

Chapter 6

Victoria Report on Activities and Outcomes

Introduction

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are the oldest living cultures in the world. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage is a fundamental part of Victoria's history and identity. The land that is now called Victoria has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history that goes back tens of thousands of years. It is estimated that there were between 20,000 and 60,000 people speaking more than 30 languages when European settlers first arrived.

In 2006 the Australian Census showed that there were around 33,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Melbourne and regional Victoria, an increase from 27,800 in 2001. It is estimated that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in 2010 has further risen, to approximately 36,700 people. The current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is about 0.65 per cent of the State total. Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population includes those connected to land in Victoria and those whose lands are elsewhere in Australia.

The demographic make-up of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Victoria differs from the general Victorian population. It is a young population: the median age of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians is estimated to be 21.8 years, while the median age of the general population is estimated to be 36.0 years. Children aged 0-17 comprise 43.5 per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, compared with 23 per cent of the general population.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Victoria has a higher growth rate than the population as a whole. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians live in regional or urban areas, whereas nationally 25 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians live in remote areas. No areas in Victoria are classified as remote.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians have suffered disproportionately from historical policies that removed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their homes and families, compared with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in other jurisdictions; 11.5 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians report having been removed from their natural family, compared with 7.0 per cent across the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. Compared to 37.6 per cent nationally, 47.1 per cent of Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported they had relatives removed from their family.

In school systems within Victoria the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students continues to grow by over 11.5 per cent from 2008 to 2010. In 2010, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students constituted 1.6 per cent (8,614) of the government school population (up from 1.5 per cent in 2008); 0.47 per cent (982) of students in Catholic schools (0.39 per cent in 2008); and 0.3 per cent (324) in Independent schools (0.23 per cent in 2008).

Since 2008, reforms within the government school system have focused on ensuring that everyone within the system is responsible for improvement in educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; that the workforce has the skills and tools to achieve this improvement; and that all schools are creating an environment that respects, recognises and celebrates cultural identity.

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria has a strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. There are 982 students supported across 158 schools and extensive work is done to support their learning, attendance and engagement at school. There are 444 students attending metropolitan schools and 538 students attend schools in regional Victoria.

Profile of Focus Schools

There are 125 focus schools within Victoria, 116 in the government sector and nine in the Catholic sector. Of these, 123 are primary schools and two are secondary.

Focus schools had 2,807.2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled at the time of the 2010 Census, comprising 5.4 per cent of the total enrolment in these schools. These students represent 51 per cent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the government primary sector.

Fifty-five of the Victorian focus schools participate in the Smarter Schools National Partnership focus schools with 21 Literacy/ Numeracy schools and 34 low socioeconomic status (SES) schools. Victoria does not have any schools classified as remote.

All 125 focus schools across Victoria are undertaking a Collegial School Snapshot during 2011. This involves the Dare to Lead State Coordinator interviewing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, parents, community and school employees, non-Aboriginal students, teachers and executives. The questions are agreed to beforehand by the principal and Dare to Lead staff.

Victorian Report on Indicators with National Data Sources

Readiness for School

Performance Indicators

- *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in and attending (where possible to measure) a preschool program.*
- *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students assessed as ready for the first year of full-time schooling by State and Territories' measures.*

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has developed a new data collection for indicators relating to early childhood education and care.

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in, and attending, a preschool program will be reported in the next Annual Report with data sourced from the National Early Childhood Education and Care data collection, which will be available in 2011.

Engagement and Connections

Performance Indicators

- *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with personalised learning strategies in place.*
- *Proportion of focus schools with a school – community partnership agreement in place.*

It was agreed that for 2010, States and Territories would only report on national data sources [e.g. ABS, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority's (ACARA) National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)] in their chapters. Therefore, Victoria will report on this domain in the 2011 Annual Report.

Attendance

Performance Indicators

- *Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students in schools.*
- *Enrolment to population ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians compared to other Australians.*
- *Retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.*
- *Grade progression ratios for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders students.*

Attendance Rates

For Victorian government schools, ungraded attendance includes both primary and secondary students. Therefore, while both Ungraded columns contain data, the data is the same. The figures for Years 1–10 include students in primary, secondary and primary/secondary schools. Ungraded figures include students in special schools only.

While attendance at all year levels in Victorian government schools is above 80 per cent, there has been no change in the 'gap' between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students over the last four years. The gap is steady around the five percentage point mark in primary schools and the first year of secondary school, but then stretches to a 10 percentage point gap in Years 8–10.

Within Catholic schools attendance is at 80 per cent or above in a majority of year levels, and above 90 per cent in four of the primary levels. The gap varies in primary levels from one percentage point to seven percentage points and is in the 7 to 11 per cent range in secondary school.

In Independent schools the gap is small in most primary levels, but in three of the secondary levels is in the seven to 13 per cent range.

Enrolment to Population Ratio

The enrolment to population ratio by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, 2010 in Victoria is consistent with that of the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

Table VIC1: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, by sector, 2010 (per cent)

	Year level										Ungraded	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Prim.	Sec.
Government												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	90	89	89	89	89	89	87	82	81	80	83	83
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	92	90	90	89	89
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	93	91	90	90	89	89
Catholic												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	89	90	90	87	93	93	88	83	88	87	60	85
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	94	94	94	94	96	94	94	94	80	85
Total	94	94	94	94	94	94	96	94	94	94	79	85
Independent												
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	93	94	93	91	92	88	81	90	80	n/a	75
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94	94	95	94	95	94	95	94	93	93	89	87
Total	94	94	95	94	95	94	94	94	93	93	89	86

n/a not available

Source: ACARA data (unpublished)

Table VIC2: Enrolment to population ratio, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, 2010

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children	Victoria	Australia
Number of children aged 6–15 years enrolled in school ^(a)	8,245	133,990
Total 6–15 year old population ^{(b)(c)}	8,291	129,308
Proportion of 6–15 year old population enrolled in school	99.4%	103.60%
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children^(d)		
Number of children aged 6–15 years enrolled in school	654,803	2,621,903
Total 6–15 year old population ^{(c)(e)}	659,671	2,657,227
Proportion of 6–15 year old population enrolled in school	99.3%	98.70%

Notes:

- School data includes children enrolled full-time or part-time in 2010. Data also includes students who cross State and Territory boundaries to attend school. In the case of the ACT this causes the proportion of 6–15 year olds enrolled in school to exceed 100 per cent. Jervis Bay enrolments are included with ACT; Norfolk Island enrolments are included with NSW. 'Other territory' enrolments are excluded.
- Data for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population are projections for June 30, 2010. These projections were based on final experimental estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population at June 30 2006 derived from the 2006 Census. Quality issues associated with the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status in both the National Schools Statistics Collection and population statistics can result in rates that exceed 100 per cent. See Appendix 2 'Collection of Indigenous Status of students' in Schools, Australia 2009 (Cat. No. 4221.0). For information on adjustments for Census undercount and the methods used to calculate projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, see explanatory notes in the publication *Experimental estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat. No. 3238.0).
- Estimates for the total population are sourced from the most recently available ABS *Population by Age and Sex*, Cat. No. 3201.0 (June 2010). The Australian total includes 'Other territories' including Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island. However, Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island are excluded from ACT and NSW totals. Therefore, State and Territory Estimated Resident Population numbers will not add to Australia totals.
- 'Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' includes those for whom Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status is not known.
- In the absence of population estimates by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status for inter-censal years, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population figures are calculated by subtracting projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population from estimates of total population.

Source: ABS, *Schools, Australia 2010*, (Cat.No.4221.0), data cube NSSC, Table 42b: Full-time and part-time students 2006-2010; ABS, *Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories, June 2010*, (Cat.No.3201.0); ABS, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021*, (Cat.No.3238.0).

Apparent Retention Rates

Table VIC3: Apparent retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from Year 7/8 to Year 10 and Year 7/8 to Year 12, government schools, 2010 (per cent)

	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
Year 7/8 – Year 10	90.7	101.3
Year 7/8 – Year 12	41.8	81.5

Source: ABS, NSSC, Table 64a: Apparent Retention Rates (ARR), *Schools, Australia, 2010* (Cat.No.4221.0)

The gap in apparent retention from Years 7 to 10 is 10.6 percentage points, which represents a major improvement from 2009 (19.8 percentage points) and 2008 (17.3 per cent) figures. The non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rate of 101.3 percentage points occurs because of significant interstate and international migration into Victoria.

There appear to be data accuracy issues with the Year 7 to 12 retention rate of 41.8 per cent. While the government school rate remained steady from previous years, non-government schools' retention rates were over 30 per cent below historical rates (Catholic ≥ 20 per cent and Independent ≥ 65 per cent). This decrease has been unable to be verified through local data sources.

It should also be noted that within Victoria a significant number of 15–19 year olds access Vocational Education and Training options through the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) system.

Apparent Grade Progression Ratios

Table VIC4 shows that the 2010 apparent grade progression ratio for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students decreased as years of schooling increased, which is also reflected in national data.

Table VIC4: Grade progression ratios of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 2010 (per cent)

	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
Year 8 to Year 9	100.7	100.5
Year 9 to Year 10	94.4	99.9
Year 10 to Year 11	83.9	93.9
Year 11 to Year 12	66.2	87.0

Source: ABS, NSSC, Table 40a, Full-time students - by States and Territories, Affiliation, Sex, Grade, Age, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Status and Years (1996 to 2010)

In Victoria in 2010, the apparent grade progression ratio for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was in excess of 100 per cent for Year 8 to 9 and 94.4 per cent for Year 9 to 10, with a further decline for Year 10 to Year 11 (83.9 per cent) and then a significant decline to 66.2 per cent for Year 11 to Year 12. The gap between the apparent grade progression ratio for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was greatest for the Year 11 to Year 12 ratio (20.8 percentage points).

As noted elsewhere, the significant take up of Vocational Education and Training options within the TAFE system by 15-19 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students needs to be considered when looking at grade progression.

Literacy and Numeracy

Performance Indicators

- *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in NAPLAN testing.*
- *Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN.*

NAPLAN Outcomes

Table VIC5: NAPLAN Reading, Writing and Numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Victoria, 2010 (per cent)

	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
Reading				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	87.0	84.8	87.7	76.6
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.9	94.6	96.5	93.7
Gap	8.9	9.8	8.8	17.1
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander confidence intervals	± 2.5	± 3.1	± 2.9	± 3.8
Writing				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	91.7	85.6	81.2	71.4
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.8	95.1	93.9	89.7
Gap	5.1	9.5	12.7	18.3
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander confidence intervals	± 2.3	± 2.6	± 2.8	± 3.8
Numeracy				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	86.5	87.4	85.5	80.9
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.9	96.0	96.4	95.2
Gap	9.4	8.6	10.9	14.3
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander confidence intervals	± 2.4	± 2.8	± 3.0	± 3.5

Note: The confidence intervals for 2010 in this table are specifically for Victoria.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2010

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Victoria meeting the national minimum standard in NAPLAN Reading, Writing and Numeracy varies across the years of schooling. Reading and Numeracy remain at a fairly constant level through Years 3 to 7 with a decline at Year 9, while Writing has a steady decline from Year 3 onwards.

There is a gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander at every level and in every area. In 2010, the gap between Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander student and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student outcomes was smallest for Year 3 Writing (5.1 percentage points) and largest for Year 9 Writing (18.3 percentage points).

The gap between the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard decreased from 2008 to 2010 in Reading and Writing in Years 3, 5 and 7, but increased in Year 9 Writing. With respect to Numeracy, the gap increased for Years 3, 7 and 9 from 2008 to 2010.

2010 NAPLAN Data by Geolocation

Table VIC6: NAPLAN Reading, Writing and Numeracy geolocation summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, 2010 (per cent)

Geolocation	Victoria		Australia	
	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
Reading				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	87.1	96.1	83.1	95.3
Provincial	86.9	95.4	81.5	94.1
Remote	n.p.	96.1	65.6	92.6
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	43.9	90.1
Year 5				
Metropolitan	89.2	94.9	77.0	89.2
Provincial	81.4	93.6	72.8	81.4
Remote	n.p.	96.8	51.2	n.p.
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	26.5	n.p.
Year 7				
Metropolitan	88.5	96.6	85.0	96.0
Provincial	86.8	96.1	82.3	95.7
Remote	n.p.	97.6	65.9	95.7
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	38.6	94.7
Year 9				
Metropolitan	77.6	94.0	71.2	92.5
Provincial	75.4	92.9	68.1	91.6
Remote	n.p.	94.3	50.9	88.4
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	24.2	85.2
Writing				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	91.2	96.9	87.4	96.7
Provincial	92.2	96.7	87.1	96.2
Remote	n.p.	97.8	71.9	96.3
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	41.2	94.3
Year 5				
Metropolitan	88.9	95.2	81.9	94.4
Provincial	83.0	93.5	77.6	92.1
Remote	n.p.	95.0	55.4	81.3
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	28.2	48.9
Year 7				
Metropolitan	84.1	94.7	79.9	94.4
Provincial	78.3	91.7	75.5	92.3
Remote	n.p.	89.2	55.6	92.4
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	28.3	90.8
Year 9				
Metropolitan	75.9	90.8	67.5	89.6
Provincial	66.6	86.7	61.9	86.1
Remote	n.p.	86.8	44.4	82.4
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	18.7	80.6
Numeracy				
Year 3				
Metropolitan	86.6	96.0	84.1	95.5
Provincial	86.4	95.6	82.5	94.8
Remote	n.p.	96.1	71.7	94.8
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	45.2	92.6
Year 5				
Metropolitan	91.8	96.2	81.7	95.3
Provincial	84.0	95.4	78.0	94.3
Remote	n.p.	98.2	57.9	92.1
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	32.5	92.1
Year 7				
Metropolitan	86.6	96.7	85.0	96.3
Provincial	84.4	95.7	82.3	95.6
Remote	n.p.	98.4	64.1	95.8
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	41.9	95.1
Year 9				
Metropolitan	81.2	95.4	77.4	94.6
Provincial	80.6	94.5	74.2	93.7
Remote	n.p.	96.2	56.6	91.8
Very Remote	n.p.	n.p.	32.7	90.0

Note: 'n.p.' indicates data not published as there were no students tested, or the number of students tested was less than 30.

Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2010

Table VIC7: Reading, Writing and Numeracy progress points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard (per cent), 2010

Year	Reading				Writing				Numeracy			
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
2010	88.3	83.2	85.7	80.2	92.2	82.9	77.9	69.4	93.1	83.5	88.1	78.8
Target 2018	92.0	88.7	91.0	87.8	94.4	88.7	86.0	80.2	95.0	89.4	92.5	87.3

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)*, 2010

Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are all enrolled in schools in metropolitan and provincial areas with no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in remote or very remote areas. Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students outperformed the Australian standard level in all measures in all four year levels in metropolitan and provincial areas. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Victoria was smaller than the Australia wide gap in 17 of the 18 measures covering metropolitan and provincial areas. The smallest gap was in metropolitan Year 5 Numeracy (4.4 percentage points), while the largest was in provincial Year 9 Writing (20.1 percentage points).

2010 NAPLAN Data and 2010 Progress Points for Victoria

One of the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) 'Closing the Gap' targets is to halve the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in Reading, Writing and Numeracy, within a decade. To monitor achievement of this COAG target by 2018, progress points for each State and Territory were developed. The progress points for Victoria are provided in Table VIC7.

Page three of the *National Indigenous Reform Agreement: Supplement on literacy and numeracy achievement 2010* states that 'a jurisdiction is considered not to have met its annual

progress point [target] if its result, including its 95 per cent confidence interval, is below the progress point. In all other cases, it is considered to have met the progress point.' When the 95 per cent confidence intervals are taken into account, the data indicate that Victoria met 11 of the 12 NAPLAN measures, the exception being Year 3 Numeracy.

Overall NAPLAN Outcomes

Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students perform strongly in the NAPLAN compared to other jurisdictions, but a gap remains with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within the state. Victoria met its trajectory targets in 11 of the 12 NAPLAN areas and there were minimal differences between metropolitan and provincial performance. Participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students decline through secondary school and actions are being undertaken to increase the number of students sitting NAPLAN tests.

NAPLAN Participation

Victoria has put in place a number of measures to increase the participation of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN testing. This includes identification of schools with low participation rates and the promotion of the benefits of students sitting the NAPLAN test for parents and community members.

Table VIC8: Reading, Writing and Numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions and assessed students, in Victoria and Australia, 2010 (per cent)

	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	Vic.	Aust.	Vic.	Aust.	Vic.	Aust.	Vic.	Aust.
Reading								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	84.9	89.9	88.3	91.2	83.7	89.1	71.5	89.7
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94.6	96.1	94.9	96.6	94.9	96.5	91.4	96.5
Writing								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	85.2	90.3	87.9	91.0	84.1	89.5	72.4	80.2
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94.3	96.0	94.8	96.5	94.9	96.5	91.6	94.0
Numeracy								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	84.7	89.1	88.3	90.0	83.4	88.6	73.2	78.8
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	94.3	95.8	94.6	96.3	94.7	96.2	91.3	93.3

Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), 2010

Leadership, Quality Teaching and Workforce Development

Performance Indicators

- Number of professional development hours on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultural and linguistic competence training undertaken by principals and teachers.
- Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principals, teachers and education workers (AIEWs and equivalents).
- Average length of service of principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools with high enrolments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

It was agreed that for 2010, States and Territories would only report on national data sources [e.g. ABS, NAPLAN (ACARA)] in their chapters. Therefore, Victoria will report on this domain in the 2011 Annual Report.

Pathways to Real Post-School Options

Performance Indicators

- Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20 – 24 who have attained Year 12 or

equivalent or Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above.

Although the performance indicator for this domain cites a national data source, there is no publicly available national level data for 2010. It was agreed that for 2010, States and Territories would only report on national data sources [e.g. ABS, NAPLAN (ACARA)] in their chapters. Therefore, Victoria will report on this domain in the 2011 Annual Report.

Indigenous Education Consultative Body's (IECB) Feedback

Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated Feedback

The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) is a community-based and controlled organisation, established in 1976. The VAEAI advocates on behalf of the Koorie Community and is the peak advisory body to the Victorian State Government – including the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) – on all issues relating to Indigenous education and training. The VAEAI also

provides advice to the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), regarding education and training issues for Victorian Indigenous people.

The following feedback against progress on systemic and local actions in support of the Plan, across each of the six priority domains, is informed by Koorie Community perspectives.

Readiness for School*

*Note: It is Victoria's position that school readiness cannot be effectively measured.

The VAEAI supports integrated early childhood programs that take a holistic approach focusing on social, physical and cognitive development. Examples of such programs are the Multifunctional Aboriginal Childcare Services (MACS) and integrated Children and Family Centres.

The VAEAI also supports initiatives that reduce barriers to participation in early childhood programs – for example, subsidised kindergarten programs; culturally relevant and inclusive playgroups; Home-based learning and In Home Support programs. However, while the VAEAI favours the development of a National Early Years Workforce Strategy, and the use of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) in childcare settings, due preparation is needed in every setting, and in particular, the MACS context. With regards to the EYLF, appropriate cultural practices need to be taken into consideration and embedded into the Early Years curriculum.

Engagement and Connections

The VAEAI welcomes endeavours to strengthen connections between schools and Koorie families and communities. The School – Community Partnerships that have been brokered throughout the last year in various schools are evidence of the progress that has been achieved towards better engagement and connections.

It is imperative that health, welfare, family support and youth and community services at local and systemic levels are utilised in the process of improving engagement and connections and that the onus for improvement is not solely placed on Koorie families and Communities. As such, the VAEAI strongly advocates for the professional development of teachers and other school

staff, in order to be able to understand and engage their Koorie students better.

The VAEAI recognises the importance of the development of curriculum that integrates Indigenous perspectives throughout the Victorian Essential Learning Standings (VELS), as well as throughout the forthcoming national curriculum. It is the VAEAI's position that Aboriginal Studies should also be available as a separate subject for all students. Furthermore, the VAEAI advocates for out-of-school-hours Aboriginal Education, to be taught by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people – similar to Language Other Than English (LOTE) models, such as Greek school for Greek students.

Both 'engagement' and 'connection' are inextricably linked to genuine and desirable post-school pathways. The VAEAI therefore asserts that these domains be addressed in conjunction, so as to ensure strategically devised policies and programs.

It is also important that 'deficit model' conceptualisations are not applied when addressing this domain. That is, the availability of extended learning opportunities for high achieving/high potential Koorie students must be addressed so that this cohort does not become disengaged with education through lack of stimulation or ongoing personalised learning. The VAEAI believes that the Koorie Education Learning Plans (KELP) will positively impact on preventing such disengagement, if applied in conjunction with professional development for teachers that stresses the importance of maintaining high expectations of Koorie students.

Attendance

There is a clear link between the previous domain of engagement and connections and the domain of attendance. The 2008 *Review of Victoria's Indigenous Education Strategies: Supporting Indigenous Students through School* found that Koorie attendance is comparatively high. However, education outcomes for Koorie students do not reflect the finding that the majority of Koorie students attend school regularly. Therefore, there must be a renewed focus on the education systems to increase student engagement, and this constitutes a focus of the Wannik Strategy.

Feedback from our Koorie community reveals that problems with attendance are largely symptomatic of other, broader, socially determined issues. Health, housing, household income, family employment, parental education levels etc., all impact

on students' abilities to participate in school, as do the absence of a culturally relevant curriculum; the lack of knowledge of education staff (and sometimes their direct or indirect racism); the inflexibility of school structures; and the lack of pathways to real post-school options. Programs such as the Clontarf Football Academy, and initiatives such as the School – Community Partnership Agreements have contributed to addressing the broader social determinants of school attendance and the VAEAI supports their continuation.

Literacy and Numeracy

It is the VAEAI's position that the NAPLAN test is limited in its ability to gauge the literacy and numeracy knowledge and capacity of Indigenous students, in the sense that it is constructed from a non-Indigenous cultural base. Therefore, in its function as a large-scale tool of assessment, VAEAI cautions that NAPLAN must be used in conjunction with a variety of other assessment tools (such as On Demand Testing and self-assessment tools), so as to better enable Koorie students to demonstrate what they know and are able to achieve. Furthermore, efforts to ensure NAPLAN and other forms of assessment become more culturally appropriate – not only in their subject matter, but in the manner that they are delivered – should be made on a national level.

Unfortunately, according to feedback from the Koorie Community, heightened emphasis on NAPLAN – as a result of its elevated status as a national assessment method – has resulted in incidents of students, including Koorie students, being actively discouraged by schools from attending school on testing days. Anecdotal evidence has also revealed that some teachers are 'teaching to the test', which can have detrimental effects on students' confidence, understanding and enjoyment of learning.

In terms of literacy pedagogy, the VAEAI strongly supports bilingual and bi-dialectal approaches – particularly those that incorporate Koorie English. An understanding of Koorie English is fundamental to any plan to improve the literacy of Koorie students and the necessity for assessment and pedagogy that targets the distinctive language learning needs of Koorie students is required.

The VAEAI notes that there is no place for 'remedial' literacy and numeracy programs, as they often result in negative outcomes,

such as stigmatisation and humiliation. Instead, the VAEAI supports effective tutorial programs and the flexibility for schools to implement these according to student needs and wants (for example, homework classes in groups or individually, held during or after school hours).

Leadership, Quality Teaching and Workforce Development

The VAEAI strongly advocates that all teachers employed in the education sector in Australia complete a minimum number of Indigenous Studies subjects as a requirement for the completion of their degrees or post-graduate courses in Education, and as a requirement for their employment in the teaching profession.

The VAEAI also believes that Professional Development (Cross-cultural training) should be mandatory for all education staff, including principals, existing and returning teachers, administration and student support officers and Departmental and Regional Office employees, throughout Australia. This is on the basis that teachers and associated education staff with access to comprehensive pre-service training and in-service professional development will be much better placed to positively and significantly impact on the education outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students alike.

The Koorie Education Workforce also requires ongoing up-skilling, professional development, and due recognition of their positions and the invaluable work they undertake. The Wannik Koorie Education Workforce reforms have been very important in this respect.

Pathways to Real Post-School Options

It is clear that there are limitations with longitudinal data collection methods – for example the On Track Data. This is an issue about which the VAEAI continues to engage with the DEECD.

In feedback from the Koorie community, the issue of the lack of availability of employment opportunities arises in all discussions about pathways to real post-school opportunities. The fact that unemployment following school completion

is a very real prospect for a significant proportion of Koorie young people, holds implications for the other domains – particularly engagement and attendance. The introduction of Koorie Transition Officers across the education Regions has the potential to influence the post-school pathways that Koorie students are able to pursue.

The VAEAI supports flexible learning options and the strengthening of partnerships between VET providers, universities and the Koorie community that broaden horizons and post-school options for Koorie students. The Toorong-Marnong Accord in Victoria contributes to achieving better outcomes in this regard.

Focus School Information

Focus Schools List	Sector	Geolocation	Total number of students enrolled as of the 2010 August Census	Total number of students enrolled that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	LIT/ NUM	Low SES	RDS
Araluen Primary School	Government	Regional	161	16	yes	no	x
Bacchus Marsh Primary School	Government	Regional	554	15	yes	no	x
Baden Powell P-9 College	Government	Metropolitan	1,512.00	13	no	no	x
Bairnsdale Primary School	Government	Regional	180.4	19	no	no	x
Bairnsdale West Primary School	Government	Regional	233	65	no	yes	x
Ballam Park Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	357	13	no	no	x
Benalla Primary School	Government	Regional	236	11	no	no	x
Bourchier Street Primary School Shepparton	Government	Regional	581.4	26	no	no	x
Bundarra Primary School	Government	Regional	222	17	no	no	x
Canadian Lead Primary School	Government	Regional	151	12	no	yes	x
Carrum Downs Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	586	10	no	no	x
Chaffey Secondary College	Government	Regional	575	79	no	yes	x
Charles La Trobe P-12 College (Bellfield PS)	Government	Metropolitan	660.1	12	no	no	x
Charles La Trobe P-12 College (Haig Street PS)	Government	Metropolitan		9	no	no	x
Colac West Primary School	Government	Regional	147	11	no	yes	x
Commercial Road Primary School - Morwell	Government	Regional	246	16	no	yes	x
Courtenay Gardens Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	702	9	no	no	x
Craigieburn Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	720	17	no	no	x
Dallas Brooks Community Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	526	8	no	yes	x
Doveton Heights Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	364.4	28	no	yes	x
Drouin Primary School	Government	Regional	197	25	no	no	x
Eaglehawk North Primary School	Government	Regional	337	25	no	no	x
Eastbourne Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	461.4	11	no	no	x
Echuca East Primary School	Government	Regional	372	31	yes	no	x
Echuca Primary School	Government	Regional	506	29	yes	no	x
Echuca South Primary School	Government	Regional	282	28	no	no	x
Findon Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	481	13	no	no	x
Forest Street Primary School	Government	Regional	362.4	30	yes	no	x
Gowrie Street Primary School Shepparton	Government	Regional	282.8	71	no	yes	x
Grovedale Primary School	Government	Regional	267	16	no	no	x
Guthridge Primary School	Government	Regional	217	20	yes	no	x
Guthrie Street Primary School Shepparton	Government	Regional	487.1	30	no	no	x
Hastings Westpark Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	156	9	no	yes	x
Healesville Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	360.2	28	no	no	x
Heywood Consolidated School	Government	Regional	176	29	no	no	x
Horsham Primary School	Government	Regional	504.2	12	no	no	x
Horsham West - Haven Primary School	Government	Regional	638	10	no	no	x
Huntly Primary School	Government	Regional	165	18	no	no	x
Iramoo Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	566	30	yes	no	x
Irymple Primary School	Government	Regional	298	21	no	no	x
Kennington Primary School	Government	Regional	567	4	no	no	x
Kerang Primary School	Government	Regional	126.4	6	no	no	x
Kilmore Primary School	Government	Regional	450	12	yes	no	x
Kyabram P-12 College (interim Name)	Government	Regional	1,281.00	38	no	no	x

Focus Schools List	Sector	Geolocation	Total number of students enrolled as of the 2010 August Census	Total number of students enrolled that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	LIT/ NUM	Low SES	RDS
Lakes Entrance Primary School	Government	Regional	265	53	yes	no	x
Lakes Entrance Secondary School	Government	Regional	286.5	30	yes	no	x
Lalor East Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	396	9	no	yes	x
Leopold Primary School	Government	Regional	698.4	11	no	no	x
Lightning Reef Primary School	Government	Regional	201	34	no	merged school. Comet Hill PS yes	x
Lucknow Primary School	Government	Regional	481	22	no	no	x
Lyndale Greens Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	514.4	14	no	no	x
Mahogany Rise Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	174	10	no	yes	x
Maryborough Education Centre	Government	Regional	1,203.30	24	no	yes	x
Meadowglen Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	573	20	yes	no	x
Melrose Primary School	Government	Regional	322	23	no	yes	x
Melton West Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	406	16	no	yes	x
Merbein P-12 College	Government	Regional	723	48	no	no	x
Mildura Primary School (Junior Campus)	Government	Regional	281	74	no	yes	x
Mildura Primary School (Senior Campus)	Government	Regional		18	no	yes	x
Mildura South Primary School	Government	Regional	654	31	no	no	x
Mildura West Primary School	Government	Regional	450	43	yes	no	x
Mill Park Heights Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	1,001.00	15	no	no	x
Moe Primary School	Government	Regional	127	15	no	yes	x
Mooroopna North Primary School	Government	Regional	83	15	no	no	x
Mooroopna Park Primary School	Government	Regional	87	23	no	yes	x
Mooroopna Primary School	Government	Regional	298	54	yes	no	x
Morwell Park Primary School	Government	Regional	343.6	26	no	yes	x
Morwell Primary School	Government	Regional	140	28	no	yes	x
Nathalia Primary School	Government	Regional	153	11	no	no	x
Norris Bank Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	231.4	8	yes	no	x
Northern Bay College- Henty St Campus	Government	Regional	2,263.20	20.2	no	no	x
Northern Bay College- Vermont Avenue campus	Government	Regional		24	no	no	x
Northern Bay College- Wexford Court Campus	Government	Regional		35	no	no	x
Nowa Nowa Primary School	Government	Regional	29	19	no	yes	x
Orbost Primary School	Government	Regional	208	24	no	no	x
Orrvale Primary School	Government	Regional	394.6	14	no	no	x
Pakenham Hills Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	472	10	no	no	x
Penders Grove Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	161.2	16	no	yes	x
Preston North East Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	310	28	no	yes	x
Preston South Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	126	16	no	no	x
Ranfurly Primary School	Government	Regional	440	74	yes	no	x
Rangebark Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	471	8	no	no	x
Reservoir East Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	127	10	no	yes	x
Reservoir Views Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	238.4	13	no	no	x
Robinvale P-12 College	Government	Regional	491.2	117	no	yes	x
Roxburgh Park Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	574.4	14	no	yes	x
Seymour P-12 College (Seymour East PS)	Government	Regional	1,023.50	45.8	no	no	x

Focus Schools List	Sector	Geolocation	Total number of students enrolled as of the 2010 August Census	Total number of students enrolled that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	LIT/ NUM	Low SES	RDS
Seymour P-12 College (Seymour PS)	Government	Regional				no	x
St Albans Meadows Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	358	13	no	yes	x
St Alipius School Ballarat	Catholic	Regional	292	13	no	no	x
St Brendan's School Lakes Entrance	Catholic	Regional	169	9	yes	no	x
St Brigid's School Healesville	Catholic	Metropolitan	216	9	no	no	x
St Catherine's School Melton	Catholic	Metropolitan	408	11	no	no	x
St Georges Road Primary School Shepparton	Government	Regional	336	48	no	no	x
St Joseph's School Collingwood	Catholic	Metropolitan	168	4	no	yes	x
St Mary's School Bairnsdale	Catholic	Regional	353	8	no	no	x
St Mary's School Swan Hill	Catholic	Regional	486	9	no	no	x
St Paul's School Mildura	Catholic	Regional	351	21	yes	no	x
St Peter's School Bendigo	Catholic	Regional	159	37	no	yes	x
Swan Hill North Primary School	Government	Regional	217.8	18.2	yes	no	x
Swan Hill Primary School	Government	Regional	556	60	yes	no	x
Sydenham - Hillside Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	1,508.40	13	no	no	x
Tatura Primary School	Government	Regional	266	15	no	no	x
The Grange P-12 College	Government	Metropolitan	1,948.20	36	no	no	x
Thornbury Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	294	51	no	no	x
Toorloo Arm Primary School	Government	Regional	147	10	no	no	x
Torquay P-9 College	Government	Regional	888	11	no	no	x
Traralgon (Liddiard Road) Primary School	Government	Regional	344.6	22	yes	no	x
Tullamarine Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	269	8	no	no	x
Wallan Primary School	Government	Regional	614	6	no	no	x
Warragul Primary School	Government	Regional	261	6	yes	no	x
Warrnambool East Primary School	Government	Regional	454	30	no	no	x
Warrnambool Primary School	Government	Regional	624.6	17	no	no	x
Warrnambool West Primary School	Government	Regional	219.6	20	no	no	x
Westgrove Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	622	16	no	no	x
Whittington Primary School	Government	Regional	97	10	no	yes	x
Wilmot Road Primary School Shepparton	Government	Regional	244	32	no	yes	x
Winters Flat Primary School	Government	Regional	241	11	no	no	x
Wodonga Primary School	Government	Regional	641	35	no	no	x
Wodonga South Primary School	Government	Regional	473	10	no	no	x
Wodonga West Primary School	Government	Regional	451	21	no	yes	x
Wooranna Park Primary School	Government	Metropolitan	340.8	10	no	yes	x
Yarrowonga College (primary campus)	Government	Regional	867.4	9	no	no	x
Yarrunga Primary School	Government	Regional	253	12	no	yes	x
Yuille Park P-8 Community College	Government	Regional	242	21	no	yes	x