

Low SES School Communities National Partnership

Final Report

*Evaluation of staffing, management and
accountability initiatives*

Centre for International Research on Education
Systems



Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	i
Tables	iii
Figures.....	iv
Glossary.....	vi
Executive Summary.....	vii
1. Introduction.....	1
Organisation of the Report.....	2
2. The Low SES National Partnerships	4
Background and context.....	4
School staffing	7
School management.....	9
Accountability.....	10
3. Evaluation of the Low SES NP	12
4. Qualitative Data: Case Studies and Principal and Teacher Surveys	21
Case Studies.....	21
Case study findings	22
High impact initiatives	23
Immediate and long-term impacts	26
Principal and Staff Surveys	27
Principals' Surveys.....	27
The 2012 Principal Survey	29
Implementation of initiatives and school context.....	30
Perceived Effectiveness of Initiatives	33
The 2014 Principal Survey	35
Key Findings	36
Implementation	40
Effectiveness	41
Sustainability.....	44
Teacher Survey, 2013	45
Qualitative Open Responses.....	54
5. Evidence of impact of Low SES NP on student outcomes.....	65
Trend analysis using NAPLAN	67
Method	68

Data	69
Results	70
Impact relative to linked programs.....	72
Interaction with SES	72
Variance analysis using NAPLAN	73
Results	75
NAPLAN analysis based on benchmarks.....	81
Results	83
Low SES NP effect	84
Assessment of impact on learning gain using NAPLAN	89
6. Analysis of other student outcomes.....	99
7. Conclusion	105
References	108
Appendix A: Fixed effects model tables.....	111
Appendix B: 2012 Principal Online Survey Instrument.....	116
Appendix C: 2013 Teacher Online Survey Instrument.....	142
Appendix D. 2014 Principal Online Survey Instrument	148



Tables

Table 2-1	Relevance of initiatives to improvement in school staffing, management and accountability.....	6
Table 4-1	Overview of initiatives implemented by 2013 and 2012 case study schools	24
Table 4-2	Responses to the school principal survey, 2012 & 2014.....	27
Table 4-3	Effectiveness of Low SES NP-funded initiatives by reform area and question number (%).....	34
Table 4-4	Questions grouped by categories and survey item.....	47
Table 4-5	Teacher responses on aspects of Managing the Classroom that have improved a little or a lot due to Low SES NP (%).....	49
Table 4-6	Summary of teacher views by school characteristics.....	51
Table 5-1	Data cleaning	70
Table 5-2	Summary of Low SES NP estimates using results from fixed effects models with and without duration of participation.....	71
Table 5-3	Heterogeneous Low SES NP effects.....	72
Table 5-4	Low SES NP variation with SES.....	73
Table 5-5	Partitions of variance explained, NAPLAN Reading, Year 3 and Year 5, Government Schools: 2009 and 2013 compared	76
Table 5-6	Partitions of variance explained, NAPLAN Numeracy, Year 3 and Year 5, Government Schools: 2009 and 2013 compared	77
Table 5-7	Partitions of variance explained, NAPLAN Reading, Year 7 and Year 9, Government Schools: 2009 and 2013 compared	79
Table 5-8	Partitions of variance explained, NAPLAN Numeracy, Year 7 and Year 9, Government Schools: 2009 and 2013 compared	80
Table 5-9	Definitions of selected key student and school level factors.....	82
Table 5-10	Odd ratios of remaining at or above benchmark proficiency in NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy from Year 3 and Year 7 in 2011 to Year 5 and Year 9 in 2013 (statistically significant differences only)	84
Table 5-11	Gains and gain-score spread in NAPLAN Reading, Year 3 to Year 5: Low SES NP schools compared to state means (government schools).....	91
Table 5-12	Gains and gain-score spread in NAPLAN Reading, Year 7 to Year 9: Low SES NP schools compared to state means (government schools).....	94
Table 5-13	Standardised estimates of adjusted gain scores, Year 3 to Year 5, NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy: 2009-2011 and 2010-2013 compared.....	97

Table 5-14	Standardised estimates of adjusted gain scores, Year 7 to Year 9, NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy: 2009-2011 and 2010-2013 compared.....	98
Table 6-1	Repeated measures regression estimates of school performance across key indicators, 2009-2012	101
Table 6-2	Repeated measures regression estimates of school performance using School Certificate results, 2008-2011	102
Table 6-3	Repeated measures regression estimates of school performance using attendance rates, 2009-2012: primary schools	103
Table A-1	Effects of Low SES NP participation on NAPLAN achievement in Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Numeracy, fixed effects based on participation only (standard errors in parentheses)	112
Table A-2	Effects of Low SES NP participation on NAPLAN achievement in Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Numeracy, fixed effects based on participation and duration of participation (standard errors in parentheses)	114

Figures

Figure 4-1	To what extent have the following changes occurred in your school as a result of participation in the Low SES NP? (%)	36
Figure 4-2	Changes because of school's participation in the Low SES NP, Strongly Agree (%).....	49
Figure 4-3	Contribution of Low SES NP to Managing the Classroom Environment: Primary and Secondary Teachers, Strongly Agree (%)	52
Figure 4-4	Contribution of Low SES NP to Managing the School Environment: Primary and Secondary Teachers, Strongly Agree (%)	53
Figure 4-5	All responses: Effect of Low SES NP on your role as teacher (%).....	54
Figure 4-6	Primary compared with secondary responses: Effects of Low SES NP on your role as a teacher (%).....	58
Figure 5-1:	Proportion of students with NAPLAN performance 'at or above benchmark' or 'below benchmark': 2011-2013 matched cohorts, all schools	83
Figure 5-2	Academic progress between 2011 and 2013, by 2011 performance	83
Figure 5-3	Estimated effects of Low SES NP schools on student progress between 2011 and 2013: effects measured as percentages of students (significant effects only).....	87
Figure 5-4	Estimated effects of 2011 commencing Low SES NP schools on student progress between 2011 and 2013: effects measured as probabilities	88
Figure 5-5	Learning gain in Numeracy, Years 7-9, 2009-2011.....	89

Figure 5-6	Mean and adjusted gain scores for Reading gain, secondary schools, by SES (2009-2011)	90
Figure 5-7	Gains and spread in NAPLAN Reading, Year 3 to Year 5: Low SES NP schools	92
Figure 5-8	Gains and spread in NAPLAN Reading, Year 7 to Year 9: Low SES NP secondary schools.....	95



Glossary

ACARA	The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. Has oversight of NAPLAN.
ARIA	Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia—an index that underpins many location classifications.
COAG	Council of Australian Governments, an organisation consisting of the federal government, the governments of the eight states and territories and the Australian Local Government Association. NPs are implemented under the auspices of COAG.
CIRES	Centre for International Research on Education Systems, Victoria University.
CRES	Centre for Research on Education Systems, The University of Melbourne.
DEC	Department of Education and Communities, NSW (from April 2011).
DET	Department of Education and Training, NSW (until April 2011).
FTE	Full Time Equivalent.
HAT	Highly Accomplished Teacher (government sector) or equivalent (non-government sector). An initiative within the NP. A HAT models good teaching practice and mentors other teachers through supervision, demonstration and team teaching. A HAT usually has half the teaching load of a regular classroom teacher and is a member of the school executive.
ICSEA	Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage, a scale that represents levels of educational advantage associated with the educational and occupational background of parents of students. A school's ICSEA value is the average level of the educational advantage of its students. Developed by ACARA to assist with the interpretation of NAPLAN results.
Low SES NP	Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities National Partnership.
MCEETYA	The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, (a Ministerial Council of COAG) which was replaced from July 2009 by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) and the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE).
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy. An annual national standardised literacy and numeracy testing program for students Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.
NP	National Partnership, agreements between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments made under the auspices of COAG outlining funding.
ISP	Individual Student Plan.
PD/PL	Professional development/Professional learning.

Executive Summary

The National Partnership (NP) Agreements were a series of policy interventions initiated by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and implemented across all states and territories in Australia. There were three Smarter Schools National Partnerships - the *Literacy and Numeracy*, *Improving Teacher Quality* and *Low Socio-Economic School Communities* National Partnerships. All three NPs were designed to improve student learning in Australian schools. Although each NP functioned independently, they were conceived as a mutually complementary reform package. The Low SES Schools National Partnership targeted schools serving disadvantaged communities and provided them with extra resources and targeted policy initiatives to help them build capacity and improve student learning outcomes.

This evaluation was commissioned by the NSW Minister for Education to evaluate selected aspects of the Low Socio-Economic School Communities National Partnership (Low SES NP) bilateral agreement between the Commonwealth and NSW Government. The particular aspects under review are the implementation, effectiveness and sustainability of initiatives dealing with staffing, management and accountability.

From 2011 until 2014, the Centre for International Research on Education Systems at Victoria University (formerly at the University of Melbourne) has evaluated the implementation and effectiveness of initiatives associated with staffing, management and accountability as developed through school involvement in the Low SES NP. The evaluators worked closely with all schools participating in the Low SES NP and relevant stakeholders during this time.

The Low SES NP featured six reform areas that encompassed a variety of initiatives implemented by schools:

- Reform Area 1:** Incentives to attract high-performing teachers and principals
- Reform Area 2:** Adoption of best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals
- Reform Area 3:** School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility
- Reform Area 4:** Provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities
- Reform Area 5:** Strengthen school accountability
- Reform Area 6:** External partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities and the provision of access

Initiatives associated with staffing, management and accountability fell under five out of the six reform areas associated with the Low SES NP. Over the life of the Low SES NP, schools implemented a variety of interconnecting and reinforcing strategies associated with the various reform areas.

A key question for the evaluation is whether or not participation in the Low SES NP has helped improve the education and life opportunities of students from low SES backgrounds through improvements in student outcomes. To examine this question, a range of analyses were undertaken using available data to evaluate the effectiveness of the Low SES NP in improving NSW student outcomes across a range of measures including NAPLAN results.

A NAPLAN trend analysis employed an approximation of a multiple error component model using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) with student level fixed effects, to measure effects of Low SES NP participation on NAPLAN scores. Estimation was performed on approximately one million student scores between 2009 and 2013.

Results suggest that Low SES NP has had a significant positive effect on student NAPLAN achievement scores, with the largest improvement in Grammar and Punctuation scores. The main results suggest that participation in Low SES NP is associated with gains in NAPLAN achievement scores for students on average ranging from 1.79 points for Spelling to 3.64 points in Grammar and Punctuation. Analysis also indicates the importance of considering the duration that a program was in place, with Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Numeracy scores increasing by 0.4 to 1.5 points per additional year of participation in the program. This translates over a period of four years of Low SES NP participation into increased student scores of five points on average in participating schools compared to non-participating schools, after controlling for student intake characteristics and school location.

The analysis also considered a number of extensions, including comparing the effects of the Low SES NP with linked programs such as NP Literacy and Numeracy, NP for teacher quality (TQ), NP for the teacher quality enhanced decision making pilot (TQE), and the NP for teacher quality for schools participating as a 'spoke' of a Centre for Excellence Hub (TQSpoke). Results presented indicate that Low SES NP has had the most significant positive effect on NAPLAN scores.

An analysis of achievement gain comparing gain scores against the state average and within school variation in gain, shows there is a reduction in the gap between the primary schools participating in the Low SES NP and the state average in Reading gain. The reductions are small, though consistent.

The effects of the Low SES NP were also measured using a study of benchmark proficiency in NAPLAN and the proportions of students who remain at or above benchmark standards in NAPLAN from 2011 (Year 3 and Year 7) to 2013 (Year 5 and Year 9). The results are compared to students in schools not participating in the Low SES NP. The benchmark standards used in the analysis are set higher than the current minimum national NAPLAN standard. The reason for doing this is to set the standard to international levels based on PIRLS, TIMSS and PISA for relevant age and year-levels.

The results show that students in Low SES NP schools were more likely to remain at or above benchmark standards from Year 3 to Year 5 and from Year 7 to Year 9 compared to

students in other schools, and more students in Low SES NP schools were likely to make up ground compared to students in other (non-Low SES NP) schools. Approximately five per cent more students in Low SES NP schools remained at or above the benchmark in Numeracy from Year 7 to Year 9 compared to students in other schools, all else equal. For students falling below benchmark in Numeracy in the transition from Year 7 to Year 9, five per cent fewer girls and four per cent fewer boys in Low SES NP schools compared to students in other schools experienced this.

The results for schools commencing in the Low SES NP program in 2011 were even stronger. The percentage of Year 7 girls in Low SES NP schools who remained at or above benchmark in Year 9 Numeracy was nine per cent higher than for girls in other 2011 non-NP schools. The rate for boys was seven per cent. The difference for Numeracy at primary school level was an advantage of five per cent (rounded) for both boys and girls.

Students in Low SES schools were also less likely to remain below benchmark in the progress from Year 3 to Year 5 and from Year 7 to Year 9. For example, eight per cent more Low SES NP boys went from below benchmark in Numeracy in Year 3 to at or above benchmark in Year 5, compared to boys in non-NP schools in 2011. The advantage for Low SES NP girls was seven per cent.

A variance analysis was undertaken using a sequence of multi-level models to estimate within and between school variation in NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy scores. The models were applied to NAPLAN results obtained in 2009 and those obtained in 2013. This was to permit comparison of results at the outset of the Low SES NP initiatives and in the final year in a quasi-pre and post-test framework. Results suggest modest positive improvement in achievement of students in Low SES NP schools.

Results of analyses using a repeated measures mixed effects design for a range of government school performance measures other than NAPLAN revealed that on four measures — HSC attainment, HSC achievement, ATAR scores, and attendance — schools not participating in Low SES NP had incremental falls in performance relative to Low SES NP schools. Within Low SES NP schools, those commencing in 2009 display relative improvement over time in HSC attainment and apparent retention (both Year 7 to 12 and Year 10 to 12). This may reflect an impact of participation of this group of schools (which had been in the program for the longest period) on retaining students in school.

In identifying impact this report has shown how schools overall have shifted on some measures as a result of the Low SES NP. Further work is required to better understand the extent of impact, the nature of initiatives or interventions that may be understood to exert more powerful or consistent outcomes, and the school-level factors that may assist in optimising program effects.

1. Introduction

This report investigates the implementation, effectiveness and sustainability of initiatives within five reform areas of the *Low SES School Communities National Partnership* (Low SES NP) dealing with school staffing, management and accountability. It represents the final report of an evaluation of the *school staffing, management and accountability initiatives* of the Low SES NP commissioned on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education and undertaken by the International Centre for Research on Education Systems at Victoria University.

The evaluation addresses selected aspects of the bilateral National Partnership Agreement for Low SES School Communities between the Commonwealth and the NSW Government, and the associated implementation plan. The Low SES NP was one of a number of National Partnership Agreements created through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in order to improve student learning in Australian schools. The Low SES NP was implemented in schools across the government, Catholic and independent school sectors in all state and territory jurisdictions.

The Evaluation of the School Staffing, Management and Accountability Initiatives addresses the implementation and effectiveness of initiatives funded through this Partnership to reform staffing and management practices at schools within low SES communities and to improve the public accountability of those schools. The broader goal of the Partnership, cultural change that will lead to a sustainable, more strategic and evidence-driven approach to managing schools that is ultimately transferable to other schools, is one particular focus of this study. A series of reports presented as part of this evaluation have considered the nature and relative impact of the initiatives that schools have implemented through the National Partnership and the extent to which these initiatives have contributed to improving outcomes.

Selected low SES schools participated in the Partnership over four years in NSW, joining it progressively in annual cohorts from 2009 to 2012. When joining the Partnership, schools engaged in a consultative process with their stakeholders to decide on the initiatives they wished to implement to address particular reform areas. Their initial self-evaluation was the basis for selecting and developing strategies to best meet the needs of all students in the local context. The results of the consultation were distilled into a school plan which detailed agreed targets, strategies, resources, evaluation processes and outputs and which was then revised annually. Participation in the Partnership provided schools with an opportunity to explore staffing, management and accountability in their school by developing plans and goals, strategies for achieving those goals, evaluation processes for the strategies and reporting mechanisms for the outcomes.

Organisation of the Report

This final report is submitted as part of an agreed work program endorsed by the NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee in partnership with the Centre for International Research on Education Systems (CIRES) at Victoria University.

The report is organised into three key parts. The first part presents material relevant to the context and background of the evaluation and the initiatives. The second part presents summaries of earlier reports and findings, together with more developed analyses drawn from school-based studies undertaken between 2012 and 2014. These build a picture of how the evaluation has developed and document how schools experienced the implementation of the Low SES NP initiatives and assessed effectiveness of measures introduced under the program. The third part of the report models administrative data to investigate and analyse the extent to which program outcomes may be discerned at school and system levels making use of a range of measures of staff and student performance and wellbeing.

Part A: Context and background to the National Partnership initiatives

Section 2 provides background and context to the National Partnership on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities and the national and state education reform agenda that informed the Low SES NP.

Section 3 details the evaluation itself, outlining key research questions, study approaches and project outputs to date.

Part B: What the schools have told us: preliminary information from the participating schools

Section 4 showcases data derived from a succession of school-based focus studies and targeted online surveys of teachers and principals undertaken between 2012 and 2014. The data provide a picture of how implementation of the Low SES NP initiative has been conducted across distinct school settings with specific focus on the areas of the Low SES NP that are particularly relevant to this evaluation - School Staffing, Management and Accountability.

Part C: Evidence of impact of Low SES NP on student outcomes

Section 5 points to the evidence of impact of the program overall, drawing on administrative data to investigate the extent to which program outcomes may be discerned at school and system levels. It addresses the assessment of impact on learning measured using NAPLAN, making use of variance analysis and trend analysis.

Section 6 provides analysis of broader student outcomes pertinent to the Low SES NP, including attendance, Higher School Certificate (HSC) results, School Certificate results, Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) scores, and rates of retention to Year 12.

Section 7 then addresses the importance of the evaluation overall and draws some concluding remarks.



2. The Low SES National Partnership

Background and context

Despite the sound performance of Australian students on many achievement measures, the relationship between SES and school achievement is stronger in Australia than in many other countries (Lamb & McGaw 2007). Although this relationship has weakened across some measures in Australia since 2000, the apparent improvement in equity can be attributed to the 'lower proportion of [Australian] students achieving at the top levels' (COAG Reform Council 2010: 34). The effect of socioeconomic background on scores in achievement tests is mirrored in a range of other educational outcomes such as Year 12 completion and post school destinations. Schools that serve low SES communities encounter other patterns of social disadvantage as well. They tend to teach higher proportions of Aboriginal, non-English speaking and refugee students, or work with families with a history of generational poverty.

An efficient school system maximises the relationship between a student's ability and their achievement and minimises any influence of extraneous factors such as social disadvantage. *The Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians* commits the Australian Government and the state and territory governments to working cooperatively with all school sectors to 'focus on school improvement in low socio-economic communities' (MCEETYA 2008: 16). The Low SES School Communities National Partnership addressed this commitment.

Together with the *Literacy and Numeracy* and *Teacher Quality* National Partnerships, the Low SES NP was one of the three *Smarter Schools National Partnerships*. These three Partnerships were designed to function independently, but they 'are tightly integrated and mutually complementary processes of reform' (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 2). The intention was that participating schools 'will be better equipped to address the complex and interconnected challenges facing students in disadvantaged communities' through the funding of school improvement programs (COAG 2008).

To improve student learning and achievement outcomes, the Low SES NP sought to build capacity in participating schools. The Low SES NP featured six reform areas that encompassed a variety of initiatives implemented by schools:

- Reform Area 1:** Incentives to attract high-performing teachers and principals
- Reform Area 2:** Adoption of best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals
- Reform Area 3:** School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility
- Reform Area 4:** Provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities
- Reform Area 5:** Strengthen school accountability
- Reform Area 6:** External partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities and the provision of access.

All schools were required to implement activities from all six reform areas over the duration of their four year participation in the Partnership. Government schools were required to address all areas in each year of their participation. Most Catholic schools adopted the same approach as government schools. Independent schools were required to include activities that addressed Reform Areas 1 and 4 in the first year of their participation and required to address all reforms after that. Schools could also choose to introduce strategies to address activities from the two other Smarter Schools National Partnerships—Literacy and Numeracy and Improving Teacher Quality—where these also addressed a specific reform area. Schools were able to choose strategies associated with other reform areas as part of their school consultation process.

School staffing, management and accountability are three key areas of educational reform supported by the Smarter Schools National Partnerships, particularly the Low SES NP. A substantial body of research highlights the importance of these initiatives, particularly in combination, for school improvement. An effective policy environment emphasises the interconnection among strategies and initiatives and the need for a systematic rather than piecemeal approach (Elmore 2007). The recognition that socially-disadvantaged school communities require additional support is the key driver behind the Low SES NP. Targeted financial support for low socio-economic school communities can improve student outcomes (Gustafsson 2003). The extent of any improvement, however, depends on the way in which those funds are used. The research emphasises the need for simultaneous complementary interventions over a range of school practices. For instance, McKinsey & Company (2007) in a comparison of the performance of many education systems found that school reforms were often unable to deliver substantial improvements in student outcomes because other aspects of school practice or organisation impeded improvement. Similarly, it is reported that UK schools using an amalgam of strategies suited to their context and stage of development had an increased chance of achieving long-term transformational change (Harris, Allen & Goodall 2008).

As Table 2.1 shows, initiatives associated with staffing, management and accountability fit under Reform Areas 1 through 5. Reform Area 6 was under review in a separate project run by the University of Canberra's Education Institute and subsequently all initiatives associated with the development of school external partnerships were out of scope for this evaluation. Reform 4 was divided up by the previous progress reports to factor in both a teacher and a student perspective.

Table 2-1 Relevance of initiatives to improvement in school staffing, management and accountability

Reform Area	Examples of initiatives	staffing	management	accountability
1. Incentives to attract high performing teachers & principals	Establishing leadership and strategic positions	highly	highly	highly
	Providing mentoring support	highly	highly	relevant
	leadership training & development	highly	highly	relevant
2. Adoption of best practice performance management & staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals	Professional learning plans	highly	highly	highly
	Staff performance and review	highly	highly	highly
	Early career teacher support	highly	relevant	relevant
	Staff mix	highly	relevant	slightly
3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation & flexibility	Para-professional employment	highly	relevant	slightly
	Team-based approaches	relevant	highly	slightly
	Timetabling and school organisation	relevant	highly	relevant
	Cooperation with other schools	relevant	relevant	slightly
4a. Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities for <i>teachers</i>	Data analysis	highly	highly	highly
	Literacy and numeracy	highly	highly	slightly
	Supporting targeted groups	highly	highly	slightly
	Using ICT	highly	highly	slightly
	welfare			
4b. Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities for <i>students</i>	Language, literacy & numeracy	highly	relevant	relevant
	Supporting targeted groups	highly	relevant	relevant
	Transition support	highly	relevant	relevant
	Welfare & student behaviour	highly	relevant	relevant
5. Strengthen school accountability	Using evidence to inform planning	relevant	highly	highly
	Monitoring & evaluating	relevant	highly	highly
	Improving accountability and reporting	relevant	highly	highly

Schools were selected into the Low SES NP based on their score on the ABS Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD), their sector (government, Catholic and independent) and their school type (primary, secondary, combined and specialist). The majority of schools involved in the Low SES NP were primary settings, with smaller numbers in secondary, combined and specialist settings. School joined the Low SES NP program from 2009 in waves and some schools were involved in more than one NP

concurrently. At the start of the evaluation in 2011, 637 schools were involved in the Low SES NP.

Subsequent to the Smarter Schools National Partnerships, COAG endorsed the *Empowering Local Schools* National Partnership, which supported participating schools to make more decisions at a local level so that they can respond better to the needs of their students and their local school community and hence improve educational outcomes for their students. This Partnership, which was implemented in 2012 and 2013, built on some aspects of changes under the Low SES NP. It further emphasised the role of the principal and school executive in strategic planning and operational management, including staffing and budgets.

In NSW, 331 schools participated in this *Empowering Local Schools* NP. The participation of the 229 NSW government schools in this Partnership is linked to the broader *Local Schools, Local Decisions* reform in NSW government schools, which also seeks to devolve greater decision-making to individual schools. The introduction of a new resource allocation model is central to these changes in the government sector and will give principals greater discretion in the use of their funding. As with the Low SES NP, these reforms seek a culture change in schools to underpin continual improvement in student learning outcomes.

School staffing, management and accountability are three key areas of educational reform supported by the Smarter Schools National Partnerships, particularly the Low SES NP. A substantial body of research highlights the importance of these initiatives, particularly in combination, for school improvement. An effective policy environment emphasises the interconnection among strategies and initiatives and the need for a systematic rather than piecemeal approach (Elmore 2007).

School staffing

Low SES NP staffing reforms focus on improving retention while also supporting initiatives to encourage quality teaching.

Staff retention

Researchers have documented the importance of retaining quality staff within low SES schools (Lamb & Teese 2005, Lamb 2007, Welch, Helme et al. 2007). Lamb and Teese's (2005) review of equity programs within disadvantaged schools in NSW found examples of successful and highly effective programs that were 'undermined by high staff turnover' (Lamb & Teese 2005: 133). The turnover in staff becomes a financial burden as schools need to reinvest to up-skill and build capacity once again. The long-term success of an initiative depends on the retention of expert staff, as 'continuity and stability in staffing are essential ingredients to a robust equity funding framework' (Lamb & Teese 2005: 150).

The Low SES NP addressed staff retention within Reform Area 1 with various 'incentives to attract high-performing teachers and principals' (Smarter Schools National Partnership 2011). Incentives included:

- additional staffing resource incentives: employing a temporary Highly Accomplished Teacher, employing temporary paraprofessionals
- school organisation incentives: providing additional release for staff for professional development or team teaching
- financial incentives: one-off recruitment allowances, changing approaches to permanent and casual appointments, providing an allowance to high achieving teacher education students to undertake internships at targeted National Partnership schools.

Strategies to encourage quality teaching

The OECD report *Teachers Matter* found that reforms to build quality teaching in schools require a two-pronged approach. One dimension of reform needs to focus on attracting and retaining teachers to work in particular schools, while another addresses the status and effectiveness of teachers (OECD 2005). The report *How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top* encourages systems to invest in their staff and ensure that the right applicants become teachers as 'the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers' (McKinsey & Company 2007). The Low SES NP supported a range of measures to encourage quality teaching:

- employing high performing graduates, and/or ensuring that new graduates are mentored by more experienced teachers
- employing paraprofessional staff with skills to provide in and out of classroom support to teachers and allow them more time to focus on student learning
- providing opportunities for existing staff to access professional learning and build capacity through collaborative planning and team teaching opportunities
- identifying an executive member with English as a Second Language (ESL) expertise to work across schools to lead professional learning and coordinate teaching and learning strategies
- employing a teacher with expertise in Aboriginal student learning outcomes to work across schools and embed Aboriginal content and viewpoints across all curriculum areas
- identifying an academic partner from a university to promote action research within the school setting and provide additional support for teaching and learning
- using new technologies to allow access and sharing of resources.

The appointment of Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) (and their non-government sector equivalents) is a key strategy of the Low SES NP in NSW. A HAT is defined as an excellent teacher who models high quality teaching for his/her colleagues across school(s) and will lead other teachers in the development and refinement of their teaching practice to improve student learning outcomes within and across schools. The creation of paraprofessional positions through the National Partnerships is another key strategy to support quality teaching. Educational paraprofessional staff work under the guidance and

supervision of teachers to support teaching and learning inside and outside the classroom, while operational paraprofessionals work under the guidance of school executive to fulfil non classroom based roles in schools.

Reform Area 4 of the Low SES NP provided opportunities for staff to participate in professional development, especially in data analysis, literacy and numeracy intervention programs, as well as in developing individual learning plans for students, homework centres and introducing strategies that meet the needs of ESL and refugee students (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011).

School management

School management reforms within the Low SES NP can be grouped by three themes: leadership capacity, instructional leadership and distributive leadership.

Leadership capacity

Research on effective schools working within disadvantaged communities in Melbourne found that leadership culture is a precondition for high-performance (Kellock, Burke et al. 2007). Hence Reform Area 1 of the Low SES NP involved strategies to attract high performing principals into disadvantaged schools. Government schools participating in the Low SES NP were offered (with regional director endorsement) a one-off recruitment allowance 'up to a maximum of \$15,000 gross to attract principals to challenging schools', with the qualifier that 'the principal will be required to remain at the school for at least 3 years' (NSW Department of Education and Training). Catholic schools also documented various measures to attract high-performing principals into schools that are difficult to staff or may be geographically remote (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 46). The Australian Productivity Commission sees 'merit in offering higher remuneration for hard-to-staff positions as a way of signalling vacancies of the highest priority across the schools workforce' (Productivity Commission 2012: 281).

Reform Area 2 incorporated building leadership capacity by encouraging schools to 'adopt best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals'. A clear role for principals ensures that schools are able to build 'strong leadership with a clear vision and direction for the school and a high degree of leadership stability over time' (Zbar, Kimber et al. 2008: 3). Mentoring and coaching for school leaders by matching 'aspiring executive with experienced executive at other schools' is supported 'to increase the numbers of school leaders in particular areas' (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 44). Targeted professional development for leadership such as the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy* and the *Team Leadership for Schools Improvement* programs are also provided (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 44). The Low SES NP also provided resources for schools to employ a Business Manager or Assistant Business Manager which may ease the administrative workload on leadership (NSW Department of Education and Training 2010).

Instructional leadership

Some research suggests that successful school leaders should remain instructional leaders first and foremost and focus on the 'the improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role' (Elmore 2000: 20; Robinson 2007). Instructional leadership is encouraged by the Low SES NP through 'principals working with school executive teams to provide teachers with the appropriate knowledge and skills to implement strategies to improve outcomes for all students' (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 46). School leaders involved in the Low SES NP will also be aware of the strategies that teachers are employing within classrooms, through the documentation of individual teacher professional learning plans, as teachers work with coaches/mentors to set goals, develop strategies and evaluate their own professional growth (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011).

Distributive leadership

Distributive leadership is about building a model of leadership within schools that 'is not top-down or overtly bureaucratic' (Harris, Allen & Goodall 2008: 18). Fullan reports that an 'organisation cannot flourish (or at least not for long) by the actions of the top leader alone . . . there needs to be leaders at many levels' (Fullan 2002: 12). The Low SES NP provided school leaders with release time so that they can offer teachers focused, individualised professional learning in areas such as leadership development (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 44). Distributive leadership of this kind creates new teams and 'spreads out leadership practice', which has proven effective to 'secure greater collective responsibility, decision making and support for the quality of teaching and learning' (Harris, Allen & Goodall 2008: 18).

Accountability

Reform Area 5 of the Low SES NP encouraged schools to set explicit goals, clearly describe strategies to achieve those goals and propose the methods to be used for assessing the success of the strategies—hence part of the broader emphasis on data analysis (Smarter Schools National Partnership 2011). The greater transparency inherent in these processes enhances the school's management accountability, as well as contributing to a broader culture of evidence-based practices and reflection. The Low SES NP provided schools with many approaches to build greater accountability including (from Department of Education and Training 2011):

- implementing a new accountability process for school executives in schools
- strengthening school development and accountability within whole-school planning, such as through interviews with members of the school community, monitoring of school performance, assessments of teachers and leaders, external evaluations and publish annual reports
- developing specialist teams within school clusters to visit schools regularly to assess outcomes in terms of the School Plan

- employing additional staff with specific skills in the creation and maintenance of databases for data collection
- engaging school leadership teams in school accountability processes across the various levels of the school.



3. Evaluation of the Low SES NP

The NSW Department of Education & Communities contracted the Centre for International Research on Education Systems at Victoria University (formerly located at the University of Melbourne) to undertake an evaluation of aspects of the Low SES NP in NSW across all three school sectors. The project team has evaluated the initiatives associated with staffing, management and accountability from 2011 until 2015. During this time, the research team has worked closely with all schools involved in the Low SES NP as well as with all other relevant stakeholders.

The purpose of the overall evaluation was to examine what staffing, management and accountability initiatives were implemented by schools and whether they had improved student outcomes. Some key guiding questions were:

Has increased flexibility in staffing practices in Low SES NP schools led to improved student results?

Have incentives led to improved retention of high quality teachers and leaders in Low SES NP schools?

Have initiatives targeting accountability, leadership capacity and whole school planning and engagement led to improved student results?

How cost-effective are school staffing, management and accountability initiatives delivered in Low SES NP Schools?

The research team has delivered six progress reports to the NSW Department of Education & Communities. They were as follows:

- Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES) (2012). Evaluation of the School Staffing, Management and Accountability Initiatives. First Progress Report.
- Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES) (2012). Low SES School Communities Smarter Schools National Partnerships Evaluation. Case studies of staffing, management and accountability initiatives. Second Progress Report.
- Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES) (2013). Low SES School Communities Smarter Schools National Partnership Evaluation. Survey of Principals of Schools Participating in the Low SES School Communities National Partnership. Third Progress Report.

- Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES) (2013). Low SES School Communities National Partnership Evaluation. Case studies of staffing, management and accountability. Fourth Progress Report.
- Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES) (2014). Evaluation of School Staffing, Management and Accountability Initiatives. Results from the teacher survey. Fifth Progress Report.
- Centre for International Research on Education Systems (CIRES) Low SES School Communities National Partnership evaluation of staffing, management and accountability initiatives. Results from the 2014 survey of principals. Sixth Progress Report.

A close reading of the previous reports finds that the Low SES NP provided additional targeted funding to schools within low socio-economic communities to improve student learning outcomes. This evaluation focused specifically on the initiatives associated with improving staffing, management and accountability. These three areas of reform were supported in the literature as appropriate directions to achieve improvements in student outcomes within socially disadvantaged school communities.

Substantial activity occurred in NSW schools as a result of their involvement in the Low SES NP. Data showed that schools implemented multiple initiatives across all of the six reform areas specified in the Low SES NP. Case study schools conveyed the importance of a multi-faceted approach in how they took up and adopted initiatives designed to improve student achievement. Every school conceived their Low SES NP initiatives as a package. However, the reinforcing impact of multiple initiatives working in coalition also makes an objective measure of initiative effectiveness in isolation hard to establish.

The Low SES NP granted schools significant autonomy in deciding on the initiatives that they chose to implement. Schools chose and agreed upon targets, strategies, resources, evaluation processes and outputs as part of a consultative process with their stakeholders. The fact that schools were able to implement initiatives that they wanted had a significant role in their reception and impact in school contexts. All of the empirical data collected over the four years of this evaluation was overwhelmingly positive about the impact that initiatives were making in schools. The two principal surveys and the teacher survey demonstrated how the Low SES NP activities were perceived to have made real differences to the teaching and learning culture in schools. Principals in particular reported that the Low SES NP initiatives had made an improvement to their role at the school.

Levels of positivity were not uniform across all schools. Primary schools were more positive than secondary schools. Schools with a higher ICSEA score were more positive than schools with lower ICSEA scores. Schools working in low SES communities face their own distinct and complex challenges, and it is understandable that they reported less

impact when reflecting on their Low SES NP initiatives than schools working in less disadvantaged settings. However, it is important to reiterate that *all* schools were positive about the benefits they had gained through their involvement in the Low SES NP.

Sustainability of the adopted initiatives was always going to be an ongoing concern with the cessation of Low SES NP funding. Principals in the final survey indicated that due to more discretionary school funding policies, they were able to continue to fund initiatives that were regarded to be making a positive impact. To some extent this continued to enable schools to build on the gains made by the Low SES NP.

First progress report, early-2012

The first progress report provided context to the Low SES NP reforms and detailed some preliminary information about the participating schools. The report was in two parts. The first part outlined the background to the National Partnership bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and NSW Government. It drew on Australian and international research and policy to consider the importance and impact of initiatives associated with staffing, management and accountability and how they can contribute to the improvement of student achievement within socially-disadvantaged schools.

The second part of the initial report presented preliminary information on the schools involved in the Low SES NP. It used data from ACARA and the NSW Department of Education & Communities to illustrate the particular contextual factors faced by low SES schools to underscore the rationale behind policy interventions that are designed to provide additional support to them.

Second progress report, late-2012

The second progress report involved seven case studies which explored how schools designed and implemented initiatives associated with staffing, management and accountability. Schools selected for the case studies were representative of the various schools involved in the Low SES NP. The in-depth case studies incorporated various sources of empirical data. Initially principals took part in a phone interview and school documentation such as Low SES NP reports and available data were analysed. Following this, each school was visited by the research team and interviews were conducted with school leaders, teachers, the school executive and any other staff relevant to the school's Low SES NP implementation. All interview data was transcribed, coded and analysed for emergent themes. Schools were also given the chance to read the case study once it was put together, to provide their feedback and input.

The case studies provided insight into the diversity of interpretations, priorities and applications of the Low SES NP reform agenda. All case study schools were working to build the skills of their staff, retain and attract high quality teachers to the school and develop a whole-school commitment to a community of learners. However, each school

was different in how they had conceptualised their involvement and implemented the initiatives, the level of funding they had been allocated and how they were using it, what critical activities they saw as essential to improvement in the identified areas of the Low SES NP, and any perceived challenges or impacts.

The report identified five key areas to the staffing, management and accountability mechanisms that schools had employed. They had:

- **Invested in teacher quality** (e.g. new professional development models and approaches, using student data, teacher appraisal and observations, adoption of new practices, engaging experts/consultants/training institutions to support PD)
- **Built leadership capacity** (e.g. leadership PD, principal taking the lead through collaboration and instruction, formal leadership development programs, in-house development initiatives)
- **Staffed their schools flexibly and sustainably** (e.g. approaches to attract and keep high quality early career teachers – release time, more formal induction processes, providing additional training, new rules and responsibilities, some schools extended head teacher positions)
- **Implemented innovative teaching and learning approaches** (e.g. welfare, attendance, literacy and numeracy performance, stronger use of student data and student intervention)
- **Built organisational capacity and a culture of accountability** (e.g. structural change implemented in schools, such as building knowledge management systems, high expectations, decision making).

The case study schools reported that they had perceived a positive impact as a result of their participation in the Low SES NP. Staff were more work oriented and there was more awareness around whole-school goals and targets. There were also increased levels of professional dialogue and willingness to try new approaches and ideas. The case studies texturized the Low SES NP reform agenda and showed how the diversity in context influences implementation and impact.

Third progress report, early-2013

The third progress report involved a discussion of the findings generated from an extensive online survey conducted in 2012 with 328 of the school principals involved in the Low SES NP. The response rate to the survey was 59 per cent. Principals who had responded to the survey were reasonably representative of all schools participating in the Low SES NP. Principals were asked to identify the initiatives they had implemented as part of the Low SES NP funding, which ones they had found to be most effective in their school and whether they perceived any changes to their role as a result of their school's participation in the Low SES NP.

This report found variation in the extent to which schools implemented certain initiatives over others. These differences were attributed in part to the fact that not all initiatives are

the same. Some were generic, others more specialised. Some were mandated for schools as part of their participation in the Low SES NP whilst other initiatives were more resource intensive. Initiatives were commonly implemented when they had already been at the school prior to the start of the Low SES NP, for example, providing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff. Schools were more likely to build on the initiatives in areas they had already determined as important and/or had made some progress in implementing, which was anticipated in the design of the Low SES NP. The report findings also indicated that many schools were beginning new initiatives as well.

Principals were overwhelmingly positive about the effectiveness of the Low SES NP initiatives that they had implemented. Across all Low SES NP-funded initiatives associated with staffing, management and accountability, on average 84.2 per cent of principals reported initiatives to be effective (effective and highly effective) and 42.6 per cent of initiatives judged as highly effective. The self-reported measures of effectiveness were not uniform across all schools. Principals working in schools in the lowest ICSEA quarter were less likely to report that their school's Low SES NP-funded initiatives were highly effective. Principals of primary schools were more likely to report that initiatives implemented at their school were highly effective than principals of secondary or combined schools. Schools with 99 or fewer students seemed to have less capacity than larger schools to implement management and staffing initiatives effectively, but had somewhat more effective outcomes for initiatives promoting student wellbeing. Principals of metropolitan schools were consistently more likely to have viewed their initiatives as more highly effective than principals of provincial and remote schools. The report also gestured to the difficulties in measuring 'effectiveness', due to the broad scope of the initiatives employed as part of the Low SES NP.

Principals were also asked to reflect on their role and they agreed there had been a number of changes in aspects of their role since the beginning of the Low SES NP at their school. In particular they felt better able to support the professional needs of their staff, support targeted staff development and they felt that they had more time for planning and whole school improvement. On average, more positive changes in the role of the principal were more likely in primary than in other types of schools and in provincial rather than metropolitan and remote schools.

Fourth progress report, late-2013

The fourth progress report featured six new case studies that were completed in 2013, and the seven case studies completed in 2012 were also revisited. It employed the same methodology as the previous case study report. Common initiatives related to staffing, management and accountability were identified across the case study schools in 2012 and 2013. In total, 25 initiatives were found to have widespread application and one initiative - *'provision of professional learning opportunities in data analysis and use'* was in use across all schools.

The report did not rank the initiatives in terms of their impact because of the diversity in school contexts within which each initiative operated, including different implementation timelines and different goals. However, discussions with the case study schools found that some were more important in facilitating change and achieving goals concerning improved student learning. Initiatives that were deemed to be important include:

Established new leadership, strategic and specialist positions, which allowed schools to better implement:

- more professional learning and development, especially for using student assessment data to individualise teaching and learning
- school development, planning, review and accountability processes, including staff performance management and review and reporting
- evidence-based best practice teaching strategies and programs
- individualised learning support for students by developing, for example, personalised student learning plans.

Provided professional learning and development opportunities, which, together with professional learning plans, led to improvements in:

- the knowledge, skills and attitudes of executive and teaching staff and the strengthening of professional dialogue
- management and teaching skills and abilities
- the quality of whole school and classroom collaborative planning, particularly in the use of data to inform decision-making
- the quality of educational provision overall, including individualised literacy and numeracy learning support.

Employed additional non-teaching staff (paraprofessionals, community liaison officers [CLOs] and school learning support officers [SLSOs] and their equivalent positions) to improve:

- the perception of the school in the community and/or the schools' relations with community groups
- professional staff efficiency and effectiveness
- student attendance rates, readiness for school, attitudes to learning, and behaviour in the playground and in the classroom
- student learning outcomes.

Implemented team-based approaches, which increased staff collaboration, enabling teachers to have shared understandings and provide continuity in teaching and learning. In turn, this facilitated improved:

- staff professional training, learning and development
- use of classroom and school databases, setting targets and designing data-driven pedagogy
- school development, planning, monitoring and evaluation
- program and classroom delivery, particularly for literacy and numeracy
- communication with students, parents and the broader community.

Provided innovative opportunities for students to learn, including programs to: improve literacy and numeracy, attendance and positive behaviour; provide access to individualised support, including culturally specific support; and support students at transition points.

Case study schools reported that a multi-faceted approach that involves implementing reinforcing initiatives together was necessary to achieve goals concerning student achievement. Initiatives employed in coalition with one another made it difficult to quantify the contribution or effectiveness of individual initiatives. Schools also reported that despite the Low SES NP funding drawing to a close, they felt that many initiatives had not yet fully realised their gains. All case study schools felt that the Low SES NP had contributed to an overall sense of educational renewal and reform. Government schools were positive about maintaining the momentum into the future with the Local School, Local Decisions policy and the new resource allocation formula, which provided greater discretion in the uses of their funding so that they will be able to continue to fund some of the effective Low SES NP initiatives.

Fifth progress report, early-2014

All teachers involved in Low SES NP recipient schools were invited to take part, via their principal, in a specifically developed online survey in 2013. The questionnaire asked for their perspective on Low SES NP initiatives and changes in the school's approach to staffing, management and accountability. Responses were received from 2,408 teachers from a broad range of schools. Teacher responses were mostly positive about the overall impact of the Low SES NP.

Teachers reported positive responses about the impact of the Low SES NP in relation to collaboration between classroom teachers, the school becoming a better place for students to learn and teachers being able to meet the individual needs of their students. They also felt that initiatives had a positive impact on access to professional learning and changes in teaching and most classroom activities. Teachers were less positive about the impact of the Low SES NP on changes in teacher evaluation, aspects of school leadership, programs for students outside the classroom and student behaviour or teacher-student relations.

In disaggregating the responses by teacher characteristics, female teachers tended to be more positive about the Low SES NP initiatives than male teachers. Teachers who were in leadership or management positions, in a new role, or at a new school tended to be more positive about the impact of the Low SES NP. The report surmised that this could be reflective of the widespread application of initiatives associated with building better school leadership, and the development of early career teachers. Teachers who were in primary schools and specialist settings were generally more positive about the Low SES NP than teachers in secondary schools, except for managing student needs outside of the classroom. Teachers who had been in the Low SES NP for longer were more likely to report positive views, indicative of increased acceptance and effectiveness of the Low SES NP initiatives within schools over time.

Sixth progress report, mid-2014

The sixth progress report outlined the findings of the second principal online survey undertaken following the completion of Low SES NP funding. The online survey was designed for principals to reflect on their school's participation in the Low SES NP, to consider what had been effective in improving student learning outcomes and to comment on the sustainability of the initiatives they had put in place. A smaller cohort of 267 principals responded to the questionnaire run in 2014, a response rate of 42.4 per cent.

Principals were highly positive about the Low SES NP program. Two thirds of principals strongly agreed that the Low SES NP had assisted the school in developing their current staff. Nearly half of principals felt that the program had allowed their teachers to access 'more innovative and tailored learning opportunities'. Principals were also highly favourable about their school's cultural changes, with high agreement reported to initiatives that had 'encouraged innovation and flexibility'. Principals reported less positive agreement with the proposition that they had been able to attract and retain quality staff. In the survey open-ended responses, they provided a complex picture about mobility and how quality teachers who were developed through the Low SES NP initiatives then became in demand for leadership positions elsewhere and were harder for schools to hold onto.

High-implementation and highly-effective initiatives—reported as implemented by more than 50 per cent of the principals in the sample and considered by 45 per cent or more to be "highly effective", included:

- Providing mentoring support to teachers
- Providing opportunities for professional learning and development
- Adopting team-based approaches to teaching and planning
- Making more use of new technologies in teaching
- Implementing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff

- Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams of staff (e.g., involving executive, faculty, and teachers within and beyond this school)
- Implementing targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs (e.g., literacy and numeracy interventions).

These strategies are considered to have worked very well across a wide range of settings. However, principals in lowest-ICSEA schools were less likely to report strong endorsement concerning the effectiveness of these initiatives. It is consistent with the literature informing the Low SES NP that schools within low SES communities face greater educational challenges than other schools.

This final progress report found that principals reported a strong level of continuation with programs funded earlier through the Low SES NP. Very high rates of retention of initiatives (average of eight in ten or higher) were reported across strategies pertaining to staff professional learning, staff performance and review, programs linked to student learning and mechanisms aimed at building a stronger culture of learning within the school community. Central to the Low SES NP's focus was the need to generate practices and approaches that could be sustained beyond the life of the project.



4. Qualitative Data: Case Studies and Principal and Teacher Surveys

One of the most important aspects of the Low SES NP was the emphasis placed on schools developing locally appropriate solutions to meet the education needs of their own communities. For schools, this meant extensive analysis of their own data and considerable consultation within and beyond their own communities to develop plans and strategies best designed to meet identified needs. Not only were school communities invited to apply strategy and initiative to their plans but they were challenged about outcomes: how would they know if their plans had succeeded. How would they measure and assess whether goals had been met?

The high level of local planning and decision making within the program presents challenges and opportunities for the evaluator. It is of course possible to lay a ruler over all schools and apply certain measures—such as those that deal with aspects of student achievement or workforce practice—and to some extent this is a necessary aspect of understanding how the program has impacted at school and system levels.

But because the Low SES NP has been conceived of as strongly grounded in the local, and because every participating school will have developed its own analysis of need together with strategies for addressing need it is important to understand how the program has been implemented and experienced at the school-level. It has been shown in earlier progress reports that this initiative is one that has had identifiable and strong effects on practice and pedagogies at a school level. We need to understand how members of school communities, especially those most closely affected by school staffing, management and accountability initiatives, have experienced the program and view its effects.

The evaluation has built a number of important elements of data collection into the sustained research program. Intensive case studies/focus studies have been developed over successive years (2012 and 2013) that showcase how individual schools have developed and applied their school-level initiatives, paying attention to local and structural challenges and factors that build success. Two principals' surveys (2012 and 2014) have been conducted together with a teacher survey (2013), allowing us to draw on the insights of many hundreds of school professionals who have worked closely with the Low SES NP over years. These are important data sources that assist us in understanding what schools have encountered in their implementation of the Low SES NP and what, if any, changes have been wrought. They are particularly important in providing a context for the administrative data modelling that explores program outcomes in more aggregated terms.

Case studies

Case study inquiry constituted one of the key inquiry components of the evaluation design, along with data-base development and analysis, literature review and stakeholder surveys.

The case studies, conducted over 2012 and 2013, provide a detailed snapshot of how 13 low SES schools in New South Wales in different settings designed and implemented Low SES NP initiatives, in particular those related to school staffing, management and accountability initiatives. Case study schools were selected to represent the diversity of Low SES NP schools in New South Wales in relation to school type, sector, gender, size, and student characteristics. They highlighted differences in the emphasis placed at the school level on initiatives directly related to staffing, management and accountability. They provided insights into the diversity of interpretations, priorities and applications of the Low SES NP reform agenda, together with schools' perceptions of program contributions and outcomes.

The schools were selected in consultation with authorities from the relevant sectors and with reference to the Low SES NP school database, school websites and individual school plans.

School visits were undertaken in Term 2 of 2012 and 2013. Individual and group interviews were held at each site with principals, school leaders, Parents and Citizens Association members, teachers, and the key professional and paraprofessional staff. School visits also included a tour of the school, and opportunities to observe and participate in relevant activities and to gain insights into the relevant school operations.

The critical task for the researchers in all field studies was to gain insights into the development, implementation and review of Low SES NP initiatives in schools, and in particular:

- what funding had been allocated and how it was used
- how schools conceptualised the Low SES NP
- key staffing, management and accountability initiatives
- critical activities, what were they aiming to achieve, how were they linked to the Low SES NP reform agenda
- perceived challenges and impacts.

Schools also provided relevant documentation to assist the research process.

Case study findings

Implementation of initiatives

The 2012 and 2013 case study schools implemented a range of initiatives related to the five reform areas associated with staffing, management and accountability:

- incentives to attract high performing teachers and principals
- adoption of best practice performance management and staffing arrangements
- developing school operational arrangements that encourage flexibility and innovation

- providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for teachers and students
- strengthening school development and accountability mechanisms.

School staffing, management and accountability reform components inter-connect, complement and reinforce these five Reform Areas.

Table 4.1 shows that all schools established new or modified leadership and strategic positions as part of their Low SES NP initiative; in one case however this was funded from the Improving Teaching Quality National Partnership program rather than their Low SES NP funding. Here it is important to note that some schools were participating in multiple NPs and this level of participation must be taken into account in understanding school level strategies adopted to support Low SES NP goals.

High impact initiatives

Given the case study approach it has not been possible to rank the initiatives in terms of their impact because of the diverse contexts within which each initiative operates, including different implementation timelines, and the different goals of the initiatives. Discussions with case study schools, however, suggest that some initiatives have been more important in facilitating change and achieving goals.

1. Establishing leadership, strategic and specialist positions

New and modified leadership and strategic positions have been **major contributors** to change in the school. Schools established new and modified positions to address their perceived needs frequently by including mentoring, supervisory and/or training and development functions in these key roles.

Schools reported that establishing such positions had allowed them to more effectively:

- implement professional learning and development strategies and in particular to increase staff engagement with student assessment data
- facilitate school development, planning, review and accountability processes, including staff performance management and review and reporting
- deliver evidence-based best practice teaching strategies and programs
- provide individualised learning support to students by, for example, developing personalised student learning plans.

Some schools also reported that leadership and strategic positions established through the Low SES NP were associated with observable outcomes such as improvements in students' attendance rates, school readiness, transition into the school, the number of new enrolments at the school and student learning outcomes.

Table 4-1 Overview of initiatives implemented by 2013 and 2012 case study schools

Reform Area	Initiative	Number of 2013 schools	Number of 2012 schools	Total number of schools
1	Establishing leadership and strategic positions	6	5	11
	Providing mentoring support	6	5	11
	Supporting leadership training and development	4	4	8
2	Developing professional learning plans	5	6	11
	Managing staff performance and review	4	5	9
	Supporting early career teachers	3	4	7
	Managing staffing mix	4	6	10
3	Employing support staff	5	4	9
	Implementing team-based approaches	5	5	10
	Establishing new organizational arrangement	2	3	5
	Facilitating cooperation with other schools	3	1	4
	Establishing technological infrastructure	1	3	4
4a	Provision of professional learning opportunities in data analysis and use.	6	6	12
	Delivering literacy and numeracy programs	6	4	10
	Supporting targeted groups	4	1	5
	Using ICT	5	3	8
	Improving QT	0	5	5
4b	Supporting literacy and numeracy learning	2	3	5
	Engaging students in learning	4	5	9
	Supporting targeted students	4	3	7
	Providing transition support	3	2	5
	Supporting student welfare	3	3	6
5	Using evidence to inform planning	5	6	11
	Monitoring and evaluating	5	6	11
	Improving accountability and reporting	4	0	4
Total number		99	98	197

2. Provision of professional learning and development opportunities

Schools reported that the provision of professional learning and development support and opportunities and the implementation of professional learning plans have strengthened their leadership and teaching capacities. These initiatives, in the main school-based and including learning through mentoring support, have contributed to improvement of:

- the knowledge, skills and attitudes of executive staff and teachers and the strengthening of professional dialogue
- management and teaching skills and abilities
- the quality of whole school and classroom collaborative planning, in particular, the use of data to inform decision-making
- the quality of educational provision overall, including individualised literacy and numeracy learning support.

Again, some schools reported that provision of professional training, learning and development opportunities, funded through the Low SES NP, were associated with improvements in students' attendance rates and behaviour, school readiness, transition into the school and student learning outcomes.

3. Employment of support staff

The employment of support staff was a widespread initiative in case study schools and where such support staff had been secured schools reported that Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and Student Learning Support Officer (SLSO) (and their equivalent) positions had contributed to the implementation and success of initiatives. In interviews principals claimed that these positions had been particularly important in helping improve:

- the perception of the school in the community and/or the school relationships with community groups
- efficiency and effectiveness of teaching and leadership staff
- student attendance rates, readiness for school, attitudes to learning, and behaviour in the playground and in the classroom
- student learning outcomes.

4. Implementation of team-based approaches

The case studies suggest that team-based approaches have played an important role in implementation of the initiative in 10 of 12 case study schools and have supported the development of whole-of-school, integrated and co-ordinated approaches to:

- staff professional training, learning and development
- navigation of databases for classroom and school use, set targets and design data driven pedagogy

- school development, planning, monitoring and evaluation
- program and classroom delivery, particularly for literacy and numeracy
- communication with students, parents and the broader community.

Team-based approaches were also regarded as helping facilitate staff collaboration to better enable teachers to have shared understandings, be consistent in their approaches and provide continuity in teaching and learning.

5. Provision of innovative opportunities for students to learn

The Low SES NP initiative specifically encouraged schools to explore how they might build specific and locally appropriate “innovative” learning opportunities to meet the distinctive needs of their own communities. Case study schools focused efforts to provide innovative learning opportunities in the areas of literacy and numeracy development, introduction of new attendance and positive behaviour approaches, provision of individualised support, including culturally specific support; and building of support at critical transition points. School leaders volunteered that these programs had increased the level of student engagement in learning and supported better learning outcomes.

In this respect some schools emphasised the importance of multifaceted approaches to the generation of “innovative” learning opportunities to achieve goals and targets, particularly those related to student achievement. This layering of approaches makes it difficult to quantify the contribution of individual initiatives, and introduces some concern about a “threshold” of appropriate activity, given the potential for confusion and “thin” delivery. A number of the case study schools, however, cited evidence about the effectiveness of the implementation of a number of inter-connected initiatives, using measures such as:

- improved readiness for school and improved learning outcomes (Best Start tests)
- successful transition of students from primary to secondary school (teacher observations and test results)
- increased attendance and increased motivation to learn (the number of student receiving awards)
- improved student behaviour (reduction in classroom incidents, student referrals and expulsions)
- improved literacy and numeracy outcomes (school-based assessments, for example, L3, Reading Recovery, MULTiLit, and Burt scores)
- positive gains made by Aboriginal students (school-based tests).

Immediate and long-term impacts

At the time of case study development most schools had had at least one and a half years to implement Low SES NP initiatives. At that point some schools had demonstrated NAPLAN test improvements for students, including Aboriginal students, but most report it

is to be too early in the implementation cycle to demonstrate the real impact of the Low SES NP initiatives in academic outcomes for students. Both professional and student learning, it was pointed out, is a cumulative process.

The case studies do point to identifiable short term impacts attributable to the program such as changes in staff or student confidence, motivation and engagement in learning. However, other changes, such as, cultural change and shifts in teaching and learning outcomes are expected to become more evident over time, as the application of innovative learning pedagogy and professional practices take effect.

Principal and Staff Surveys

An important source of data developed over the course of this evaluation has been information provided through school-based surveys. Surveys of school principals and teachers have assisted in obtaining more detailed information about the implementation and effectiveness of *school staffing, management and accountability initiatives* at the school level.

Surveys of principals and teachers sought practitioners' and school leaders' assessments of the value of the National Partnerships initiative and of the value of particular initiatives specifically supported by initiative funding within school settings. They were able to generate information about synergies with other programs, cooperation with other schools or community groups, difficulties in the implementation of the initiatives and any effects associated with redirection of resources and estimates of the extent of funding for particular initiatives. The surveys provided an opportunity to ask about factors emerging as significant within the course of the study in the development of a schools database.

Principals' Surveys

Table 4-2 Responses to the school principal survey, 2012 & 2014

	2012		2014	
	% of population	N	% of population	N
Schools in the Low SES NP	---	636	--	636
Schools contacted (<i>target population</i>)	100	556	100	629
All responses	64.0	356	42.4	267
Responses fulfilling minimal criteria	59.0	328	42.4	267

Two principals' surveys were undertaken by the evaluation team. In 2012 and 2014 principals of all schools participating in the Low SES NP undertook online surveys that collected information about the nature of initiatives being run at their school, whether those initiatives could be associated primarily with the Low SES NP, effectiveness of

strategies employed within the school and issues associated with implementation of the program.

The first survey of principals was undertaken for this evaluation in September 2012. Principals from 356 NSW schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership responded to that survey – making ultimately for an achieved response rate of 59.0 per cent, as shown in Table 4.2.

The second survey of principals was undertaken in May 2014, following cessation of the National Partnerships program funding. The survey was therefore conducted at a point where schools had concluded their Low SES NP participation (although some schools due to receive funds in 2014 had been allocated transition funding, under the 2014 Low SES NP adjustment). Accordingly the second survey was well-placed to offer principals an opportunity to reflect on their participation in the program and on the contribution of the program to their school overall. They were also in a position to comment on the sustainability of initiatives adopted by their school as part of the Low SES NP scheme.

Table 4.2 reveals that principals from 629 government, Catholic and independent schools participating in New South Wales' Low SES National Partnerships program were approached to participate in the 2014 survey, and 267 responded. The response rate for this survey was therefore 42.4 per cent. Given the cessation of the Low SES NP initiative at that point it may be that some principals saw completion of an online survey about past participation as lower on their priorities than may have been the case if the program had still been “live” at that point. As with the earlier principal survey, however, the distribution of principals across six school characteristics—ICSEA scores, type of school, enrolment size, NAPLAN reading scores and location—was broadly representative of all the schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership scheme.

What principals have to say about their schools' participation in the Low SES NP initiatives is particularly important given the strategic power vested in schools by the program. It has been part of the underlying rationale of the National Partnerships approach that when joining the Partnership, schools engaged in a consultative process with their stakeholders to decide on the initiatives they wish to implement to address particular reform areas. To recap, the five reform areas of *staffing, management and accountability* were:

1. Implementing incentives to attract high performing teachers and principals.
2. Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals.
3. Introducing school operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility.
4. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities.
5. Strengthening school accountability.

This initial self-evaluation was the basis for then selecting and developing strategies that would best meet the needs of all students in the local context. The results of the consultation were then distilled in a school plan which detailed agreed targets, strategies,

resources, evaluation processes and outputs and was then revised annually. Monitoring Partnership-related activities was mandatory.

The 2012 Principal Survey

In September 2012, principals were provided with a comprehensive online survey that sought information on their schools' engagement with all six reform areas within the Low SES NP. This questionnaire grouped an extended array of initiatives under their reform areas. For each initiative, principals were asked:

- whether the school had chosen to implement that specific initiative
- whether the initiative existed before the *Smarter Schools National Partnership (NP)* commenced
- whether the initiative was funded through the NP
- their view of the effectiveness of the initiative.

Principals were also asked to describe their implementation of any *other* initiatives or incentives intended to contribute to the specific area of the reform.

The initiatives most frequently reported by schools were, with one exception, generic and could be implemented at *any* school, regardless of its particular circumstances:

- *Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs, e.g. literacy & numeracy interventions*
- *Implementing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff*
- *Providing professional development opportunities to help teachers to use and analyse student data to cater to student needs*
- *Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams e.g. involving executive, faculty and teachers within and beyond the school*
- *Using student assessment and other data to identify student needs*
- *Use of new technologies in teaching*
- *Using the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher and school performance*
- *Implementing differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students*
- *Using evidence . . . to inform decision-making and/or strategic direction setting.*

Among the ten initiatives that were *least* frequently implemented,

- two were specific to particular school contexts and hence not necessarily relevant to every school:

Providing assisted housing

Providing students with access to STARTTS

- four reflected a potentially resource-intensive strategic decision:

Other incentives to attract high performing teachers

Employing or providing access to youth workers

Employing highly accomplished teachers (HATs) or their equivalent

Providing attractive terms & conditions outside standard entitlements

- four were related to student wellbeing:

Providing links to government wellbeing-related services for students & their families

Providing students with access to health services

Providing links to non-government wellbeing-related services for students & their families

Other initiatives to promote student wellbeing.

Implementation of initiatives and school context

The implementation of the various reform areas and the individual initiatives differed with a range of considerations, including the characteristics of the school. Accordingly, reporting of the 2012 principals' survey specifically compared the range of initiatives schools chose to implement in the Low SES NP across several school contexts:

- the ICSEA score (from the 2010 NAPLAN analyses)
- the type of school—primary, secondary, combined and special
- the mean score for the 2010 NAPLAN reading tests
- the number of full-time equivalent student enrolments at the school
- the remoteness of the school.

On this basis it was possible to identify where meaningful distinctions in implementation choices were made across schools of differing characteristics.

ICSEA

Some substantial differences in implementation could be identified across ICSEA quarters, although little difference was evident among ICSEA categories in staffing related measures including implementation of initiatives related to *Staff recruitment and retention* (although schools in the lowest quarter are less likely to provide mentoring support to teachers) and *Management and staffing arrangements*. For the individually-focussed staffing initiatives, it was mostly schools in the highest ICSEA quarter that reported higher levels of implementation and schools in the lowest ICSEA quarter that reported lower levels of implementation. For instance, 31.1 per cent of schools in the highest ICSEA quarter had employed a HAT compared with an overall average of 20.2 per cent; and only 63.1 per cent of schools in the lowest ICSEA quarter reported *Use of new technologies in teaching* compared with the average for all schools of 76.2 per cent.

For initiatives related to improvement of student outcomes, the only statistically significant difference was for providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students—schools in the lowest ICSEA quarter (78.2 per cent) were less likely than all schools (85.6 per cent) to have implemented at least one initiative. Although there were no significant differences for the other summary measures related to improved student learning outcomes or student wellbeing, several individual initiatives were less likely than average to have been implemented by schools in the lowest ICSEA quarter.

Principals' responses suggested that schools in the lowest ICSEA quarter were less likely than other schools to have implemented at least one initiative in each of the reform areas, but these differences were statistically significant only for initiatives *providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students to improve student learning outcomes*.

Type of school

Four types of school were involved in the Low SES NP—primary, secondary, combined and special. Combined schools include public Central schools that mostly cater for enrolment from kindergarten to Year 10, as well as other schools that have enrolments to Year 12. Results for special and combined schools are not discussed here because of the smaller number of responses.

The differences between types of schools— primary, secondary, combined and special—were less consistent than those between ICSEA quarters. Across all the summary measures and individual initiatives, however, there was a discernible tendency for **higher levels of implementation** of initiatives in secondary schools.

The implementation of a number of individual initiatives, however, differed more markedly with the type of school. Secondary schools were more likely than schools overall to have introduced several staffing initiatives designed to attract or retain staff or to support student learning outcomes:

- establishing leadership and strategic positions (72.3 per cent compared with 53.3 per cent overall)
- managing the staffing mix and succession planning (57.3 per cent compared with 41.2 per cent overall)
- employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside classrooms (47.2 per cent compared with 30.1 per cent overall)
- employing additional paraprofessionals in other support roles (54.5 per cent compared with 37.8 per cent overall).

This group of initiatives, it may be observed, deal specifically with *strengthening leadership teams* and with *enlisting extra support staff to address learning and welfare needs of students* both in and outside the classroom.

In line with this focus on welfare, wellbeing and engagement needs secondary schools were also more likely to have implemented some programs providing extended care for students, especially those identified as strongly in need of support:

- out of school hours learning programs for targeted students (55.6 per cent compared with 19.8 per cent overall)
- employing or provide access to youth workers (15.5 per cent compared with 6.0 per cent overall).

Primary schools on the other hand were more likely to focus their programs on a more limited and targeted area of staff need – especially areas of staff pedagogical practice and professional learning. Here the emphasis was on team or whole-school approaches rather than the development of specific individuals or staff members. There were several initiatives that were more likely to have been implemented by primary schools:

- team based approaches to teaching and learning (72.3 per cent compared with 69.4 per cent overall)
- implementing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff (90.7 per cent compared with 87.6 per cent overall).

Secondary schools were more likely than others to report a more complex mix of initiatives across reform areas. However the differences were statistically significant only for *accountability initiatives*. Combined schools had implementation rates similar to, or below, those of primary schools. A number of individual initiatives, however, did have statistically significant differences, with all but one, *team-based approaches to teaching and learning*, displaying higher implementation levels for secondary schools.

These differences between primary and secondary schools in the implementation of particular initiatives are broadly consistent with the higher division of labour in secondary schools and the differing social, curriculum and learning needs of primary and secondary school students. They are relevant however in the context of assessments on effectiveness and in understanding the nature of teacher survey responses (which are addressed below).

School size

School size tends to be associated with school type in many contexts with primary schools, for example, making up most of schools under 200 enrolments. *The larger the school, the more likely it is to have implemented at least one initiative in a reform area or part of a reform area.* Low SES NP funding for schools is based on a school's enrolments (with a loading for more remote schools). Larger schools received more funding and principals of these schools reported more initiatives than smaller size schools. Although the pattern was not perfectly consistent across all reform areas, and sometimes differences only approach statistical significance, schools with 99 or fewer students usually reported lower levels of implementation of initiatives than schools with 1,000 or more students—and the clearer differences are mostly between schools with 99 or fewer students and other schools.

The only major exception among the individual initiatives is the implementation of the Accountability initiative *using the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher and school performance*. Smaller schools may be more likely than larger schools to be managed informally and the requirements of the Partnership for school plans may have

provided an attractive opportunity for these schools to formalise their planning and approach to school improvement.

Location

Metropolitan schools were more likely than provincial schools, and provincial schools more likely than remote schools, to have implemented at least one initiative in most reform areas. The few exceptions—initiatives in management and staffing arrangements to attract retain and develop staff; management initiatives to promote student wellbeing; and accountability initiatives—showed a similar pattern, but without reaching statistical significance. Among the many individual initiatives with statically significant differences, the only clear exception to this overall pattern was *providing assisted housing*, which was a feature of the responses of principals of remote schools.

NAPLAN performance

Across reform areas, there was general pattern that schools in the lowest quarter of NAPLAN reading scores reported lower levels of implementation than other schools but the differences were statistically significant for only one reform area: staff recruitment and retention to attract high performing teachers. Often any differences were clearest for the category of schools with small enrolments and no NAPLAN reading scores. For many individual initiatives, however, there was a stronger tendency for schools in the lowest quarter to have lower levels of implementation. A notable exception was the higher likelihood of schools in the lowest quarter to have provided attractive terms and conditions outside standard entitlements to attract high performing teachers.

Perceived effectiveness of initiatives

Principals expressed very strong support for the results of implemented initiatives. *All* initiatives were judged by a majority of principals of the schools in which they were implemented to be either *effective* or *highly effective*. Within that context of positive judgements about the *absolute* efficiency of the initiatives, however, some initiatives were viewed even more positively than others. In reporting responses, then, it has been important to discuss the *relative effectiveness* of the initiatives within the separate reform areas and of the individual initiatives. It is also important to examine the effectiveness of the initiatives by school characteristics.

Across all the Low SES NP-funded initiatives implemented in schools, 42.6 per cent were judged to be *highly effective* and 84.2 per cent to be either *effective* or *highly effective*. The overall high level of the reported effectiveness of the initiatives meant that comparisons of the effectiveness among initiatives or across school contexts were in terms of the extent to which they were *highly effective*—there was often too little variation in the combined measure of *effective* or *highly effective* to provide meaningful differences. The discussion of differences, therefore, is in the context of a mostly high level of reported effectiveness.

Table 4-3 Effectiveness of Low SES NP-funded initiatives by reform area and question number (%)

Reform area/Question number	Effectiveness		
	Highly	Eff/Highly	n
<i>All initiatives</i>	42.6	84.2	7844
<i>Reform areas . . .</i>			
<i>1. Incentives to attract high performing teachers and principals (Q6)</i>	54.0	87.3	794
<i>2. Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangement to attract, retain and develop staff. (Q7)</i>	36.9	79.6	655
<i>3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility (Q10, Q11)</i>	50.1	87.2	2116
Q10. Operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility . . . to attract, retain and develop staff	50.1	86.4	1219
Q11. Operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility . . . to improve student learning outcomes	50.1	88.4	897
<i>4. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities</i>	40.1	83.7	3207
<i>4a: Providing innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers to attract, retain & develop staff (Q12)</i>	42.9	86.6	1357
<i>4b: Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students (Q13, Q14, Q15)</i>	38.0	81.6	1850
Q13. Provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students . . . to improve student learning outcomes	43.5	83.8	819
Q14. Provide individual learning support for students, . . . to improve student learning outcomes	33.5	81.8	523
Q15. Promote student wellbeing . . . to improve student learning outcomes	33.5	77.9	508
<i>5:Accountability initiatives to promote a culture of continuous school improvement (Q16)</i>	30.2	80.5	1072
<i>Type of effectiveness—Initiatives to . . .</i>			
attract high performing teachers (Q6)	54.0	87.3	794
attract, retain and develop staff (Q7, Q10,Q12)	44.4	85.1	3231
improve student learning outcomes (Q11, Q13, Q14)	43.9	85.2	2238
promote student wellbeing (Q15).	33.5	77.9	508
promote a culture of continuous school improvement (Q16)	30.2	80.5	1072

1. Values for Effectiveness are Highly effective and Effective or Highly effective as a per cent of principals responding to the effectiveness question
2. Q refers to the question number in the questionnaire (see Appendix B) and the relationship between reform areas and questions is detailed in Table 4, CIRES, Progress Report Two.
3. Per cents are weighted (see Appendix A, CIRES, Progress Report Two), n's are counts.

Effectiveness and school context

Differences in the perceived effectiveness of initiatives across schools of different types and operating in different contexts were not marked. For the majority of individual initiatives, there were no statistically significant differences in the proportion reported to be *highly effective*. Nevertheless, there were some differences.

Principals of schools in the lowest quarter of ICSEA scores were less likely than principals of other schools to report that their school's Low SES NP-funded initiatives were *Highly effective*. This finding is consistent with the literature that informs the Low SES NP—schools with low SES communities face greater educational challenges than other schools. The pattern, however, was not uniform. Schools in the second lowest quarter frequently reported the highest levels of effectiveness—and the differences were stronger for **staffing outcomes** than student outcomes (for which they were sometimes not present) and for accountability (for which differences were rare).

Overall, principals of primary schools were more likely to report that initiatives implemented at their school had been *highly effective* than were principals of secondary schools or principals of combined schools. The differences among principals of primary and secondary schools were often modest and, where present, inconsistent across initiatives. The strongest difference, however, was a tendency for principals of primary schools to be more positive about the effectiveness of their initiatives in **improving student outcomes**.

Principals of schools in the lowest NAPLAN reading test quarter and of small schools without a NAPLAN reading test score were slightly more likely to report that their Low SES NP-funded initiatives were *highly effective* than were principals of other schools. The difference was mostly evident in and attributable to initiatives targeting **staffing outcomes**.

The size of a school (measured by its enrolments) had only a modest and patchy effect on the likelihood of a principal describing their initiatives as *highly effective*. Schools with 99 or fewer students seemed to have less capacity to effectively implement management and staffing initiatives, but reported somewhat more effective outcomes for initiatives to promote **student wellbeing**.

Generally, school location had little impact on the perceived effectiveness of an initiative. There were some small differences overall, with principals in metropolitan schools reporting slightly more effective initiatives than did principals in remote schools and provincial schools. The effectiveness of initiatives across staffing initiatives was mixed. Initiatives to employ additional paraprofessional staff, however, were clearly more effective in remote schools.

The 2014 Principal Survey

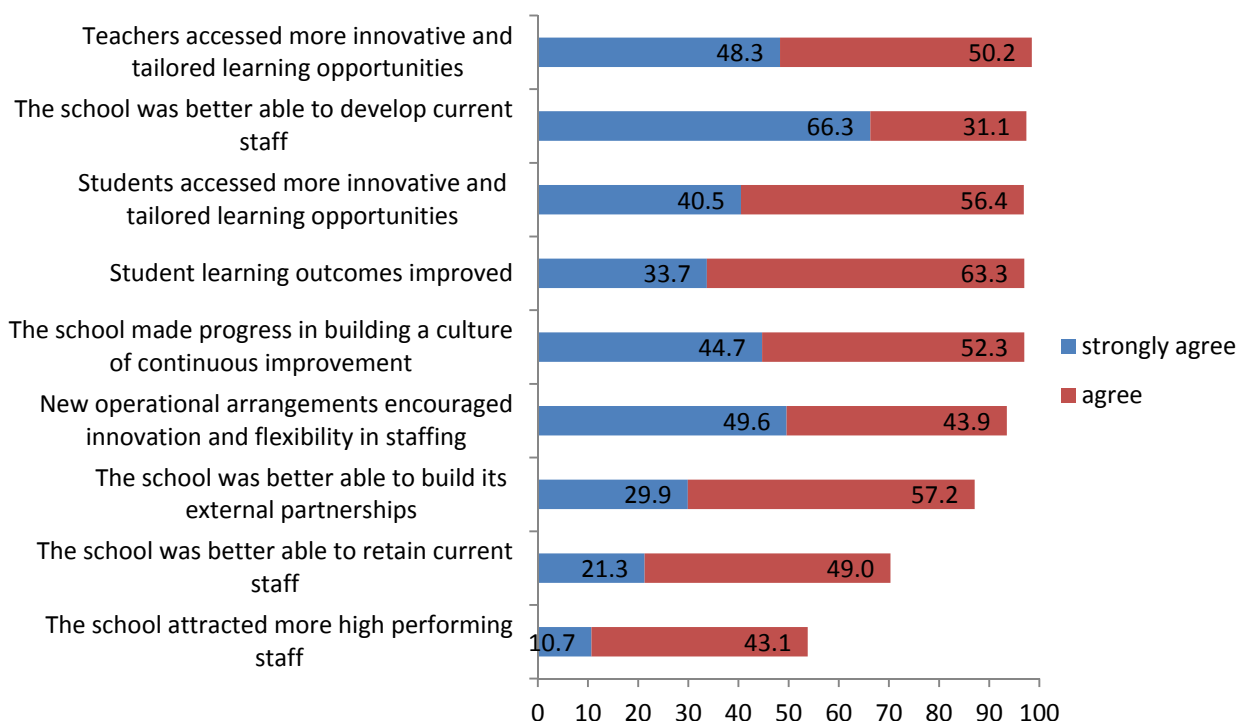
In September 2014, when principals were approached to undertake a second and final survey addressing their experience of the Low SES NP, they engaged with a more streamlined online survey instrument that sought their reflections on the five reform areas that are the subject of this report. This survey also asked about principals' perceptions of the Low SES School Communities National Partnership overall, together with information on their own school's processes and initiatives. Here principals were able to draw on a

more sustained experience and understanding of the initiative, and to project a picture of the sustainability of their schools’ initiatives. To optimise the value of their individual perceptions and responses this survey instrument also afforded greater opportunities for principals to provide their own insights, in their own words, in a number of open ended questions.

Key findings

Consistent with the earlier survey, principals’ reporting of the program overall remained highly positive. This is reflected in Figure 4.1. Nine in ten principals, for example, agreed that as a result of the Low SES NP their school had been able to develop their existing staff capacity, develop operational arrangements that encouraged innovation and flexibility in staffing, support improved student learning outcomes, and build teachers’ and students’ access to more innovative and tailored learning opportunities. Furthermore, 87 per cent believed their school had been able to extend and develop external partnerships and over seven in ten were of the view that they had been able to retain high performing staff through mechanisms of the program. More than half believed they had been able to attract high performing staff through program initiatives.

Figure 4-1 To what extent have the following changes occurred in your school as a result of participation in the Low SES NP? (%)



Source: Low SES Principal Survey 2014

Given high levels of generalised agreement in this overview response the report focussed on the extent to which principals expressed *very strong agreement* with key propositions.

Two thirds of principals, for example, *strongly agreed* that the Low SES NP had assisted their school in *developing* its current staff. In fact the role of the program in *building staff skills* emerged clearly both in this overview and in more targeted responses. Nearly half of principals (48.3 per cent) also felt strongly that the program had allowed their teachers to access “more innovative and tailored learning opportunities”.

Some initiatives demand longer lead times than others. In relation to cultural change at the school level, principals by 2014 were able to report with high levels of agreement that new arrangements had “*encouraged innovation and flexibility*”. Nearly 45 per cent of principals also reported themselves to be “strongly agreeing” that their school had built a *culture of continuous improvement* as a result of participation in the Low SES NP.

Principals were almost unanimous in their belief that student outcomes in their school had improved under the Low SES NP. In relation to student learning outcomes, however, they were more reserved in their *levels* of agreement. Almost all principals (97 per cent) felt that the program had allowed their students to access “more innovative and tailored learning opportunities” and a comparable proportion agreed that as a result of their participation in the program “student learning outcomes improved”. Only a third, however, reported themselves to be “strongly agreeing” on improvement of student outcomes.

Two important emphases of the Low SES NP concerned the progress of schools in building and maintaining a strong teacher workforce. Attracting high quality staff and retaining staff were both important objectives in supporting schools in building and consolidating their teacher capacity. It should be pointed out here that over half of principals surveyed were in general agreement that their school had *attracted* at least *some* high performing staff and over seventy per cent that they had been able to *retain some staff* as a result of the initiatives.

But principals were least likely to express “strong” support for propositions that they had been able to either attract or retain staff. Just one in ten felt strongly their school had been able to attract more high performing staff while one in five could express a comparable conviction that they had been able to *retain* quality staff as a result of Low SES NP initiatives. In their open-ended responses a number of principals clarified some of the complexities associated with the Low SES NP program to assist us in understanding this picture. They made reference for example to the enhanced mobility of quality teachers whose development had been supported through Low SES NP initiatives – such teachers were in demand on leadership teams elsewhere and for at least some schools were therefore difficult to hold.

Over 120 principals volunteered open-ended comments on beneficial changes they regarded as notable in their schools as a result of the National Partnership. Overall these comments could be grouped under a number of distinct categories – culture change, accountability, resourcing, and the development of a high performing staff base.

Naturally some of these categories see significant overlap and in many cases principals explicitly referenced at least two categories in their comments. Broadly, however, responses most often referenced the *cultural change* within the school (around 44 per cent of open responses engaged with this theme) as a key result of the school's participation in the Low SES NP.

Examples of such responses included:

A culture of rigor and academic achievement has started to develop.

A more collegial culture has been created. Our focus is now on learning not on school organisation.

A more positive and professional culture was built. Morale increased.

Cultural shift in behaviour to point that learning became more important than behaviour management. In 2013 we finally saw the positive growth in NAPLAN reading that we had been working towards.

Parent engagement increased significantly. Open, transparent decision-making became an expected trait of the school culture.

The development of a learning culture amongst staff, students and parents

These are strong endorsements and provide some insights into principals' concern to provide some clear guidance to evaluators to assist understanding about the contribution of years of participation in the program. Among other things, there is an emphasis here on the provision of a space and context to allow such culture change to develop:

Participation in the Low SES NP gave our school the opportunity through increased funds to improve teaching and learning through quality professional learning. Without the funds it would have been extremely difficult to begin our program of continuous improvement.

Highlighted the importance of gathering accurate and consistent data as the first step towards developing and creating programs.

Being a small school, it galvanised staff and gave us the tools to explore different opportunities for professional development which improved quality teaching practices across the school.

Increased accountability became a conversation we could all engage in as a staff. The importance of collecting student data and really looking at it to examine our own practices is starting to become part of usual practice for staff. Teacher professional learning has been lifted to a position of priority in the school. An ongoing message is that we should all be learners and we can always improve.

Other changes observed relate to this theme of culture-building, with a number of principals referencing enhanced school image in the community, development of parent involvement or engagement and relationships with other schools especially schools associated with transition: *“Strengthened partnerships with other Low SES NP schools. More sharing of professional learning and resources. The impetus to establish and strengthen collegial networks between teachers across schools working together.”*

Principals also highlighted the importance of the program in building staff capacity and confidence. They emphasised professional development programs but also highlighted leadership development, changed ways of working together and the significance of such change for all members of the teaching staff within the school. Over 20 per cent of these responses could be grouped under this set of themes:

Teacher capacity increased: their tool box of teaching strategies increased - they saw a change in their practice impacted positively on student outcomes.

Teacher development in best practice was more readily available due to availability of mentor staff.

Teachers had opportunities to work collaboratively and support each other with professional learning. This has had a positive impact on the school's culture. As a school we were able to make some targeted choices regarding resources for our students and this has had a positive impact on teaching and learning.

Teachers were able to access quality professional development resulting in more explicit teaching experiences for students, resources, staff flexibility enabled more innovative classroom to develop and community involvement improved.

The school was able to provide time for teachers to collaborate on best practice to plan, teach and assess learning opportunities that have a direct impact on student learning outcomes.

The most significant impact of the Low SES NP was the capacity for the school to spend additional funds on additional professional development of staff.

But principals also demonstrated a readiness to identify what they regarded to be their school's key outcomes in this section. These may not have aligned directly to the propositions provided in the survey question. In many cases their responses linked specifically to student outcomes, with efforts made to explicitly connect such improvements with specific strategies and emphases:

Improved attendance; Improved retention of students to Yr. 12; Improved HSC results on 5 year trends; Improved University placement

Development of alternative educational experiences for students and greater student engagement a major benefit. Enrolments have increased dramatically—a sign of community endorsement.

Huge increase in staff capabilities. Higher level of student engagement.

Increased community engagement and support leading to increased numbers of enrolments and improved attendance.

Increased student enrolments have occurred for the first time in 8 years leading to an increase in permanent staff.

The community regularly comments on the "good job" being done here for students. Suspension data and the number of educational days lost due to absence from school has declined every year of the Low SES NP and at the moment is at a 50 per cent decrease on days lost and the number of suspensions compared to data for 2011 (the year prior to the Low SES NP starting).

The school was able to provide time for teachers to collaborate on best practice to plan, teach and assess learning opportunities that have a direct impact on student learning outcomes.

These sets of comments are important reminders that outcomes may be viewed through different lenses and that school needs and emphases will differ according to starting points on change trajectories. Where some schools may identify stronger NAPLAN outcomes, Year 12 results or university places achieved, others may be more likely to identify powerful change in shifts in community attitudes to the school, or a growing enrolment base. The comments provide important amplification of themes developed in the principals' strongly favourable but somewhat undifferentiated responses to specific survey questions about implementation and effectiveness of initiatives introduced at the school level as a result of the Low SES NP.

Implementation

Areas where initiatives were reported as most extensively implemented (over eight in ten schools reported activity) involved provision of:

- innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students
- accountability initiatives to promote a culture of continuous school improvement
- innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers to attract, retain and develop staff
- school operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility.

Where the implementation of specific initiatives involves variation this partly reflected the extent to which the initiatives were:

- generic or specialised
- a potentially resource-intensive strategic focus in the school
- required of schools as a condition of participation in the Low SES NP.

For instance, the initiative most frequently reported by schools was *Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs, e.g. literacy & numeracy interventions (83 per cent)* from Reform Area 4. On the other hand, the least frequently implemented Low SES NP-funded initiative was *providing assisted housing (0.8 per cent)*, a highly targeted program aimed at recruitment of high-calibre teachers for hard-to-staff schools, a strategy relevant to a very small proportion of schools in the program overall.

Implementation and school context

The relatively high level of schools' overall implementation of initiatives in each of the reform areas means that there is often little scope for differences across school characteristics. However certain generalisations may be made:

- The larger the school, the more likely it is to have implemented at least one initiative in a reform area or part of a reform area. Low SES NP funding for schools is based on a school's enrolments (with a loading for more remote schools). Larger schools received more funding and principals of these schools reported more initiatives than smaller size schools. Although the pattern is not perfectly consistent across all reform areas, and sometimes differences only approach statistical significance, schools with 99 or fewer students usually reported lower levels of implementation of initiatives than schools with 500 or more students—and the clearer differences are mostly between schools with 50 or fewer students and other schools.
- Metropolitan schools were more likely than provincial schools, and provincial schools more likely than remote schools, to have implemented at least one initiative in most reform areas. The few exceptions—initiatives in management and staffing arrangements to attract retain and develop staff; management initiatives to promote student wellbeing; and accountability initiatives—showed a similar pattern, but without reaching statistical significance. Among the many individual initiatives with statically significant differences, the only clear exception to this overall pattern was *providing assisted housing*, which was a feature of the responses of principals of remote schools.
- Principals' responses suggested that schools in the lowest ICSEA quarter were less likely than other schools to have implemented at least one initiative in each of the reform areas.

Effectiveness

All initiatives were judged by a majority of principals of the schools in which they were implemented to be either *effective* or *highly effective*. Within that context of positive judgements about the *absolute* efficiency of the initiatives, however, some initiatives were viewed more positively than others.

Analysis of effectiveness of initiatives identifies three distinct lenses through which patterns of “effectiveness” may be usefully viewed. The first involves identification of initiatives that have been widely implemented across diverse settings and shown to be “effective” across all contexts. This informs “generalisability” across contexts. The second lens reviews initiatives that may be less widely implemented but shown to be specifically and appropriately targeted to effective implementation in particular school settings—

pointing the value of strategically focussed initiatives. The third deals with initiatives that may be shown to have seen widespread implementation across settings—sometimes due to alignment with specific processes associated with the Low SES NP and its regimes—but which may be regarded by principals with some reservation about effectiveness and benefits.

High-implementation and highly-effective initiatives—reported as implemented by more than 50 per cent of the principals in the sample and considered by 45 per cent or more to be “highly effective”, included:

- Providing mentoring support to teachers
- Providing opportunities for professional learning and development
- Adopting team-based approaches to teaching and planning
- Making more use of new technologies in teaching
- Implementing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff
- Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams of staff (e.g., involving executive, faculty, and teachers within and beyond this school)
- Implementing targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs (e.g., literacy and numeracy interventions).

These strategies may be considered to have worked very well across a wide range of school settings.

Certain other initiatives that are less widely-subscribed but are also reported to be “highly effective” characteristically link to specific resource-intensive strategies associated with staffing decisions to enhance a school’s student welfare, learning support or professional development programs. Less than six per cent of principals, for example, saw the provision of *attractive terms and conditions outside standard entitlements* as important in their school’s plans to attract high performing teachers. Over half of those that did, however, described the strategy as *highly effective*. Some but by no means all schools approached the business of attracting, retaining and developing staff through programs of strategic employment including the employment of *additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles*, and *Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) or the sectoral equivalent (Teacher Educators, Leaders of Pedagogy, etc.)* and again reported high estimates of effectiveness of these specific initiatives. Very positive effects on student outcomes were associated with the *implementation of transition plans* at both the primary and secondary levels – not widely reported as making up a school’s suite of Low SES NP initiatives but very positively regarded when implemented.

A number of strategies, on the other hand, were widely reported to be implemented but nevertheless regarded with comparative reservation by principals. Included among these were some accountability strategies associated with *promoting a culture of continuous school improvement*, where compliance considerations assured high implementation of specific initiatives. It should be recognised that of all the strategies or reforms the promotion of cultural change is least tangible and most likely to take an extended time to be manifest and measurable – both in terms of teacher behaviours and learner outcomes.

Principals were less likely to report their strategies in these areas as “highly effective” although their overall levels of endorsement tended to remain high. Similar patterns could be found in the management of some approaches to student learning, such as the introduction of *Individual Learning Plans for high need learners*. These approaches, too, were widely reported to be implemented but only 38 per cent of those including these initiatives in their Low SES NP strategies described their effectiveness in strong terms.

Some variability has been evident, then, in levels of implementation and assessment of effect. Principals reported favourably on a range of widely-adopted strategies focussing on the professional learning and development of staff; to a lesser extent certain actions centred around the strategic employment of specialist staff to build school capacity in areas of teacher and student learning, student welfare and student support, were also regarded as delivering “effective” results.

These findings compare to our earlier 2012 survey, where principals reported on their perceptions of selected strategies as the program unfolded. There it was speculated that findings on different levels of effectiveness may reflect different timeframes for implementation. Certain goals, such as the cultural change associated with *promoting a culture of continuous school improvement* may be simply more difficult to effect in the short term than more concrete goals such as improving staffing or learning profiles. Comparisons of the effectiveness of different initiatives (and of schools implementing those initiatives) must be undertaken with strong caveats.

Effectiveness and school context

Some differences in the perceived effectiveness of initiatives may be identified across schools of different types and operating in different contexts:

- Principals of schools in the lowest quarter of ICSEA scores were less likely than principals of other schools to report that their school’s Low SES NP-funded initiatives were *Highly effective*. This finding is of particular relevance in instances where these schools report stronger levels of implementation, as in the development of ILPs. It is also evident in certain other widely-implemented measures, such as accountability measures aimed at building a culture of school improvement, where principals in lowest-ICSEA schools are least likely to report strong endorsement for the effectiveness of these initiatives. It is consistent with the literature that informs the Low SES NP—that schools with low SES communities face greater educational challenges than other schools.
- This pattern was not always uniform but may assist in understanding the location of need and the case for further targeting of support and initiatives in subsequent programs.
- Overall, principals of primary schools were more likely to report that initiatives implemented at their school were *highly effective* than were principals of secondary schools or principals of combined schools. The differences among principals of primary and secondary schools were often modest and, where present, inconsistent across initiatives. There was a strong tendency for principals of primary schools to be more positive about the effectiveness of their initiatives in improving student outcomes.
- The size of a school (measured by its enrolments) had only a modest and patchy effect on the likelihood of a principal describing their initiatives as *highly effective*. In general, school

size (as measured by enrolments) had some consistent alignments with the likelihood of a principal describing a National Partnerships-funded initiative as *highly effective* and in higher take-up initiatives in particular these did tend to align with rates of implementation of the initiative.

- Larger schools, which were more likely more likely to be reporting implementation of an initiative, were also more likely to regard the initiative as highly effective. This may link to the volume of funding available to the school either directly through the program or through other resources, and to factors such as economies of scale that may help underpin the effective introduction of initiatives.
- Most differentiation may be seen in estimates of effectiveness expressed by principals of smallest schools (50 and less) and all others. Schools enrolling more than 51 students reported relatively consistent perceptions of effectiveness overall (with a sliding scale of effectiveness evident in many cases from larger schools through to smallest). Those below 50 enrolments showed a different pattern of response and overall much lower assessments of effectiveness. Again, this response pattern aligns with levels of implementation in many cases. Not only are small schools less likely to be undertaking specific strategies but they are also less likely, when they do undertake the strategy, to report it to be highly effective.
- The perceived effectiveness of initiatives differed by location (metropolitan, provincial or remote) in selected instances. Principals of metropolitan schools were consistently more likely to have viewed their initiatives as *highly effective* than principals of provincial schools.
- The values for remote schools have been presented in some detail in discussion above as patterns of implementation and estimates of effectiveness are at times quite distinct from those of other locations. It is important to note that these schools' perceptions of the value of development of technology-based learning initiatives are high, as are particular staffing-focussed initiatives such as employment of specific types of paraprofessional staff. They are much less likely than other schools to see strong value in some of the accountability initiatives introduced to support the Low SES NP itself.

Sustainability

The Low SES NP ceased on 31 December 2013, and for some schools this termination came prematurely. The strategy of school improvement pursued through the Partnership had been to break the nexus between a school community's low socioeconomic status and poor educational outcomes by implementing coordinated and responsive sets of locally-appropriate strategies in areas of staffing, management, accountability and partnerships.

Central to the program's focus was the need to generate practices and approaches that could be sustained beyond the life of the project proper. The ability of schools to continue with initiatives commenced through the Low SES NP has been of great relevance to this evaluation. It is important that we understand what has been valued most highly at a school level, and why, and what has been able to be retained by schools after the program's conclusion. The 2014 survey indicated that at that point principals were able to report a strong level of continuation with programs earlier funded through the Low SES NP. Very high rates of retention of initiatives (average of eight in ten or higher) were reported across strategies pertaining to staff professional learning, staff performance and review, programs linked to student learning and mechanisms aimed at building a stronger culture

of learning within the school community.

Continuation does not necessarily align with perceptions of effectiveness; some of the highest levels of continuation were found in the areas of accountability (Reform Area 5), among the least endorsed as *highly effective* across schools. In this instance it may be that vestigial reporting arrangements associated with the Low SES NP continued to apply, at least in the short term.

When schools reported discontinuing Low SES NP initiatives it was almost invariably due to the withdrawal of funding – that is, they were unable to resource the initiative from any alternative funding source. This was seen most markedly in the resource-hungry initiatives of establishing leadership and other strategic positions, providing mentoring support for teachers, providing opportunities for professional learning and development, employing paraprofessionals for learning support and other support roles, employing HATs or their sectoral equivalents, providing “quality learning opportunities for teams of staff” and monitoring and evaluating Low SES NP initiatives. In the overwhelming majority of these cases schools did not disperse with initiatives because of a perceived lack of effectiveness but because *resources were no longer available* to fund those initiatives. In a small proportion of instances – for example, in the monitoring or evaluating of the initiatives or in the employment of HATs, some reported that *alternative strategies* were now preferred to earlier initiatives.

Suggestions that schools maintain high levels of continued implementation should be treated with considerable caution. A minority of eligible principals participated in the study and it may be that their participation itself denotes a skewed study population, with stronger attachment to the Low SES NP program than the low SES schools population overall. Moreover some schools indicated that they were continuing to discharge the final stages of funded Low SES NP activity and there is a strong likelihood that at least some schools continued to access the last tranches of Low SES NP funding into late 2014 as they concluded scheduled programs in accordance with school plans. Further, where measures had been reported as “retained” it is not wholly clear whether strategies had been retained in full or whether some lower level of comparable activity had been put in place in a salvage operation.

Teacher Survey, 2013

A major survey of teachers was undertaken in Term 2, 2013. Staffing returns indicated that teacher numbers in Low SES NP schools in NSW at that time were around 13,290. All principals in Low SES NP schools were approached in mid 2013 with an invitation for their staff to participate in the online survey. At least one teacher responded to the survey in 55% of Low SES NP schools in NSW.

In all, 2408 teachers completed the survey, pointing to a response rate of around 18%.

The initial sample was found to :

***over-represent* teachers from:**

- Primary & combined schools
- Catholic & independent schools
- Schools in metropolitan areas
- Schools with lower proportions of ATSI students
- Schools with high proportions of LBOTE students
- Schools with higher ICSEA values
- Schools with higher than average NAPLAN reading scores

***under-represent* teachers from:**

- Secondary schools
- Government schools
- Schools in provincial areas
- Schools with higher proportions of ATSI students
- Schools with lower proportions of LBOTE students
- Schools with lower ICSEA values
- Schools with lower than average NAPLAN reading scores

While the relatively small overall sample size and the sometimes small number of schools in some categories limited any weighting design, a weighting schema based on the affiliation of the school, the type of school (with secondary and combined grouped together) and ICSEA quarters (highest two versus the rest) was developed to build a more representative basis for analysis and discussion.

A report undertaken on the survey findings outlines the overall survey outcomes in detail.

Naturally teachers in schools are important sources of information and insights about the implementation and effectiveness of National Partnerships strategies and their views were sought about the nature and effect of the Low SES NP in their own schools and more generally.

An important finding of the survey, highlighted at the time, was that the overall views of teachers about the Low SES NP initiatives were strongly favourable—with the majority of all teachers indicating that the Partnership had encouraged the kinds of changes intended.

Questions 9 to 11 of the survey sought information on the extent to which positive strategies were occurring in the school as a result of the Low SES NP, how the Low SES NP had affected specific favourable outcomes and how teachers saw the Low SES NP as influencing their effectiveness in their teaching role. For the purposes of analysis these questions were initially grouped into four broad themes, outlined in Table 4.4 below:

Table 4-4 Questions grouped by categories and survey item

MANAGING THE CLASSROOM	MANAGING THE SCHOOL
11g. Teaching	10j. The school has become a better place for students to learn
11c. Managing student behaviour in classrooms	10i. The school has become a better place in which to teach
11a. Meeting the individual learning needs of your students	10a. The school runs more smoothly
11e. Being supported in the classroom	10b. Teachers use better strategies to support student learning
11f. Able to explain the goals of your school to colleagues, parents and others	10c. There have been improvements in the way teachers relate to students
12d. Availability of professional learning opportunities for teachers	10d. This school uses more effective methods to determine how well teachers are performing
12c. The quality of school leadership	10e. A more strategic approach to school planning
12a. Mentoring support provided to teachers	MANAGING PARENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS
9b. Classroom support for teachers to help with student learning	9e. Parent/carer engagement in the school
9c. Opportunities for professional learning of classroom teachers	11b. Communicating with parents and carers from diverse social and cultural backgrounds
9a. Collaboration between classroom teachers	9g. Engaging with parents and carers from diverse social and cultural groups
12b. Quality of support for early career teachers	10g. The school is more effective in engaging parents and carers from diverse social and cultural groups
9d. Using results from student assessments to inform teaching	11d. Involving parents in their children's learning
	10h. The school is more engaged with its wider community
MEETING STUDENT NEEDS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM	12e. Parents' and carers' support for student learning
9h. Additional programs and services to promote student wellbeing	9f. Links between the school and its wider community
9i. Additional programs and services to support students in their learning	10f. The school communicates better with parents and carers

Notes: See questions 9, 10, 11 and 12 in the survey shown in Appendix C.

The four question categories have been grouped as follows:

- *Managing the classroom* draws on the largest single group of questions, reflecting the classroom focus of what is essentially a survey of professionals whose experience is directly influenced by classroom based factors. It includes questions relating to a number of aspects of teaching—teaching itself, student needs and behaviour in learning settings, cooperation and support among teachers, professional learning and the strategic use of assessment to inform teaching practice.
- *Meeting student needs outside the classroom* contains only two questions—*additional programs and services to promote student wellbeing* and *additional programs and services to support students in their learning*. Both these items tap effects of the Partnership on students outside the classroom. These are actually important aspects of the Partnership strategies in many schools. On occasion, these themes relate to school characteristics differently from some other groupings as they connect closely with the needs of specific school communities. It is important to note that these questions were residual—their content did not fit well with the other groupings but responses to them were related.
- *Managing the school* includes responses from seven questions, most of which relate directly to the Partnership’s effect on aspects of school management and staffing including staff review and development.
- *Managing parent and community relations* contains nine questions that ask about the school’s outreach to parents in general and to parents from different cultural and social groups in particular as well as broader questions about the school’s engagement with its wider community. These are of course relevant to teaching experience and effective teaching practice.

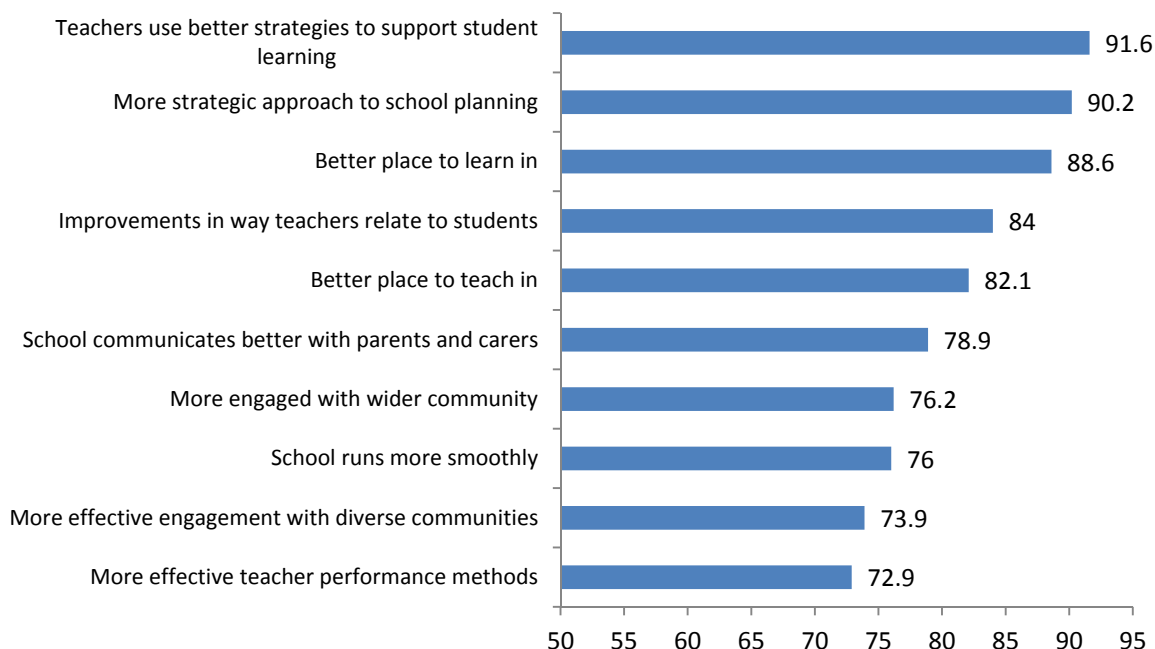
Of most relevance to this study are Managing the Classroom and Managing the School – with teachers likely to be more equipped to focus on the former.

Table 4.5 outlines teacher responses to key aspects on Managing the Classroom that teachers feel have improved a little or a lot because of Low SES NP. The Managing the Classroom propositions, such as levels of collaboration between classroom teachers, link to activities and strategies that are associated with enhanced learning environments. Strongest results in the area of classroom-relevant activity could be found in items relating to participation in professional learning (92 per cent reported they had benefitted from these opportunities), the growth in collaboration among classroom teachers (89 per cent responding positively) and the provision of classroom support for teachers to assist with student learning (90 per cent). This classroom support had to be identified as part of the Low SES NP initiative within the school and took a number of forms such as teaching aides, special support for specific curriculum areas such as Literacy and Numeracy, or other targeted support to assist with higher needs learners. Nine in ten teachers also reported that as a result of the Low SES NP they were more likely to be “using results from student assessments to inform teaching”, a practice associated closely with intensive professional development.

Table 4-5 Teacher responses on aspects of Managing the Classroom that have improved a little or a lot due to Low SES NP (%)

Managing the Classroom	A little or a lot improved (%)
9c. Opportunities for professional learning of classroom teachers	92
9a. Collaboration between classroom teachers	89
9b. Classroom support for teachers to help with student learning	90
9d. Using results from student assessments to inform teaching	90
11a. Meeting the individual learning needs of your students	88
11c. Managing student behaviour in classrooms	70
11e. Being supported in the classroom	82
11f. Able to explain the goals of your school to colleagues, parents and others	82
12a. Mentoring support provided to teachers	69
12c. The quality of school leadership	78
12b. Quality of support for early career teachers	88

Figure 4-2 Changes because of school’s participation in the Low SES NP, Strongly Agree (%)



1. The wording of some questions has been altered slightly to facilitate presentation. The original wording is provided in Q10 of the survey (see Appendix C).
2. Responses of Not an NP goal for this school are excluded from the values in this Table.

Figure 4.2 lists the main changes that teachers reported as a result of their school's participation in Low SES NP. Over 90 per cent of teachers felt that Low SES NP had led to the use of better strategies to support student learning (91.6 per cent), as well as more strategic approaches to school planning (90.2 per cent), helped make the school a better place for students to learn in (88.6 per cent), and improved the way teachers related to students (84 per cent). Strong impact was also reported on:

- better communication with parents and carers (78.9 per cent),
- stronger engagement with school community (76.2 per cent),
- smoother running of the school (76 per cent), and
- more effective teaching methods (72.9 per cent)

Managing the School refers to elements that affect teachers' work, including leadership, the targeted provision of professional learning, structures set in place to support the schools' workforce generally and overviews of the school as a teaching and learning environment.

These strongly favourable responses however provide an aggregate picture and it is important to understand the extent to which different groups of teachers within the survey responded to the question.

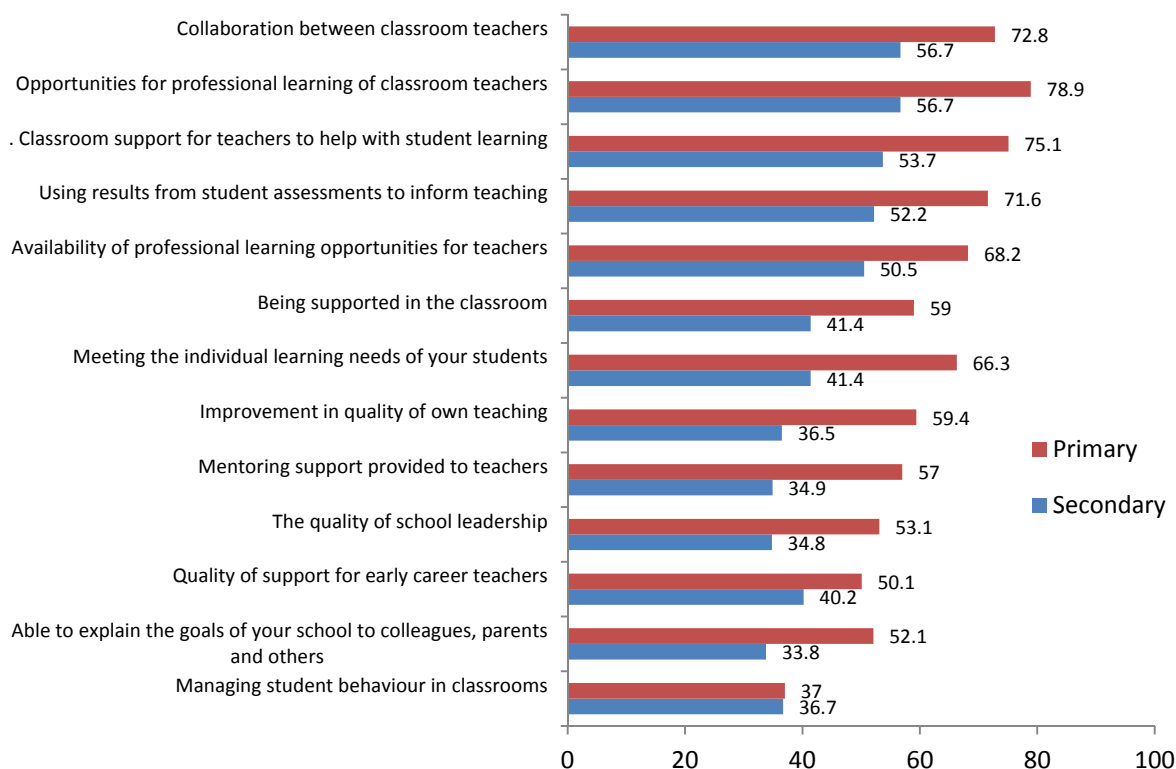
Table 4.6 summarises variations in teachers' responses by a range of school characteristics. Of particular interest is the finding that variation may be discerned by cohort (with schools entering the program earlier more likely to report favourably on the initiative), by school type, by school size and in more limited contexts by ATSI enrolments and ICSEA and NAPLAN quarters. School size is of course associated with type in many instances with primary schools closely aligned with small schools in many instances. Location and LBOTE enrolments are not in themselves factors that appear to drive differentiation.

The analysis in Figure 4.3 focuses most directly on the observed distinctions between responses from primary and secondary school teachers – responses that tend to provide some important insights into the nature of the initiative and the ways in which it has been implemented in schools of different types across New South Wales. As we would expect primary and secondary schools provide very different workplace and learning environments with arguably different opportunities and challenges for implementation of strategies for reform.

Table 4-6 Summary of teacher views by school characteristics

School characteristics	<i>Overall</i>	<i>Managing the classroom</i>	<i>Students outside the classroom</i>	<i>Parent & community relations</i>	<i>Managing the school</i>
Cohort	More positive responses from teachers in schools that joined the Partnership earlier.	As for <i>Overall</i> , but stronger effect	Differences not statistically significant	As for <i>Overall</i>	As for <i>Overall</i> , weaker after adjustment
Type of school	More positive responses from teachers in primary & special schools.	As for <i>Overall</i> , but stronger effect	More positive for secondary school teachers	As for <i>Overall</i> , but weaker after adjustment	As for <i>Overall</i>
Location	No statistically significant differences	Differences not statistically significant	Differences not statistically significant	Differences not statistically significant	Differences not statistically significant
Size by enrolments	More positive responses from teachers in smaller schools	As for <i>Overall</i> , but stronger effect	Teachers in larger schools more positive, weaker after adjustment	As for <i>Overall</i> , but weaker, particularly after adjustment	As for <i>Overall</i> , but weaker after adjustment
% ATSI enrolments	Statistically significant differences, but inconsistent (10%- 30% most positive), and weaker after adjustment	As for <i>Overall</i> , but statistically significant after adjustment	As for <i>Overall</i>	As for <i>Overall</i> , but not statistically significant after adjustment	Differences not statistically significant
% LBOTE enrolments	No statistically significant differences	Differences not statistically significant	Teachers in schools with higher % LBOTE more positive	Differences not statistically significant	Differences not statistically significant
ICSEA quarters	Statistically significant after adjustment but inconsistent—more positive for 2 nd & 3 rd quarters.	Differences not statistically significant	Differences not statistically significant after adjustment	Differences not statistically significant	Differences not statistically significant
NAPLAN reading quarters	Statistically significant differences after adjustment —teachers in schools the 3 rd & 2 nd quarters more positive	Differences not statistically significant	Teachers in the 3 rd & 2 nd quarters more positive	Teachers in the 3 rd & 2 nd quarters more positive	Differences not statistically significant

Figure 4-3 Contribution of Low SES NP to Managing the Classroom Environment: Primary and Secondary Teachers, Strongly Agree (%)



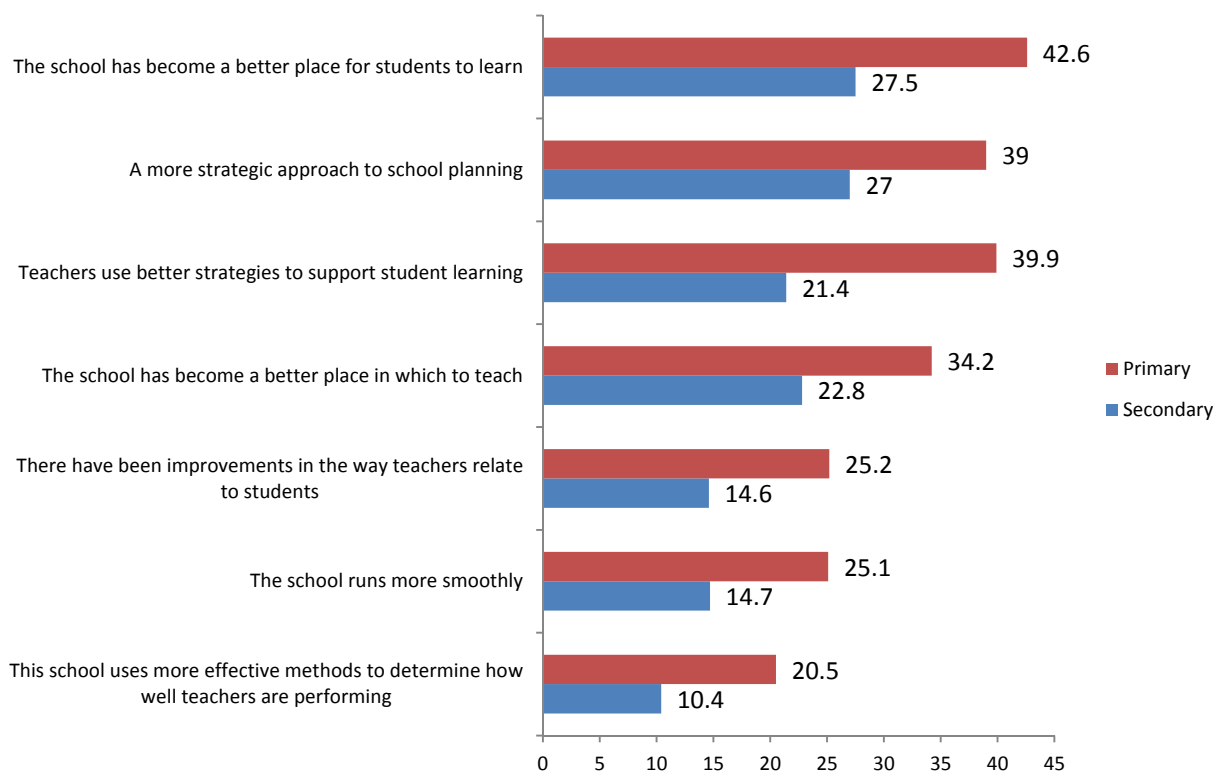
The results in Figure 4.3 show that, overall, teachers surveyed tended to report a strong impact of the Low SES NP measures based on what they had experienced in their schools. In many cases, such as the opportunities made available for professional learning or to develop collaborative relationships with colleagues through team teaching and sharing of strategic or planning activities, these were reported strongly by teachers across school types. If analysis is confined to teachers expressing strongest levels of endorsement for a strategy (excluding those who responded in terms of “a little” improvement) this trend is still in evidence. Over half of primary and secondary teachers for example were likely to strongly endorse the role of the Low SES NP in building their professional development opportunities, extending stronger support (through extra staff) to help them in their classrooms and to have improved management of student learning through using assessments more strategically.

In all cases, however, primary schools compared to secondary schools were likely to report this more strongly and consistently. And as shown in Figure 4.5, in analysis of the open responses that followed these banks of questions, primary teachers tended to describe a more coherent and consistent approach to the Low SES NP at the school level, with stronger and more positive summations of ways in which the initiative had been introduced and had come to inform their experiences and practice.



Similar themes apply in teachers’ responses to propositions about the learning environment in the school more generally (“Managing the School”), presented in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4-4 Contribution of Low SES NP to Managing the School Environment: Primary and Secondary Teachers, Strongly Agree (%)



Around four in ten primary teachers were in strong agreement that as a result of the Low SES NP their schools had become better places for students to learn, with teachers using better strategies to support student learning. These are the measures most closely associated with student learning directly. There was also a strong view (39 per cent of primary teachers strongly agreeing) that the school had adopted a more “strategic” approach to school planning. By comparison just over a quarter of secondary teachers were in strong agreement that their schools had become more strategic in approach or had become a better place for students to learn while 21.4 per cent expressed a strong belief that teachers in their schools were applying “better strategies” to support student learning.

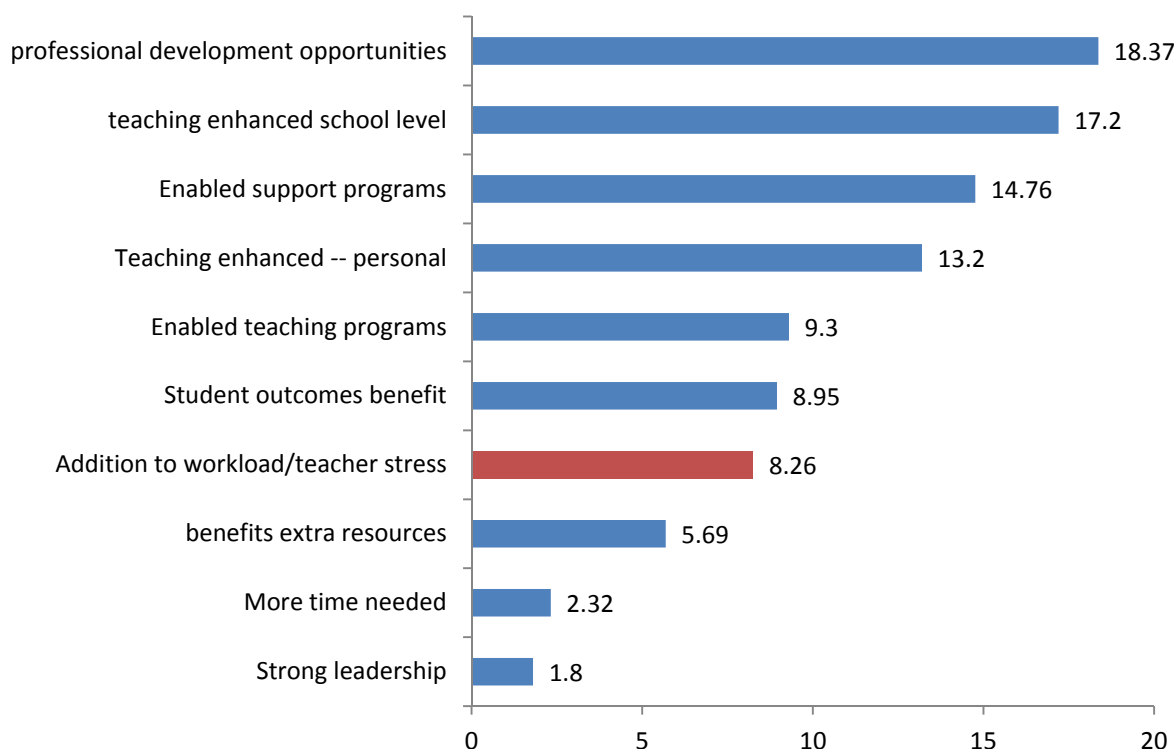
These distinctions are quite marked and most marked in relation to schools as learning environments. On other measures over a third of primary teachers believed that their schools had become better places for teachers (compared with 22.8 per cent of secondary teachers). On all measures relating to the school as a functional workplace primary teachers were more likely to express strong support for initiatives.



Qualitative open responses

One of the most valuable elements within the teacher survey was an open question introduced within this set of proposition-based questions about the impact of the Low SES NP initiatives. This question sought teacher views about the effects of the Low SES NP initiatives on their role as a teacher. Responses were extensive, complex and illuminating and many teachers offered considered responses that canvassed a wide range of their immediate experiences, both positive and negative. They appeared to regard this question as a place to contextualise their responses – if for example they may have indicated that they had had opportunities to undertake professional learning this would be the place to express an opinion of the value or targeting of that learning. Figure 4.5 presents the key responses by percentage of teachers.

Figure 4-5 All responses: Effect of Low SES NP on your role as teacher (%)



In broad terms the factors nominated by teachers could be grouped into ten key themes.

Professional development opportunities (over 18 per cent of responses) were most regularly highlighted as a key effect associated with their school’s participation in the Low SES NP – the nature and extent of these professional learning opportunities were most significant especially when conducted, as so many reported, on a whole-school or at least whole-team basis. For the most part these “opportunities” were reported as positives, and teachers referred to the professional development as supporting heightened quality of professional interactions, a more coherent and shared approach to their practice and

stronger confidence and enjoyment in their roles. But a minority also mentioned the downside of such a strong approach to staff development, especially when conducted on a whole-school basis. They alluded to disruption to their own classrooms and the school more generally, caused as a result of extensive professional learning commitments. In such instances teachers might report inappropriately targeted training, the sense that a “blanket” approach had been applied without recognition of teachers’ actual current skills, expertise or experience professional development.. (“was not appropriate or useful to me. I would like to have been given a choice in the type of PD available that I believe would help me as a teacher.”), and the reliance on casual relief teachers to backfill in classrooms with consequent negative effects on student learning and teacher workloads. Given the nature of these comments many were included under Addition to workload/teacher stress. An exemplar of a comment of this nature would be: “A lot of teachers have been much more stressed with a great deal heavier workload and the professional learning”.

A high volume of responses referred to a perception that their school’s teaching delivery had been **enhanced overall** (over 17 per cent responses); this response could be differentiated from comments about an individual’s self-assessment about their own practice. It entailed a picture of how the Low SES NP had made an impact at the school level and is a strong global picture of impact on practice.

The Low SES NP was used in many schools to build strategic **support** into schools and classrooms, often through the use of support workers to assist at specific year levels, for specific learning programs, for support of particular groups of higher need students or for particular programs aimed at engagement and wellbeing. School plans developed individualised approaches to the mode and nature of this support to be developed at a school level. For teachers these strategies were also identified as influential on teachers’ immediate experiences; their presence and effects were generally highly visible and measureable. Again, while these support strategies were welcomed, some teachers raised a question in relation to this program element about sustainability, given that support arrangements had been contingent on Low SES NP funding. They had benefitted from this extra resource but would it last?

One of the most interesting set of responses entailed those dealing with teachers’ reports about **transformation of their own practice**. Over 13 per cent of statements alluded to teachers’ own sense of enhanced efficacy and performance. These were overwhelmingly positive and often highly powerful personal statements. They affirmed the contributions the Low SES NP had made to individuals’ approaches to their work, their school and profession more generally:

Absolutely the best thing that has ever happened in my over 30 years of being a teacher. The opportunities for having the time to cooperatively plan our programmes, having the time off class to attend workshops and in servicing has been invaluable. I have learnt more new ways and effective ways of teaching these past two years than what has been for me in the past 15 years. I am a much better teacher, with more strategies and effective ways of teaching because of this programme...

Enabling of **teaching programs** tended to encompass descriptions of specially targeted teaching programs introduced by the school as a result of the Low SES NP. These strategies involved significant deployment of funding, sometimes directed toward securing the dedicated staffing expertise provided by a staff mentor or pedagogical leader but sometimes to the injection of resources in technology or other classroom-based teaching materials associated with a specific program or approach (such as a literacy program).

Some teachers volunteered perceptions about the extent to which the initiative had impacted positively on **student outcomes**. Around eight per cent of responses overall made such claims, generally in the context of specific initiatives seen as influential in generating this outcome – such as development of strong and coherent teaching teams, or instigation of whole-school approaches to professional development. These responses may be distinguished from more generalised perceptions of teaching improvements within the school (referenced above).

While most comments submitted in these open responses were positive one specific area of reservation was relatively widely expressed by teachers. Just under one in ten comments alluded to the **heightened workloads** associated with their school's engagement with the Low SES NP. For some the comment was made in the context of other more positive effects – such as development of professional skills or the provision of support in the classroom. Here some teachers specifically noted the trade-off involved in privileging stronger work satisfaction and learner outcomes over intensification of workloads: “the work has increased fourfold but there is a feeling that my “busyness” is productive as it is in a positive direction to improve quality teaching...” “There has been an increase in workload but there are benefits for those who have taken the trouble to become genuinely involved. Others have missed the opportunities and their practices have not improved, I find this to be a sad situation.”

There is obviously an increased workload for the teachers involved. However the dedication the teachers have shown to the program indicates that they see the work is worth it!

Others highlighted the pace of change and the difficulties some staff might have experienced in keeping up with the wide ranging demands of this program – while nevertheless acknowledging its benefits:

(In this school) a lot of great programs have been set up and begun, as well as a lot of inspiring professional development that give practical strategies to boost students' literacy learning. Some teachers are struggling to adjust to this change as we now base school programs and initiatives from a research background, and some are struggling to deal with this consistent change which is part of the teacher evaluative cycle. I think the school changes are very positive and will benefit the students greatly – in fact we have seen some benefits already...”

For others however the comments provided alluded merely to heightened workloads and associated levels of stress. Such comments were often accompanied by reference to high accountability and compliance demands associated with the initiative.

Other factors were less widely subscribed. One theme raised by some teachers involved the limited time in which their school had participated in what they perceived as major and potentially significant interventions – with the comment that insufficient time had elapsed to make any assessment of the benefits or otherwise of the initiative. In this context some alluded to the “pain” of implementation and establishment and the assumption that “gain” would be forthcoming at a later point.

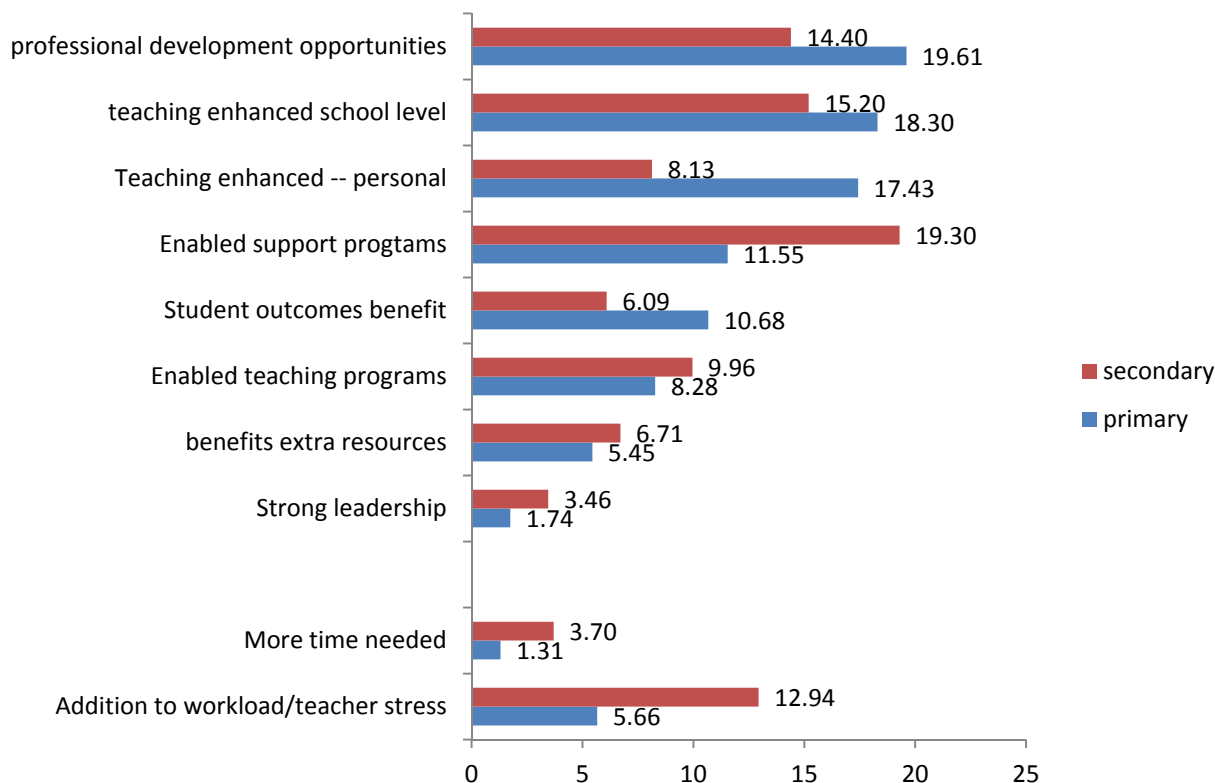
This overview draws on the perceptions of many hundreds of teachers across Low SES schools of different types, sizes, regions and sectors. It is important to understand the nature of their views and to draw a picture of the overall emphases of their responses. Nevertheless it is also possible to differentiate within the survey sample. One important area of differentiation must involve primary and secondary schools where teachers’ experiences must inevitably differ, coloured by schools’ organisational structures, social contexts, size, and instructional focus.

Figure 4.6 compares the responses of primary and secondary school teachers. For primary teachers three key areas saw relatively high levels of favourable responses and commentary. Professional development was most widely reported as a program “effect” on teaching practice, followed by a picture of whole-school improvement in teaching quality, and enhancement of teaching quality at a personal level. Around one in ten primary school teachers explicitly nominated effects on students’ outcomes as important in their experience of the Low SES NP. Very few proposed negative views of the program – just over five per cent mentioned concerns about workload and a handful believed that the program required more time before effects could be evident.

Secondary teachers on the other hand conveyed a somewhat different picture. They were less likely than primary teachers to report on the professional learning opportunities afforded by the program or to believe that teaching had been enhanced “at a school level”. They were markedly less likely to feel that their own teaching had been enhanced, suggesting a level of disconnect between the professional learning experienced and actual impact. In commenting on the effect of the initiatives on their own experiences as a teacher they were more likely than primary teachers to comment on school-level strategies and initiatives with a focus distinct from immediate teaching practice. Reference was most often made for example to the support programs initiated – which may have attended for example to student engagement and wellbeing – and to a broad assessment that teaching programs had been enhanced through “add-on” initiatives such as staffing or material resources.

Secondary teachers were more likely to claim that the Low SES NP had affected them primarily in terms of increased workloads (nearly 13 per cent of responses compared to less than six per cent of responses from primary teachers) and more likely too to feel that insufficient time had elapsed before results could be ascertained.

Figure 4-6 Primary compared with secondary responses: Effects of Low SES NP on your role as a teacher (%)



The original wording is provided in Q12 of the survey (see Appendix C).

Professional learning opportunities

The best insights into these responses are provided by the teachers themselves, whose comments were often developed at some length. As noted nearly one in five of primary teachers surveyed made favourable reference to the contribution of the Low SES NP to their **professional learning** opportunities:

A lot of great programs have been set up and begun, as well as a lot of inspiring professional development that gives practical strategies to boost students literacy learning.

Absolutely the best thing that has ever happened in my over 30 years of being a teacher. The oppourtunities for having the time to cooperatively plan our programmes, having the time off class to attend workshops and in servicing has been invaluable. I have learnt more new ways and effective ways of teaching these past two years than what has been for me in the last 15 years.

As a teacher I feel the professional development programs that were able to be provided due to (Low SES) NP initiatives, have really upskilled me as a teacher and

added to my aspects of being a quality teacher. This has had a flow on effect to the students who have benefited from my deeper knowledge of how to support them.

As a teacher in my first early stages of my career the professional learning provided through national partnerships is just what I need to be a better teacher for the students at my school and when I move to another school. I feel more involved and aware of school plans and targets. I can see what I'm doing is meeting those targets.

Secondary school teachers, on the other hand, were less likely to report on professional learning opportunities and when they did their responses were more cautiously expressed “It has allowed teachers to access a wide range of in-service...” They might even mention that they had “gained a lot’ from professional learning opportunities within their school or acknowledge the opportunity for teacher development to be “fantastic”. But they were also more likely to demonstrate a degree of ambivalence about those opportunities and to express some concern about the application of implementation of those opportunities, especially as they may have impacted on teachers’ time out of the classroom:

..the time taken for different in-services, frequent meetings either to analyse student results or to plan cooperatively take us out of the classroom and it feels at present as though students miss out..

I am currently trying to implement so many strategies...that I don't feel like I have time to do any of them particularly well. I'm sure the school feels that I am extremely lucky to have all of these opportunities for growth. I feel like I would like to have one main focus and when we are all using that proficiently, then add on...

Most of the initiatives are helpful however there is a lack of appropriate professional development courses...

Teachers are continually on professional learning courses so there is a continual need for casuals...disjointedness across the day to day running of the school

Enhancement of teaching at school and personal levels

Strong levels of responses were received from both primary and secondary teachers about the extent to which the Low SES NP had contributed to the overall delivery of teaching programs within the school with over 18 per cent of primary teachers and 15 per cent of secondary teachers alluding to changes associated with the Low SES NP. These are important in terms of teachers’ perceptions of effect.

Primary and secondary teachers were more likely to report *overall* teaching to have benefited from Low SES NP initiatives than their own immediate teaching practice, with primary teachers reporting more strongly on this measure of whole-school effect.

*This is the best initiative in years, making every teacher an ‘expert’ in chosen targets.
(Primary)*

By increasing collaboration between teachers through job embedded planning time and increasing the number of exec to lead smaller grade based teams we have been able to make huge changes to teacher practice and student learning outcomes. (Primary)

Have definitely seen an improvement in teaching styles, accountability and differentiation over the years involved in the program. (Primary)

Our school is a much better happier place to work in for everyone. (Primary)

My whole school is alive with the joy of learning! (Primary)

(The Low SES NP has) established clear goals for teaching that the whole school can act on. (Secondary)

Lots of TPL opportunities which have enriched the learning if many teachers with the flow on effect of more engaging responsive teaching and learning. (Secondary)

There has been an obvious improvement in the level of pedagogy and practice discussions and this can only be of benefit in the big picture. (Secondary)

Many comments however focussed less on the overall school environment and more on the personal impact of the Low SES NP. Here primary teachers were much more likely to volunteer positive and personal experiences of the Low SES NP and to connect the initiative with their own professional growth.

Over 17 per cent of primary teachers made reference to the importance of the program in informing their own practice:

It has been great having the Teacher Educator and professional learning for teachers. I feel supported and am more confident to analyse student data and use the knowledge gained from it.

It has changed the way I program, teach and assess. I have been given many more opportunities to engage in quality professional learning and the time to embed those changes into my classroom. Having the support of others..is extremely beneficial..

It has improved my pedagogy. The professional development programs have been wonderful and meaningful.

Opportunity to look at research and new literacy and numeracy programs has made me a better teacher..I am far more explicit in what I teach and how I teach.

Secondary teachers were much less likely to connect the effects of the initiative to their own practice (just over eight per cent) – although they acknowledged the effect of the program on the school’s teaching environment more generally.

Enabling support and teaching programs

While primary teachers were more likely to report the impacts of initiatives in boosting their own or their schools' teaching practices secondary teachers were more likely to highlight the impact of the Low SES NP in packing support into school programs – either into teaching programs or into other aspects of school activity such as engagement and wellbeing. Given the complexity of the secondary school's objectives and roles – where young people come to assume more independent identities and where student engagement and wellbeing are increasingly keys to achievement and retention – it is not surprising that many schools have invested in support frameworks as part of Low SES NP initiatives. We have already noted the extent to which secondary school teachers and principals have nominated programs and strategies external to the classroom as important aspects of their Low SES NP plans – and teachers' references in these more open ended questions appear to support this emphasis. Thus teachers are able to allude to specially-designated roles enabled by Low SES NP funding – to support student learning in classroom settings and to build engagement and attendance externally.

Great classroom support has assisted in reducing behavioural disruptions and increased student engagement, resulting in improved learning outcomes. Opportunities to better implement alternative learning pathways for students from years 10 to 12 has appeared to increase student attendance , retention and engagement beyond Stage 5. There are increased numbers of students who probably would have left school now completing year 12. ..additional resources have greatly supported this student outcome.

An extra teacher in the room is invaluable for our low ability classes which contain many students who struggle to complete any task individually and need continual support, encouragement and redirection. Having a trained speech pathologist in the school has informed teaching practice; skills field building, scaffolding and structuring lessons are spreading throughout the school. The homework centre...and use of electronic whiteboards...has been invaluable.

When primary school teachers refer to “support” in these contexts they are more likely to refer to more explicitly targeted classroom learning support especially in the areas of literacy and numeracy development:

By having one extra day to support the ESL students there is more effective teaching and learning happening here. I am able to liaise with the classroom teachers and support them in class more effectively.

Fabulous implementation of Focus on Reading program has made a significant and continued difference in the way teachers approach the teaching of reading – has engaged students more .

Student outcomes

Overall less than ten per cent of responses explicitly associated the program with enhanced student outcomes. It is noteworthy however that primary teachers (10.68 per cent) were more likely than secondary (6.09 per cent) to make reference to **enhanced student outcomes** and to make explicit connections between specific aspects of their implementation and student learning benefits.

For some primary school teachers this specific outcome – enhanced student performance – was presented as a prime focus of the school’s program and success in this domain as enormously powerful and motivating:

Extra resources, implemented programs and initiatives, support for students and targeted TPL, have all translated into real, practical value added for myself and substantial measured gains in outcomes for my students as shown in both school based assessments and NAPLAN results. Seeing these gains, as a direct effect of the Low SES NP initiatives, has had a more positive, motivational, as well as improved pedagogical impact, than any single other factor previously in my lengthy teaching career.

I have been excited to be a classroom teacher. Because of the professional development and additional support I have received I am a more effective teacher and I am able to see the improvement in my students’ performance.

Low SES NP has been of immense support in my school and taken my Low SES students to the next level. Without this funding this would not have occurred.

Outstanding support leading to outstanding improved outcomes for students.

I believe the initiatives have been wonderful opportunities for staff and students to increase learning outcomes.

While a number of secondary school teachers alluded to enhanced student outcomes their focus was more diffuse: unlike primary teachers they were less likely to see “outcomes” in terms of a relatively limited range of academic measures (such as NAPLAN results) and to refer instead to a range of measures from behavioural change through to attendance and academic results. In these terms then strategies associated with enhanced student learning outcomes were often (but not always) linked to the provision of more extensive and complex “support” arrangements within and outside classrooms:

Additional support in the learning environment is extremely helpful in improving student outcomes.

(Low SES) NP funding has allowed / given our school the opportunity to implement programs and employ support staff to improve and support student outcomes and teacher performance at our school.

In classes of students with challenging behaviour the backup and assistance has improved the educational outcomes of some students. Some cohorts of students need

several years of special attention. Low SES NP initiatives are crucial to these students. Without it they simply 'slip through the cracks' due to the nature of their behaviours and disengagement with learning.

Great to have more programs running to help students particularly with their reading. If students are given assistance with reading this will help them in all of their subjects and makes them more confident in all of their classes. This confidence enables them to be more settled and cooperative in classroom learning, allowing for more learning to take place.

Such support involves extra personnel and many schools invested significantly in teaching support staff and other assistants who could assist teaching staff in managing the needs of their very diverse classrooms. The support arrangements may also have been experienced at a more distant remove than those for primary teachers who tended to see the results of this activity more consistently and at closer quarters, generally within their own classrooms. As noted, some teachers expressed concern about the sustainability of such arrangements given the finite nature of the Low SES NP initiative.

Some secondary teachers also volunteered comments that “outcomes” from some school-based initiatives had not been forthcoming or had been compromised by aspects of implementation – such as an overly ambitious spread of initiatives at the school level resulting in confusion and initiative-fatigue.

Workload increase and other concerns

While most comments submitted in these open responses were positive one specific area of reservation was relatively widely expressed by teachers. Just under one in ten comments alluded to the **heightened workloads** associated with their school’s engagement with the Low SES NP (around eight per cent of comments). Secondary school teachers (13 per cent) however were much more likely than primary colleagues (six per cent) to express such criticisms with the bulk of this commentary concerning increases in workload, increased and bureaucratic approaches to compliance within the initiative, inappropriate targeting of programs and resources and the adverse effect on students involved in large-scale teacher professional learning programs, where teachers would routinely withdraw from their classrooms.

In many cases the focus on increased workloads was accompanied by reference to teacher stress and concerns about “top down” approaches to teacher work. Here teachers reported a sense of being devalued, with their professional expertise overlooked or otherwise unacknowledged:

Far too many interruptions to curriculum delivery due to ongoing complexity and number of (Low SES) NP initiatives. Over simplistic; problematic cultural development of blaming the teacher / pedagogical style of teachers/ing as initial problem before appropriate investigation / problem solving takes place. Unfortunate narrowing of educational practices.

I am currently trying to implement so many strategies (literacy target, LIN and LIEN, Reading to learn, evidence based teaching strategies, social skills, ESSA strategies, Naplan Focus) that I don't feel like I have time to do any of them particularly well. ... I feel that I would like to have one main focus, when we are all using this proficiently then add on.

I understand that in theory it should affect us in a positive way but unfortunately there has been some "loss in translation" as the strategies converted to practical implementation.

In principle, the goals of the program (to address individual learning needs of students on the basis of their current outcomes, and to engage in collaborative planning with other teachers as well as to encourage all staff to use more explicit teaching strategies) are to be commended, however, the time taken for different in-services, frequent meetings either to analyse students' results or to plan cooperatively take us out of the classroom, and it feels at present that the students miss out, being so often taught by casual teachers. If the meetings were to be held before or after school, it would not change the situation, because the teachers would be too tired and too absorbed in different projects to give their best during lessons. In my opinion, the collaborative planning and using explicit teaching strategies are very effective methods to improve students' results, but the teachers' workload (including purely administrative tasks connected with the above) is enormous, which impacts on their quality of work with the students and on their own mental condition (stress and always trying to meet the deadlines).

It creates more to do with less time to do it in. A 50 hour week has become a 60 hour week. Less down time and more weekend work is making me a less effective teacher overall. We have more and more professional development which demands change, but no time to implement it.

The volume and extent of comments such as these submitted by secondary school respondents tends to indicate a concern with the implementation aspect of the initiative in some schools. It should be noted that many secondary school teachers, if highlighting concerns, did so in a context of strong support for the program overall. Their concern tended to lie with the pace or intensity of implementation and at times with the inability of the school to afford them adequate time to make the required changes in their own practice.

5. Evidence of impact of Low SES NP on student outcomes

There is a considerable amount of evidence collected as part of this evaluation through the surveys of participating schools, teachers and principals suggesting a positive impact of the Low SES NP on schools. For example, nine out of ten principals who participated in the 2014 survey reported that as a result of the Low SES NP their school had been able to develop their existing staff capacity, develop operational arrangements that encouraged innovation and flexibility in staffing, support improved student learning outcomes, and build teachers' and students' access to more innovative and tailored learning opportunities. Almost the same number believed their school had been able to extend and develop external partnerships and over seven in ten were of the view that they had been able to retain high performing staff through mechanisms of the program. More than half believed they had been able to attract high performing staff through program initiatives (CIRES, 2014).

A major goal of the Low SES NP was to improve the education and life opportunities of students from low SES backgrounds through reforms targeting teacher quality, better use of assessment data, strengthened school leadership and strengthened partnership arrangements between schools and parents, local communities and the higher education sector. The major question to be asked, therefore, is whether the reforms and the reported impact of the reforms according to schools have led to improved student outcomes; the main reason for the investment in and implementation of the Low SES NP.

The acid test of the success of the reforms in improving outcomes for students would be evidence of improvement in achievement (as measured by such indicators as NAPLAN scores, School Certificate results, HSC results, ATAR scores) and in attendance rates, retention rates, attainment, student engagement measures, health and well-being, non-cognitive skills and transition into further study and work. Ideally, an assessment of the impact of Low SES NP would include all of these measures and potentially more to provide a comprehensive assessment of impact on the lives of students from low SES backgrounds, including on their attitudes, plans, achievement, skills, progress and opportunities. However, data for all of these dimensions are not readily available.

This section of the evaluation will attempt to measure the impact of the Low SES NP on changes in student outcomes, using available data. The data include:

- NAPLAN test scores (2009-2013)
- Learning gain as measured using NAPLAN
- School Certificate results
- Number of HSC certificates awarded, 2009-2012 (as a proportion of Year 12 students)
- HSC achievement, 2009-2012 (percentage of band 4 or above awards as a proportion of all course entries)

- Attendance rates, 2009-2012
- Apparent retention rates 7 – 12, 2009-2012
- Apparent retention rates 10-12, 2009-2012
- School Certificate (SC) results, 2008-2011:
 - Maths (average score)
 - English (average score)
 - Science (average score)
 - Average SC score across all SC results

The data for NAPLAN test scores, and for measuring NAPLAN skill gain, were available at a student level which permits more robust analysis of within and between school performance to evaluate more precisely the impact of the Low SES NP.

All other data were available only at a school level.

NAPLAN data were available for all government and Catholic schools, and for participating Low SES NP independent schools. All other data were only available for government schools. As a result much of the focus in this section is on government schools.

Comparisons of schools using the indicators can provide important insights into changes in learning and achievement associated with the impact of Low SES NP. However, there are some important caveats that need to be recognised in using such data to measure impact.

One is linked to the amount of time that may be needed to detect or reflect change in student outcomes. It is entirely feasible for schools to gain major improvements in teacher retention, nurturing quality teachers, improving teaching practice and improving school culture, which may take time, and for effects on student achievement to be lagged or to appear over time.

Alternatively, a sometimes reported finding in evaluations is a ‘halo’ effect in which schools display shorter term gains associated with interest in and awareness of new programs that dissipates with time as the newness and gloss wears off.

Student learning and skills may markedly improve in various classroom subject areas but not necessarily in NAPLAN test domains, or on other measures.

The data may not be the best for measuring ‘real’ changes occurring in student behaviour and outlooks which have lasting and beneficial impact in a lifelong perspective.

By virtue of the program, schools may be far better places in nurturing students and addressing their needs, and promoting a better and more engaged and active community as a result of participation without it leading directly to improved student outcomes.

Recognising these caveats, this section will present some analysis of the available data to measure any changes in student outcomes associated with the impact of the Low SES NP.

It will begin with various analyses using NAPLAN data. The first provides a trend analysis using a fixed effects model to measure the overall impact of the program and duration effects (exposure and sustained performance). The second includes a variance analysis based on a multi-level model using a comparison of student and school performance at the commencement of the Low SES NP (2009) and at the end (2013), in a pre- and post-program frame. The third is an analysis looking at the numbers of students in Low SES NP participating schools who remain at or above benchmark standards in NAPLAN across testing points (Year 3 to Year 5, and Year 7 to Year 9). The results are compared to students in low SES schools not participating in Low SES NP. The final analysis is a descriptive assessment of learning gain using NAPLAN data to assess whether there has been any change across the period in which the Low SES NP was in place. Change will be measured in terms of improvements relative to the state average in gain and relative to the state average variation in gain within schools.

In a separate chapter, Section 6 will present some analysis using the school-level data. Apart from attendance rates, nearly all of the indicators relate to secondary schools and secondary school students. For the analysis, a repeated measures design is employed using a mixed effects model with annual scores nested within schools.

A discussion on method is provided at each relevant part.

Trend analysis using NAPLAN

Various econometric approaches can be taken to evaluating the impact of the Low SES NP initiatives on student outcomes using NAPLAN. One method that has been applied in evaluating the impact of Low SES NP initiatives is regression discontinuity. In his report 'School Resources, Autonomy and Student Achievement: Evidence from a Regression Discontinuity Design', for example, Helal (2012) uses a regression discontinuity approach to estimate the impact of the Smarter Schools National Partnership in Victoria. This approach to evaluation relies on the presence of a threshold defining treatment (e.g. being in a Low SES NP-funded school or not) where assignment to a treatment is determined by the value of an observed covariate lying on either side of a fixed threshold (SES score for a school separating low SES from higher SES). Those schools below the threshold are selected for treatment. In practice, selection based on the threshold is not exact, and there can be random deviations around this point (i.e. schools below the threshold being treated and vice versa). To account for this, a fuzzy regression discontinuity method is used to alleviate the impact of imperfect selection for treatment.

Helal's (2012) methodology relies largely on a set threshold SES score defining low SES. In reality, no threshold was formally present and selection for participation in the Low SES NP was partly discretionary and 'blurred'. Technically, this issue does not impact some of the results presented. However, in order to obtain clearer estimates of the Low SES NP's impact on the population of interest, Helal utilised a bandwidth selection approach wherein the

sample was restricted to points around the threshold. If no threshold is clearly present in selection design, these estimates would not reflect the true underlying impact.

Given the varying and discretionary approach to low SES school selection, we have favoured an alternative approach to evaluating the impact of the Low SES NP initiatives on NAPLAN results. The approach used in the current section is to apply standard panel data techniques to analyse the Low SES NP's impact on student NAPLAN scores. It takes repeated observations on student scores through each testing round (3, 5, 7 and 9) and estimates the impact of the Low SES NP controlling for a range of characteristics (both at the student and school level).

Using this approach this section presents a set of results evaluating the Low SES NP program on NSW student NAPLAN scores. The Low SES NP impact on scores in each of the five NAPLAN domains – Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation, and Numeracy – is considered separately.

Method

The methodology in this section is based on approximation of a multiple error component model using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) with student-level fixed effects. It takes repeated observations on student scores through each testing round (3, 5, 7 and 9) and estimates the impact of the Low SES NP controlling for a range of characteristics (both at the student- and school-level).

The basic model takes the following form:

$$Score_{ijkt} = \alpha_i + X_{ijkt}\beta + \gamma SSNP_{kt} + u_{jkt} + v_{kt} + \xi_k + \epsilon_{ijkt}$$

Where,

- Student i
- Cohort (year level) j
- School k
- Year t

The set of variables represented by X_{ijkt} are all the student characteristics that may vary over time. This set included the student's age, socioeconomic status and an interaction between age and socioeconomic status. A number of fixed effects for calendar year, year level and school variables were also included.

The α_i represents characteristics specific to the student that are constant over the sample period, the 'fixed effect'. The school effect ξ_k , cohort effect u_{jkt} , school year effect v_{kt} are assumed to be random and uncorrelated with other error components. In order to estimate this specification with the full set of random effects, a multivariate optimisation routine would be required. Given the large number of observations, such a procedure is very computationally intensive. However, the definition of a random effects specification

ensures that OLS estimation of the model is unbiased and consistent. There is an efficiency loss (higher variance) incurred in this step, however, the large number of observations helps to alleviate this issue.

In addition to the main explanatory variables in X_{ijkt} , the average of these at each random effect was also included. This is known as the correlated random effects specification, and can help account for any fixed variation among these effects.

Including a comprehensive set of fixed and correlated random effects in the model specification serves two distinct purposes. Primarily, each is treated as an unobserved factor specific to that domain (e.g. student level, year level, etc.) that is to be estimated. This allows for an arbitrary correlation between the overall error component and the fixed effect, as well as a linear correlation between each random effect and the group averaged explanatory variables. This attempts to control for potential endogeneity between treatment, $SSNP_{kt}$, and the school effects, ξ_k and v_{kt} . Endogeneity (correlation between the error components) might arise when important variables that determine treatment are omitted from the analysis (which is likely in this situation).

Estimation of the fixed effects model involves de-meaning student level observations, that is, the within-student means for each variable are subtracted from the observed values of the variables. Hence, within each student, the de-meaned variables all have a mean of zero. This necessarily wipes out the effect of time invariant factors (such as gender). So, with a fixed effects model, we are analyzing what causes individual's values to change across time. Variables whose values do not change (like race or gender) cannot cause changes across time (unless their effects change across time as well). However, whatever effect they have at one time is the same effect that they have at other times, so the effects of such stable characteristics are controlled.

Data

Data were available on approximately 1.8 million observations over the period 2008-2013. A number of these, however, were omitted due to either missing or unusable values, as outlined in Table 5.1.

Further restrictions in the sample size were due to missing data in at least one field used in regression. This brought the sample size down to 1,032,652 scores.

The table and summary demonstrates that we are able to draw on around 60% of observations as accurate and complete. Where data are missing key reasons have involved inadequate data on NAPLAN scores where there is either no evidence of NAPLAN results at all (around 58,000 instances) or inadequate information on NAPLAN results over time (around 377,000). Other data missing at a student level involve identification of family SES – a further 173,000. Around 75,000 instances were excluded due to insufficient identification information about individual students (student ID).

Work on data sets in NAPLAN in which students are tracked across year-levels and matched in terms of their Identifier and school suggest that the 60 per cent of cases available for the analysis are consistent with what might be expected. An examination of the spread of missing data did not show differences in percentages between Low SES NP schools and other schools.

Table 5-1 Data cleaning

Omission reason	Count
Initial	1,843,720
Age < 7	237
Age > 17	869
	1,842,614
Student ID missing ¹	4802
	1,837,812
No NAPLAN results ²	57549
	1,780,263
Problems with Student identifier ³	70371
	1,709,892
At least one school ID didn't match school's data	19828
	1,690,064
At least one school ID didn't match ICSEA data	16026
	1,674,038
> 1 student-year (more than one set of scores within a year)	106
	1,673,932
< 1 student observation (no NAPLAN scores over time)	377,333
	1,296,599
SES missing	172,949
	1,123,650
LBOTE status was missing	61,441
Final	1,062,209

NOTES:

1. Majority of cases were in non-government schools
2. Results missing because students did not sit any of the tests
3. Student identifiers were not consistent, possibly due to clerical errors, and students could not be tracked.

Further work is required to examine more fully the effects of missing data, including exploration of possibilities of creating a more comprehensive file through restoring data fields and developing a weighted approach to ensure representativeness.

Results

Table 5.2 presents the results of the impact of the Low SES NP from two different models: (1) a fixed effects model that excludes duration of school participation in the Low SES NP

and estimates effects based on participation only, and (2) a fixed effects model that includes both participation and duration of participation in the Low SES NP. The full results with all estimates are provided in Table A.1 and Table A.2 in Appendix A.

The main results suggest that participation in the Low SES NP is associated with positive gains in NAPLAN achievement scores. These range from 1.79 points for Spelling to 3.64 points in Grammar and Punctuation. In addition to actual participation (whether a school participated in the program or not), the duration or length of time that schools had participated in the Low SES NP was associated with the level of effectiveness and size of impact.

Table 5-2 Summary of Low SES NP estimates using results from fixed effects models with and without duration of participation

	Reading scores	Spelling scores	Grammar scores	Numeracy scores
	<i>Fixed Effects Model excluding duration</i>			
Low SES participation	1.98**	1.79**	3.64**	2.94**
	<i>Fixed Effects Model including duration</i>			
Low SES participation	0.66*	1.00**	3.30**	2.43**
Duration of participation	1.41**	0.88**	0.37*	0.54**

Note: * represents significance at 5% level, ** represents significance at 1% level
 Full results for the two models are provided in Table A.1 and Table A.2 in Appendix A.

An important indication of the Low SES NP effect is that for the four disciplines—Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation, and Numeracy—the Low SES NP was estimated to have a significant positive impact on average student scores with each additional program year in place. So, over a period of four years of Low SES NP participation student scores increased by five points on average in participating schools compared to non-participating schools, after controlling for student intake characteristics and school location.

The estimate of five points is calculated by obtaining the total average effect across the NAPLAN domains and adding four times the average duration impact. Therefore:

$$((\text{Reading}=0.66 + (4*1.41)) + (\text{Spelling}=1.00+(4*.88)) + (\text{Grammar}=3.30+(4*.37)) + (\text{Numeracy}=2.43+(4*0.54)))/4 = ((6.3 + 4.52 + 4.78 + 4.56) = 20.16/4 = \mathbf{5.04} \text{ points})$$

The average across all four disciplines comes to 5.04 points, meaning that students in schools which commenced in Low SES NP in 2009 gained an average improvement of 5.04 points in the period from 2009 to 2013.



Impact relative to linked programs

This section considers a potentially varying effect of Low SES NP initiatives through comparison with other often linked NP programs. The Low SES NP encompasses several different programs, and a model was estimated that considers the individual effect of each program and its duration. The programs included in the model in addition to the broad Low SES NP cover participation in the NP Literacy and Numeracy (LN), NP for teacher quality (TQ), NP for the teacher quality enhanced decision making pilot (TQE), and the NP for teacher quality for schools participating as a ‘spoke’ of a Centre for Excellence Hub (TQSpoke).

Results presented in Table 5.3 indicate that Low SES NP and TQSpoke have had the most significant effect on NAPLAN scores. The effect of the Low SES program is significant and positive for most cases. However, the effect on scores of TQSpoke appears more negative, with the downward impact effect being offset over a three to four year period (suggesting a net of zero).

Table 5-3 Heterogeneous Low SES NP effects

		LN	Low SES NP	TQ	TQE	TQSpoke
Reading scores	Individual effect	-1.36	0.86**	0.36	-2.48*	0.00
	Duration effect	0.63	1.38***	-1.74*	0.94	0.51
Spelling scores	Individual effect	0.02	1.25***	-3.50**	0.32	-1.43*
	Duration effect	-0.57	0.84***	1.26*	0.10	0.54
Grammar scores	Individual effect	3.99***	3.73***	-1.64	0.48	1.14
	Duration effect	-0.20	0.47**	-3.19***	-1.53*	-0.27
Numeracy scores	Individual effect	0.18	2.74***	-2.90*	2.64*	-3.67***
	Duration effect	0.01	0.38**	-1.26	0.11	2.23***

Note: * represents significance at 5% level, ** represents significance at 1% level

Interaction with SES

This section considers effects using a specification that includes an interaction between the Low SES NP effect and a student’s SES score.

Interacting the treatment indicator with the SES variable allows for the effect of the Low SES NP to vary depending on socioeconomic status. The intuition behind such an approach might be that there is a diminishing marginal return to additional resources (captured in SES), so students of low SES benefit relatively more than those of higher SES. However, the estimated impact was largely insignificant, with there being a small negative effect with duration.

Table 5-4 Low SES NP variation with SES

	Low SES NP	Low SES NP*SES	Duration of Low SES NP	Duration*SES
Reading scores	-1.67*	0.06**	2.90**	-0.04**
Spelling scores	0.54	0.02	1.99**	-0.03**
Grammar scores	3.83**	-0.01	2.41**	-0.05**
Numeracy scores	4.54**	-0.05**	1.82**	-0.03**

Note: * represents significance at 5% level, ** represents significance at 1% level

Variance analysis using NAPLAN

Variance analysis of NAPLAN scores is another method for measuring impact of Low SES NP participation. Standard analysis of variance techniques require certain assumptions to be met for accurate estimation of effects including roughly equal sample sizes across comparison groups, and independence of observations. Where data are hierarchical or nested as in the case of the NAPLAN data (e.g. student within schools), independence of observations cannot be assumed, and sample sizes between low SES schools and other schools vary, a mixed effects or multi-level model is a more appropriate method for calculating within and between school variance to evaluate impact (e.g. see Lu & Rickard, 2014). Mixed effect or multi-level modeling provides a robust approach for addressing challenges associated with hierarchical data.

This section presents the results of a sequence of multi-level models to estimate variance in NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy scores. The models were applied to NAPLAN results obtained in 2009 and those obtained in 2013. This was to permit comparison of results at the outset of the Low SES NP initiatives and in the final year in a quasi pre and post-test framework.

For the analysis, we started with the simplest multilevel model which allows for school effects on achievement, but without explanatory variables. This 'null' model is effectively:

$$y_{ij} = \beta_0 + u_j + e_{ij}$$

Where y_{ij} is the attainment of student i in school j , β_0 is the overall mean across schools, u_j is the effect of school j on attainment, and e is random error associated with student i in school j .

The school effects u_j , which are also school (or level 2) residuals, are assumed to follow a normal distribution with mean zero and variance σ_u^2 . With this model it is possible to partition the levels of variance in achievement to obtain overall estimates of within and between school effects.

The following models tested the impact of the inclusion of a range of student-level and school-level variables on the overall levels of within and between school variance to measure the influence of a range of student and school level factors.

The models for primary schools included the following student controls:

- Student SES (based on an equal weighting of parental education and occupation, using the highest level where there are two parents)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) status
- Gender
- Whether the student was from a Language background other than English (LBOTE)

And the following school-level controls:

- Non-metropolitan location
- School SES
- Proportion of LBOTE students
- Proportion of ATSI students
- Proportion of students with a disability
- Proportion of girls
- Size of school (enrolments)
- Selective entry school or not (secondary schools only)

The models also included a flag for Low SES NP participation to assess whether there were independent effects for participation or not, and whether this contributed to explaining variance in Reading and Numeracy achievement, and whether this contribution had changed between 2009 and 2013.

In addition to the partitioning of variance, standardised parameter estimates were derived to show the size of the independent effect of each contributing student and school factor, including Low SES NP participation. The estimates presented here were those obtained in the final model which included all student and school-level controls. The estimates for the constant are also included. The constant is the mean value of the outcome variable (NAPLAN reading achievement, for example) when all of the explanatory variables equal zero.

Regression diagnostics were undertaken to examine the validity of each model. This included plotting of residuals and running a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality. For all of the models in this section, the results showed that conditional residuals followed a normal distribution and the results from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests for normality were not significant, suggesting normality of residuals.

Results

The results for NAPLAN Reading for Year 3 and for Year 5 are presented in Table 5.5. The results for NAPLAN Numeracy are presented in Table 5.6. The tables present the results for 2009 in the first set of columns and the results for 2013 in the second set.

In Years 3 and 5, for both Reading and Numeracy, the majority (70-80%) of variation in student NAPLAN scores can be attributed to the difference in individual student attributes (within school variation). Of this variation, student SES background has the strongest independent effects on achievement, for both Reading and Numeracy. It also accounts for most of the measured within-school variance, for example 6.5 per cent for Year 3 Reading in 2009 (Table 5.5) and 4.1 per cent for Year 5 Numeracy (Table 5.6). ATSI status has significant effects on achievement, but does not contribute greatly to explaining much of the within-school variation in achievement.

Across Year 3 and Year 5 the amount of *between school* variance in NAPLAN Reading achievement ranges from 15.7 per cent to 19.2 per cent. It actually increases for both year-levels from 2009 to 2013.

A striking feature of the variance estimates is the impact of student SES. In Year 3 in 2009 it accounted for 59.1 per cent of the between-school variance. In 2013, it was 59.7 per cent. In Year 5 the level is still over 50 per cent in 2009 and 58.5 per cent in 2013. Being ATSI, LBOTE or female contributes only marginal amounts to explaining between-school variance in achievement, though the parameter estimates suggest independent effects with ATSI and LBOTE status associated with lower achievement and girls outperforming boys in reading.

After student SES, social intake as measured by school SES has the largest effect on *between school* variance. In Year 3 in 2009, mean school SES accounted for 16.0 per cent of between school variance in Reading achievement, rising to 18.5 per cent in 2013. In Year 5, school SES accounted for 17.6 per cent of between-school variance in 2009 and for 17.9 per cent in 2013.

Of relevance to the evaluation of the Low SES NP, in 2009 at the commencement of the program inclusion of the Low SES NP school flag for Year 3 contributed little to explaining between-school differences. The parameter estimate was positive though small. By 2013, the estimate had increased to 2.0, indicating that participation had more than doubled the effect for Low SES NP schools, even if still small. In 2013 there was also a small amount (0.2) that participation contributed to explaining between-school variance.

In Year 5, there is also a small shift in the independent effect of participation in the Low SES NP from 2009 to 2013. The contribution to explaining between school variance rises fractionally from 0.2 to 0.5, and the parameter estimate, positive, rises from 1.1 to 1.5. These patterns suggest slight improvement over time in the effect of Low SES NP participation on Reading achievement.

Table 5-5 Partitions of variance explained, NAPLAN Reading, Year 3 and Year 5, Government Schools: 2009 and 2013 compared

		2009			2013		
		Within school	Between school	Estimate	Within school	Between school	Estimate
Year 3	Constant	84.3	15.7	411.7**	82.0	18.0	410.3**
	Student Characteristics						
	Socioeconomic Status	6.5	59.1	26.9**	7.2	59.7	25.1**
	Female	1.3	0.3	9.6**	1.0	0.0	8.1**
	ATSI	0.3	2.6	-5.9**	0.4	2.4	-5.1**
	LBOTE	0.0	0.4	-2.1	0.0	0.3	-2.4**
	School characteristics						
	Non-city location		0.6	0.6		1.2	-0.5
	School SES		16.0	13.1**		18.5	16.5**
	LBOTE (%)		0.3	-2.8*		0.6	-2.9**
	ATSI (%)		1.7	-3.2**		0.4	-1.5*
	Disabilities (%)		0.7	0.2		0.9	0.1
	Females (%)		0.0	1.9		0.0	0.1
	Size of school		0.0	0.0		0.1	0.8
	Low SES NP		0.0	0.9		0.1	2.0**
	Total Variance explained	8.2	81.7		8.6	84.2	
Year 5	Constant	82.9	17.1	491.7**	80.8	19.2	495.8**
	Student Characteristics						
	Socioeconomic Status	6.7	51.5	24.3**	7.3	58.5	20.6**
	Female	1.2	0.0	8.1**	0.8	0.1	5.5**
	ATSI	0.7	2.9	-7.5**	0.4	2.3	-4.3**
	LBOTE	0.2	1.6	-4.9**	0.0	0.1	-2.1**
	School characteristics						
	Non-city location		0.4	-0.4		1.9	-0.3
	School SES		17.6	14.8**		17.9	13.9**
	LBOTE (%)		0.6	-4.7**		0.3	-1.5*
	ATSI (%)		0.7	-2.0**		0.2	-1.3*
	Disabilities (%)		0.4	1.5*		0.0	0.0
	Females (%)		0.1	0.1		0.0	0.5
	Size of school		0.0	1.1		0.0	1.3*
	Low SES NP		0.2	1.6*		0.5	1.5*
	Total Variance explained	8.7	75.8		8.5	81.9	

Note: *= $p < 0.05$ **= $p < 0.01$

Table 5-6 Partitions of variance explained, NAPLAN Numeracy, Year 3 and Year 5, Government Schools: 2009 and 2013 compared

		2009			2013		
		Within school	Between school	Estimate	Within school	Between school	Estimate
Year 3	Constant	82.7	17.3	396.0**	80.7	19.3	391.8**
	Student Characteristics						
	Socioeconomic Status	6.2	52.0	22.9**	7.7	55.2	22.3**
	Female	0.1	-0.1	-2.5**	0.1	0.0	-1.9**
	ATSI	0.4	2.9	-5.8**	0.4	2.5	-4.3**
	LBOTE	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.1	0.1	2.2**
	School characteristics						
	Non-city location		0.3	0.3		1.6	-0.9
	School SES		14.4	11.3**		16.2	13.9**
	LBOTE (%)		0.6	-2.5*		0.4	-2.5**
	ATSI (%)		1.7	-2.5**		0.0	-1.3*
	Disabilities (%)		1.0	-0.1		0.1	0.6
	Females (%)		0.1	3.0		0.0	-0.8
	Size of school		0.0	-0.6		0.4	2.0**
	Low SES NP		0.0	0.8		0.6	2.1**
	Total Variance explained	6.7	72.8		8.2	77.0	
Year 5	Constant	79.4	20.6	493.4**	79.2	20.8	483.3**
	Student Characteristics						
	Socioeconomic Status	4.1	40.9	22.8**	7.1	49.6	24.1**
	Female	0.7	0.1	-5.8**	0.6	0.1	-5.7**
	ATSI	0.5	2.6	-5.3**	0.4	2.5	-4.4**
	LBOTE	0.4	2.3	5.1**	0.3	2.1	5.5**
	School characteristics						
	Non-city location		0.6	1.4		1.8	0.0
	School SES		16.9	15.6**		15.4	16.7**
	LBOTE (%)		0.3	0.0		0.4	0.4
	ATSI (%)		2.5	-0.9		0.0	-0.9
	Disabilities (%)		0.8	1.0		0.3	0.7
	Females (%)		0.4	0.5		0.1	-2.1
	Size of school		0.0	2.5**		0.7	3.9**
	Low SES NP		0.1	1.9*		0.4	2.6**
	Total Variance explained	5.7	67.6		8.4	73.2	

Note: *= $p < 0.05$ **= $p < 0.01$

The same patterns appear in the analysis for NAPLAN Numeracy achievement. About two-thirds of all between-school variance is accounted for by student SES and mean school SES. This holds across the years 2009 and 2013.

It is a striking feature that social background accounts for the majority of both explained within and between-school variation. It is an important reminder of why the Low SES NP program was introduced, recognising the huge impact that family background has on school achievement, both individually and in pooled contexts. It highlights the need to address the issue. It also points to the reasons why the national review of school funding (the Gonksi report) outlined the need for considering the interaction between pupil-based SES and school-level SES, recognising the independent effects of social intake.

The results for Numeracy suggest an increase between 2009 and 2013 in the contribution of low SES participation to explaining between-school variation in achievement (rising from 0.0 per cent in 2009 to 0.6 per cent in 2013) and an increase in the independent effect of participation of 1.3 NAPLAN points. This is reflected also in the results for Year 5.

Tables 5.7 and 5.8 present the equivalent Reading and Numeracy results for secondary school students in Year 7 and Year 9.

One feature to note from the two tables is the marked increase in the amount of between-school variance. For Reading the amounts range from 25.1 per cent in Year 9 in 2009 to 28.2 per cent in Year 7 in 2013. More striking are the levels for Numeracy (Table 5.8). They range from 38.2 per cent for Year 9 students in 2009 to 40.3 per cent for Year 7 students in 2013. It would seem that there are large school differences in Numeracy achievement and, therefore, where students go to school matters far more at secondary school level given that the between-school estimates are double those in primary school. It also appears that between-school differences are far greater in Numeracy than in Reading, and this is true in part also for primary schools. Numeracy achievement is linked more to school than is reading.

Another feature to note, compared to the primary school results, is the marked increase in the effect of mean school SES (social intake). Student-level SES still has the largest influence on between school differences in achievement in Reading, but for Numeracy school SES is as influential as individual student SES. Both account for nearly half or more of between-school variance in Numeracy, and up to 75 per cent for Reading. Again this points to the importance of addressing need in low SES schools, and to consideration of funding sensitive to the interaction between individual and school SES.

A further feature to note is that selective entry schools account independently for up to 15 per cent of between-school variance and the third largest influence in terms of variance estimates. Low SES NP schools are not included in this group.

Table 5-7 Partitions of variance explained, NAPLAN Reading, Year 7 and Year 9, Government Schools: 2009 and 2013 compared

		2009			2013		
		Within school	Between school	Estimate	Within school	Between school	Estimate
Year 7	Constant	73.3	26.7	539**	71.8	28.2	533**
	Student Characteristics						
	Socioeconomic Status	8.2	44.5	20.4**	7.9	43.5	19.9**
	Female	1.7	1.4	9.2**	0.5	0.7	4.4**
	ATSI	0.6	2.4	-6.0**	0.7	2.8	-6.2**
	LBOTE	0.3	0.1	-5.1**	0.2	0.0	-3.9**
	School characteristics						
	Non-city location		0.1	2.2*		1.0	1.4
	School SES		29.2	19.2**		28.7	17.2**
	LBOTE (%)		0.7	-1.3		1.8	1.2
	ATSI (%)		0.0	-1.2		0.1	-1.2
	Disabilities (%)		1.6	0.9		2.5	1.4
	Females (%)		0.0	0.5		0.0	0.6
	Size of school		0.1	2.5*		0.0	1.5
	Selective entry		9.2	9.8**		9.3	10.4**
	Low SES NP		0.1	1.6		0.1	0.6
	Total Variance explained	10.8	89.4		9.2	90.7	
Year 9	Constant	74.9	25.1	579**	74.5	25.5	575.7**
	Student Characteristics						
	Socioeconomic Status	7.5	34.9	18.7**	7.5	44.5	18.4**
	Female	2.0	2.3	9.8**	0.7	0.9	5.6**
	ATSI	0.7	2.3	-6.4**	0.6	2.7	-5.7**
	LBOTE	0.4	0.0	-5.5**	0.4	0.0	-5.0**
	School characteristics						
	Non-city location		0.4	3.8**		0.5	1.3
	School SES		29.6	16.7**		28.2	16.9**
	LBOTE (%)		1.3	-2.1*		2.2	2.0*
	ATSI (%)		0.0	-2.8**		0.2	-1.0
	Disabilities (%)		1.7	2.2*		1.9	2.1*
	Females (%)		0.1	0.8		0.0	0.4
	Size of school		0.0	2.5*		0.0	1.0
	Selective entry		7.4	8.2**		7.4	8.4**
	Low SES NP		0.0	1.2		0.1	1.7
	Total Variance explained	10.6	80.0		9.2	88.6	

Note: *= $p < 0.05$ **= $p < 0.01$

Table 5-8 Partitions of variance explained, NAPLAN Numeracy, Year 7 and Year 9, Government Schools: 2009 and 2013 compared

		2009			2013		
		Within school	Between school	Estimate	Within school	Between school	Estimate
Year 7	Constant	61.3	38.7	544.0**	59.7	40.3	538.0**
	Student Characteristics						
	Socioeconomic Status	7.6	30.7	19.7**	6.7	29.1	19.3**
	Female	0.4	0.0	-4.4**	0.4	0.0	-4.4**
	ATSI	0.8	2.2	-6.4**	0.7	2.2	-5.5**
	LBOTE	0.2	3.4	4.0**	0.5	4.9	5.9**
	School characteristics						
	Non-city location		2.2	5.3**		3.0	3.7**
	School SES		29.8	26.0**		28.6	23.1**
	LBOTE (%)		2.3	4.3**		2.6	3.8*
	ATSI (%)		0.4	0.7		0.4	-0.7
	Disabilities (%)		3.1	1.5		2.8	2.6*
	Females (%)		0.0	0.8		0.0	0.5
	Size of school		0.0	2.5		0.0	2.3
	Selective entry		10.6	14.2**		13.1	16.5**
	Low SES NP		0.1	2.5*		0.1	2.3*
	Total Variance explained	9.0	84.8		8.2	86.6	
Year 9	Constant	61.8	38.2	593.1**	60.1	39.9	582.7**
	Student Characteristics						
	Socioeconomic Status	6.4	26.8	17.6**	6.4	29.2	22.5**
	Female	0.2	0.0	-3.1**	0.5	0.0	-5.8**
	ATSI	0.8	2.3	-6.3**	0.6	2.1	-6.4**
	LBOTE	0.7	5.2	6.8**	0.4	4.6	6.3**
	School characteristics						
	Non-city location		2.0	6.4**		2.2	5.3*
	School SES		31.7	24.3**		29.8	26.0**
	LBOTE (%)		2.1	3.6**		2.3	4.3**
	ATSI (%)		0.2	-0.1		0.4	0.7
	Disabilities (%)		3.2	2.1*		3.1	1.5
	Females (%)		0.0	0.8		0.0	0.8
	Size of school		0.2	4.2**		0.0	2.5*
	Selective entry		9.6	12.9**		10.6	14.2**
	Low SES NP		0.1	2.5*		0.1	2.5*
	Total Variance explained	8.0	83.4		8.0	84.8	

Note: *= $p < 0.05$ **= $p < 0.01$

In terms of Low SES NP participation and evidence of impact, for Reading in Year 7 there is no evidence to suggest any improvement, and for Year 9 there is a small increase in the parameter estimate and also to the contribution in explaining between-school variance. This is also reflected in the patterns for Numeracy. It must be acknowledged that any measurement of impact at the Year 7 level would be limited given the limited time that Year 7 students have had in secondary school and their experiences of the schools.

NAPLAN analysis based on benchmarks

This section presents an analysis looking at the numbers of students in Low SES NP participating schools who remain at or above benchmark standards in NAPLAN across testing points (Year 3 to Year 5, and Year 7 to Year 9). The results are compared to students in schools not participating in Low SES NP. The benchmark standards used in the analysis are set higher than the current minimum national NAPLAN standard. The reason for doing this is to set the standard to international levels based on PIRLS, TIMSS and PISA for relevant age and year-levels.

The national minimum benchmarks set for NAPLAN are lower than international standards in estimating how many students are below minimum age and year-level standards. Results published by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) suggest that more than one-quarter of the Australian Year 4 students who participated in PIRLS failed to meet the minimum international benchmark (Thomson et al., 2012), whereas the 2013 NAPLAN results showed only nine per cent of Year 5 students did not meet the minimum national standard (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2013). Similar differences occur in comparisons of PISA results and NAPLAN as well as between TIMSS and NAPLAN (ACER, 2014). If we rank order students in PIRLS, TIMSS and PISA according to their scores and the international standard cut-off point, then the equivalent point in NAPLAN would be approximately the mid-point in the third band of performance at each year-level. This has been set as the benchmark for the current analysis.

Using a multi-level modelling approach, the analysis identifies and estimates the effect of participation in Low SES NP programs on student progress over the two years between NAPLAN assessments, after controlling for key student and school level factors. The preliminary results are based on NAPLAN data of the 2011-2013 matched cohorts from schools.

To control for multiple school effects, only students who stayed in the same school between the two NAPLAN assessment periods are included in the analysis. Data for the Years 5-7 cohort are excluded in the analysis due to insufficient matching records for those who remained in the same schools during transition from primary to secondary schooling (i.e., between Year 5 and Year 7).

The analysis is applied using all Low SES NP schools, and also separately for Low SES NP schools which commenced funding in 2011. A total of 182 schools started Low SES NP

programs in or after 2011, with the majority of them being primary schools. A total of 129 Low SES NP schools have been matched to the student NAPLAN records for the Year 3-5 cohort and 26 Low SES NP schools for the Year 7-9 cohort respectively for the separate 2011 cohort schools.

Children learn and develop through their interactions with different environments, including their family, peers, schools and larger social and the community more generally. Student learning outcomes in schools often reflect a compounding effect from both individual and school factors.

A Multi-level Modelling approach has been used in this analysis to investigate and estimate separately the school and student level effect on students’ progress over the two years between two NAPLAN assessments: Reading and Numeracy.

Both student and school level factors have been selected in the multi-level analysis as defined in Table 5-9.

Table 5-9 Definitions of selected key student and school level factors

		Measures	Description
Dependant variable	Student Outcome	NAPLAN Results are on track	For Year 5 and Year 9 cohorts in Reading and Numeracy respectively
Explanatory variables	Student factors	Prior performance	Whether NAPLAN performance on track at Year 3 for Year 5 cohort and at Year 5 for Year 9 cohorts
		Family SES	Derived based on parental occupation and education levels
		ATSI status	
		LBOTE status	Students with Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE)
		Gender	
	School factors	School SES	Median of student SES indexes within the school.
		ATSI concentration	% of students being ATSI
		LBOTE concentration	% of LBOTE students
		School Sector	Government, Independent or Catholic sector
		Size of school	Total enrolment
		School Location	ARIA groups
		Low SES NP schools	Schools participating in Low SES National Partnership programs



Results

Figure 5.1 presents the proportions of students below or at or above benchmark in the 2011 to 2013 matched sample cohort. Based on their NAPLAN results, 21 per cent of students are considered to be below the benchmark proficiency standard in NAPLAN Reading achievement in Year 3 and in Year 5. For Numeracy, the rate is 24 per cent in Year 3 and 33 per cent in Year 5. The proportions of students below benchmark in Year 7 are 31 per cent for Reading and 35 per cent for Numeracy. The levels in Year 9 are 34 per cent for Reading and 41 per cent for Numeracy.

Figure 5-1: Proportion of students with NAPLAN performance ‘at or above benchmark’ or ‘below benchmark’: 2011-2013 matched cohorts, all schools

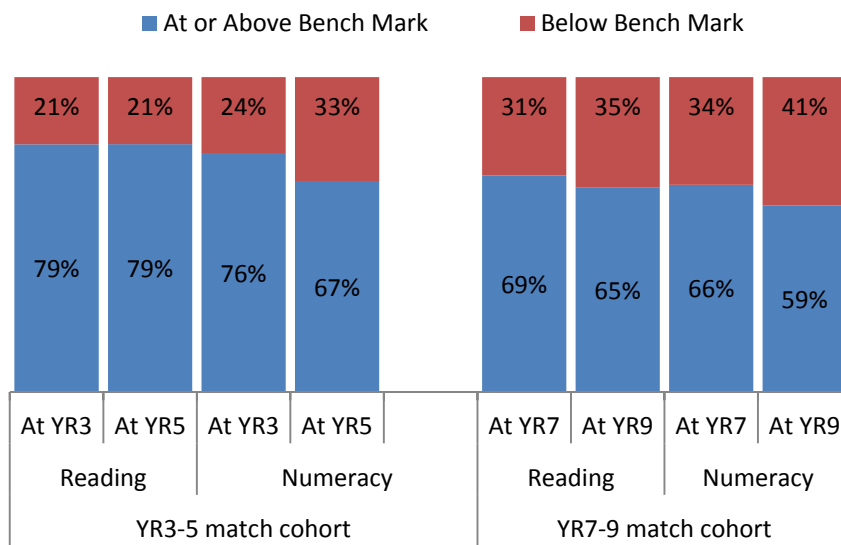


Figure 5-2 Academic progress between 2011 and 2013, by 2011 performance

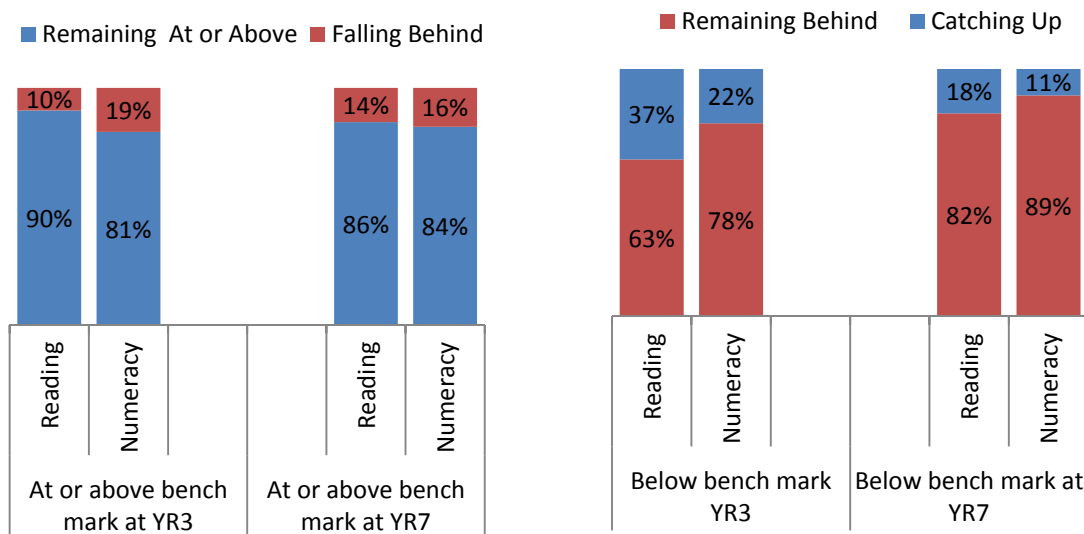


Figure 5.2 shows that for both the Year 3 and Year 7 cohorts, the majority of students (over 80 per cent) at or above standard in 2011 remained so in 2013, while the majority (over 60 per cent) of students below standard in 2011 remained behind in 2013.

Low SES NP effect

One way to examine the impact of Low SES NP participation on student outcomes is to examine the extent to which students remain at or above benchmark standards of proficiency in NAPLAN skill domains across year-levels, compared to students in non-participating schools, after controlling for a range of influential student and school characteristics. To do this, a multi-level logistic regression procedure was applied to the NAPLAN results for students in Year 3 and Year 7 in 2011 who remained in the same school into Year 5 or Year 9 in 2013, respectively. The results are presented in Table 5.10 as odds ratios. The ratios represent the odds that a student remains at or above benchmark proficiency in Reading and Numeracy from Year 3 to Year 5 (Year 5 outcomes) and from Year 7 to Year 9 (Year 9 outcomes), compared to the odds of not remaining above benchmark. So the odds of 1.30 for Numeracy for Year 5 males means that boys have increased odds of remaining above benchmark standards of proficiency at a rate of 1.30 (males) to 1 (females). The reverse is true for Reading where boys have odds of 0.8 to the base for girls of 1.

Table 5-10 Odd ratios of remaining at or above benchmark proficiency in NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy from Year 3 and Year 7 in 2011 to Year 5 and Year 9 in 2013 (statistically significant differences only)

Explanatory variables		Year 5 Outcomes		Year 9 Outcomes	
		Reading	Numeracy	Reading	Numeracy
Student factor	Prior performance	12.50 (+*)	12.50 (+*)	21.30 (+*)	34.50 (+*)
	Family SES	1.02 (+*)	1.02 (+*)	1.02 (+*)	1.02 (+*)
	ATSI status	0.72 (-*)	0.58 (-*)	0.69 (-*)	0.53 (-*)
	LBOTE status	0.88 (-*)		1.09 (**)	1.42 (+*)
	Gender (Male)	0.80 (-*)	1.30 (+*)	0.82 (-*)	1.33 (+*)
School factor	School SES	1.02 (+*)	1.02 (+*)	1.04(+*)	1.04 (+*)
	ATSI concentration	0.95 (-*)	0.96 (-*)		0.93 (-*)
	LBOTE concentration	0.96 (-*)		1.04 (+**)	
	School sector				
	School size				
	School Location				
	All Low SES NP schools (VS Non-NP schools)		1.16 (+*)	1.14 (**)	1.41 (+*)
	2011 Low SES NP schools (VS 2011 Non-NP schools)	1.14 (**)	1.45 (+*)	1.53 (+*)	1.80 (+*)

* indicates the selected variable is statistically significant at the 1% significant level in predicting student outcomes.
 ** indicates the selected variable is statistically significant at the 5% significant level in predicting student outcomes.

The sex of students appears to have opposite effects in Reading and Numeracy, with male students progressing better in Numeracy and female students doing better in Reading. However, the gender effect seems to be marginal in comparison with the effects from other risk factors, such as family and school SES and indigenous background.

LBOTE appears to be a risk factor in student progress in primary schools but a positive factor for students in secondary schools. This suggests that: although with difficulties in learning at the beginning of school, most LBOTE students do catch up by the end of primary schools; this may be attributed to the effect of existing funding/support programs in schools and a generally strong motivation or support from LBOTE families.

The results also show that:

- previous achievement levels appear to have the strongest predictive power in their NAPLAN for both Year 5 and Year 9 cohorts.
- However, being from low SES family, ATSI, LBOTE, or the sex of students are shown to be significant risk factors in student progressing and achieving desirable outcomes over the two years of NAPLAN assessments.
- A significant part of student progress can also be attributed to school environmental factors, such as school level SES, concentration of ATSI students.
- School size, in particular small schools with less than 100 enrolments appears to have a positive effect on student progress in reading from Year 3 to Year 5.
- After taking into account of student and school level factors, school sector does not seem to make any difference on student progress.

Controlling for student and school level factors, including family and school SES, ATSI and LBOTE status, Low SES NP schools show a positive impact on student progress over time in Numeracy in both primary school and secondary school. At primary school level, the odds of remaining at or above benchmark proficiency standard for students in Low SES NP schools compared to students not in Low SES NP schools are 1.16 to 1, and at secondary school level the odds are even stronger of students in Low SES NP schools remaining at or above standards in Numeracy—1.41 to 1. There also show significant effects for Reading in the progress from Year 7 to Year 9, with odds of 1.14 for students in Low SES NP schools compared to 1 in other schools.

The schools commencing in the Low SES NP program in 2011 show a significant effect for both Reading and Numeracy in both primary school and secondary school.

Another way to estimate the effect of participation in the Low SES NP is by looking at the progress of students between Year 3 and Year 5 and Year 7 and Year 9 using percentages of students, after controlling for key student and school characteristics. This was undertaken using a multi-level logistic regression to estimate the probability of students:

1. being at or above benchmark standard in Year 3 and remaining so at Year 5 (remaining ahead)
2. being at or above benchmark standard in Year 3 and falling below benchmark in Year 5 (falling behind)
3. being below the benchmark standard in Year 3 and rising above the standard in Year 5 (catching up)
4. being below the benchmark standard in Year 3 and remaining below the standard in Year 5 (remaining behind)

The results for each outcome are presented in Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4 as separate panels. Figure 5.3 reports the results for all NP schools treated as a single group. The results in Figure 5.4 are for Low SES NP schools which commenced their Low SES NP funding in 2011.

The results show that after controlling for other student and school level factors, students at or above benchmark standards of proficiency in Low SES NP schools in Year 3 and in Year 7 are more likely to remain at or above standards by 2013 and less likely to fall behind compared to those in non-NP schools. Approximately five per cent more students in Low SES NP schools remained at or above the benchmark in Numeracy from Year 7 to Year 9 compared to other schools, all else equal. The percentage for Numeracy in the progress from Year 3 to Year 5 was a two per cent gain over students in other schools.

For students falling below benchmark in Numeracy in the transition from Year 7 to Year 9, five per cent fewer girls and four per cent fewer boys in Low SES NP schools compared to students in other schools experienced this.

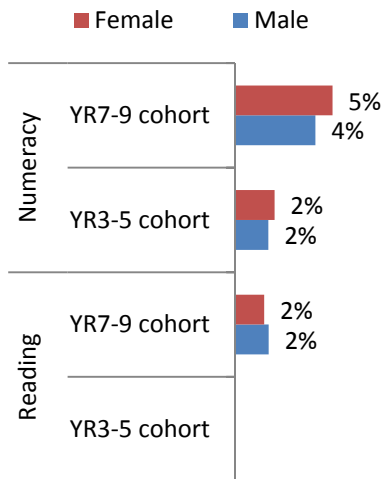
The results for schools commencing in the Low SES NP program in 2011 are even stronger (see Figure 5.4). The percentage of Year 7 girls in Low SES NP schools who remained at or above benchmark in Year 9 Numeracy was nine per cent higher than for girls in other 2011 non-NP schools. The rate for boys was seven per cent. The difference for Numeracy at primary school level was an advantage of five per cent (rounded) for both boys and girls.

The superior performance of Low SES NP students was also evident in Reading, particularly in secondary schools.

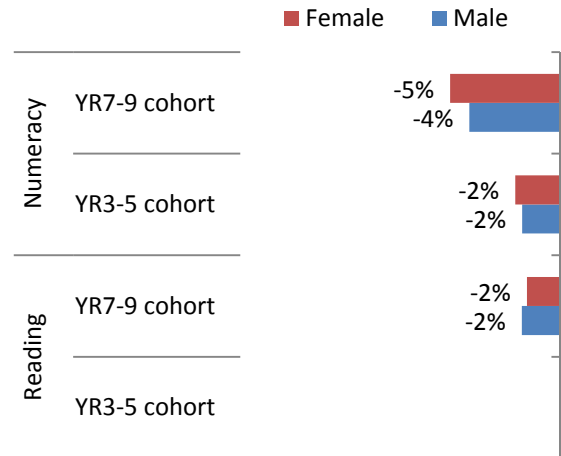
Students in Low SES NP schools were also less likely to remain below benchmark in the progression from Year 3 to Year 5 and from Year 7 to Year 9. For example, eight per cent more Low SES NP boys went from below benchmark in Numeracy in Year 3 to at or above benchmark in Year 5, compared to boys in non-NP schools in 2011. The advantage for Low SES NP girls was seven per cent.

Figure 5-3 Estimated effects of Low SES NP schools on student progress between 2011 and 2013: effects measured as percentages of students (significant effects only)

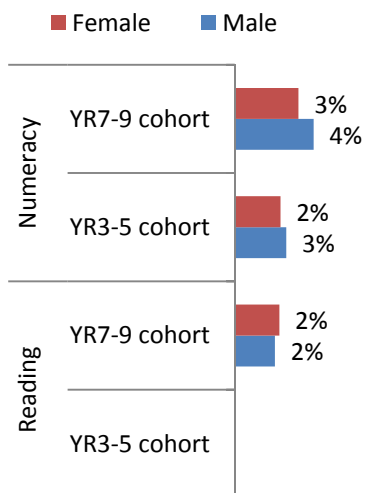
Remaining above benchmark



Falling below benchmark



Rising above benchmark



Remaining below benchmark

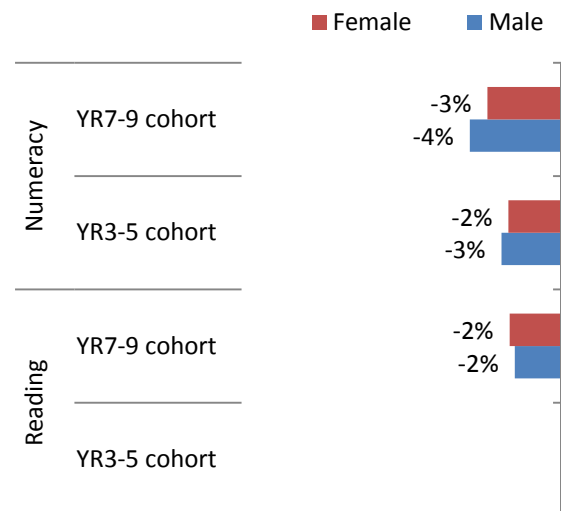
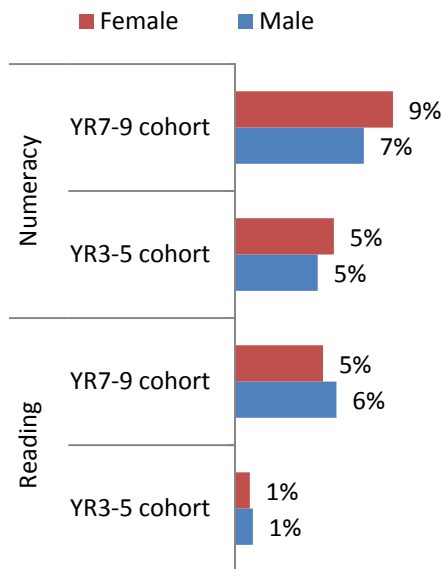
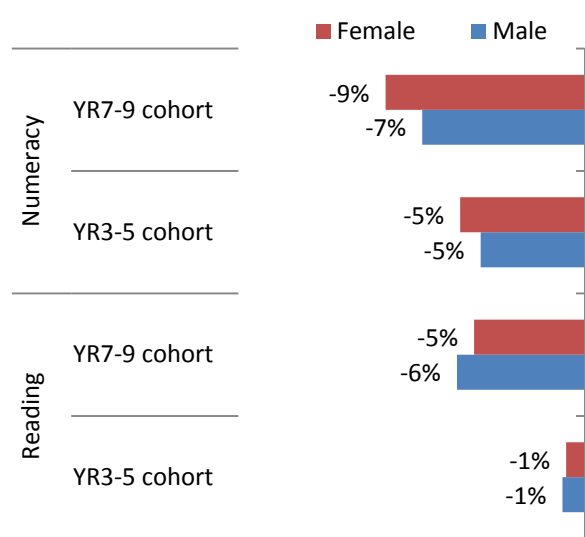


Figure 5-4 Estimated effects of 2011 commencing Low SES NP schools on student progress between 2011 and 2013: effects measured as probabilities

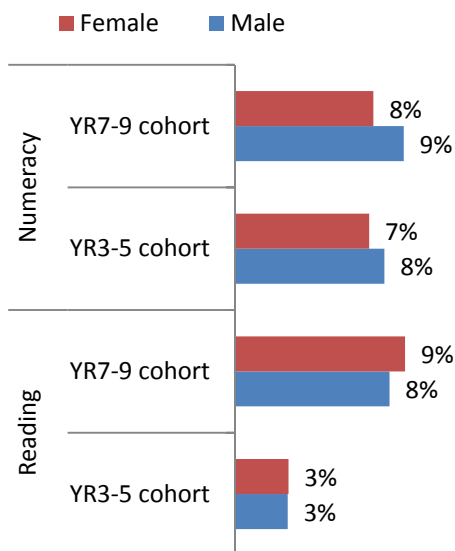
Remaining above benchmark



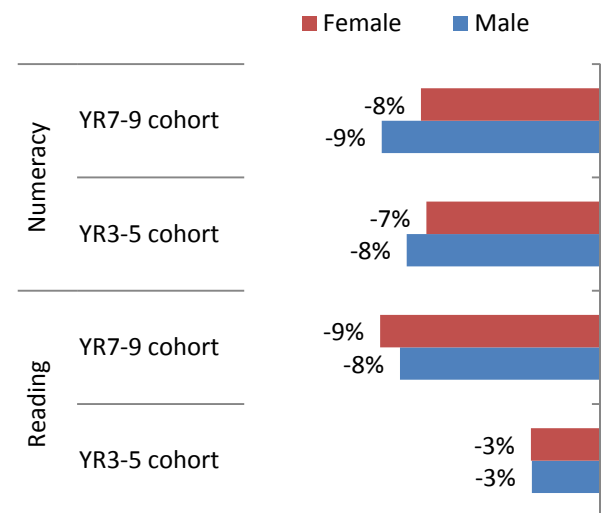
Falling below benchmark



Rising above benchmark



Remaining below benchmark

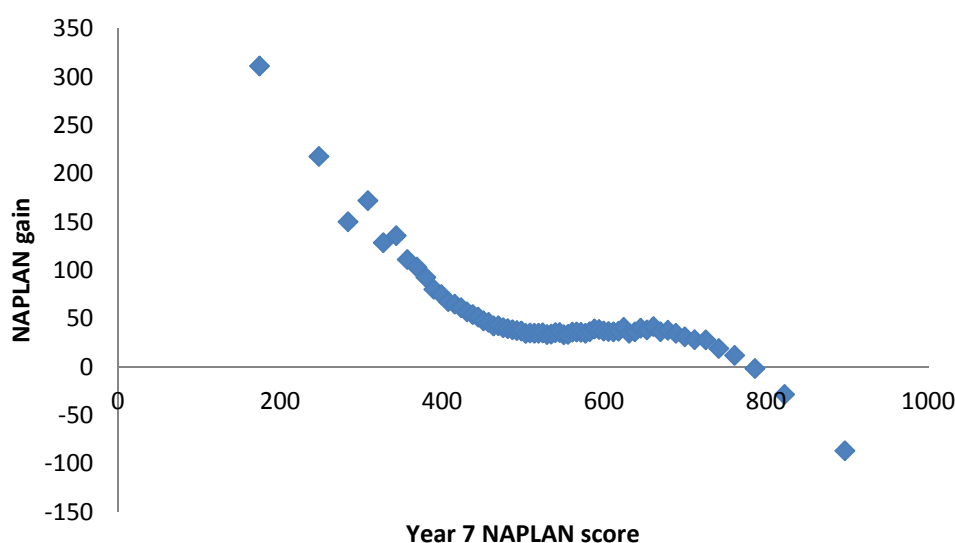


Assessment of impact on learning gain using NAPLAN

There are few readily available ways of measuring learning gain in schools. This is because there are few standardised and calibrated tests of achievement and learning administered and repeated at regular intervals. One exception is the availability of NAPLAN test score data covering various literacy domains and numeracy. NAPLAN is not a direct measure of curriculum content covered in school programs, but rather an assessment of selected literacy and numeracy skills at given year-levels (and ages). It is not clear that test score results are a measure of school learning or achievement, but they do provide an assessment of skills that we might expect children to possess at given ages and for schools and teachers to help develop.¹ The following analysis deals with Low SES NP government schools only.

The scaling of NAPLAN data makes it difficult for measuring skill growth between year-levels. A major reason is the impact of ‘ceiling’ effects. This is readily evident in the following chart based on changes in Numeracy scores for Year 7 students between 2009 and the score they achieved in Year 9 in 2011.

Figure 5-5 Learning gain in Numeracy, Years 7-9, 2009-2011



The pattern is curvilinear, but the general pattern reveals that a student’s gain in Numeracy score between Year 7 and Year 9 falls as their starting score in Year 7 increases. The higher the score a Year 7 student has in NAPLAN Numeracy, the lower the amount of gain they will make between Year 7 and Year 9 scores. This has major implications for an evaluation

¹ Because most students change schools at the point of the primary-secondary transition it is inappropriate to make use of learning gain measurement to understand school-level effectiveness and Year 5 to 7 learning gain is accordingly not included in this analysis.

of Low SES NP schools because low SES students in every NAPLAN year-level have lower scores (on average). It means low SES students (and the schools they attend) will achieve higher learning gain scores by virtue of this pattern. The measured gain for students will not reflect the real gain.

The same patterns apply for the gain between Year 3 and Year 5, with student gain in NAPLAN scores between Year 3 and Year 5 falling as the starting score in Year 3 increase.

It is possible to address this problem and use NAPLAN gain to measure the impact of Low SES NP participation. The method to adjust scores is to calculate an adjusted score by subtracting the average gain score from Year 3 to Year 5, (or Year 7 to Year 9, for every starting point in Year 3 (or Year 7) from the actual score for each student. This effectively creates an average across the state of 0.

Because most students change schools at the point of the primary-secondary transition it is far more difficult to make use of learning gain measurement to understand school-level effectiveness at this transition point. It would require the use of cross-classified models that link primary and secondary schools and further work to estimate where the main effect occurred (primary or secondary). School effects are more directly measured with single schools which is possible using Year 3 to Year 5 or Year 7 to Year 9 gain.

The effect of the adjusted scores, for government schools, is shown in Figure 5.6, with the mean raw or absolute Year 7 to Year 9 Reading gain scores for secondary schools for the period from 2009 to 2011 shown in the first panel and the adjusted scores shown in the right panel. They reveal a different pattern of apparent gains depending on the mean SES of the schools. The adjustment provides a better and more accurate estimate of learning gain, overcoming the weaknesses in raw NAPLAN scores.

Figure 5-6 Mean and adjusted gain scores for Reading gain, secondary schools, by SES (2009-2011)

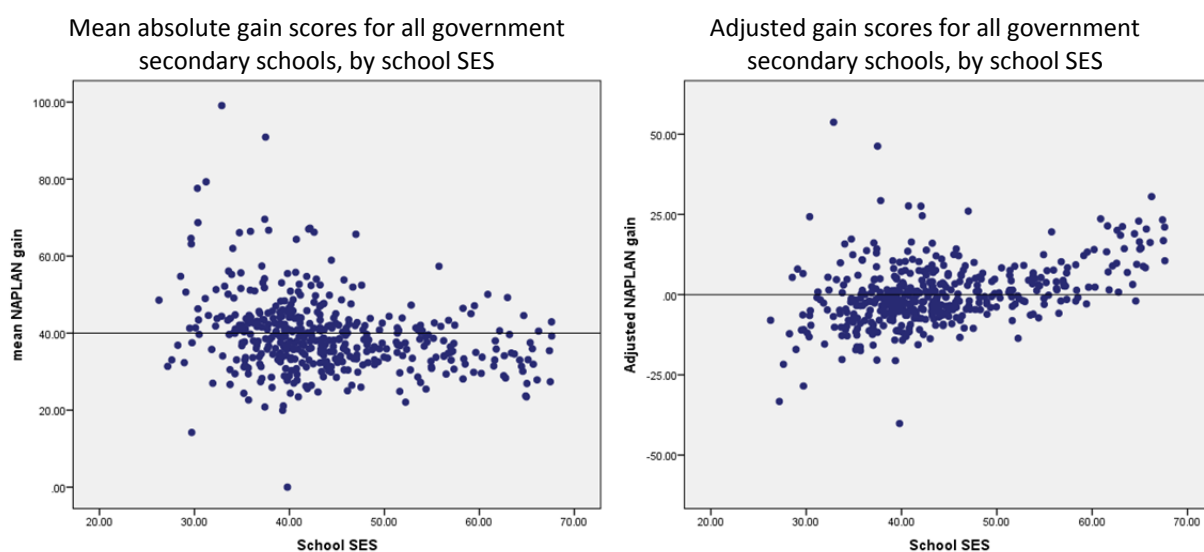


Figure 5.7 presents four panels mapping school mean Year 3 to Year 5 NAPLAN Reading score gain against the spread of within school variation in gain scores, measured by standard deviation. Panel 1 presents the results for the gain period from 2008 to 2010. Panel 2 presents gains from 2009 to 2011. Panel 3 shows the gains from 2010 to 2012 and Panel 4 shows them for 2011 to 2013. The horizontal or X axis in each chart reports the levels of achievement gain. The state average is 0 and is represented in each panel by a red vertical line. The vertical or Y axis reports the spread of adjusted gain scores within schools, measured by standard deviation. The state mean estimate of standard deviation is represented by the horizontal red line in each panel.

The panels are divided into quadrants. The bottom right quadrant in each panel portrays schools that obtained higher than average learning gain and they gained this with less than average spread of gain scores, meaning that they obtained the better gain scores for most students. The bottom left hand quadrant shows the opposite: weaker than average gain over the learning period and lower than average spread of gain, meaning poorer outcomes for high proportions of students in the school. The upper quadrants reveal higher variations within schools meaning that gains are not even across students, with schools in the upper right quadrant having stronger than average gains in literacy and schools in the upper left quadrant having weaker than average gains in literacy achievement.

Across the four panels, there is a reduction in the gap between the primary schools participating in the Low SES NP and the state average in Reading gain. Table 5.11 summarises these data. For 2008-2010 the mean gain score is -8.8, reducing slightly to -8.0 in the following period (2009-2011), to -7.6 for 2010 to 2011 and to -6.2 for 2011-2013. The reductions are small, though consistent.

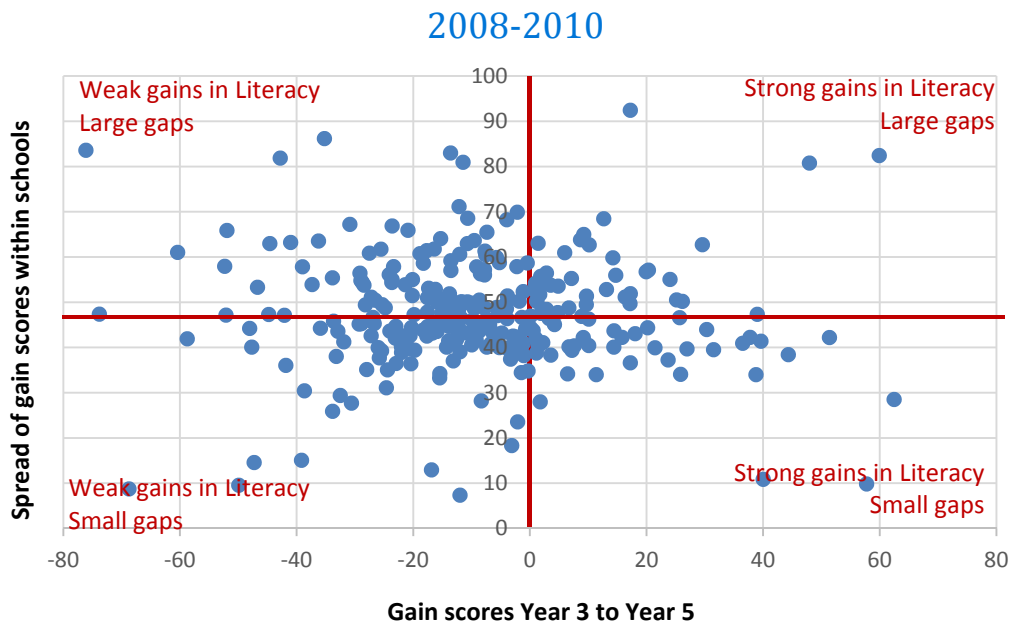
Table 5-11 Gains and gain-score spread in NAPLAN Reading, Year 3 to Year 5: Low SES NP schools compared to state means (government schools)

Gain period	Gap in mean gain between Low SES NP schools and all schools (X Axis)	Mean standard deviation in gain score spread for all schools (Y Axis)	State mean in gain scores (unadjusted)
2008-2010	-8.8	47.5	47.8
2009-2011	-8.0	47.8	47.7
2010-2012	-7.6	52.6	51.9
2011-2013	-6.2	37.1	39.0

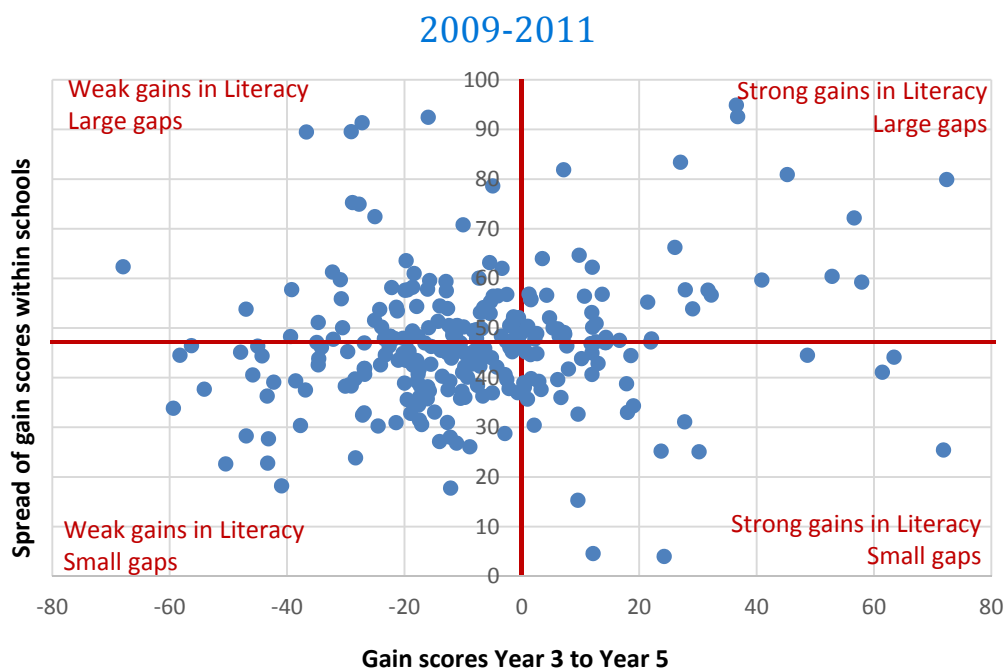
It is possible to identify within the spread of low SES primary schools a number that shift quadrants across the period, moving from producing less than average gains to above average gains. There are also a number of schools that markedly reduce the gap between their initial position and the state average over the four gain periods, consistent with the hypothesis that the Low SES NP initiatives have had impact. At the same time there are schools that record weaker performance over the time, despite participation. Others don't make marked gain score improvement but reveal marked increase in variation in the

spread of scores within their school, suggesting that Low SES NP participation may have had impact for some groups of students more than others.

Figure 5-7 Gains and spread in NAPLAN Reading, Year 3 to Year 5: Low SES NP schools

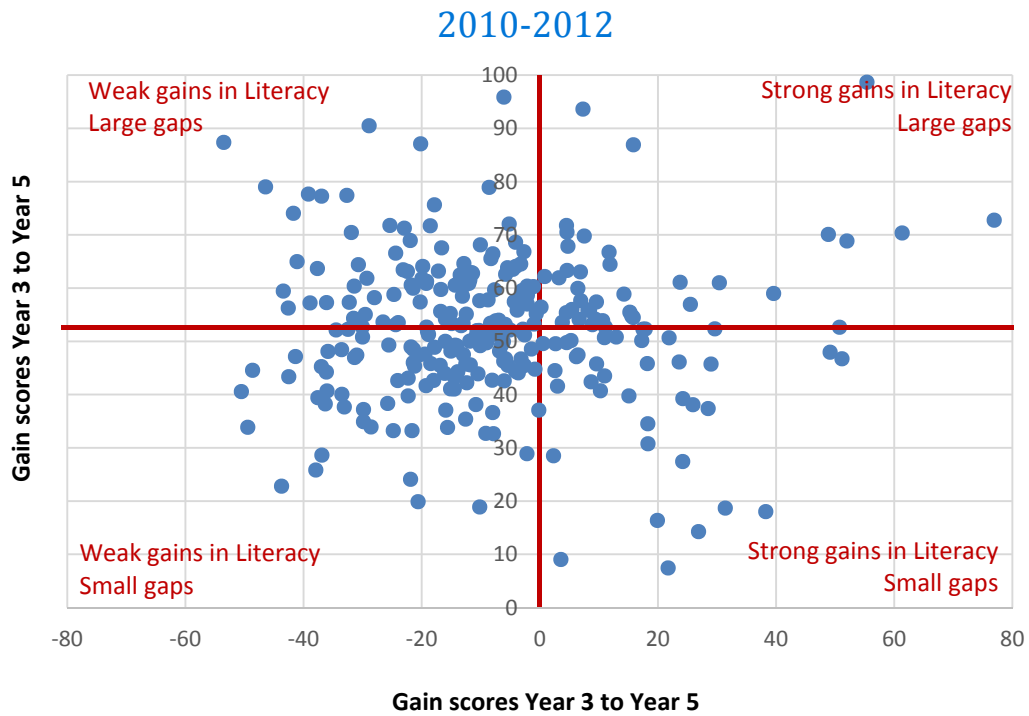


Mean gain of low SES school=-8.8 Mean standard deviation=47.5 State mean=47.8

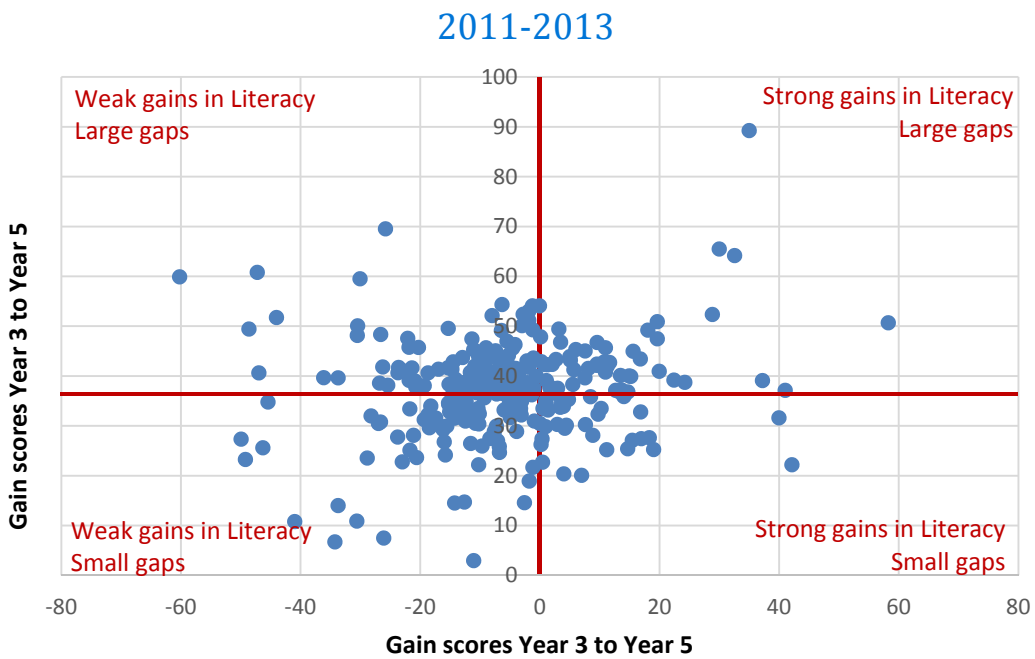


Mean gain of low SES school=-8.0 Mean standard deviation=47.8 State mean=47.7

Figure 5.7 Cont...



Mean gain of low SES school=-7.6 Mean standard deviation=52.6 State mean=51.9



Mean gain of low SES school=-6.2 Mean standard deviation=37.1 State mean=39.0

Only schools with results for every gain period are included in the figure.



The variation across schools is consistent with many evaluations of system-led initiatives that reveal varied impact with marked improvements in some settings, weak impact for others, and no improvement (or going backwards) in others. Further work is needed to partition out the variations across schools to try to identify why participation in some schools has contributed to marked improvement, and not in others. What have been the facilitators or the inhibitors? Is this linked to particular initiatives or to elements of the context within schools or both? Surveys conducted with principals throughout the evaluation revealed that most schools (nine in ten) report improvements in school culture, teacher quality and student behaviour, engagement and performance. As much as NAPLAN results can be used as a guide to the impact, then the aggregate effects provide weak support to their assessments, though the results in some schools are consistent with principal assessments.

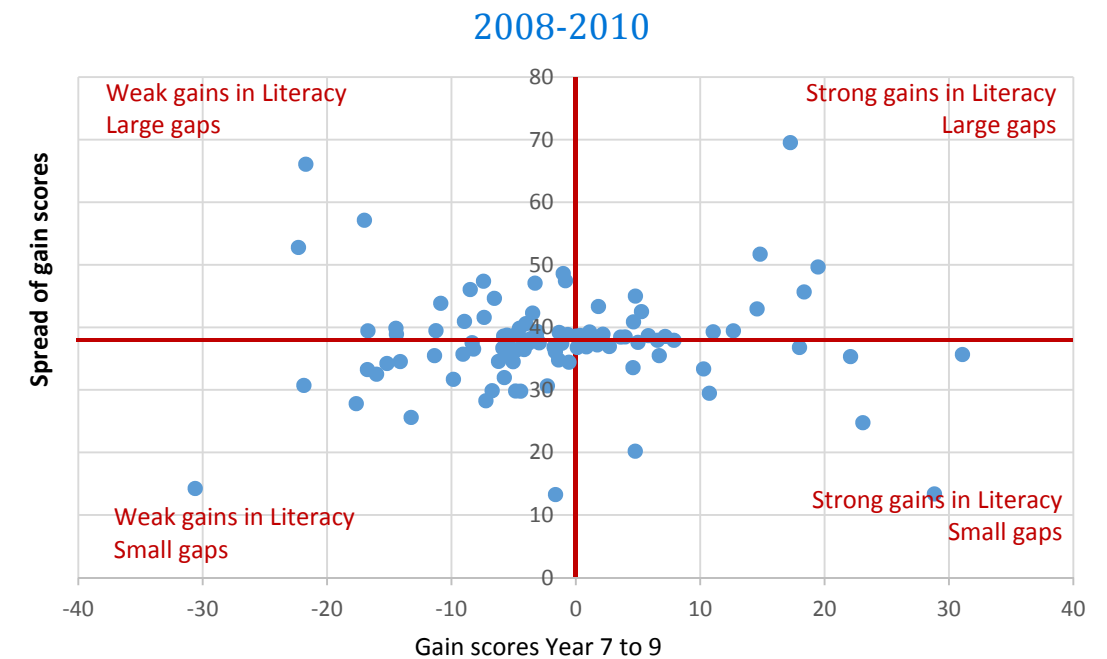
Figure 5.8 presents the results for NAPLAN Reading gain in secondary schools, recording adjusted gain scores from Year 7 to Year 9 across the four gain score periods. Table 5.12 summarises these data.

Table 5-12 Gains and gain-score spread in NAPLAN Reading, Year 7 to Year 9: Low SES NP schools compared to state means (government schools)

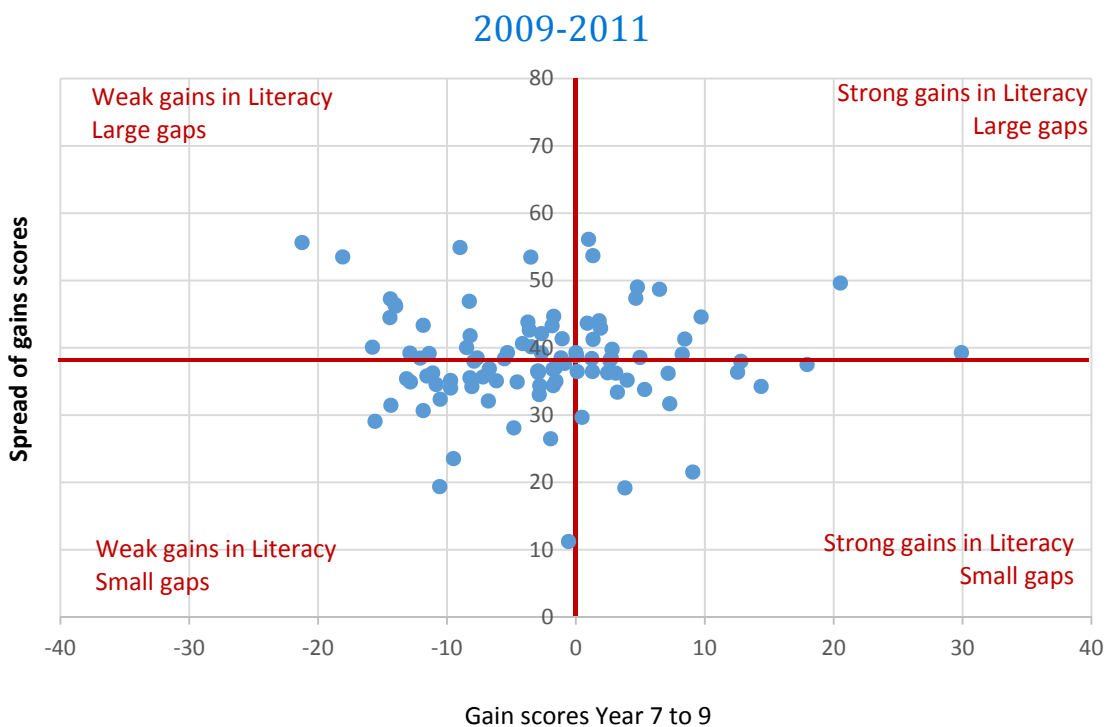
Gain period	Gap in mean gain between Low SES NP schools and all schools (X Axis)	Mean standard deviation in gain score spread for all schools (Y Axis)	State mean in gain scores (unadjusted)
2008-2010	-1.6	37.5	39.3
2009-2011	-3.0	38.1	39.3
2010-2012	-3.1	35.0	35.5
2011-2013	-0.8	38.2	38.2

The results initially are less consistent and apparent than in primary schools. Compared to the mean gain recorded for all Low SES NP schools from 2008 to 2010 of -1.6, the result is weaker in the next period, from 2009 to 2011, falling to -3.0. In the following period the mean gain remains at this level (-3.1) for 2010 to 2012, and improves in the gain period for 2011 to 2013 to -0.8, almost the state average. The result for 2011 to 2013 may reflect improvement associated with participation. As with primary schools there's considerable variation across schools, some showing marked change and others not, which is important to examine. However the average effects do not reveal a clear result.

Figure 5-8 Gains and spread in NAPLAN Reading, Year 7 to Year 9: Low SES NP secondary schools



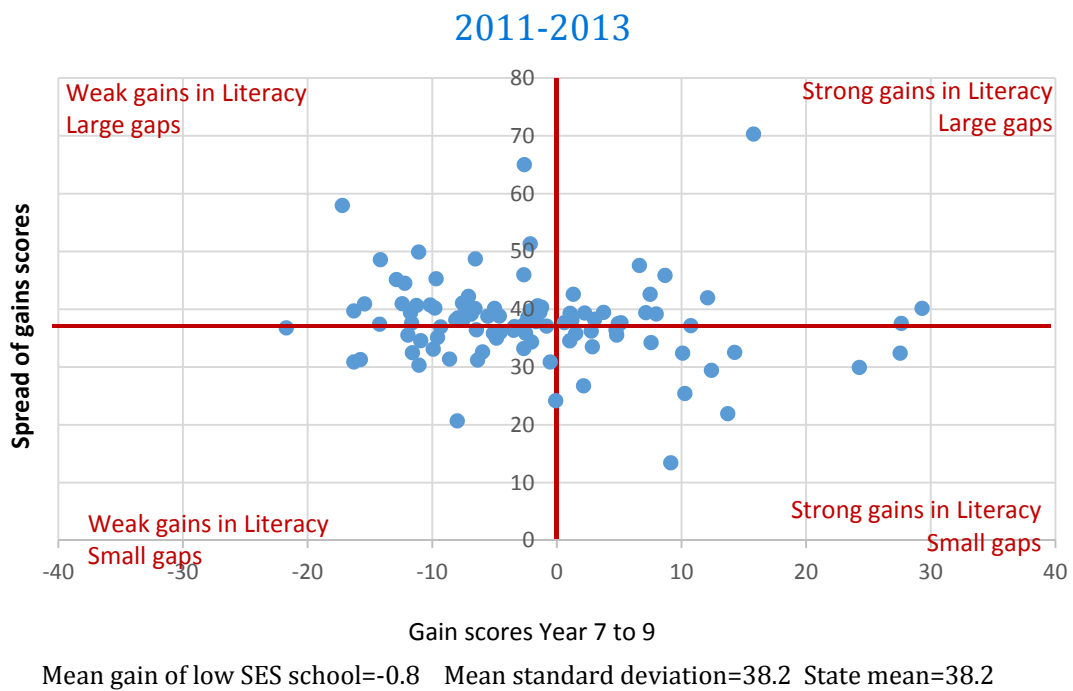
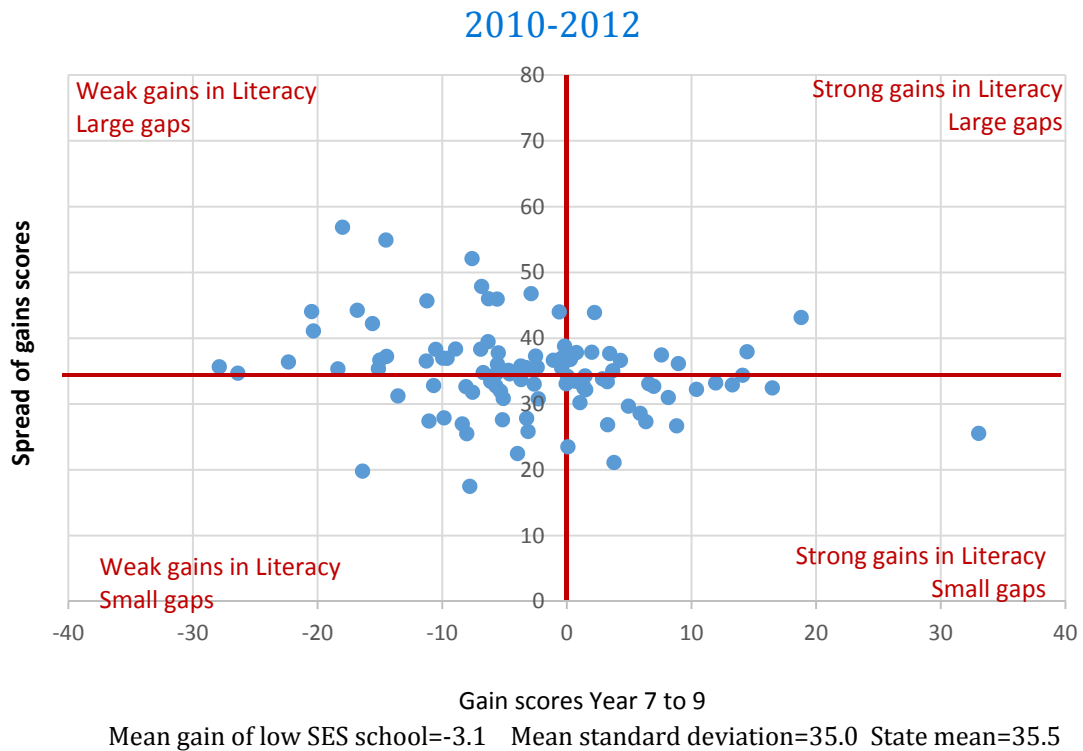
Mean gain of low SES school=-1.6 Mean standard deviation=37.5 State mean=39.3



Mean gain of low SES school=-3.0 Mean standard deviation=38.1 State mean=39.3



Figure 5.8 Cont...



Impact on NAPLAN gain

Table 5.13 presents the results of a multi-level regression analysis modelling Year 3 to Year 5 gain scores in Reading and Numeracy achievement between two gain periods: 2009-2011 and 2011-2013. The aim is to compare the effects of various factors on achievement gain and whether or not there is any change associated with participation in the Low SES NP.

Table 5-13 Standardised estimates of adjusted gain scores, Year 3 to Year 5, NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy: 2009-2011 and 2010-2013 compared

	Reading		Numeracy	
	2009-2011	2011-2013	2009-2011	2011-2013
Constant	73.42**	84.13**	94.09**	87.28**
Student characteristics				
SES	6.07**	4.56**	6.02**	5.07**
Girls	0.40	-0.27	-2.42**	-2.42**
ATSI	-1.57**	-0.90**	-1.20**	-0.88**
LBOTE	-0.30	0.64*	5.09**	5.66**
School characteristics				
Non-city location	0.41	-0.40	0.22	-0.24
School SES	5.09**	3.05**	3.75**	3.22**
School LBOTE	-0.61	0.02	2.02**	1.60*
School ATSI	-1.20*	-0.16	-0.19	-0.39
School females	1.47	0.58	1.12	-2.17
Enrolments	-1.42**	-0.30	0.68	1.01*
Low SES NP	0.41	0.51	0.48	0.88

Note: *= $p < 0.05$ **= $p < 0.01$

In terms of adjusted NAPLAN gain, there is some evidence that the impact of student-level SES and school-level SES weaken in both Reading and Numeracy. This would be consistent with reductions in the impact of SES on gain. It occurs with a very small increase in the parameter estimate for Low SES NP participation for Reading, and a slightly larger one for Numeracy. This may reflect incremental improvement in the low SES schools, though the estimates are very small and not statistically significant.

Table 5.14 presents the results for Year 7 to Year 9 gain scores in Reading and Numeracy achievement between two gain periods: 2009-2011 and 2011-2013. The results show a decline in the size of the student SES standardised estimate in Reading over the two gain periods, and a decline in the school SES estimate. There is also a small increase in the Low SES NP participation estimate.

In Numeracy the student and school SES estimates increase across the two gain periods, suggesting an increase in the influence of SES on NAPLAN gain. However, the parameter

estimate for Low SES NP schools more than doubled suggesting that in Numeracy achievement, after controlling for a range of key student and school influences, participation in Low SES NP was associated with a larger effect in the later gain period.

Table 5-14 Standardised estimates of adjusted gain scores, Year 7 to Year 9, NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy: 2009-2011 and 2010-2013 compared

	Reading		Numeracy	
	2009-2011	2011-2013	2009-2011	2011-2013
Constant	37.51**	40.37**	38.68**	42.25**
Student characteristics				
SES	3.73**	2.70**	2.38**	2.56**
Girls	-2.29**	1.64**	-0.64**	0.52*
ATSI	-1.44**	-1.12**	-1.08**	-0.98**
LBOTE	-0.45	1.46**	0.41	3.75**
School characteristics				
Non-city location	1.47**	-0.04	1.12*	0.24
School SES	2.96**	1.96**	2.39**	2.90**
School LBOTE	1.76**	2.50**	0.83*	2.67**
School ATSI	0.61	-0.42	-0.69	-0.22
School females	-0.04	-0.28	-0.36	-0.24
Enrolments	-0.87*	-0.29	-0.10	-0.05
Selective entry	1.19**	0.24	-0.19	-0.04
Low SES NP	0.38	0.66	0.79*	1.97**

Note: *= $p < 0.05$ **= $p < 0.01$

6. Analysis of other student outcomes

This section presents the results of analyses on a range of government school performance measures other than NAPLAN. They include analysis of HSC attainment (Number of HSC certificates awarded, as a proportion of Year 12 students), HSC achievement (percentage of band 4 or above awards as a proportion of all course entries), attendance rates, (all of school up to Year 10), apparent retention rates Year 7-12, apparent retention rates Year 10-12, and School Certificate results (average scores for selected subjects and all subjects). Apart from attendance rates, nearly all results relate to secondary schools. The data are at a school level as student level data were not available.

The method of analysis is a repeated measures mixed effects design, with annual results nested within schools. Results across key measures of performance — HSC award rate, HSC achievement, ATAR score, Year 7 to 12 retention, Year 10 to 12 retention, and attendance rates — are provided in Table 6.1. Included in the models are controls for variables that have been identified in previous research as influences on school performance. They include the proportion of LBOTE students, proportion of ATSI students, percentage of girls, school size (enrolments), mean school SES, location of school (non-metropolitan), proportion of students with a disability, and selective entry status. Data were available up until 2012 and the repeated measures are for the period from 2009 to 2012. Low SES NP status was included based on when the school started in the Low SES NP (2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012), and all other government schools. Estimates are provided of the effect of Low SES NP status for each year, controlling for intake and other features of school in 2009.

The reference group in Table 6.1 is made up of Low SES NP schools which gained funding in 2012, and the reference year is 2012 (therefore the results in that year are missing for that group of schools). It means that this group of schools had not attracted funds during the comparison period and for the main part can be treated as if they were not subject to Low SES NP initiatives. All results for other Low SES NP schools and the non-participating schools are relative to the 2012 results for the Low SES NP schools which commenced funding in 2012.

The constant values are the mean scores for each school when all of the control variables are set to zero. For example, the mean ATAR score is 56.3 with all of the control variables included and at zero. The coefficients for the control variables are beta scores and represent the change in value of the outcome variable associated with a one standard deviation unit increase in each control variable. For example, a one standard deviation increase in school SES would lead to an increase in ATAR of 9.12 points, all else equal, while for the concentration of LBOTE students it would be 0.79.

One result to note from the results of the analysis presented in in Table 6.1 is the impact of the main school characteristics on performance in each measure. School SES is a key influence on performance, particularly for HSC achievement, ATAR scores, and retention. Selective entry school status has a strong effect on the achievement measures, less on the other indicators. School size is influential across many of the measures, with larger schools

tending to get stronger results in HSC attainment, achievement, ATAR and retention. Having a higher proportion of girls is also associated with positive gains in HSC achievement and ATAR as well as retention and attendance.

After controlling for student intake and other school demographic differences, the results suggest that on four measures — HSC attainment, HSC achievement, ATAR scores, and attendance — schools not participating in the Low SES NP had incremental falls in performance relative to the 2012 results of the Low SES NP schools which gained funding for the first time in 2012. The main statistically significant differences were in 2009 for HSC attainment, Year 7 to Year 12 retention and Year 10 to Year 12 retention.

More importantly in terms of this study, across other Low SES NP schools, those commencing in 2009 displayed relative improvement over time in HSC attainment and apparent retention (both Year 7 to 12 and Year 10 to 12), as well as attendance. Most noticeably, after controlling for student intake and other school demographic differences, the 2009 Low SES NP schools gained significantly higher results than the reference schools in their 2011 results for all measures except for Year 7 to Year 12 retention. That is, in 2011, after approximately two-years exposure to Low SES NP initiatives, the 2009 Low SES NP schools outperformed the reference schools. This may reflect an impact of participation for the group of schools who had been in the program for the longest period. It means that compared to the 2012 results of the Low SES NP schools commencing in 2012, students in the 2009 Low SES NP schools outperformed them by an average of 3.08 points in HSC achievement, and 3.58 scores on the ATAR scale. They had a higher retention rate from Year 10 to 12 of 8.2 per cent on average, and a higher attendance rate of 2.15 per cent, on average. All of these results were significant.

A feature to note from the results is the coefficients for retention. The reference schools (2012 Low SES NP commencing schools for the reference year of 2012) had higher retention rates, often statistically significantly higher, than for the non-NP schools, all else equal. However, for Year 10 to Year 12 retention, the 2009 Low SES NP schools and those commencing in 2010 and 2011 gained improvements over time. In 2011, the Low SES NP schools commencing in 2009 significantly outperformed the reference group of schools. Positive gains were also made by the schools commencing in the Low SES NP program in 2010 and 2011.

Table 6.2 presents results for School Certificate results in Maths, English, Science and an average score across all assessed subjects. School Certificate results at a student level are measured on a scale of 0 to 100 with a mean that varies by subject. The constant values are the mean scores for each school when all of the control variables are set to zero. For example, the mean score for Maths is 63.05 with all of the control variables included and at zero. The coefficients for the control variables are beta scores and represent the change in value of the control variable associated with a one standard deviation unit increase in each control variables.

Table 6-1 Repeated measures regression estimates of school performance across key indicators, 2009-2012

	HSC attainment	HSC achievement	ATAR score	Retention 7-12	Retention 10-12	Attendance rates
Constant	85.24**	42.99**	56.30**	70.55**	69.74**	88.42**
School features						
LBOTE	-0.65	1.87**	0.79	11.31**	8.08**	0.85**
School size	3.67**	4.23**	2.97**	2.75**	1.17*	-0.48**
Females	0.43	2.13**	1.48**	0.68	1.35**	0.30**
ATSI	-1.45*	-2.68**	-2.33**	-2.38**	-2.66**	-1.19**
SES	1.90*	13.22**	9.12**	9.45**	8.75**	1.65**
Non-city school	-0.05	2.97**	2.86**	2.98**	3.01**	0.14
Disabilities	-1.85*	-0.11	0.56	-0.05	-0.68	-0.10
Selective entry	-1.07	2.91**	2.64**	0.41	0.58	0.32**
Low SES NP status						
Not a Low SES NP school						
2009	7.83*	0.49	1.60	-8.59**	-6.13*	1.26
2010	6.82*	0.46	0.25	-6.46*	-2.94	1.38
2011	6.27	-0.59	-0.46	-6.70*	-2.34	0.83
2012	5.32	-1.43	-0.40	-5.84	-3.86	0.66
Low SES NP school from 2009						
2009	-0.60	3.11	3.71	-8.35*	-2.13	2.40**
2010	1.59	5.96*	1.01	-5.61*	0.59	2.59**
2011	5.62*	3.08*	3.58*	2.63	8.21*	2.15**
2012	4.52	3.04	-0.30	2.02	3.80	2.46**
Low SES NP school from 2010						
2009	4.86	3.17	5.94*	-7.87*	-5.98*	1.22
2010	2.74	2.68	5.29*	-5.76*	0.80	1.71*
2011	2.76	1.44	2.42	-2.71	4.88	0.57
2012	2.60	2.89	5.76*	-3.71	-0.58	0.35
Low SES NP school from 2011						
2009	5.25	1.78	1.31	-6.15	-3.45	0.57
2010	3.70	3.16	2.40	-6.40	-1.70	1.52*
2011	2.07	0.88	2.85	-6.44	1.93	0.79
2012	3.93	-0.11	1.44	-1.66	4.27	1.62*
Low SES NP school from 2012						
2009	-1.77	1.86	1.48	-9.30**	-3.65	0.23
2010	1.10	0.06	-2.53	-6.64*	-1.23	0.98
2011	-3.46	-0.10	-1.57	-2.18	7.26*	0.25

Note: *= $p < 0.05$ **= $p < 0.01$

Table 6-2 Repeated measures regression estimates of school performance using School Certificate results, 2008-2011

	Maths	English	Science	All
Constant	63.05**	70.06**	69.42**	66.62**
School features				
LBOTE	0.86**	-0.79**	-0.53**	-0.23
School size	0.89**	0.60**	0.70**	0.68**
Females	0.10	0.72**	0.55**	0.59**
ATSI	-1.30**	-1.79**	-1.67**	-1.66**
SES	4.46**	2.95**	3.90**	3.71**
Non-city school	1.12**	0.57**	0.95**	0.77**
Disabilities	0.01	0.01	0.04	-0.04
Selective entry	1.81**	1.07**	1.36**	1.44**
Low SES NP status				
Not a Low SES NP school				
2008	3.96**	3.44**	0.67	2.78**
2019	3.84**	4.15**	2.07**	3.11**
2010	4.35**	2.72**	2.67**	2.36**
2011	2.26*	2.39**	0.78	1.58*
Low SES NP school from 2009				
2008	5.49**	4.79**	1.20*	4.18**
2019	5.46**	4.89**	3.21**	4.40**
2010	3.89**	1.85*	2.07**	1.89**
2011	3.54**	3.49**	2.90**	3.12**
Low SES NP school from 2010				
2008	4.48**	3.98**	0.94	3.26**
2019	4.67**	4.53**	2.39**	3.53**
2010	5.06**	2.65**	3.24**	2.62**
2011	2.65**	1.79*	1.04*	1.66*
Low SES NP school from 2011				
2008	4.62**	3.49**	0.20	2.89**
2019	4.44**	4.47**	2.17**	3.30**
2010	5.18**	3.15**	3.00**	2.79**
2011	3.43**	3.35**	1.90*	2.63**
Low SES NP school from 2012				
2008	3.61**	3.11**	-0.08	2.33**
2019	4.08**	4.05**	1.73*	2.91**
2010	4.28**	3.45**	2.85**	2.29**

Note: *= $p < 0.05$ **= $p < 0.01$

Table 6-3 Repeated measures regression estimates of school performance using attendance rates, 2009-2012: primary schools

	Attendance rates
Constant	92.32**
School features	
LBOTE	0.08
School size	0.02
Females	-1.54
ATSI	-0.51**
SES	0.11**
Non-city school	0.01
Disabilities	-0.17
Low SES NP status	
Not a Low SES NP school	
2009	0.92**
2010	1.29**
2011	1.12**
2012	1.06**
Low SES NP school from 2009	
2009	1.11**
2010	1.03**
2011	0.84**
2012	0.94**
Low SES NP school from 2010	
2009	0.82**
2010	1.47**
2011	1.08**
2012	1.16**
Low SES NP school from 2011	
2009	0.54
2010	1.29**
2011	1.19**
2012	1.01**
Low SES NP school from 2012	
2009	-0.32
2010	0.31
2011	0.24

Note: *= $p < 0.05$ **= $p < 0.01$

The results are for the period from 2008 to 2011 after which the School Certificate was no longer offered. The aim is to see if there are any changes that might reflect the effects of Low SES NP participation, though it might only be expected for schools commencing in 2009 or 2010.

The reference group in Table 6.2 is made up of Low SES NP schools which gained funding in 2012, and the reference year is 2011 (therefore missing for this group of schools). It means that this group of schools did not attract funds during the comparison period and can be treated as if they were not subject to Low SES NP initiatives. All results for other Low SES NP schools and the non-participating schools are relative to the 2011 results for the Low SES NP schools which commenced funding in 2012.

The results show that school SES, ATSI status and selective entry schools are key influences on school performance across all of the School Certificate subjects. ATSI students have School Certificate scores that are 1.3 points lower in maths and up to 1.79 points lower in English than non-ATSI students, on average, and all else equal. Alternatively, selective entry schools provide gains of 1.81 points in maths, all else constant, and 1.36 points in science.

The results are significantly higher for almost all subjects and for almost all years for schools that were not part of the Low SES NP. However, there is a fall from 2010 into 2011 for non-NP schools in the sizes of the coefficients that occurs across all subjects, particularly in science and this may be linked to a reduction in gaps with the reference group of schools.

In terms of the Low SES NP schools, the results were also significantly higher for almost all subjects and for almost all years compared to the 2011 results of the reference group schools. One result to notice, against the pattern of other schools, is an increase from 2010 to 2011 in achievement scores in English (1.58 to 3.49), Science (2.07 to 2.9) and the overall School Certificate average (1.89 to 3.12) for schools commencing participation in the Low SES NP program in 2009. It suggests that relative to the reference group of schools and the reference year (2011) the Low SES NP schools that had been in the program the longest, from 2009, displayed stronger performance by the final School Certificate year. This may be due to the impact of the Low SES NP. For schools commencing in later years, the results are still higher than for the reference group of schools, but the results tend to fall from 2010 to 2011.

The only available non-NAPLAN measure for primary schools is attendance. The results, obtained using the same procedure, are presented in Table 6.3. As with the previous tables, the reference group is made up of Low SES NP schools which gained funding in 2012, and the reference year is 2012. There is little to suggest from the results that Low SES NP primary schools have had much impact on attendance rates, relative to the reference group schools or schools not participating in the Low SES NP. They do not show changes consistent with improvements for Low SES NP schools, despite having significantly higher average attendance rates than the reference group of primary schools.

7. Conclusion

This report synthesises quantitative and qualitative data and analyses developed over three years. The evaluation has drawn on policy analyses, extensive administrative datasets modelling, large scale survey material and sustained field work in Low SES NP school settings. As such it has been able to triangulate and cross-refer between data sources to build a nuanced picture of program implementation that reflects the experiences of the low SES schools across New South Wales that have engaged with the program over several years.

The report employs an exploration of good practice issues derived from site visits, focus studies and analyses of teacher and principal surveys, together with results from multivariate statistical analyses of the effect of the initiative and of the various strategies within the initiative, to better understand the effect of the initiative on an array of school outcomes, including learning outcomes such as NAPLAN, Year 12 retention and Year 12 results as well as intermediate outcomes such as effects on staff recruitment and retention and student absenteeism.

It has been able to generate findings that will assist in development of future program implementation, including challenges and lessons learned for schools implementing similar strategies, and practicability of transferability and up-scaling of effective strategies.

It has been noted that this evaluation has generated several earlier reports, many of which provided highly detailed accounts of how specific schools have worked with the Low SES NP or how schools and school personnel across NSW have experienced the initiatives over time. These are valuable pieces of work in their own right and their findings inform this report. But the main focus of this report lies with the broad question of outcome and impact.

A key question for the evaluation is whether or not participation in the Low SES NP has helped improve the education and life opportunities of students from low SES backgrounds through improvements in student outcomes. To examine this question, a range of analyses were undertaken using available data to evaluate the effectiveness of the Low SES NP in improving NSW student outcomes across a range of measures including NAPLAN results.

Results suggest that the Low SES NP has had a significant positive effect on student NAPLAN achievement. Analysis also indicates the importance of considering the duration that a program has been in place, with Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Numeracy scores increasing by 1 to 1.5 points per additional year of participation in the program.

The analysis also considered a number of extensions, including comparing schools with common ICSEA scores, examining heterogeneity in the treatment effect and estimation on Catholic schools. The comparison sample estimates are similar in sign and magnitude to the main results, suggesting modest positive effects on student NAPLAN scores of participation in the Low SES NP.

The Low SES NP encompasses several different programs, and a model was estimated that considers the individual effect of each program and its duration. The programs included in the models in addition to the broad Low SES NP cover participation in the NP Literacy and Numeracy, NP for teacher quality, NP for the teacher quality enhanced decision making pilot, and the NP for teacher quality for schools participating as a 'spoke' of a Centre for Excellence Hub. Results suggest that participation in the broad Low SES NP only had the largest positive effects on NAPLAN scores.

An analysis of achievement gain comparing gain scores against the state average and within school variation in gain shows there is a reduction in the gap between the primary schools participating in the Low SES NP and the state average in Reading gain. The reductions are small, though consistent.

A variance analysis was undertaken using a sequence of multi-level models to estimate within and between school variation in NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy scores. The models were applied to NAPLAN results obtained in 2009 and those obtained in 2013. This was to permit comparison of results at the outset of the Low SES NP initiatives and in the final year in a quasi-pre and post-test framework. Results suggest modest positive improvement in achievement of students in Low SES NP schools.

Results of analyses using a repeated measures mixed effects design for a range of government school performance measures other than NAPLAN revealed that on four measures — HSC attainment, HSC achievement, ATAR scores, and attendance — schools not participating in Low SES NP had incremental falls in performance relative to Low SES NP schools. Within Low SES schools, those commencing in 2009 display relative improvement over time in HSC attainment and apparent retention (both Year 7 to 12 and Year 10 to 12). This may reflect an impact of participation of this group of schools (which had been in the program for the longest period) on retaining students in school.

In short the analysis does suggest that there has been some impact from the Low SES NP and affirms some of the positive responses found in both principal and staff surveys on effects of the program, including in areas of student outcomes. Over several years, teachers, principals, parents and others have provided perspectives on the Low SES NP and on the challenges confronting low SES schools in building capacity and earlier reports, together with qualitative data presented in prior chapters, highlight the importance of culture change and the necessarily protracted nature of such change. This was well-expressed by the Assistant Principal at a focus study school who outlined the approach taken by her secondary school in addressing such change:

It's a bit of everything. It's having a consistently good newsletter, consistently doing things better, setting up routines and raising expectations, it's having routines in our classroom and delivering on what we promise. And sometimes exceeding. Not overselling but not underselling either. When we do things we want them to be done properly, we want to get everything slowly into place. And you build on that. You get one thing right, and you keep building.

In identifying impact this report has shown how schools overall have shifted on some measures as a result of the Low SES NP. Further work is required to better understand the extent of impact, the nature of initiatives or interventions that may be understood to exert more powerful or consistent outcomes, and the school-level factors that may assist in optimising program effects.



References

- Australian Council For Educational Research (2014) *The Comparability of Measures to Report Literacy and Numeracy Achievement Levels*, Unpublished research report.
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2013), *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Persuasive Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2013*, ACARA, Sydney.
- Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES) (2012). *Evaluation of the School Staffing, Management and Accountability Initiatives. Progress Report No. 1*. Prepared for: the New South Wales National Partnerships Evaluation Committee.
- COAG Reform Council (2010). *Education 2010: Comparing performance across Australia*. Sydney: COAG Reform Council. Retrieved from: www.coagreformcouncil.gov.au/reports/docs/education/2010compare/education_2010_report.pdf
- Council of Australian Governments (2008). *National Partnership Agreement on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities*. Retrieved from: www.smarterschools.gov.au/nationalpartnerships/Documents/SSNatPartnerAgreem.pdf
- Council of Australian Governments (2009). "National Education Agreement: Fact Sheet." Retrieved from: www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2008-11-29/docs/20081129_national_education_agreement_factsheet.pdf
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). "Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence." *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 8(1).
- Department of Education and Training (2011). *Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership. Information Package for Schools*. Retrieved from: www.lowsesschools.nsw.edu.au/wcb-content/uploads/psp/file/2_percent20LOW_SES_InfoPackage.pdf
- Elmore, R. (2000). *Building a New Structure for School Leadership*. Washington: The Albert Shanker Institute.
- Elmore, R. (2007). "Educational Improvement in Victoria." Retrieved from: www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/staffdev/schlead/Richard_Elmore-wps-v1-20070817.pdf
- Field, S., M. Kuczera & B. Pont (2007). *No More Failures: Ten Steps to Equity in Education*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved from: www.education.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/publ/research/publ/policy_and_provision-research_rpt.pdf
- Friedlaender, D. & L. Darling-Hammond (2007). *High Schools for Equity: Policy Supports for Student Learning in Communities of Colour*. School Redesign Network, Stanford University. Retrieved from: www.srnleads.org/press/pdfs/hsfe_report.pdf
- Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a Culture of Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gustafsson, J. (2003). "What do we know about the effects of school resources on educational results?" *Swedish Economic Policy Review* 10.

- Harris, A., T. Allen, & J. Goodall (2008). *"Capturing Transformation: How schools secure and sustain improvement"*. Retrieved from: www.almaharris.co.uk/files/capturing_transformation.pdf
- Kellock, P., G. Burke, et al. (2007). *The Use of Equity Funding to Improve Outcomes*, Centre for the Economics of Education and Training, Monash University. Report prepared for the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
- Lamb, S. (2007). "School Reform and Inequality in Urban Australia: A Case of Residualizing the Poor". *School Reform & Inequality*. R. Teese and S. Lamb, Dordrecht: Springer.
- Lamb, S. & B. McGaw (2007). The performance of Australian schools, international benchmarking. *Federalist Paper 2: The Future of Schooling in Australia*. Retrieved from: www.caf.gov.au/Documents/TheFutureofSchoolinginAustralia.pdf
- Lu, L. & Rickard, K. (2014) *Value added models for NSW government schools*, Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, Technical paper, New South Wales Department of Education and Communities.
- Lamb, S. & R. Teese (2005). *Equity programs for government schools in New South Wales: a Review*, Centre for Post-compulsory Education and Lifelong Learning.
- McKinsey & Company (2007). *How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top*. Retrieved from: mckinseysociety.com/downloads/reports/Education/Worlds_School_Systems_Final.pdf
- Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs (2008). *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*. Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs.
- National Smarter Schools Partnerships (2011). *New South Wales Progress Report 2011*. Retrieved from: www.nationalpartnerships.nsw.edu.au/resources/documents/2011-ProgressReport.pdf
- New South Wales Department of Education and Training. *Incentives Menu*. Smarter Schools National Partnerships on Improving Teacher Quality and Low Socioeconomic Status School Communities. Retrieved from: www.nationalpartnerships.nsw.edu.au/resources/documents/ITQ-LSES-DETIncentivesMenu.pdf
- NSW Department of Education & Training. *National Partnership of Low SES School Communities: Research Underpinning the Reforms*. Retrieved from: www.lowsesschools.nsw.edu.au/wcb-content/uploads/psp/file/Resources/Reforms_paper.pdf
- NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee (2011). *Project Brief: Evaluation of School Staffing, Management and Accountability Initiatives, Attachment A: An Overview of Initiatives*. Tender document provided to CRES.
- OECD. (2005). *Teachers Matter. Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*. Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development: Paris.
- Productivity Commission. (2012). *Schools Workforce*. Research Report, Canberra.
- Robinson, V. (2007). "The impact of leadership on student outcomes: Making sense of the evidence". *The impact of leadership on student outcomes: Making sense of the Evidence*.
- Smarter Schools National Partnership (2011). *New South Wales Smarter Schools National Partnerships Implementation Plan*. Prepared by the Australian Government, New South

Wales Government, Association of Independent Schools NSW and NSW Catholic Education Commission. Retrieved from:
www.nationalpartnerships.nsw.edu.au/resources/documents/2011-NSW-Implementation-Plan.pdf

- Teese, R. and S. Lamb (2009). *Low achievement and social background: patterns processes and interventions; a Discussion paper*. Centre for Post-Compulsory Education and Lifelong Learning, The University of Melbourne.
- Thomson, Sue; Hillman, Kylie; Wernert, Nicole; Schmid, Marina; Buckley, Sarah; and Munene, Ann (2012). *Highlights from TIMSS & PIRLS 2011 from Australia's perspective*. Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)
- Welch, A., S. Helme, et al. (2007). "Rurality and Inequality in Education the Australian Experience". In R. Teese, S. Lamb and M. Duru-Bellat, *International Studies in Educational Inequality, Theory and Policy*, Springer: Netherlands: 271-293.
- Zbar, V., R. Kimber, et al. (2008). *How our best performing schools come out on top: an examination of eight high performing schools*, Data and Evaluation Division; Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Appendix A: Fixed effects model tables



Table A-1 Effects of Low SES NP participation on NAPLAN achievement in Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Numeracy, fixed effects based on participation only (standard errors in parentheses)

	Reading	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Low SES NP	1.98 (0.24)	1.79 (0.19)	3.64 (0.30)	2.94 (0.21)
Age	19.53 (2.07)	14.98 (1.96)	22.38 (2.63)	33.88 (2.15)
SES	0.41 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	-0.05 (0.03)	-0.80 (0.02)
Age*SES	-0.04 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.07 (0.00)
Calendar year				
2009	41.29 (2.67)	30.44 (2.58)	41.43 (3.45)	31.61 (2.82)
2010	72.79 (5.65)	50.36 (5.56)	77.55 (7.23)	57.53 (6.05)
2011	106.97 (8.16)	76.16 (8.03)	109.79 (10.49)	88.26 (8.75)
2012	140.99 (11.30)	103.08 (11.12)	147.69 (14.44)	115.03 (12.10)
2013	179.61 (13.78)	131.67 (13.57)	179.52 (17.68)	144.47 (14.78)
Year_level				
5	-2.35 (3.28)	20.28 (2.68)	1.42 (3.94)	18.65 (3.00)
7	-28.63 (6.58)	16.72 (5.36)	-32.69 (7.91)	10.68 (6.01)
9	-64.76 (9.87)	-2.10 (8.06)	-62.76 (11.88)	2.85 (9.02)
School SES	-27.82 (2.83)	-8.42 (2.11)	-13.82 (3.44)	-10.23 (2.50)
Age_mean	0.89 (0.98)	-0.17 (0.73)	0.87 (1.19)	-0.70 (0.85)
Age*School_mean	-0.87 (0.23)	-4.55 (0.17)	3.10 (0.28)	0.55 (0.20)
Age*school*Year_mean	0.79 (0.16)	4.06 (0.12)	-4.05 (0.20)	-1.36 (0.14)
ATSI_mean	-8.69 (2.71)	-4.28 (2.13)	-0.33 (3.36)	-7.11 (2.32)
ATSI*School_mean	3.38 (3.42)	-1.57 (2.64)	10.94 (4.28)	40.96 (2.98)
ATSI*School*Year mean	-3.28 (3.35)	-0.45 (2.59)	-16.08 (4.15)	-21.00 (2.89)
Gender_mean	1.41 (1.16)	0.68 (0.87)	3.57 (1.43)	-1.96 (1.04)

Gender*School_mean	-0.77	-0.84	1.84	0.12
	(1.33)	(1.00)	(1.63)	(1.20)
Gender*School*Year_mean	-2.18	-0.38	-5.51	1.16
	(1.45)	(1.08)	(1.78)	(1.28)
LBOTE_mean	-0.23	-0.41	-4.91	7.66
	(1.73)	(1.31)	(2.14)	(1.59)
LBOTE*year_mean	-2.61	-0.01	5.83	-3.46
	(1.98)	(1.50)	(2.48)	(1.80)
LBOTE*School*Year_mean	-2.37	-1.32	0.21	-1.11
	(1.83)	(1.39)	(2.27)	(1.70)
SES_mean	0.00	-0.05	-0.05	0.05
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
SES*School_mean	0.04	0.06	0.37	0.30
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.04)
SES*School*Year mean	-0.45	-0.19	-0.27	-0.22
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.05)
Cohort_mean	-0.02	0.00	-0.04	-0.01
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Constant	323.96	344.53	303.30	236.36
	(19.35)	(18.03)	(24.55)	(19.84)



Table A-2 Effects of Low SES NP participation on NAPLAN achievement in Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Numeracy, fixed effects based on participation and duration of participation (standard errors in parentheses)

Reading	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy	Reading
Low SES NP	0.66 (0.27)	1.00 (0.21)	3.30 (0.34)	2.43 (0.24)
Low SES NP Duration	1.41 (0.13)	0.84 (0.10)	0.37 (0.16)	0.54 (0.12)
Age	19.39 (2.07)	14.90 (1.96)	22.34 (2.63)	33.83 (2.15)
SES	0.38 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	-0.06 (0.03)	-0.81 (0.02)
Age*SES	-0.03 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.07 (0.00)
Calendar year				
2009	41.32 (2.67)	30.45 (2.58)	41.44 (3.45)	31.62 (2.82)
2010	72.80 (5.66)	50.37 (5.56)	77.55 (7.23)	57.53 (6.05)
2011	106.87 (8.16)	76.10 (8.03)	109.77 (10.49)	88.22 (8.76)
2012	140.71 (11.31)	102.91 (11.12)	147.62 (14.44)	114.93 (12.10)
2013	179.07 (13.78)	131.34 (13.57)	179.38 (17.68)	144.26 (14.79)
Year_level				
5	-2.21 (3.28)	20.37 (2.68)	1.45 (3.94)	18.70 (3.00)
7	-28.56 (6.58)	16.77 (5.36)	-32.67 (7.91)	10.71 (6.01)
9	-64.52 (9.87)	-1.96 (8.06)	-62.70 (11.88)	2.94 (9.02)
School SES	-28.51 (2.83)	-8.84 (2.11)	-14.00 (3.44)	-10.50 (2.50)
Age_mean	0.82 (0.98)	-0.21 (0.73)	0.85 (1.19)	-0.72 (0.85)
Age*School_mean	-0.88 (0.23)	-4.55 (0.17)	3.10 (0.28)	0.55 (0.20)
Age*school*Year_mean	0.83 (0.16)	4.09 (0.12)	-4.04 (0.20)	-1.34 (0.14)
ATSI_mean	-8.51 (2.71)	-4.17 (2.13)	-0.28 (3.36)	-7.04 (2.32)
ATSI*School_mean	3.75 (3.42)	-1.35 (2.64)	11.04 (4.28)	41.10 (2.99)
ATSI*School*Year mean	-4.40	-1.12	-16.37	-21.43

	(3.35)	(2.59)	(4.16)	(2.90)
Gender_mean	1.39	0.67	3.56	-1.97
	(1.16)	(0.87)	(1.43)	(1.04)
Gender*School_mean	-0.73	-0.81	1.85	0.14
	(1.33)	(1.00)	(1.63)	(1.20)
Gender*School*Year_mean	-2.19	-0.38	-5.52	1.16
	(1.45)	(1.08)	(1.78)	(1.28)
LBOTE_mean	-0.16	-0.37	-4.89	7.69
	(1.73)	(1.31)	(2.14)	(1.59)
LBOTE*year_mean	-2.65	-1.50	0.14	-1.22
	(1.83)	(1.39)	(2.27)	(1.70)
LBOTE*School*Year_mean	-2.50	0.05	5.85	-3.42
	(1.98)	(1.50)	(2.48)	(1.80)
SES_mean	0.01	-0.05	-0.05	0.05
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
SES*School_mean	0.03	0.06	0.37	0.29
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.04)
SES*School*Year mean	-0.46	-0.19	-0.27	-0.23
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.05)
Cohort_mean	-0.02	0.00	-0.04	-0.01
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Constant	326.72	346.18	304.02	237.42
	(19.36)	(18.04)	(24.55)	(19.84)



Appendix B: 2012 Principal Online Survey Instrument





CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON
EDUCATION SYSTEMS
MELBOURNE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Low SES Smarter Schools National Partnerships Survey for Principals 2012

Welcome to the *Low SES Smarter Schools National Partnerships Survey* for Principals. This survey gathers information on the implementation of external partnerships and staffing, management and accountability initiatives in NSW schools participating in the *Low SES Smarter Schools National Partnership (SSNP)*. The information will be used to help to identify changes that may have occurred as a result of schools' participation in the SSNP. NSW Government, Catholic and Independent schools receiving SSNP funding are expected to participate in evaluation activities.

The impact of the Low SES SSNP initiatives is being evaluated by research teams from the Education Institute at the University of Canberra and the Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES) at the University of Melbourne. The evaluation has been contracted on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education. The responses from this survey will be analysed by both research teams and published in their evaluation reports. **No schools or individuals will be identified in any published reports from the *Low SES SSNP Survey for Principals*.**

This survey should take around 30 to 40 minutes. If you do not complete it at one session ***you can save your responses and return to complete it at a later time.***

More information, including contact details for technical support, is provided in the **Information Brochure (LINK)**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. What is the name of your current school?

SELECT FROM DROP-DOWN LIST

2. Which *year* did you become principal at *this* school?

- 2012
 2011
 2010
 2009
 2008
 2006-2007
 2000-2005
 before 2000

3. In which year were you first a member of staff at this school?

- 2012 2011 2010 2009 2008 2006-2007 2000-2005 before 2000

4. In which year did you first become a principal at *any* school?

- 2012 2011 2010 2009 2008 2006-2007 2000-2005 before 2000

5. What is your gender?

- Male Female

Reform 1. INCENTIVES TO ATTRACT HIGH PERFORMING TEACHERS

6. If any of the following incentives are part of this school’s strategy to *attract high performing staff*, please indicate:

- whether the incentive existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the incentive is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the incentive so far in **attracting high performing teachers**.

If the incentive is not part of this school’s strategy, **do not select it**.

If any incentive is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness of this incentive in attracting high performing teachers				
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
<i>Incentive to attract high performing teachers</i>									
a. Establishing leadership and strategic positions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Providing incentives (such as additional support, professional development and career advancement) to attract high performing early career teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Providing mentoring support to teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Providing attractive terms and conditions outside standard entitlements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Providing opportunities for professional learning and development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Providing assisted housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Other incentives to attract high performing teachers (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reform 2. ADOPTING BEST PRACTICE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

7. If any of the following initiatives are part of this school’s strategy to *adopt best practice performance management and staffing arrangements*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in attracting, retaining and developing staff.

If the initiative is not part of this school’s strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness of initiative in attracting, retaining and developing staff				
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
<i>Initiative to adopt best practice performance management and staffing arrangements</i>									
a. Implementing revised staff performance review procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Supporting early career teachers professionally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Managing the staffing mix and succession planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Implementing professional learning plans for staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other performance management and staffing arrangements (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. How important is each of the following in providing an *evidence base to guide teacher performance support/development* at this school?

<i>Evidence of teacher performance</i>	Not used	Not very important	Rather important	Very important
a. Test scores of students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Other measurable student learning outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Documented student feedback on teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Documented parent feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Documented feedback from peers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Other evidence to guide teacher performance support/development (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. To what extent do you agree that the following *changes* have occurred since the beginning of the Low SES SSNP in this school?

<i>Changes that have occurred in this school</i>	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Too early to tell	Don't know
a. I spend more time on planning and whole school improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I spend more time on teaching and learning issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. My job has become more satisfying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I am better organised	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. I am better able to delegate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. I am better able to influence the direction in which the school is moving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. I have a better understanding of the strengths, weaknesses and needs of my staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. I am better able to support targeted staff development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. The professional needs of my staff are better met	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. My communication with staff has been enhanced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. I have been able to play a more proactive role in teacher recruitment and selection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Reform 3. SCHOOL OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS THAT ENCOURAGE INNOVATION AND FLEXIBILITY

10. If any of the following initiatives are part of this school’s strategy to institute *operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility*, please indicate:
- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
 - whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
 - your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in attracting, retaining and developing staff.

If the initiative is not part of this school’s strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness of initiative in attracting, retaining and developing staff				
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
<i>School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility</i>									
a. Employment of additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Employment of additional paraprofessionals in other support roles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Employment of Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) or the sectoral equivalent (Teacher Educators, Leaders of Pedagogy, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Team-based approaches to teaching and planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Increased flexibility in timetabling and/or school’s hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Greater cooperation with other schools to share resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Use of new technologies in teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Other school operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



11. If any of the following initiatives are part of this school’s strategy to institute *operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in improving student learning outcomes.

If the initiative is not part of this school’s strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness of initiative in improving student learning outcomes				
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
a. Employment of additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles within classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Employment of additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside of classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Employment of additional paraprofessionals in other support roles outside of classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Employment of Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) or the sectoral equivalent (Teacher Educators, Leaders of Pedagogy, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Introduction of curriculum and/or programs for students with particular needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Out of school hours learning programs for targeted students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Use of new technologies in teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Other school operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Reform 4. PROVIDE INNOVATIVE AND TAILORED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHERS

12. If any of the following initiatives are part of this school’s strategy to *provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for teachers*, please indicate:
- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
 - whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
 - your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in attracting, retaining and developing staff.

If the initiative is not part of this school’s strategy, **do not select it.**

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness of initiative in attracting, retaining and developing staff				
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
<i>Initiative to provide innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for professional development for teachers</i>									
a. Providing professional development opportunities for teachers to help them use and analyse student data, including NAPLAN, to cater to student needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams (e.g., involving executive, faculty, and teachers within and beyond this school)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Implementing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Providing whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers and school executive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Providing professional development on a range of student wellbeing theories and approaches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Providing professional development on a range of behaviour management theories and approaches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Engaging staff through professional dialogue on behaviour management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Other innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Reform 4. PROVIDE INNOVATIVE AND TAILORED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

13. If any of the following initiatives are part of this school’s strategy to *provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in improving student learning outcomes.

If the initiative is not part of this school’s strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<i>Initiative to provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students</i>	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness of initiative in improving student learning outcomes				
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
a. Using student assessment and other data to identify student needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Implementing targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs (e.g., literacy and numeracy interventions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Implementing differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Implementing transition plans for students moving from primary school into secondary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Implementing transition plans for students moving from secondary school into work, further training or further education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Other innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



14. If any of the following initiatives are undertaken by this school to *provide individual learning support for students*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is being funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in improving student learning outcomes.

If the initiative is not undertaken by this school, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<i>Initiative to provide individual learning support for students</i>	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in improving student learning outcomes				
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
a. Providing professional learning for teachers on meeting individual learning needs (e.g., training teachers in how to create Individual Learning Plans for students)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Providing students with access to learning support services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Providing Individual Learning Programs (ILPs) for students needing assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Other types of individual learning support for students (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



15. If any of the following initiatives are undertaken by this school to *promote student wellbeing*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in promoting student wellbeing.

If the initiative is not undertaken by this school, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<i>Initiative to promote student wellbeing</i>	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in promoting student wellbeing				
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
a. Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Providing students with access to counselling services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Delivering a wellbeing program to students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Providing students with access to health services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Providing links to government wellbeing-related services for students and their families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Providing links to non-government wellbeing-related services for students and their families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Employing or providing access to youth workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Providing students with access to the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Other initiatives to promote student wellbeing (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Reform 5. ACCOUNTABILITY INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

16. If any of the following accountability initiatives are part of this school’s strategy to *promote a culture of continuous school improvement*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in promoting a culture of continuous school improvement.

If the initiative is not part of this school’s strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in promoting a culture of continuous school improvement				
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
<i>Initiative to strengthen school accountability and promote a culture of continuous school improvement</i>									
a. Using the school plan to drive change to improve <i>student, teacher and school</i> performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Using evidence (from a range of sources) to inform decision making and/or strategic direction setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Making planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Monitoring and evaluating the impact of new SSNP initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Expanding the range of school activities that are evaluated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Other initiatives to improve accountability and/or promote a culture of continuous school improvement <i>(Please specify)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Reform 6. SCHOOL EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS—parents/carers

17. If this school undertakes any of the following activities *to engage with parents/carers*, please indicate:

- whether the activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far in building parent/carer engagement in the school.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it**.

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in building parent/carer engagement in the school					
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	
<i>To engage with parents/carers, this school:</i>										
a. Provides English language and/or literacy classes for parents/carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Provides sessions for parents/carers on how to support student learning at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Invites parents/carers to help out in the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Invites parents/carers to talk to students about their culture, work or life experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Invites parents/carers to help out with excursions, carnivals, canteen duty, fundraising etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Holds regular parent/teacher interviews about students' progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Has a documented strategy to lift parents'/carers' expectations of their children's education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Provides extended transition to school programs for potential future cohorts of students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Provides orientation activities for cohorts of students in the year prior to entry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Dedicates resources/staff to the parent/carer and community engagement role	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Has a documented strategy to improve communication with parents/carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Translates newsletters into community languages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Undertakes other activities to engage with parents/carers <i>(Please specify)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



18. Thinking of all the ways in which parents and carers can engage with this school, roughly what proportion of *this school's students* have parents or carers who participate in the following activities?

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

<i>School activities that involve parent or carer participation</i>	Proportion of students whose parents/carers participate					
	0%	1%-24%	25% - 49%	50% - 74%	75% -100%	Don't Know
a. Parent/teacher interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Canteen duty and administrative roles (e.g., library duty)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Working bees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Excursions and camps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Learning support roles (e.g., reading)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Giving presentations to students about their culture, work or life experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. School governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Parent organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Festivals, fetes and cultural events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Other activities that involve parent or carer participation (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. Thinking of how this school *engages parents/carers*, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

<i>How this school engages parents/carers</i>	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
a. This school makes all parents/carers feel welcome and valued	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. In this school, parents /carers are encouraged to be partners with the school in the education of their child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I make it a priority to engage with the parents/carers of students and/or to delegate this responsibility to other staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Parents /carers can access this school and teachers at a time that is convenient to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Teachers make it a priority to engage with parents/carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



20. Generally speaking, to roughly what proportion of students in this school do the following statements apply?

Proportion of students whose:	0%	1-24%	25%-49%	50%-74%	75%-100%	Don't know
a. Parents/carers have the confidence to engage with school staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Parents/carers are active partners with this school in supporting their child's learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Parents/carers respond to requests from this school to volunteer their time in any role (e.g., fundraising, canteen etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Parents/carers expect their child to complete Year 12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Parents/carers expect their child to do further study or training (such as university or TAFE) after they complete school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Parents/carers respond promptly to invitations from this school to attend a meeting to discuss their child (including parent/teacher interviews)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Parents/carers actively seek out ways to support this school in achieving its goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Parents/carers initiate meetings with school staff to discuss their child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. There are occasions when you communicate directly with a parent or carer to discuss their child (apart from parent/teacher interviews), and usually this is in person, over the phone or via email. Thinking of all the times you have communicated directly with parents/carers this year, what was the *main purpose of the communication*?

Main purpose of communicating directly with parent/carer about their child (excluding parent/teacher interviews)	How often this applied (% of total communications)						
	0%	1-24%	25%-49%	50%-74%	75%-100%	Did not contact parents	Don't know
a. To discuss their child's behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. To share good news with the parent/carer about their child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. To discuss legal issues (e.g., protection orders, child custody arrangements)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. To advise and assist the parent/carer to liaise with other services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other purposes of direct communication with parents/carers (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



22. Thinking of all the times you have wanted to communicate with a parent or carer this year to *discuss their child*, how often did the following apply?

	How often this applied (% of total communications)					
	1-24%	25%-49%	50%-74%	75%-100%	Did not contact parents	Don't know
<i>When I initiated contact with a parent or carer to discuss their child:</i>						
a. The parent/carer was difficult to get hold of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I was confident that the parent/carer understood me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I felt threatened	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I understood what the parent/carer was saying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. I felt satisfied that the interaction had served its purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

23. What are the main levers and/or barriers to this school's *engagement with parents or carers of students*?



Reform 6. SCHOOL EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community

24. If this school undertakes any of the following activities to engage with *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) parents and/or community* please indicate:

- whether the partnership activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<p><i>To engage with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, this school:</i></p>	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in building ATSI parent and community engagement in the school						Effectiveness in supporting student learning					
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know
a. Invites ATSI community members to provide support in classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Invites ATSI community members to speak to students about their culture, work or life experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Has a documented strategy to engage the ATSI community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Dedicates resources/staff to engage with the ATSI community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Ensures that I or other members of the school executive attend ATSI community meetings to share information about school activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Undertakes other activities to engage with the ATSI community (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

25. Approximately what proportion of this school’s student population is *Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI)*?

(IF 0% SELECTED, WILL SKIP TO SECTION J)

- 0%
 1% to 24%
 25% to 49%
 50% to 74%
 75% or more

26. How well do the following statements describe this school's *relationship with ATSI parents and/or community?*

<i>This school's relationship with the ATSI community</i>	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Members of the ATSI community are often present at this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Members of the ATSI community provide support in some classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This school has an effective partnership with the ATSI community to support student learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. What are the main levers and/or barriers to this school's *engagement with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) parents and/or community?*



Reform 6. SCHOOL EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS—English as a second language (ESL)

28. If this school undertakes any of the following activities to engage with parents and communities that *speak English as a second language*, please indicate:

- whether the partnership activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it**.

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in building ESL parent and community engagement in the school					Effectiveness in supporting student learning						
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know
To engage with ESL parents and communities, this school:																
a. Invites ESL parents or community members to provide support in classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Invites ESL parents or community members to speak to students about their culture, work and life experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Has a documented strategy to engage ESL parents and communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Dedicates specific resources/staff to engage with ESL parents and communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Ensures that I or members of the school executive regularly attend ESL community meetings to share information about school activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Undertakes other activities to engage with ESL parents and communities (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. Approximately what proportion of this school’s student population speaks *English as a second language*?

(IF 0% SELECTED, WILL SKIP TO SECTION K)

- 0%
 1% to 24%
 25% to 49%
 50% to 74%
 75% or more
 Don't know

30. What are the main levers and/or barriers to this school’s engagement with *English as a second language (ESL) parents and/or community*?

K. SCHOOL EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS—Employers and the wider community

31. If this school undertakes any of the following activities to engage with *employers and the wider community*, please indicate:

- whether the partnership activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<p><i>To engage with employers and the wider community, this school:</i></p>	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in building engagement with employers and the wider community					Effectiveness in supporting student learning						
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know
a. Invites community members to talk to students about their life experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Invites employers and/or community members to talk to students about work and careers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Invites employers and/or community members to help with fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Collaborates with employers to provide work experience opportunities for students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Undertakes other activities to engage with employers and/or the wider community (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

32. What are the main levers and/or barriers to this school's engagement with *employers and the wider community*?



Reform 6. SCHOOL EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS—other education and training providers

33. Does your school work in partnership with one or more TAFE or training providers?

- Yes No **(Skip to Q35)**

34. From your experience of this school’s partnership with one or more TAFE or training providers, please indicate if this involves any of the following activities and:

- whether the activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in raising students’ career aspirations						Effectiveness in supporting student learning					
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don’t know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don’t know
Through partnership with one or more TAFE or training providers, this school:																
a. Arranges orientation visits to the training provider’s facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Arranges for students from this school to receive teaching at the training providers’ facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Arranges for teachers from the training provider to teach students at this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Invites teachers from the training provider to talk to students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Invites teachers from the training provider to talk to parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Offers VET Certificate courses to students while at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Engages in other partnership activities with training providers <i>(Please specify)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



35. Does your school work in partnership with one with one or more universities?

- Yes No **(Skip to Q37)**

36. From your experience of this school’s partnership with one or more *universities*, please indicate if this involves any of the following activities and:

- whether the partnership activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in raising students’ career aspirations					Effectiveness in supporting student learning						
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know
<i>Through partnership with one or more universities, this school:</i>																
a. Arranges orientation visits to the university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Arranges for students to receive teaching at the university’s facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Arranges for university staff to conduct some teaching at this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Arranges for university staff to conduct professional learning for teachers at this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Invites university staff to talk to students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Invites university staff to talk to parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Offers university-accredited units of study to students while at this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Engages in other partnership activities with universities <i>(Please specify)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

37. Does your school work in partnership with one or more secondary schools?

- Yes No **(Skip to Q39)**

38. From your experience of this school’s partnership with one or more *secondary schools*, please indicate if this involves any of the following activities and:

- whether the activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it**.

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in supporting students’ transitions						Effectiveness in supporting student learning					
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know
<i>Through partnership with one or more secondary schools, this school:</i>																
a. Arranges student visits to a partner school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Arranges for partner school staff to teach at this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Invites partner school staff to talk to students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Invites partner school staff to talk to parents of students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Engages in other partnership activities with secondary schools (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

39. Does your school work in partnership with one or more primary schools?

- Yes No **(Skip to Q41)**

40. From your experience of this school’s partnership with one or more *primary schools*, please indicate if this involves any of the following activities and:

- whether the activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- Your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it**.

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in supporting students’ transitions						Effectiveness in supporting student learning					
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know
Through partnership with one or more primary schools, this school:																
a. Provides some teaching in a partner school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Shares professional learning for teachers with a partner school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Engages in other partnership activities with primary schools (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

41. Does your school work in partnership with one or more preschools/early childhood service providers/play groups?

- Yes No **(Skip to Q43)**



42. From your experience of this school’s partnership with one or more *preschools, early childhood care/service providers or play groups*, please indicate if this involves any of the following activities and:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in supporting students’ transitions						Effectiveness in supporting student learning					
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know
<i>Through partnership with one or more preschools, early childhood service providers or playgroups, this school:</i>																
a. Hosts orientation visits including parent events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Supports sharing of staff, with staff from this school conducting some teaching at preschools, early childhood service providers or playgroups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Offers literacy learning to preschool students where appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Engages in other partnership activities with preschools, early childhood service providers or play groups <i>(Please specify)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

43. Does your school engage in partnerships with other education and training providers?

- Yes No **(Skip to Q45)**

44. This school:					Effectiveness in supporting student learning					
	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	
	Y	N	Y	N						
a. Engages in partnerships with other education and training providers (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

YOU, THIS SCHOOL AND ITS COMMUNITY

45. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
a. I feel supported by the parents of students at this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I feel connected to the broader community that this school is part of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I feel supported professionally at this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. There is a school wide student behaviour policy that is understood by all members of the school community and consistently applied	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Classroom teachers are effective in identifying and managing students with challenging behaviours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Negotiating and planning a phased program of support for students with challenging behaviours is a feature of this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Student behaviour management has been a key focus of this school in the implementation of the Low SES SSNP initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

46. Overall, how do you feel about working at this school?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know

Thank you for participating in the survey ► *Exit questionnaire*



**Appendix C: 2013 Teacher Online Survey
Instrument**



CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON
EDUCATION SYSTEMS
MELBOURNE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Low SES School Communities National Partnership Low SES NP Teacher Survey 2013

Welcome to the *Low SES School Communities National Partnership Teacher Survey 2013*. This survey gathers information on the implementation of external partnerships and staffing, management and accountability initiatives by NSW schools participating in the *Low SES School Communities National Partnership (Low SES NP)*. The information will be used to identify changes that may have occurred because of schools' participation in the Low SES NP initiatives. NSW government, Catholic and independent schools that receive NP funding are expected to participate in evaluation activities.

The impact of the Low SES NP initiatives is being evaluated by research teams from the Education Institute at the University of Canberra and the Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES) at the University of Melbourne. The evaluation has been contracted on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education. The responses from this survey will be analysed by both research teams and published in their evaluation reports. **No schools or individuals will be identified in any published reports from the *Low SES School Communities National Partnership Teacher Survey*.** The information you provide will only be reported in aggregate form. It will NOT be reported by school or sector. Your school name is necessary to allow other demographic data such as school enrolments to be connected to responses and will only be used for this purpose.

This survey should take around 20 minutes to complete. Your responses to the survey are vital in informing future policy to enhance education in NSW. The evaluation team values your support for this survey, and relies on your assistance.

More information, including contact details for technical support, is provided in the **Information Brochure (LINK)**

1. What is the name of your current school?

SELECT FROM DROP-DOWN LIST OR WRITE THE NAME OF YOUR SCHOOL HERE

2. What is your gender? Male Female

- 3. How old are you?**
- 20 – 29 years
 - 30 – 39 years
 - 40 – 49 years
 - 50 – 59 years
 - 60 years or older

4. What position do you currently hold in this school? (*Nominate current one only, regardless of whether it is an acting, relieving, temporary or substantive position*)

- Deputy or Assistant Principal
- Executive Teacher, Head of Department, Year-level Coordinator or equivalent role
- Classroom Teacher
- Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT), Teacher Educator, Leader of Pedagogy, or equivalent role
- Teacher – other (please specify)

5. How long have you been in your current position?

- Less than one year
- 1- 2 years
- 3- 5 years
- 6- 10 years
- More than ten years

6. How long have you been at this school?

- Less than one year SKIP LOGIC ENSURED THAT QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO LOW SES NP
- 1-2 years (INDICATED BY ASTERIX*) WERE SUPPRESSED IF THIS ITEM WAS SELECTED
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than ten years

7. How long have you been teaching/working in schools?

- Less than one year SKIP LOGIC ENSURED THAT QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO LOW SES NP
- 1-2 years (INDICATED BY ASTERIX*) WERE SUPPRESSED IF THIS ITEM WAS SELECTED
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than ten years

8. How familiar are you with this school’s involvement with the Low SES NP initiatives?

- I am involved in leading this school’s Low SES NP initiatives
- I have a good idea of what this school is doing as a result of Low SES NP funding
- I know we are involved in the Low SES NP and can identify programs at this school that are connected with the initiatives
- I know we are involved in the Low SES NP but I am unsure about what programs in this school connect with that
- I am unfamiliar with the Low SES NP initiatives
- I wasn’t aware that this school was participating in the Low SES NP

SKIP LOGIC ENSURED THAT QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO LOW SES NP (INDICATED BY ASTERIX*) ARE SUPPRESSED IF EITHER OF THESE ITEMS IS SELECTED

9* Please indicate whether each of the following is occurring more or less frequently since the implementation of the Low SES NP initiatives at your school:

Is each of the following occurring <i>more or less</i> frequently since the implementation of the Low SES NP initiatives at your school?	A lot less	A little less	Un-changed	A little more	A lot more	Not an NP goal for this school
a. Collaboration between classroom teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Classroom support for teachers to help with student learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Opportunities for professional learning of classroom teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Using results from student assessments to inform teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Parent/carer engagement in the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Links between the school and its wider community (e.g., other schools, community organisations or business groups)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Engaging with parents and carers from diverse social and cultural groups (including ATSI and LBOTE communities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Additional programs and services to promote student wellbeing (e.g., counselling, health services)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Additional programs and services to support students in their learning (e.g., homework centres, home-school liaison officers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10* To what extent have the Low SES NP initiatives affected the following? Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement:

As a result of your school's participation in the Low SES NP initiatives:	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not an NP goal for this school
a. The school runs more smoothly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Teachers use better strategies to support student learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. There have been improvements in the way teachers relate to students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. This school uses more effective methods to determine how well teachers are performing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. There is a more strategic approach to school planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. The school communicates better with parents and carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. The school is more effective in engaging parents & carers from diverse social & cultural groups (including ATSI and LBOTE communities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. The school is more engaged with its wider community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. The school has become a better place in which to teach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. The school has become a better place for students to learn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11* To what extent have the initiatives affected the following aspects of your role as a teacher?

Because of your school's participation in the Low SES NP initiatives, as a teacher you are now:	A lot less well	A little less well	Un-changed	A little better	A lot better	Not an NP goal for this school
a. Meeting the individual learning needs of your students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Communicating with parents and carers from diverse social and cultural backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Managing student behaviour in classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Involving parents in their children's learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Being supported in the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Able to explain the goals of your school to colleagues, parents and others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have any comments about the effect of the Low SES NP initiatives on your role as a teacher?						

12* To what extent do you feel that the Low SES NP initiatives have affected the following?

Because of your school's participation in the Low SES NP initiatives, as a teacher you are now:	A lot worse	A little worse	Un-changed	A little better	A lot better	Not an NP goal for this school
a. Mentoring support provided to teachers is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Quality of support for early career teachers is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Quality of school leadership is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Availability of professional learning opportunities for teachers is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Parents' and carers' support for student learning is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. In your view, what are the main challenges if any, that this school faces in engaging with parents and carers?

14*. Please provide any additional comments on Low SES NP initiatives in the area of school staffing, management and accountability

15*. Please provide any additional comments on Low SES NP initiatives in the area of school external partnerships

Thank you for participating in the survey



Appendix D. 2014 Principal Online Survey Instrument





**Low SES Smarter Schools National Partnerships
Staffing, Management and Accountability Initiatives
2014 Survey for NSW Principals**

Welcome to the 2014 *Low SES Smarter Schools National Partnerships Principals' Survey* on staffing, management and accountability initiatives. This is the second of two Principal surveys (the first was conducted in 2013) that gather information on the implementation and effectiveness of staffing, management and accountability initiatives in NSW schools participating in the *Low SES Smarter Schools National Partnership (NP)*.

This survey should take around 30 minutes. If you do not complete it at one session ***you can save your responses and return to complete it at a later time.***

More information, including contact details for technical support, is provided in the **Information Brochure (LINK)**

This survey will be open until the 2nd June 2014.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. What is the name of your current school?

SELECT FROM DROP-DOWN LIST

2. Which *year* did you become principal at *this* school?

2014
 2013
 2012
 2011
 2010
 2009
 2006-2005
 2000-2000
 before 2000
 I am the principal's delegate

3. In which year were you first a member of staff at this school?

2014
 2013
 2012
 2011
 2010
 2009
 2006-2005
 2000-2000
 before 2000

If you have answered '2014' for Q2 and Q3, you may exit the survey at this point if you wish.

4. In which year did you first become a principal at *any* school?

2014 2013 2012 2011 2010 2009 2006-2005 2000-2005 before 2000 Not employed as a principal before

5. What is your gender?

Male

Female

6. To what extent do you agree that the following changes occurred in your school as a result of participation in the Low SES NP?

<i>Changes in this school due to the Low SES NP</i>	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
The school attracted more high performing staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The school was better able to retain current staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The school was better able to develop current staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New operational arrangements encouraged innovation and flexibility in staffing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student learning outcomes improved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teachers accessed more innovative and tailored learning opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students accessed more innovative and tailored learning opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The school made progress in building a culture of continuous improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The school was better able to build its external partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Any other changes of particular note in your school as a result of participation in the Low SES NP?

8. To what extent do you agree that the following changes to your role as principal were due to the school’s Low SES NP participation? *If you are a principal’s delegate, please answer these questions as best you can.*

<i>Changes that have occurred in your principal role</i>	Was this a change in your role?		If yes, to what extent was the change due to the school’s participation in the Low SES NP?				
	Yes	No	Significant	To some extent	Not much	Not at all	N/A
I spent more time on planning and whole school improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I spent more time on teaching and learning issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My job became more satisfying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was better organised	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I delegated more	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was better able to influence the direction in which the school is moving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I felt I had a better understanding of the strengths, weaknesses and needs of my staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was better able to support targeted staff development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The professional needs of my staff were better met	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My communication with staff was enhanced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I played a more proactive role in teacher recruitment and selection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Any other changes to your role as principal as a result of participation in the Low SES NP?

ATTRACTING HIGH PERFORMING TEACHERS TO YOUR SCHOOL

10. Please select any of the following initiatives that were part of your school’s targeted Low SES National Partnership-funded strategies to **ATTRACT HIGH PERFORMING TEACHERS TO YOUR SCHOOL.**

(NOTE: If the initiative was not part of this school’s strategy for Low SES NP, do not select it.)

Click all that apply

<input type="checkbox"/>	Established leadership and strategic positions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided incentives (such as additional support, professional development and career advancement) to attract high performing early career teachers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided mentoring support to teachers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided attractive terms and conditions outside standard entitlements
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided opportunities for professional learning and development
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided assisted housing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other incentives developed to attract high performing teachers <i>(Please specify)</i>

11. If an initiative was selected, please indicate your assessment of the effectiveness of the selected initiative at your school, whether it continues to be applied beyond the NP and reasons for continuing or discontinuing it.

Initiatives to ATTRACT HIGH PERFORMING TEACHERS TO YOUR SCHOOL	<i>Effectiveness in attracting high performing teachers</i>				<i>Continuing to apply incentive</i>		<i>If no, why are you no longer using this strategy into 2014?</i>		
	Not at all effective	Somewh at effective	Effective	Highly effective	Yes	No	Insufficient impact	No resources available	Alternative strategy now preferred
Established leadership and strategic positions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided incentives (such as additional support, professional development and career advancement) to attract high performing early career teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided mentoring support to teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided attractive terms and conditions outside standard entitlements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided opportunities for professional learning and development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Provided assisted housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other incentives developed to attract high performing teachers <i>(Please specify)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Please select any of the following initiatives that were part of your school’s targeted Low SES National Partnership-funded strategies to **ATTRACT, RETAIN AND DEVELOP STAFF AT YOUR SCHOOL.**

(NOTE: If the initiative was not part of this school’s strategy for Low SES NP, do not select it.)

Click all that apply

- Implemented revised staff performance review procedures
- Supported early career teachers professionally
- Managed the staffing mix and succession planning
- Implemented professional learning plans for staff
- Employed additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles
- Employed additional paraprofessionals in other support roles
- Employed Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) or the sectoral equivalent (Teacher Educators, Leaders of Pedagogy, etc.)
- Adopted team-based approaches to teaching and planning
- Introduced increased flexibility in timetabling and/or school’s hours
- Introduced greater cooperation with other schools to share resources
- Made more use of new technologies in teaching
- Provided professional development opportunities for teachers to help them use and analyse student data
- Provided quality professional learning for school-based teams of staff (e.g., involving executive, faculty, and teachers within and beyond this school)
- Implemented relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff
- Provided whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers and school executive
- Provided professional development on a range of student wellbeing theories and approaches
- Provided professional development on a range of behaviour management theories and approaches
- Engaged staff through professional dialogue on behaviour management

□	Other innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers (<i>Please specify</i>).....
---	---

13. If an initiative was selected, please indicate your assessment of the effectiveness of the selected initiative at your school, whether it continues to be applied beyond the NP and reasons for continuing or discontinuing it.

Initiatives to ATTRACT, RETAIN AND DEVELOP STAFF AT YOUR SCHOOL	<i>Effectiveness in attracting, retaining and developing staff</i>				<i>Continuing to apply incentive</i>		<i>If no, why are you no longer using this strategy into 2014?</i>		
	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Yes	No	Insufficient impact	No resources available	Alternative strategy now preferred
Implemented revised staff performance review procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supported early career teachers professionally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managed the staffing mix and succession planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implemented professional learning plans for staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employed additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employed additional paraprofessionals in other support roles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employed Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) or the sectoral equivalent (Teacher Educators, Leaders of Pedagogy, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adopted team-based approaches to teaching and planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Introduced increased flexibility in timetabling and/or school's hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Introduced greater cooperation with other schools to share resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made more use of new technologies in teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided professional development opportunities for teachers to help them use and analyse student data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided quality professional learning for school-based teams of staff (e.g., involving executive, faculty, and teachers within and beyond this school)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Implemented relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers and school executive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided professional development on a range of student wellbeing theories and approaches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided professional development on a range of behaviour management theories and approaches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engaged staff through professional dialogue on behaviour management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other incentives developed to attract, retain and develop staff at your school (Please specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

INITIATIVES TO PROVIDE INNOVATIVE AND TAILORED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

14. Please select any of the following initiatives that were part of your school’s targeted Low SES National Partnership-funded strategies to **PROVIDE INNOVATIVE AND TAILORED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS.**

(NOTE: If the initiative was not part of this school’s strategy for Low SES NP, do not select it.)

Click all that apply

<input type="checkbox"/>	Used student assessment and other data to identify student needs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implemented targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs (e.g., literacy and numeracy interventions)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implemented differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implemented transition plans for students moving from primary school into secondary school
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implemented transition plans for students moving from secondary school into work, further training or further education
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided professional learning for teachers on meeting individual learning needs (e.g., training teachers in how to create Individual Learning Plans for students)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided students with access to learning support services
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided Individual Learning Programs (ILPs) for students needing assistance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provided other types of individual learning support for students (<i>Please specify</i>).....

15. If an initiative was selected, please indicate your assessment of the effectiveness of the selected initiative at your school, whether it continues to be applied beyond the NP and reasons for continuing or discontinuing it.

Initiatives to PROVIDE INNOVATIVE AND TAILORED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS	<i>Effectiveness in providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students</i>				<i>Continuing to apply incentive</i>		<i>If no, why are you no longer using this strategy into 2014?</i>		
	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Yes	No	Insufficient impact	No resources available	Alternative strategy now preferred
Used student assessment and other data to identify student needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implemented targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs (e.g., literacy and numeracy interventions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implemented differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implemented transition plans for students moving from primary school into secondary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implemented transition plans for students moving from secondary school into work, further training or further education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided professional learning for teachers on meeting individual learning needs (e.g., training teachers in how to create Individual Learning Plans for students)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided students with access to learning support services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided Individual Learning Programs (ILPs) for students needing assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provided other types of individual learning support for students (<i>Please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

16. Please select any of the following initiatives that were part of your school’s targeted Low SES National Partnership-funded strategies to **PROMOTE A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.**

(NOTE: If the initiative was not part of this school’s strategy for Low SES NP, do not select it.)

Click all that apply

<input type="checkbox"/>	Used the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher and school performance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Used evidence (from a range of sources) to inform decision making and/or strategic direction setting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Made planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitored and evaluated the impact of new NP initiatives
<input type="checkbox"/>	Expanded the range of school activities that are evaluated
<input type="checkbox"/>	Introduced other initiatives to improve accountability and/or promote a culture of continuous school improvement (Please specify).....



17. If an initiative was selected, please indicate your assessment of the effectiveness of the selected initiative at your school, whether it continues to be applied beyond the NP and reasons for continuing or discontinuing it.

Initiatives to PROMOTE A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	Effectiveness in promoting a culture of continuous school improvement				Continuing to apply incentive		If no, why are you no longer using this strategy into 2014?		
	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Yes	No	Insufficient impact	No resources available	Alternative strategy now preferred
Used the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher and school performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Used evidence (from a range of sources) to inform decision making and/or strategic direction setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitored and evaluated the impact of new NP initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expanded the range of school activities that are evaluated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Introduced other initiatives to improve accountability and/or promote a culture of continuous school improvement (Please specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

18. Please select any of the following initiatives that were part of your school’s targeted Low SES National Partnership-funded strategies to **PROMOTE EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS**.

(NOTE: If the initiative was not part of this school’s strategy for Low SES NP, do not select it.)

Click all that apply

Strategic Development with:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Parents and carers generally in the school community
<input type="checkbox"/>	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wider community
<input type="checkbox"/>	One or more TAFEs and training providers
<input type="checkbox"/>	One or more universities
<input type="checkbox"/>	One or more secondary schools
<input type="checkbox"/>	One or more primary schools
<input type="checkbox"/>	One or more preschools or early childhood centres

19. If an initiative was selected, please indicate your assessment of the effectiveness of the selected initiative at your school, whether it continues to be applied beyond the NP and reasons for continuing or discontinuing it.



Initiatives to PROMOTE EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS	<i>Effectiveness in promoting external partnerships</i>				<i>Continuing to apply incentive</i>		<i>If no, why are you no longer using this strategy into 2014?</i>		
	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Yes	No	Insufficient impact	No resources available	Alternative strategy now preferred
Parents and carers generally in the school community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wider community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One or more TAFEs and training providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One or more universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One or more secondary schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One or more primary schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One or more preschools or early childhood centres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

INTO THE FUTURE

20. The following statements deal with your school’s activities following the cessation of the Low SES NP and introduction of Local Schools, Local Decisions (LSLD) and the new resource allocation model (RAM). Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

If you are a principal at a Catholic or Independent School, please skip to Q22.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
LSDL and the RAM have allowed my school to retain all of the initiatives that we wanted to retain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LSDL and the RAM have allowed my school to retain at least some of the initiatives introduced under the Low SES NP but not necessarily all we wanted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to have retained more of the NP initiatives but didn't have the resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LSDL and the RAM have allowed my school to introduce initiatives that better suit our needs than the NP initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you have answered Strongly Agree/Agree to this statement, please complete Q21. If you have not agreed with this statement, please skip to Q22.</i>					

- 21.** Can you please identify key initiatives that you have introduced since the NP that better suit your needs?

- 22.** This concludes the structured questions in our survey. Your specific comments about your school's participation in the Low SES NP initiative and your assessment of the ways in which participation has impacted on staffing, management and accountability arrangements would be appreciated.

Thank you for your participation in this survey!

▶ *Exit questionnaire*

