information sessions for parents and there were regular editions of a statements and profiles newsletter for schools. Five school-based development projects allowed 50 schools to explore good practice and develop materials on assessment and reporting, transition, the integrated curriculum and using student achievement information. Quality assessment tasks in draft form were developed for trial to assist teachers' professional judgement in assigning profile levels in years 1–10. A student achievement data software module of the system's school administration computing system was trialled prior to its installation in 1996.

The DECS assessment and reporting policy provides guidelines on the use of statements and profiles and the achievement of consistency in assessment and reporting.

Transient students project

The transient students project, funded under the Country Areas National Component and the Projects of National Significance, was carried out in a group of schools in the rural western region, focusing on students whose schooling was disrupted by frequent school transfer and developing strategies to improve the transfer of curriculum information between schools.

Alienation of adolescents project

The cross-sectoral, government-funded Alienation During the Middle Years of Schooling project, part of the project of National Significance in Middle Schooling, began in 1995 and a report will be released in 1996. Middle Schooling training and development has been funded under NPDP through the South Australian Institute of Teachers.

Multiculturalism in education

DECS launched its Multiculturalism in Schooling and Children's Services Policy, establishing a framework for

the provision of services which acknowledge and promote cultural and linguistic diversity and seek to ensure equitable and enriched learning and care outcomes for all children and students.

NALSAS

In 1995, *Studies of Asia: A Statement for Australian Schools* was distributed to all DECS and Catholic schools for use as the basis for curriculum change. *Including Studies of Asia in Primary Curriculum*, a professional development course for teachers, was run by a consortium of DECS, Catholic Education Office, Flinders and Adelaide Universities and AEF. Seven DECS' teachers participated in AEF study tours to Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia and China, and one teacher from the Catholic sector undertook a study tour of India.

Teachers of the priority Asian languages participated in training and development that included a series of peak cross-linguistic as well as language-specific conferences.

Curriculum materials and resources were developed to support and enhance the teaching of the priority Asian languages including the writing of curriculum, the development of frameworks, work samples and audio equipment.

Languages other than English

In 1995, the DECS' LOTE policy was fully implemented so that all primary school students studied a LOTE as part of their formal education. A policy review, *Consolidating Gains, Recovering Ground: Languages in South Australia*, was undertaken in 1995 and will inform planning for the next ten year provision in languages education. LOTE was offered in 575 DECS schools to 123,516 primary and secondary students studying 26 languages. Of the Asian languages, Japanese (25,635 students) and Indonesian (15,137 students) had the highest enrolments.

The South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Incorporated (SACCS) Implementation Plan continued to support new languages programs in primary schools, of which 74 per cent teach a language other than English. All secondary schools continued to offer at least one language. Nine languages are taught in Catholic schools.

The Commission has approved the rewriting of the languages policy, to be undertaken in 1996.

Resourcing schools

Government schools

The Commonwealth contributed $71.75 million in general recurrent funds to government schools in South Australia in 1995. The Commonwealth contributed $17.1 million from the Capital Grants Program General Element for the construction of new schools and facilities, major additions to and redevelopment and upgrading of existing primary, secondary and special schools.

Capital expenditure for 1994/95 was $58.6 million compared with $88.8 million in 1993/94. Recurrent expenditure in government schools during the 1994/95 financial year was $1,008.3 million compared with $1,013.8 million in the previous year, a decrease of $5.5 million (these figures include oncosts such as payroll tax not in the *National Schools Statistics Collection* totals). Salary, wages and related payments represent 78.2 per cent of total recurrent payments in government primary and secondary schools.

Total DECS spending as a percentage of State outlay in 1994–95 was 17 per cent which includes government spending on government and non-government schools. Total outlays are the sum of current and capital outlays as measured by the ABS and detailed in the publication *ABS, Government Finance,* Cat. No. 5512.0, 1994–5. The basis of this calculation differs from previous years and is a more meaningful and accurate measure of relative spending on education by the government.

Independent schools

In 1995 the Commonwealth provided $2.73 million towards capital projects in South Australian independent schools. This included $0.88 million to help broaden the secondary curriculum and implementation of the Finn and Carmichael Reports (QCaTS). Of the 15 capital projects funded by the Commonwealth and completed both physically and financially during 1995, the most common types of work undertaken and facilities provided were:

- master planning, site preparation, construction of general purpose learning areas, library and resource facilities and a facility for language technology, construction and refurbishment of administration and staff facilities and specialist facilities for science, design, art and technology; and

- provision of furniture and equipment, including computer equipment.

Catholic schools

In 1995 the Commonwealth provided to the SACCS Block Grants Authority $4.63 million towards capital projects which included $1,470,279 to help broaden the secondary curriculum and implement the Finn and Carmichael Reports (QCaTS). Of the 14 projects funded by the Commonwealth and completed both physically and financially during 1995, the most common types were:

- construction, refurbishment and alterations to provide administration facilities, staff and student facilities and amenities, general and specialist learning areas including computer bureaus and laboratories, design and technical facilities and resource centres; and
- provision of specialist equipment to enhance the quality and competency of teachers and students and to raise the technology standard of facilities.

Students at a South Australian Catholic school participate in a literacy program using technology.

Focus areas

Vocational education and training

Vocational education in DECS schools

The SACE forms the basis for post-compulsory education in the State. Most schools have integrated vocational learning outcomes into the SACE whilst a minority have trialled an alternative model of stand-alone modules outside the SACE framework. In order to meet a diversity of student needs, schools investigate a variety of delivery modes including delivery to students at schools or clusters of schools, on site at workplaces or training centres, and distance delivery through the Open Access College.

Teachers from six clusters of schools from the three sectors undertook professional development through the NPDP and completed workplace assessor training and training in the areas of tourism, hospitality, office skills, communication and occupational health. Training in 1995 for teachers in government schools included industry placements for 72 teachers, industry-specific training for 170 teachers, workshops on embedding VET into curriculum for 362 teachers, workplace assessor training for 103 teachers and conferences attended by 335 teachers. A DECS proposal gained NPDP funding for 1996 for training based on a three-stage model incorporating workplace assessor training, industry-specific training and the embedding of VET curriculum within the SACE.

The Vocational Pathways for Rural and Isolated Students project developed infrastructure and curriculum materials to support the provision of entry level training to rural and isolated students. The project provided students with access to training in the areas of horticulture, retail, business and communication through a range of delivery modes including face-to-face, cluster flexible delivery and through the Open Access College. For each of the curriculum areas, independent learning resources have been developed to incorporate entry level competencies into SACE extended subject frameworks. South Australia is the first State to offer VET via distance mode.

The ASTF funded 52 programs in South Australian schools: 23 in metropolitan and 29 in country locations. The areas covered in 1995 were: automotive, electrical, defence, training in retail and commerce (TRAC), retail, enterprise, computing, business – office, plastics, polymer, tourism, hospitality, disabilities, building, agriculture, viticulture, communication, technology, fishing, aquaculture, and engineering. The DECS-Mitsubishi office skills joint venture project assessed competencies in the workplace. In line with the South Australian ASTF strategic plan, national VET accreditation for the Young Achievement Business Skills and E Team programs were being investigated. Schools offered both programs through SACE curriculum.

The Curriculum Division of DECS managed the Vocational Education in Schools – Enterprise Project funded by DEET through Curriculum Corporation, developing materials for national distribution on enterprise in vocational education.

DECS and the Economic Development Authority worked during 1995 on the program, including plans for the development of materials as well as a network of enterprise schools for ongoing work in 1996 which will encourage schools to establish partnerships with local industry, business, local government and regional economic development boards.

In 1995 SSABSA identified 52 per cent of DECS schools delivering one or more VET modules in 577 classes and a further 47 per cent developing VET programs. Eight DECS schools offered engineering pathways courses which were accessed by 177 students in 1995. In several of the schools 100 per cent of graduating students have obtained employment or are enrolled in further training in the broader metals, engineering or manufacturing industries.

A DECS curriculum digest paper, Industry and Vocational Education, on the Australian Training Reform and the experience gained from AVTS pilot programs, informs curriculum leaders implementing VET programs. The report, *The Implementation of the AVTS in DECS Schools*, detailed ten recommendations for the coordinated implementation of the AVTS, supported by the AVTS Implementation Plan.

A government high school began the first Enterprise High School program in Australia, successfully linking school initiatives with regional economic priorities and action. Developments include partnerships with major local industries, an award-winning company formed by 25 students under the Young Achievement Australia banner and a variety of similarly successful enterprise and training programs.

VET in independent schools

There was a steady increase in the number of independent schools offering vocational education in 1995 and an increase in the number of students enrolled in vocational education courses. Schools have worked with Industry Training Advisory Bodies and private providers in the delivery of curriculum.

While independent schools are individually responsible for the development of policy frameworks for vocational education the Independent Schools Board of South Australia participates in several projects with the VET sector to improve the interface between school education and vocational education and training. Students are encouraged to examine alternative pathways to employment, training and further education and schools report increased activity in consolidating links with TAFE and other cross-sectoral partnerships, but recognise the difficulty in strengthening programs due to scheduling, equipment and staffing costs.

Courses in independent schools included hospitality, office and business skills, information technology, hairdressing and production (sheltered workshop). Work placements were an important component of programs and in many instances were the central focus although a significant increase in demand for work placements cannot be met by industry. Student response has been enthusiastic and increased cross-credit transfer arrangements between secondary and vocational education curriculum have facilitated program participation.

VET in Catholic schools

For many Catholic schools 1995 was a year in which awareness of the AVTS was raised and its ramifications considered, with some schools trialling and some delivering VET modules and/or structured workplace learning. This process was enhanced by the tabling of findings of a Taskforce on Vocational Education and Post-Compulsory Schooling in South Australia after 18 months of research within Catholic schools and across the broader vocational area locally, interstate and overseas. An important outcome of the recommendations was the decision by SACCS to appoint a full-time consultant in vocational education and training for an initial period of three years.

An AVTS reference group was formed to link schools, training providers, industry and quality assurance groups, to develop policy and oversee implementation. Working parties evolved to implement various aspects of the system (for example, ASTF coordinators, AVTS working party, the VET in SACE group and school clusters).

Half of all Catholic schools with a post-compulsory enrolment were engaged in vocational courses, either independently or jointly within cross-sector school clusters. Courses are offered in aviation, hospitality, retail customer service, office skills, business studies and apparel and small business.

Examples of developments in vocational education related to the key competencies were the redevelopment of work experience log books and assessment sheets, the direction of instruction in work education subjects and counselling and in identifying the presence of or potential for relevant content and methodologies in existing curriculum.

Catholic schools undertaking an AVTS style of work experience generally used it to access funds from ASTF and

to satisfy on-the-job assessment requirements of industry courses. These placements were offered as a traditional one- or two-week block of school time or as one day per week. Other options explored were the use of holiday periods, after-hours, part-time employment and school-based work. Many teachers still value the existing practices of work observation and shadowing as a preferred form of work experience for some students, in providing general vocational awareness or by providing scope for the work-related studies component of SACE.

Introductory in-service training at school or system level was delivered by a combination of school, SSABSA, ASTF and other personnel. NPDP initiatives in Catholic schools included developing retailing materials, adapting competency-based training techniques, researching enterprise programs and developing business/office material. A small number of teachers attended the two-day work-based assessor training due to its limited availability and publicity and the costs of teacher release from school. Similar restrictions saw fewer than 20 Catholic teachers accessing five-day industry-specific courses in retailing, hospitality and aviation. Some other training in specific programs (for example, TRAC) was offered to participating schools.

Gender education and gender equity

Government schools

Issues in the education of girls in association with issues in the education of boys were addressed through DECS' implementation of the NAPEG and the system's priorities which focused on the early years of schooling, including literacy teaching and learning and the implementation of the statements and profiles as frameworks for curriculum review and reform. Other developments with implications for achieving gender equity included review of the school discipline policy and a review into the establishment of a girls' only primary school. The national priorities of addressing the needs of girls at risk and girls who benefit least from schooling were the specific focus of a range of programs and initiatives.

System data collection and analysis by gender and group is mandatory. The collection of achievement data of all groups of students by gender to year 10 will contribute to the identification of girls and boys benefiting least from schooling. Information about subject choice and achievement in the SACE is collected by gender. The annual census for students with disabilities collects data about gender, nature of disability, and target group.

The STAR Component of NEPS supported secondary students at risk of leaving school early and with no viable vocational pathways in 12 metropolitan and country schools, with an additional salary provided for a program for girls at risk in four primary and two secondary schools (the secondary schools had separate programs for girls and boys), while Port Adelaide Girls High School provided flexible access to schooling for pregnant girls and teenage mothers. The priorities of the Commonwealth and State programs included:

- individual programs which span educational, career, welfare and health needs for girls and boys;
- review and reform of organisational practices and teaching and learning, and integration of literacy, career/work education and key competencies across the areas of learning;
- development of monitoring mechanisms by group and gender at the school level; and
- work with local agencies to support the welfare, health and housing needs of students.

Additional State initiatives included training and development, a program for pregnant girls at an adult re-entry campus, the participation of a group of young mothers in Business Studies (SACE) as part of the Vocational Pathways Rural and Isolated Students' project, and distance education providing support for girls at risk through curriculum materials and teaching time.

The State's Gender Equity Project for Girls in Maths and Science through the Gender Equity Component of NEPS included 29 country and metropolitan schools. The aim of the project was increased participation of girls in mathematics and sciences through curriculum review and reform and strategies such as single-sex classes and groups. One particular outcome was the production and distribution of *We can make a difference: an annotated bibliography of gender inclusive classroom texts and professional development materials for teachers R–12.*

Changed emphases in resourcing resulted in increased focus on specific groups of girls at risk such as Aboriginal girls and adolescent girls. For example, a program targeting Aboriginal girls at risk is conducted by Aboriginal attendance officers and behaviour management team personnel. In response to the ratio 1:2 of girls with disabilities to boys with disabilities, there has been an

increase in single-sex girls' classes and groups in special schools.

In training and development there has been a focus on gender construction through activities in English, science and SoSE and an overall increase in professional development activities through the NPDP, including production of the video *Gender Equity and Visual Arts: How do we Look?*

Emerging or continuing issues centred around the need for more identification of and attention to a range of specific issues for different groups of girls at risk and boys at risk, early identification of girls who are gifted, and close monitoring of the academic achievement of girls during the adolescent years. The stereotyping of cultural groups is a continuing issue for girls from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Issues emerging around vocational education and training for girls include provision of AVTS programs to meet the needs of girls and women without stereotyping their participation in employment, training and tertiary education and the need for increased resources for VET programs for girls in country areas.

For students with disabilities, the areas of concern include the limited post-school pathways for girls with disabilities who have fewer opportunities for paid work than boys with disabilities, and addressing sexuality and parenting issues for girls and boys with disabilities, particularly intellectual disabilities.

Strategies to involve parents

Parent groups took part in each stage of the review of the DECS School Discipline Policy, and implementation of the policy and its procedures involves parents and care-givers with the school in a preventative approach. Parent groups were included in consultation on the document, *Gender Equity: A Framework for Australian Schools,* in the development of the Assessment and Reporting Policy and parent information brochure, and in the review of single-sex schooling in DECS schools. Parents and care-givers are involved in establishing negotiated curriculum plans and planning for the transition from school for students with disabilities.

Programs which primarily support the education of boys

A committee representative of the early years of schooling, Aboriginal education, cultural inclusivity and equity examined recent research on gender issues with an emphasis on the construction of masculinity and its effects. The system focus on early literacy has highlighted issues regarding boys and literacy. A coordinator position has been established to examine the inter-relatedness of behaviour management and disability with a focus on boys. Schools emphasise the identification of gifted boys who underachieve and the development of individual education plans/student development plans to address behaviour management and specific learning needs.

Additional funds were made available for behaviour management. A budget allocation of $2 million provides 70 salaries for primary school counsellors in disadvantaged schools (approximately 80 per cent boys), 85 salaries for behaviour support through interagency teams, learning centres and behaviour support teams (approximately 80 per cent boys) and two alternative schools (approximately 80 per cent boys), annexe programs (over 80 per cent boys) and the Enterprise Incubator Program (100 per cent boys).

Learning centre programs, established for students not benefiting from participation in the schooling system, are mainly accessed by boys. Centres have an emphasis on the links between learning and behaviour and programs include supporting boys to develop strategies to interact positively with peers. Learning centres for years R–2 and for years 3–7 have been established in the northern suburbs of Adelaide. The Possibility 14 Program is a program for excluded and highly resistant secondary students who cannot be managed appropriately either in a regular school setting or a learning centre.

A junior primary program provides for groups of ten students to be involved for two terms in intensive programs to address behaviour and learning needs. The New Start Program targets groups of 12–15 students in years 8–10 who are at risk of not completing their secondary education.

Programs specifically for boys at risk in country schools focused on boys and relationships, anger and social skills. Training and development was provided for staff on mandatory reporting, protective behaviours, peer mediation, decision-making, life skills, developing student support teams and supporting victims of domestic violence.

Training and development has been provided for primary and secondary teachers with programs on boys and relationships, social competency training, problem solving, conflict resolution, forms of harassment and anger management.

The Open Access College, which provides distance education, also provides for excluded students who are mostly boys. Distance education programs through the College include teaching about sexual harassment and the implementation of the policy and grievance procedures.

Materials development included sexuality and HIV/AIDS education and classroom guides targeting primary and secondary girls and boys, for example:

- *Gender perspectives: how the individual, school and society shape status and identity based on sex for years 7–10 using studies of society and environment;*
- *Poverty and Education and Subject and Career Choice: issues for girls in secondary schools;*
- *Girls and boys come out to play: gender construction and sexual harassment for Reception to year 3 using studies of society and environment and English;* and
- *Breaking the silence: domestic violence issues for years 6–9 using studies of society and environment and health and physical education.*

Independent schools

Achievements in gender equity were noted in raised awareness and action in addressing social needs, respecting differences, protective behaviour and collaborative learning. Peer support programs in the transition from years 7 to 8 were significant. Improvements were monitored through counselling and curriculum opportunities and systematic school planning of the goals within the NAPEG. Independent schools have implemented extensive professional development for teachers on protective behaviours, mandatory reporting and harassment.

Some schools reported increased staffing and resource allocations for the education of girls. Girls' use of sport and recreation facilities and information technology was observed and staff/student consultative mechanisms were established to address any imbalance and for allocation of resource usage.

Support for students whose circumstances result in marginalisation continues to need attention. Balancing mainstream curriculum with alternative delivery models is seen as one way of improving the educational outcomes of those girls who benefit least from schooling.

Parents and care-givers are involved in learning assistance programs, effectiveness training, workshops and seminars. Consultation and active participation have been integral to the development of behaviour management policies and grievance procedures. Newsletters with a specific target audience of parents and guardians address gender issues related to education of girls.

Gender equity issues

Independent schools recognise the importance of the individual positions of schools, different starting points for change and a range of perceptions regarding the construction of gender.

Examples of best practice in independent schools are emerging through a commitment to cooperative and collaborative learning cultures, an acknowledgment of differences and critical examination of behaviours. The focus on catering for individual differences in students is evident in staffing and resource allocation. Reflective practice is also encouraged through journals, autobiographies and narratives.

Many schools have grievance and harassment policies. The values of individual schools are supported and explicit in each school's documentation of principles and practices. These include key gender equity principles and practices.

In relation to the education of boys, considerable effort has been made by schools, particularly schools catering only for boys, to teach and foster appropriate behaviour management strategies, especially with respect to personal development. Monitoring of playground behaviour to note and then develop programs to prevent dominance by boys, bullying and harassment has occurred. Schools have then initiated staff development programs or provided opportunities for staff to attend conferences and professional development in related areas. This has often resulted in the development or review of appropriate school policies.

A number of single-sex schools have made arrangements for their students to join with classes of other schools to generate classes of both sexes in order to model the behaviour being taught in the home school.

Catholic schools

Implementation of the SACCS Gender and Equity Policy 1992 continued in 1995 to emphasise the priorities of achieving gender equity and improving outcomes for girls at risk and for girls who benefit least from schooling. Achievements included the allocation of additional personnel and a range of professional training and development programs.

Support was provided for curriculum initiatives such as literacy programs for girls from non-English speaking backgrounds, an emphasis on literacy in relation to girls and behavioural issues, and second language provision. The aim of an ESL project in 1994–95 was to improve the learning outcomes of girls from non-English speaking backgrounds. The individual needs of students at risk and students who benefit least from schooling are increasingly catered for in a number of ways such as the linking of identified students with LAP tutors. Schools provided opportunities for girls to work cooperatively in gender groupings and implemented other appropriate methodologies for the education of girls.

Programs and policy addressing the needs of girls at risk provided support for initiatives such as gender groups for mathematics lessons, protective behaviours courses, programs based on Glasser's reality therapy, and programs on assertiveness training and dealing with sexual harassment.

In physical education and health, provision for girls included single-sex groupings, exposure to non-traditional sport, extra-curricular activities and studies of the issues of anorexia and bulimia and the impact of media on body image and self-esteem. Pastoral care programs contributed significantly towards improving outcomes for identified groups of girls. The Family Life Education program examines the construction of gender and fosters a critical awareness of relationships.

Career and vocational education programs in Catholic schools which increased opportunities for students at risk and girls who benefit least from schooling included TRAC, four units of work education in Stage 1 of the SACE, VET, Pathways to the Future, Tradeswomen on the Move, and provision of a wider range of subjects such as tourism and outdoor education and alternative career programs.

At the system level, additional resourcing to address issues concerning the education of girls at risk and girls who benefit least from schooling included a $6,000 budget allocation from the Education Standing Committee, a 0.2 consultancy allocation, adaptive education staffing support and increased purchase of resource materials. Changed emphases at the school level included an increase in the establishment of gender equity committees and heightened support for gender equity contact personnel. Students unable to attend school were provided with programs through the Open Access College. SACE courses were revised and a wider range of SACE school-assessed subjects were offered in conjunction with negotiated curriculum to improve senior secondary options for students at risk and girls who benefit least from schooling.

School and system staff identified a range of issues needing further development, including professional development of staff in the construction of gender and learning styles and in equity and assessment. Further research is required into the issues of single-sex classes, gender equity and learning disability and gender equity and technology. Research into the performance, achievement and patterns of behaviour of those who do not opt for post-compulsory education was also identified as a priority.

Family participation is an essential element of Catholic schooling and parents are invited as a matter of course to be active on school-based committees such as the gender equity committee and are involved in the wider decision-making process. Schools ran parent programs in ESL and options for girls and parents were active in programs such as LAP.

Programs to support the education of boys focused on workshops for teachers covering aspects of behaviour management and interpersonal skill development. The issue of gender-related correlation to unacceptable behaviours was addressed mainly in the following:

- a Boys and Relationship Program workshop for 23 teachers;
- an Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) workshop for 37 teachers and principals; and
- an anti-bullying/harassment policy development workshop for 37 teachers and school leaders.

As part of the Alienation During the Middle Years of Schooling project, action research was undertaken at a Catholic school to determine the construction of masculinity and its effect on the alienation of boys at school. Questions about why boys are more often in trouble at school and more often diagnosed with behaviour-associated medical conditions and learning difficulties are providing the focus for further initiatives planned for 1996.

Literacy

Government schools

One of the priorities of DECS during 1995 was learning in the early years, addressed through the Early Years Strategy. The major initiative in the Early Years Strategy in 1995 was the Cornerstones program, a training and development

project to help teachers identify and support students needing additional assistance by providing teachers with critical frameworks for reviewing teaching practice, resources, programs and services. Training and development was undertaken by all teachers in pre-schools and years R–3, a total of 6,000 early childhood teachers. Topics included literacy as social and cultural practice; finding out what learners know and can do; identifying students needing early assistance, frameworks for critical analysis of teaching practice; family, community, school and pre-school links; explicit teaching; programs, services and resources that support early literacy learning; and planning for early assistance at school and centre level.

As a result of the Cornerstones program, pre-schools and schools with junior primary enrolments have developed strategic plans for early assistance for children experiencing difficulties in their literacy learning. Special schools with junior primary enrolments have been provided with additional funds to develop early assistance plans for those students with disabilities at risk in their literacy learning.

Other initiatives within the Early Years Strategy include:

- support for a further ten schools to implement Reading Recovery;
- development of an early years literacy profile to assist teachers to identify literacy learning outcomes pre-level one;
- implementation of the BST program in aspects of literacy and numeracy for students in years 3 and year 5;
- a development project exploring numeracy in the early years;
- development and trial of a screening and early intervention program focusing on emergent literacy for four year olds entering pre-schools; and
- extension of a home-based program for children younger than four identified as at risk.

These initiatives have been coordinated to link with the objectives of the Commonwealth-funded ELC. The component involved the development of a resource package which assists teachers and principals to identify, understand and respond to the literacy needs of students in the early years of schooling.

In addition to the early years priority, the major State-funded literacy initiative was the establishment of a literacy curriculum team of four to provide support for literacy learning through a focus schools program, through the development of materials, and through liaison with officers working in other curriculum areas. The literacy focus schools program provided training and development for key personnel in ten schools, including two high schools and one area school. Training and development emphasised the development of common planning, monitoring and evaluation frameworks which focus on shared understandings about literacy. The monitoring of literacy achievement, the review and reform of curriculum and teaching practices and the review and reform of whole school structures and practices were other areas of particular emphasis.

Support for the literacy learning of particular target groups of students continued through the Social Justice Curriculum Development Project (Commonwealth-funded through the Disadvantaged Schools Component) and the Supporting English Language Acquisition for Aboriginal Students program.

Independent schools

In 1995 there was a range of initiatives in the area of literacy undertaken. In the early years of schooling, First Steps and Reading Recovery were implemented or expanded in a number of schools and programs were developed to foster partnerships between parents and schools in early literacy strategies. At year 10, new programs were trialled in preparing students for SACE, involving the development of independent learning skills programs, peer group and cross-age tutoring.

Individual support programs for ESL students were expanded and a project to study Aboriginal English relating to the teaching of standard Australian English was commenced. Schools are experimenting with cooperative learning programs with some targeting specific areas of school culture. Schools use computer-assisted instruction to improve student outcomes in literacy related areas.

Functional reading skills were identified as a priority area for action in a range of school settings. Cross-curricular writing of exemplars as part of the key competencies pilot informed the teaching of literacy-related skills.

Catholic schools

Literacy programs funded through NEPS focused on professional development materials for teachers in the early years in designated disadvantaged schools. For example, *TELL – Talk in Early Literacy Learning*, a

document on oral language, was developed, and *PD on CD: Literacy*, the interactive CD-ROM of professional development activities in early literacy, developed by Curriculum Corporation, was distributed to all schools supported through the Disadvantaged Schools Program.

LLNC materials were developed to improve students' access to the valued literacies of school. The South Australian product for LLNC, *Key Literacy Learning*, reinforced this by advocating that in planning literacy programs, teachers need to value and include students' out-of-school language and literacy experiences, and explicitly teach the literacies of school, particularly the literacy of the key learning areas. It shows teachers how to use the statements and profiles as the starting point for identifying the specific literacy they will need to teach.

Training and development funded under the ELC also focused on improving the literacy outcomes of early years students. One program, Collaborating for Success: The Parent Factor, which uses parent presenters, aimed to foster partnerships between parents and teachers in home-school reading programs.

All LLNC and ELC programs were developed to highlight the needs of priority groups in literacy teaching and learning so that curriculum and assessment address particular needs. Professional development encouraged teachers to be explicit about outcomes so that they are clearly understood by students, parents and their communities, and through the program, Reading Discovery, helped teachers identify what students are doing as readers and writers in order to help them to move forward. Other programs included professional development for teachers working in designated disadvantaged schools and training for tutors in First Steps. The First Steps Developmental Continuum provides a framework for identifying early literacy needs.

Professional development through LLNC and ELC encouraged the development of a supportive school environment which values and empowers students and encouraged whole-school approaches to literacy teaching, learning, assessment and reporting.

Physical development, health and fitness

Government schools

DECS has implemented the National Junior Sport Policy and is conducting a wide-ranging program from 1995–97 in response to the findings of the report, *Towards improving physical education and sport in South Australian schools*, including a $300,000 allocation for a three-year training and development program for primary school teachers in physical education and sport. A secondary school has been established as the first specialist physical education and sport school in South Australia. As one part of the specialist focus the school is coordinating a small cluster of schools in the development of the Southern Vales Physical Education and Sport Program.

The implementation of the statements and profiles provided a focus for curriculum review and reform. Teachers have developed planning and programming that is inclusive of the three key principles of social justice, diversity and supportive environments which underpin the health and physical education learning area. A significant achievement was the professional development of teachers R–10 in the health and physical education focus and resource schools projects which produced curriculum support materials to share with all schools and which were inclusive of targeted groups.

Achievements in 1995 also included the linking of curriculum topics, and the production by the Health Education Interagency Advisory Committee (HEIAC) of guidelines for guest speakers in schools. In addition, fire safety education was implemented in years R–10 and a child protection resource was developed.

Physical education and health agencies play a valuable part in supporting teachers with materials and information on the latest research and current issues. The major source of advice and advocacy is the HEIAC, a monitoring and evaluating body which consists of seven link groups in physical education, safety, mental health, health care, nutrition, sexuality, and drug education.

Issues identified as priorities include: demonstrating links between the health and physical education statement and profiles and those in other learning areas; examining dimensions of health, particularly spiritual health; developing programming in environmental education; explicitly teaching younger children about safety from physical violence and sexual abuse; and developing a pre-compulsory band in the statement and profiles.

Strategies to involve parents and the community included parent representation on resource and focus school project management teams, parent involvement in the health promoting schools indicators, agency involvement and a parent reference group on the HEIAC, and agency involvement in professional development of teachers.

Independent schools

A number of schools now have provision for specialist teachers for health and physical education. Increased time allocation was a significant achievement, particularly in small schools, while accommodating the needs of year 12 students and balancing timetable demands for senior subjects was a challenge overcome by some secondary schools. Compulsory physical education for all students has been introduced and schools continue to experiment with single-sex classes and teams. New and improved facilities assisted some schools and broadened the range of options for students.

Fourteen independent schools were involved in this sector's HIV/AIDS program. The intention is to support schools in the identification and development of appropriate programs, provide teacher in-service training and develop networks for the sharing of professional practice. HIV/AIDS policy guidelines have been circulated to all independent schools.

Several schools catering for students from R–12 are involved with the NIDE program, resulting in a rewrite of the R–10 drug education program using the statements and profiles and adapting the harm minimisation approach. National initiatives have brought subtle rather than major change in the provision of physical education and sport and have tended to reinforce the program and policies that were already part of many independent schools.

Schools are concerned about the funding and resources needed to maintain effective programs. More time to review programs is also a high priority for many schools. Provision for girls and boys and endeavouring to ensure that all students are able to achieve their potential is monitored closely.

The use of community facilities by a number of schools provides opportunity for involvement in coaching and managing teams. Schools organise coaching clinics for parents and care-givers and information evenings for drug education and HIV/AIDS education. Several schools work with community groups and associations in the promotion of health and lifestyle choices.

Daily fitness sessions in schools have impacted positively on student levels of fitness, coordination, learning and ability to participate in meaningful recreation and sport. Issues of gender, race, disability, poverty and social dysfunction are always being addressed. Strong pastoral care programs in independent schools and demonstrable links and support from a range of church and community groups enhance supportive learning cultures. Students are encouraged to state firmly and clearly the behaviours that are unacceptable to them and for their learning.

Primary students at a South Australian independent school enjoy classroom activities.

Catholic schools

For this report, 53 per cent of Catholic secondary schools were sampled and 55 per cent of primary schools. Of those, 44 per cent of secondary schools and 36 per cent of primary schools had implemented the health and physical education statement and profile. The survey showed that 88 per cent of secondary schools had staff undertake training and development in health and physical education, and 36 per cent of primary schools.

Secondary schools were more likely to be members of professional associations in this curriculum area with 60 per cent of secondary schools and 33 per cent of primary schools. Seventy-one per cent of the secondary schools had staff as members of a professional association compared with 23 per cent of primary schools. Professional associations were seen to play a significant role in professional development by 60 per cent of the secondary schools and 21 per cent of primary schools. ACHPER was mentioned several times as being particularly useful.

Secondary schools gave about 10 per cent of lesson time to health and physical education, increasing to around 17 per cent in the senior secondary years. Primary schools ranged from four per cent to 23 per cent of lesson time, most schools clustering around the 8–12 per cent range.

National initiatives effected new emphases in the provision of health and physical education in Catholic schools,

particularly the statement and profile and the National Junior Sport Policy. Specific changes were curriculum mapping, more structured assessment and reporting, changed organisation of physical education classes, and use of the initiatives to better inform school-based policy development.

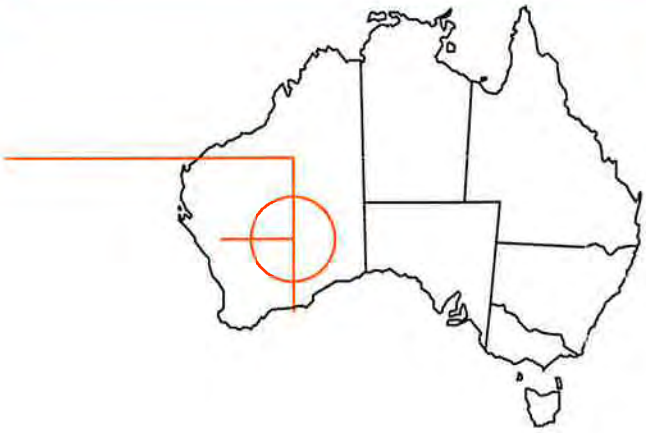
Significant achievements included the implementation of the National Junior Sport Policy and reforms resulting from the implementation of the statement and profiles such as increased accountability, and the use of outcome statements in reporting student achievement. Schools also reported achievements such as increased opportunities for all students to access activities, offering physical education as a senior secondary subject, single-sex classes, daily fitness activities, the provision of modified sports and emphasis upon producing policies in the curriculum area.

Schools reported a number of priority issues such as the need for more indoor facilities and the appointment of specialist teachers in primary schools. Curriculum issues included improving the status of the curriculum area, physical education as a compulsory junior secondary subject in all schools, addressing mental health issues, ensuring that physical education is not seen simply as playing sport, and greater links between health and physical education. In addition, schools were giving priority to issues such as increasing girls' positive attitudes to physical education, falling levels of fitness, and continued emphasis on appropriate levels of skill development and competition.

Ethics and values have a significant role in the health and physical education learning area in a variety of ways, such as expectations in the playing of sport; discussions and teaching about respecting one's body; practising equitable treatment of all as well as respect for the dignity of each person; and through discussion of key issues such as personal relationships, drugs and health matters.

Most schools involve parents in the delivery of sport activities to students, rather than in the management and delivery of health and physical education. Parents and community members are often called upon as resource people, particularly in the areas of health and personal development.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Introduction

Western Australia occupies a land area of some 2.5 million square kilometres and the settlement patterns associated with agricultural, pastoral and mining development, coupled with the commitment of the government and Catholic schools systems to Statewide equity of provision, have historically required a very large number of small, widely-dispersed schools.

Forty-six per cent of government schools are located outside the Perth metropolitan area but enrol only one-third of the system's students. About 40 per cent of Catholic schools are in rural areas and cater for 24 per cent of Catholic students, compared with 30 per cent of independent schools (12 per cent of students).

While the relative proportions of students educated by each sector in Western Australia do not vary significantly from year to year, the long-term trend is for enrolments at non-government schools to grow at a faster rate than those at government schools. Another feature is the rapid development of schools operated by various Christian denominations in new suburbs, schools based on non-Christian religious principles and secular schools practising particular theories of schooling.

Major initiatives

Curriculum frameworks

In June 1994, the then Minister for Education formed a committee chaired by the Director of the CEOWA and with membership drawn from the three schools sectors, universities and industry to review the process of curriculum development in Western Australia.

The committee's recommendations were endorsed by the Minister in September 1995 and will be implemented during 1996–1997. They provide for:

- the establishment of a new statutory authority, the Curriculum Council, which will be responsible for the coordination of K–12 curriculum development for all schools and for the current functions of the Secondary Education Authority (SEA). It will develop a curriculum framework describing the knowledge, understandings, skills and attitudes that all students can be expected to develop as they progress through schooling;
- the Council to be accountable to the Minister for the quality of its products, processes and services, but accountability for student learning to remain with the schools sectors;
- a K–12 curriculum framework to be developed for all schools comprising an overarching curriculum statement and eight learning area statements. The starting point will be major learning outcomes encompassing a common set of knowledge, skills, understandings and attitudes. Schools wishing to address desired learning outcomes not included in the framework (for example, spiritual) will be able to do so, but those which prefer to adopt an alternative framework will require the Minister's approval. The framework will not dictate how the curriculum is to be delivered and schools will continue to devise educational programs appropriate to students' developmental or other needs;
- new curriculum materials to be produced only after a comprehensive review of current local and national resources – consideration will be given to adapting or updating existing materials; and
- the SEA's functions to be undertaken by the Council in relation to the preparation of years 11 and 12 courses, assessment of years 11 and 12 student performance (especially in the year 12 external examinations) and the expression of the schools sectors' views on admission processes for further education and training.

Student outcome statements

In 1993, the then Minister for Education established consultative groups representing teachers, tertiary institutions, professional associations and other community interests to work with the Education Department (EDWA) in examining the national statements and profiles for modification and identifying issues for investigation.

A two-year trial of a 'working edition', a version of the national profiles developed to suit the curriculum in government schools, was followed by a report and recommendations to the Minister.

Catholic primary and secondary schools trialled specific aspects of the statements and that sector also participated in various learning area steering committees and reference groups.

The trial found that the statements could improve student learning and accountability, encourage professional practice and allow greater equity.

Key competencies

In cooperation with the SEA and the CEOWA, 27 government schools trialled aspects of the key competencies developed by the Mayer Committee to determine whether they could be used to improve teaching and learning. Schools examined students' opportunities to gain the competencies, means of assessment and reporting, attitudes of post-secondary institutions and employers to their judgements, and linkages with the world of work.

The trial found that key competencies supported student-centred open learning, helped teachers to reflect on their own performance and assisted students' transition from school to constantly-changing work environments. Recommendations included:

- embedding of the underlying ideas of the key competencies within years 11 and 12 courses:
- assessment of key competencies within rather than separately from normal assessment procedures:
- use of key competencies by students in the development of employment-related work portfolios; and
- consideration of key competencies by the Curriculum Council in the development of the curriculum and learning area statements for schools.

Early childhood education

This EDWA program for four to eight year olds emphasises the importance of early learning and is intended to guarantee Statewide access to eight half-day sessions of pre-primary (P) and two half-days of kindergarten education per week, taken in various combinations.

Current provisions allow access to pre-primary education for 40 per cent of eligible five year olds, but an additional 12,500 places will be provided by 1998. In 1997, EDWA will begin to transfer kindergarten programs operated by the Department of Family and Children's Services and by 1999 will offer 18,000 places.

Existing programs are being reviewed to ensure that they meet the developmental needs of all children and, through a cross-sectoral Focus Schools project, new programs and teacher resources will be developed in nine specialist schools.

Another important and growing aspect of reform to the delivery of schooling is multi-age grouping, which examines the implications of school organisational strategies which focus on vertically-grouped classes in P–3. The project currently involves 17 schools in which parents are offered the option of P, 1, 2, P–1 or P–2 classes: benefits noted have included students being able to learn at their own levels and enhanced group and cooperative learning.

Effective communication with stakeholders in early childhood education is regarded as vital and more comprehensive information for parents and the establishment of a Ministerial Advisory Council are other features of this initiative.

Schools review

This process provided an opportunity to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of government schooling. Of the schools identified for review, 22 voted to close or amalgamate and 37 to remain open. Funding freed as a result helped schools to improve programs and resources, provided air-conditioned buses for travel in some rural areas and out-of-school hours childcare facilities in the metropolitan area.

Technology

A Technology 2000 strategic plan was under preparation by EDWA, with the aim of ensuring that all teachers and students use technology to enhance their teaching and learning; all schools have adequate computing and telecommunications equipment, networks and support; and all schools, district offices and central office have technology plans and integrated information systems.

The biggest State government employer, EDWA has always managed personnel processes from the central office, but from 1996, under the Personnel 2000 (P2000) project, schools will begin to take responsibility for matters such as leave and teacher relief. During 1995, P2000 was trialled in 85 schools throughout the State, each of which was linked to the central office by a wide-area network.

Commonwealth-funded capital projects

The Commonwealth provided $20.2 million toward the cost of EDWA capital projects, including $5 million for the Warnbro Community High School. Forty projects, including new schools and improvements to existing schools, benefited from Commonwealth funding.

Warnbro Community High School, WA

Thirty-one projects in Catholic schools were completed physically and financially, including facilities in new primary and secondary schools, technical and science work areas, specialist upgradings in secondary schools and library upgradings in primary and secondary schools. Commonwealth capital grants for metropolitan primary schools totalled $1.8 million, against total expenditures of $2.8 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' efficiency and confidence. In rural and remote areas, total capital expenditure on primary schools was $3.5 million, of which Commonwealth grants accounted for $2.7 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, one in the Pilbara region and several campuses at Broome in the Kimberley region expended $2 million on capital works, of which the Commonwealth provided $1 million in grants.

Capital works to the value of $5 million were undertaken at four secondary schools, and involved schools' contributions of $4.4 million.

The Commonwealth paid to the Association of Independent Schools (AISWA) Capital Grants Association $1.6 million under the General Element, $767,000 for projects under the QCATS Element and $1.25 million under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support Element. Thirty-three capital projects were completed, for which grants totalling $3.44 million were received from the Commonwealth against projects to the value of $5.33 million. These projects reflected the Commonwealth's support for building projects that would have a positive effect on the educational achievements of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students or 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.

Focus areas

Vocational education

Experience so far, with over half of the State's secondary schools offering some form of vocational education, has indicated that:

- there is a need for better coordination of structured work-based learning placements, as continual demands on the same employers causes justifiable resentment;
- both workplace assessors and teachers need more training, including, in the case of the latter, pre-service education;
- the time required to implement and coordinate vocational education in schools is considerable and must be acknowledged in their planning;
- school-industry partnerships are slow to develop;

- the most successful programs are taught by strongly-committed teachers, who give freely of their time and experience without additional salary, and are student-, not subject- or timetable-centred; and
- because of the developmental nature of vocational education, provisions during 1995–1996 will need to be reviewed and refined in 1997 by the new Curriculum Council.

Gender education

Sixteen government schools were funded to develop innovations in curriculum and teaching that would improve girls' learning environments, particularly those in secondary schools and those disadvantaged by SES or isolation. However, many of these initiatives were not fully implemented as a result of industrial action in schools and will carry over into 1996.

A policy and procedures document, *Dealing With Sexual Harassment*, was released in November 1995, and applies to both students and staff. Workshops for district superintendents and gender equity contact officers, interactive television transmissions and brochures were used to support introduction of the policy.

In Catholic schools, awareness-raising activities with students, parents and staff focused on gender equity issues and both school-based professional development and in-service activities by the CEOWA were intended to maintain attention to these issues. A gender equity policy for schools was approved by the Catholic Education Commission in November 1995.

Independent schools reported that no student was denied access to specific courses on the basis of gender and initiatives to support target groups (such as assistance through the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme), were available equally to boys and girls. Many schools, operating either as single-sex schools or on principles of equal opportunity, did not report any specific gender issues or initiatives.

Over all, students were assisted in recognising the importance of gender equity through equity policies in the playground and gender education classes. Student counsellors were often provided to assist with problems and schools reported that a common curriculum was set for boys and girls, with teaching based on an individualised focus. Some schools used strategies such as behaviour plans to limit boys' domination in the playground, a focus on non-sexist language or the provision of non-stereotypical role models, but on the whole, schools reported that the strategies they employed enhanced the achievements of both boys and girls, with equal opportunities being provided in all learning activities.

Parents at most schools were encouraged to set a positive example for their children and were involved in discussion, planning and development of equity strategies. However, few schools planned to increase the role of parents in these initiatives.

Most schools did not report any continuing or emerging issues requiring attention in relation to equity, although several stated that affirmative action for girls should cease and an emphasis be placed on assisting boys to reach their potential, as they were currently performing at levels below those achieved by girls. Programs such as behaviour management and early literacy were offered for the benefit of all students, but the majority of participants were boys.

Literacy

In government schools, development of a systemic literacy strategy commenced, with the aim of establishing a consolidated and coordinated approach to literacy development, by defining the principles of literacy education and creating policy and guidelines. The strategy is to be completed by the end of 1996, for implementation in 1997.

Support in early literacy intervention was provided to schools through the LLNC and NEPS National Priorities Element, ELC. LLNC, a four-year project with a focus on P–3 teachers in Priority Schools Program (PSP) schools which finished in December 1995, aimed to identify best practice in relation to children experiencing difficulty with literacy learning. Resources were collaboratively developed under LLNC and schools attending to the needs of disadvantaged students with literacy difficulties used LLNC professional development materials, including print, video and a CD-ROM that allowed materials to be selected according to users' specific needs.

The ELC built on existing resources such as First Steps and those developed through LLNC to support and improve whole-school approaches to early intervention, intervention strategies in mainstream classrooms and home-school partnerships.

The project began in May 1995 in 60 Priority Schools which had identified literacy intervention as a priority in P–3. Schools benefited from the resources and time provided for work on whole-school approaches to

intervention and the development of specific plans for children based on First Steps processes and strategies.

The student outcome statements working edition in English was well received but some refinements were recommended, the most significant being the separation of reading and viewing into two distinct strands: although both are receptive processes, it was clear from the trial that they develop at different rates.

In Catholic primary schools, central facilitator training was provided and networks encouraged to assist with professional development. School-based teacher support focused on spelling, writing, reading and oral language. A collaborative learning project in 22 pilot schools developed strategies to enhance literacy development, including measurement of student literacy levels. In lower secondary schools, the Stepping Out program in language and literacy was used to improve student outcomes by enhancing literacy skills.

Support in early literacy intervention was provided to target groups of independent schools and involved whole-school assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of existing literacy programs in small schools. Individual school plans were developed to better match schools' needs and students' literacy problems.

First Steps training was made available to all these schools, with support in the form of whole-school professional development and individual teacher assistance. A network of classroom teachers/First Steps trainers acted as Focus B teachers.

A small group of schools specifically examined possibilities of multi-age grouping and developed teaching strategies for improved delivery. A visitation and support program was set up for the sharing of ideas and planning of possible future learning centres for the early years of schooling.

Collaboration between ESL and early literacy support consultants enabled the establishment of jointly-funded and supported professional development in early literacy.

A pilot group of junior schools worked to develop better ways of communicating to parents about students' progress in early literacy, while some teachers used NPDP training and support structures to refine techniques for the use of student outcome statements, First Steps continua and student sample profiles in their schools.

Parents as Partners (in First Steps literacy development) featured in the programs of most independent schools, and workshops, training sessions and newsletters were used to offer ideas to parents on activities for building their children's literacy skills.

Most schools reported that monitoring tests confirmed that First Steps was very effective in improving literacy achievement. Other initiatives included phonics courses such as the Learning to Read program and the expansion of one-to-one teaching. Involvement in competitions, associations and clubs and the use of more relevant materials were other strategies noted.

Very few schools participated in Statewide basic skills literacy testing, although those that did reported that it was helpful in validating and reinforcing literacy programs and was a useful indicator of students with difficulties.

Health and physical education

EDWA is currently implementing initiatives outlined in a 1994 Ministerial statement, including 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 designating physical education as a curriculum priority in schools' accountability to district superintendents.

A key element, the Physical Steps project was launched in March 1995 to help teachers develop structured sequential programs to improve student fitness and provide professional development, resource materials and a network of

Students involved in sports activities at a Pilbara school, WA.

trainers. In a train-the-trainers program, two persons from each government school district, as well as some from non-government schools, participated in workshops.

A survey was conducted to provide a systemic perspective on such issues as professional development, networking and in-school coordination before introduction of the Physical Steps program in Catholic primary schools. The CEOWA was represented in the Ministerial Working Party on Sport and participated in the NIDE conference.

Most independent schools delivered all elements of the learning area, many of them including camps, sex education and drug awareness classes, teamwork and self-discipline strategies and activities to promote learning to accept the consequences of one's actions and recognise the place for the expression of emotion. Many schools reported that all elements were applicable to other subjects and noted a broadening of topics to incorporate a larger variety of sporting and general health education activities. Parents and communities were involved in various ways, including the coaching of teams and organisation of events, while schools took advantage of the expertise of parents and often invited them to help with course delivery.

National Strategy for Equity in Schooling

Through the provision of supplementary support, EDWA continued to ensure that those students with special educational needs and interests achieved the outcomes expected of all students to an extent commensurate with their abilities.

Catholic schools reviewed their programs to ensure that they reflected the principles of social justice; and, while no particular component of NEPS was targeted specifically, some 12,500 students were assisted: With the support of the CEOWA, schools moved toward the achievement of NEPS objectives and the evolution of meaningful program initiatives linked to strategic goals.

About a quarter of independent schools surveyed reported that socioeconomically disadvantaged students were supported through an accessible fee structure or a reduction in fees. Students with disabilities were assisted through the employment of special aides, modification of facilities, provision of one-to-one teaching and occupational therapy. Extension programs were provided for gifted and talented students.

Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds

In 1995, $5.96 million was expended on the administration and operation of the PSP in 138 government schools enrolling 45,372 students.

Of the 755 PSP projects funded, 706 were developed by schools, 30 by schools/districts, 15 by districts and four by the central office. The most significant funding areas were social skills development and literacy, with other major foci being curriculum practices, numeracy, organisational skills and health. The Disadvantaged Schools Program supported 5,534 students in 34 Catholic schools throughout the State in the areas of literacy, numeracy, pastoral care, technology and enterprise, music appreciation, collaborative learning, the arts, computer-assisted learning and health education. Staff were provided with wider access to resources to improve students' cultural opportunities and learning outcomes.

With the devolution of NEPS to the separate schools sectors and the transfer of part of the Disadvantaged Schools Program funding to AISWA, services were continued to seven schools previously identified under the Disadvantaged Schools Program and to an eighth added in 1995. The proportion of funds allocated to independent schools was insufficient to provide adequately for more than a small number of schools in which students were subject to educational disadvantage.

Students with disabilities

Mainstream government schools and specialised facilities provided educational services to 4,545 students with intellectual, physical, sensorimotor or multiple disabilities. Education support schools delivered individualised programs to 672 students with moderate to severe intellectual difficulties and/or multiple disabilities; education support centres, which shared mainstream school campuses, provided for 732 students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities; and education support units (single classes located in mainstream schools) catered for 1,065 students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities.

Students with physical or sensorimotor disabilities generally attended local mainstream schools and, with visiting teacher assistance, were educated in regular classes alongside their peers without disabilities. These students included 298 with physical disabilities, 289 with impaired vision, 591 with impaired hearing and 81 with autism. A

Table 74. NEPS participation, Catholic school students (FTE), 1995

Program	*Primary*		*Secondary*		*All*		*Totals*
	Females	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*All*
ESL New Arrivals	42	49	38	32	80	81	161
ESL General Support	1,484	1,682	791	800	2,275	2,482	4,757
DSP	2,203	2, 217	592	560	2,795	2,777	5,572
Country Areas	703	772	131	191	834	963	1,797
STAR	0	0	66	178	66	178	244
Totals	**4,432**	**4, 720**	**1,618**	**1,761**	**6,050**	**6,481**	**12,531**

Source: Catholic Education Office of WA

further 206 pre-primary aged students with disabilities attended local pre-primary facilities and received both visiting teacher and additional aide support.

The national movement toward the education of students with intellectual disabilities in their local schools was reflected in the trialling, in collaboration with the Disabilities Services Commission, of support strategies for a small number of these students.

The development of foundation (pre-level 1) outcome statements for students with intellectual disabilities will significantly improve schools' abilities to determine their progress and provide appropriate educational programs.

In accordance with the endorsed recommendations of a 1993 Ministerial review, over the period 1995–1997 special funding totalling $6 million is being provided to improve provisions for students with disabilities or specific learning difficulties. During 1995, initiatives included:

- the development of systemic policy and guidelines for the education of students experiencing learning difficulties in literacy and numeracy;
- encouragement of individualised educational planning;
- professional development support for teachers of students with learning difficulties;
- the allocation of $983,000 in seeding grants to 110 school- and district-based projects addressing the special needs of students with disabilities or learning difficulties;
- the employment of additional visiting teachers for students with disabilities in remote districts; and
- the provision of a freecall telephone service in the central office for parents, teachers and community members with concerns or questions about the education of children with learning difficulties.

Some 1,100 students with disabilities and other special educational needs were enrolled in 132 Catholic primary and secondary schools. Of these, 720 students with mild to severe levels of disability were funded through NEPS. The majority were integrated into mainstream K–12 classes, while those with more significant disabilities were enrolled in purpose-built support units with specialist staff.

Under the NPDP, 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. Other work involved the development of indicators and strategies for foundation skills within the national outcome statement profiles.

Funding was sought for some 300 students with disabilities and provided for about 250, with mild to severe levels of disability, in 52 independent schools, through the Special Education Schools Support and Intervention Support sub-components of NEPS.

Geographically-isolated students

EDWA delivered educational programs for students in isolated rural and remote areas through the School of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE), which consisted of a Perth campus and five Schools of the Air (SOTAs) in remote areas; small P–7 and P–10 schools; and a combination of SIDE and local provisions.

Progress with the Communicating for the Future – Rural and Distance Education strategic plan continued with the acquisition of computers for the training of teachers in the application of telematics under the district high schools program, increased Westlink narrowcast transmissions and commencement of a building program bringing together all distance education functions, including research and development, training, service delivery and access to wider resources through telecommunications.

Three-quarters of all district high schools now have access to telematics and the remainder will be linked during 1996. Ongoing training was provided for teachers delivering lessons to the 140 schools networked through telematics and over 400 teachers have now been trained in telematics.

In 1995, SIDE Perth provided K–12 education for 662 FTE students, while SOTAs and their itinerant teachers delivered K–7 education to 292 isolated students.

Some 16,000 students in 147 schools were supported through educational, social and cultural programs funded by the Priority Country Areas Program (PCAP), which continued to address the issue of equity and access for isolated students through the provision of a broader curriculum and an enriched range of experiences across all eight learning areas. PCAP also endeavoured to improve student outcomes by supporting professional development opportunities for isolated teachers and assisting schools in using telematics, for example, by teachers of ESL students in the remote Ngaanyatjarra Lands.

Like PSP, PCAP moved away from the parallel planning processes of the past and focused on embedding resources in school development planning processes. This led to most funds going directly to schools, which were expected to demonstrate to district superintendents how they had addressed disadvantage arising from geographic isolation and had improved student outcomes.

Sixteen Catholic schools, 14 of them in the Kimberley region, operated in prescribed areas and received NEPS funding for excursions and school-based projects according to a formula based on isolation and enrolments, while central funding provided a computer consultancy for the Kimberley schools.

Eight independent schools in prescribed areas were NEPS-funded 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 from NEPS target groups

EDWA education districts received resources to deliver supplementary programs to exceptional students in years 5 to 7, mostly through Primary Extension and Challenge (PEAC) centres. The Secondary Special Placement Program (SSPP) supported 750 academically-talented students at ten senior high schools, while 400 places were provided in visual arts at three schools, 300 in dance (four schools), 100 in theatre arts (one school), 150 in LOTE (two schools) and 500 in specialist music (one school). Telematics technology enabled 15 isolated year 8 students to receive curriculum enrichment. In addition, all high and senior high schools were allocated 0.15 teacher FTE to allow coordination of identification processes and services.

School-based provisions were assisted by the Commonwealth-funded Teaching TAGS (Talented and Gifted Students) project, which focused on the identification and encouragement of these students in the early childhood and primary years by all teachers. It included a range of strategies to enrich classroom learning and nurture creativity, independent learning, thinking skills and problem-solving abilities among both mainstream and target populations. It was introduced to all education districts in 1995.

Sixteen courses were offered to 220 students in years 4 to 7 from 11 Catholic schools in the Perth metropolitan area. A major aim was to establish a combined regional program to bring identified gifted and talented students together in a challenging environment to work on a range of courses, such as tactical thinking in sport, modern dance, percussion music and problem-solving, at a level of difficulty that would stimulate their development. The success of this project laid the foundation for an ongoing program of regional commitment.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

EDWA operated seven intensive language centres (ILCs) for 970 new arrivals, 35 ESL specialist support programs for 1,454 non-English speaking background students in mainstream schools, a visiting teacher service for teachers of mainstream classes with 225 new arrivals students, the Critical Steps program for 3,158 non-English speaking background Aboriginal students and a resource centre with some 700 regular users.

Initiatives included:

- establishment of a 'born in Australia' class at a metropolitan primary ILC to cater for 16 students born in Australia who had commenced year 1 unable to speak English;
- visiting teacher support for mainstream teachers of 161 Stage 2 students in 12 primary schools in three cells on a rotating basis – trialling indicated improved student and parent participation and staff awareness of the linguistic and cultural needs of NESB students;

- trialling of a visiting teacher service for mainstream schools with Stage 2 students unable to access an ESL support program;
- trialling in five schools of the *ESL in the Mainstream Teacher Development Course,* which aims to develop teachers' understanding of the needs of non-English speaking background students and collaboration between mainstream and specialist ESL teachers. Outcomes noted included changes in teacher attitudes, classroom strategies and delivery models; and
- the Country New Arrivals Program, introduced in 1994 to provide for those unable to access on-arrival support or attend an ILC, which was expanded with 22 ESL teachers being allocated to country schools for a semester: many of these students, being highly mobile, had been difficult to monitor and service, given the factors of distance and critical mass.

ESL provisions for permanently-resident NESB students operated in 69 primary and secondary Catholic schools. Proposals were prepared for the inclusion of ESL in mainstream professional development programs, following training of two ESL consultants in conjunction with EDWA. This approach involves ESL teachers in the mainstream working collaboratively on developing and implementing an inclusive curriculum focusing on the language demands of all learning areas.

Two Catholic primary schools and one Catholic secondary school in the Perth metropolitan area provided intensive language centres for new arrivals, while support in other schools and in country areas was delivered according to need.

Assistance under the General Support sub-component was provided to 11 remote Aboriginal independent schools and seven other independent schools enrolling a total of 1,790 students.

Aboriginal students

In July 1995, 13,002 Aboriginal students were enrolled in government schools (9,886 in P–7 and 3,116 in years 8–12) and 743 in community pre-schools supported by EDWA.

Most Aboriginal students remained at school until year 10, and while 67.3 per cent continued to year 11 in 1994, 25.2 per cent were retained to year 12 in 1995. Of these 186 year 12 students, 68 achieved secondary graduation.

Major initiatives arising from the current EDWA 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 program committees, attached to 251 schools, facilitated Aboriginal participation in school communities;
- the continuing development of Aboriginal studies curriculum materials for primary and lower secondary students, leading to greater involvement of Aboriginal people in schooling, improvements in self-image among Aboriginal students and a better understanding of Aboriginal history and culture among non-Aboriginal students and their parents. Materials will be published during 1996;
- the Aboriginal speakers program, which enabled 360 schools to conduct cultural awareness programs with 118 Aboriginal community members;
- Aboriginal languages teaching, which was undertaken in 25 primary and four secondary schools, and involved 1,490 students;
- support for 28 Aboriginal pre-school centres for four year olds through the provision of professional and curriculum services for staff, the delivery of parent awareness and support programs emphasising the value of pre-school education and funding for bus services to improve access to these centres; and
- the introduction of Aboriginal Education and Training Awards, to acknowledge outstanding achievement and generate support in the Aboriginal and broader communities.

The Catholic Education Commission's major initiatives during 1995 included:

- completing the structure of the Catholic Education Aboriginal Committee (CEAC) – from January 1996, the chair of CEAC will be a member of the Commission;
- strengthening involvement and support for the education of Aboriginal students;
- fostering an appreciation of traditional and contemporary Aboriginal culture;

- supporting the teaching of traditional Aboriginal languages;
- providing a greater range of educational opportunities for Aboriginal students;
- funding appropriate training courses for teachers and teacher assistants working with Aboriginal students;
- delivering relevant curriculum to meet the diverse needs of Aboriginal students;
- promoting a greater involvement of Aboriginal parents in educational decision-making;
- cooperating with other providers to improve the quality and suitability of programs for Aboriginal students;
- upgrading early childhood education services; and
- addressing the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

Students at risk

During 1995, STAR was more closely linked with the State-funded Alternative Education Initiative (AEI), a joint EDWA/Family and Children's Services/Justice/Health project, and this led to the establishment of a STAR School Support Program, which assisted education districts and schools in accepting full responsibility for developing and implementing quality educational and related support strategies and improved the dissemination of good practice.

STAR programs operated in 20 education districts and involved four primary schools, three district high schools and 18 senior high schools. Schools provided data for targeted students on attendance, academic performance, behaviour and intended destinations for 1996. Of the 418 targeted students in 1995, two-thirds were male and 48 per cent Aboriginal. Improvement or maintenance of appropriate social behaviours for classroom participation was noted in 68 per cent of students, 63 per cent maintained or improved their record of satisfactory attendance and 63 per cent maintained or improved satisfactory academic performance. Almost 90 per cent of targeted students continued at school or entered an alternative education program or training in 1996.

The CEOWA was allocated funding for 11 school-based projects which involved 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 or students' failure to complete secondary schooling. One project involved funding support for an effort by Aboriginal women in the local community to address problems relating to the sexual abuse of girls.

The independent schools sector received funding for eight schools and 130 students (74 per cent of them enrolled in six Aboriginal independent community schools and the remainder in two Perth metropolitan schools), for programs designed to minimise the effect of such factors as isolation, family dislocation, low SES, transience or truancy.

Learning areas

Mathematics

The mathematics component of the outcome statements trial involved 24 government schools. In addition, a six-month trial in the Kimberley education district provided valuable information on the relationship of the outcome statements to the needs and experiences of Aboriginal students and communities.

The trial as a whole highlighted the need to increase primary teachers' understandings and confidence, while in

Table 75. Aboriginal students, participation in schooling, years 10–12, 1995

	Government schools				*Non-government schools*				*All schools*			
	F	*M*	*P*	*% of all students*	*F*	*M*	*P*	*% of all students*	*F*	*M*	*P*	*% of all students*
Year 10	366	374	740	4.42	83	74	157	2.04	449	448	897	3.67
Year 11	177	171	348	2.52	41	64	105	1.53	218	235	453	2.19
Year 12	83	58	141	1.25	22	26	48	0.83	105	84	189	1.11

Source: Education Department of WA

secondary schools it indicated the importance of a wider range of assessment procedures and the development of more effective courses for low-achieving students. For all teachers, the time required to develop confidence in their capacities to make consistent and valid judgements about student learning is also an issue to be addressed in planning for implementation of the statements and through First Steps in Mathematics.

First Steps in Mathematics started in January 1995 and aims to produce significant improvements in outcomes for primary students in a similar manner to First Steps in Literacy, which has operated since 1989. The goal is to enhance teachers' abilities to make professional judgements about their students' learning by producing learning continua which draw upon and complement the student outcome statements; developing additional support material to facilitate improved teaching; increasing teacher expertise through the use of a team of support teachers; and improving teachers' understanding of mathematics teaching and learning through curriculum support and professional development.

Science

During the first year of the Science Project, which aims to improve the provision of science education in government schools, emphasis was placed on establishing structures, training leaders and trialling programs for implementation. Twelve primary schools which had named science as a priority worked to add value to the Australian Academy of Science program, Primary Investigations (which was implemented, with professional development, in 140 schools) by integrating it across the learning areas, developing open-ended investigations and complementing First Steps.

In secondary schools, the focus was on providing professional development for experienced teachers and supporting them in generating change in teaching practices through reflection and school-based action. Whole-school curriculum initiatives developed from programs initiated by these leaders.

As a result of the outcome statements trial, the Working Scientifically and four conceptual strands will be further developed. The former was used in supporting schools which identified the use of open-ended investigations as an effective strategy for moving toward a more student-centred approach to learning.

A 43 per cent increase in enrolments in year 12 senior science (a non-TEE subject) was recorded, partly because of its inclusion in the range of selection criteria for entry to TAFE colleges. On the other hand, enrolments in human biology fell by 12 per cent compared with 1994, with smaller reductions evident for other science subjects. Females continued to dominate enrolments in biology and human biology and males dominated in physics.

Studies of society and environment

TEE enrolments remained stable, with about two-thirds of students studying at least one SoSE course. Geography was again the most popular, as is evident from the figures in Table 77.

The new non-TEE course in Australian studies was introduced to year 11 students in 14 schools and will be extended to year 12 in 1996. Workshops were held for prospective teachers of the new TEE political and legal studies course (which replaces politics) and in the revised modern history course, which has a more inquiry-based approach and includes a compulsory element on Australian history in year 12. Both courses will be implemented in year 11 in 1996.

Table 76. Students awarded grades in TEE/CSE science, 1994–1995

Subject	*1994*		*1995*	
	Students	*Female per cent*	*Students*	*Female per cent*
Biology	2,611	58.0	2,476	60.0
Chemistry	4,437	46.1	4,132	45.9
Geology	112	20.5	95	25.3
Human biology	5,773	70.6	5,070	70.2
Physical science	604	50.3	532	48.8
Physics	3,275	29.0	3,132	28.1
Senior science	1,433	34.8	2,052	42.5
All	**18,245**	**51.5**	**17,489**	**51.4**

Source: Secondary Education Authority, WA

Table 77. Year 11–12 enrolments, TEE SoSE, 1995

Course	*Year 11 per cent of cohort*	*Year 12 per cent of cohort*
Ancient History	0.7	1.8
Economics	19.2	20.7
Geography	27.7	29.4
History	16.3	17.3
Politics	1.3	2.0

Source: Secondary Education Authority, WA

Following trialling of the outcome statements and consultation with stakeholders, revision is likely of the process strand (investigation, communication and participation) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sub-strand.

The AEF's Magnet Schools Program (renamed Access Asia Network of Schools) involved over 50 schools, with additional non-funded outreach schools. The AEF again funded in-country fellowships in Asia to improve teachers' cultural understandings and provide background knowledge for the development of curriculum support materials.

In the emerging area of civics and citizenship education, EDWA participated in planning for Curriculum Corporation's materials development project, which relates mainly to SoSE, while under the NPDP, materials were produced describing innovative approaches to assessment and case studies of creative teaching and learning strategies in lower secondary SoSE.

The NPDP Values Review project, which now includes EDWA on its management committee, produced an agreed minimum values framework which will provide a starting point for development of the EDWA position on values.

Languages other than English

In March 1995, the Premier announced a LOTE 2000: New Horizons policy that would build on gains made in preceding years under EDWA's LOTE action plan and its involvement in the NALSAS initiative. Less than 21 per cent of students K–12 were studying a LOTE and only 7 per cent were continuing their study to year 12.

The main aim is for all government schools students in years 3 to 10 to be studying a LOTE by 2000; priority languages are French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Modern Greek, Spanish, Thai, Vietnamese and Aboriginal languages, and it is expected that 60 per cent of students will opt for an Asian language. An extensive teacher education program is involved in order to meet the demand for additional teachers.

So far, 130 primary schools have introduced LOTE programs as a result, most of them taking advantage of an above-formula staffing allocation, and 372 now offer a LOTE. In 1995, some 56,000 students studied a LOTE, representing 23 per cent of all enrolments. Four hundred teachers have undertaken LOTE language and methodology training since 1994, most of it in their own time.

District-level planning for LOTE implementation continued, with two-thirds of districts completing their plans by the end of 1995. Provisions were also made through telematics for students in 56 primary and 20 secondary schools in rural and remote areas.

Curriculum support materials in primary Indonesian and Italian and secondary French, German and Italian were completed, a CD-ROM for the remote delivery of Japanese

Table 78. Student participation in LOTE studies, government schools, 1995

Year	*Abor. lang.*	*Chin.*	*French*	*German*	*Indo-nesian*	*Italian*	*Japanese*	*Mod. Greek*	*Spanish*	*Viet.*	*Totals*	*% of all students*
P	39	0	0	5	0	301	0	0	0	0	345	1.44
1	182	0	191	68	200	1,484	0	0	0	0	2,125	10.2
2	173	0	376	235	260	1,617	0	0	0	0	2,661	13.0
3	392	55	632	314	737	2,540	204	169	0	0	5,043	25.0
4	275	78	566	333	777	2,617	386	227	80	0	5,339	25.8
5	145	80	660	314	659	2,423	563	335	66	0	5,245	25.4
6	125	102	2,371	266	1,042	2,863	1,944	265	58	0	9,036	44.3
7	117	157	2,587	562	1,048	3,080	2,951	131	0	0	10, 633	52.5
8	14	214	1,964	361	1,107	1,968	2,820	18	0	33	8,499	48.1
9	10	84	839	202	378	554	1,270	18	0	23	3,378	19.4
10	13	73	570	181	130	346	829	8	0	0	2,150	12.9
11	5	35	289	81	29	151	349	0	0	0	939	6.9
12	0	132	177	93	90	118	267	0	0	0	877	7.8
Totals	**1,490**	**1,010**	**11,222**	**3,015**	**6,457**	**20,062**	**11,583**	**1,171**	**204**	**56**	**56,270**	**23.1**

Source: Education Department of WA

was under development and a post-compulsory course in elementary Indonesian was introduced. Advisory teachers were appointed for Indonesian and Italian and work commenced on the application of technology to LOTE teaching.

Aboriginal language programs involved 28 primary schools and 'language nests', in which speakers of Aboriginal languages attended four Aboriginal pre-schools to immerse young children in these languages, and which were based on the successful model used for the teaching of Maori in New Zealand, continued.

Over the current triennium, $14 million has been allocated by the State Government.

A range of languages, including Aboriginal, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Mandarin, Japanese and Indonesian, continued to be offered in Catholic primary and secondary schools. In conjunction with EDWA, professional development was also been provided for teachers under the Community Languages Element (CLE) of the Language and Literacy Program.

A total of 20,883 students studied from 12 LOTE in 138 independent schools: the most popular languages were French (31 per cent of enrolments), Italian and Japanese (21 per cent each) and Indonesian (12 per cent).

Technology and enterprise

New post-compulsory courses are being developed for all technology and enterprise subjects and will be phased in by 2000. Curriculum development in 1995 was concentrated in years 11 and 12, with 11 new courses being written for trialling in schools. These courses employ an outcomes approach to provide schools with greater flexibility in meeting student needs, replace existing courses and reduce the total number of courses available.

Thirty-nine government and 21 non-government schools are trialling the new years 11 and 12 syllabuses in animal production and marketing; information technology – business; information technology – digital media; information technology – personal productivity; food technology; information systems; management and marketing; fabric design and technology; plant production and marketing; small business management and enterprise; and systems technology. The trial aims to identify any difficulties with course documentation and assessment requirements and provide feedback to the SEA.

Increased interest in technology and enterprise among government primary schools was supported by the development of resource materials through the NPDP. NPDP funds were also used to develop a videocassette, Launching Technology, depicting the approach of one secondary school to curriculum delivery and integration.

As a result of trialling, revision of the outcome statements will involve further development of the concept of enterprise, revision of pointers, improved work samples and the inclusion of strand-level statements.

The arts

Curriculum implementation was concentrated on new courses for years 11 and 12 in drama, dance studies, ballet studies and art and design. These courses use a common assessment framework and an outcomes-based approach.

The outcome statements trial indicated the need for primary teachers to be supported in developing their knowledge, skills and confidence; for all teachers to better understand and apply assessment and reporting processes; and for recognition of the time needed to develop confidence in making consistent and valid judgements about student learning using an outcomes approach.

TASMANIA

Introduction

Three types of schools are available in Tasmania: government, Catholic and independent. Compulsory schooling starts at year 1, preceded by kindergarten and a preparatory year.

In government schools, students attend primary school (kindergarten to year 6), high school (years 7 to 10) and college (years 11 and 12). In some country areas, students attend district high schools, which range from kindergarten to year 10.

In 1995 there were 35 systemic and four non-systemic Catholic schools in Tasmania. Six of these were declared disadvantaged schools and three were CAP schools.

Class configurations within the schools are shown below.

Three new kindergartens attached to existing schools were opened and the restructuring of the southern secondary schools was completed with the opening of a senior secondary (year 11/12) college.

Table 79. Class configurations

Class configuration	*Number of schools*
K–6	8
P–1	1
P–6	17
3–6	1
K–10	1
P–10	3
P–12	2
6–12	1
7–8	1
7–10	1
7–12	2
11–12	1

Source: Catholic Education Office, Tasmania

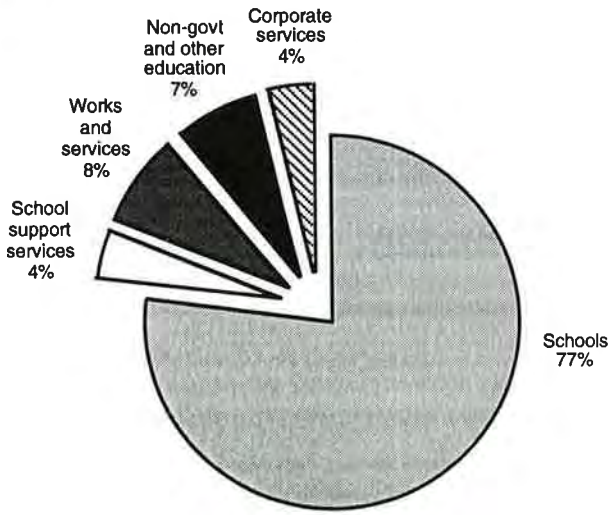
In 1995 there were 31 independent schools with enrolments from 13 to 1,080 students. These comprised seven primary schools, 17 primary/secondary schools, eight of which also included senior secondary, and six small ungraded schools. Giant Steps, a school for autistic students, became the first independent special school in Tasmania. Four schools were declared disadvantaged schools.

Resourcing

Government schools

In the year 1994/95, the government spent a total of $357.6 million on education in Tasmania. Of this, $327.4 million was used for recurrent purposes and $30.2 million for resourcing of works and services. This expenditure was $22 million greater than in 1993/94. During 1995, the Commonwealth contributed $26.5 million to the recurrent funding of Tasmania's government schools.

Figure 23. Expenditure by major programs



Source: Department of Education and the Arts, Tasmania

Catholic schools

Commonwealth Recurrent Grants for Tasmanian Catholic schools in 1995 are shown in Table 80.

Table 80. Commonwealth recurrent expenditure in Tasmanian Catholic schools ($'000)

	Recurrent	*Disabled students*	*Total*
Systemic	18,916	19	18,935
Non-systemic	7,757	6	7,763
Total	**26,673**	**25**	**26,698**

Source: Catholic Education Office, Tasmania

Capital expenditure

Government schools

In 1995 the Commonwealth provided $6 million towards capital projects in the State of Tasmania.

Of the eight Commonwealth-funded capital works projects, the most common types of work undertaken and facilities provided were the refurbishment of specialist facilities including art, music, science, home economics and materials, design and technology areas. It also provided the funds for the feasibility processes during the planning stages of a new senior secondary facility and for the upgrading of existing facilities in secondary schools.

Catholic schools

The Commonwealth provided $1.68 million towards capital projects in the Tasmanian Catholic sector. Of the four capital works projects funded, the most common types of work undertaken were conversion and refurbishment of existing facilities for classrooms and libraries.

Independent schools

The Commonwealth provided $1.38 million towards capital projects in the independent sector which includes $244,672 to broaden the secondary curriculum and implement the Finn and Carmichael Reports (QCaTS), and $564,850 for projects specifically granted under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support (ATSIS) Element.

Of the 20 projects funded by the Commonwealth and completed both physically and financially during the 1995 year, the most common types of work undertaken and facilities provided were the provision of resource, research and study facilities; graphics, design, craft and technological drawing facilities; and food technology and catering facilities.

Particular initiatives in 1995

Government schools

During 1995 the Department of Education and the Arts (DEA) undertook major initiatives in the areas of equity, priority curriculum and general curriculum.

Equity initiatives

The draft policy, Equity in Schooling, was released for consultation with schools and their communities. A series of discussion papers accompanying the draft policy provided recent information about students at risk of lower educational outcomes. These papers give a framework for schools to address specific issues.

Inclusion of students with disabilities

The DEA published and disseminated support materials for the Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in Regular Schools Policy. These materials are based on differentiated curriculum, or multi-layering, and include a professional development component for schools' use. Reorganisation of support services, including guidance officers, social workers, speech pathologists and support teachers, into district-based support teams created a local service more sensitive to individual students' needs.

Aboriginal education

Staff employed to support Aboriginal education programs in government schools comprised a coordinator, a retention officer, a literacy officer, three Aboriginal studies resource teachers, seven Aboriginal home-school liaison officers (AHSLO), ten Aboriginal teacher assistants and three clerical staff. There were 21 cultural instructors employed on a casual basis, providing a program that reached over 2,000 students in schools and colleges. In 1995 all seven AHSLO positions were made permanent State Public Service positions and had been filled by the end of the year.

Curriculum support materials produced included the fourth and last document of the Aboriginal Studies Framework and Guidelines; a short guide to some contemporary Aboriginal artists working in Tasmania, written and published in conjunction with 'Nuini', an exhibition of contemporary Aboriginal art; and two posters dealing with a timeline of Aboriginal history in Tasmania.

Work continued by the AHSLOs in the direct service area of support to parents, students and schools, improving the participation of Aboriginal students, and also became more involved in the implementation of access and retention strategies. The retention officer continued to conduct an effective series of cultural camps.

Some 300 students were supported through the Aboriginal Student Development Program that provides support directly to identified students in DEA schools. Retention rates to year 12 of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students closely approached those of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for the first time in the last five years.

Distance education

In 1995, 684 students from kindergarten to year 12, received all or part of their education through the Tasmanian School of Distance Education (TSDE). Of these, nearly one-quarter were isolated and 30 per cent were unable to attend regular schools because of medical or psychological reasons or pregnancy. In addition a service to other schools in the teaching of specialised subjects catered for a further 290 students. The most significant growth area was among secondary students. All fields of learning were provided for, although offerings in practically-based subjects were limited. The largest area of growth was LOTE, with 150 students enrolled with TSDE studying a LOTE.

Priority curriculum

Numeracy and mathematics

The work of the Numeracy Steering Committee set up in 1994 continued into the first half of 1995. The DEA published a statement, *Numerate Students Numerate Adults,* which addressed the cross-curriculum nature of numeracy and the implications for the future. Work commenced on the development of Key Intended Numeracy Outcomes (KINOs).

Mathematics continued as a priority learning area in 1995 with five mathematics implementation officers working in districts to support teachers in the development of school mathematics programs. They provided professional development for teachers in the K–8 sector based on the national mathematics statement and profile and the Tasmanian K–8 Mathematics Guidelines.

Science

Science continued as a priority learning area in 1995 with five science implementation officers working in districts to support teachers. A Key Teacher of Science program was established with NPDP funding. Features of this program included:

- familiarisation with the national science statement and profile and their application in developing curricula and teaching and learning programs;
- workshops on a range of models of professional development, including the Australian Science Teachers Association professional development package; and
- development of a key teacher project for each district to allow the continuation of the key teacher program in these districts after 1995.

Curriculum support materials to assist teachers were developed and distributed to all government schools. Regional workshops assisted the implementation of these materials. A detailed review of non-pre-tertiary science courses offered to students at years 11 and 12 commenced and has provided an interim report to secondary college principals. A set of science learning outcomes corresponding to each of the Tasmanian KILOs was developed.

Technology

Technology continued as a priority learning area in 1995 with four technology implementation officers working in districts to support teachers and develop understanding of the national technology statement and profile. A key teacher program was established with NPDP funding. An overview of the technology learning area indicated that:

- there is growing awareness of technology as a learning area, particularly in schools involved with the systemic support available;
- change was most likely to occur when there was a key teacher in the school who was supported by professional development programs and collegial support within the school;
- primary schools (K–6) were more likely than high schools (years 7–10) to integrate technology with other learning areas, but were less likely to map student progress specifically against the technology profile; and

- teaching methodology was varied and included design challenges, cooperative group work and peer tutoring.

Other curriculum areas

English

A draft action plan for the English learning area was developed in preparation for priority support from the DEA from 1996–1998. This plan included intended outcomes to aid planning, monitoring and evaluation at all levels.

A key teacher program, established with NPDP funding, attracted considerable support. Teachers in five districts investigated the use of the national English statement and profile for curriculum review and explored the selection and use of texts in the classroom. An important element of the program was the formation of district-based action research networks. Many teachers chose to focus on the choice and use of visual texts in the classroom. Professional development of teachers of English continued to receive strong support from professional organisations.

Studies of society and environment

The Tasmanian *Guidelines for SOSE* were developed. These contain practical examples of how teachers and schools can work with the national SOSE statement and profile and other DEA policies and priorities.

NPDP funding provided professional development across the State for primary and secondary teachers in cooperative learning, materials development and whole-school and cluster implementation of the national SOSE statement and profile.

Programs complementary to SOSE, including landcare, equity, Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander studies, and Asian studies have been incorporated into professional development and SOSE guidelines. Tasmania continues to be involved in the national civics and citizenship project with many teachers expressing interest in being included over the next few years. Integrated landcare programs ran in 80 schools around the State, promoting community links and working towards ecological sustainability.

Languages other than English

LOTE programs in primary schools increased by 12 per cent over 1994 figures, with 6,437 students involved in 43 per cent of all primary schools. Telematics programs provided by the TSDE involved 58 of these students in six schools, mainly in isolated areas. Indonesian accounted for 53 per cent of the programs, and Asian languages generally made up 70 per cent of the total. Time allocation for LOTE in primary schools was between 30 and 60 minutes per week. Most primary LOTE programs, however, did not run for a full year.

Approximately 36 per cent of all years 7–12 students studied a LOTE, the majority being in years 7 and 8, with approximately one-third in 'taster' courses. Most students do not choose to continue with a LOTE once this becomes optional. Only 11 per cent of all LOTE students in years 7–10 are in the upper grades (years 9 and 10). Of all enrolments in years 11 and 12, 13 per cent studied a LOTE in 1995, a drop of 2 per cent from the previous year. Gender differences continued to be apparent in optional LOTE enrolments. Over 70 per cent of optional (years 9–12) LOTE enrolments were female. Asian languages (Indonesian, Japanese and Chinese) accounted for 61 per cent of all secondary LOTE enrolments.

The DEA policy statement on the teaching and learning of LOTE was approved in October 1995 and an implementation plan developed. At the end of 1995, 18 schools were identified to begin supported LOTE programs in year 3. These programs guarantee continuous study of the selected

A Tasmanian student engrossed in a technology project.

language through to years 11/12 provided that the normal pathway from the primary school to the local high school and senior secondary college is followed.

The arts

A Statewide arts mapping exercise commenced, informed by the national statement and profile. Information gathered will be used as the basis for future planning.

The DEA continued to fund the successful Artists in Schools program. Each educational district was provided with 20 artist days and finance for materials that was allocated according to local needs and priorities. Schools frequently extended the program and artists from both the visual and performing arts spent more than 140 days working directly with students.

The Secondary Music Scholarship Scheme continued to support excellence in music. The Musica Viva Performance Project presented concerts in over 50 schools, backed up by professional development and support materials for the teachers involved.

Catholic schools

Major initiatives

During 1995 the major initiatives undertaken by the Catholic sector schools were:

- three schools piloted a project on setting guidelines and developing resource materials for use with gifted and talented children;
- the NPDP focused on English and the review of curricula;
- all primary teachers were provided in-service training for delivery of an integrated science program for primary schools;
- early intervention programs in literacy were implemented;
- a data collection program was designed to enhance record keeping and to facilitate the tracking of targeted students and their participation and attendance levels;
- a review of the staffing formula was undertaken; and
- planning for the extension of AVTS programs in senior secondary colleges was undertaken or extended.

Equity in schooling

Access and participation

Catholic schools continued to provide education for significant numbers of students from all priority groups. Aboriginal students made up over 25 per cent of targeted enrolment (258 students from a school population of 341 Aboriginal students) and the number of students with disabilities eligible for NEPS Special Education Component funding rose by more than 30 per cent to 110.

An apparent decrease in numbers of students from non-English speaking backgrounds receiving NEPS assistance was the result of tighter targeting procedures (down from 240 primary and 48 secondary to 186 primary and 66 secondary students).

In systemic schools the distribution of the GRG according to need helped schools to provide a range of educational opportunities for priority groups.

Eight schools provided kindergarten facilities. Support payments were made available from AESIP funds to assist kindergartens enrolling Aboriginal children and mobile Aboriginal kindergartens operated by the DEA.

Retention of targeted students to completion of year 12 continued to improve. Of year 10 students targeted by the STAR Component, 67 per cent planned to continue education in 1996. A particular concern is that only 33 per cent of Aboriginal students in this group intended to continue at school.

Educational outcomes

Schools reported some progress in lifting attainment levels of students in priority groups. Students with disabilities made progress commensurate with their abilities in most instances, often using modified curricula and programs. For many students with physical disabilities or behavioural problems, equity funding made participation in mainstream schooling possible.

Significant gains in literacy were achieved by students assisted by the ESL Component of NEPS and by the Aboriginal Literacy Strategy. Schools with targeted students at risk reported satisfactory student attainment by almost all students in basic curriculum areas as well as generally improved attitudes to continuing education. Targeted funding assistance enabled schools in socio-economically disadvantaged and isolated areas to provide suitable curricula to enhance student learning and develop self-esteem.

Curriculum and assessment

Catholic schools attempt to design curricula to match the capabilities of all students. In 1995 a number of secondary students from priority groups studied modified but accredited curricula with some success.

Teaching

Consultants employed by the Catholic education sector assisted teachers to develop the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes for teaching priority group students. A major focus was on early intervention strategies.

Awareness and commitment among the education community

Besides the overall encouragement of parents to be involved in school decision-making processes, specific involvement was fostered in the areas of:

- students with disabilities, on an individual student basis; and
- socioeconomically disadvantaged students and geographically isolated students on a whole-school basis.

School environment

Pastoral care of students continued to be a strong feature of schooling in 1995.

Use of resources

The Catholic sector NEPS Committee allocated grants on the basis of school or individual need and recycled and reallocated physical resources whenever possible.

Independent schools

Information concerning the independent schools sector in Tasmania was taken from the five Tasmanian schools surveyed for the Option B survey.

Major initiatives

The main objective for most of the surveyed schools in Tasmania was that all students should achieve their full potential both academically and in other areas such as good citizenship and self-discipline, motivation and love of learning. For schools associated with particular religions or educational philosophies objectives often included strengthening the practice of that religion or philosophy.

Grounding in basic skills was also important, with many schools expanding early intervention and literacy programs. A number of schools aimed to improve monitoring and assessment techniques while others focused on the updating of other specific programs as their major objective.

The majority of the Tasmanian schools surveyed included increasing technology-assisted teaching as a priority objective. Strategies to realise this included acquiring additional equipment and the appropriate infrastructure (buildings) and providing professional development for staff.

Many of the schools had as an objective the encouragement of a love for Australia and the study of Australia's role in the world scene. This included a particular emphasis on the study of the multicultural aspects of Australia as well as improved understanding of the culture and way of life of other countries.

The majority of the schools sampled indicated that the goals and objectives of their school encompassed those of the Common and Agreed National Goals and the document was often used as a cross-check.

The composition and role of school communities

Sampled schools in Tasmania included parents in their school community. This strong connection followed the philosophy that parents should be actively involved in the education of their children, and that schools should have a role in helping parents raise their children. Parents in 60 per cent of surveyed schools were actively involved in school activities: they assisted teachers in the classroom, acted as guest speakers and helped in fundraising events.

Where a school was affiliated with a particular church the school included the Church and its members as part of the community. The associations or school boards which ran schools were also an essential part of the school community taking the responsibility for finances and the general running of the school. Local businesses and owners of local facilities were also important members as they were often able to provide facilities and opportunities which would not otherwise have been available to a school.

Teachers and teaching

The experience profile of teachers in surveyed Tasmanian schools indicated that most schools' teachers were in the five to fifteen or greater than fifteen years teaching experience range. Over half the sampled schools had no concerns with the teaching experience profile of their teachers. A small number of schools expressed concern regarding the ageing of staff and the resultant lack of promotion opportunities for younger teachers at their schools, while others noted that teachers with more than 15 years experience needed to update their skills and qualifications.

Issues affecting staff recruitment and retention included concerns that there were too few career opportunities for young staff to look forward to owing to low staff turnover and teachers often feeling trapped as a result of not being able to transfer between schools. Most professional development in 1995 at surveyed schools was in-school courses that allowed schools to focus on their areas of need, staff members to have input and provided feedback for future course planning. In-house seminars were made available in schools as well as periodic staff or subject meetings. Many teachers also attended subject association lectures, often outside school hours. Several schools noted the importance of holding professional development sessions outside school hours as this greatly reduced the cost and disruption to programs.

Several schools focused professional development on multimedia and/or technology. Professional development also covered LOTE, literacy, specialty subject areas (science, philosophy, drama, art), early childhood development and assessment techniques. Professional development was also provided for teachers of children with learning difficulties, such as ADD. Most professional development was non-credentialled, but many schools had teachers enrolled in TAFE or university courses. Over half the surveyed schools were involved in a professional development program funded through the NPDP in 1995, covering the use of national statements and profiles, early literacy and behaviour management. Schools reported that the programs were relevant and useful.

Equity in schooling

Students with disabilities

Eighteen schools received funding for individual focussed projects for 66 students (32 male, 34 female) in years kindergarten to year 10. The disability categories included: 42 intellectual; five hearing-impaired; three vision-impaired; three physical; five social/emotional (including autism); three language; and five multiple impairment. Documentation was maintained on all students which contained details of individual educational programs, their implementation and evaluation.

NEPS project officers carried out educational assessments on all funded students, focusing on measurable outcomes. They also provided school-based consultancies for teachers and teacher assistants regarding appropriate curriculum and management. This has resulted in improved access, participation and achievement for these students. Professional development focused on inclusion and equity, particularly addressing the newly released policies of the DEA concerning both these issues.

Students at risk

Eight secondary schools received funding for projects, targeting students with significant literacy problems. Eighty-eight students (63 male, 25 female) participated in the programs. The major focus was on year 7 students (49). The main emphasis of all schools was to provide individual student-focused programs addressing literacy.

Regional meetings were held for STAR coordinators and teachers. Professional development focused on specific learning difficulties and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Issues relating to learning styles were explored and strategies to assist these students with their learning were suggested. Networking amongst STAR schools and teachers has been a significant 'spin-off' from this program.

Outcomes from this program included better screening strategies, measurable improvements in literacy levels using pre- and post-testing, and improved understanding of literacy problems and appropriate programs.

Disadvantaged schools program

Four schools (three primary/secondary and one primary) participated in this program. The funded schools' projects met Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania (AIST) priorities mainly through the key competencies, particularly using technology, and collecting, analysing and organising information.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

There were six funded school-based projects in one primary and five primary/secondary schools. Twenty-one students (13 male, 8 female) participated in these programs. Four levels were used to determine proficiency. Individual student profiles, outcomes and evidence of progress were documented. Proficiency levels achieved were: level 1 – one student; level 2 – 14 students; level 3 – six students.

Professional development concentrated on familiarising ESL teachers with the ESL Scales with the long-term objective of using them to determine proficiency levels.

Vocational education

Government schools

Developments in vocational education

Major DEA support for the implementation of the AVTS led to a rapid rate of change, including the creation of radically new student programs and curriculum innovation. In 1995, 28 vocational placement-based programs modelled on AVTS principles were successfully implemented, an increase of 18 over the previous year. In 1995, 174 year 11 or 12 students received a result in an accredited module, an increase of greater than 180 per cent over 1994.

Formal implementation of the AVTS began following a successful pilot program. The AVTS is being implemented in association with the introduction of the DEA Career and Work Education Policy and the trialling and development of the key competencies. Senior secondary colleges are now required to provide programs which:

- combine education, training and experience in workplaces;
- are part of broad, articulated pathways based on nationally-endorsed industry and enterprise competency standards;
- conform to the NFROT Principles; and
- lead to certification at levels 1 – 4 within the Australian Qualifications Framework.

A team of nine AVTS development officers facilitated the effective implementation of the AVTS to sustain growth and to ensure quality educational outcomes. Major professional support to teachers was provided through a series of new initiatives including the launching of the Teachers in Industry Program intended to provide senior secondary teachers with a structured on-the-job placement of five days duration.

The second stage of the key competencies project jointly conducted by the Schools Board of Tasmania and the DEA commenced in anticipation of the implementation of the key competencies in Tasmania.

Extensive curriculum development commenced jointly with the majority of the Tasmanian Industry Training Advisory Boards (ITABs) to produce courses that cover the breadth of Tasmanian industry at entry-level. Industry areas covered by the courses included: hospitality and tourism; administration and clerical; rural and forestry; metal and engineering; furniture-making; aged care; aviation; and theatre 'roadies'.

Aboriginal education

Vocational education initiatives centred on the ABSTART mentoring program. The program provided students at risk in senior high school with a workplace-based mentor. The project has had significant early success in providing students with an outcomes-focused approach to their schooling. During the annual school Careers Expo the Aboriginal Education Unit funded and staffed a stand advertising careers available to Aboriginal people in the education industry.

Plans for future years

With NPDP funding, an extensive professional development program is planned for 1996 and beyond. This involves partnerships with unions and industry organisations, and other training providers, including the Tasmanian Trades and Labour Council, Tasmanian Training Authority and the Tasmanian Department of Industrial Relations, Vocational Education and Training (now the Department of Vocational Training).

Components of planned professional development include:

- the Vocational Education Professional Development Program, which aims to ensure that all teachers understand the nature of vocational education and recent developments including key competencies and AVTS. Over 300 teachers will be involved in 1996;
- the Teachers in Industry Program, where teachers undertake five days workplace experience. In 1996, 50 teachers will complete this program;
- the AVTS Shadowing Program targets teachers of years 9 and 10, and years 11 and 12 teachers not directly involved with AVTS. The aim is to expose one key teacher from every high school and college in the State to AVTS programs. In 1996, 24 teachers will undertake the program;
- the Induction and Training Program for teachers of new AVTS programs has several components. Altogether 120 teachers will be involved in 1996;
- the AVTS Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Flexible Delivery Programs will provide professional development for 100 teachers already involved in AVTS; and
- eight AVTS teachers and eight teacher-librarians will be involved in new approaches to professional

development including the use of information technology.

Some elements of the program will be eligible for certification, including national accreditation.

All pilot vocational education programs, including the professional development programs, have an outcomes-based approach. Evaluators will monitor performance and identify factors critical to success.

Catholic schools

Developments in vocational education

Formally accredited vocational education courses were not undertaken in 1995 but two schools offered a wide range of Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) courses which were articulated with and led into various TAFE modules in the areas of business, information technology, librarianship, laboratory technology, metals and engineering, automotive, social work and hospitality. Altogether 373 students (209 boys and 164 girls) were involved in these courses. Fifteen teachers had specific training to deliver vocational education courses and others involved had a variety of industry experience.

In setting up their courses, schools have worked in partnership with TAFE, unions, ITABs and employers.

Year 12 students participated in the Australian Quality Council's Enterprise Teams and in Young Achievers Australia projects.

Plans for future years

Four schools will offer accredited courses in 1996 and plan to extend course offerings in 1997. Teachers will be involved in train-the-trainer courses in 1996 and schools will pursue the possibility of registration as training providers in selected industry areas.

Independent schools

Sampled schools offered general vocational courses including furnishing, electronics, design and graphics. Schools offered career guidance to students and assisted in finding post-year 12 placements in the workforce as well as work experience opportunities for most students.

Schools believed that participation in vocational education in 1995 enhanced student motivation, improved the development of key competencies, created better links with TAFE, higher education and the labour market and increased community participation in school activities.

A few schools encouraged their teachers to undertake commercial or industrial work experience as part of professional development activities in areas such as professional theatre and industry. Other professional development for teachers in this area included attendance at workshops on vocational courses, discussions with coordinators from other schools and subscriptions to relevant magazines.

Gender equity

Government schools

Significant achievements in gender equity

Gender equity continued to be a DEA priority in 1995. Each DEA district, supported by the curriculum officers, set up gender equity networks as a resource to principals and teachers. There was less emphasis on specific gender equity programs and an increased focus on schools examining their policies and procedures and considering how the construction of gender impacts on the teaching and learning program. All principals participated in professional development in district forums to examine the part that schools play in the current construction of gender. Follow-up work occurred on planning for gender equity.

Resource provision

Central support was provided to gender equity as a priority in 1995, with the provision of four regional gender equity curriculum officers, to support the work of the senior curriculum officer for gender equity. These officers worked in DEA districts and schools to provide programs and professional development in gender education. There was an emphasis on literacy issues for boys and gender and behaviour management, including harassment.

Curriculum issues

Gender curriculum officers worked with learning area curriculum officers to embed gender issues into pedagogy and curriculum content. Gender issues for boys, including the use of texts to deconstruct masculinity was a focus, particularly in English teacher professional development.

School planning and review

All government schools are required to address the Tasmanian Gender Equity Implementation Plan in their school plans. This implementation plan reflects the priorities of the NAPEG. Schools address the priorities of NAPEG within their own school priorities.

Gender equity was a focus for school review in 1995, managed by district superintendents. Most schools have developed, or are in the process of developing a gender equity policy in line with the NAPEG. Procedures for dealing with sexual harassment incidents are clearly understood and used as appropriate. Staff are very aware of role stereotyping and take explicit steps to address this both in the classroom and in the administrative structures within the school. Schools reported that a major barrier to change is community attitudes, especially in more isolated areas.

Within the curriculum, there is an increased awareness of gender bias and materials are chosen to promote equity. Some schools run single-sex classes for specific purposes for example, dance classes for boys in speech and drama, and technology classes for girls. Schools' curriculum frameworks are increasingly addressing gender equity issues.

Addressing the needs of girls at risk

Research undertaken at a high school regarding absenteeism among girls in years 9 and 10 revealed two trends. There was a marked increase in the level of girls' absenteeism in years 9 and 10 over years 7 and 8, and the rate of absenteeism was twice that of boys. Interviews with the girls revealed a complex web of social, physical and psychological reasons for absence. This research formed the focus for professional development and school improvement throughout 1995.

Teachers at a senior secondary college carried out research focusing on retention among girls in years 11 and 12. The research objectives were to investigate patterns of behaviour characterising girls at risk of not completing year 12 and to develop appropriate intervention strategies. The project identified several issues some of which are preventative while others provide treatment. These were addressed at the level of whole-school planning during 1995. This research was disseminated at the senior secondary colleges' gender equity implementation group.

A Statewide research project undertaken in 1995 surveyed high schools and colleges to assess issues relating to adolescent pregnancy and schooling. The project aimed to develop an awareness of the need for the provision of education for young pregnant women, to promote strategies that have been successful and to listen to the voices of the young women themselves.

Improving the educational outcomes of girls who benefit least from schooling

Teacher professional development was a focus for this priority during 1995. The DEA and the Tasmanian Education Consortium ran a series of well attended seminars, entitled Class, Culture and Gender.

Further professional development in equity issues is planned for all curriculum implementation officers and will include gender-related issues.

Developing issues in educating boys

All gender equity work in schools during 1995 was inclusive of the particular needs of both boys and girls. The gender curriculum officers working in DEA districts used the principles of the draft national gender equity framework as a basis for professional development with teachers.

A central initiative, the Key Teacher Behaviour Management Program, included a gender perspective in a seven-day behaviour management program for key teachers in high schools. This was conducted in three regions, and participants spent two days working with the *No Fear* kit, examining the gendered nature of violence in schooling. As a consequence, several schools are using the kit to work with their school communities.

Catholic schools

Subject selection in all subject areas is open to both boys and girls and there has been some crossing of the stereotypical boundaries in subject choices. Part of personal development programs has been directed towards the promotion of positive gender relations and there was a focus with staff on consciousness raising approaches in relation to methodology, language and inclusion.

Some schools, with input from parents, staff and students, have articulated gender equity policies for their specific sites and other schools are working towards this. Pastoral care policies and practices have been expanded to address the issues of violence, bullying and sexual harassment.

Changes to school uniform have incorporated the needs of both boys and girls. Unisex physical education programs have been developed.

Schools have identified and are addressing the discrepancies between the technical aptitude and competency of boys and girls and the greater development of sound study habits of girls with the consequent impact on achievement in the classroom.

The number of girls enrolling in the traditionally male-dominated areas is increasing, and increasing numbers of boys are entering clerical and catering classes.

Some schools, particularly coeducational and boys schools, started researching best practice concerning the education of boys within the mainstream curriculum and specific behaviour management strategies to support boys' quality learning.

Independent schools

Gender education and the achievement of gender equity

Among the sampled schools gender equity was seen as a part of the overall goal to maximise the academic and social potential of all students. Most schools were conscious of promoting equity in all situations and some schools had special social awareness programs in place. The majority of schools did not have programs specifically in place for the benefit of girls or boys as students were treated as individuals with each student being given an education program to meet his or her specific needs.

Behaviour management and remedial reading programs involved more boys than girls. However, these programs were introduced as and when required to meet the needs of any student. Students were continually encouraged to take part in non-gender-typical activities. In particular several schools commented that gender equity and education were promoted by the inclusion of both girls and boys into all sporting pursuits and that with the growth of self-esteem and self-confidence students were able to feel comfortable participating in any activity.

None of the sampled schools reported plans to enhance or expand the role of parents in gender equity initiatives. They found that the approach in this area to date had succeeded in recognising each of the students as a unique person with individual strengths.

Student outcomes in literacy related areas

Government schools

Initiatives undertaken

Development of support materials for KILOs continued. Support material for schools K–6 has now been disseminated.

Curriculum implementation program, literacy

The Literacy Curriculum Implementation Team consisted of seven district-based literacy officers seconded to work with schools K–12 in each of the education districts to:

- develop in teachers consistent understanding of the content and implication of DEA policies and documents relating to literacy;
- collaborate with schools to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning in literacy;
- promote sustainable whole-school development in literacy education by supporting effective planning, enactment and evaluation;
- facilitate teachers' understanding of literacy development and enhance their ability to apply this in all learning areas and school contexts;
- promote and support the development of teachers' understanding of principles and practices of professional learning; and
- support schools in developing and implementing parent and community education programs in literacy.

Literacy programs in early childhood

The DEA Literacy Policy has a particular emphasis on the early years of schooling. The development of inclusive systemic literacy programs in the early childhood area has, therefore, been a particular focus over the past three years.

Priority areas for action in 1995

Preparatory Literacy Support Program and Performance Study

The Prep Literacy Support Program, a highly focused literacy intervention program, aimed to ensure that all prep students attain the K–P strand of the KILOs within a classroom setting.

The program provided the following:

- a minimum of 0.2 prep resource teacher allocation to all primary and district high schools;
- increased opportunities for teachers to work with parents;
- a smaller student-to-teacher ratio for a critical teaching and learning time each day;
- assistance for prep teachers in assessment and planning for intervention; and
- additional professional development for prep teachers and prep resource teachers.

The program has now been accepted and incorporated into school planning and resource allocation. It will be extended into year 2 in 1996.

Outcomes

The Prep Literacy Performance Study is a two-year study, based on year 1 students' performances on a two-sentence dictation task and on observations made by the guidance officers who administered the task. Results suggested that there were significant improvements in literacy performance. The task was administered to a random sample of students in year 1. Those in 1994 received no extra prep literacy support. The 1995 cohort had been involved in the Prep Literacy Support Program.

Data obtained from the study is summarised in Table 81.

Table 81. Mean overall literacy scores for year 1 students, Tasmania, 1995

	1994	*1995*
State total	71.99	76.42
Gender		
Boys	67.99	72.05
Girls	76.64	81.01
Disadvantaged schools (a)	65.75	71.26
Rural schools (b)	68.98	80.73

(a) Schools supported by the Disadvantaged Schools General Component

(b) Categorised by distance, not by support through Country Areas Program Component.

Source: Department of Education and the Arts, Tasmania

The Prep Literacy Support Program provided a resource teacher for a part of every day.

These results are all statistically significant. In addition, the distribution of scores for all groups had a shorter 'tail' in 1995 indicating that students who would have been categorised as 'low-performing' in 1994 made larger gains than those categorised as 'high-performing'.

Key findings included:

- significant improvements in both boys and girls composite literacy scores from 1994 to 1995;
- girls outperformed boys in both years;
- significant improvements in students from schools in rural areas;
- significant improvements in students from both socioeconomically advantaged and disadvantaged schools; and
- relative gains were greater among students who would have been categorised as 'low-performing'.

Literacy programs in early childhood appear to be particularly effective at improving attainment for students in the target equity groups.

Kindergarten Development Check

The Kindergarten Development Check uses a checklist of key aspects of children's early development, including gross and fine motor skills, social and emotional development, and listening, speaking and understanding. The kindergarten teacher completes the check with each student by the end of term 1, identifies individual children who require specific intervention, and plans an individual program of eight weeks duration.

Following this program, the check is re-administered and, if necessary, a further individual education program is developed. All children entering kindergarten in 1994 and 1995 have been monitored against the key indicators on the check and relevant follow-up intervention has been sought for those students requiring specific programs.

Aboriginal education

Literacy strategies were refined and developed throughout the year with a continuing emphasis on the early childhood years. The Kindergarten Access Program for Aboriginal students was expanded to include Cape Barren Island and start up procedures for the program on Flinders Island commenced. A parent literacy project, planned in 1994, commenced in one suburban high school as part of a newly developed year 6/7 transition education project. In September it was broadened to include three other high schools. The literacy officer continued to liaise with State-funded literacy implementation staff.

Catholic schools

Initiatives undertaken

An Early Literacy Project undertaken in 1995 targeted four schools that were disadvantaged socioeconomically, two of which had the compounding problem of isolation. More than 95 teachers from all schools were given the opportunity to participate in professional development seminars on early literacy which also involved an additional 100 teachers from independent and government schools.

The aims were to foster the development of literacy in the early years of schooling and to support intervention strategies for children from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Insights gained from the project included:

- an awareness of the need for adequate and appropriate professional development;
- an understanding of the problems created by isolation;
- an awareness of the lack of insight demonstrated by many parents concerning their role in fostering sound literacy skills; and
- the need of their support of and involvement in literacy-based programs in schools.

In a joint venture with AIST, a booklet is currently being produced which will provide strategies in teaching phonic awareness for early childhood teachers.

English was a focus learning area. Emphasis was placed on the year 6/7 interface and on the auditing of school curricula in the light of the national English statement and profile.

Independent schools

Initiatives undertaken

Surveyed Tasmanian schools were involved with several early literacy initiatives. These included the encouragement of parental involvement in the learning process, peer teaching, early screening and intervention for learning and language difficulties, and the use of a variety of learning techniques to ensure that students gained acceptable levels of literacy. Strategies and procedures to monitor and improve literacy outcomes included: one-to-one teaching; phonics and word recognition; fostering a love of literature; an interest in spoken and written language and the encouragement of reading for pleasure; use of specialised staff and the Macquarie Reading Scheme; and the use of laptop computers to improve student learning outcomes.

Professional development activities for teachers in the area of literacy included high school English teaching seminars organised by TAFE, courses about the Macquarie Reading Scheme, national statements and profiles and professional conferences. Literacy was seen as a critical area for the schools and thus many teachers took part in literacy workshops.

Six schools participated in early literacy projects (three primary, three primary/secondary) which involved assistance in the identification of, diagnosis of, and program planning for students who were deemed 'at risk' with the acquisition of literacy skills, focusing on prep and year one students.

Professional development centred on facilitating improvements in literacy outcomes and increasing teachers' understanding of the development of the acquisition of literacy skills.

Outcomes

Teachers involved gained an increased understanding of current views of literacy. A framework to support current teaching practice was established, along with strategies to develop phonological processing. Improved screening strategies and individual programs were developed and there was increased parent participation.

Providing for the physical development and personal health and fitness of students

Government schools

Significant achievements

A comprehensive review of health education indicated that all government schools were providing programs in health and physical education. The general community, parents, teachers and students strongly supported the major curriculum areas in the current Tasmanian Health Education Policy. The review findings and the national statement and profile will provide the basis for future development of curriculum guidelines.

Schools reported positive outcomes as a result of health education including:

- students being more aware of health risks and more willing to discuss controversial topics;
- changes in some canteens to bring the menu more in line with health guidelines; and
- successful outcomes from programs promoting supportive environments, especially where these programs allowed students to practise appropriate behaviour.

Changed emphases

National curriculum

The national statement continued to provide the directions for future planning. A crucial issue is the provision of strategies and support to ensure a 'seamless delivery' of both health education and physical education, rather than the fragmented approach that has characterised the past. This overall strategy is being developed in conjunction with personnel from the University of Tasmania, other Government agencies and teacher organisations.

National HIV/AIDS Strategy

The relevant components of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy were integrated with the personal relationships and sexuality component of the K–12 health education program. A review of the effectiveness of the HIV/AIDS school policy and curriculum strategies, commissioned by the Tasmanian Department of Community and Health Services, indicated that the desired outcomes are being achieved.

National drug strategy

The NIDE project provided a focus, some strategies and resources to enhance the drug education program in Tasmanian secondary schools. This initiative will be integrated with a broader Tasmanian strategy that involves a whole-of-Government approach to the issues surrounding young people and drugs.

National Nutrition Education in Schools project

Funds provided to the Tasmanian reference group were used to locate and document examples of good practice in the nutrition-related areas of school policy, teaching and learning, school canteens and school-community linking.

National Junior Sport Policy

A Tasmanian Junior Sport Strategy was developed prior to the release of the National Junior Sport Policy and this continues to shape the future directions of junior sport in Tasmania. The two documents are complementary and mutually supportive.

Emerging or continuing issues

Specialist staffing

Tasmania has retained qualified specialist physical educators in the primary sector. The skills and expertise of these teachers is matched with the needs of children and the changing requirements of the schools within which they work.

Results from the review of health education indicated that:

- approximately one-quarter of all government schools have specialist health education staff;
- the class or pastoral care teacher is responsible for health education in over 95 per cent of government primary schools; and
- in just over 50 per cent of government schools health education is delivered by specialist physical education staff.

Time allocation

The balance in the provision of the health and physical education strands as well as the balance between learning areas is a continuing issue.

In nearly three-quarters of all government schools, time allocated specifically to health education is less than 2 hours per week.

Fundamental motor skills and fitness levels

Considerable work was undertaken into the sequential development of fundamental movement skills, based on Tasmanian and national research. This work will inform the development of a core curriculum to ensure Statewide consistency. The issue of student fitness levels and the standards that should be attained across the years of schooling is still to be resolved. Fitness testing for the purpose of reporting has been rationalised. Teachers generally considered it more important to have an impact on students' attitudes towards lifestyle choices than to achieve artificial standards in personal fitness.

Junior sport

The role of schools in the provision of junior sporting competitions is an issue yet to be satisfactorily resolved. It is clear that both schools and the community have definite parts to play but the roles and responsibilities are not yet sufficiently defined to eliminate the duplication of opportunities and resources.

Professional development

The issue of professional development emerged from the review of health education. While 70 per cent of all health education coordinators have received some specialist professional development, primary school coordinators were significantly less likely than high school coordinators to have participated in specialist health education professional development. Since health and physical education was not a DEA priority, schools had not allocated significant amounts of professional development resources to this learning area in 1995.

Strategies to involve parents and the community

Strong community interest in health education led to the review of health education undertaken in 1995. The review used strategies to involve individuals and representatives of community organisations, teachers, parents and students, including surveys and focus groups.

Parent involvement

It is mandatory in government schools that parents be informed about the teaching of socially sensitive aspects within health education and have the opportunity to withdraw students. Schools reported that parents were informed about the personal relationships and sexuality aspects of health education but that few parents withdrew students.

Less than 50 per cent of government schools involved parents directly in health education policy and program development in 1995. Implementation of the DEA Policy on Parent Participation should improve this figure.

Links with community agencies

Parents, teachers, students and the general community strongly supported the use of other government and community agencies in the delivery of the learning area. The range of support covers the spectrum from health-related organisations to activity and sporting groups and safety and welfare organisations. The Health Education Review, however, indicated that guidelines are lacking for the involvement of community groups and this issue will be addressed in the future. The NIDE project provides a model for the involvement of community agencies.

Health promoting schools

Initial discussions were held with the Tasmanian Department of Community and Health Services about establishing a joint initiative to establish a Health Promoting Schools Program.

Catholic schools

Significant achievements

Primary schools had daily physical education lessons for all classes and provided a variety of general sports activities, playing modified rules with emphasis on the development of basic skills. Schools were involved in outdoor education, swimming and athletics programs and participated in activities such as Jump Rope for Heart.

Some primary and secondary schools implemented the Aussie Sport Leader program to expand the sports options for junior students and provide leadership and self-esteem enhancement for older students.

A dental health nurse visited primary schools. Some primary schools participated in the Life Education program which addresses choices, diet, sexuality, drugs and health issues.

Physical education was part of the core curriculum for all students in secondary schools. Health and personal development programs have been implemented in all

schools with a holistic approach which involves input from subject areas as diverse as physical education, religious education, sports science and home economics as well as health and personal development. Attention has been given to equity provisions in the allocation of time and resources.

Skill development in sports and general fitness were emphasised and students encouraged to participate. Parents continued to be involved in sporting activities as team managers and coaches.

All schools, with parent input, have reviewed canteen policies and practices.

Changed emphases

The reviews of physical education and health programs were informed by the national health and physical education statement and profile, as well as information and resources made available through the National Junior Sport Policy, the National Nutrition Education in Schools project and NIDE.

Joint processes have been put in train with the DEA and the AIST for the inclusion of drug education in the development of health promoting schools and these include input from and collaboration with the Department of Community and Health Services, the Drug Education Network and the police.

Emerging or continuing issues

The level of fitness of some students remains an area of concern as does the provision of sporting opportunities in an already crowded timetable. Parental involvement continues to be important in extra curricular sporting activities.

Independent schools

Significant achievements

The majority of sampled schools included the following elements in addition to those covered in the health and physical education learning area: leadership skills; general health and safety including nutrition; health hazards and life threatening diseases; mental and emotional health; recreational health; adventure education; sports science; and first aid. Courses covered the development of self-esteem, self-confidence, respect for others, analytical and decision-making skills, moral and ethical judgement, and the creative use of leisure. Programs were organised so that individuals could perform at their own standard/capability level.

Changed emphases

Changes of emphasis in the topics covered in this learning area in 1995 included teaching health as a separate or more structured subject with different topics taught to cover the changing needs of students and a greater emphasis on daily physical education to complement academic studies. Some schools relied heavily on the community for sporting and health resources and often combined with other schools for these activities.

Teachers took part in professional development programs designed to learn particular sports. Courses covered physical fitness programs, seminars on physical and mental development, drug education, sexuality seminars and updates in Bronze Medallion and first aid courses. Many schools also conducted in-service programs on topics such as motor skills and health policies.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

The context of Northern Territory schooling

Introduction

The Northern Territory, with a population of 173,878 people 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. Many remote centres are accessible only by air or sea and others are often not accessible during the wet season from October to March. In the Territory, 54.9 per cent of schools and 24.2 per cent of students are located in remote areas with varying degrees of access disadvantage.

The physical and social environment imposes exceptional access and cost disabilities. School-aged children comprise 22.1 per cent of the total population, a greater proportion than in any of the other States. There were 12,074 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students which was 34.6 per cent of the total student population of 34,842. 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.

Government sector

In 1995, there were 27,280 full-time students enrolled in 147 government schools. This represented 78 per cent of Northern Territory students.

Students with a poor understanding of English are read to in an English class.

Northern Territory/Commonwealth issues

Disadvantaged Schools Program Index of Disadvantage

The Northern Territory allocates the Disadvantaged Schools Component funding using the ABS IRSED and differential weightings are applied to take account of the relative poverty of its students. The Disadvantaged Schools Program Index was reviewed by TOSS and recommendations to adopt IRSED were made to DEET with weightings to reflect different levels of socioeconomic disadvantage to allocate Disadvantaged Schools Program funding.

Country Areas General Component resource allocation formula

The formula used by the Commonwealth in 1995 to allocate funding for the Country Areas General Component in 1995, continues to allocate funding to students in close proximity to major population centres at the same level as those with much greater access disadvantage. This formula was found

to be inequitable by the Tomlinson review (1985), Ashenden and Milligan (1993), and Rousseaux (1993) and has been continually referred to DEET in an attempt to rectify the situation. 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 the same 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

The Northern Territory allocates its Country Areas General Component funding on the basis of relative access disadvantage using the GSAF, thus ensuring those students with the greatest access disadvantage receive the most assistance. The GSAF was put forward as the preferred option for allocating Country Areas General Component funding to Ministers and to DEET by TOSS in 1995, after positive assessments by Queensland, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

Government initiatives

First Steps

In 1995, the First Steps Literacy Professional Development Program was implemented in interested Northern Territory schools. The goal of First Steps is to support schools as they help school children from pre-school to year 7 to make measurable and observable progress in the area of language and literacy development. It is based on the belief that teaching practice has a significant effect on student outcomes and that all children can learn successfully. The program is a resource which helps schools to achieve the literacy objectives of the Northern Territory English curriculum. During 1995, 32 schools commenced implementation of this program.

Parent participation

The Partners in Education: Parent Policy was encouraged at a wide range of levels. Parent liaison officers assisted schools to develop policy and practice in parent participation appropriate to their school community.

School communities organised culture and language celebrations and curriculum information sessions, developed databases of parent skills, talents and interests, established collections of parent resources for home loan and introduced a broad range of ways to report student progress to parents. Ways of reporting to parents included home visits, videoing student class participation, small parent/teacher sessions in a family home, displays of work in community venues and parent involvement in classroom activities at the conclusion of a unit of work.

Parent participation in decision-making was strengthened through school community conferences, and teacher and parent council representatives participated in residential orientation weekends with collaborative approaches to reviewing school action plans.

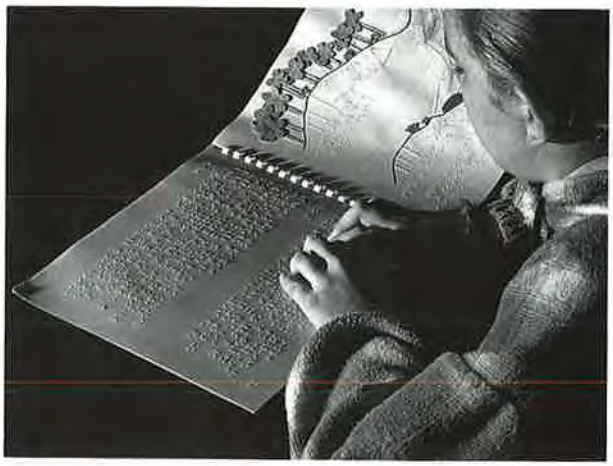
Parents participated in workshops focused on strategies for supporting children's literacy development in the home, script writing, costuming, set design, make-up and lighting workshops that enabled parents to assist with end of year class performances.

Students with disabilities

During 1995, the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classrooms continued to be a feature in education in the Northern Territory and there were over 150 children with disabilities supported in regular schools.

There was a significant increase in the number of Aboriginal students with disabilities attending school in their home communities (19 students in eight remote schools) and the level of professional support to the communities and schools involved rose significantly.

In relation to occupational therapy, sensorimotor and language programs were incorporated into the physical education curriculum and this has benefited the estimated 25 per cent of students identified with sensorimotor difficulties.



A visually-impaired student reads from a book of Braille, made by the Visually Impaired Centre, at Ludmilla, NT.

Profiling Pilot Program

The Profiling Pilot Program was a significant part of policy development for Territory-wide implementation of profiling outcomes. A profile records the normal sequence of learning as a child progresses in key subject areas through school. At the beginning of the 1995 school year, the Profiling Pilot Program commenced in 13 schools and included the trialling of computer software for record-keeping purposes. Formal and informal data of both a qualitative and quantitative nature were gathered and an interim evaluation and seminar were conducted for the pilot school coordinators and key teachers. As a consequence of the experience gained, the Board of Studies was able to develop policy and schedules for the introduction of outcomes profiling throughout Northern Territory schools.

Key competencies

During 1995, selected schools and curriculum officers participated in a process of identifying the extent to which the key competencies, as identified by the Mayer Committee, already feature in the senior school curriculum and in school practice. On conclusion of the project a number of recommendations relating to incorporation of the key competencies in curriculum, assessment and reporting were accepted by the Board of Studies. The effect of these recommendations will be to make the competencies more explicit in curriculum documents and to provide information about the extent to which students' chosen courses of study have provided opportunities for the development of the competencies.

English as a second language

During 1995, substantial assistance was provided to students with English as a second language through staffing arrangements, programs of intensive and general support, curriculum support materials and professional development. This provision was supplemented by Commonwealth funding under the NEPS New Arrivals Element and the General Support Element. Unfortunately, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students requiring intensive English language support did not receive access equivalent to the New Arrivals Program which is a matter of concern that needs to be addressed in the future.

Commonwealth-funded capital projects

For 1995, the Commonwealth contributed $2.4 million towards 19 projects in Northern Territory government schools. Fifteen projects were for repairs and general up-grading including re-roofing, painting and upgrading of air conditioning systems. These projects will all be completed early in 1996. The Commonwealth also contributed a significant amount towards additional classrooms at two high schools, the construction of a new pre- and primary school in the Darwin rural area and construction of a 40 bed student hostel facility in Katherine.

The Commonwealth contributed $751,134 to capital works in Catholic schools and $1,347,032 in independent schools. This contribution was made through programs administered by the Northern Territory joint Block Grant Authority. The work included part funding of classrooms in Darwin and support for a further five projects for a total of $434,716 under the General Element. Two projects to provide Aboriginal education units were funded in Catholic schools under the ATSIS Element of the program for a total of $286,000. A further $1,174,000 for construction of dormitories and general learning areas for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was provided under this element. A further six projects, totalling $208,450 were completed under the QCaTS Element. From their own resources Catholic schools contributed $322,637 towards all of the above projects and independent schools $238,314 towards these projects.

Catholic system

In 1995, there were 4,901 full time students enrolled in Catholic schools. This represented 14 per cent of Northern Territory students.

There were nine Catholic urban schools (Darwin and Alice Springs), one rural school (Katherine) and five remote schools (all areas). Of the nine urban schools, two were secondary. In Alice Springs, the Catholic High School enrolled year 12 students for the first time, whilst in Darwin, O'Loughlin Catholic College planned for the introduction of year 12 studies in 1996. The remote schools include outstations and two Community Education Centres.

Catholic education initiatives

Retention and participation

During 1995, the Catholic system continued towards introducing senior classes in all its three secondary schools. Senior classes were available for the first time in Alice Springs in 1994 and were available in Darwin in 1995 and this has resulted in increasing participation and retention rates.

At the remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander schools there was an overall increase in the number of students in initial secondary studies. Students took on studies in intensive English, foundation studies and general studies and as well, students from these schools attended St John's College in Darwin as boarders. Continuing their studies away from their home communities presents many difficulties for students separated from close family groups. As a result many return to their community but few continue their schooling. Some return to adult studies at a later stage.

The Kumamadjiin Unit at Sacred Heart School, Palmerston continued to provide educational facilities for students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities and, along with the units at the Catholic High School and Our Lady Sacred Heart Alice Springs, supported students and families in students' accessing education and in remaining at school.

Decision-making and community participation

Catholic schools operated with assistance from school boards and/or other parent organisations. Through its staff members, Catholic education was represented on the Northern Territory Board of Studies and several of its committees, the Northern Territory Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (Feppi), the MCEETYA Taskforce on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Education and the Block Grant Authority. Discussions continued with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people concerning the formation of a Catholic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education group.

Aboriginal student support and parental awareness committees, parents and Aboriginal resource officers accepted greater responsibility for school initiatives and contributed to discussions with school staff on school programs.

Aboriginal teacher education

The number of teachers studying at Batchelor College continued to increase, as teachers returned to upgrade qualifications or obtain their initial teaching qualification. In the Remote Area Teacher Education mode of study, students spend time at Batchelor College and also back in their community. All Catholic Aboriginal community schools now have at least two trained Aboriginal teachers on staff and school communities support others in training.

Mentoring programs, which are extremely important as community schools move toward greater Aboriginalisation (Localisation), continued in 1995 with appropriate support and ongoing professional development provided to neophyte teachers and leaders.

Aboriginal education in the urban environment

The Aboriginal education program concentrated on increasing and maintaining the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resource officers in each Catholic urban school. The resource officers were involved in ongoing in-service training and professional development programs. There was an increase in the networking of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The regular meetings of representatives from each school strengthened the Catholic Combined Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committees group and encouraged the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in school programs. Cultural activities were implemented in all Darwin Catholic urban schools.

Religion

During 1995, teachers in Catholic schools were provided with in-service training in the *Guidelines for Religious Education of Students in the Archdiocese of Melbourne*. The guidelines are a resource document and outline the scope and sequence for teachers to use in preparing their classroom religious education programs. The guidelines are based on recent church documents and form a comprehensive curriculum package promoting sound educational principles.

English

There was a continued emphasis on English as a written and oral form of communication. Government testing throughout the Northern Territory included students from Catholic schools and the Board of Studies indicated that appropriate standards have been achieved. All urban primary schools continued their commitment to the First Steps program in 1995.

Languages other than English

Arrernte, Greek, Italian, Indonesian and Japanese languages were available to students in Catholic urban primary schools. Two primary schools were trial schools for the PAL program. Arrernte, Chinese (Mandarin), French, Indonesian and Japanese languages were available in Catholic urban secondary schools. In Aboriginal community schools, Arrernte, Murrinhpatha and Tiwi languages were taught within the context of the 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.

English as a second language

The ESL needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children gained greater recognition and efforts were made to address the English language teaching of these students from the perspective of its being a second or third language for them and in many cases a foreign language.

Catholic school staff participated in two government professional development programs, ESL in the Mainstream and ESL in Anangu Schools, as whole-school developments.

Science

The interest in teaching science in the years T–7 continued and staff developed teaching strategies focusing on problem solving. Developments during 1995, included the use of 'hands on' science in the years T–2 and working collaboratively in classroom programs. Senior students went on excursions interstate, where they were able to take part in science and technology workshops and broaden their experiences. Science is a common curriculum subject in the years T–10.

Technology

During 1995, Catholic schools made greater use of information technology including networking of computers. Primary students were provided with greater access and were becoming more proficient with computer applications. Technology beyond computing is also taught in the primary classes. Courses in years 8–10 use computers and other technologies to facilitate learning and encourage students to broaden their experience of the subject matter as well as gain insight into the possible future directions of technology.

Students at risk

Three Catholic secondary schools received funding under the STAR Component of NEPS, which has as its objective the identification of students at most risk of not completing secondary education. Other factors taken into consideration in the provision of STAR funds were poverty and family trauma.

Gifted and talented

The Catholic Education Office continued to be involved in developing policy and curriculum documents across the sectors in the Northern Territory. Four primary schools and one high school provided programs specifically targeted for these students. The Catholic sector participated in a joint project initiated by the Armidale Catholic Education Office, under the Parents as Life Long Teachers program and St John's College provided professional development and programming under a national grant.

Students with disabilities

Special education programs focused on services to improve educational outcomes, therapeutic and essential services to improve participation in schooling. Procedures covering the enrolment and support of students were refined.

A feature of 1995 was the beginning of a series of professional development in-service training programs for government and non-government teachers and administrators under the generic title, An Inclusive Vision. These in-service training programs will be continuing beyond 1995.

Independent schools

There were 2,869 full time students enrolled in 11 independent schools. These represented eight per cent of Northern Territory students.

Independent schools provide the majority of school boarding places for students from isolated families and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. School enrolments continued to increase, with requests by communities to extend the number and type of schools.

Independent schools in the Northern Territory strive to provide students with a comprehensive education, one which will develop their intellectual, physical, social and spiritual capabilities and enhance their cultural awareness and participation in society.

Independent school initiatives

Professional development

During 1995, professional development continued to be a priority area for independent schools with specific emphasis on areas such as English language programs, early literacy and behaviour management. The most cost-effective and efficient development was found to be through experts conducting in-school courses.

Equity initiatives

During 1995, a variety of programs were available to students in addition to those set up specially for students in

need, such as remedial programs or health programs which were designed differently for boys and girls:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were able to use the AITAP;
- ESL was available to students from non-English speaking backgrounds;
- challenge programs were designed for gifted and talented students;
- support mechanisms were provided for isolated students;
- facilities were designed to take account of the needs of students with disabilities; and
- pastoral care programs were continued for all students.

NEPS funding made available to the independent schools by the Commonwealth assisted with the implementation of initiatives.

Students at risk

Five independent schools were funded for projects under the 1995 STAR Component of NEPS and the funding enabled the implementation of a variety of measures to improve attendance and retention, and a continuance of programs initiated in previous years. Education as a prerequisite to employment is still highlighted in these programs.

Disadvantaged schools

In 1995, funding from NEPS under the Disadvantaged Schools Component went to three independent schools in the Northern Territory and this allowed students to undertake a variety of support and enrichment programs. The basis of support in this area was for Aboriginal students in areas of literacy and numeracy.

Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

ESL funding allowed four schools, three secondary and one primary, to undertake programs. Three schools programs centred on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children for whom English was a second or third language. The fourth school had programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, as well as for children from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds.

Students with disabilities

In 1995, funds from the Special Education Support Component of NEPS were allocated to six schools enabling those schools to cater for students with special needs, mainly through the employment of part-time instructors. This enabled the individualisation of programs, one-to-one and small group teaching and integration of special needs children into the mainstream.

Early literacy

During 1995, early literacy funding was provided to a disadvantaged independent primary school. Positive results were obtained with a staff member being trained in First Steps and teaching resources were developed to enhance programs in both ESL and the four Aboriginal language classes being taught there.

NALSAS

During 1995, NALSAS funding allocated to the independent schools was pooled with the Northern Territory Department of Education. This enabled independent schools to have access to project initiatives undertaken by the Department and achieve progress towards the meeting of targets set in the teaching of Asian cultures and languages.

Focus areas

Vocational education

Government sector

The number of schools and colleges with registered provider status, and hence the potential to deliver accredited vocational education and training, increased to seven during 1995.

Two of these, Centralian College and the Northern Territory Rural College, have always been registered providers, offering a wide range of vocational programs, mainly to adult students. However they are now offering a range of vocational programs to secondary students. A number of additional training programs or packages for secondary students were introduced at Centralian College during 1995, covering the areas of hospitality, trades, business and hairdressing.

An increased range of vocational programs for both night (mainly adult) students and day (mainly secondary) students was offered at Casuarina Senior College. Certificate courses in the areas of clerical skills, practical computer operations, and art and design were available to secondary students. In addition, a number of training programs and DEET-sponsored intervention programs were also provided.

The AVTS pilot program at Alice Springs High School continued into its third year, while a new pilot program, the Young Australian Student Access program, commenced at

Katherine High School. The AVTS program, Certificate 1 in Metals and Engineering (Entry Level), which commenced midway through 1994 as a joint venture between the Northern Territory University – Territory Training Centre and Casuarina Senior College continued throughout 1995. The TRAC program continued to expand in 1995 with a new strand in tourism and hospitality being offered in Darwin and the introduction of the program in Alice Springs. The first group of Darwin TRAC students to complete a full year of the course (Stage 1, Parts 1 and 2) were awarded their TRAC certificates at a graduation ceremony in February 1995.

A project officer to support the implementation of VET in schools commenced work in semester 2, 1995. This is a Commonwealth NPDP-funded project.

The Board of Studies published its Recognition Policy for Stage 1 of the SACE/NT Certificate of Education (NTCE) in January 1995 following a period of discussion and wide consultation during development. The Recognition Policy outlines the Board's policies and provisions in relation to endorsement of courses that are not developed by the Board, credit towards the SACE(NT)/NTCE, and credit transfer. Credit arrangements have allowed for VET programs which are of equivalent length to Board of Studies courses to count towards the SACE(NT)/NTCE.

The Board of Studies applied for, and received, recognition from the Australian Tourism Training Review Panel for an introductory level national tourism industry module which is embedded in the Board of Studies course, Tourism Studies 1. The first Stage 2 NTCE course accredited by the Board was TRAC Stage 2.

Specific plans for the future include:

- publication and dissemination of a booklet explaining the AVTS for schools;
- conducting on-going professional development programs for secondary teachers on implementing vocational education;
- extension of the TRAC program to three other major centres out of Darwin (Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy and Katherine) and extension of the program in Darwin with the addition of another strand;
- extension of vocational offerings for secondary students at Casuarina Senior College, including Certificate 2 in automotive career and technology training and a childcare training program;
- development of an AVTS program in the construction industry; and
- revision of the Board of Studies Recognition Policy to include credit arrangements for Stage 2 of the NTCE.

Catholic system

At Wadeye, in the area of adult education, and under the Catholic Education Office's private provider status, training was provided in literacy/numeracy skills; retail training; driver education; office administration; craft techniques; purchasing/retailing goods; and work/health safety.

A project officer, funded under the Commonwealth NPDP, worked with Catholic schools to support the implementation of VET.

Future plans for Catholic education include:

- continuing to work collaboratively with the Department of Education and other stake holders in the provision of vocational education in the three secondary urban schools, community education centres and adult education centres in remote locations; and
- extending the nature and number of vocational education courses conducted at urban and remote centres.

Independent schools

A range of vocational education programs was offered by independent schools in the Northern Territory in the areas of tourism and hospitality (home economics, languages), office clerical (computing), metal/engineering (maths, physics), rural (agriculture) and arts/entertainment (music/drama).

Students at Taminmin High School work with buffalo calves during an agriculture class.

Independent schools encouraged their students to access TAFE courses and the recognised vocational program, TRAC, was available. Students were also encouraged to arrange week-long periods of work experience which were found to enhance student motivation, develop key competencies, increase community participation in school activities and forge better links between school-TAFE, higher education and the labour market.

Gender education and the achievement of gender equity

Government sector

During 1995, the following gender equity related programs were undertaken within the Northern Territory.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tertiary Aspirations Program

During 1995, the AITAP provided support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who hoped to complete year 12 studies and enter higher education courses. The program is designed to address the issue of under representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at the senior secondary level of schooling. It recognises that a wide range of issues affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' academic success and aims to enhance not only academic achievement and skills but also personal and cultural identity. The program also aims to develop working relationships among students, teachers and parents, founded on shared knowledge and understanding. The program targets male and female students although in 1995 more female students than male participated.

NEPS Gender Equity Component

To utilise the funding that the Northern Territory receives from the Gender Equity Component of the NEPS, a small scale research project was developed to investigate gender-related barriers to the participation of girls in mathematics and physics in secondary school. A major part of the project involved 24 year 9 girls from two high schools participating in four two-hour workshop sessions and a full day Saturday workshop. During the workshops students participated in activities that explored constructions of femininities and masculinities, constructions of science and mathematics and the impact of these on their attitudes towards science and mathematics.

Focus group interviews were conducted with years 11 and 12 girls from a number of schools who have chosen to take higher level mathematics and sciences. The purpose of these interviews was to explore what factors these students believe influenced their choices. The final part of the project was an in-service activity in November for teachers of science and mathematics which informed them of the outcomes of the project and the implications of these outcomes for practice.

Gender and violence

In 1995, an audit of the strategies and programs in place within the Department that support schools in addressing gender-based violence was undertaken. Questionnaires were developed and sent to all schools and curriculum and support services at the beginning of the school year. More than 240 responses were received. This data was analysed and a report written. A submission for special initiative funding to establish a gender and violence project over three years was successful. This project will begin in 1996 and will focus on assisting schools to deal with gender and violence issues through the curriculum.

In response to recommendations in the report, *Sticks and Stones* (1994), which resulted from the House of Representatives inquiry into violence in schools, DEET offered funding to support holding forums in the Territory to identify principles of good practice in dealing with violence in schools. Planning for the forum, to be held in term 1, 1996, began late in 1995.

Literacy intervention strategies for boys

In 1995 James Cook University, Townsville, the Queensland Department of Education and the Northern Territory Department of Education were successful in gaining NPDP funding for this project.

The aim of the project was to develop appropriate teacher professional development materials to enable teachers to successfully implement a wide variety of literacy strategies for boys. The outcomes of the project will be published in 1996.

Behaviour management programs

Behaviour management personnel work in a variety of capacities in both primary schools and high schools across the Northern Territory. There are regional teams, consisting of a teacher and teacher assistant, to directly service the Darwin North, Darwin Central, Palmerston/Rural, Katherine and Alice Springs regions and Darwin high schools.

These teams provide:

- advice and consultation to schools, principals, teachers, parents, students and other allied professionals, for example, student services colleagues, police, welfare officers, paediatricians and juvenile justice workers;
- one-to-one hands on programming and support to individually referred students and their families;
- hands-on group work with students identified by schools as being at risk;
- hands-on whole-class lessons which may focus on particular areas, for example, setting up class rules, developing cooperation and group skills and developing assertive language;
- teacher training in effective classroom practice, personal safety issues for students and mandatory reporting of abuse;
- whole-school discipline policy implementation, including implementation of anti-bullying and harassment clauses; and
- assisting teachers in the development of units of class work related to assertive language, self-esteem, anger management, cooperative skills, group skills, decision-making and problem solving.

The primary focus of behaviour management personnel is to assist teachers, students and their parents in the management of a student's difficult behaviour.

All referred students, whether individual or in groups, boys or girls, exhibit behaviours that are indicative of poor self-esteem. Both the individual behaviour management programs, group and classroom programs are designed to enhance each individual's self-esteem whilst in the process of learning new behaviours.

In group or class work where issues of gender arise (in a behavioural sense) they are dealt with in the general context of a protective behaviours model that is that, everyone has a right to feel safe. This is also dealt with under the area of rights and responsibilities. This model 'dovetails' with the class and school rules and school ethos that are implemented.

Other issues of gender arise most frequently in high schools and more often than not, these issues are related to the students' physical development, burgeoning sexual awareness and curiosity about both. Many of thesestudents, although professing great knowledge, are in fact extremely ignorant about many of the issues, particularly:

- HIV/AIDS and the use of condoms;
- what to do or say when propositioned for sex; and
- the socially accepted ways of behaving with a partner
    - what is OK? what isn't?
    - how can I avoid being pressured?
    - what will I do if .....?

Both boys and girls express a desire to know more about these issues.

Gender equity policy

After extensive consultation during 1995 the Board of Studies endorsed the Gender Equity in Education Policy. The formation of a Gender Equity Special Area Committee was also endorsed. The development of implementation strategies for this policy will be a focus for the Committee in 1996. In 1995 the Board of Studies Handbook guidelines for gender inclusive curriculum were updated.

Sexual harassment policy

The Departmental sexual harassment policy was released in 1995. The policy relates not only to staff but to students in school and emphasises the importance of teaching about harassment in the curriculum. The first of a number of professional development days was held for teachers in Alice Springs to explore ways of addressing issues through the curriculum.

Action research in schools

Gender equity action research continued in three Alice Springs schools during 1995. In October, key staff from the schools presented to staff from other schools and the regional office some of the outcomes of their participation in gender equity action research.

Parents and children at Jilkminggan school.

Staff from Darwin schools also participated in action research to address gender issues in their classes and schools. Issues being tackled include single-sex classes and methodology, improving classroom interactions and addressing gender issues in curriculum.

Professional development activities

A number of professional development activities were held during 1995. These focused on girls at risk and those who benefit least from schooling, gender equity policy in practice, gender inclusive curriculum and understanding the construction of gender.

Catholic sector

During 1995, Catholic sector staff participated in national meetings and worked with schools on gender equity issues in relation to staffing and staff organisational practices. Staff also served on the Board of Studies Committee which finalised the writing of the policy document for gender equity in education.

Independent schools

Independent schools encouraged parents to participate as partners with the schools in issues relating to gender equity and gender education. Schools reported that girls were found to be dominant in social and public speaking, while boys were found to take mathematics and science courses more frequently than girls. Health programs were sometimes developed separately for girls and boys, but, in the main, schools emphasised the need to treat students as individuals and aimed to motivate and encourage all students regardless of gender. The main objective was for all students to increase academic achievement.

Literacy

Government sector

In addition to the comprehensive curriculum materials, the ongoing system-wide assessment program and the ongoing extensive professional development support already provided, major significant initiatives undertaken, that is, materials first published or programs newly offered, in 1995 were:

- English for years T–10 Its Scope and Sequence: levels 1 and 2 and levels 3–5 and 6–8; this program brought together the content, work requirements and learning outcomes of the Board-approved course of study into sequential focuses of study and clearly identified for teachers what it is they need to plan for to ensure effective teaching and learning of English;
- implementing the common curriculum in Aboriginal schools: years 4 and 5 ESL units were produced, and contained a lesson plan and student activity sheets for each day of the school year with the aim of supporting the achievement of learning outcomes. The materials covered the range of genres required by the curriculum. Supporting resources included a video, audio tapes and a novel;
- Sea of Talk and Phonological Awareness: these professional development programs were collaboratively planned and presented by curriculum advisory project officers and speech pathologists. They were offered to early childhood teachers with preference given to groups from the same school in order to maximise ongoing support within the school; and
- First Steps literacy professional development program: this whole-school program incorporates professional development and ongoing support in implementing diagnostic assessment and linking teaching strategies. It supports the implementation of the English curriculum across the primary school, provides support for parents as partners in literacy education and enables schools to monitor the literacy development of all students.

Other developments

Under the aegis of the National Literacy Enhancement Program, the AEU (NT) organised the training of a number of literacy education officers to assist teachers with the enhancement of children's literacy skills. This was a national initiative.

Work began on the development of a Northern Territory English profile as well as profiles in the other learning areas. These draw from the nationally developed profiles, but the strands are classified and organised in the ways used in Northern Territory curriculum documents.

Literacy outcomes

Details are included in the *National Overview*.

Physical development, health and fitness

Government sector

Development of approved courses of study and specific projects have been significantly influenced by the profiles

and statements. NIDE and Home Economics in Junior Secondary School are two projects of note.

Other national initiatives in the learning area which have affected the provision of health and physical education include:

- the Senate inquiry into physical and sport education raising the profile of physical education;
- the national HIV/AIDS Strategy and the National Drug Strategy both being incorporated into health education delivery at the school level;
- the National Nutrition Education in Schools project which contributed to a coordinated approach to nutrition throughout schools;
- the National Junior Sport Policy highlighted the way junior sport is conducted at all levels; and
- Home Economics in Junior Secondary Schools, a Commonwealth program, helped to define and highlight the curriculum area and parameters of home economics Australia-wide.

Priorities for future effort involve provision of additional training to update teachers' knowledge and skills. Sports skills, gender equity, nutrition and food skills are specific areas of need.

Strategies exist to involve parents and the community in the planning and delivery of health and physical education, but these need strengthening and expanding with the intersectoral approach utilised in the NIDE project proving highly effective.

National Initiatives In Drug Education

Funding was allocated to the Department in July 1995 to implement this initiative following the successful submission of a Northern Territory NIDE proposal. Teachers, school counsellors and nurses, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) constables and parent representatives took part in forums which provided current concise information about drug education, resource availability and ideas for best teaching practice. Workshop sessions explored issues relating to the development of policy, principles of harm minimisation and resource implementation. Expressions of interest were sought from schools wishing to be considered as pilot or trialling schools of the NIDE materials.

Sport education

Sport Education in Physical Education Program (SEPEP) is an innovative curriculum model used as a component of upper primary and secondary school physical education programs and exhibiting many parallels with community junior sport. Within normally scheduled physical education lessons, mixed ability teams are formed at the start of a twenty-session competitive season.

Students are motivated to learn in a cooperative activity-based environment. In the SEPEP model students are more active and make a concerted effort to improve psychomotor skills through designing drills specific to their own needs and practice. The SEPEP model has the potential for educating children to perform with good sporting behaviour and it was trialled very successfully in three Northern Territory schools in 1994 and 1995 as part of a wider national trial.

Catholic sector

In health, current social health issues are addressed. A number of schools participated in the DARE program and other life education programs including HIV/AIDS education and alcohol awareness. In several schools, nutrition cooking classes were used for teaching scientific and mathematical concepts as well as health and hygiene. The Commonwealth grants health program was continued, and a school-based curriculum used with a focus on providing the students with experiences in health education and requiring them to take responsibility for their own health and that of their community.

Physical education programs ranged from the development of skills to the playing of competitive sports.

Catholic schools were involved in national initiatives sponsored by the Northern Territory Department of Education.

Independent schools

Within independent schools, elements of health and physical education such as the creative use of leisure and the development of self esteem were developed and taught in all courses. Schools included subjects such as home economics and religious and cultural instruction in this learning area as well as extra-curricular sport and leadership skills.

Programs were designed so that special student populations were able and encouraged to take part in this learning area. Parents and other community members were invited to coach sporting teams, act as speakers and provide outside school facilities.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

The Australian Capital Territory is a self-governing territory comprising 2,367 square kilometres in south-eastern Australia. In June, 1995 its population was 304,100. Its principal economic activity is government.

Students attended a range of government, Catholic and independent schools. On 14 August 1995 there was a total of 61,134 students enrolled in schools in the ACT. These included 32,524 primary students, 19,107 high school students, 9,078 secondary college students and 425 special school students.

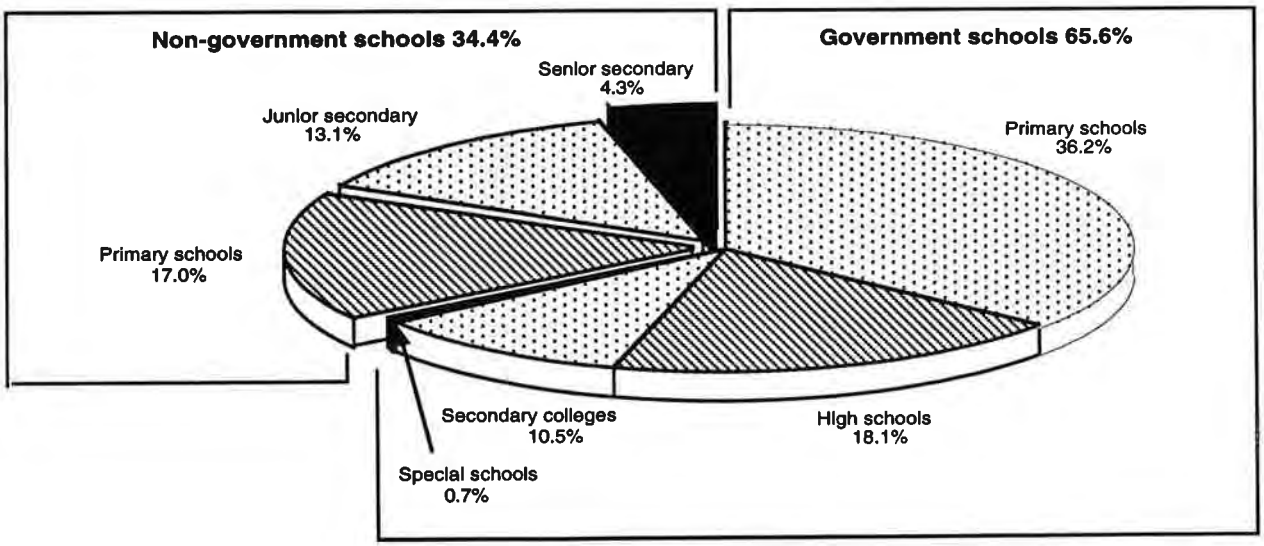
Approximately 65.6 per cent (or 40,110 students) were enrolled in 98 government schools. These students were enrolled in 66 primary schools (22,160), 16 high schools (11,076) and nine secondary colleges (6,449) and seven special schools (425). The remaining 32 per cent (or 21,024 students) were enrolled in 39 non-government schools. These students were enrolled in 22 primary schools (10,364), nine junior secondary schools (8,031) and eight senior secondary schools (2,629). Of non-government enrolments, 75 per cent were in Catholic schools, 17 per cent in Anglican schools and 8 per cent in other schools.

Territory education priorities

The Education Plan for ACT Government Schooling 1995–97 was developed in consultation with schools and the education community. The plan outlined the following goals and priorities for government schooling:

- improve learning outcomes for all students, through outcomes-based education and access and equity;
- promote dynamic learning communities through flexible approaches to learning and partnerships with a range of community groups and education providers;

Figure 24. Enrolment by sector and level, all ACT schools, August 1995



Source: ACT Schools Census, August 1995

Table 82. Enrolments by sector and level, all ACT schools, August 1995

Level of education	*Govt*	*Non-govt*	*All schools*	*Govt schools, ACT*	*Govt schools, Australia (1994)*
	number of students			*percent*	
Primary school enrolments	22,160	10,364	32,524	68.1	74.3
Secondary school enrolments					
Junior secondary years 7–10	11,076	8,031	19,107	58.0	68.3
Senior secondary years 11–12	6,449	2,629	9,078	71.0	65.5
Special school enrolments	425	–	425	100.0	n.a.
Total enrolments	**40,110**	**21,024**	**61,134**	**65.6**	**72.1**

Source: ACT Schools Census, August 1995

- value and develop staff through opportunities to participate in training and development, participative decision-making and educational leadership; and
- manage effectively through use of information technology and skilful use of resources.

Priority objectives for non-government schools in 1995 were to:

- maximise the general competencies of students, particularly in literacy and numeracy skills;
- maximise learning for all students;
- 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; and
- involve the community in school operations.

Additional objectives for independent schools were to:

- encourage the pursuit of excellence and the development of self-discipline and self-motivation in students;
- facilitate the achievement of sound academic knowledge so that each student can perform to his or her full potential;
- ensure the balanced development of students as a whole, which includes building a foundation of ethical behaviour, developing an inquiring mind and acknowledging the worth of the individual; and
- ensure that students have a sense of responsibility to the society in which they live.

Priority objectives set by the Catholic Education Office for systemic schools in 1995 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;
- provide better feedback to the school community and involve the community in school operations through the development of a process of school renewal; and
- bring closer together system and school administrators, parents, teachers and students, as members of a cohesive and caring school community.

Capital expenditure

In 1995 the Commonwealth provided $3.76 million towards capital projects in the government sector, and $2.47 million in the non-government sector, (including $0.8 million to help broaden the secondary curriculum and to implement the Finn and Carmichael Reports).

In government schools there were three major projects and five minor projects funded by the Commonwealth and completed both financially and physically during 1995. The major projects involved provision of a new high school and a new primary school, and a program of replacement of old and unsafe playground equipment at a number of schools. The minor projects involved a range of

works to address health and safety issues including ventilation improvements, carpark area works and refurbishment of toilet facilities. (Note that a project is considered financially complete if monies retained for the defect period are expected to be expended during that period.)

The ACT government provided $21.4 million to capital works projects in government schools and a total of $1.97 million in interest subsidies for capital projects to the non-government sector.

In non-government schools 23 capital projects were funded by the Commonwealth. The most common types of work undertaken were construction of general learning areas, refurbishment of library/administration areas for primary schools and upgrading of facilities for computing, art, science and technology curriculum areas in primary and high schools and senior secondary colleges.

In 1995 the Department of Education and Training commenced a program of improving access for disabled students to government school facilities. In the 1995/96 financial year $100,000 was provided for such facilities as lifts, toilets, change rooms, ramps and car parking.

Strategic initiatives in 1995

Government schools

A review of the School Performance Review and Development Program was completed. As a result a revised quality assurance process was developed, known as School Development. This process promotes school improvement and planning. It involves the whole community in assessing effectiveness and is tailored to meet the specific need of the school.

Enhanced school based management

In 1995 the introduction of extended school based management (SBM) was investigated. A SBM Unit was established to explore devolving additional management responsibilities to schools. ACT schools already exercised a high level of responsibility for budgeting, curriculum and maintenance. The objective of extended SBM was to improve educational outcomes for students by increasing the range of decision making and resource management at the school level. The principles of SBM were:

- improved outcomes for students;
- fairness;
- accountability;
- community involvement; and
- transparency.

In government schools a discussion paper on extending school based management was circulated throughout the education community. The paper canvassed ways of increasing decision-making and resource management. The results of the consultations will be reported in 1996 and a number of recommendations made regarding implementation.

Students with special needs

A review of special education was undertaken. The review:

- evaluated the effectiveness of programs for students with disabilities;
- provided options for changing the resourcing model to a needs-based model; and
- made recommendations for improved services.

An examination of the recommendations will be undertaken in 1996.

Catholic schools

Following extensive consultations with the school community, the report, ACT Catholic Schooling into the 21st Century, was released in 1995. It formed the basis of a number of policy decisions regarding the amalgamation of two secondary schools, introduction of co-education, maintenance of single-sex education options, and enrolment policy.

Other initiatives taken in 1995 included:

- establishment of an Interim Planning Committee to investigate the feasibility of establishing an Archdiocesan Catholic Parents Association;
- review and reaffirmation of the Catholic Education Commission's commitment to the goals of the Aboriginal Education Policy;
- determination of human resource management policies relating to affirmative action, occupational health and safety and occupational rehabilitation; and

- development of a pilot staff appraisal program in 1995 and agreement to an extension of the trial in 1996–97.

Focus areas

Vocational education

Australian Capital Territory college students participated in vocational education and training through employment-related courses. These courses provided the knowledge and skills relevant to particular areas of employment or further vocational education and training.

Employment-related courses, originally designed to facilitate students' transfer to the TAFE sector, were oriented towards nationally recognised outcomes with structured work placements. This was achieved under the AVTS by dual accrediting courses. The ACT BSSS and the ARC accredited these courses according to the NFROT.

Employment related courses were developed in consultation with teachers, ITABs, Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) and industry. Dual accreditation for all employment-related courses is scheduled to occur by the year 2000. Upon completion of a dual accredited employment related course, students achieved Australian Standard Framework (ASF) 1 or 2. Certificates I and/or II awarded by the Department of Education and Training reported on achievement of required industry standards. Students not meeting all requirements had their achievement recognised on Statements of Attainment certificates. A total of 481 trainees from both non-government and government colleges participated across six industry groups.

Nationally recognised AVTS vocational courses accredited by BSSS and the ARC included:

- introductory studies in human services;
- the business of fashion;
- retail – customer service;
- automotive technology;
- contemporary music;
- information and office services;
- hospitality;
- computer applications; and
- construction worker – basic industry skills.

The ACT Department of Education and Training was the registered provider of these courses with government and non-government colleges registered as delivery sites.

The above courses, excluding hospitality and construction worker (basic industry skills), included structured workplace training. Students who received certificates for these courses completed a combination of modules and competencies in on- and off-the-job training. Assessment of the on-the-job component of these courses was completed at the workplace. Courses were delivered by the CIT and private providers. The electronics course at one secondary college was delivered by the CIT. Another secondary college used the facilities and staff of a sporting club to give students hospitality skills.

Approaches to managing work placements were trialled. The Commonwealth provided $200,000 for these trials to cover the costs of placements and relief for teacher coordinators. In courses such as contemporary music, it was difficult to find suitable placements to satisfy student demand within prescribed hours.

Colleges offered around 40 other employment-related courses that were vocationally oriented. These courses did not include workplace learning and were not competency-based. Vocational education and training courses were included in 22 per cent of the year 12 packages of government and non-government college students. One hundred and sixty-six trainees participated in vocational placements across industry.

Broad-based national modules were also embedded into mainstream courses. An English course was developed that included the national communications skills modules of workplace communication, including writing and job-seeking skills.

Secondary colleges and the CIT cooperatively developed credit transfer arrangements. Two models of credit transfer between colleges and the CIT were developed. The first was direct recognition of modules in courses for which the Department was the registered provider. These courses were nationally recognised and delivered to industry standard.

Table 83. Number of certificates awarded, vocational education and training courses, ACT, 1995

	Female	*Male*	*Total*
Certificate I	69	35	104
Certificate II	14	4	18
E Certificate (incl. Statement of Attainment)	485	691	1,176

Source: ACT Department of Education and Training

The second model was for courses completed that were not nationally recognised. These courses were employment related or covered general education. The content of the courses was directly related to those delivered at the CIT.

Partnership arrangements between all vocational education and training providers, colleges and the CIT were strengthened with the development of the *Framework for Vocational Education and Training of 16–18 Year Olds in the ACT*. The Framework covered public and private providers and outlined arrangements for the delivery of entry level training. It facilitated articulation through joint course writing and delivery and resource sharing within the vocational education and training sector.

Government and non-government teachers gained vocational education and training skills through industry specific training either by registered providers or on-the-job training. Teachers involved in the AVTS completed one week return-to-industry training or the CIT courses as required by industry. Commonwealth funding of $65,580 was received to improve the industry skills of teachers in government and non-government colleges. A total of 134 teachers (105 female, 29 male) participated in a program that comprised:

- a week in a relevant industry to update technical knowledge;
- a course on recognition of prior learning methods and competency-based training and assessment; and
- an industry consultation course.

The government and non-government sectors continued to work with industry and the community to broaden vocational education and training opportunities for students.

Gender equity

The promotion of understanding of issues associated with the construction of gender as well as gender and violence was achieved through professional development for teachers, school-based initiatives and networking of newly appointed managers in schools.

Government schools were provided with ongoing support to assist them develop gender equity curriculum policies and practices. Assistance to schools included:

- provision of a course for teachers on skills needed to implement the PAIR Program in ACT high schools;
- training for 90 teachers as SHCOs, two network support meetings per term to assist SHCOs in their work, revision of the Department's *Policies and Guidelines for Dealing with Sexual Harassment (1992)* for distribution to schools in 1996, and a course that explored the role of the classroom teacher in dealing with sexual harassment; and
- completion of the Power, Knowledge, Desire: Changing School Organisation and Management Practices report. To provide data for this report teachers and principals researched school management practices as they related to the NAPEG.

A government primary school and four government secondary schools provided personal development days, where students studied a range of gender issues including gender and violence and improving gender relations.

Five government schools participated in the trialling of Commonwealth gender and violence curriculum and professional development materials. Teachers who participated in this trial were better able to incorporate gender and violence issues in the mainstream curriculum.

Government primary and secondary schools increasingly incorporated curriculum units on the construction of gender. School reports indicated improved relations between boys and boys, girls and girls and boys and girls. Staff and parent associations worked together to promote understanding of gender issues in schooling. Advice and seminars on gender issues were provided to schools and their communities. An increasing number of schools included parent representatives on their gender equity committees.

The NAPEG provided a focus for gender equity initiatives in government schools. Professional development was structured around the two action plan priorities of addressing the needs of girls at risk and improving the educational outcomes of girls who benefit least from schooling. Seminars were offered to school staff and community members by ACT agencies and workers in the field. Seminars covered areas such as:

- eating disorders;
- girls and boys in education;
- factors associated with being at risk for girls and boys in schools;
- sexual harassment in schools; and
- sexual and ritual abuse.

Networks were established during these seminars with other agencies that work with girls who benefit least from

schooling. Staff awareness was raised on the needs of these girls. Staff involved in behaviour management, including school counsellors, attended a seminar on the issues concerning these groups.

The government sector provided additional assistance to support the particular needs of boys in the areas of behaviour management, literacy and numeracy. Sixty-four per cent of students assisted through the learning assistance program were boys, indicating a large amount of resourcing was designated to the needs of boys. The government sector is further investigating positive strategies to assist boys at risk of encountering problems at school.

Cross-sectoral achievements in gender equity included:

- participation of 50 female year 10 students in the Women into Trades and Technology Week at the CIT, which introduced girls to trades which do not normally attract females including electrical, construction, automotive engineering and scientific; and
- establishment of a forum of staff and community members on outcomes of the national Promoting Gender Equity Conference, including the educational needs of boys.

Gender equity initiatives in the Catholic sector occurred as part of other programs. Much of the progress of previous years was consolidated. Strategies to improve gender equity were incorporated into classroom practice and policy development. The Catholic Education Office contributed $2,000 towards the operation of the Gender Equity Committee that monitored gender issues in education. The renewal process for Catholic schools encouraged the development of behaviour management policies that were inclusive of the needs of both boys and girls. In this process schools dealt with issues of language and the curriculum as well as attitudinal factors, such as harassment, teacher expectations and home-school cooperation.

A number of Catholic secondary schools provided specific programs for boys and for girls. The programs for boys dealt with alienation and ways of handling anger. The programs for girls focused on developing self-esteem. One school worked in partnership with Centacare, the social welfare agency of the Church, to develop a program for students who through their behaviour or their attendance were recognised as being at risk of not completing their secondary schooling. The program included work experience, counselling to raise self-esteem by increasing career expectations and identifying links between school and work. A Learning Across the Curriculum program enhanced girls' self-image, emphasised their potential and raised their self-esteem.

Independent schools are both co-educational and single-sex. Where it is seen by the school to be more educationally appropriate single-sex classes are provided for both boys and girls. Schools keep parents informed on gender-related issues and encourage parental participation in school activities which relate to the achievement of gender equity.

Emerging gender equity issues for government and non-government schools centred around:

- the establishment of processes to collect quantitative data in relation to gender equity issues that affect student learning outcomes;
- exploration of the ways in which sexuality issues affect learning outcomes; and
- investigation of how the particular needs of boys can be better met.

ACT schools are working to develop strategies that further promote understanding and awareness of gender issues.

Student outcomes in literacy related areas

A key focus for government schools was the development of a strategy for improving assessment of, and reporting on student achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy. It also involved trialling of the *Curriculum Profiles for Australian Schools* by primary and high schools teachers. Implementation of the strategy should lead to more effective use of resources and improved reporting to parents. The strategy has been assisted by the establishment of an Outcomes and Reporting Section within the ACT Department of Education and Training.

The K–10 Learning Assistance Program was introduced in government schools in 1995 to improve student literacy and numeracy skills. The Learning Assistance Program provided direct assistance for 651 year 1 students, 4,675 year 2–6 students and 3,323 year 7–10 students in government schools. Reading Recovery was provided for 363 year 1 students. $5.02 million was provided for the operation of the program.

Government school teachers participated in NPDP–funded seminars that focused on strategies to enhance student literacy learning outcomes in the English strand of viewing

of the national curriculum profile. Other NPDP programs were presented to teachers from disadvantaged schools on strategies to enhance outcomes for students with entrenched literacy difficulties.

Reporting on student achievement in literacy on a sample basis at two key points in the primary years of schooling will be introduced in government schools in 1997. Processes for numeracy assessment will be trialled in 1997.

Government and Catholic schools promoted improved outcomes in literacy through seminars at both regional and school levels. Schools developed and implemented English curriculum documents, incorporating the appropriate national statement, curriculum profile, ACT framework and, in the case of Catholic schools, the NSW K–12 English syllabus.

Teachers from Catholic schools participated in the NPDP Linkages Project. This provided teachers with the opportunity to network and share best practice across the key learning areas. English was a significant part of this program.

The Catholic Education Office received NEPS funding of $32,000 which provided for:

- an early literacy in-service activity;
- trialling of Curriculum Corporation's production of *Successful Intervention*, produced under the LLNC in 1994;
- training in First Steps for three Catholic Education Office tutors; and
- trialling in schools of Curriculum Corporation's package *Literacy: PD on CD*, produced under the LLNC.

Development of literacy skills across K–12 is an ongoing focus of the Catholic school improvement program. The implementation in 1996 of the Western Australian First Steps program should further enhance literacy skills.

The First Steps program enabled teachers to trial guided reading strategies, focusing on the performance of individual students and reading prompts to support specific needs. The Catholic sector intends to train additional primary and central school teachers in the First Steps program.

Future plans in the Catholic sector include training for primary and central schools teachers in First Steps, and introduction of the Successful Intervention package to schools supported by systemic professional development for teachers.

In the independent sector literacy related programs continued to be school-based. Strategies and initiatives were employed to monitor and improve literacy outcomes to assist targeted students. These included individual assistance, small group tutoring for identified students, shared literature programs, mapping literacy requirements across individual schools and strategies to develop reading, writing and speaking with the subsequent integration of these skills into other subject areas. Parental involvement was encouraged both in school literacy programs and in the home.

Professional development for independent school teachers included the development of a language policy that reflected the aims of the national English curriculum statement and profile, and seminars on a range of literacy schemes. Twenty-eight primary teachers from seven schools participated in the NEPS-funded ELC seminar on strategies used in working with children experiencing problems with literacy.

The government sector will continue to investigate mechanisms for reporting student outcomes, particularly in terms of literacy and numeracy. Both the non-government and government sectors are developing strategies to identify and address student needs in literacy.

Physical development and personal health and fitness of students

In line with government policy, increased emphasis was placed on health, physical education and sport in government schools from K–10. A Health, Physical Education and Sport Unit was created in the Department of Education and Training. This unit developed the *Health, Physical Education and Sport Implementation Plan for ACT Schools*, which covered:

- time allocations to health, physical education and sport in schools;
- curriculum development;
- professional development;
- reporting procedures;
- evaluation of the implementation process;
- equipment enhancement in primary schools; and
- commitment to resolving transport and facility issues.

A sports science class at Grindale College, ACT.

The Plan was developed in consultation with schools, parents and community sporting organisations, including the Bureau of Sport, Recreation and Racing, the Junior Sport Council and the Koorie Sport and Recreation program.

Government schools were surveyed to determine time allocations to health, physical education and sport, specialist teacher involvement and curriculum emphasis. The survey found that:

- 30 per cent of primary schools surveyed had a specialist physical education teacher;
- 30–120 minutes per week were allocated to physical education in primary schools (mean: 80 minutes);
- 94 per cent of high schools surveyed included health and physical education as core in years 7 and 8; and
- in years 9 and 10 there was significant variation in the amount of health and physical education offered to students.

As a result of the survey, specialist staffing has been identified as a priority.

Both the government and non-government sectors were represented on the steering committee for the National Nutrition Education in Schools project. The ACT played a vital role in the national project by providing footage for the support video.

Two Statewide forums were developed for the ACT community. The first was held by the Healthy Schools Communities Network and focused on health promoting schools and associated changes in pedagogy. The Home Economics Institute of Australia (ACT Branch) also held a forum for teachers on nutrition education.

Table 84. Proposed health and physical education time allocation, ACT, 1996

Level of schooling	*Time allocation*
K–2	20–30 minutes of physical activity per day
Years 3–10	180 minutes of health, physical education and sport per week with a minimum of 150 minutes spent on active physical education and sport.

Source: ACT Department of Education and Training

Schools in the ACT have adopted the Health Promoting Schools philosophy with the support of parent and community groups through the Healthy Schools Community Network. Community involvement includes before-school care and provision of breakfasts, redevelopment of the school environment and improvement of canteens.

The ACT Department of Health and Community Care funded two major student health projects. A primary school program, based on the School Development in Health Education model, enabled teachers to participate in workshops about the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students need for dealing with drugs. A high school program focused on drug and alcohol issues that students face during adolescence, including binge drinking.

All teachers in ACT government schools participated in trialling the national profile on physical education and health.

The Aussie Sport Education Officer has been incorporated into the Health, Physical Education and Sport Unit, fostering greater cooperation between the two areas.

The Commonwealth's NIDE supported the development of drug education programs in all high schools in the ACT. The ACT steering committee developed links with the NSW steering committee in order to utilise their professional development package.

Commonwealth funding enabled the ACT branch of ACPHER to conduct two major professional development programs for government and non-government teachers. They were:

- a health and physical education conference, with speakers from the Australian Institute of Sport and the Centre for Adolescent Health. Ninety-two teachers participated in this conference including 57 primary (44

government, 13 non-government) and 29 high school (18 government, 11 non-government); and

- a first aid instructors' training course for 77 government school teachers.

The programs provided teachers in government and non-government schools with practical activities to promote health in schools. The train-the-trainer approach to the first aid course facilitated ongoing school-based professional develo pment.

The Protective Behaviours program is an adaptable living skills program which enables people of all ages to develop strategies to help them deal with difficult situations and has been implemented in all government primary schools.

In the Catholic sector it has been implemented in 92 per cent of primary schools and 4 of the 8 secondary colleges. Progress is also being made towards introduction of the program in country schools in the Archdiocese. Basic texts of the program fit comfortably within the national statements and profiles strand framework.

Independent schools have reported changes in emphasis in health and physical development education. Increased parental involvement, both in terms of time and funding, has led to the expansion of a number of programs and activities.

Programs in independent schools now include outdoor education planning and survival, driver education and substance abuse awareness. Schools addressed a variety of topics in health and physical development courses including health and fitness, creative use of leisure, development of self-confidence and self-esteem and a respect for others. Particular initiatives in this area comprised the introduction of a morning fitness program and a review of curriculum to better target the needs of students. Assistance was provided to enhance access for students with special needs, extension activities were developed for gifted and talented students and single-sex classes provided as appropriate.

Physical education, health and sport will continue to be promoted in government and non-government schools to improve student well-being.

COMMONWEALTH

Role of Commonwealth in schooling

Although the national government operates no primary or secondary schools it has an important part to play in school education in Australia. Its role arises from its interest in the achievement of national social and economic goals, particularly those relating to Australia's young people.

The Commonwealth endorses and promotes the ten Common and Agreed National Goals adopted by education Ministers in 1989. Within the context of those goals the Commonwealth's broad objectives for schooling in 1995 were to help to improve the learning outcomes of students in the key educational competencies and across the curriculum and to help build links with post-school education, training and employment. Particular objectives were to improve the participation and achievement of educationally disadvantaged students and to promote gender equity in schools.

As in past years, the Commonwealth sought to strengthen Australia's schools through the provision of additional operational resources and by addressing issues of national significance through policy development, research and analysis. It aimed to enhance the professionalism and status of teachers, and supported work towards more national consistency in schooling, particularly in curriculum and in the reporting of student outcomes.

The Commonwealth pursues its objectives by working closely with the States and Territories – which have the constitutional responsibility for delivering school education in Australia – as well as with the authorities which run non-government schools. In 1995 it provided around $3 billion in supplementary funding for schools through its GRG Program and Capital Grants Programs, through NEPS and through programs which supported language learning, national priority projects, national professional development, key competencies and strategic initiatives in Aboriginal education. A further $600 million of financial assistance was provided directly to individual school students and their families through AUSTUDY, ABSTUDY and the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) scheme.

The Commonwealth also has responsibilities in Australia's international relations in education, aiming to promote educational outcomes and links in ways which take account of Australia's location in the Asia-Pacific region.

In 1995 the Commonwealth administered its policies and programs for schools and students through DEET. The National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) promoted public discussion of issues and provided independent advice to Ministers on national policy matters in employment, education, training and research. Two councils of NBEET had a particular interest in schools: the Schools Council advised the government on primary and secondary education in Australian schools and the Australian Language and Literacy Council provided advice on literacy and language policies.

Initiatives and developments in 1995

Among the key Commonwealth activities in school education during 1995 were new programs aimed at parents' role in schooling, civics and citizenship education and enterprise education, a review of the New Schools Policy and an evaluation of the GRG Program. The year was also one of progress in some important national initiatives, notably the trialling of the National Schools English Literacy Survey, work on the statements and profiles, vocational education reform and a review of resource levels in primary schools.

Parents statement

In recognition of the important role parents play in achieving successful outcomes for students, the Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training released on 20 October the statement, Parents as Partners in School Education at the National Level. This announced Commonwealth funding of over $1 million in 1995–96 for ACSSO and APC to carry out projects which would increase parents' awareness of national education issues and equip them to effectively contribute to the debate on these issues.

Civics and citizenship education

In 1995, in response to the Civics Expert Group's recommendations for a non-partisan program of public information on the Australian system of government, the constitution, citizenship and other civic issues, the Commonwealth announced a new Civics and Citizenship Education Program. The 1995 Budget funded the program with approximately $25 million over four years, more than $20 million of this being allocated to support civics and citizenship education in schools, TAFE, higher education and adult and community education.

The program aims to help schools to implement quality teaching of civics and citizenship, the key element of the schools program being the development by Curriculum Corporation of high quality, balanced resource materials, together with strategic professional development and support in their use. The materials would focus mainly on the SOSE key learning area. In September 1995 Curriculum Corporation issued a framework for materials development to all education authorities and community organisations for comment.

Enterprise education

In the 1995 Budget the Commonwealth made $3.8 million available over the four years from 1995–96 to 1998–99 to support the Enterprise Education in Schools Program (EESP). Endorsed by MCEETYA as well as industry Ministers, this initiative focused on developing an enterprise culture in Australian schools. During the year a reference group was established to oversee the program and Curriculum Corporation conducted exploratory work including preparing a draft strategy for future years of the EESP.

New Schools Policy

The Commonwealth's New Schools Policy was reviewed during the year. A discussion paper and an interim report were published for consultation in 1995 and a final report is scheduled for 1996.

Youth policy and support

The Youth Bureau within DEET advises the Government on youth affairs at a national level and administers a range of youth support programs. In 1995 the Bureau provided $0.4 million for five school-based pilot projects to assist homeless students or students at risk of homelessness. The projects worked closely with schools, with the aim of helping students remain in school or participate in alternative education and training programs. They also attempted to develop and enhance linkages between the schools and local community and government.

The Education Counselling for Young People Program aimed to improve the educational participation and outcomes of secondary students who were socioeconomically disadvantaged and at risk of not completing their secondary schooling. Welfare agencies were funded to provide counselling services to students and their families, together with financial assistance towards educational costs such as books and uniforms. An example in 1995 was the INDEX project which was administered by the North East Regional Youth Council in Midland, Western Australia, and helped 14 and 15 year old school refusers, chronic truants and offenders. It enabled individual vocational training packages to be prepared to help each young person to develop skills through work experience and had the vital support of a network of local, accessible employers willing to help young people in the target group.

Another Youth Bureau project for 1995 assisted young refugee people at risk of leaving school after their initial period of intensive English. The Bilingual Education and Training Workers Project employed bilingual Red Cross volunteers, assigned to small groups of young refugees, to provide them with information on their local education and employment options, refer them to the right people in the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES), and give psychological support to those who had come out of war and other conflict.

National Board of Employment, Education and Training

The Schools Council of NBEET investigated and provided advice to the Commonwealth Minister on a range of major priorities in school education during 1995 including:

- *Students' Attitudes towards Careers and Post-school Options for Education, Training and Employment* – the need for a more interventionist approach in assisting students likely to leave school early and those who make subject choices that close off their post-school options; and

- *Resources and Accountability: Commonwealth Funding Scenarios for Government Primary Schools 1996–2000* – three possible funding scenarios, with strategies to improve educational accountability to ensure resources are deployed efficiently, and strategies for addressing literacy.

Other reports by the Schools Council on priorities in school education included:

- *Charting a Course: Students' Views of Their Future* – on the ways in which young people acquire knowledge about and develop attitudes towards their post-school options;
- *Compendium of Good Practice: the Role of Schools in the Vocational Preparation of Australia's Senior Secondary Students;*
- *Meeting the Educational Needs of Aboriginal Adolescents* – on the education, employment and training opportunities of Aboriginal students including those in remote areas; and
- *Elements of Successful Student Outcomes: Views of Upper Primary Classroom Teachers* – on monitoring students' educational outcomes.

During 1995 the Australian Language and Literacy Council of NBEET provided advice on *Teacher Education in English Language and Literacy*. Issues considered included recruitment of teachers, pre-service training, continuing professional development and monitoring and review of teacher education literacy programs.

In September NBEET co-hosted an international conference, efficiency and equity in education policy.

Focus areas

Vocational education

The chief priorities of the Commonwealth in vocational education and training in 1995 were the implementation of the AVTS and progress in the Key Competencies Program.

The AVTS, introduced in 1995, aimed to provide a better entry-level training system for Australia. At school level, this meant more flexibility in training opportunities, for example enabling students to combine academic subjects and vocational education as part of their senior school certificates. In addition to the $23.8 million it committed to the implementation of AVTS in 1995, the Commonwealth supported transition of schools to the new system through its recurrent funding and through specific programs targeting curriculum and professional development.

During the year Curriculum Corporation circulated for comment a report examining State and Territory priorities for AVTS transition and the relationship of these priorities to work being undertaken in the vocational education and training sector.

The main activity under the Commonwealth Key Competencies Program in 1995 was a series of projects to field-test aspects of the key competencies. The first stage of this program, to the end of 1994, had seen major pilots in the States, concentrating on the post-compulsory years of schooling, and the conducting of a promotional strategy. This phase addressed broad issues such as the validation of the key competencies in industry. The second stage in 1995–96 built on the first, giving greater emphasis to industry and the vocational education and training sector, and providing for development of a professional development package for teachers and trainers. A final report will describe and explore what has been learnt from all the pilot projects in the four areas of inquiry – curriculum, teaching and learning practice, assessment and reporting, and the interpretation of the key competencies – in terms of students, teachers, employers and education systems.

Gender education and the achievement of gender equity

During the year ACER carried out the major part of the Commonwealth-financed sample study on Gender and School Education, the outcomes of which are detailed in the *National Overview* section of this report.

Since 1992 the Gender and Violence Project has aimed to promote a safe environment in schools, where students in all years and their teachers can learn and work free from fear of abuse. Project initiatives have attempted to address the incidence of gender-based violence and anti-social behaviour through a whole-school approach, inclusive of students, teachers, parents and the wider community.

In December 1995 curriculum and school management materials developed by the project were published and began to be disseminated. They included the *Gender and Violence Project Position Paper*, *No Fear* kit, and *Getting It Together*.

The report of the Student Pathways Project, a Commonwealth-supported research project to analyse

national databases and other significant data collections for information about the impact of gender on boys' and girls' post-school pathways was completed. Prepared by La Trobe University with assistance from ACER, the report included a comprehensive analysis of current data collections and suggested modifications to obtain better data to help in determining the impact of gender on post-school pathways.

Production of *The Gen* newsletter continued through 1995. The newsletter aims to promote the goals set out in the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools and strategies to implement the objectives of the NAPEG. Circulation of *The Gen* reached 40,000 during the year.

Other 1995 publications dealing with gender and schooling included:

- *Shaping up Nicely*, which is a report for primary teachers and teacher educators examining gender interactions in the classroom in the first month of schooling and their influence on child development;
- *What's Going On?* which is a book and video kit produced as a result of a research project funded by DEET under the Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project; and
- *Who Wins at School?* which is detailed in the *National Overview* chapter.

Student outcomes in literacy related areas

In recognition of the lack of reliable national baseline data on outcomes in literacy of Australian school students, in 1994 the Commonwealth provided funding over three years to conduct the first national school literacy survey since 1980.

During 1995 a steering committee with representatives from all States, non-government school authorities, professional literacy associations, teachers' organisations, parents and the business sector developed a methodology for the survey which was successfully trialled in November 1995. This methodology valued the judgement of classroom teachers and linked the richness of classroom assessment practices into the framework of reliable national data collection processes.

Two NEPS programs focused on literacy in 1995. The LLNC provided funds to foster the development of literacy and learning, especially in the early years of schooling, addressing in particular the special needs of students disadvantaged by socioeconomic circumstances. LLNC funds supported collaborative State and system activities, some of the key products being:

- the report, *Everyday Literacy Practices in Low Socio-economic Urban Communities,* describing practices in the classroom and the school for successful learning, teaching and communication;
- *PD on CD: Literacy*, a CD-ROM using on-screen text, narration, colour photos and a video to provide professional development on literacy and classroom practice; and
- a range of materials from Curriculum Corporation on successful intervention, literacy equity, oral language and literacy learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The LLNC program ended in 1995. However, the ELC of NEPS commenced that year, complementing the work of the LLNC by building on and supporting professional development programs it had developed.

Intended to result in school and pedagogical change, ELC projects promoted intervention strategies for literacy learning by K–3 students, including programs like Reading Recovery and First Steps. For example:

- one team of teachers and university researchers in South Australia produced a resource package to help early-years teachers to identify and deal with their students' literacy needs and trialled the material with individual children and small groups; and
- in Western Australia, the Catholic authorities implemented a new collaborative learning strategy across 20 low-SES schools to help with the management of First Steps in the classroom. This involved in-service training, provision of reference materials, advisory school visits, networking meetings and newsletters.

Another Commonwealth activity, the Children's Literacy National Projects program (CLP) funded innovative, nationally significant research on child literacy. Projects completed in 1995 examined such diverse issues as literacy in the transition between upper primary and junior secondary school, assessment and reporting practices, including competency-based approaches, differences in literacy practices between urban and rural communities, and literacy and distance education. Another seven projects were commissioned in 1995 for completion in 1996 and 1997.

Physical development and personal health and fitness

In 1995 the Commonwealth funded an annotated bibliography of health materials for schools, developed by the Queensland Department of Education in partnership with the University of Queensland and ACHPER. Aimed at providing practical assistance to teachers in selecting resources to support health education programs, the bibliography is to be published by ACHPER in 1996.

Under the Home Economics in Secondary Schools Project the Commonwealth also funded a discussion paper on the status of home economics in the curriculum and supported development of curriculum units on The Family in Society, The Dynamics of Family Relationships, Food for all Cultures, Let's Eat Some Healthy Snacks, Body Image and Food Behaviour and Promoting Healthy Food Choices. These will be published by Curriculum Corporation in 1996.

Monitoring, evaluation and research

The Commonwealth's main program evaluation for 1995 was an assessment of operational aspects of the GRG Program. This evaluation covered the conditions of funding, program administration and selected aspects of non-government funding. Being undertaken by a large management consultancy group, it will be completed in 1996.

Other evaluations in 1995 examined:

- the QSP: this investigation found that the QSP was successful in terms of its immediate objectives and had generated considerable momentum in the search for quality and excellence as the basis for improving performance in Australian schooling;
- the NPDP: a mid-term evaluation of the NPDP found it to be a very effective program in terms of outcomes and costs. It was highly successful in providing teacher professional development in the priority areas, with a substantial level of participation by teachers. It provided effective renewal of teacher discipline knowledge and teaching skills and promoted partnerships within the educational community. The evaluation also noted the cost-effectiveness of the program, which elicited a high level of voluntary contributions, estimated as being equal to that of program funds; and
- the Country Areas National Component of NEPS: this evaluation concluded that the program had helped to improve rural students' access to educational services, thus contributing to better retention rates and opportunities for school leavers. Teachers' and administrators' access to professional development activities had also been improved, and it was the overwhelming perception of the people involved in the Country Areas National Component that it had stimulated action on educational opportunities and outcomes for students disadvantaged by their geographic location. A *Project and Resource Directory* describing the educational materials produced under the Country Areas National Component will be published in 1996.

Commissioned by DEET in 1994, the equity baseline data study aimed to provide a 'snapshot' survey of the kinds of equity outcomes data currently available from education authorities in the States and from national research and statistical organisations. *The Availability of Baseline Data on Equity in Australian Schools*, which was published in 1995, pointed out that although data is available on equity outcomes, problems with identifying target groups as well as incompleteness and definitional inconsistencies in the data lessen its overall usefulness. The report stressed the need for improved coordination in data collection at national, State and system levels.

The survey of the outcomes of schooling for disadvantaged students, being undertaken by the University of Melbourne continued gathering and presenting data with the aim of providing a national picture of equity outcomes – access to the curriculum, attainment and transition – by gender, socioeconomic group, Aboriginality and non-English speaking background. Products from the project included reports on outcomes and surveys of year 12 students and a database developed from the surveys.

During 1995 the Commonwealth's AYS and the ACER's Youth in Transition longitudinal survey were brought together to form a single project, to be undertaken by the ACER and to be known as Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY). As from 1995 ACER became responsible for supervising the collection of information from the AYS samples and was also made the repository for AYS data. A new LSAY cohort of 13,500 year 9 students was selected and surveyed during 1995. The first major follow-up of this group will occur by telephone interview in late 1997.

Table 85. Commonwealth grants for schools, by program and category of school, States, 1995 ($'000) (a)

Program	*NSW*	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Australia*
				Government schools					
General Recurrent	309,507	209,840	169,044	71,753	93,714	26,535	10,763	16,634	907,790
Capital	70,282	48,831	37,485	17,119	20,626	6,002	0	3,760	204,105
NEPS English as a Second Language – General Support	17,846	13,772	4,013	3,522	3,507	463	903	875	44,901
English as a Second Language – New Arrivals	16,049	9,189	2,411	3,120	2,910	166	414	435	34,695
Special Education – Schools Support	9,592	6,665	5,114	2,338	2,814	820	339	511	28,193
Special Education – Intervention Support	5,452	4,365	3,550	1,445	1,447	529	228	77	17,091
Disadvantaged Schools	20,744	14,601	6,966	5,181	5,865	2,572	1,252	56	57,237
Country Areas General	3,421	1,984	3,284	1,598	2,333	522	571	0	13,714
Students at Risk	2,026	1,152	813	344	516	202	103	0	5,156
Early Literacy	2,430	1,718	877	594	663	190	127	68	6,666
Gender Equity	376	536	63	245	78	0	19	0	1,316
Students with Disabilities	1,626	866	738	697	407	229	152	124	4,840
Priority Languages	953	706	214	194	127	92	5	110	2,401
Community Languages	2,861	1,937	529	405	304	21	33	88	6,178
Total	**463,164**	**316,162**	**235,101**	**108,555**	**135,311**	**38,344**	**14,910**	**22,737**	**1,334,284**
				Non-government schools					
General Recurrent (incl. STEA)	532,561	434,539	282,235	114,143	152,943	36,806	13,406	38,402	1,605,035
Capital	35,587	32,194	17,792	7,382	12,010	3,057	2,161	2,545	112,728
Hostels for Rural Students	392	23	202	160	192	0	102	0	1,071
NEPS English as a Second Language – General Support	8,690	8,338	1,909	1,431	1,856	193	295	445	23,157
English as a Second Language – New Arrivals	1,532	1,302	306	111	630	29	0	9	3,920
Special Education – Schools Support	8,982	8,456	3,981	2,002	2,423	608	287	451	27,190
Special Education – Capital Support	428	162	206	4	114	62	20	0	994
Special Education – Intervention Support	112	229	63	0	198	15	0	310	927
Disadvantaged Schools	3,446	3,785	784	437	660	134	84	19	9,350
Country Areas General	463	313	454	16	412	29	5	0	1,692
Students at Risk	774	542	293	98	214	80	62	0	2,063
Early Literacy	852	732	201	108	224	32	26	32	2,208
Gender Equity	28	62	1	9	8	0	6	0	114
Students with Disabilities	1,861	1,385	609	512	326	82	145	97	5,017
Priority Languages	515	447	229	163	167	35	2	40	1,599
Community Languages	872	3,214	316	127	149	4	0	92	4,774
Total	**597,095**	**495,724**	**309,581**	**126,702**	**172,526**	**41,166**	**16,600**	**42,442**	**1,801,837**
				Joint programs					
Education Centres	617	651	450	305	304	168	91	0	2,586
Projects of National Significance	444	812	146	120	60	8	0	563	2,153
NEPS Language and Learning - National	105	937	136	188	162	73	94	49	1,743
Gifted and Talented	404	118	216	174	108	27	7	27	1,081
Transition Support	501	418	475	209	185	88	209	137	2,222
Total	**2,071**	**2,935**	**1,424**	**996**	**819**	**364**	**401**	**776**	**9,785**
				All programs					
Total	**1,062,330**	**814,821**	**546,107**	**236,253**	**308,656**	**79,874**	**31,911**	**65,955**	**3,145,906**

(a) 1995 program year expenditure for 1995, as at end June 1996.

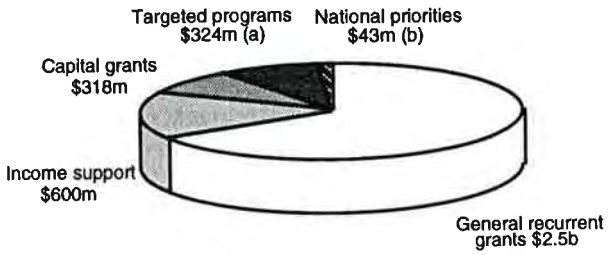
Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Funding for schools and students

The Commonwealth addresses national priorities for school education in Australia through its funding programs for schools and students. It spent over $3.1 billion on school programs, the main items being $2.5 billion in general recurrent grants, $318 million in capital grants, $324 million on targeted programs (plus a further $84 million under AESIP) and $43 million on national priority programs. In addition, $600 million was provided for income support for school students (see Figure 25).

Commonwealth grants for schools (excluding Annual Appropriation funding for schools programs going to national and other non-school organisations) totalled $3.146 billion in 1995, with the government sector receiving $1.3 billion and the non-government sector $1.8 billion. Table 85 shows how this was distributed, by State, while Figure 26 illustrates the distribution by school sector.

Figure 25. Commonwealth expenditure on schools and students, by program, 1995

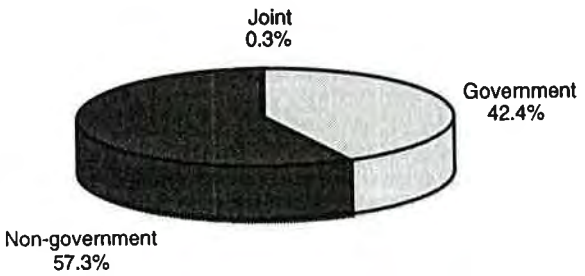


(a) Includes some allocations for 1995–96 financial year. Excludes AESIP and Special Education Capital Support.

(b) Indicates allocated funds for 1995–1996 financial year except for education centres and Projects of National Significance, which are allocated on a calendar year basis.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Figure 26. Commonwealth grants for schools, by sector, 1995



Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Table 86. Commonwealth grants for schools, Annual Appropriations, 1995–96 ($'000 actual expenditure)

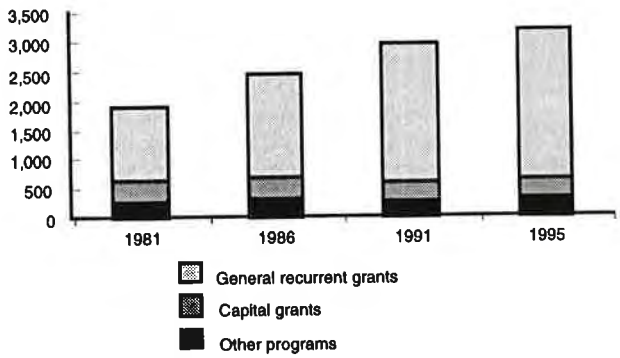
Joint programs	
Children's Literacy National Projects	582
Languages other than English	345
Asia Education Foundation	1,096
National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia	1,455
National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools	10,216
National priorities programs	
Curriculum Development Projects	3,264
Key Competencies	6,187
National Professional Development	24,970
Australian Students Prize	1,000
Grants-in-aid	904
National Schools English Literacy Survey	1,239
Civics and Citizenship Education (schools component only)	1,170
Total	**52,428**

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Programs funded under Annual Appropriations, totalling $52 million, are outlined in Table 86.

Approximately 80 per cent of Commonwealth funding for schools in 1995 was for general recurrent funding. Over the period 1981 to 1995 total Commonwealth funding has increased by 67 per cent in real terms with general recurrent funding increasing by 99.5 per cent in real terms. This has included funding increases to the neediest non-government schools, which have received real increases since 1985, as well as annual supplementation. General recurrent funding to the Government sector was maintained over the period. Combined capital and other expenditure remained steady in real terms from 1981 to 1995 (see Figure 27).

Figure 27. Commonwealth grants for schools, selected years ($ million, final 1995 prices)



Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

General assistance

General recurrent grants

In 1995 the Commonwealth provided nearly $2.5 billion in recurrent funding to government and non-government schools through the GRG Program, an increase of 4 per cent over 1994. The program underpins the Commonwealth's priorities and objectives for schooling by providing funding to support the recurrent costs of schools. The Commonwealth works with school authorities to develop agreed priorities for the GRG Program that will prepare the nation's young people to undertake post-school education and training, to participate successfully in the labour market, and to contribute to, and benefit from, Australian society.

Grants are made on a per capita basis. In the government sector they are provided as block grants, while in the non-government sector grants are needs-based, with schools being placed in one of twelve categories, category 1 receiving the least financial support. Schools in categories 5 to 12 continued to receive real annual increases in their grant levels while grants to schools in categories 1 to 4 were maintained in real terms. Per capita grant levels by category are given in Table 11 in the *National Overview*. Table 86 in this chapter shows changes in the numbers of Commonwealth-funded non-government schools and students since 1991.

Table 87. Number of Commonwealth-funded non-government schools and students (FTE), by funding category and affiliation, selected years

	Schools			*Students*		
	1991	*1993*	*1995*	*1991*	*1993*	*1995*
Category 1	52	50	61	48,738	46,064	54,623
Category 2	38	38	37	30,304	30,619	30,843
Category 3	108	102	101	61,725	60,430	56,672
Category 4	27	24	22	9,389	7,792	5,699
Category 5	44	42	43	6,984	7,628	8,912
Category 6	110	96	102	22,677	21,817	26,295
Category 7	33	39	34	11,235	10,276	9,273
Category 8	141	160	160	28,664	35,831	38,161
Category 9	99	90	104	47,098	39,212	46,898
Category 10	1,593	1,588	1,574	517,142	531,094	539,516
Category 11	170	175	178	59,752	65,971	71,238
Category 12	36	40	38	7,482	8,416	8,689
Other	2	3	(a)	1,383	1,708	(a)
Total	**2,453**	**2,447**	**2,454**	**852,573**	**866,858**	**896,817**
Systemic schools						
Catholic	1,511	1,523	1,538	484,760	498,587	515,878
Independent	102	123	148	13,068	22,907	31,686
Sub-total	1,613	1,646	1,686	497,828	521,494	547,564
Non-systemic schools						
Catholic	185	165	146	114,432	102,846	94,616
Independent	655	636	622	240,314	242,518	254,637
Sub-total	840	801	768	354,746	345,364	349,253
Total	**2,453**	**2,447**	**2,454**	**852,574**	**866,858**	**896,817**

(a) The category 'Other' refers to schools recategorised into a lower funding category but which had their per student grants maintained in money terms each year until their revised funding category rate of grant reached the previous level of grant. For 1995, these schools and students are shown against the funding category to which the school is moving.

(b) Where figures have been rounded discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Table 88. Outcomes of the Commonwealth's New Schools Policy, 1994 and 1995

	1994		*1995*	
Type of proposal	*Proposed*	*Approved*	*Proposed*	*Approved*
Commencement	40	31	58	40
Extension of school years	17	13	29	18
Relocation of school	29	25	12	11
Other	35	34	6	5
Total	**121**	**103**	**105**	**74**

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Forty new schools, with proposed enrolments of 12,600, received funding approval in 1995. Another 18 proposals were not approved for funding because they were not considered to be consistent with the planned provision of education in the proposed locations. Table 88 shows the outcomes of proposals for new schools in 1994 and 1995.

Schools which were not approved for funding could seek a review of that decision by the Non-Government Schools Funding Review Committee (NGSFRC), an independent body appointed by the Minister. Of the 45 proposals under the New Schools Policy considered by the NGSFRC (25 in 1994 and 20 in 1995), seven new school commencements (four in 1994, three in 1995) were subsequently approved for Commonwealth funding by the Minister.

Capital grants

The objectives of the Commonwealth's Capital Grants Program are to prepare the nation's young people to undertake post-school education and training, to participate successfully in the labour market and to contribute to, and benefit from, Australian society. The program seeks to improve educational outcomes by assisting in the provision of school facilities, emphasising improvement in educational outcomes in schools catering for students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds and other disadvantaged groups.

Of the $320 million provided in 1995, $207 million funded 466 major and over 3,000 minor projects at government schools, with an average grant of $399,000 for major projects. In the non-government sector $113 million funded 732 school and hostel projects at an average value of $154,000.

National priorities

Projects of National Significance

The Projects of National Significance Program funds projects which promote change or innovation in primary and secondary education and improve the experience, knowledge or skills of teachers and others involved in school education.

Key projects for 1995 included the Broadcast Student Showcase of Video Production and Multi-media Student Based Network, which involved the production of the 26-episode television series 'School Torque' for screening on SBS. Also of note was the publication of *From Alienation to Engagement: Opportunities for Reform in the Middle Years of Schooling*, and the project, Education of Students with Disabilities, undertaken by the Department for Education and Children's Services, South Australia.

Australian Students Prize

Five hundred Australian Students Prizes awarded annually by the Commonwealth give national recognition to academic excellence and achievement in secondary education, particularly at the year 12 level. The prize consists of a certificate of excellence and a cheque for $2000.

In 1995 prizes were awarded to students who had won medals as part of Australia's team in the 1994 International Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology Olympiads. Allocation of the remaining awards was based on each State's and Territory's share of the 1994 year 12 population. Students were nominated for the prize by their State or Territory Ministers for Education on the basis of information provided by their own State assessment boards. In the case of dual eligibility only one prize was awarded.

Quality Schooling Program

The QSP aims to improve the quality of education in Australian schools by supporting developments in educational leadership, school organisation, student welfare and teacher professionalism. Some important QSP projects for 1995 were:

- a publication on the assessment and reporting of student achievement was jointly produced by ACSSO and APC;

- a series of workshops for principals was run by the Australian Principals' Associations Professional Development Council, including groundbreaking work in the use of technology in the delivery of professional development; and
- support for schools and key research outcomes in school reform and work organisation was provided by the National Schools Network.

Education Centres

In 1995 the Education Centres Program continued to support 22 centres in city and rural locations across Australia. Education Centres are autonomous bodies managed through local committees (having a majority of teacher members) which provide curriculum and professional development support for teachers to improve school education. During 1995 centres introduced a national collaborative focus to their activities through the development and implementation of programs including Parenting Skills Development Pilot and Hands-off: Teaching for Non-violence.

National Professional Development Program

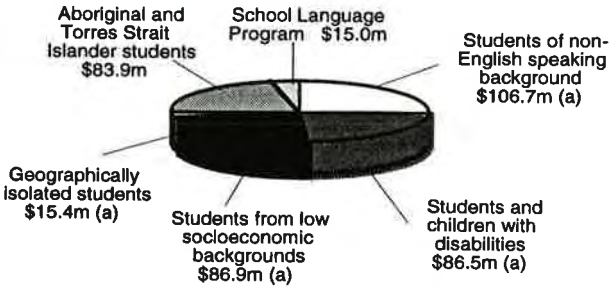
The NPDP seeks to promote partnerships between teacher employers, universities and teacher organisations in the provision of relevant, quality professional development activities. NPDP activities in 1995 supported national initiatives in education, particularly those involving the curriculum statements and profiles for Australian schools, the key competencies and accredited vocational education in schools. The program funded 45 projects under its Strategic Element and 47 projects under the General Element in 1995.

Curriculum development projects

The objectives of the Curriculum Development Projects Program are to support nationally consistent curriculum, assessment and reporting mechanisms for Australian schools and curriculum initiatives in gender equity and other national priorities.

In 1995 the program funded development of a series of curriculum and support materials to help teachers use the nationally-developed curriculum statements and profiles and State adaptations of them. The new Assessment Resource Kit, comprising guides and a videotape, illustrated a range of assessment mechanisms that could be used to support an outcomes-based approach consistent with the use of the curriculum profiles. The materials will be published and disseminated by ACER in 1996.

Figure 28. Commonwealth expenditure on targeted assistance, Australia, 1995



(a) Calculated from relevant components of NEPS. Expenditure on low SES students includes Gifted and Talented Component funding.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Targeted assistance

During 1995 the Commonwealth provided $394.3 million for school programs aimed at improving the educational outcomes of disadvantaged young people and expanding and improving the learning of languages other than English. Figure 28 shows how this assistance, provided under NEPS, AESIP and the School Language Program, was distributed.

National Equity Program for Schools

The NEPS aims at removing the educational disadvantage experienced by many school children, particularly as a result of poverty and socioeconomic circumstances, disability, geographic location, or non-English speaking and/or Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. Funding is provided under agreements with States and non-government systems which cover objectives, targets, evaluations, mechanisms for community involvement and the provision of nationally consistent data on equity outcomes. NEPS program components and funding for 1995 are provided in Table 85.

1995 was the last year for new projects to be funded under the Gifted and Talented Component of NEPS. The Gender Equity Component also ceased operation in 1995. However, a new NEPS transition program was announced in the 1995 Budget for commencement in 1996. This was the Transition Support – Special Schools with Residential Care Component, which assists non-government special schools providing residential care to integrate students with disabilities into mainstream school education, further education, employment and the responsibilities of adult life. Table 89 shows the assistance provided by five NEPS components.

Table 89. Numbers of schools and students assisted under NEPS components, 1995

State/sector	*Country Areas General (a)*		*Disadvantaged Schools (b)*		*ESL General Support (c) (e)*		*ESL New Arrivals (d) (e)*		*Students at Risk (f)*
	Students	*Schools*	*Students*	*Schools*	*Students*	*Schools*	*Students*	*Schools*	*Schools*
New South Wales									
Government	28,832	216	145,578	472	78,647	914	5,499	597	143
Catholic	3,936	38	27,695	115	48,007	300	519	2	120
Independent	75	2	640	21	2,342	45	7	3	17
Total	**32,843**	**256**	**173,913**	**608**	**128,996**	**1,259**	**6,025**	**602**	**280**
Victoria									
Government	27,327	260	24,012	370	42,177	478	3,148	479	51
Catholic	3,968	38	37,648	149	33,446	162	364	136	33
Independent	137	3	1961	11	4,000	47	82	10	36
Total	**31,432**	**301**	**63,621**	**530**	**79,623**	**687**	**3,594**	**625**	**120**
Queensland									
Government	30,945	229	53,086	243	4,982	457	824	216	98
Catholic	3,876	28	13,947	41	4,388	147	81	47	56
Independent	236	2	579	11	987	34	24	16	12
Total	**35,057**	**259**	**67,612**	**295**	**10,357**	**638**	**929**	**279**	**166**
South Australia (h)									
Government	13,967	103	37,122	173	8,741	344	1,069	10	13
Catholic	226	3	3,127	18	3,136	33	32	12	8
Independent	299	3	557	5	833	38	6	3	3
Total	**14,492**	**109**	**40,806**	**196**	**12,710**	**415**	**1,107**	**25**	**24**
Western Australia									
Government	23,612	147	50,060	187	2,649	215	997	144	25
Catholic	1,797	16	5,572	34	4,757	69	161	69	11
Independent	513	8	792	8	1,008	19	55	2	9
Total	**25,922**	**171**	**56,424**	**229**	**8,414**	**303**	**1,213**	**215**	**45**
Tasmania									
Government	5,814	39	18,273	82	214	56	57	21	37
Catholic	220	3	1,198	6	252	25	9	3	3
Independent	0	0	n/a	4	21	6	1	1	8
Total	**6,034**	**42**	**19,471**	**92**	**487**	**87**	**67**	**25**	**48**
Northern Territory									
Government	11,290	101	16,739	113	2,886	40	142	2	83
Catholic	290	1	3,914	10	524	10	0	0	3
Independent	0	0	n/a	3	n.a.	4	0	0	5
Total	**11,580**	**102**	**20,653**	**126**	**3,410**	**54**	**142**	**2**	**91**
Australian Capital Territory									
Government (g)	0	0	643	2	3,039	94	149	4	0
Catholic	0	0	157	1	1,713	30	3	3	0
Independent	0	0	0	0	23	2	0	0	0
Total	**0**	**0**	**800**	**3**	**4,775**	**126**	**152**	**7**	**0**
Australia									
Government	141,787	1,095	345,513	1,642	143,335	2,598	11,885	1,473	450
Catholic	14,313	127	93,258	374	96,223	776	1,169	272	234
Independent	1,260	18	4,529	63	9,214	195	175	35	90
Total	**157,360**	**1,240**	**443,300**	**2079**	**248,772**	**3,569**	**13,229**	**1,780**	**774**

(a) Country Areas General Component: number of schools eligible for assistance and number of students enrolled in schools assisted.

(b) Disadvantaged Schools Component: number of schools eligible for assistance and number of students enrolled in schools assisted.

(c) ESL General Support: number of students assisted.

(d) ESL New Arrivals: number of students assisted.

(e) ESL: number of schools (including intensive language centre and units) at which ESL students were enrolled.

(f) STAR Component: number of schools assisted: student numbers are not available. Numbers of schools reported should be treated with caution in any between State comparisons since they reflect policy differences in State allocations.

(g) ESL programs in ACT government schools are provided through a combination of funds from the NEPS and the ACT government. In 1995 NEPS provided 28.3% and the ACT, 71.7%.

(h) The SA government New Arrival schools total refers to sites rather than schools. Sites cater for students in R–Adult Re-entry. The Adelaide Secondary School of English has more than one site.

Source: MCEETYA and Commonwealth DEETYA

Languages and Asian studies

The NALSAS strategy is a collaborative initiative of Commonwealth and State governments and non-government education systems to help schools enhance and expand the provision of Asian languages and studies for their students. The bulk of the Commonwealth's funding of $10.2 million in 1995–96 was distributed to school systems to assist them in implementing the strategy, with $0.5 million of this being set aside to fund national collaborative projects. The Commonwealth also provided a further $1.9 million through the National Priority (Reserve) Fund to develop courses in Japanese, Korean and Indonesian for the professional development of teachers.

The continuation of Commonwealth funding for the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia and the AEF was announced during 1995.

School Language Program

The School Language Program has two elements, the objectives of which are to support the expansion of and improvement in the learning of languages other than English:

- implemented in 1995, the Priority Languages Support Element (PLSE) provides for growth and excellence in ten languages. In 1995 payments of $4 million were made in respect of 13,232 year 12 students who presented for assessment in accredited courses in one or more of the ten languages in 1993. PLSE funds were used to provide education in the priority languages at any level from K–12; and
- the CLE provided $9.5 million support to maintain the languages and cultures of students of non-English speaking background and to increase all students' awareness and understanding of the different community languages and cultures within Australian society. In 1995 CLE funding supported more than 60 community languages in insertion classes held during school hours and in after-hours classes.

The Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program

In 1995 the Commonwealth continued to provide support to the States through AESIP, the Commonwealth's contribution to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy. It also provided direct assistance to indigenous students through ABSTUDY and through a range of funding programs:

- the Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness Program, which is aimed at encouraging parents' participation and involvement in decision-making in schools;
- the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme, which provides supplementary individual and small-group tutorial assistance to school, TAFE and higher education students; and
- the VEGAS, which assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students to make informed education and career choices.

In September the Commonwealth issued a response to the National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres

Table 90. Numbers of students attracting PLSE funds, by State and language, 1995 (a)

Language	*NSW*	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*ACT*	*NT*	*Australia*
Aboriginal languages	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Arabic	391	126	—	—	2	1	—	—	520
French	1,598	856	700	285	459	202	244	13	4,357
German	811	468	626	329	130	115	139	—	2,618
Italian	673	605	109	249	382	72	45	4	2,139
Modern Greek	536	923	14	108	—	9	5	6	1,601
Russian	62	71	9	1	—	12	—	—	155
Spanish	397	205	—	71	—	9	64	—	746
Thai	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vietnamese	390	561	9	136	—	—	—	—	1,096
Total	**4,858**	**3,815**	**1,467**	**1,179**	**973**	**420**	**497**	**23**	**13,232**

(a) Numbers of students who attracted funding for 1995 calculated according to year 12 completions in 1993.

Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

Strait Islander Peoples, announcing it would be spending an additional $143 million over the next four years to address recommendations of the review. This represented an increase of 25 per cent in annual funding and was conditional upon the States increasing their effort.

The review recommended a focus on the key areas of literacy and numeracy, involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents in decision-making in schools, employment of more Aboriginal education workers and indigenous teachers in schools, and encouragement of greater participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in pre-schools.

AESIP provides funds to education providers and associated organisations to supplement the cost of delivering educational services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Organisations funded include independent pre-schools, primary and secondary schools and providers of vocational education and training. All State departments of school education are allocated funds from AESIP.

AESIP funds appropriated in 1995 totalled $83.9 million, which included $5.2 million for the employment of additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers, $2.1 million for extra pre-school places, and $5.8 million for the Aboriginal Literacy Strategy and Aboriginal Languages Education Strategy.

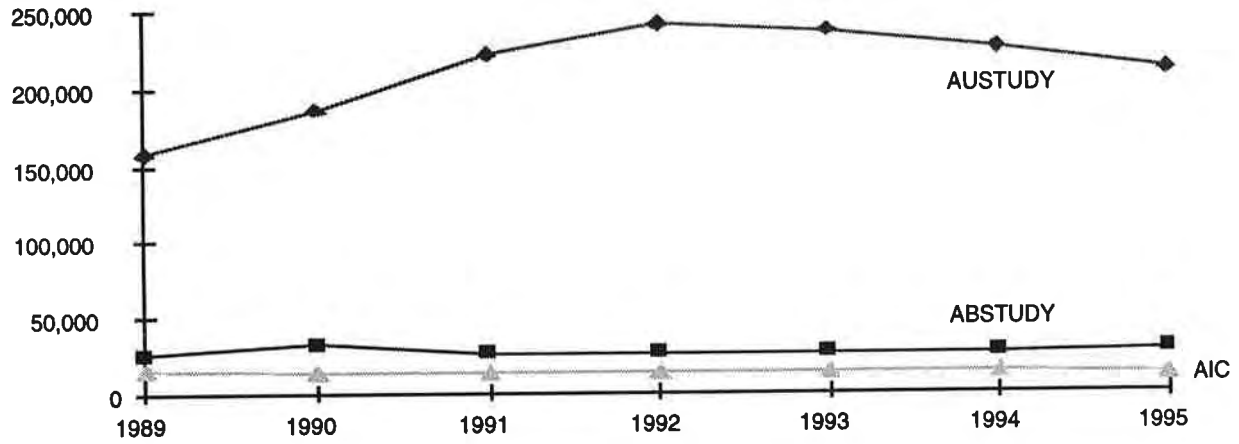
Income support for students

The Commonwealth's income support programs aim to promote equality of educational opportunity by improving access to, participation and retention in, and completion of education through provision of financial assistance to students who are financially disadvantaged or geographically isolated:

- AUSTUDY helps needy full-time students who are 16 years or over or who, if homeless, have reached minimum school leaving age;
- ABSTUDY encourages all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities at secondary school which are available to other Australian students; and
- the AIC scheme 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.

There has been a gradual decrease in school students receiving AUSTUDY since 1992, following steady growth from the inception of the scheme in 1987. The numbers of ABSTUDY and AIC students, however, remained fairly constant over the period 1989–1995 (see Figure 29).

Figure 29. School students who received Commonwealth income support, by type of assistance, 1989–95



Source: Commonwealth DEETYA

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GLOSSARY

Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander student: a student of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island origin who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Affiliation of non-government schools: non-government schools are classified into two groups—Catholic and independent. Included in the independent category are schools with specific religious affiliations (other than Catholic) and schools that are inter-denominational, non-denominational or which have no religious affiliation.

Age participation rate: the number of school students of a particular age and sex expressed as a proportion of the estimated resident population of the same age and sex. It indicates the proportion of the population who are still at school.

Apparent retention rate: the percentage of full-time students of a given cohort group who continued to a particular level/year of education. In this publication, retention rates are calculated for students who continued to years 10, 11 and 12 of secondary schooling.

Area of activity (of staff): considered to be primary education or secondary education. As a rule, the full-time equivalent (FTE) of staff is apportioned across areas of activity on the basis of time spent in the various areas of activity.

Category of school: schools are classified to the government or non-government sector.

Educational attainment: measures the highest qualification obtained by the respondent. Qualifications may include those obtained at other than educational institutions (e.g. nursing qualifications obtained at a hospital).

FTE of staff: a measure of the total level of staff resources used. The FTE of a full-time staff member (i.e. employed full-time and engaged solely on activities which fall within the scope of the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC)) is equal to 1.0. The calculation of FTE for part-time staff is as follows:

(a) The full-time equivalent of part-time staff performing some activities which fall outside the scope of this collection (e.g. pre-school, TAFE) is calculated on the basis of the proportion of time spent on in-scope activities compared with that spent by a full-time staff member solely occupied by in-scope activities.

(b) The FTE of part-time staff performing activities which fall solely within the scope of the NSSC is calculated on the basis of time worked compared with that worked by full-time staff performing similar duties.

Some States are not able to calculate FTEs on a 'time spent' basis for all staff functions but use wages paid as a fraction of full-time rate, or a resource allocation-based formula. Some also use a pro-rata formula based on student or teacher numbers to estimate aggregate FTE for some categories of staff.

Highest level of secondary schooling available: the highest level of secondary schooling (or equivalent) offered by the education system at the time the respondent left school.

Leavers: persons who were full-time students at any time in the previous calendar year, but were not full-time students at the time of the survey.

Level of education: defined as follows:

(a) primary education is that full-time education which typically commences at around age 5 and lasts for seven to eight years. It does not include sessional education such as pre-school education. In New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, primary education may extend from pre-year 1 to year 6 (or equivalent). In South Australia and the Northern Territory it may extend from pre-year 1 to year 7 (or equivalent). In Queensland and Western Australia it may extend from year 1 to year 7 (or equivalent);

(b) secondary education is that education which typically commences at around age 12 after completion of primary education and lasts for five or six years. In New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory secondary education may extend from year 7 to year 12 (or equivalent). In Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory it may extend from year 8 to year 12 (or equivalent).

Junior secondary education comprises years 7 to 10 in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory and years 8 to 10 in Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Senior secondary education comprises years 11 and 12 in all States and Territories; and

(c) combined education refers to those schools which offer both primary and secondary education.

Major function (of staff): staff have been categorised according to their major function, which is based on the duties in which they spend the majority of their time.

The functional categories for school staff are as follows:

(a) teaching staff are staff who spend the majority of their time in contact with students, i.e. support students either by direct class contact or on an individual basis, and have teaching duties, i.e. are engaged to impart the school curriculum. Teaching staff include principals, deputy principals and senior teachers mainly involved in administrative duties;

(b) specialist support staff are staff who perform functions that are of special benefit to students or teaching staff in the development of the school curriculum. While these staff may spend the majority of their time in contact with students, they are not engaged to impart the school curriculum. Instead they generally undertake such duties as providing counselling to students or their families, providing advice on appropriate courses of study or careers advice;

(c) administrative and clerical staff are staff whose main duties are generally of a clerical/administrative nature. Teacher aides and assistants are included in this category, as they are seen to provide services to teaching staff rather than directly to students; and

(d) building operations, general maintenance and other staff are staff involved in the maintenance of buildings, grounds etc. Also included are staff providing associated technical services and janitorial staff.

The functional categories for staff not generally active in schools are as follows:

(a) executive staff are staff generally undertaking senior administrative functions which are broader than those of a secondary school principal. Executive staff salaries generally exceed those of a secondary school principal;

(b) specialist support staff are staff who manage or are engaged in curriculum development and research activities, assisting with teaching resources, staff development, student support services and teacher support services.

(c) administrative and clerical staff are staff whose main duties are of a clerical/administrative nature. Includes office staff, publicity staff and information technology staff in State and regional offices; and

(d) building operations, general maintenance and other staff are staff involved in the maintenance of buildings, grounds etc. Also included are staff providing associated technical services and janitorial staff.

School (other than a special school): must satisfy the following criteria:

(a) its major activity is:

(i) the provision of full-time day primary or secondary education

or

(ii) the provision of primary or secondary education by radio or correspondence;

(b) it is headed by a principal (or equivalent) responsible for its internal operation; and

(c) it is possible for students to enrol for a minimum of four continuous weeks, excluding breaks for school vacations.

The term 'school' includes schools in institutions and hospitals, mission schools and similar establishments. The term excludes pre-schools, kindergarten centres, pre-primary schools or pre-primary classes in or attached to non-special schools, senior technical and agricultural colleges, evening schools, continuation classes, and institutions such as business or coaching colleges.

Special school: a school which requires students to exhibit one or more of the following characteristics before enrolment is allowed:

- intellectual disability
- physical disablility
- autism
- social/emotional disturbance
- in custody or on remand.

The following are not considered to be special schools: intensive language centres; schools whose distinguishing feature is the lack of formal curriculum; or schools for exceptionally bright or talented students.

Staff: persons who are involved in the administration or provision of primary, secondary or special education. Staff are categorised as school staff and staff not generally active in schools. School staff include all teaching staff and those non-teaching staff who spend more than half their time actively engaged in duties in one or more schools.

Student: a person who is enrolled in a school and active in a course of study other than pre-school or TAFE courses.

A *full-time* student is one who undertakes a workload specified as full-time in the government or non-government sector.

A *part-time* student is one who undertakes a workload less than that specified as full-time in either sector.

The method used to determine student workload varies between States. Most of the tables in this publication relate to full-time students.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ABSTUDY	Aboriginal Study Allowance
ACCI	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
ACER	Australian Council for Education Research
ACHPER	Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation
ACSSO	Australian Council of State School Organisations
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AEC	Australian Education Council
AEF	Asia Education Foundation
AEI	Alternative Education Initiative
AESIP	Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program
AEU	Australian Education Union
AHSLO	Aboriginal Home School Liaison Officers
AIC	Assistance for Isolated Children
AIST	Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania
AISV	Association of Independent Schools of Victoria Inc.
AISWA	Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia
AITAP	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tertiary Aspirations Program
ALS	Access to Languages via Satellite
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
APC	Australian Parents Council
ARC	Accreditation and Recognition Council
ASF	Australian Standards Framework
ASTF	Australian Student Traineeship Foundation
ATC	Australian Teaching Council
ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
AUSTUDY	Australian Student Study Allowance
AVTS	Australian Vocational Training System
AYS	Australian Youth Surveys
BCA	Business Council of Australia
BSSS	Board of Senior Secondary Studies
BSSSS	Board of Senior Secondary School Studies
BST	Basic Skills Test
CAP	Country Areas Program
CASES	Computerised Administration Systems Environment for Schools
CEAC	Catholic Education Aboriginal Committee
CECV	Catholic Education Commission of Victoria
CEO	Catholic Education Office
CEOWA	Catholic Education Office, Western Australia

CES	Commonwealth Employment Service
CIA	Common Instruments of Assessment
CIT	Canberra Institute of Technology
CLE	Community Languages Element
CLP	Children's Literacy National Projects
CMC	Cooperative Multimedia Centre
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CPR	Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation
CSF	Curriculum Standards Framework
DARE	Drug Abuse Resistance Education
DEA	Department of Education and the Arts
DECS	Department for Education and Children's Services
DEET	Department of Employment, Education and Training
DEETYA	Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
EdNA	Education Network Australia
EDWA	Education Department of Western Australia
EESP	Enterprise Education in Schools Program
ELC	Early Literacy Component
ESL	English as a Second Language
FTE	Full-time Equivalent (Students or Staff Numbers)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GELP	Gender Equity Liaison Person
GRG	General Recurrent Grant
GSAF	Griffith Service Access Frame
HEIAC	Health Education Interagency Advisory Committee
HSC	Higher School Certificate
IEU	Independent Education Union of Australia
ILC	Intensive Language Centre
IMM	Interactive Mulitmedia
IRSED	Index of Relative Social Disadvantage
IRT	Item Response Theory
ITAB	Industry Training Advisory Board
JSSC	Junior Secondary Studies Certificate
JSSTAFE	Joint Secondary Schools/TAFE
KILOs	Key Intended Literacy Outcomes
KINOs	Key Intended Numeracy Outcomes
LAP	Learning Assessment Project
LAST	Learning Assistance Support Team
LLNC	Literacy and Learning National Component
LOTE	Languages Other Than English
LSAY	Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth
MAP	Multilevel Assessment Program
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
MOVEET	Council of Ministers of Vocational, Education, Employment and Training
NALSAS	National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools
NAPEG	National Action Plan for the Education of Girls
NBEET	National Board of Employment Education and Training
NCEC	National Catholic Education Commission
NCISA	National Council of Independent Schools' Association
NEPS	National Equity Program for Schools

NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
NFROT	National Framework for the Recognition of Training
NGSFRC	Non-Government Schools Funding Review Committee
NIDE	National Initiatives in Drug Education
NIEF	National Industry Education Forum
NPDP	National Professional Development Program
NSES	National Strategy for Equity in Schooling
NSSC	National Schools Statistics Collection
NTCE	Northern Territory Centre of Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
OLTC	Open Learning Technology Corporation
P	Prep or Preparatory
PAIR	Preventing Abuse in Relationships
PAL	Primary Access to Languages
PASE	Physical and Sport Education
PCAP	Priority Country Areas Program
PDHPE	Personal Development, Health and Physical Education
PEAC	Primary Extension and Challenge
PLSE	Priority Languages Support Element
QATS	Quality Assessment Tasks
QCaTS	Quality, Competencies and Technological Support
QSP	Quality Schooling Program
R	Reception
SACCS	South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Incorporated
SACE	South Australian Certificate of Education
SBM	School Based Management
SEA	Secondary Education Authority
SEPEP	Sport Education in Physical Education Program
SES	Socioeconomic Status
SGB	School Global Budgets
SHCO	Sexual Harassment Contact Officers
SIDE	School of isolated and Distance Education
SJCD	Social Justice Curriculum Development
SOFNet	Schools of the Future interactive television broadcast network
SOSE/SoSE	Studies of Society and Environment
SOTA	Schools of the Air
SSABSA	Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia
STAR	Students at Risk Program
T	Transition
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TCE	Tasmanian Certificate of Education
TEE	Tertiary Entrance Examination
TER	Tertiary Entrance Rank
TIMSS	Third International Mathematics and Science Study
TOSS	Taskforce on School Statistics
TRAC	Training in Retail and Commerce
TRIP	Teacher Release to Industry Program
TSDE	Tasmanian School of Distance Education
TTALL	Talk to a Literacy learner
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education

VECCI	Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VEGAS	Vocational Education and Guidance for Aboriginals Scheme
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VETA	Vocational Education and Training Authority
VETAB	Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board
VETAC	Vocational Education, Training and Employment Commission
VPSSA	Victorian Primary School Sports Association
VSSSA	Victoria Secondary School Sports Association
WBLA	Writing Based Literacy Assessment
YMC	Youth Ministers Council