

## Chapter 8

# Western Australia Report on Activities and Outcomes

## Introduction

In Western Australia in Semester 2, 2010, there were 389,381 students enrolled in 1,110 schools. This compares with 385,234 students enrolled in 1,117 schools in 2009. There were 25,111 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Western Australian schools in Semester 2, 2010. Government schools enrolled 21,147 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, accounting for approximately 82.4 per cent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in school education. Government schools also enrolled approximately 75 per cent of all students in regional and remote areas of Western Australia. Because of the role schools play in promoting community cohesion and development, the Department of Education maintains a presence in many very remote locations where it is costly to provide services.

In the Catholic system there is a strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. The Catholic system supports 13 schools in the Kimberley region, which have predominantly, or 100 per cent, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student cohort. Many of these are sole provider schools. Additionally, the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA) runs the only all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school in Perth at Clontarf Aboriginal College.

In the independent sector there are 14 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander schools including nine in the remote areas of the Kimberley and Pilbara, one outside Meekatharra, two in the Goldfields and one outside Esperance. Many 'mainstream' independent schools in Perth and rural areas have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled. Approximately 160 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are enrolled in boarding schools in the sector. The remote Aboriginal Independent Community (AIC) Schools in the Kimberley and the Pilbara are sole education providers for the communities they serve, and have a 100 per cent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student cohort.

Western Australia is addressing the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students using a coordinated and targeted approach across mainstream and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific programs and strategies. The Western Australian implementation plans for national partnership agreements include a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, disadvantaged schools, students not meeting minimum standards in literacy and

numeracy, and students whose first language is not Standard Australian English. Targeted support will provide flexibility, incentives and additional resources to identified schools under the Early Childhood, Smarter Schools and Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership Agreements.

Western Australia has established a Cross-Sectoral Governance Group to facilitate the planning and implementation of national partnerships. The group will focus on strategies linking government and non-government school sectors to maintain a strategic approach and reduce duplication of effort. All sectors support the actions under each domain of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014* and, wherever possible, will encourage and support schools to incorporate key actions into their whole school planning processes.

Western Australia did not formally commence specific focus school action until the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014* received official endorsement from the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). Formal activity to meet the intent of the Plan commenced from 31 May 2011.

## Profile of Focus Schools

There are 98 focus schools in Western Australia, comprising 70 government schools, 15 Catholic schools and 13 independent schools. Of these, 95 are primary schools and three are secondary. Many of these schools are receiving, or will receive, support through the Low SES or the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership Agreements.

Focus schools had 9,179 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in Semester 2, 2010, which is 54 per cent of the total enrolment in these schools. These students represent 37 per cent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Western Australian schools.

The distribution of government focus schools is predominately in remote and very remote geolocations, with 77 per cent of focus schools in these areas. In the Catholic system, there is a strong emphasis on the Kimberley schools, with 12 included as focus schools. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments are very high and in many cases, 100 per cent of the cohort. Eight of the independent focus schools are in the Kimberley and Pilbara region. Service delivery in remote and very remote areas of Western Australia can be very costly.

Focus schools are encouraged to use flexible and innovative approaches to address the education needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The best results are often achieved when principals work with communities to build shared ownership in addressing local issues, and devote time and energy to ensure teachers adopt the most effective teaching strategies for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

## Western Australia 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 Territory 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.

In 2010, Western Australia contributed to national collaborative effort in early childhood education, including representation on committees. In addition, schools participated in the National Early Childhood Workforce Census conducted in July 2010 across Australia.

Implementation of on-entry assessment for pre-primary students in public schools began on a limited basis in 2010 following the establishment of a licence agreement with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in Victoria for use of their Online Interviews for English and Mathematics.

## 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.*

In 2010, Western Australia participated in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group - Inter-Sectoral Consultation to identify the inter-sectoral interventions and strategies required if children and young people are to achieve the development and learning outcomes under the national *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010 - 2014*. The Working Group also considered how these inter-sectoral strategies and interventions support and complement the school-based interventions and strategies identified in the Plan.

## Attendance

#### Performance Indicators

- *Attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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.*

The Department of Education is managing the development of the Tri-Border Attendance Strategy, which tracks the attendance, enrolments and academic achievement of students in the border regions of Western Australia, Northern Territory and South Australia. This strategy is improving the ability of schools to locate students as they move across the borders and facilitates the sharing of relevant educational information. There are 404 schools from the government and non-government sectors participating. The strategy will promote better understanding of the movements of transient students to enable resources to be more effectively distributed.

In all 13 Kimberley schools, CEOWA has begun implementing the Tri-border Agreement attendance monitoring strategy in collaboration with government and independent schools, and eventually involving the Northern Territory and South Australia with support also from the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The AIC Schools of the Kimberley, with the support of the 'Kimberley Success Zone' Project are working towards full implementation of the Tri-border attendance monitoring strategy in collaboration with government and Catholic schools.

## Attendance Rates

The attendance rates for Aboriginal students are lower than those of non-Aboriginal students in all cases. This remains an area of concern. Regular attendance is critical to improved literacy and numeracy achievement.

## Enrolment to Population Ratio

There was a severe undercount of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Western Australia for the 2006 Census. This has flow through effects to the estimate of population in the *Experimental estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021*. These problems apply particularly to the Western Australian Indigenous estimated resident population (ERP) and cause difficulties in

using the experimental ERPs in any participation calculations. The experimental estimates of ERPs are in ABS Cat. No. 3238 (see 3238.0.55.001 Technical notes, for details), and these are the result of Bayesian smoothing of earlier estimates of the Indigenous undercount in the 2006 Census (see the ABS Cat. No. 2940.0 analysis of the Post Enumeration Survey and the estimate of the net undercount). The Post Enumeration Survey (PES) estimate of the net undercount adjustment factor for Western Australian Indigenous persons was 1.32 which was then lowered to 1.21 using Bayesian smoothing of the estimates because the standard errors of measurement of the original PES estimates were considered to be too high by the ABS. Western Australia believes that the earlier estimates were more accurate.

The estimated resident population (ERP) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 6–15 year-olds for Western Australia for 2010 has presumably been based on unpublished data from the ABS. This ERP is required for the calculations of the enrolment to population ratio. However, there are problems with using the *Experimental estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991–2021* (Cat. No. 3238.0) data for Western Australia.

The root cause of the problems is a faulty estimation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undercount in the 2006 ABS Census. These problems apply particularly to the Western Australia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ERP, and cause difficulties in using the experimental ERPs in any participation

**Table WA1: Student attendance rates Years 1–10, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, by sector, 2010 (per cent)**

	Year level									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Government</b>										
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	81	83	83	84	83	84	81	75	68	62
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	94	94	94	94	93	92	90	88
Total	92	93	93	93	93	93	92	90	88	86
<b>Catholic</b>										
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	75	78	81	80	81	80	81	83	84	85
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	95	94	95	94	95	94	94	94
Total	92	93	94	94	94	94	95	94	94	94
<b>Independent</b>										
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	83	82	88	81	87	82	88	79	87	64
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93	94	95	95	95	95	95	95	94	93
Total	93	94	95	94	95	94	94	94	94	93

Source: ACARA data (unpublished)

**Table WA2: Enrolment to population ratio, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, 2010**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children	WA	Australia
Number of children aged 6–15 years enrolled in school <sup>(a)</sup>	18,998	133,990
Total 6–15 year old population <sup>(b)(c)</sup>	17,209	129,308
Proportion of 6–15 year old population enrolled in school	110.40%	103.62%
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children <sup>(d)</sup>		
Number of children aged 6–15 years enrolled in school	270,115	2,621,903
Total 6–15 year old population <sup>(c)(e)</sup>	276,649	2,657,227
Proportion of 6–15 year old population enrolled in school	97.64%	98.67%

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).

calculations. The experimental estimates of ERPs are in ABS Cat. No. 3238 (see 3238.0.55.001 Technical notes, for details), and these are the result of Bayesian smoothing of earlier estimates of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undercount in the 2006 Census (see the ABS Cat. No. 2940.0 analysis of the Post Enumeration Survey and the estimate of the net undercount). The Post Enumeration Survey (PES) estimate of the net undercount adjustment factor for Western Australia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons was 1.32 which was then lowered to 1.21 using Bayesian smoothing of the estimates because the standard errors of measurement of the original PES estimates were considered to be too high by the ABS. Western Australia believes that the earlier estimates were more accurate. There has been correspondence the Western Australia Government and the ABS on this matter. The use of the earlier estimates can be simulated by using an adjustment factor of 0.9167 (derived from 1.32 divided by 1.21).

Western Australia is not confident that the experimental estimates of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population are reliable enough to calculate the ratio for this indicator.

## Apparent Retention Rates

The apparent retention rates for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are significantly higher than those for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This is particularly the case when considering the retention rate from Year 8 to Year 12.

## Apparent Grade Progression Rates

The apparent grade progression rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students up to and including Year 11 continues to

**Table WA3: 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, 2010 (per cent)**

	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
Year 7/8 – Year 10	90.7	103.0
Year 7/8 – Year 12	42.9	80.7

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

**Table WA4: Grade progression rates 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	96.6	101.0
Year 9 to Year 10	91.7	101.0
Year 10 to Year 11	83.9	96.1
Year 11 to Year 12	50.3	80.4

Source: Based on 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)

**Table WA5: NAPLAN Reading, Writing and Numeracy trend summary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, Western Australia, 2010 (per cent)**

	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
<b>Reading</b>				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	67.4	54.1	69.9	54.7
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	93.9	91.8	96.0	91.6
Gap	26.5	37.7	26.1	36.9
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander confidence intervals	± 3.3	± 4.0	± 3.1	± 4.2
<b>Writing</b>				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	70.4	59.6	60.0	49.6
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.8	94.0	94.4	88.6
Gap	26.4	34.4	34.4	39.0
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander confidence intervals	± 1.4	± 1.6	± 1.9	± 2.3
<b>Numeracy</b>				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	73.7	61.9	72.4	63.7
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	95.3	94.6	96.5	93.9
Gap	21.6	32.7	24.1	30.2
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander confidence intervals	± 3.4	± 3.7	± 3.0	± 4.0

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

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

improve over time. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their peers is greatest at Year 12.

## 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

The performance gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Western Australia is significant. The gap is consistently lower at Year 3 than at the other Year levels, indicating that stronger and more targeted strategies need to be implemented to improve readiness for school and attendance, engagement and achievement throughout the years of schooling. Reading, Writing and Numeracy achievement remains a priority for Western Australia.

## 2010 NAPLAN Data by Geolocation

**Table WA6: 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	Western Australia		Australia	
	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
<b>Reading</b>				
<b>Year 3</b>				
Metropolitan	76.2	94.3	83.1	95.3
Provincial	70.0	93.0	81.5	94.1
Remote	63.7	92.4	65.6	92.6
Very Remote	54.7	91.0	43.9	90.1
<b>Year 5</b>				
Metropolitan	66.9	92.7	77.0	93.2
Provincial	60.3	89.9	72.8	91.5
Remote	48.6	88.9	51.2	87.8
Very Remote	34.0	87.5	26.5	88.3
<b>Year 7</b>				
Metropolitan	80.0	96.0	85.0	96.0
Provincial	78.8	96.1	82.3	95.7
Remote	69.1	95.8	65.9	95.7
Very Remote	47.4	94.3	38.6	94.7
<b>Year 9</b>				
Metropolitan	63.5	92.1	71.2	92.5
Provincial	58.5	90.7	68.1	91.6
Remote	53.4	88.5	50.9	88.4
Very Remote	30.9	86.5	24.2	85.2
<b>Writing</b>				
<b>Year 3</b>				
Metropolitan	81.7	96.9	87.4	96.7
Provincial	79.0	96.5	87.1	96.2
Remote	66.4	96.8	71.9	96.3
Very Remote	47.8	95.6	41.2	94.3
<b>Year 5</b>				
Metropolitan	73.7	94.7	81.9	94.8
Provincial	68.6	92.4	77.6	93.3
Remote	54.1	91.3	55.4	89.9
Very Remote	34.7	87.5	28.2	90.0
<b>Year 7</b>				
Metropolitan	69.7	94.5	79.9	94.4
Provincial	71.0	94.0	75.5	92.3
Remote	58.5	93.7	55.6	92.4
Very Remote	36.0	93.4	28.3	90.8
<b>Year 9</b>				
Metropolitan	59.4	89.7	67.5	89.6
Provincial	51.4	85.6	61.9	86.1
Remote	45.9	82.1	44.4	82.4
Very Remote	29.5	82.7	18.7	80.6
<b>Numeracy</b>				
<b>Year 3</b>				
Metropolitan	82.0	95.5	84.1	95.5
Provincial	76.8	94.7	82.5	94.8
Remote	72.5	95.3	71.7	94.8
Very Remote	59.9	93.8	45.2	92.6
<b>Year 5</b>				
Metropolitan	75.1	95.2	81.7	95.3
Provincial	67.2	93.1	78.0	94.3
Remote	57.1	93.3	57.9	92.1
Very Remote	40.8	91.9	32.5	92.1
<b>Year 7</b>				
Metropolitan	82.6	96.4	85.0	96.3
Provincial	81.4	96.7	82.3	95.6
Remote	70.9	96.0	64.1	95.8
Very Remote	49.1	94.3	41.9	95.1
<b>Year 9</b>				
Metropolitan	74.2	94.2	77.4	94.6
Provincial	68.3	93.4	74.2	93.7
Remote	55.9	90.0	56.6	91.8
Very Remote	43.2	91.7	32.7	90.0

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

The performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students decreases as remoteness increases. By comparison, the performance of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students decreases slightly with remoteness.

## 2010 NAPLAN Data and 2010 Progress Points for Western Australia

One of the 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 target and 2010 progress points for Western Australia are provided in Table WA7.

The trajectories are ambitious and it remains a challenge for Western Australia to meet these progress points. Western Australia is committed to strengthening efforts to improve the learning outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

**Table WA7: Reading, Writing and Numeracy progress points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard (per cent)**

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	58.0	52.6	64.1	63.4	72.5	59.9	60.6	50.7	75.9	62.3	74.7	66.8
Target 2018	75.4	72.8	79.8	79.0	85.0	77.1	76.9	69.8	86.2	78.3	85.8	80.8

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

## NAPLAN Participation

**Table WA8: Reading, Writing and Numeracy participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, exemptions and assessed students, in Western Australia and Australia, 2010 (per cent)**

	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	WA	Aust.	WA	Aust.	WA	Aust.	WA	Aust.
<b>Reading</b>								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	86.6	89.9	87.3	91.2	85.3	89.1	74.0	79.7
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.8	96.1	97.1	96.6	97.0	96.5	95.0	96.5
<b>Writing</b>								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	88.1	90.3	87.2	91.0	86.4	89.5	74.9	80.2
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.8	96.0	97.0	96.5	97.0	96.5	95.2	94.0
<b>Numeracy</b>								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	85.6	89.1	86.1	90.0	85.0	88.6	73.9	78.8
Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	96.4	95.8	96.7	96.3	96.7	96.2	94.6	93.3

Note: The NAPLAN participation data provided reflects students who were exempted, absent/withdrawn and assessed.

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.*

Leadership support is provided through well-established links with Principals Australia through the Dare to Lead program, the Stronger Smarter Institute, What Works and the Women in Leadership program to support the professional development of principals. Dare to Lead is based upon 20 networks of schools (action areas) covering the entire State. The action areas are led by local principals 18 of whom are public school principals. Sixty-eight per cent of public schools currently participate in

Dare to Lead. Professional development was delivered to 530 staff in action areas, including Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers and staff from other professional associations. The Remote Schools Executive Support Program continued to support schools in reviewing their performance with a view to improving educational provision for Aboriginal students.

## 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 publically 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, Western Australia will report on this domain in the 2011 Annual Report.



## Focus School Information

ID	School Name	Suburb/ Town	Geolocation	2010 Semester 2 K-12	2010 Semester 2 Aboriginal K-12	Lit-Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
<b>Government</b>								
5055	Boulder Primary School	Boulder	Provincial	371	134	Yes		
5232	East Kalgoorlie Primary School	Kalgoorlie	Provincial	115	114		Yes	
5275	Laverton School	Laverton	Very Remote	74	41		Yes	
4151	Leonora District High School	Leonora	Remote	207	104		Yes	
4092	Norseman District High School	Norseman	Remote	164	58		Yes	
5552	Nulsen Primary School	Esperance	Remote	302	96	Yes		
5899	The Ngaanyatjarra Lands School	Warakurna	Very Remote	335	326		Yes	
5814	Tjuntjunjara Remote Community School	Great Victoria Desert	Very Remote	41	39		Yes	
5478	Wiluna Remote Community School	Wiluna	Very Remote	110	91		Yes	
5128	Yintarri Remote Community School	Coonana Remote Community	Very Remote	10	10			
5191	Bayulu Remote Community School	Via Fitzroy Crossing	Very Remote	129	126		Yes	
5712	Broome Primary School	Broome	Remote	398	206		Yes	
4065	Broome Senior High School	Broome	Remote	153	20		Yes	
5702	Cable Beach Primary School	Broome	Remote	593	16		Yes	
5691	Dawul Remote Community School	Kununurra	Very Remote	36	36		Yes	
4073	Derby District High School	Derby	Very Remote	577	454		Yes	
5098	Djugerari Remote Community School	Djugerari Community	Very Remote	16	16		Yes	
4149	Fitzroy Valley District High School	Fitzroy Crossing	Very Remote	264	242		Yes	Yes
4145	Halls Creek District High School	Halls Creek	Very Remote	367	348		Yes	Yes
5670	Jungdranung Remote Community School	Glen Hill Station	Very Remote	24	24		Yes	
5236	Kalumburu Remote Community School	Kalumburu	Very Remote	167	167		Yes	
4123	Kununurra District High School	Kununurra	Very Remote	790	367		Yes	
5267	La Grange Remote Community School	Via Broome	Very Remote	205	200		Yes	
5671	Looma Remote Community School	Looma	Very Remote	119	113		Yes	
5723	Muludja Remote Community School	Fossil Downs	Very Remote	27	27		Yes	
5789	Ngalapita Remote Community School	Fitzroy Crossing	Very Remote	20	20		Yes	
5583	One Arm Point Remote Community School	Broome	Very Remote	112	101		Yes	Yes
5714	Wananami Remote Community School	Derby	Very Remote	50	50		Yes	
5101	Wangkatjungka Remote Community School	Christmas Creek	Very Remote	69	69		Yes	
4108	Wyndham District High School	Wyndham	Very Remote	141	104		Yes	

ID	School Name	Suburb/ Town	Geolocation	2010 Semester 2 K-12	2010 Semester 2 Aboriginal K-12	Lit-Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
5032	Beachlands Primary School	Geraldton	Provincial	158	85		Yes	
5049	Bluff Point Primary School	Bluff Point	Provincial	433	160			
5715	Burringurrah Remote Community School	Mt James	Very Remote	41	39		Yes	
5093	Carnarvon Primary School	Carnarvon	Remote	178	150		Yes	
4011	Carnarvon Senior High School	Carnarvon	Remote	206	78		Yes	
5500	East Carnarvon Primary School	Carnarvon	Remote	348	158		Yes	
4085	Meekatharra District High School	Meekatharra	Very Remote	159	146		Yes	
4142	Mount Magnet District High School	Mt Magnet	Very Remote	128	91		Yes	
4088	Mullewa District High School	Mullewa	Remote	98	90		Yes	
4093	Northampton District High School	Northampton	Provincial	118	31		Yes	
5784	Pia Wadjarri Remote Community School	Murchison	Very Remote	12	12		Yes	
5388	Rangeway Primary School	Rangeway	Provincial	500	308		Yes	
5488	Yalgoo Primary School	Yalgoo	Very Remote	27	27		Yes	
5787	Yulga Jinna Remote Community School	Meekatharra	Very Remote	24	24		Yes	
5015	Ashfield Primary School	Ashfield	Metropolitan	101	30			
5303	Midvale Primary School	Midvale	Metropolitan	314	92		Yes	
5774	Moorditj Noongar Community College	Midland	Metropolitan	132	132		Yes	
5580	Baler Primary School	Sth Hedland	Remote	593	192	Yes		
5652	Cassia Primary School	Sth Hedland	Remote	305	90	Yes		
5224	Jigalong Remote Community School	Jigalong	Very Remote	103	93		Yes	
5286	Marble Bar Primary School	Marble Bar	Very Remote	52	39		Yes	
5505	Newman Primary School	Newman	Very Remote	309	89			
4114	Newman Senior High School	Newman	Very Remote	236	59			
5355	Nullagine Primary School	Nullagine	Very Remote	60	59		Yes	
5363	Onslow Primary School	Onslow	Very Remote	131	75		Yes	
5384	Port Hedland Primary School	Port Hedland	Remote	393	65			
4189	Roebourne District High School	Roebourne	Remote	180	177		Yes	
5553	South Hedland Primary School	Sth Hedland	Remote	257	229	Yes		
5593	South Newman Primary School	Newman	Very Remote	467	59	Yes		
5542	Wickham Primary School	Wickham	Remote	350	121			
5088	Carey Park Primary School	Carey Park	Provincial	356	52		Yes	
5477	Wilson Park Primary School	Collie	Provincial	104	36		Yes	
5601	Maidens Park Primary School (Withers)	Bunbury	Provincial	234	43		Yes	
5791	Coolbellup Community School	Coolbellup	Metropolitan	226	41		Yes	
5634	East Kenwick Primary School	Kenwick	Metropolitan	426	66	Yes		
5294	Medina Primary School	Medina	Metropolitan	138	55		Yes	
5568	Southwell Primary School	Hamilton Hill	Metropolitan	97	31		Yes	

ID	School Name	Suburb/ Town	Geolocation	2010 Semester 2 K-12	2010 Semester 2 Aboriginal K-12	Lit-Num NP	Low SES NP	RSD
5439	Tranby Primary School	Rivervale	Metropolitan	140	68	Yes		
5352	West Northam Primary School	Northam	Provincial	167	85		Yes	
<b>Catholic</b>								
5625	Birlirr Ngawiyiwu Catholic School	Ringer Soak	Very Remote	45	45		Yes	
16459	Djarindjin Lombadina Catholic School	Djarindjin Lombadina	Very Remote	81	74	Yes	Yes	
2154	Holy Rosary School	Derby	Very Remote	187	97	Yes	Yes	
16458	John Pujajangka Piyirn School	Mulan	Very Remote	44	44		Yes	Yes
16461	Kururrungku Catholic Education Centre	Billiluna	Very Remote	47	47		Yes	Yes
4239	Luurnpa Catholic School	Balgo Hills	Very Remote	108	108		Yes	Yes
16462	Ngalangangpum School	Warmun	Very Remote	132	132		Yes	
16460	Sacred Heart School	Beagle Bay	Very Remote	90	90	Yes	Yes	
153	St Brigid's School	Middle Swan	Metropolitan	406	25			
171	St John's School	Rangeway	Provincial	196	44		Yes	
175	St Joseph's School	Kununurra	Very Remote	171	104		Yes	
194	St Joseph's School	Wyndham	Very Remote	66	57		Yes	
187	St Joseph's School	Moora	Provincial	155	47	Yes		
16457	St Mary's College	Broome	Remote	55	256	Yes	Yes	
8787	Warlawurru Catholic School	Red Hill	Very Remote	36	25		Yes	
<b>Independent</b>								
2756	Christian Aboriginal Parent-Directed School: Coolgardie	Coolgardie	Remote	130	124			
8870	Christian Aboriginal Parent-Directed School: Kurrawang	Goldfields	Remote	23	20		Yes	
14577	Culunga Aboriginal Community School	West Swan	Metropolitan	65	65		Yes	
5603	Karalundi Aboriginal Education Centre	Murchison	Very Remote	68	66		Yes	
16023	Kulkariya Community School	Kimberley	Very Remote	79	79		Yes	
17285	Nyikina Mangala Community School	Kimberley	Very Remote	34	34		Yes	
13596	Purnululu	Kimberley	Very Remote	26	26		Yes	
4264	Rawa Community School	Pilbara	Very Remote	65	65		Yes	
2705	Strelley Community School	Pilbara	Very Remote	74	74		Yes	
16021	Wulungarra Community School	Kimberley	Very Remote	35	35		Yes	
14016	Yakanarra Community School	Kimberley	Very Remote	56	56		Yes	
2771	Yiyili Aboriginal Community School	Kimberley	Very Remote	70	70		Yes	
1367	Christian Aboriginal Parent-Directed School: Wongutha	Goldfields	Provincial	66	66		Yes	

Note: The Ngaanyatjarra Lands Schools comprises the following campuses – Warakurna RCS, Blackstone RCS, Cosmo Newberry RCS, Jamieson RCS, Wingellina RCS, Kiwirrkurra RCS, Wanarn RCS, Warburton Ranges, Tjirrkarli RCS and Tjukurla RCS

Sources: Government schools data: Western Australia Department of Education School Census Collection August 2010

Catholic schools data: Catholic Education Office of Western Australia

Independent schools data: Association of Independent Schools for Western Australia

## Good Practice

Follow the Dream: Partnerships for Success (FTD: PFS) is the most significant secondary school retention program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to be implemented in Western Australia. It targets secondary school Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who have the academic potential and desire to complete Year 12 and provides them with a supportive learning environment to enable them to complete their studies and gain university entrance. The program aims to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university student enrolments in the belief that a tertiary education opens doors to increased job opportunities and the prospect of meaningful employment.

The program is managed by the Aboriginal Education Directorate in partnership with The Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation. The administration of the program at the local level is via a steering committee, which consists of Departmental staff, local Aboriginal community members, industry representatives and a representative of The Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation. Together with its industry partners, the Foundation contributes substantial financial and in-kind support to the FTD program at eleven industry sites, including half the salary cost for each coordinator and all of the contingency funding. The program attracts significant financial contributions from corporate partners in regional areas, in support of their own community investment aims.

High achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in Years 7 to 12 are invited to apply to be part of the program. If selected, students and parents make a formal commitment to participate in FTD: PFS activities and attend in-school and after school tuition sessions organised by a level three program coordinator. One of the key findings of the longitudinal study of the program was the critical role program coordinators have in the success of students in the program (Edith Cowan University; 2009). They have a key role within schools in promoting effective learning strategies for the students, developing and monitoring individual learning plans for students that focus on academic excellence, subject advice and selection and career and transition to tertiary studies.

The FTD: PFS program is currently being delivered to more than 600 students who attend learning centres in 10 metropolitan and 14 regional locations. An additional site in Port Hedland

commenced in 2010. An outreach program has been established in the Perth metropolitan area to enable schools with small numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to access the program. The key benefits of the program are:

- increased number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students staying at school and going on to university
- improved literacy and numeracy levels
- high level achievement in education becoming the norm rather than the exception in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- enhanced community pride through success of the students and the community's involvement
- increased employment opportunities for young Aboriginal people
- enhanced engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in education and capacity building.

The evaluation for the Follow the Dream is currently on the website: <http://www.det.wa.edu.au/aboriginaleducation/detcms/portal/>

## Indigenous Education Consultative Body's (IECB) Feedback

The Western Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Council (WAAETC) is an independent body, which was established in 1995 to facilitate the delivery of more effective education and training services to Aboriginal people in Western Australia through advice to the relevant Western Australian Ministers. The WAAETC is a primary source of advice to government on emerging issues in Aboriginal Education and Training and has a key role in coordinating the development of a strategic plan for Aboriginal education and training in Western Australia.

*The Western Australian Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Education and Training 2010 – 2015* is a high order plan prepared by the WAAETC and endorsed by the Government through the Minister for Education and the Minister for Training and Workforce Development. This strategic plan is one plan that focuses on

Aboriginal students that spans both education and training. Reporting of progress on the strategic plan is another key function of the WAAETC. The reporting of progress is done by the WAAETC through its Annual Implementation Report. The report provides the Western Australian Government with a comprehensive and authoritative overview of the educational and training outcomes for Aboriginal students. The priorities of the *Western Australian Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Education and Training 2011 – 2015* are aligned with the national *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010 – 2014* and include:

- Priority 1 – *Aboriginal Languages, Culture, Perspectives and History.*
- Priority 2 – *Early Childhood Development and Readiness for Schooling.*
- Priority 3 – *Enrolment, Attendance, Participation and Achievement.*
- Priority 4 – *Quality Teaching and Strong Leadership.*
- Priority 5 – *Community Capacity Building for Leadership and Engagement in Decision-Making.*
- Priority 6 – *Training and Workforce Development for Aboriginal people.*

The WAAETC provides a valuable and independent voice in the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. The strength of the WAAETC is its community base through its membership, networks and other established relationships and provides Aboriginal people with a critical voice in the education of their children. The WAAETC ensures that effective consultation occurs with Aboriginal people and communities on matters concerning Aboriginal education. It provides strategic advice to State and Commonwealth agencies about the development of policies and programs that relate to Aboriginal education.

## Readiness for School

Aboriginal kindergartens were applauded by many Aboriginal people because they were seen as places where young children could be prepared for formal schooling in a culturally sensitive environment. The mainstreaming of Aboriginal kindergartens in the last two decades has caused a lot of anxiety in the Aboriginal

community as it was seen as a strategy to bring about the demise of culturally sensitive early childhood programs and demise in self-determination by Aboriginal people. Expanding access to Aboriginal kindergartens and service delivery to support the early learning of Aboriginal children will create interest and some cynicism. The Aboriginal community welcomes the return of Aboriginal kindergartens but there has to be proper involvement and engagement of Aboriginal people and communities. Access to quality learning centres, attendance and quality teaching will improve the life outcomes of Aboriginal people.

In the WAAETC Annual Implementation reports of the past four years (2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009) reference has been made to the alarming statistics that on average Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children commence school at a level equivalent to two years behind their non-Aboriginal counterparts. While there is reason to believe that some – albeit small – progress is being made, it is worth reiterating that

*“... unless Indigenous children have access to appropriate and high quality early childhood education the disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous educational outcomes will remain and continue to widen as Indigenous children progress through primary school.”*  
(*Australian Directions in Indigenous Education 2005 – 2008*, p.19)

## Engagement and Connections

At the centre of the national *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010 – 2014* are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imperatives of culture, identity, pride and safety that are central to knowing and being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and adults. Unfortunately, far too often the “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imperatives” are neglected in western education.

The WAAETC acknowledges that education and training providers are committed to improving the experiences and success of Aboriginal children and adults in education and training. Nonetheless, historically the organisational structures, values and practices are predominantly dominant-culture embedded. While also acknowledging that genuine and ongoing attempts are being made to minimise that influence, these structures, values and practices impact significantly on Aboriginal voices being heard and applied within an organisation or

institution. They also impact ultimately on the successful participation of Aboriginal students, whether they are children, young people or adults. While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imperatives may exist within education and training providers' planning, operational and reporting documents, the imperatives are not yet fully (or equally) embedded within the culture of Western Australia's education and training providers. The WAAETC is of the view that the Aboriginal imperatives should be so embedded – universally and equally – within a provider's culture, and be the prime driver of any Aboriginal activity within the organisation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people seek to be first-rate, contributing citizens in a modern Australia, with our culture and identity embedded within as individuals and as a cultural group. This can eventuate only if cultural imperatives are acknowledged, accepted and cemented in Australian society. Education and training providers—as instruments of cultural change—have a significant role to play in ensuring that this societal modification occurs in the near future—by embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imperatives in their organisation or institution. Throughout the education industry in Western Australia much is being done to recognise, acknowledge and be more inclusive of Aboriginal culture and identity but more has to be done.

The WAAETC and the Western Australian Department of Education have established a formal partnership agreement, *Strong Connections and Engagement* which provides a unique opportunity for both parties to formally commit to working in partnership to achieve the common goal of accelerating the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. The Agreement outlines a statement of roles and responsibilities for the Department and the WAAETC and clarifies how the WAAETC will work with schools and communities to improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students. This partnership is based on the principles of:

- Inclusion of Aboriginal history, culture and perspectives in teaching and learning programs and contexts will enhance the learning of Aboriginal students.
- Engagement with Aboriginal people is a central element in the development of programs and strategies.
- Accountability and communication will be transparent, honest and open.

- Continual improvement of educational practice at system and local levels.

The involvement of Aboriginal parents/carers and appropriate Aboriginal educators in the development of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student's Personalised Learning Plan is essential. The WAAETC has been involved in some school and community partnership agreements and reports that most are tokenistic and do little to enhance educational outcomes and community engagement. Whilst some of the schools have tried to get an agreement negotiated, there has been a high level of non-participation by local Aboriginal parents, carers, families and community members.

## Attendance

In 2010, for the first time, statewide data was available from the Western Australian Curriculum Council regarding the 'registrations' of all students undertaking secondary school level education. The data shows the number of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students registered in year levels as well as by system or sector and includes home education. It is valuable to have such an overall view of the situation, but the crucial point that remains is student attendance and participation *"The strategically important goal is closing the gap on literacy and numeracy achievement by indigenous students...if you want this to happen you have to first focus on the magic bullet of school attendance and readiness."* (Noel Pearson, "Some magic bullets for education", *The Weekend Australian*, 27 March, 2010)

The statistics also raises the critical and closely related issues of completions *vis-à-vis* expectations and aspirations. In the matter of Year 12 completion, of continuing concern are the secondary school figures, in which negative disparities exist between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students' attendance, retention, achievements and completion percentages; it would appear that very few Aboriginal students are in the mainstream courses/ subjects. It will be important to pursue the reasons for this. It may be due, in part at least, to the level/s or horizons of 'expectations and aspirations'. If more Aboriginal students are to undertake post-secondary school education, the nature and quality of completions, expectations and aspirations must be lifted.

## Literacy and Numeracy

The Department of Education has key performance targets around halving the gap in literacy and numeracy, improving attendance and halving the gap in attainment of Year 12 certification. Whilst there is baseline data provided in order to demonstrate improvement over the next three years, the performance targets should also target specific training and professional development of teachers that offers quality teaching leading to accelerated achievement and competency in literacy and numeracy.

## Leadership, Quality Teaching and Workforce Development

Education and training providers need to develop strategies that actively engage members of the Aboriginal community – including Aboriginal staff and students at various levels of education, that is, to build or enhance capacity. In terms of schools, it means developing strategies aimed at providing parents and carers with the necessary training and skills that can enable them to engage confidently in their children's education and training. For vocational education and training providers and universities it means developing strategies and possibly courses for Aboriginal staff, students and community to enhance

their capacity for involvement in the education processes within their institution. All providers seem to be providing a number of opportunities for AIEOs/ATA, principals and teachers. Perhaps more focus on leadership development of Aboriginal staff is needed for teachers, principals and managers.

## Pathways to Real Post-School Options

All education systems and sectors need to be strong advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students if we have any hope of closing the achievement gap in Aboriginal education. The cornerstone of advocacy is the acknowledgement that some individuals or groups in society require, from time to time, representation of their views and their interests by another. This function is a necessary recognition of the imbalance of power between an institution and an individual made more intense and problematic when individuals or groups from culturally different backgrounds from those who design and administer the intuitions/systems, attempt to interface with them to secure their own needs. It is imperative that educational and training providers and/or institutions engage more in advocacy in Aboriginal education, training and employment and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are given appropriate support and counselling in their pursuit of post school options.