



# NATIONAL REPORT

on schooling in Australia

2013



## National Report on Schooling in Australia 2013

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## Overview

The *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2013* is the twenty-fifth annual report on Australia's school education sector. It has been produced by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on behalf of the Education Council<sup>1</sup>.

The report highlights progress in 2013 towards the [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) agreed by Australian education ministers in 2008, and on Council of Australian Governments (COAG) initiatives for school education through the National Education Agreement (NEA).

The *National Report on Schooling in Australia* addresses the eight areas of commitment to action specified in the Melbourne Declaration. It describes the national policy and reporting context for school education in Australia, outlines nationally agreed policy initiatives, and reports against the nationally agreed key performance measures for schooling including enrolment, attendance, student achievement in national assessments and transitions to further education and work. These include key performance measures reflecting the educational goals for young Australians and measures reflecting COAG targets and indicators drawn from the performance reporting framework of the NEA.

Under the NEA, which came into effect in January 2009<sup>2</sup>, the Australian state, territory and federal governments agreed to streamlined and consistent reports on national progress, including the continued publication of an annual national report on the outcomes of schooling in Australia.

A variety of other statistical information on Australian schooling in 2013 and for the five-year period 2009–2013 is included in the Additional statistics tables.

This is the fifth annual *National Report on Schooling in Australia* to address the Melbourne Declaration and the NEA, and the fifth edition to be compiled by ACARA as required under its charter.

The [National Report on Schooling in Australia 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012](#) are available on the ACARA website. Editions prior to 2009 are available on the [SCSEEC website](#).

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<sup>1</sup> The (COAG) Education Council replaced the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) in July 2014 as the ministerial council with responsibility for schooling in Australia. SCSEEC replaced the former Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) in January 2012. In this report, references to the council of Australian education ministers in 2013 are to SCSEEC. Historical references are to MCEECDYA, or to its predecessor until July 2009, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).

<sup>2</sup> A review of the National Education Agreement performance framework was undertaken in 2012 and a revised agreement to reflect the outcomes of the review came into effect in July 2012. References and links to the NEA in this report are to the revised agreement.

## Part 1: National policy context

### 1.0 Overview

Within Australia's federal system, constitutional responsibility for school education rests predominantly with the Australian states and territories<sup>3</sup>. The six state and two territory governments and the Australian Government have cooperated to develop and work towards agreed goals for improving the educational outcomes for all young Australians.

In Australia, joint decisions on shared priorities and agreed national initiatives are made through intergovernmental policy councils. For education in 2013, these councils are the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC), the Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment (SCOTESE), and the Council of Australian Governments (COAG).

#### SCSEEC

The COAG Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) was established in January 2012, replacing the previous Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) as the Ministerial Council with responsibility for schooling<sup>4</sup>.

Membership of the Standing Council comprises state, territory, Australian Government and New Zealand ministers with responsibility for the portfolios of school education, early childhood development and youth affairs.

SCSEEC's areas of responsibility include:

- primary and secondary education
- youth affairs and youth policy
- cross-sectoral matters including transitions and careers
- early childhood development including early childhood education and care.

SCSEEC provides a forum through which strategic policy on school education and early childhood development can be coordinated at the national level and is responsible for overseeing progress towards the [Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians](#).

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<sup>3</sup> New South Wales (NSW), Victoria (Vic.), Queensland (Qld), South Australia (SA), Western Australia (WA), Tasmania (Tas.), Northern Territory (NT) and Australian Capital Territory (ACT).

<sup>4</sup> In this report, contemporary references to the council of Australian education ministers are to SCSEEC. Historical references are to MCEECDYA, or to its predecessor until July 2009, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). In July 2014 SCSEEC was replaced by the COAG Education Council.

## SCOTESE

In 2013, the COAG Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment (SCOTESE)<sup>5</sup> is responsible for higher education, vocational education and training, international education, adult and community education and employment. Its membership comprises ministers responsible for these portfolios in all jurisdictions.

## COAG

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia. Its members are the Prime Minister, state premiers, territory chief ministers and the president of the Australian Local Government Association.

COAG's National Education Agreement includes a set of nationally agreed objectives, outcomes, targets and performance indicators to guide education reform across the country. It is one of six national agreements that seek to drive COAG's national reform agenda and to improve service delivery across the country.

SCSEEC and SCOTESE are standing councils of COAG.

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<sup>5</sup> In 2014 SCOTESE was replaced by the COAG Industry and Skills Council.

## National policy context

### 1.1 Educational goals

The [\*Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians\*](#)<sup>6</sup> sets the directions for Australian schooling for the ten-year period 2009–2018 as agreed to by all Australian education ministers.

The Melbourne Declaration has two overarching educational goals<sup>7</sup> for young Australians:

Goal 1: Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence

Goal 2: All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

### Commitment to Action

The Melbourne Declaration includes a Commitment to Action in eight interrelated areas in order to support the achievement of the educational goals:

- developing stronger partnerships
- supporting quality teaching and school leadership
- strengthening early childhood education
- enhancing middle years development
- supporting senior years of schooling and youth transitions
- promoting world-class curriculum and assessment
- improving educational outcomes for Indigenous youth and disadvantaged young Australians, especially those from low socio-economic backgrounds
- strengthening accountability and transparency.

Progress in implementing strategies and initiatives addressing the areas for action in 2013 is outlined in Part 2: National initiatives and achievements.

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<sup>6</sup> The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (2008) replaced the *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century* (the Adelaide Declaration, agreed in 1999), which itself superseded the original *National Goals for Schooling in Australia* (Hobart Declaration, agreed in 1989).

<sup>7</sup> For a full explanation of the goals, see the Melbourne Declaration, pp. 6–9.

### National Education Agreement

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Education Agreement (NEA) articulates the shared objective of Australian governments that all Australian school students acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in society and employment in a globalised economy.

The agreement sets out conditions for the provision of Commonwealth school education funding to the Australian states and territories for the period of 2009–2013. It details roles and responsibilities of the Australian Government, and states and territories, and defines a framework for performance reporting. These, along with agreed policy and reform directions, are designed to contribute to the following outcomes:

- All children are engaged in, and benefiting from, schooling.
- Young people are meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards, and overall levels of literacy and numeracy achievement are improving.
- Australian students excel by international standards.
- Schooling promotes social inclusion and reduces the education disadvantage of children, especially Indigenous children.
- Young people make a successful transition from school to work and further study.

The performance reporting framework agreed by all governments includes the following elements:

- streamlined and consistent reports on national progress, including an annual national report on the outcomes of schooling in Australia (the *National Report on Schooling in Australia* – this report) and the biennial COAG report *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators*
- national reporting on performance of individual schools to inform parents and carers, and for evaluation by governments of school performance with details, as agreed by SCSEEC in March 2009
- provision by schools of plain language student reports to parents and carers, and an annual report made publicly available to their school community on the school's achievements and other contextual information.

Under the provisions of the *Schools Assistance Act 2008* and regulations, the accountability framework for non-government schools and school systems is consistent with that of the NEA for the government school sector.

## National policy context

### 1.2 Measuring and reporting performance

#### The Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia

The [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#) provides the basis for national reporting on the performance of schooling, as agreed by education ministers, and is the main focus of the statistical data included in this report.

The *Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012* defines national key performance measures (KPMs) for schooling, specifies the data sources for these KPMs and outlines the reporting cycle for the period 2012–2017.

The framework was revised during 2012; the revised document replaces the *Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2010*. The revised framework incorporates measures arising from the [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) and measures reflecting indicators in the revised National Education Agreement (effective July 2012).

The framework is maintained by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on behalf of the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) and is published on the ACARA website. It is periodically revised by ACARA in consultation with jurisdictions and sectors.

#### Key performance measures

By intent, the KPMs contained in the measurement framework are:

- strategic measures that provide nationally comparable data on aspects of performance critical to monitoring progress against the Melbourne Declaration
- focused on student participation, achievement, attainment and equity
- based on sound and reliable assessment practice
- supportive of open and transparent reporting
- relevant and of interest to the public
- cost-effective, practical to collect, and take account of the burden and impact that data collection may place on students, schools and schooling systems.

The agreed areas of performance monitoring for which KPMs have been developed and approved are:

Participation:

- enrolment in school
- student attendance
- participation in National Assessment Program (NAP) assessments
- participation of young people in vocational education and training (VET), including VET in Schools
- participation by young people in other learning pathways;

Achievement in the National Assessment Program (NAP) in:

- literacy
- numeracy
- civics and citizenship
- ICT literacy
- science literacy

Attainment:

- school completion and attainment
- attainment of young people in other learning pathways.

For national reporting purposes, KPMs for student participation, achievement and attainment are disaggregated by equity measures: Indigenous status; sex; geolocation; socio-economic status and language background; where possible and appropriate.

### Policy and reporting framework

The key national school education policy documents and reports including the Melbourne Declaration, the National Education Agreement (NEA), the *Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia* and the *National Report on Schooling in Australia* relate to and reinforce each other. Their relationships and roles in policy formation, reporting, evaluation and review are summarised in figure 1.1.

### National School Education Policy Framework

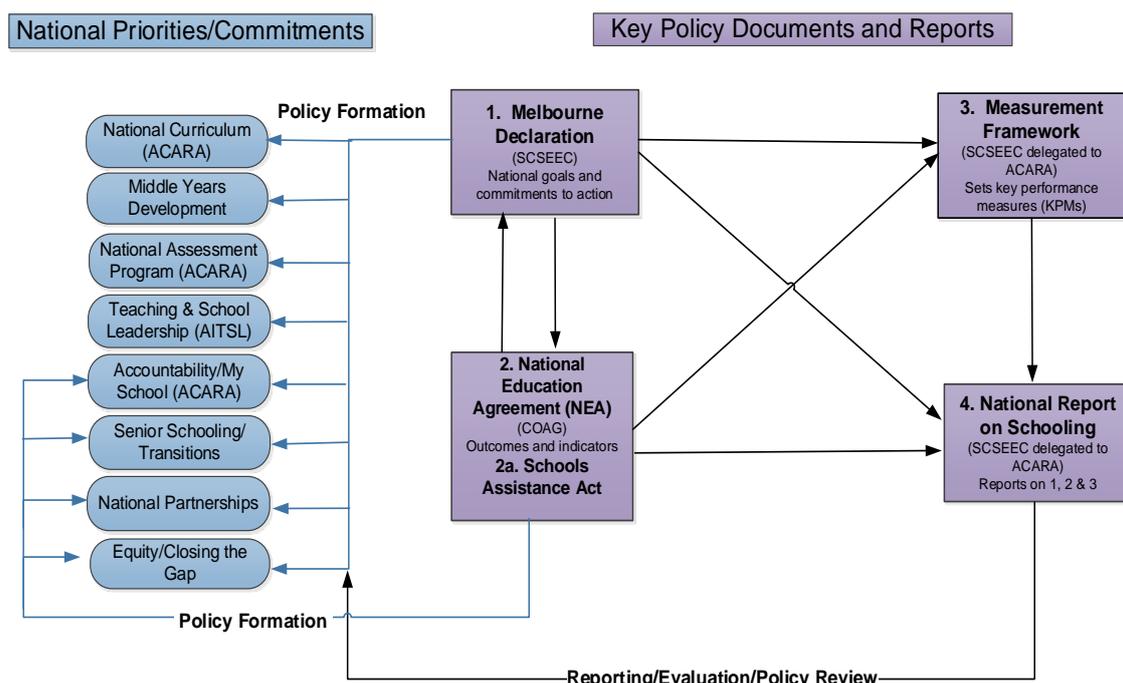


Figure 1.1 National school education policy and reporting framework

The measurement framework incorporates national key performance measures arising from the Melbourne Declaration goals and commitment to action, and key performance measures reflecting COAG targets and indicators drawn from the performance reporting framework of the NEA.

The performance reporting framework of the NEA includes an annual national report on the outcomes of schooling in Australia (the *National Report on Schooling in Australia*) covering the Melbourne Declaration and the Measurement Framework. The Measurement Framework is included as a schedule of the NEA.

The *National Report on Schooling in Australia* reports on national commitments and achievements arising from the Melbourne Declaration and is the main vehicle for reporting the key performance measures defined in the Measurement Framework.

## Part 2: National initiatives and achievements

### 2.0 Overview

This section outlines key national strategies designed to address the Commitment to Action made by Australian education ministers in the [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#), together with initiatives for education agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), including through the National Education Agreement (NEA). It also reports on the implementation of these initiatives in 2013.

In this context, national initiatives are defined as those in which states, territories and the Australian Government are working together, at a national level, to progress their joint commitments.

States and territories are also committed to progressing work towards the educational goals for young Australians, COAG targets and NEA outcomes on an individual basis. Information on the implementation of these programs within jurisdictions is available through state and territory education authority reports and websites.

## National initiatives and achievements

### 2.1 Developing stronger partnerships

Australian governments have committed to working with all school sectors to ensure that schools engage young Australians, parents, carers, families, other education and training providers, business and the broader community to support students' progress through schooling and to provide them with rich learning, personal development and citizenship opportunities ([Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) 2008).

In line with the commitment reflected in the Melbourne Declaration, states and territories have worked on an individual basis to establish:

- school-based partnerships with parents, carers and families; with local community groups; with Indigenous communities and between schools
- system-based partnerships with business, higher education, government agencies and others.

Through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), the Australian Government and state and territory governments also entered into a set of formal national partnership agreements. These are outlined below.

National partnership agreements for:

- improving teacher quality
- education in low socio-economic status school communities
- literacy and numeracy

have contributed to achieving objectives, outcomes and targets for schooling, outlined in the National Education Agreement (NEA). In addition to the Australian Government funding shown below, states and territories contributed to the implementation of national partnerships in money terms and in kind. Participation by non-government schools in these partnerships was determined through collaboration between the non-government sectors and state and territory governments.

#### Improving teacher quality

The [Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership](#) (from 2008–09 to 2012–13) sought to implement a range of initiatives targeting critical points in teachers' careers. Australian government funding of \$550 million was provided to state and territory education authorities to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and leaders in schools. Other measures were designed to develop effective workforce planning and support, improve teacher pay structures, increase school-based decision-making and improve teacher education and professional development. The Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership ceased in June 2013.

The [Rewards for Great Teachers National Partnership](#) was introduced to implement the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework and a nationally

consistent assessment and certification process for highly accomplished and lead teachers. These processes have since been implemented nationally. The Rewards for Great Teachers National Partnership ceased in December 2013.

#### Low socio-economic status school communities

The [Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership](#) aimed to facilitate progress within targeted schools and communities to improve student learning, engagement and wellbeing, and to foster active participation of the community.

The Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership was scheduled to run from 2008–09 to 2014–15 and included \$1.5 billion in Australian government funding to be matched by states and territories. Approximately 1,790 schools participated in the program, which ceased in December 2013. Unallocated funds were redirected to needs-based funding arrangements specified in the Australian Education Act 2013, which will apply from January 2014 (see under ‘Funding arrangements from 2014’ later in this section).

More information on this initiative is included in Part 2.7: National initiatives and achievements – improving educational outcomes for Indigenous youth and disadvantaged young Australians.

#### Literacy and numeracy

The \$540 million [Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership](#) (from 2008–09 to 2011–12) aimed to deliver sustained improvement in literacy and numeracy outcomes for students, especially those needing support. Over the life of this national partnership, approximately 1,070 schools were targeted for support. Programs included individualised support for students, and targeted professional learning for school leaders and classroom teachers.

The Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership sponsored the development of ‘Teach, Learn, Share’, an online database of strategies and approaches for improving literacy and numeracy, submitted by teachers, professional associations, academics and education authorities. Launched in June 2012, ‘Teach, Learn, Share’ provided access to evidence-based research and to strategies and interventions shown to be successful in improving student outcomes in Australian schools and school systems. ‘Teach, Learn, Share’ was incorporated on the [Scootle website](#) in 2014.

The \$243.9 million National Partnership on Improving Literacy and Numeracy aimed to support states and territories to expand the implementation of effective literacy and numeracy strategies in schools during the 2013 school year. Funding was provided over the 2012–13 and 2013–14 financial years. Almost 1,900 schools participated in the initiative, providing coverage for 36 per cent of lower-achieving students across Australia.

The partnership focused on effective school leadership and whole school engagement with literacy and numeracy; monitoring student performance in literacy and numeracy to identify areas needing support; and implementing evidence-based literacy and numeracy teaching approaches.

### National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions

The [National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions](#), which covered the period from July 2009 to December 2013, aimed to increase participation of young people in education and training, increase attainment levels nationally and improve successful transitions from school.

The national partnership included the Compact with Young Australians and the implementation of the National Youth Participation Requirement, which took effect nationally in 2010. Programs implemented to support the achievement of this national partnership included School Business Community Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections.

More information on this partnership is included in Part 2.5: National initiatives and achievements – supporting senior years of schooling and youth transitions.

### National Partnership Agreement on Digital Education Revolution

The [National Partnership Agreement on Digital Education Revolution](#), provided \$2.1 billion by the Australian Government over six years, for new information and communication technology (ICT) equipment in secondary schools, for enhancing teaching resources in ICT and for providing technical advice and support to schools. The Digital Education Revolution concluded in June 2013.

More information on the Digital Education Revolution is provided in Part 2.5: National initiatives and achievements – supporting senior years of schooling and youth transitions.

### National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan – Building the Education Revolution

In 2009, COAG agreed to the [National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan: Building Prosperity for the Future and Supporting Jobs Now](#), incorporating Building the Education Revolution (BER). This agreement provided Commonwealth funding for the BER program over four years and expired on 31 December 2012. The \$16.2 billion BER sought to provide economic stimulus through rapid construction and refurbishment of school infrastructure and built learning environments. BER funding was allocated to nearly 24,000 projects in approximately 9,500 schools under the three elements of the BER. The BER program closed on 30 August 2013.

### Empowering Local Schools National Partnership Agreement

The [Empowering Local Schools National Partnership](#) sought to help principals, parents and school communities make decisions that suited the local context of their schools, focusing on governance, funding and infrastructure, and workforce management. Schools from all states and territories participated<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> The Empowering Local Schools National Partnership ceased in June 2014.

#### Funding arrangements from 2014

A new needs-based funding model for the provision of Australian Government funding for school education, contained in the Australian Education Act 2013, will take effect from January 2014. These funding arrangements provide that schools with students needing extra support will attract additional payment loadings.

The Australian Government's *Students First* policy will focus on four areas intended to improve student outcomes: teacher quality; school autonomy; engaging parents in education; and strengthening the Australian Curriculum. This includes the objective that mainstream schools policy, programs and service delivery contribute to improvements in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Information on national partnerships for early childhood education is included in Part 2.3: National initiatives and achievements – strengthening early childhood.

## National initiatives and achievements

### 2.2 Supporting quality teaching and school leadership

Australian governments are committed to working with all school sectors to attract, develop, support and retain a high-quality teaching and school leadership workforce in Australian schools ([Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians 2008](#)).

Among the key strategies in this area agreed by education ministers in 2008 were the creation of new professional standards, a framework to guide professional learning for teachers and school leaders, and national consistency in the registration of teachers. Improved pay dispersion to reward quality teaching, improved in-school support for teachers and leaders – particularly in disadvantaged Indigenous, rural/remote and hard-to-staff schools – and joint engagement with higher education to provide improved pre-service teacher education were other agreed strategies.

#### Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

The [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership \(AITSL\)](#) was established, with the support of all state and territory education ministers, to provide national leadership for the Australian, state and territory governments in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership. AITSL has responsibility for professional standards and for fostering high-quality professional development for teachers and school leaders. AITSL works collaboratively across jurisdictions and engages with key professional bodies.

To support quality teaching, AITSL developed the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, which were endorsed in December 2010. The standards are a statement of what constitutes teacher quality and defines what teachers should know and be able to do at different stages in their careers ('graduate', 'proficient', 'highly accomplished' and 'lead'). The standards comprise three domains: Professional Knowledge; Professional Practice and Professional Engagement; each with a number of standards that articulate knowledge, skills and attributes required across the four career stages.

The standards are intended as a tool to measure teaching capability at various levels of a teacher's career and to provide a nationally agreed quality assurance mechanism.

As such, they underpin national approaches to accreditation of initial teacher education programs, registration of teachers and formal recognition of highly accomplished and lead teachers. All states and territories have agreed to implement the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers from 2013.

AITSL also developed the Australian Professional Standard for Principals, which was introduced in 2011. This standard complements the professional standards for teachers and is intended to build the capacity of school principals across Australia.

Further information on the work AITSL is undertaking to support the teaching profession is available on the [AITSL website](#).

### National partnership agreements on teacher quality

The [Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership](#) (from 2008–09 to 2012–13) sought to implement a range of initiatives targeting critical points in teachers' careers. Australian government funding of \$550 million was provided to state and territory education authorities to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and leaders in schools. Other measures were designed to develop effective workforce planning and support, improve teacher pay structures, increase school-based decision-making and improve teacher education and professional development. The Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership ceased in June 2013.

The [Rewards for Great Teachers National Partnership](#) was introduced to implement the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework, and a nationally consistent assessment and certification process for highly accomplished and lead teachers. These processes have since been implemented nationally. The Rewards for Great Teachers National Partnership ceased in December 2013.

### The More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative

The [More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative](#) (2011–2015), delivered through the University of South Australia, seeks to increase the number and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers working in schools across Australia. Strategies to enhance the professional and leadership capabilities of experienced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers form a key component of the initiative.

## National initiatives and achievements

### 2.3 Strengthening early childhood education<sup>9</sup>

Australian governments have committed to supporting the development and strengthening of early childhood education, to provide every child with the opportunity for the best start in life ([Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) 2008).

#### National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education

Through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) [National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education](#), Commonwealth and state and territory governments committed to ensuring that all children have access to a quality early childhood education program, delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, for 600 hours in the year before they attend school full time.

The Australian Government's commitment of \$970 million over five years to 30 June 2013 included \$955 million, provided directly to states and territories to support their implementation of universal access to early childhood education. Three million dollars each year (for five years) was also set aside for research, data development and evaluation. The national partnership includes a specific focus on ensuring early childhood education is available to Indigenous and disadvantaged children.

In April 2013, the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education was renewed for the period of July–December 2014. A further \$655.6 million was allocated to states and territories to support the maintenance of universal access.

#### National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development

Through the [National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development](#), the Australian Government provided \$292.6 million for the establishment of 38 children and family centres across Australia by June 2014. The children and family centres deliver integrated services, including early childhood learning, child care and family programs in areas where there is a demonstrated need for these services and a high proportion of Indigenous children under five years of age. As at 31 December 2013, 30 of the 38 centres had been completed.

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<sup>9</sup> Early childhood education refers to programs that children may undertake in the years before they commence full-time schooling. In general, statistical and other information on early childhood education in Australia is not reported in the *National Report on Schooling in Australia*.

## National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care

The Australian Government, together with state and territory governments, has committed to the [National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care](#) that contributes to improving better educational and developmental outcomes for children by using education and care services, including most long day care, family day care, kindergarten/preschool<sup>10</sup> and outside school hours care services in Australia.

Under the agreement, the National Quality Framework was established to provide a national system for regulation and quality assessment of child care and early learning services to ensure children consistently receive a high-quality standard of education and care.

Regulatory authorities in each state and territory are responsible for administration of the National Quality Framework. The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority is a national body that supports regulatory activities under the National Quality Framework.

Since the introduction of the National Quality Framework in 2012, regulatory authorities have been assessing and rating services against the National Quality Standard. As at December 2013, 32 per cent of services had received a quality rating.

## National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care

The National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care facilitates collection, sharing and reporting of early childhood education and care information. It was developed in consultation with the Australian Government, states and territories, as well as key data agencies. The agreement is a key element of the COAG monitoring and reporting arrangements, especially for children in the year before school under the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education, and for Indigenous children in that age group, under the Closing the Gap agenda.

Further information on the commitment for strengthening early childhood education is outside the scope of the National Report on Schooling in Australia but is available on the [Australian Government Department of Education](#) website.

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<sup>10</sup> In jurisdictions where preschool is currently delivered by government or non-government schools, there is an option of administering the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care through existing government quality assurance processes with respect to preschools (*National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care*, Appendix B-8.53).

## National initiatives and achievements

### 2.4 Enhancing middle years development

Australian governments are committed to working with all school sectors to ensure that schools provide programs that are responsive to students' developmental and learning needs in the middle years, and which are challenging, engaging and rewarding ([Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) 2008).

States and territories continue to progress work in this area on an individual basis.

In addition, the national partnerships on improving teacher quality and on low socio-economic status school communities have supported a range of strategies to assist schools in engaging students in the middle years of schooling. Information on these partnerships is available in Part 2.1: National initiatives and achievements – developing stronger partnerships.

The development and implementation of the Foundation – Year 10 Australian Curriculum has also catered for the provision of challenging, engaging and rewarding programs in the middle years. This initiative is outlined in Part 2.6: National initiatives and achievements – promoting world-class curriculum and assessment, and on the ACARA [Australian Curriculum website](#).

## National initiatives and achievements

### 2.5 Supporting senior years of schooling and youth transitions

Australian governments are committed to working with all school sectors to support the senior years of schooling and provision of high-quality pathways to facilitate effective transitions between further study, training and employment ([Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#)2008).

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has established targets to lift the Year 12 or equivalent attainment rate. Specifically, COAG agreed to a target for 2015 that 90 per cent of 20–24-year-olds will have achieved Year 12 or equivalent, or an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or above, and a target for 2020 that 90 per cent of 20–24-year-olds will have achieved Year 12 or equivalent or an AQF Certificate III or above<sup>11</sup>.

#### National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions

To support achievement of the attainment targets, to increase educational participation and attainment of young people and to improve their transition to post-school education, training and employment, COAG established the [National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions](#), which included the Compact with Young Australians. This national partnership ran from July 2009 to December 2013 and provided \$706 million of project and reward funding.

The [Compact with Young Australians](#) included a National Youth Participation Requirement, which required young people to participate in schooling (or an approved equivalent) until they completed Year 10, and then participate full-time (at least 25 hours per week) in education, training or employment, or a combination of these activities, until age 17. This came into effect nationally in 2010, effectively raising the minimum school (or approved equivalent) leaving age in several jurisdictions and making it consistent across the country. Since that time, there have been overall increases in the apparent rates of student progression and retention to the later years of schooling, and in the proportion of 15–19-year-olds participating in education and training. These developments are reported in Part 4.2: Student participation – progression and retention, and Part 6.2: Senior schooling and youth transitions – participation.

#### Trade Training Centres in Schools Program

The Trade Training Centres in Schools Program, which commenced in 2008, was designed to provide students at eligible secondary schools with access to modern facilities to undertake vocational education and training (VET). The funding was provided to construct new or upgrade existing training facilities and install industry standard equipment. \$1.4 billion funding was approved for 511 projects benefiting over 1,290 schools.

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<sup>11</sup> The AQF is the national framework of qualifications in the school, vocational education and training (VET), and higher education sectors in Australia. The Senior Secondary Certificate of Education, Certificate II and Certificate III are qualifications within the AQF.

This program supports and complements existing programs for VET in Schools, and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships operating in all states and territories. Under these programs, school students are able to combine school study with training towards an accredited AQF VET qualification.

### Digital Education Revolution

Ensuring learning in the senior years is supported by access to computers, online tools and resources, and teaching expertise in using information and communication technologies (ICT) is an agreed strategy for supporting senior schooling and youth transitions under the Melbourne Declaration.

Through the [National Partnership Agreement on the Digital Education Revolution](#) (DER), the Australian Government provided more than \$2.1 billion from 2008 to 2013 to:

- provide new ICT equipment for all secondary schools with students in Years 9–12 through the National Secondary Schools Computer Fund
- provide technical advice and support for national initiatives through the National Schools Interoperability Program
- support implementation of the Australian Curriculum through the Australian Curriculum Connect Project, enabling the use, sharing and discovery of digital resources aligned with the new curriculum.

### Career development resources and initiatives

[myfuture](#) is Australia's free online career information service created to assist career planning, career pathways and work transitions. It is accessed by a range of users including secondary school students, school leavers, parents, teachers, career practitioners and adults.

The myfuture website is a joint initiative of the Australian Government, and state and territory governments, which was updated and relaunched in December 2013. The Australian Government provided \$2.1 million for the maintenance and redevelopment of the website during 2013.

The [Job Guide](#) publication helps young people to explore entry level occupations and to make subject choices. The Job Guide also provides information for those who have a role in supporting students, such as teachers, career practitioners in schools, and employment service providers. Job Guide is distributed each year to all Australian schools with Year 10 students. In 2013, the Australian Government provided \$1.4 million for the development, printing and distribution of Job Guide, in both hard copy and online.

To coincide with the release of the National Career Development Strategy in May 2013, eight Making Career Connections initiatives were implemented in July and August 2013, totalling \$6.1 million. The initiatives focussed on four priority areas including:

- involving industry more actively in career development
- building career development skills in individuals

- improving young people's exposure to the world of work
- improving quality and professionalism of the career development industry.

The initiatives were designed to support young people to gain the skills they need to make effective career decisions; and are all due for completion in the 2014–15 financial year.

Further information on senior schooling and transitions, including the key performance measures related to this commitment, is in Part 6: Senior schooling and youth transitions.

## National initiatives and achievements

### 2.6 Promoting world-class curriculum and assessment

Australian governments are committed to working together with all school sectors to ensure world-class curriculum and assessment for Australia at national and local levels ([Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) 2008).

#### The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

The [Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority \(ACARA\)](#) is an independent statutory authority responsible to the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC)<sup>12</sup>.

In terms of curriculum and assessment, the functions of ACARA<sup>13</sup> are to:

- develop and administer a national school curriculum, including content of the curriculum and achievement standards, for school subjects specified in the charter<sup>14</sup>
- develop and administer national assessments
- provide school curriculum resource services
- provide information, resources, support and guidance to the teaching profession.

The ACARA Charter specifies strategic directions for the authority in the key areas of curriculum and assessment at the national level as:

1. a national curriculum from Foundation<sup>15</sup> to Year 12 in specified learning areas
2. a national assessment program aligned to the national curriculum, that measures students' progress.

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<sup>12</sup> From July 2014, SCSEEC is known as Education Council

<sup>13</sup> *Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act (2008)*, Section 6. (ACARA's functions in data collection and reporting are outlined in Part 2.8: National initiatives and achievements – strengthening accountability and transparency.)

<sup>14</sup> SCSEEC determines the ACARA Charter and specifies subjects for development within the charter and letter of expectations.

<sup>15</sup> The Foundation year (first year of full-time schooling) is known as Preparatory in Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania; Kindergarten in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory; Reception in South Australia; Pre-primary in Western Australia; and Transition in the Northern Territory.

## The Australian Curriculum

There are eight learning areas in the Australian Curriculum, corresponding to those listed by education ministers in the Melbourne Declaration:

- English
- Mathematics
- Sciences (including Physics, Chemistry, Biology)
- Humanities and Social Sciences (including History, Geography, Economics and Business, Civics and Citizenship)
- The Arts (performing and visual)
- Technologies (including Digital Technologies<sup>16</sup>, and Design and Technologies)
- Health and Physical Education
- Languages (especially Asian languages).

In addition to its focus on learning areas, the Australian Curriculum includes seven general capabilities: literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology capability, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding and intercultural understanding. These are addressed where relevant to the learning area. The Australian Curriculum also focuses on three cross-curriculum priorities: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures; Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia; and Sustainability. As with the general capabilities, these are addressed where relevant to the learning area.

### Curriculum development process

The overall development of the Australian Curriculum from Foundation to Year 12 (F–12) is guided by the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum*, first approved by education ministers in 2009. The most recent version, [Shape of the Australian Curriculum version 4.0](#), was published in 2012.

The process and specifications for the development of the Australian Curriculum are described in two key documents: the [Curriculum Development Process v6.0](#) (April 2012) and the [Curriculum Design Paper v3.1](#) (June 2013). Each phase of curriculum development involves substantial consultation with government and non-government education authorities, professional associations, teachers, academics, business, industry, parent and community groups, and comprehensive review and revision processes.

The [Australian Curriculum Consultation portal](#) allows stakeholders and the general public to read and review draft curriculum materials as they become available.

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<sup>16</sup> Previously called information and communication technology

Further information on the curriculum development process, including an [infographic summarising the process](#), is available on the [‘Curriculum’ pages](#) of the ACARA website.

Once endorsed by education ministers, curriculum documents are progressively released on the ACARA [Australian Curriculum website](#). In each curriculum, the content descriptions specify what all young people should be taught, and the achievement standards set out the depth of understanding and sophistication of skill expected of students at particular points in their schooling. Other information is provided to support content descriptions and achievement standards. Each endorsed curriculum includes a rationale, aims, year- or band-level descriptions, information on organisation of the curriculum, content elaborations, annotated portfolios of student work samples and a glossary.

The Australian Curriculum Foundation – Year 10 (F–10) for English, mathematics, science and history was endorsed in 2010. Education ministers endorsed the F–10 curriculum for geography in May 2013, and the F–10 curriculum for drama, dance, media arts, music and visual arts in July 2013. In November 2013, ministers noted the F–10 curriculum in economics and business, civics and citizenship, design and technologies, digital technologies, and health and physical education, and agreed that curriculum could be made available for state and territory use. Development and consultation on F–10 curriculum in a number of languages continued during 2013. The draft Australian Curriculum: Work Studies, Years 9–10 also underwent national consultation in late 2013.

Responsibility for implementing the Australian Curriculum lies with each state and territory. Implementation of English, Mathematics, Science and History Australian Curriculum for F–10 commenced in some jurisdictions in 2011 with substantial implementation in 2013 in most states and territories.

In December 2012, education ministers endorsed the curricula for 14 senior secondary subjects for English, mathematics, science and history as the agreed and common base for development of state and territory senior secondary courses. The senior secondary geography curriculum was endorsed by ministers in July 2013.

The senior secondary Australian Curriculum for each subject specifies content and achievement standards. The content describes the knowledge, understanding and skills that are to be taught and learnt. The achievement standards describe the quality of learning (the depth of understanding, extent of knowledge and sophistication of skill) expected of students who have studied the subject’s content.

State and territory curriculum, assessment and certification authorities are responsible for determining how the senior secondary Australian Curriculum content and achievement standards are to be integrated into their courses.

### [School curriculum resource services and information and support to the teaching profession](#)

While implementation of the Australian Curriculum is a matter for each state and territory, ACARA works with states and territories to facilitate this implementation. This includes working with jurisdictions, non-government school sectors and other agencies to provide tools and resources to support schools, teachers and the public in implementing and interacting with the Australian Curriculum.

[Education Services Australia](#) (ESA) is a ministerial company established by SCSEEC to support delivery of national priorities in the school, training and higher education sectors. Major functions of ESA include: to create, publish, disseminate and market curriculum and assessment materials; to research, test and develop technologies and communication systems for use in education; to devise, develop and deliver curriculum and assessment support services.

ACARA collaborates with ESA regarding online resource discovery, development and access, and with the [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership](#) (AITSL) regarding professional learning requirements in relation to the Australian Curriculum.

To ensure the Australian Curriculum is accessible to all students, ACARA publishes advice and examples on the '[Student diversity](#)' section of the Australian Curriculum website.

### The National Assessment Program

The National Assessment Program (NAP) is an ongoing program of assessments to monitor progress towards the educational goals for young Australians. The NAP encompasses the annual national literacy and numeracy tests (NAPLAN), three-yearly sample assessments in science literacy, civics and citizenship, and information and communication technology (ICT) literacy, and Australia's participation in international assessments.

### National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

NAPLAN is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in the areas of reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, punctuation and grammar) and numeracy.

NAPLAN tests were first conducted in 2008, replacing former state- and territory-based literacy and numeracy tests. ACARA has been responsible for the development and oversight of the delivery of the NAPLAN tests since 2010.

For national reporting purposes, key performance measures (KPMs) have been approved by ministers for reading, writing, numeracy and participation. These KPMs are reported for NAPLAN 2013 in Part 5.1: Student achievement: National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

Further information about the 2013 NAPLAN test results is available in the [NAPLAN National Report](#) for 2013 on the ACARA [National Assessment Program \(NAP\)](#) website. This report provides data on results including breakdowns by state and territory, and by student background characteristics, including sex, language background, Indigenous status, geolocation, and parental education and occupation. The data are also available in interactive form from the '[Results](#)' page of the NAP website.

Further information about NAPLAN for parents, schools and students is also available on the NAP website. This information includes samples of the individual student reports that are provided to all students who participate in the NAPLAN tests, and background information

about the NAPLAN tests. Average NAPLAN results for schools are reported on the [My School website](#).

### The National Assessment Program – sample assessments

The national sample assessments test students' skills and understanding in science literacy (Year 6), civics and citizenship literacy (Years 6 and 10) and information and communication technology (ICT) literacy (Years 6 and 10). Sample groups of students participate in these assessments, which are held on a rolling three-yearly basis. Sample assessments began in 2003 with science literacy, followed by civics and citizenship literacy in 2004 and ICT literacy in 2005.

The fourth Civics and Citizenship assessment was undertaken by a more than 11,000 Year 6 and 10 students between October and November 2013. For the first time, the assessment included an online test with multiple-choice and open-ended questions, and an online student questionnaire. The same test was made available to schools on USB drives as a back-up delivery method.

Information on results of the 2013 NAP – Civics and Citizenship assessment, including the key performance measures related to it, is included in Part 5.2: Student Achievement – National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship. The report on this sample assessment, [2013 National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship public report](#) is available on the ACARA National Assessment Program website.

### National Assessment Program – international assessments

There are two NAP sample assessments, conducted by international organisations, which are used as a basis for key performance measures in the *Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia*: the [Programme for International Student Assessment](#) (PISA) and the [Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study](#) (TIMSS).

PISA is conducted every three years by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and involves assessment of a sample of 15-year-old students in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy. The most recent PISA assessment was conducted in 2012 and was reported in the *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2012*. Reports and key findings from PISA 2012 are available on the [Australian Council for Educational Research \(ACER\) website](#).

TIMSS is a four-yearly international sample assessment of student achievement in Mathematics and Science at Years 4 and 8, administered by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The most recent TIMSS assessment was TIMSS 2011. Information on the performance of Australian students in TIMSS 2011 is available on the ACER website.

## National Online Assessment

In July 2013, education ministers agreed to guiding [principles for national online assessment](#) that provide strategic direction to ACARA for online delivery of NAPLAN<sup>17</sup>. This follows SCSEEC's previous commitment to trial an electronic onscreen delivery platform for National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship (NAPCC) in 2013.

The principles are grouped under three broad headings that require online assessment to:

- support quality teaching and learning
- deliver better national and assessment information
- broaden the curriculum coverage of assessments.

Ministers noted that: 'A national online assessment capability will enhance the NAP and will provide the opportunity to deliver new, flexible, optional, high quality assessments that support learning.'

There are three components in the program to move NAPLAN online:

- developing the platform, known as the online national assessment platform. This is being developed by Education Services Australia (ESA).
- ensuring NAPLAN and sample assessments ready to run online. ACARA is responsible for this component.
- readiness of schools and school authorities to implement the tests, including devices and training.

ACARA, ESA and the Australian Government Department of Education are working with state and territory school authorities to ensure the three components of the program are fully coordinated.

In August 2013, ACARA investigated the feasibility of proposed multi-stage, branching test design (tailored test design) for the implementation of NAPLAN as a computer-delivered assessment. More than 23,000 tests in reading, numeracy and writing were delivered in 250 schools during the trial period. Studies in 2014 will finalise the measurement aspects of the tailored test design.

In late 2013, the NAP sample assessment in Civics and Citizenship was conducted online for the first time.

Further information on online assessment is available on the ACARA [NAP website](#).

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<sup>17</sup> The Education Council has since agreed (2014) that NAPLAN online would be implemented from 2017 on an opt-in basis over two–three years.

## National initiatives and achievements

### 2.7 Improving educational outcomes for Indigenous youth and disadvantaged young Australians, especially those from low socio-economic backgrounds

The first goal of the [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) is that Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence.

Within the Melbourne Declaration, education ministers acknowledged that:

- Educational outcomes for Indigenous<sup>18</sup> children and young people are substantially behind those of other students in key areas of enrolment, attendance, participation, literacy, numeracy, retention and completion.
- Students from low socio-economic backgrounds, those from remote areas, refugees, homeless young people, and students with disabilities often experience educational disadvantage
- Australian governments must support all young Australians to achieve not only equality of opportunity, but also more equitable outcomes.

Ministers committed Australian governments to working with all school sectors to:

- 'close the gap' for young Indigenous Australians
- provide targeted support to disadvantaged students
- focus on school improvement in low socio-economic communities.

Agreed national strategies under the Melbourne Declaration included: the development of an action plan to close the gap for Indigenous children and young people; providing increased access to quality early childhood education programs for Indigenous children; supporting coordinated community services for Indigenous students and their families; strengthening school leadership and teaching in disadvantaged schools; and generating meaningful pathways for all disadvantaged students.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has set targets to lift educational attainment overall and to close the gap between the educational outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students; these are incorporated in the National Education Agreement.

These are to:

- lift the Year 12 or equivalent or Certificate II attainment rate to 90 per cent by 2015
- lift the Year 12 or equivalent or Certificate III attainment rate to 90 per cent by 2020

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<sup>18</sup> The Melbourne Declaration and national data collections use the term 'Indigenous' to refer to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Where possible, this report uses 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' in preference to the term 'Indigenous'.

- halve the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy by 2018
- at least halve the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students' Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020.

Progress towards these targets is discussed in Part 6.3: Senior school and transitions – attainment, and Part 7: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

COAG has also set a target to ensure access to early childhood education for all Indigenous four-year-olds in remote communities by 2013.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth

State and territory governments, non-government education authorities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are working in collaboration to close the gap between the outcomes of schooling for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students.

The [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014](#) was developed as a commitment under the Melbourne Declaration and as a part of the COAG reform agenda to improve life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. The action plan was approved by education ministers in 2010 and endorsed by COAG in 2011.

The action plan focuses on six priority areas identified as having the greatest impact on closing the gap:

- readiness for school
- engagement and connections
- attendance
- literacy and numeracy
- leadership, quality teaching and workforce development
- pathways to real post-school options.

The action plan seeks to bring together existing commitments made through the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) and the National Education Agreement, and builds on commitments by governments for structural reforms in early childhood education, schooling and youth engagement.

Under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan, a key group of focus schools are identified as sites for specific action. The Investing in Focus Schools Project is a \$40-million initiative over two years from 2012. Funding was provided as a one-off payment to states and territories under a project agreement. The initiative supports approximately 300 government and non-government schools (selected by states and territories) to complement and accelerate implementation of local actions in the Engagement and connections; Attendance; and Literacy and numeracy domains of the action plan.

The Next Steps Focus Schools Initiative is an Australian Government commitment of \$30 million under the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000*. The two-year funding, finishing in 2014, assists 101 schools (selected by states and territories) to address the attendance, engagement and educational achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Annual reports for 2012, 2011 and 2010 on progress against the action plan are available on the [SCSEEC website](#).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have also benefited from the national partnership agreements in literacy and numeracy, low socio-economic status school communities, improving teacher quality and youth attainment and transitions. These agreements are for all Australians, but have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific measures. Information on these partnerships is included in Part 2.1: National initiatives and achievements – developing stronger partnerships.

More information on initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth is available in the [annual reports on the action plan](#) and the Australian Government's [Indigenous website](#). Information on schooling for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2013, including relevant key performance measures and performance indicators under the Action Plan, is provided in Part 7: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

### Low socio-economic status school communities

All governments have agreed that they have mutual interest in and shared responsibility for improving educational outcomes in low socio-economic status (SES) school communities and in supporting reforms in the way schooling is delivered to those communities.

The [National Partnership for Low Socio-economic Status School Communities](#) aimed to facilitate improvements within targeted schools and communities to improve student learning, engagement and wellbeing and to foster active participation of the community.

This national partnership was scheduled to run from 2008-09 to 2014-15 and included \$1.5 billion in Australian government funding, to be matched by states and territories. Approximately 1,790 schools participated in the program, which ceased in December 2013. Unallocated funds were redirected to needs-based funding arrangements in the Australian Education Act 2013, applying from January 2014.

The needs of students from low socio-economic backgrounds (whether or not they attend a school participating in the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership), as well as those experiencing other forms of educational disadvantage, have also been addressed in the national partnerships for literacy and numeracy and for improving teacher quality. Information on these partnerships is included in Part 2.1: National initiatives and achievements – developing stronger partnerships.

The [National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions](#), which included the Compact with Young Australians and the National Youth Participation Requirement, also addressed outcomes for educationally disadvantaged young Australians. In particular, the Youth Connections Program provided an individualised service to support those most at risk of disengaging from education, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

These initiatives are outlined in Part 2.5: National initiatives and achievements – supporting senior years of schooling and youth transitions.

## National initiatives and achievements

### 2.8 Strengthening accountability and transparency

Both the [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) and the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Education Agreement (NEA) emphasise transparency in reporting educational information and accountability for the use of public resources for education.

This includes reporting to families about student achievement and school performance, as well as to the Australian public on comparative school performance and the performance of Australian schooling overall.

In the Melbourne Declaration, Australian governments committed to working with all school sectors to ensure that public reporting of education:

- focuses on improving performance and student outcomes
- is both locally and nationally relevant
- is timely, consistent and comparable.

Under the NEA (government schools) and the [Schools Assistance Act 2008](#) (non-government schools), all schools must provide plain language student reports to parents and carers, and an annual report on the school's achievements and other contextual information must be made publicly available to their school community.

The NEA performance reporting framework also specifies the provision of:

- streamlined and consistent reports on national progress, including an annual national report on the outcomes of schooling in Australia<sup>19</sup>, covering the Melbourne Declaration and the Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia and the biennial COAG report *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators*
- national reporting on performance of individual schools to inform parents and carers and for evaluation by governments of school performance.

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<sup>19</sup> The *National Report on Schooling in Australia*, that is, this report.

### The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is responsible for implementing the majority of national strategies for accountability and transparency, agreed by education ministers under the Melbourne Declaration.

In terms of data collection and reporting the functions of ACARA<sup>20</sup> are to:

- collect, manage and analyse student assessment data and other data relating to schools and comparative school performance
  - facilitate information sharing arrangements between Australian government bodies in relation to the collection, management and analysis of school data
- publish information relating to school education, including information relating to comparative school performance.

ACARA's priorities under its charter include: the monitoring and review of the *Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia*, which sets out agreed national key performance measures (KPMs) for schooling; producing a comprehensive and authoritative *National Report on Schooling in Australia* related to the *Melbourne Declaration* and national KPMs; developing, or supporting the development of, national definitions and managing the collection, quality assurance and reporting of school information through the *My School* website.

### Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia

In 2012, ACARA, in consultation with jurisdictions, school sectors and relevant government agencies, conducted a review of the *Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia*. This review coincided with a review of the NEA performance reporting framework. The revised [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#), reflects revisions to the NEA indicators and was published on the ACARA website in early 2013 following its approval by education ministers.

### National Report on Schooling in Australia

In 2013, ACARA published the [National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011](#) on behalf of the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC)<sup>21</sup>, and undertook the preparation of the [National Report on Schooling in Australia 2012](#) in consultation with representatives of state and territory education authorities, other government agencies, and non-government school sectors. The 2012 report was the twenty-fourth annual national report on schooling and the fourth to be published by ACARA.

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<sup>20</sup> Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act (2008), Section 6. ACARA's role in developing the Australian Curriculum and administering the National Assessment Program is outlined in Part 2.6 National initiatives and achievements: Promoting world-class curriculum and assessment.

<sup>21</sup> from July 2014 known as Education Council.

### Development of national definitions and measures

At the direction of COAG and SCSEEC, ACARA undertook work on new national definitions and measures for senior secondary outcomes. These measures were intended to supplement existing measures of progress towards COAG targets for the completion of Year 12, or equivalent, using administrative data. This work was undertaken in collaboration with jurisdictions and school sectors.

In 2012, SCSEEC acknowledged the importance to schools, schooling systems and jurisdictional authorities of gathering and analysing school opinion information. Ministers approved the use of agreed student and parent survey items, and made provision for a national survey and data collection tool that schools could use to collect responses.

ACARA worked with Education Services Australia (ESA) and representatives of jurisdictions and the non-government school sectors to develop specifications for this tool. The [School Survey website](#) was developed by ESA on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Education and was launched in August 2013.

Nationally agreed parent, staff and student satisfaction surveys are made available to schools by jurisdictions that opt to use them, either via *School Survey* or through locally available data collection processes. Schools and school systems may elect to use responses to these items as a basis for school satisfaction reporting required from 2014.

ACARA has also published the [Data Standards Manual: Student Background Characteristics](#) and the [National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting](#) to establish nationally consistent parameters for collection and reporting of education information, and to assist schools and school systems in its collection.

### *My School*

ACARA is also responsible for the national data collection on individual schools housed on the [My School website](#). *My School* reporting demonstrates education ministers' commitment to establish fair, public, comparable national reporting on individual school performance and fulfils the requirement under the NEA to report on performance of individual schools to support school evaluation, accountability, resource allocation and policy development.

Launched in January 2010, the *My School* website introduced a new level of transparency and accountability to schooling in Australia by providing extensive information on approximately 9,500 schools.

The website includes a profile of each school, and data on enrolment, attendance, staff numbers and senior secondary outcomes, as well as summary data on performance in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Enhanced versions of *My School*, released in 2011 and 2012, provided additional data on schools' recurrent income and capital expenditure and on Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Schools and depicted students' gains in literacy and numeracy between NAPLAN tests. These data are provided, directly or indirectly, by jurisdictions, non-government school authorities and individual schools.

The *My School* website introduced the index of community socio-educational advantage (ICSEA), developed specifically for the purpose of identifying schools serving similar student populations. This enables students' results on NAPLAN tests to be understood in a fair and meaningful way, and allows schools seeking to improve their students' performance to learn from other schools with statistically similar populations.

The fourth version of *My School* was launched in March 2013, making up to five years of performance data available for each school for the first time.

### National Assessment Program reporting

As well as reporting NAPLAN results for each school on the *My School* website, ACARA is responsible for national reporting to the Australian public on the outcomes of the National Assessment Program. The [NAPLAN National Report 2013](#) is published, along with previous reports for 2008–2012, on the ACARA [National Assessment Program](#) website. The report provides disaggregation of NAPLAN results including breakdowns by state and territory, sex, language background, Indigenous status, geolocation and parental education and occupation.

The ['Results' page](#) of the NAPLAN website allows users interactive access to national NAPLAN data for 2008–2013 and the opportunity to download customised tables, including time series. Results may be selected by state and territory, gender, Indigenous status, language background other than English status, geolocation (metropolitan, provincial, remote and very remote), parental occupation and parental education at each year level and for each domain of the test.

Further information about NAPLAN for parents, schools and students is also available on the NAPLAN website. This includes information on NAPLAN tests and on the individual student reports provided to the parents/carers of all students who participate in the NAPLAN tests.

Public and technical reports for the NAP sample assessments in Science Literacy, Civics and Citizenship, and Information and Communications Technology are also available on the reports page of the National Assessment Program website. The public report on the 2012 NAP – Science Literacy assessment was released in December 2013. Reports for the NAP sample assessment in Civics and Citizenship, conducted in 2013, will be published in 2014.

Further information on the NAP is provided in Part 2.6: National initiatives and achievements – Promoting world-class curriculum and assessment, and Part 5: Student achievement – National Assessment Program.

## Part 3: Schools and schooling

### 3.0 Overview

Within Australia's federal system, constitutional responsibility for school education rests predominantly with the six state and two territory governments.

All states and territories<sup>22</sup> provide for 13 years of formal school education. Primary education, including a preparatory year, lasts for either seven or eight years and is followed by secondary education of six or five years respectively. Typically, schooling commences at age five, is compulsory from age six until age 17 (with provision for alternative study or work arrangements in the senior secondary years) and is completed at age 17 or 18.

The majority – 71 per cent – of schools are government schools, established and administered by state and territory governments through their education departments or authorities. The remaining 29 per cent are non-government schools, made up of Catholic schools (18 per cent) and independent schools (11 per cent). Non-government schools are established and operated under conditions determined by state and territory governments through their registration authorities.

Around 65 per cent of school students are enrolled in government schools; 21 per cent, in Catholic schools; and 14 per cent, in independent schools.

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<sup>22</sup> New South Wales (NSW), Victoria (Vic.), Queensland (Qld), South Australia (SA), Western Australia (WA), Tasmania (Tas.), Northern Territory (NT) and Australian Capital Territory (ACT).

## Schools and schooling

### 3.1 School structures

Differences between Australian states and territories in school structures, and in age requirements for student enrolment have been substantially reduced in recent years. School structures and age requirements are summarised in table 3.1.

In New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, primary education consists of a preparatory year followed by Years 1–6. Secondary education consists of Years 7–12. In Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia, primary education consists of a preparatory year followed by Years 1–7, and secondary education consists of Years 8–12<sup>23</sup>. The preparatory year has different names in the various jurisdictions<sup>24</sup>.

The age at which schooling becomes compulsory is six years in all states and territories, except Western Australia and Tasmania, where it is five years. In practice, most children start the preparatory year of primary school at between four and a half and five and a half years.

All states and territories require young people to participate in schooling until they complete Year 10 and to participate full time in education, training or employment, or a combination of these activities, until the age of 17<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> In Western Australia and Queensland, decisions on whether to transition Year 7 to secondary status are pending. These enrolments are counted as primary enrolments in this report.

<sup>24</sup> These are listed in table 3.1. The Australian Curriculum uses the term ‘Foundation’ for this year of schooling.

<sup>25</sup> Up until 2010, the minimum school leaving age in most jurisdictions was 15 or 16. In 2010, the National Youth Participation Requirement, agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), came into effect across all states and territories, effectively lengthening the period of compulsory education.

Table 3.1 summarises school structures and requirements for school enrolment by jurisdiction.

**Table 3.1 Primary and secondary school structures – minimum age of commencement for Year 1 and minimum school leaving age by state and territory, 2013**

| State/territory              | Preparatory year (first year of school) | Month of and minimum age at commencement for Year 1 | Primary schooling         | Secondary schooling | Minimum school leaving age |
|------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| New South Wales              | Kindergarten                            | January, 5 turning 6 by 31 July                     | Kindergarten<br>Years 1–6 | Years 7–12          | 17 years <sup>(a)</sup>    |
| Victoria                     | Preparatory                             | January, 5 turning 6 by 30 April                    | Preparatory<br>Years 1–6  | Years 7–12          | 17 years <sup>(b)</sup>    |
| Queensland                   | Preparatory                             | January, 5 turning 6 by 30 June                     | Preparatory<br>Years 1–7  | Years 8–12          | 17 years <sup>(c)</sup>    |
| South Australia              | Reception                               | January, 5 years 6 months by 1 January              | Reception<br>Years 1–7    | Years 8–12          | 17 years <sup>(d)</sup>    |
| Western Australia            | Pre-primary                             | January, 5 turning 6 by 30 June                     | Pre-primary<br>Years 1–7  | Years 8–12          | 17 years <sup>(e)</sup>    |
| Tasmania                     | Preparatory                             | January, turning 6 by 1 January                     | Preparatory<br>Years 1–6  | Years 7–12          | 17 years <sup>(f)</sup>    |
| Northern Territory           | Transition                              | January, 5 turning 6 by 30 June                     | Transition<br>Years 1–6   | Years 7–12          | 17 years <sup>(g)</sup>    |
| Australian Capital Territory | Kindergarten                            | January, 5 turning 6 by 30 April                    | Kindergarten<br>Years 1–6 | Years 7–12          | 17 years <sup>(h)</sup>    |

(a) From 2010, all NSW students have been required to complete Year 10. After Year 10, students must be in school, in approved education or training, in full-time employment or in a combination of training and employment until they turn 17 years old.

(b) From 2010, all Victorian students have been required to complete Year 10 and remain in some form of education, training or employment until the age of 17.

(c) From 2006, Queensland students have been required to participate in 'learning or earning' for two years after completing compulsory schooling, or until they turn 17 or until they attain a Senior Secondary Certificate or a Certificate III (or higher) vocational qualification.

(d) From 2007, South Australian students who have turned 16 have been required to remain at school or undertake an approved learning program until they turn 17 or gain a Senior Secondary Certificate or equivalent or a Certificate II (or higher) vocational qualification.

(e) From 2008, Western Australian students have been required to remain at school or undertake an approved combination of training and employment until the end of the year in which they turn 17.

(f) From 2008, Tasmanian students have been required to continue participating in education, training or full-time employment until they turn 17.

(g) From January 2010, it has been compulsory for all Northern Territory students to complete Year 10 and then participate in education, training or employment until they turn 17.

(h) From 2010, ACT students have been required to complete Year 10 and then participate full time in education, training or employment until they complete Year 12 or equivalent, or reach age 17.

Sources: ABS, Schools Australia, 2013; state and territory education authorities.

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Within the overall structure of primary and secondary education, there is further scope for variation in the structure of individual schools. Both government and non-government schools may be primary only, secondary only or combined primary and secondary. Secondary schools may accommodate the full age range of secondary students or be divided into junior and senior campuses. In some jurisdictions, separate Year 11 and 12 institutions may be known as colleges or senior secondary schools.

Government and some non-government school authorities operate special schools for students with disabilities and other special needs, while in some jurisdictions, a high proportion of students with special needs are integrated into mainstream schools. (See Part 10: Glossary for definition of special schools.)

Students who are geographically isolated, or who are otherwise unable to attend a local school, may study through distance education schools or centres established by state and territory education departments. Distance education is conducted through a variety of means including print and web-based materials and online and satellite technologies. Boarding facilities are available at some schools, mainly in the non-government sectors<sup>26</sup>.

Each state and territory also has an early childhood education sector that is separate from primary and secondary schooling<sup>27</sup>, although early childhood centres are often attached to or accommodated in primary schools. In general, data on early childhood education are excluded from this report.

Data on secondary education provided by adult learning institutions such as institutes of technical and further education (TAFE) are also excluded from this report, except for VET in Schools programs undertaken by secondary school students.

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26. Students of compulsory school age may also be home schooled if they have met the criteria set down by the relevant state or territory education authority. However, as these students are not enrolled in a school, they are outside the scope of the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) and are therefore excluded from data in this report.

27. In some jurisdictions, part-time programs that precede the preparatory year and are conducted in primary schools (for example, Kindergarten in Western Australia) are considered to be a part of schooling. However, these programs are outside the scope of the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) and data on them are therefore not included in the data in this report.

## Schools and schooling

### 3.2 School numbers

In 2013 there were 9,393 schools in Australia<sup>28</sup>. This total included primary, secondary, combined (primary and secondary) and special schools, across government (71 per cent) and non-government (29 per cent) school sectors. (See Part 10: Glossary for definitions of school levels, types and sectors.)

Of the total number of schools, 71 per cent were administered by state and territory governments, 18 per cent identified as having Catholic affiliation, and 11 per cent were classified as independent. Most independent schools provide a religious-based education or promote a particular educational philosophy.

Seventy-seven per cent of primary schools, 74 per cent of secondary schools and 76 per cent of special schools were in the government sector. The Catholic sector accounted for 20 per cent of primary schools and 22 per cent of secondary schools, while 50 per cent of all combined schools were in the independent sector.

The number and proportion of schools by school type and school sector in 2013 is shown in table 3.2 and figure 3.1.

**Table 3.2** Number and proportion<sup>(a)</sup> of schools by school type and school sector, Australia, 2013

| School type  | School sector |             |              |             |             |             |              |              |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
|              | Government    |             | Catholic     |             | Independent |             | Total        |              |
|              | No.           | %           | No.          | %           | No.         | %           | No.          | %            |
| Primary      | 4,802         | 51.1        | 1,226        | 13.1        | 228         | 2.4         | 6,256        | 66.6         |
| Secondary    | 1,025         | 10.9        | 303          | 3.2         | 57          | 0.6         | 1,385        | 14.7         |
| Combined     | 505           | 5.4         | 155          | 1.7         | 661         | 7.0         | 1,321        | 14.1         |
| Special      | 329           | 3.5         | 33           | 0.4         | 69          | 0.7         | 431          | 4.6          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>6,661</b>  | <b>70.9</b> | <b>1,717</b> | <b>18.3</b> | <b>1015</b> | <b>10.8</b> | <b>9,393</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Notes:

Primary education comprises a pre-Year 1 grade followed by Years 1–6 in NSW, Vic., Tas., NT and ACT. In Qld., SA and WA, primary education comprises a pre-Year 1 grade followed by Years 1–7.

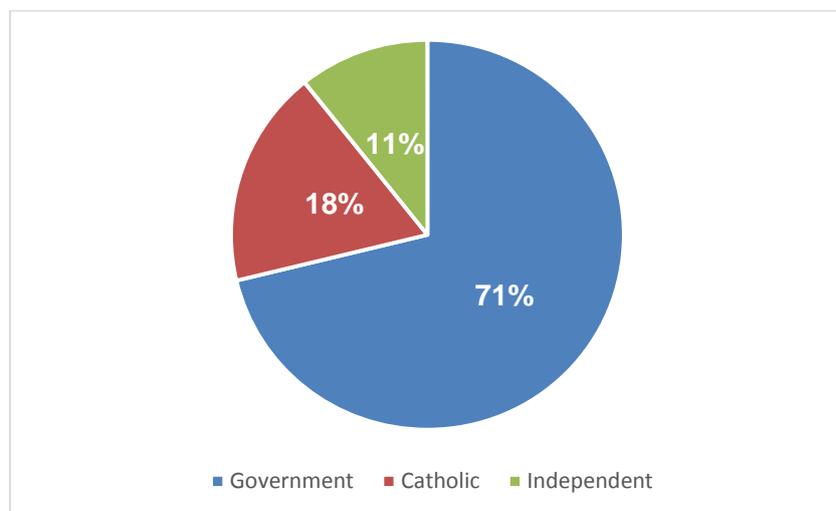
(a) Proportion of all schools

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, Schools, Australia, 2013.

See also Additional statistics, table 1.

<sup>28</sup> As at the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) census, August 2013.

**Figure 3.1. Proportion of schools by sector, Australia, 2013**



Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, Schools, Australia, 2013

For the number of schools by school type and school sector by state and territory 2013, see Part 9: Additional statistics, table 1.

The total number of schools in Australia fell from 9,427 in 2012 to 9,393 in 2013, a net fall of 34. This continued a trend in recent years, driven mainly by school amalgamations<sup>29</sup>.

School numbers have fallen by 136 (1.4 per cent) over the period 2009–2013. This was made up of falls of 2.1 per cent in the number of government schools and 0.7 per cent in the number of independent schools, which were partially offset by a rise of 0.7 per cent in the number of Catholic schools. The numbers and proportions of schools in the three sectors within this period are shown in table 3.3 and figure 3.2.

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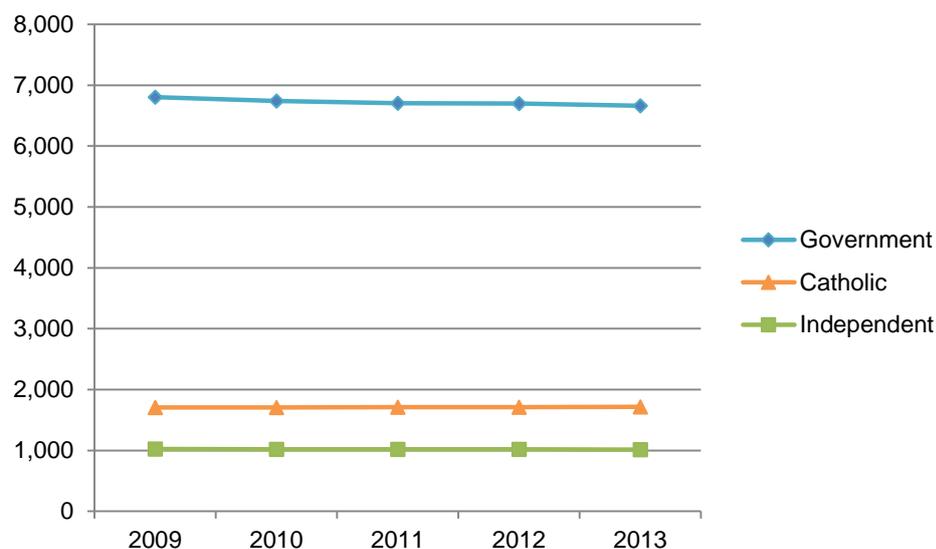
<sup>29</sup> ABS, Schools Australia 2013, Summary.

**Table 3.3** Number and proportion of schools by school sector, Australia, 2009–2013

| Year | School sector |      |          |      |             |      |       |       |
|------|---------------|------|----------|------|-------------|------|-------|-------|
|      | Government    |      | Catholic |      | Independent |      | Total |       |
|      | No.           | %    | No.      | %    | No.         | %    | No.   | %     |
| 2009 | 6,802         | 71.4 | 1,705    | 17.9 | 1,022       | 10.7 | 9,529 | 100.0 |
| 2010 | 6,743         | 71.2 | 1,708    | 18.0 | 1,017       | 10.7 | 9,468 | 100.0 |
| 2011 | 6,705         | 71.1 | 1,710    | 18.1 | 1,020       | 10.8 | 9,435 | 100.0 |
| 2012 | 6,697         | 71.0 | 1,713    | 18.2 | 1,017       | 10.8 | 9,427 | 100.0 |
| 2013 | 6,661         | 70.9 | 1,717    | 18.3 | 1,015       | 10.8 | 9,393 | 100.0 |

Source: ABS Cat. No. 4221.0, Schools, Australia, 2013

See also Additional statistics, table 1

**Figure 3.2.** Number of schools by school sector, Australia, 2009–2013

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, Schools, Australia, 2013.

Some caution is required when interpreting time series for numbers of schools, as changes from year to year may be due to administrative or structural changes in school systems or individual schools, as much as to changes in school populations. For example, primary schools and secondary schools may be amalgamated to create combined schools or secondary schools may be split to create separate junior and senior secondary schools.

## Schools and schooling

### 3.3 Student numbers

#### Enrolments by school level and sector

In total, nearly 3.65 million individual students were enrolled in Australian schools in 2013. Of these, approximately 2.13 million (58.4 per cent) were primary school students, and approximately 1.52 million (41.6 per cent) were secondary school students. This difference is mainly due to schooling structures, in which primary schooling comprises more year groups/cohorts than secondary schooling. The number of students by school level and sector for 2013 are summarised in table 3.4.

**Table 3.4** Number and proportion of students (full-time plus part-time) enrolled in schools by school level and school sector, Australia, 2013

| School level     | School sector    |             |                |             |                |             |                  |              |
|------------------|------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|
|                  | Government       |             | Catholic       |             | Independent    |             | Total            |              |
|                  | No.              | %           | No.            | %           | No.            | %           | No.              | %            |
| Primary          | 1,467,191        | 69.0        | 409,939        | 19.3        | 250,600        | 11.8        | 2,127,730        | 58.4         |
| Junior secondary | 614,898          | 59.2        | 242,586        | 23.4        | 181,421        | 17.5        | 1,038,905        | 28.5         |
| Senior secondary | 292,935          | 61.2        | 96,534         | 20.2        | 89,415         | 18.7        | 478,884          | 13.1         |
| Total secondary  | 907,833          | 59.8        | 339,120        | 22.3        | 270,836        | 17.8        | 1,517,789        | 41.6         |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>2,375,024</b> | <b>65.2</b> | <b>749,059</b> | <b>20.5</b> | <b>521,436</b> | <b>14.3</b> | <b>3,645,519</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Primary education comprises a pre-Year 1 grade, followed by Years 1–6 in NSW, Vic., Tas., NT and ACT. In Qld., SA and WA, primary education comprises a pre-Year 1 grade followed by Years 1–7.

Junior secondary comprises the years from commencement of secondary school to Year 10, including ungraded secondary.

Senior secondary comprises Years 11 and 12.

Students attending special schools are allocated to either primary or secondary school on the basis of grade or school level, where identified. Where the grade or school level is not identified, students are allocated to primary or secondary level of education according to the typical age level in each state or territory. See Part 10: Glossary for definition of special schools.

Percentage columns for each sector show the proportion of students at each level enrolled in that sector. The total percentage row shows the proportion of all students enrolled in each sector. The total percentage column shows the proportions of all students enrolled at each level. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

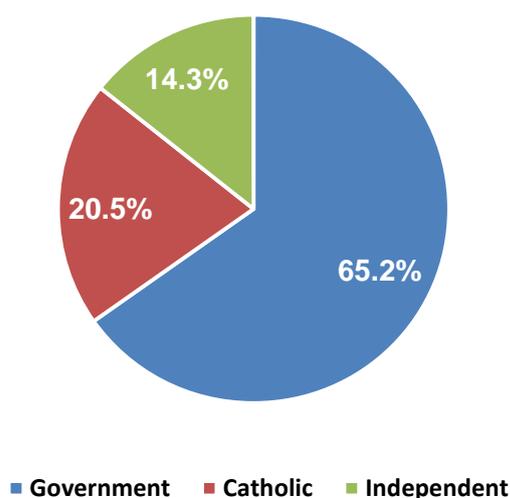
Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013.

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 10.

Part 9: Additional statistics, table 10 reports the number of students in 2013 by full-time and part-time status, and by state and territory, as well as by school level and sector.

As shown in table 3.4 and figure 3.3, almost two-thirds (65.2 per cent) of Australian school students in 2013 were enrolled in government schools, approximately one-fifth (20.5 per cent) of students were enrolled in Catholic schools and the remainder (14.3 per cent) attended independent schools.

**Figure 3.3** Proportion of students (full-time plus part-time) enrolled in schools by sector, Australia, 2013 (%)



Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013.

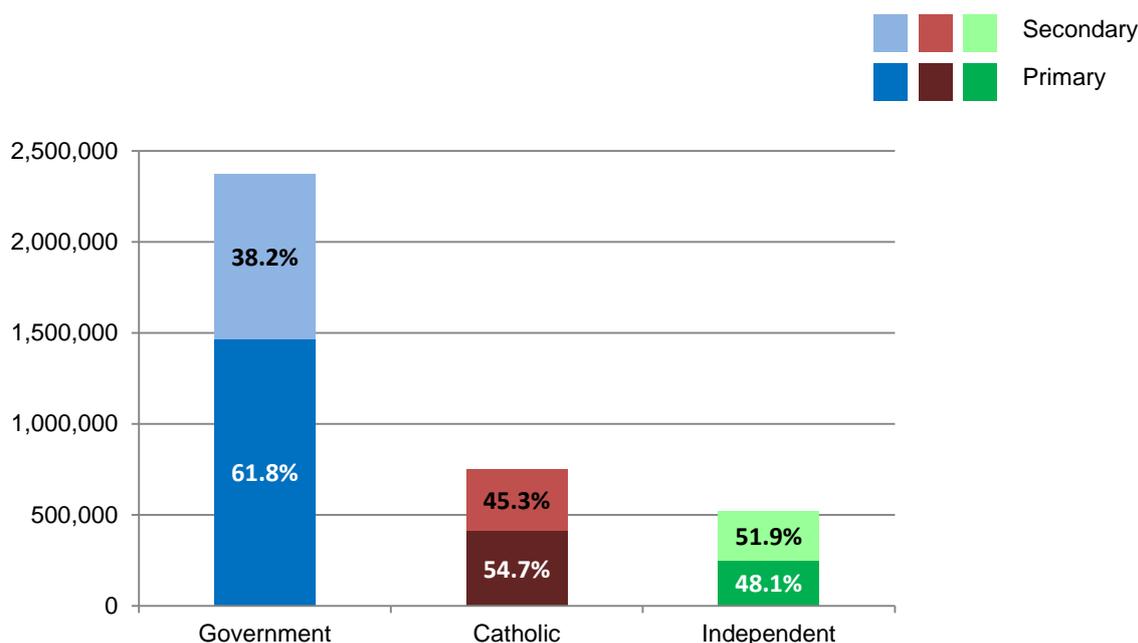
However, as shown in table 3.4, the proportions of students enrolled in each school sector differed between levels of education. The proportion of primary students enrolled in government schools (69.0 per cent) was higher than the proportion of junior secondary students (59.8 per cent). The proportion of primary students enrolled in non-government schools (31.0 per cent) was lower than the proportion of junior secondary students (40.2 per cent).

This implies a movement of students from the government to the non-government sectors, probably between primary and secondary schooling. However, as the movement of individual students between sectors and over time is currently not tracked, it is not clear to what extent this is the net effect of larger student movements among the three sectors. The enrolment of overseas students in independent secondary schools may also contribute to this difference.

The higher proportion of senior secondary students in the independent sector, shown in table 3.4, is consistent with higher Year 10–12 apparent retention rates for this sector. Apparent progression rates and apparent retention rates are discussed in Part 4.2: Progression and retention.

As shown in figure 3.4, more government and Catholic school students were enrolled in primary years than in secondary years, while most independent school students were secondary students.

**Figure 3.4** Number of students (full-time plus part-time) enrolled by school level and sector, Australia, 2013



Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia, 2013*

The numbers of students enrolled in Australian schools grew by 160,715 in the period 2009–2013 and by 55,533 between 2012 and 2013. Enrolments in all three school sectors have risen over the last four years, with growth in enrolments split evenly between government and non-government schools. Growth has been proportionately higher in the non-government sectors, leading to a slight shift in the proportions of total enrolments per school sector over the period 2009–2013, but with little change since 2011. Table 3.5 and figure 3.5 summarise these data.

**Table 3.5** Number and proportion of students (full-time plus part-time) by school sector, Australia, 2009–2013

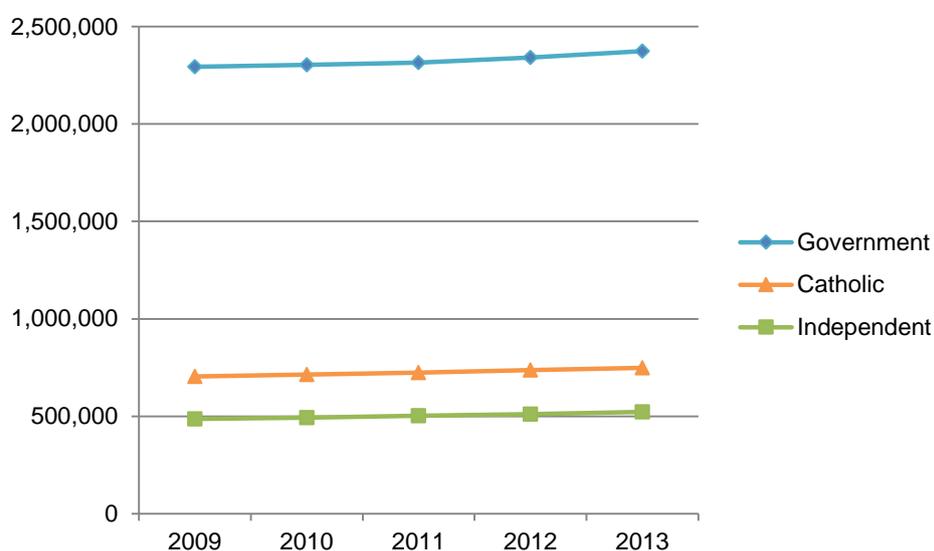
| Year | Sector     |      |          |      |             |      |           |       |
|------|------------|------|----------|------|-------------|------|-----------|-------|
|      | Government |      | Catholic |      | Independent |      | Total     |       |
|      | No.        | %    | No.      | %    | No.         | %    | No.       | %     |
| 2009 | 2,294,638  | 65.8 | 704,837  | 20.2 | 485,329     | 13.9 | 3,484,804 | 100.0 |
| 2010 | 2,304,259  | 65.6 | 713,911  | 20.3 | 492,705     | 14.0 | 3,510,875 | 100.0 |
| 2011 | 2,315,253  | 65.4 | 724,594  | 20.5 | 501,962     | 14.2 | 3,541,809 | 100.0 |
| 2012 | 2,342,379  | 65.2 | 736,595  | 20.5 | 511,012     | 14.2 | 3,589,986 | 100.0 |
| 2013 | 2,375,024  | 65.2 | 749,059  | 20.5 | 521,436     | 14.3 | 3,645,519 | 100.0 |

Notes:

Data are drawn from the most recent ABS series and may differ from those in previous publications.

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 10.

**Figure 3.5** Number of students enrolled (full-time plus part-time) by school sector, Australia, 2009–13

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

Data on full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolments by state and territory, by school sector and by level of education, are included in Part 9: Additional statistics, table 12 and table 13.

## Schools and schooling

### 3.4 Staff

#### Staff numbers

In 2013 there were 261,585 full-time equivalent (FTE)<sup>30</sup> teaching staff across primary and secondary schooling in Australia. The number of FTE teaching staff by school sector, school level and sex is shown in table 3.6.

**Table 3.6 Full-time equivalent (FTE) of teaching staff by school sector, school level and sex, Australia, 2013**

| School sector      | Primary       |                |                | Secondary     |               |                | Total         |                |                |
|--------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
|                    | Males         | Females        | Persons        | Males         | Females       | Persons        | Males         | Females        | Persons        |
| Government         | 17,755        | 77,372         | 95,126         | 29,205        | 43,572        | 72,777         | 46,959        | 120,944        | 167,903        |
| Non-government     | 8,056         | 32,835         | 40,891         | 22,612        | 30,179        | 52,790         | 30,668        | 63,014         | 93,682         |
| Catholic           | 4,147         | 19,730         | 23,877         | 11,013        | 15,638        | 26,651         | 15,160        | 35,367         | 50,527         |
| Independent        | 3,909         | 13,105         | 17,015         | 11,599        | 14,541        | 26,140         | 15,508        | 27,646         | 43,154         |
| <b>All schools</b> | <b>25,811</b> | <b>110,206</b> | <b>136,017</b> | <b>51,817</b> | <b>73,751</b> | <b>125,568</b> | <b>77,628</b> | <b>183,957</b> | <b>261,585</b> |

Notes:

Staff employed in special schools are allocated to either primary or secondary education on a pro-rata basis. Components may not add to totals due to rounding.

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 2 and table 3

Australia's teaching workforce was predominantly female, with women accounting for 70 per cent of FTE teachers, and men making up 30 per cent. The difference was most pronounced at the primary level, where FTE teaching staff was made up of 81 per cent females and only 19 per cent males. In secondary schooling, the balance between male and female teachers was closer, but females still accounted for 59 per cent of the total.

<sup>30</sup> At the time of the schools census in August 2013. In the calculation of numbers of full-time equivalent (FTE) teaching staff, a part-time teacher is counted as a proportion of a full-time teacher according to the time spent in teaching activities compared to a full-time teacher in the same school system or school. (See Part 10: Glossary for definitions of FTE and teaching staff.)

Across Australia, 64.2 per cent of FTE teachers were employed by the government school sector, 19.3 per cent by the Catholic school sector and 16.5 per cent by the independent sector.

The numbers of FTE teaching staff by school sector from 2009 to 2013 are shown in table 3.7. Between 2009 and 2013, the total number of FTE teaching staff grew by 12,389 or 5.0 per cent. The growth in teaching staff numbers over the period was concentrated in non-government schools with 7,052 additional teachers (a rise of 8.1 per cent), compared to 5,337 (a rise of 3.3 per cent) in government schools.

**Table 3.7 Full-time equivalent (FTE) of teaching staff by school sector, Australia, 2009–2013**

| Sector             | 2009           | 2010           | 2011           | 2012           | 2013           |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Government         | 162,566        | 163,697        | 165,272        | 167,152        | 167,903        |
| Non-government     | 86,630         | 87,724         | 89,838         | 91,834         | 93,682         |
| Catholic           | 46,807         | 47,391         | 48,393         | 49,427         | 50,527         |
| Independent        | 39,823         | 40,333         | 41,445         | 42,407         | 43,154         |
| <b>All schools</b> | <b>249,196</b> | <b>251,421</b> | <b>255,110</b> | <b>258,986</b> | <b>261,585</b> |

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 3

### Student–teacher ratios

The student–teacher ratio is calculated as the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students per FTE teaching staff. A lower student–teacher ratio means there is a smaller number of students per teacher. However, while lower student–teacher ratios would tend to allow smaller class sizes, ratios are not, by themselves, reliable indicators of class size. Average student–teacher ratios do not take into account the different requirements of different age groups / school years, of special needs students or of different subjects, especially in secondary schools. Nor do they reflect other administrative or specialist duties undertaken by teaching staff. These factors help to explain the consistently higher average student–teacher ratios in primary than secondary schooling.

Table 3.8 summarises average student–teacher ratios in Australia in 2013 across the three school sectors.

**Table 3.8 Full-time equivalent (FTE) student–teacher ratios, by school sector and school level, Australia, 2013**

| Sector             | Primary | Secondary | All schools |
|--------------------|---------|-----------|-------------|
| Government         | 15.4    | 12.4      | 14.1        |
| Non-government     | 16.1    | 11.5      | 13.6        |
| Catholic           | 17.2    | 12.7      | 14.8        |
| Independent        | 14.7    | 10.4      | 12.1        |
| <b>All schools</b> | 15.6    | 12.0      | 13.9        |

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 4

For all Australian schools, the average FTE student–teacher ratio in 2013 was 13.9:1, with an overall difference of 0.5 FTE between government schools (14.1) and non-government schools (13.6). However, within the non-government sector, student–teacher ratios for secondary classes in independent schools were noticeably lower than the overall average.

At the primary level in 2013, the average FTE student–teacher ratio was 15.6:1 compared to 12.0:1 at the secondary level, and there were higher ratios for primary than secondary school classes in all three sectors. Overall, the student–teacher ratio was lower in government schools than non-government schools at the primary level, but higher at the secondary level.

As shown in table 3.9, the average student–teacher ratio across all schools of 13.9 students per teacher in 2013 was the same as in 2009.

**Table 3.9 Full-time equivalent (FTE) student–teacher ratios, by school sector and level of education, Australia, 2009–2013**

| School sector and level | 2009        | 2010        | 2011        | 2012        | 2013        |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Government primary      | 15.5        | 15.4        | 15.3        | 15.2        | 15.4        |
| Government secondary    | 12.3        | 12.3        | 12.2        | 12.3        | 12.4        |
| Catholic primary        | 17.6        | 17.6        | 17.5        | 17.4        | 17.2        |
| Catholic secondary      | 12.8        | 12.8        | 12.8        | 12.7        | 12.7        |
| Independent primary     | 14.8        | 14.9        | 14.8        | 14.6        | 14.7        |
| Independent secondary   | 10.6        | 10.5        | 10.4        | 10.3        | 10.4        |
| <b>All schools</b>      | <b>13.9</b> | <b>13.9</b> | <b>13.8</b> | <b>13.8</b> | <b>13.9</b> |

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 4

### International comparisons

On average, in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries in 2012 (the latest year available), there were 15 students for every teacher at primary school level and 13 students per teacher at secondary school level. Most, but not all, OECD countries conformed to the pattern of higher student–teacher ratios for primary than for secondary schooling. Australia’s average student–teacher ratio in 2012 of 16:1 (15.5) for primary schooling was slightly above the OECD average. Australia’s average student–teacher ratio of 12:1 (12.0) for secondary schooling was lower than the OECD average.

Student–teacher ratios in Australia were lower than in the United Kingdom (21 primary and 16 secondary), Japan (18 and 13), Germany (16 and 14) and Korea (18 and 17), but higher than ratios in Spain (13 and 10) and Norway (10 and 10)<sup>31</sup>. Australia's student–teacher ratios were lower than the average for the Group of 20 (G20) nations (19 primary and 15 secondary) for 2012.

A comparison of student–teacher ratios in 2012 in OECD countries and other G20 nations is included as table 5 in Part 9: Additional statistics.

<sup>31</sup> Source: OECD, *Education at a Glance 2014: OECD Indicators*, table D2.2 based on UNESCO Institute for Statistics (World Education Indicators Programme)

## Part 4: Student participation

### 4.0 Overview

Goal 1 of the [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) is that Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence. The first condition set down for achieving this goal is that 'all Australian governments and all school sectors must provide all students with access to high-quality schooling that is free from discrimination...'<sup>32</sup>

The extent to which young people access and participate in schooling is one component of measuring progress towards this goal.

Participation in schooling is also central to the first agreed outcome of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Education Agreement (NEA) that all children are engaged in and benefiting from schooling.

Two measures of participation in schooling specified as key performance measures for schooling in the [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#) are:

- enrolment: the proportion of children enrolled in school
- attendance: the rate at which children attend school.

Attendance at school is also a performance indicator within the reporting framework of the NEA, and the number of students enrolled in school, while no longer a performance indicator<sup>33</sup>, remains as an output of the NEA<sup>34</sup>.

This section provides data and commentary on enrolment and attendance in Australian schools in 2013, including these performance measures. It also includes data and commentary on the apparent progression and retention of students through secondary school.

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<sup>32</sup> Melbourne Declaration, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> Enrolment in school was deleted as a performance indicator from the revised NEA of July 2012.

<sup>34</sup> National Education Agreement, July 2012, p. 5.

## Student participation

### 4.1 Enrolment

The proportion of school-aged children who are enrolled in school is a measure of the reach and coverage of Australian schooling and of the extent to which young people have access to school education. It is specified as a key performance measure (KPM) in the [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#).

This KPM is specified as the number of students aged 6–15 years enrolled in school, expressed as a proportion of the 6–15-year-old population. KPM 1(a) for the period 2009–2013 is reported in table 4.1.

#### Key performance measure 1(a)

Proportion of children aged 6–15 years who are enrolled in school

**Table 4.1** Number and proportion of the population aged 6–15 years enrolled in school, 2009–2013

|   | 2009      | 2010      | 2011      | 2012      | 2013      |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| School enrolments, Australia (6–15 years) <sup>(a)</sup>                      | 2,748,736 | 2,755,893 | 2,768,177 | 2,801,751 | 2,844,983 |
| Population, Australia (6–15 years) <sup>(b)(c)</sup>                          | 2,746,766 | 2,755,102 | 2,769,311 | 2,803,166 | 2,837,141 |
| Proportion of 6–15-year-olds enrolled in school, Australia (%) <sup>(d)</sup> | 100.07    | 100.03    | 99.96     | 99.95     | 100.28    |

(a) School data include students who cross state and territory boundaries to attend school. Includes children enrolled full time or part time. Jervis Bay enrolments and Norfolk Island enrolments are included. 'Other territory' enrolments are excluded.

(b) Estimates for the total population are sourced from ABS, Cat. No. 3101.0, *Australian Demographic Statistics*, 30 June 2014. The Australia total includes 'other territories' including Jervis Bay and Norfolk Island.

(c) Estimates for the total population of 6–15-year-olds for, 2009, 2010 and 2011 have been rebased to the 2011 Census of Population and Housing.

(d) Proportions are calculated using a numerator from the National Schools Statistics Collection (published as *Schools Australia*) and a denominator from Estimated Resident Population data (published in *Australian Demographic Statistics*). When developing an indicator using data from different sources, significant data comparability issues can emerge that will affect the accuracy of the indicator. These differences can have unexpected effects such as producing an estimate greater than 100 per cent of the population.

Sources: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia, 2013*; ABS, Cat. No. 3101.0, *Australian Demographic Statistics, Australian States and Territories*, June 2014.

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 9.

The rate of enrolment in schooling of 6–15-year-olds approximates 100 per cent in each of the five years (2009–2013) for which this measure is reported, reflecting the compulsory nature of schooling for this age group.

However, it is acknowledged that the KPM is an approximation, not an exact measure, of the rate of participation in schooling by students of compulsory school age/year level.

First, KPM 1(a) excludes some students for whom schooling is compulsory. Participation in school education is compulsory for Australian children in all states and territories at least from the age of six until they complete Year 10. Participation full time in some form of education, training or employment, but not necessarily schooling, is mandatory until the age of 17<sup>35</sup>. The age range specified in KPM 1(a) of 6–15 inclusive (as of 1 July in the reporting year) captures nearly all students of compulsory school age/year level. However, it excludes those students who were 16 years old and over by midway through the calendar year but had not yet completed Year 10<sup>36</sup>.

Second, the numerator and denominator for KPM 1(a) are drawn from different types of data source. The count of 6–15-year-old school students that forms the numerator of the KPM is administrative data drawn from the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), collected in the annual schools census and published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as *Schools Australia*. The denominator for the 6–15-year-old population is drawn from the Estimated Residential Population (ERP) for this age group, which is estimated by projection from the five-yearly Australian Census of Population and Housing. As estimates, ERP figures are subject to error and to periodic revision. As a result, and because of data comparability issues between the two data sets, proportions may exceed 100 per cent.

For rates of enrolment for 6–15-year-olds by state and territory, see Part 9: Additional statistics, table 9.

In 2013, students in the 6–15 years age group made up 78 per cent of total enrolments in schools. The remaining 22 per cent (approximately 801 thousand students) were either under six, or 16 and over at 1 July 2013, the age reference date for the annual schools census of August 2013.

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<sup>35</sup> This has applied since the implementation of the National Youth Participation Requirement across all states and territories in 2010. (See table 3.1: Primary and secondary school structures, minimum age of commencement for Year 1 and minimum school leaving age by state and territory, 2013 for a summary of enrolment requirements in each jurisdiction.)

<sup>36</sup> The age at which students typically complete Year 10 varies between jurisdictions because of historical differences in requirements for school commencement, but for most students it is 15 or 16.

## Student participation

### 4.2 Progression and retention

Increased student progression and retention to Year 10 and Year 12 (or approved alternative) are in line with the policy intent of Australian governments in establishing the National Youth Participation Requirement<sup>37</sup>.

Apparent grade progression rates estimate the progression of students from one school grade/year level to the next. An apparent progression rate is calculated as the number of full-time students in a designated grade/year level as a percentage of the number enrolled in the grade/year level below in the previous calendar year.

Apparent retention rates estimate the progression of students through school over several calendar years and several grades/year levels, from the beginning to the end of a stage/level of schooling; for example, retention from Year 7–8 to Year 10, or across stages; for example, from Year 10 to Year 12. An apparent retention rate is calculated as the number of full-time students in a designated grade/year level as a percentage of their respective cohort group in a base year.

Progression and retention rates are 'apparent' as they are based on aggregate enrolment data and do not record the progression of individual students. As such, they do not take into account that some students may repeat a grade or be promoted (moving between cohorts), or that new students may join a cohort through immigration. Apparent retention rates do not take account of changes in the cohort that may have occurred in the years between the base year and the designated reporting year.

When apparent progression and retention rates are disaggregated, for example, by state and territory or by school sector, they are less meaningful, as they do not take into account movements of students between jurisdictions or sectors. National apparent progression rates (but not apparent retention rates) for Australia include a weighting for the proportion of students in each state/territory and are adjusted to factor in changes in the population<sup>38</sup>. Apparent progression rates reported in table 4.2 have been rebased to the 2011 Census of Population and Housing.

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<sup>37</sup> The National Youth Participation Requirement includes the mandatory requirement for all young people to participate in schooling until they complete Year 10, and the requirement to participate full-time in education, training or employment, or a combination of these activities, until the age of 17. These were implemented in Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania between 2006 and 2008 and in New South Wales, Victoria, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory in 2010.

<sup>1 38</sup> For more information, see ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013, Explanatory Notes; ABS, Cat. No.4221 *Schools, Australia*, [Alternative Measures of Engagement in Secondary Education, 2009](#)

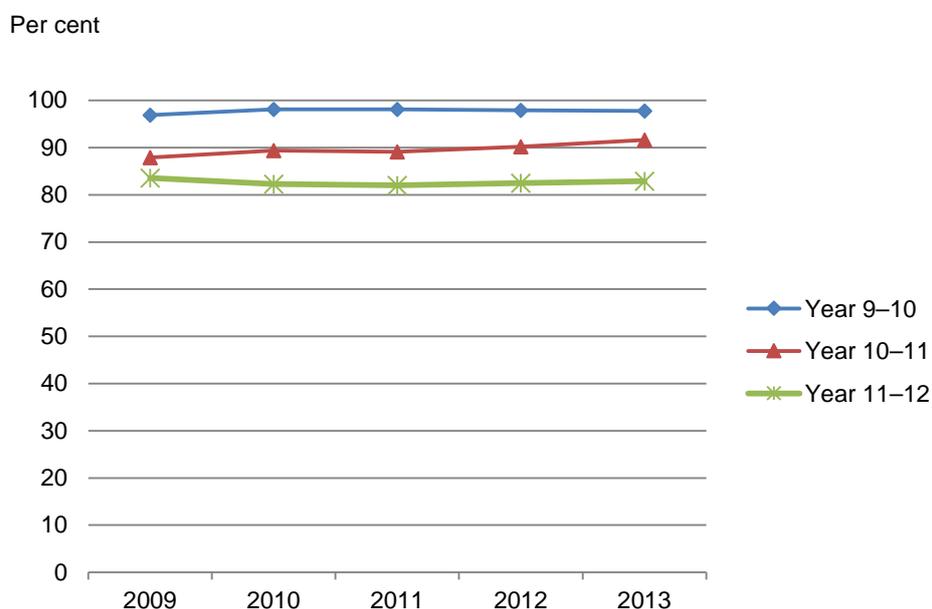
**Table 4.2 Apparent progression rates<sup>(a)</sup>, Year 9 to Year 10, Year 10 to Year 11 and Year 11 to Year 12, Australia, 2009–2013 (%)**

| Australia     | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Year 9 to 10  | 96.9 | 98.1 | 98.1 | 97.9 | 97.8 |
| Year 10 to 11 | 87.9 | 89.4 | 89.1 | 90.2 | 91.6 |
| Year 11 to 12 | 83.6 | 82.3 | 82.0 | 82.5 | 82.9 |

(a) Apparent progression rates are calculated using Estimated Residential Population (ERP) data based on the Census of Population and Housing. Rates for years prior to 2010 are calculated using ERP data based on the 2006 census. Rates for 2010 onwards are calculated using ERP data based on the 2011 census.

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

These data are illustrated in figure 4.1.

**Figure 4.1 Apparent progression rates, Year 9 to Year 10, Year 10 to Year 11 and Year 11 to Year 12, Australia, 2009–2013**

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

As noted in previous reports, this series records upward movements in apparent progression rates from Year 9 to Year 10, from Year 10 to Year 11 and from Year 11 to Year 12<sup>39</sup>, following the implementation of strengthened education participation requirements for 15- and 16-year-olds.

Data on apparent progression rates in each state and territory are available in the ABS publication [Schools, Australia](#) (table 65a).

The effects of strengthened participation requirements for older school students are also observable in rising retention rates over the last five years, especially for the government school sector.

Table 4.3 and figure 4.2 illustrate national apparent retention rates by school sector from the first year of secondary school (Year 7 or Year 8, depending on jurisdiction) to Year 10 over the period 2009–2013. (Detail from figure 4.2 is also shown below the main graph.)

**Table 4.3** Apparent retention rates, Year 7–8 to Year 10 by sector, Australia, 2009–2013 (%)

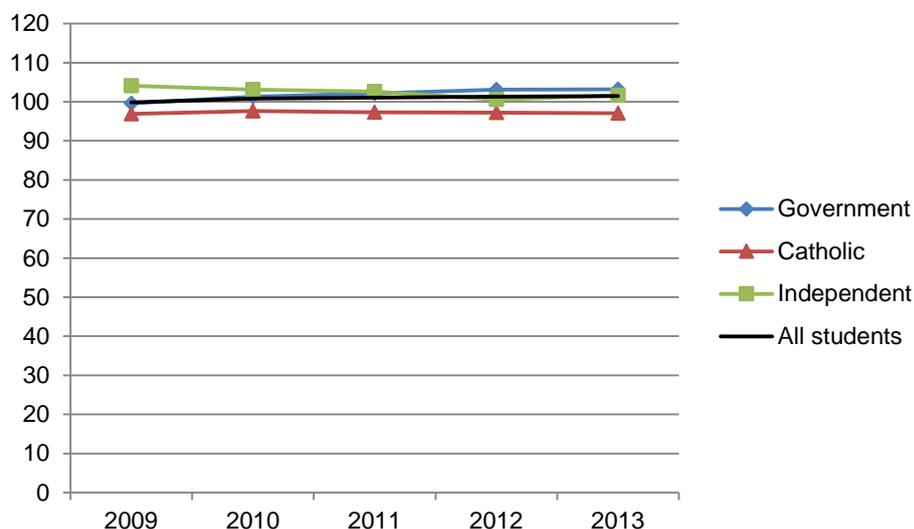
| Australia    | 2009  | 2010  | 2011  | 2012  | 2013  |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Government   | 99.6  | 101.3 | 102.1 | 103.1 | 103.2 |
| Catholic     | 96.9  | 97.6  | 97.3  | 97.2  | 97.1  |
| Independent  | 104.1 | 103.1 | 102.6 | 100.6 | 101.6 |
| All students | 99.8  | 100.8 | 101.1 | 101.3 | 101.5 |

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

<sup>39</sup> The effect on Year 11 and 12 enrolments will also depend on the proportion of students who pursue approved alternative pathways to senior schooling following Year 10.

**Figure 4.2 Apparent retention rates, Year 7/8 to Year 10 by sector, Australia, 2009–2013**

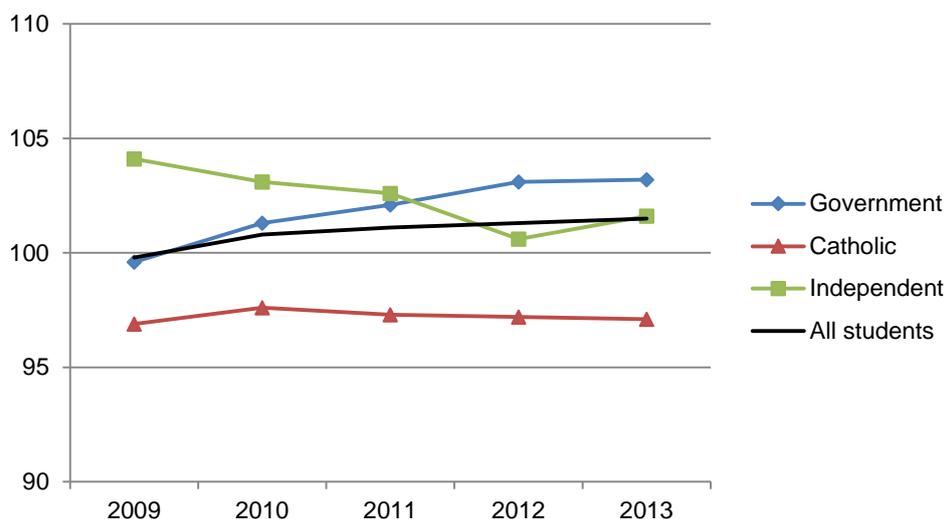
Per cent



Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

**Figure 4.2 (Detail)** Data are identical to above – the vertical axis has been truncated for enhanced visibility

Per cent



During this period, the apparent retention rate from Year 7/8 to Year 10 for all students rose from 99.8 per cent to 101.5 per cent. (Percentages exceeding 100 per cent for national apparent retention rates are possible because of net immigration to Australia of secondary students.) This reflected rises in the apparent retention rate in the government school sector,

which followed participation in Year 10 becoming compulsory in the two most populous states, New South Wales and Victoria. The fall-off, in 2009 and 2010, in the apparent Year 7/8 to Year 10 retention rate in the independent school sector may be partly due to a dip in the number of overseas students enrolled<sup>40</sup>.

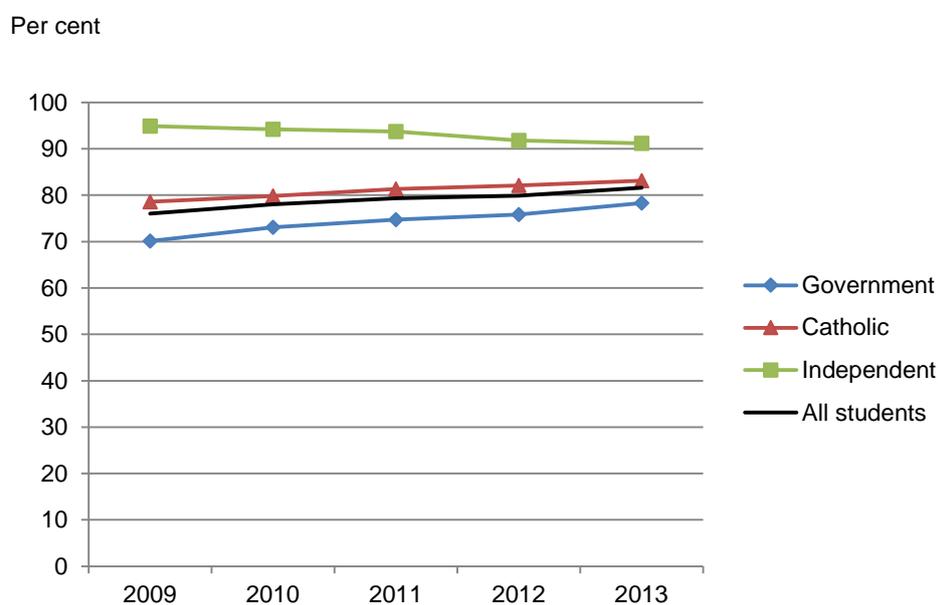
Table 4.4 and figure 4.3 describe national apparent retention rates from the first year of secondary school (Year 7 or Year 8, depending on jurisdiction) to Year 12 over the period 2009–2013.

**Table 4.4 Apparent retention rates, Year 7/8 to Year 12 by sector, Australia, 2009–2013 (%)**

| Australia    | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Government   | 70.1 | 73.1 | 74.7 | 75.8 | 78.3 |
| Catholic     | 78.6 | 79.8 | 81.3 | 82.1 | 83.1 |
| Independent  | 94.9 | 94.2 | 93.7 | 91.8 | 91.2 |
| All students | 76.0 | 78.0 | 79.3 | 79.9 | 81.6 |

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

**Figure 4.3 Apparent retention rates, Year 7/8 to Year 12 by sector, Australia, 2009–2013**



Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

<sup>40</sup> Reported by the Independent Schools Council of Australia

During this period, there was a marked increase in the overall Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent retention rate, which rose from 76.0 per cent to 81.6 per cent, and a convergence of rates for the three sectors. The greatest rise was of more than 8 percentage points for the government school sector, narrowing the gap in apparent retention to Year 12 between government and non-government schools. The convergence of rates between sectors suggests both a rise in the proportion of government school students continuing to Year 12, and a reduction in students transferring from government to non-government schools for Years 11 and 12. A fall in the enrolments of overseas students in Years 11 and 12 in the independent sector may have also contributed to the fall in apparent Year 7/8 to 12 retention rates for this sector. However, as noted above, sector-specific retention rates should be interpreted with caution.

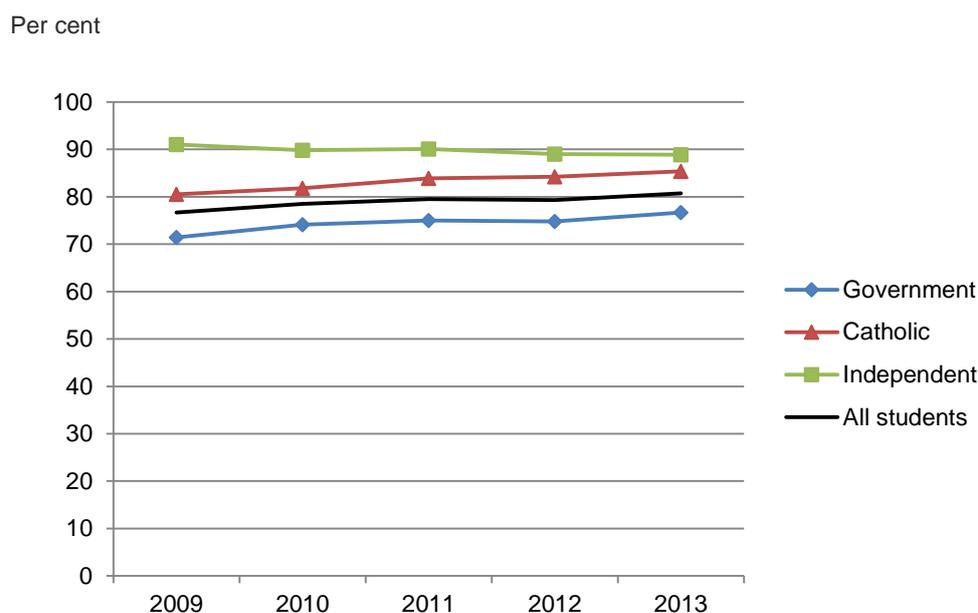
Table 4.5 and figure 4.4 show national apparent retention rates from Year 10 to Year 12 by sector over the period 2009–2013.

**Table 4.5** Apparent retention rates, Year 10 to Year 12 by sector, Australia, 2009–2013 (%)

| Australia    | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Government   | 71.4 | 74.1 | 75   | 74.8 | 76.7 |
| Catholic     | 80.5 | 81.8 | 83.9 | 84.2 | 85.4 |
| Independent  | 91   | 89.8 | 90.1 | 89   | 88.9 |
| All students | 76.7 | 78.5 | 79.5 | 79.3 | 80.7 |

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

**Figure 4.4** Apparent retention rates, Year 10 to Year 12 by sector, Australia, 2009–2013



Source: ABS, Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia*, 2013

Apparent retention rates from Year 10 to Year 12 rose by 5.3 percentage points for the government school sector and 4.9 percentage points for the Catholic sector in the period 2009–2013. The overall apparent retention rate rose by 4 percentage points to 80.7 per cent in 2013. The gap between apparent retention from Year 10 to Year 12 for government and independent schools narrowed from 19.6 percentage points in 2009 to 12.2 percentage points in 2013. While data are subject to the caveat that they do not take into account movement of students between sectors, the overall increase in retention to Year 12 is in line with the policy intention of governments in strengthening requirements for 15–17-year-olds to participate in education and/or training.

## Student participation

### 4.3 Attendance

The national key performance measure (KPM) for attendance as agreed to by education ministers is included in the [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#) as KPM 1(b):

The number of actual full-time equivalent student-days attended by full-time students in Years 1 to 10 as a percentage of the total number of possible student-days attended over the period.

The National Education Agreement (NEA) and *Schools Assistance Act 2008* also specify this measure as a performance indicator.

From 2013, a consistent reference period of Semester 1 in each school year has been adopted by all school sectors in all states and territories for the collection of these data.

This is consistent with the agreement reached in 2012 by all jurisdictions and sectors on new standards for the collection and reporting of nationally consistent student attendance data. This resulted from work undertaken by all states, territories and the non-government school sectors in collaboration with the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). The [National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting](#) were published on the ACARA website in December 2012 and updated in December 2013.

These standards will enable consistent and comparable reporting of attendance rates, including the calculation of KPM 1(b) at the national level, for students in Years 1–10 (including ungraded students, where applicable) across all sectors and jurisdictions in Australia for the 2014 data collection period<sup>41</sup> and onwards. The non-government sectors agreed to conform to the national standards from the 2013 data collection period.

For the 2013 national school attendance data collection, there are still some differences in definitions and methodology between sectors and between states and territories. Notes on these differences are included in the glossary of this report.

Because of these residual differences, the 2013 attendance data have not been aggregated or averaged to calculate KPM 1(b) at the national level.

For 2013, attendance rates for government, Catholic and independent school sectors continue to be reported separately in tables 17–19 in Part 9: Additional statistics.

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<sup>41</sup> NSW is working towards complying with national standards in 2016.

Each of these tables show attendance rates by:

- state and territory
- year level
- sex.

They also include summary data for 2009–2013 for each school sector by state and territory. The comments below should be read in conjunction with these tables.

Although differences in methodology still prevent full comparisons of attendance data between jurisdictions and sectors, a common characteristic is an apparent fall in attendance rates as students move from primary to secondary school, and through secondary school to Year 10.

In 2013, attendance rates for Years 1–7 exceeded 90 per cent in all sectors in all jurisdictions, except for the Northern Territory. Year 10 attendance rates were lower than those for the first year of secondary school in all sectors in all jurisdictions. Comments on attendance rates for each sector are below.

#### Government school sector

For the Semester 1 2013, student attendance rates for all states and the Australian Capital Territory were consistently in the range of 92–95 per cent for Years 1–7, dropping to between 85 and 91 per cent for Years 8, 9 and 10. Rates for the Northern Territory were lower across all years. All jurisdictions exhibited similar patterns, with the lowest attendance rates recorded for Year 10. Differences in rates between year levels ranged between three percentage points (Victoria) and nine percentage points (Northern Territory).

The attendance rates for male and female government school students during the 2013 collection period were similar within year levels, within jurisdictions. Differences, where they occurred, were no more than three percentage points.

Between 2009 and 2013, there was limited change in student attendance rates for individual year levels in the government sector in most jurisdictions.

#### Catholic school sector

For Semester 1 2013, student attendance rates were consistently in the 93–95 per cent range for Years 1–7, with some decline in junior secondary years. The exception was the Northern Territory, where all rates were lower.

The attendance rates for male and female Catholic school students during the 2013 collection period were similar within year levels, within jurisdictions. Differences, where they occurred, were no more than three percentage points.

Between 2009 and 2013, there was limited change in student attendance rates for individual year levels in the Catholic sector, with changes of up to five percentage points.

### Independent school sector

For Semester 1 2013, student attendance rates were consistently 93–95 per cent for Years 1–7, except for the Northern Territory where rates were slightly lower. Rates for Years 8–10 were 91–95 per cent, except for the Northern Territory where they were below 90 per cent.

The attendance rates for male and female independent school students during the 2013 collection period were similar within year levels in all jurisdictions.

Between 2009 and 2013, there was little change in student attendance rates for individual year levels in the independent sector in most jurisdictions, with variations up to four percentage points. The exceptions were the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, where some larger variations occurred.

Attendance data by Indigenous status are shown in tables 42–44 in Part 9: Additional statistics and discussed in Part 7 of this report.

## Part 5: Student achievement – National Assessment Program

### 5.0 Overview

The [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) describes literacy and numeracy and knowledge of key disciplines, as 'the cornerstone of schooling for young Australians'. As a part of the commitment, within the Melbourne Declaration, to promote world-class curriculum and assessment, education ministers agreed that the curriculum will include a strong focus on literacy and numeracy skills.

The [National Education Agreement \(NEA\)](#) also articulates directions for measuring and improving the literacy and numeracy achievement of young people.

The *Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012* defines the national key performance measures (KPMs) for student achievement in the National Assessment Program (NAP) in literacy, numeracy, science literacy, civics and citizenship, and information and communication technology literacy. The measurement framework also specifies the annual assessment and reporting cycle for the NAP.

#### The National Assessment Program

The NAP, as specified in the measurement framework, encompasses all assessments endorsed by education ministers for participation by students nationally:

- the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) – annual, full student cohort literacy and numeracy assessments in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9
- NAP sample assessments – triennial domestic sample student population assessments in science literacy (Year 6), information and communication technology literacy (Years 6 and 10) and civics and citizenship (Years 6 and 10) (to 2017)
- Australia's participation in international sample student population assessments, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). PISA, which is conducted every three years, assesses reading, mathematical and scientific literacy of a sample of 15-year-old students. TIMSS, which is conducted every four years, assesses the performance of a sample of Year 4 and Year 8 students in mathematics and science.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is delegated to manage the development and oversee the delivery of assessments and reporting for NAPLAN, and for domestic NAP sample assessments, as directed by the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC). PISA is conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). TIMSS is conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

NAP assessments conducted for 2013 were:

- NAPLAN for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Key performance measures for NAPLAN 2013 are reported in Part 5.1: Student achievement – National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).
- NAP – civics and citizenship Year 6 and 10 sample assessment. Key performance measures for civics and citizenship 2013 are reported in Part 5.2: Student achievement – National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship.

[NAPLAN national reports](#) for each year detail student achievement in NAPLAN at the national, state and territory, and student subgroup levels. These are published on ACARA's [National Assessment Program website](#). The website also allows users to specify and download tables from its results page. Student achievement in NAPLAN is reported at the school level on the [My School website](#).

Reports on each three-yearly NAP sample assessment are also published on the NAP website.

Key performance measures for PISA 2012 are reported in the *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2012*. The national report for PISA 2012 is available on the [Australian Council for Educational Research \(ACER\) website](#). Key performance measures for TIMSS 2011 are reported in the *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2011*.

## Student achievement – National Assessment Program

### 5.1 NAP – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

In 2013, the sixth year of national literacy and numeracy testing, Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students in Australia were assessed on reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. These tests, known as the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), were first conducted in 2008.

NAPLAN tests the sorts of skills that are essential for every child to progress through school and life. The same tests are used in each state and territory, and the results provide nationally comparable data on student performance in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy.

The test results provide schools, and states and territories with information about how education programs are working and which areas need to be prioritised for improvement. They also give parents and schools an understanding of how individual students are performing at the time of the tests.

A key aspect of NAPLAN test design is the single scale of achievement across 10 bands for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in each assessment domain. Each band for each domain has a summary of skills assessed at each year level. The 10 achievement bands for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 mean that, as a student advances through schooling, it is possible to see how much progress has been made in each domain.

In the first three years of testing (2008–2010), writing was assessed by testing students' ability to respond to a narrative writing task. In 2011, a change of genre was introduced, and the narrative task was replaced with a persuasive writing task. Results for the persuasive writing task are reported on a separate persuasive writing scale that is not comparable with the narrative writing scale. As a consequence, student performances in writing 2011–2013 cannot be compared with those from 2008–2010.

#### Key performance measures

NAPLAN participation rates, mean scale scores and proportions of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy at each year level are specified as performance indicators in the National Education Agreement and as key performance measures (KPMs) in the [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#).

Information about how to interpret scales and standards is available on the [NAP website](#).

For 2013, the proportions of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard and mean scale scores at the national level are reported for reading in table 5.1, for persuasive writing in table 5.2, and for numeracy in table 5.3.

**Key performance measure 2(a)**  
Proportion of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard for reading

**Key performance measure 2(b)**  
NAPLAN mean scale scores for reading

**Table 5.1 Summary for reading for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 for Australia (per cent at or above national minimum standards; mean scale scores), 2013**

|  | Year 3 | Year 5 | Year 7 | Year 9 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Percentage of students at or above national minimum standard | 95.3   | 96.1   | 94.2   | 93.4   |
| CI±  | 0.2    | 0.2    | 0.3    | 0.3    |
| Mean scale score   | 419.1  | 502.3  | 540.6  | 580.2  |
| (standard deviation)   | (80.6) | (64.7) | (66.3) | (63.4) |

**Notes:**

Exempt students were not assessed and are deemed not to have met the national minimum standard.

CI = Confidence interval. Confidence intervals reflect the level of uncertainty associated with the measurement of achievement. They define a range of values within which the true level of achievement is likely to lie. This table shows 95 per cent confidence intervals for percentages of students at or above the national minimum standard. This means, for example, that where the percentage shown is 90% ± 0.5 it can be said with 95 per cent confidence the true value lies between 89.5% and 90.5%.

Confidence intervals cited should be used to compare data within 2013 only.

Sources: ACARA, *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy, Achievement in Reading, Persuasive Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy, National Report for 2013*; ACARA (unpublished data)

**Key performance measure 2(c)**  
Proportion of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard for writing

**Key performance measure 2(d)**  
NAPLAN mean scale scores for writing

**Table 5.2 Summary for persuasive writing for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 for Australia (per cent at or above national minimum standards; mean scale scores), 2013**

|  | Year 3 | Year 5 | Year 7 | Year 9 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Percentage of students at or above national minimum standard | 95.0   | 91.7   | 89.3   | 82.6   |
| CI±  | 0.2    | 0.3    | 0.4    | 0.6    |
| Mean scale score   | 415.6  | 477.9  | 517.0  | 554.1  |
| (standard deviation)   | (70.5) | (70.1) | (76.2) | (87.1) |

**Notes:**

Exempt students were not assessed and were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard.

CI = Confidence interval. Confidence intervals reflect the level of uncertainty associated with the measurement of achievement. They define a range of values within which the true level of achievement is likely to lie. This table shows 95 per cent confidence intervals for percentages of students at or above the national minimum standard. This means, for example, that where the percentage shown is 90% ± 0.5, it can be said with 95 per cent confidence the true value lies between 89.5% and 90.5%.

Confidence intervals cited should be used to compare data within 2013 only.

Results for the persuasive writing task are reported on a separate persuasive writing scale that is not comparable with the narrative writing scale. Student performances in writing 2011–2013 should not be compared with those from 2008–2010.

Sources: ACARA, *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy, Achievement in Reading, Persuasive Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy, National Report for 2013*; ACARA (unpublished data)

**Key performance measure 3(a)**  
Proportion of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard for numeracy

**Key performance measure 3(b)**  
NAPLAN mean scale scores for numeracy

**Table 5.3 Summary for numeracy for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 for Australia (per cent at or above national minimum standards; mean scale scores), 2013**

|  | Year 3 | Year 5 | Year 7 | Year 9 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Percentage of students at or above national minimum standard | 95.7   | 93.4   | 95.0   | 90.6   |
| CI±  | 0.2    | 0.2    | 0.2    | 0.4    |
| Mean scale score   | 396.9  | 485.8  | 542.1  | 583.6  |
| (standard deviation)   | (65.8) | (71.5) | (71.4) | (82.2) |

**Notes:**

Exempt students were not assessed and are deemed not to have met the national minimum standard.

CI = Confidence interval. Confidence intervals reflect the level of uncertainty associated with the measurement of achievement. They define a range of values within which the true level of achievement is likely to lie. This table shows 95 per cent confidence intervals for percentages of students at or above the national minimum standard. This means, for example, that where the percentage shown is 90% ± 0.5 it can be said with 95 per cent confidence the true value lies between 89.5% and 90.5%.

Confidence intervals cited should be used to compare data within 2013 only.

Sources: ACARA, *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy, Achievement in Reading, Persuasive Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy, National Report for 2013*; ACARA (unpublished data)

The proportion of students participating in NAPLAN in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 for reading, writing and numeracy in 2013 are reported in table 5.4.

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Key performance measure 1(c)</b><br/>Proportion of students participating in NAPLAN for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 for reading, writing and numeracy</p> |
|---|

**Table 5.4 Proportion of students participating in NAPLAN for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 for reading, persuasive writing and numeracy, 2013 (per cent)**

|  | Year 3 | Year 5 | Year 7 | Year 9 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Proportion of students participating in reading tests            | 95.2   | 95.8   | 95.5   | 92.1   |
| Proportion of students participating in persuasive writing tests | 95.1   | 95.7   | 95.6   | 92.4   |
| Proportion of students participating in numeracy tests           | 94.9   | 95.4   | 95.1   | 91.4   |

**Notes:**

Participation rates are calculated as all assessed and exempt students as a percentage of the total number of students in the year level, as reported by schools, which includes those absent and withdrawn.

Exempt students were not assessed and are deemed not to have met the national minimum standard.

Sources: ACARA, *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy, Achievement in Reading, Persuasive Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy, National Report for 2013*

Detailed information on NAPLAN results for 2013 is contained in *NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Persuasive Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2013* (the 2013 NAPLAN national report). The results contained in this report (and previous reports) are also available in interactive form on the results page of the [NAP website](#).

The national NAPLAN results are reported as mean scale scores and by performance in bands, may be viewed by gender, Indigenous status, language background other than English status, geolocation (metropolitan, provincial, remote and very remote), parental occupation and parental education at each year level and for each domain of the test. Other data available include participation rates, the performance of each state and territory relative to other states and territories, and to Australia; time series; and cohort gain across year levels.

NAPLAN results are reported at the school level on the [My School website](#) and parents receive an individual report on their child's achievement in the NAPLAN tests. A student report shows student performance against the national average and relative to the achievement band scale.

## Student achievement

### 5.2 NAP – Civics and Citizenship

The [National Sample Assessment in Civics and Citizenship](#) (NAP–CC) commenced in 2004 and is held every three years. It assesses samples of Year 6 and Year 10 students in civics and citizenship education

Civics education focuses on knowledge and understanding of formal institutions and processes of civic life (such as voting in elections). Citizenship education focuses on knowledge and understanding of, and opportunities for, participation and engagement in both civic and civil society. This focus aims to develop students as active and informed citizens, in line with the [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#)<sup>42</sup>.

In 2013, NAP–CC was trialled and delivered to students online for the first time. The NAP–CC sample assessment was administered to 11,255 students from 671 government, Catholic and independent schools between 9 October and 5 November 2013 in all states and territories. The assessment included an online test with multiple-choice and open-ended questions, and an online student questionnaire. The same test was made available to a small number of schools on USB drives as a back-up delivery method.

The next NAP – Civics and Citizenship will be undertaken in 2016.

#### Proficient Standards for Civics and Citizenship

Proficient standards for Civics and Citizenship were established for both Years 6 and 10 in 2004. Each proficient standard is a point on the NAP – Civics and Citizenship scale that represents ‘a challenging but reasonable’ expectation of student achievement at the respective year level.

Proficiency scores are grouped into six proficiency levels ranging from below Level 1 (comprising the least difficult items) to Level 5 (comprising the most difficult items). Each level represents an equal range of student ability/item difficulty on the scale.

The full Civics and Citizenship proficiency scale and descriptions are available on the [National Assessment Program website](#).

The Year 6 Proficient Standard in Civics and Citizenship is set at Level 2. Year 6 students achieving at Level 2 have demonstrated more than minimal or elementary skills; they are considered to have an understanding appropriate to Year 6 and have performed at ‘a challenging but reasonable’ level.

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<sup>42</sup> Goal 2 of the Melbourne Declaration is that all young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

Year 6 students who reach the proficient standard demonstrate accurate factual responses to relatively simple civics and citizenship concepts or issues in responding to multiple-choice items and show limited interpretation or reasoning in their responses to open-ended items. For example, they recognise the division of governmental responsibilities in a federation, that respecting the right of others to hold differing opinions is a democratic principle, and can identify a link between a change in Australia's identity and the national anthem.

Year 10 students achieving the proficient standard (Level 3) demonstrate more than minimal or elementary skills; they are considered to have an understanding appropriate to Year 10 and perform at 'a challenging but reasonable' level. They demonstrate relatively precise and detailed factual responses to complex key civics and citizenship concepts or issues in multiple-choice items. In responding to open-ended items, they use field-specific language with some fluency and reveal some interpretation of information. For example, they recognise some key functions and features of parliament, and can identify the importance in democracies for citizens to engage with issues.

### Key performance measure

The proportion of students achieving at or above the proficient standard (Level 2 in Year 6 and Level 3 in Year 10) is a key performance measure (KPM) in the [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#).

The proportion of students achieving at each proficiency level is reported in table 5.5.

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Key performance measure 5</b></p> <p>Proportion of students achieving at or above the proficient standard in Civics and Citizenship</p> |
|---|

**Table 5.5 Proportion of students achieving at each proficiency level and at or above the proficient standards (Level 2 in Year 6; Level 3 in Year 10) in Civics and Citizenship, 2013 (per cent)**

|                | Proficiency level |       |       |       |                               |                            | At or above the proficient standard |
|----------------|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                | Below 1           | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4<br>(or above<br>for Year 6) | 5<br>(for Year<br>10 only) |                                     |
| <b>Year 6</b>  |                   |       |       |       |                               |                            |                                     |
| Australia (%)  | 15                | 33    | 38    | 13    | 1                             |                            | 52                                  |
| CI±            | (1.5)             | (2.3) | (1.9) | (1.6) | (0.4)                         |                            | (2.4)                               |
| <b>Year 10</b> |                   |       |       |       |                               |                            |                                     |
| Australia (%)  | 3                 | 16    | 37    | 35    | 9                             | 1                          | 44                                  |
| CI±            | (0.8)             | (1.6) | (2.3) | (2.4) | (1.5)                         | (0.4)                      | (2.6)                               |

Notes:

CI = Confidence interval

Confidence intervals are reported in brackets. Because results are rounded to the nearest whole number, some totals may appear inconsistent.

Source: ACARA, *National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship Years 6 and 10 Report 2013*

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As shown in table 5.5, 52 per cent of Year 6 students and 44 per cent of Year 10 students achieved at or above the Year 6 and Year 10 proficient standards for Civics and Citizenship in 2013.

The detailed [National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship Years 6 & 10 Report 2013](#) is available on the [National Assessment Program website](#). A technical report on NAP–CC 2013 is also available on this site.

## Part 6: Senior schooling and youth transitions

### 6.0 Overview

The national key performance measures (KPMs) for schooling, specified in the [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#), include measures for participation and attainment, including:

- student enrolment
- attendance at school
- participation of young people in vocational education and training (VET) including VET in Schools
- participation of young people in education, training and employment
- attainment of young people in education and training.

The KPMs for the enrolment and attendance of students in primary and junior secondary school are reported in Part 4: Student participation, which also reports on apparent progression and apparent retention rates for secondary school students.

This section of the report deals with the participation and attainment of older students, including those in senior secondary school. It outlines participation in VET by secondary students as a part of Senior Secondary Certificates of Education (VET in Schools). It also deals with the participation of young people in education, training and work beyond school, and their attainment in post-school education and training.

These measures reflect the policy intent of the [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) to define educational goals, not just for school students, but for all young Australians, and the role of the *National Report on Schooling in Australia* in reporting on the outcomes of schooling. They also reflect the Melbourne Declaration commitment to support the senior years of schooling and the provision of high-quality pathways to facilitate effective transitions between further study, training and employment.

VET participation and attainment are reported in terms of qualifications within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The AQF is a comprehensive national framework of qualifications in the school, VET and higher education sectors. It was introduced in 1995 to underpin the national system of qualifications in Australia. The revised AQF First Edition was released in 2011; and a modified AQF Second Edition, in January 2013.

Qualifications within the AQF include:

- Senior Secondary Certificates of Education issued by state and territory school curriculum, assessment and certification authorities to students meeting requirements on completion of Year 12
- VET qualifications at various certificate and diploma levels delivered by institutes of technical and further education (TAFE) and other registered training organisations (RTOs)

- higher education diplomas and degrees provided through Australian universities and other educational institutions.

Detailed information on qualification levels is contained in the [Australian Qualifications Framework document](#).

KPMs reported in this section indicate progress towards the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) targets for Year 12 or equivalent attainment and progress in achieving the agreed outcome in the National Education Agreement and the [National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions](#) that young people make a successful transition from school to work and further study.

## Senior schooling and youth transitions

### 6.1 Participation in vocational education and training, including VET in Schools

The Australian vocational education and training (VET) sector provides nationally consistent vocational training and qualifications for those entering or already engaged in the workforce. Competency standards (units of competency) for vocational qualifications in different industries and occupations are set out in nationally endorsed training packages, which also define the qualifications in each industry. The requirements for each level of VET qualification are set out in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), which also sets out guidelines for senior secondary certificates of education (Year 12 qualifications) and qualifications in the higher education sector. Qualifications delivered through the VET sector range from Certificate I (AQF level 1) to Graduate Diploma (AQF level 8).

Secondary school students in all states and territories can undertake VET courses as part of their school program (VET in Schools courses), usually in the senior years of schooling as a part of the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education in each jurisdiction. Secondary students can also take VET courses in addition to their school studies, or move from school to full-time VET study, or a combination of part-time VET and work.

Until 2008, the proportion of senior secondary students undertaking VET in Schools courses was a key performance measure (KPM) for schooling. From 2009, this KPM was broadened to all 15–19-year-old VET students (whether or not they were enrolled in school) as a proportion of the 15–19-year-old population. The specification for participation is the completion of at least one unit of competency in a VET qualification at AQF Certificate II or above<sup>43</sup>.

This measure, KPM 1(e) in the [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#), includes VET in Schools students, but also includes school-aged students who have left school and are still engaged in education and training through an institute of technical and further education (TAFE) or other registered training organisation (RTO). Table 6.1 shows the Australian data for this KPM for the period 2009–2013. Part 9: Additional statistics, table 20 shows state and territory data for this KPM for 2013.

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<sup>43</sup> The specification of the successful completion of a unit of competency in the KPM is a marker for genuine participation in a VET course (as opposed to an initial enrolment, which may not be followed through). It is not intended that the KPM be regarded as a measure of attainment.

**Key performance measure 1(e)**

Proportion of the population aged 15–19 years who in the calendar year successfully completed at least one unit of competency as a part of a VET qualification at AQF Certificate II or above

**Table 6.1** Number and proportion of 15–19-year-olds who successfully completed at least one unit of competency as a part of a VET qualification at AQF Certificate II or above, Australia, 2009–2013

| Australia   | 2009    | 2010    | 2011    | 2012    | 2013    |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of 15–19-year-olds successfully completing at least one unit of competency at AQF II or above ('000)         | 360.3   | 375.2   | 400.1   | 419.4   | 395.9   |
| 15–19-year-old population ('000)  | 1,462.4 | 1,460.0 | 1,435.5 | 1,458.5 | 1,467.1 |
| Proportion of 15–19-year-olds successfully completing at least one unit of competency at AQF II or above (per cent) | 24.6    | 25.7    | 27.5    | 28.8    | 27.0    |

## Notes:

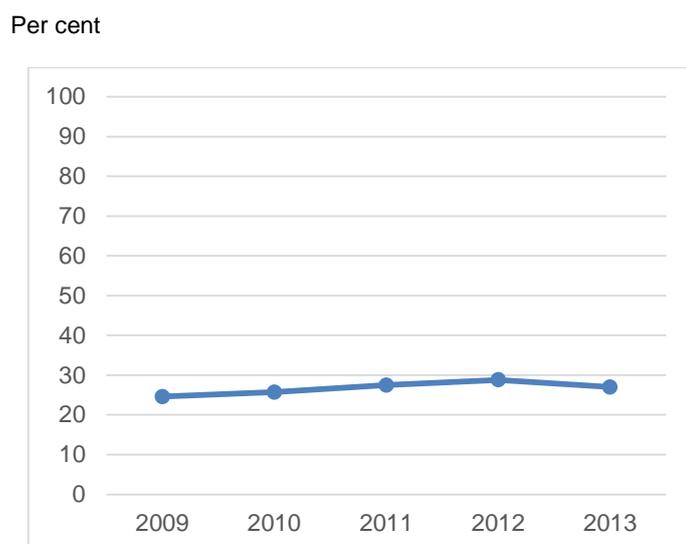
A successfully completed unit of competency/module includes competencies with an outcome of competency achieved/pass/recognition of prior learning granted.

The KPM is derived by calculating student numbers in the 15–19 year age group as a percentage of the estimated residential population in the corresponding group.

Sources: NCVER, National VET in Schools Collection 2009–13; NCVER, National VET Provider Collection 2009–13; NCVER [Key performance and program measures for school-aged youth in vocational education and training 2013](#); National Report on Schooling in Australia, 2012; ABS, Cat. No. 3101.0, *Australian demographic statistics*, December 2013

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 20

**Figure 6.1** Proportion of 15–19-year-olds successfully completing at least one unit of competency at AQF II or above (per cent)



In addition to KPM 1(e), education ministers approved two program measures for young people’s participation and attainment in VET, disaggregated by industry area and by qualification level. These are reported for 2013 in tables 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4.

**VET program measure 1**

Occupation and industry profile of VET engagement for 15–19-year-olds who in the calendar year, successfully completed at least one unit of competency/module as a part of a VET qualification at AQF Certificate II or above

**Table 6.2** Number of 15–19-year-olds who have successfully completed at least one unit of competency/module as a part of a VET qualification at AQF Certificate II or above, by major field of education, Australia, 2013 ('000)

| Field of education                             | Australia    |
|--|--------------|
| Natural and physical sciences                  | 1.4          |
| Information technology                         | 15.1         |
| Engineering and related technologies           | 63.3         |
| Architecture and building                      | 38.7         |
| Agriculture, environmental and related studies | 12.3         |
| Health   | 14.4         |
| Education                                      | 2.8          |
| Management and commerce                        | 75.2         |
| Society and culture                            | 58.4         |
| Creative Arts                                  | 25.0         |
| Food, hospitality and personal services        | 69.8         |
| Mixed field programs                           | 19.4         |
| <b>Total</b>                                   | <b>395.9</b> |

Note: These figures relate only to characteristics of each student's major course.

Sources: NCVER, *National VET in Schools Collection, 2013*; NCVER, *National VET Provider Collection, 2013*; NCVER, *Key performance and program measures for school-aged youth in vocational education and training 2013*

**Table 6.3** Number of 15–19-year-olds who have successfully completed at least one unit of competency/module as a part of a VET qualification at AQF certificate II or above, by major qualification, Australia, 2013 ('000)

| Major qualification | Australia    |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Diploma or higher   | 24.3         |
| Certificate IV      | 29.6         |
| Certificate III     | 181.9        |
| Certificate II      | 160.1        |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>395.9</b> |

Note: These figures relate only to characteristics of each student's major course.

Sources: NCVER, *National VET in Schools Collection, 2013*; NCVER, *National VET Provider Collection, 2013*; NCVER, *National VET Provider Collection 2013*; NCVER, *Key performance and program measures for school-aged youth in vocational education and training 2013*

### VET program measure 2

Level of AQF certification for 15–19-year-olds who in the calendar year successfully completed a VET qualification

**Table 6.4** Qualification completions for 15–19-year-olds by qualification level, Australia ('000), 2013

| Qualification level | Australia    |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Diploma or higher   | 6.3          |
| Certificate IV      | 10.1         |
| Certificate III     | 51.4         |
| Certificate II      | 81.6         |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>186.5</b> |

Sources: NCVER, *National VET in Schools Collection, 2013*; NCVER, *National VET Provider Collection, 2013*; NCVER, *Key performance and program measures for school-aged youth in vocational education and training 2013*

KPM 1(e) and the VET program measures include all 15–19-year-old students. The information below refers to students who are identified as VET in Schools students. For the

purposes of the VET in Schools data collection, these are students who are undertaking VET as a part of a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education<sup>44</sup>. These data are not restricted to Certificate II or above, or to students who have successfully completed at least one unit of competency.

VET in Schools includes school-based apprentices and trainees. These are students who, as well as undertaking an accredited VET qualification as a part of their school studies, have entered into a formal contract of part-time paid employment and training with an employer. Typically, these students undertake part of their traineeship or apprenticeship while at school, and complete it once they have left school.

Table 6.5 shows the number of 15–19-year-old school students undertaking VET in Schools programs each year 2009–2013 with school-based apprentices and trainees disaggregated.

**Table 6.5** Number of 15–19-year-old students<sup>(a)</sup> undertaking VET in Schools programs, Australia, 2009–2013

| Australia   | 2009  | 2010  | 2011  | 2012  | 2013  |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| School-based apprentices and trainees <sup>(b)</sup> ('000) | 20.9  | 17.3  | 18.1  | 22.5  | 21.7  |
| Other VET in Schools program students ('000)                | 195.8 | 203.6 | 218.3 | 219.8 | 218.1 |
| Total VET in Schools students ('000)                        | 216.7 | 220.9 | 236.4 | 242.3 | 239.7 |

- (a) Approximately 10,000 students recorded in the VET in Schools data collection 2013, who were outside the 15–19-year-old age range, are excluded from these data.
- (b) School-based apprentices and trainees include students who undertook at least one module/unit of competency in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship.

Sources: NCVER, National VET in Schools Collection, 2013; NCVER National VET Provider Collection, 2013. NCVER, *Key performance and program measures for school-aged youth in vocational education and training 2013*, NCVER.

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 21 and table 22

The VET qualifications attempted by school students are most commonly at AQF Certificate II, but there is a policy emphasis on encouraging participation in AQF Certificate III and above. Between 2012 and 2013, the number of VET in Schools students aged 15–19 years declined by 1.1 per cent. However, the number of 15–19-year-old VET in Schools students enrolled in Certificate III qualifications increased by 12.7 per cent.

Due to time constraints, VET in Schools courses do not necessarily lead to the achievement of a full AQF VET qualification. Where they do not, students assessed as competent in one

<sup>44</sup> In most (but not all) states and territories these students are enrolled in secondary schools.

or more units of competency receive a statement of attainment towards a certificate or other qualification and are eligible to complete the full qualification post-school.

Tables 21 and 22 in Part 9: Additional statistics provide extra information on the participation and attainment of young people in VET, including VET in Schools, in 2013 and for the period 2009–13. Further detailed information is included in the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) publications [\*Australian vocational education and training statistics: young people in education and training 2013\*](#) and [\*Key performance measures and program measures for school-aged youth in vocational education and training 2013\*](#).

## Senior schooling and youth transitions

### 6.2 Participation in education and work

The key performance measures (KPMs) for participation specified in the [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#) reflect not only the participation of young Australians in schooling, but their participation in post-school education, training and employment. These are indicators of the success of schooling in preparing students for further education and work. As such, they address both the Melbourne Declaration commitment to facilitate effective transitions, and the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Education Agreement (NEA) outcome that young people make a successful transition from school to work and further study.

KPMs 1(f) and 1(g) measure the full-time participation in education, training and employment of two groups of young people. Full-time participation is defined as participation in full-time education or training, or full-time work, or a combination of both part-time education or training and part-time work. The measures are based on the [Australian Bureau of Statistics \(ABS\) Survey of Education and Work](#), which is conducted in May each year.

KPM 1(f) measures the full-time participation of young people from the age of 15–19, and includes students who are still at school. It also includes 15–19-year-olds who have left school and have moved into tertiary study or the workforce. KPM 1(g) measures the full-time participation of 20–24-year-olds, who may be undertaking vocational education and training (VET) or university study, working, or a combination of these activities. KPMs 1(f) and 1(g) are shown for the period 2009–2013 in table 6.6.

**Key performance measure 1(f)**

Proportion of 15–19-year-olds in full-time education or training, in full-time work, or both in part-time work and part-time education or training

**Key performance measure 1(g)**

Proportion of 20–24-year-olds in full-time education or training, in full-time work, or both in part-time work and part-time education or training

**Table 6.6 Proportions of 15–19-year-olds and 20–24-year-olds in full-time education or training, in full-time work, or both in part-time work and part-time education or training, Australia, 2009–2013 (%)**

| Year  | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
|   | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    |
| Full-time participation rates for 15–19-year-olds | 84.1 | 84.8 | 85.3 | 86.5 | 86.3 |
| CI±   | 1.4  | 1.5  | 1.4  | 1.0  | 1.2  |
| Full-time participation rates for 20–24-year-olds | 77.1 | 77.2 | 77.0 | 76.6 | 73.8 |
| CI±   | 2.0  | 1.6  | 1.5  | 1.7  | 1.1  |

Notes:

CI = Confidence Interval

The percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals. Confidence intervals are a way of expressing the degree of sampling and measurement error associated with survey estimates. For example, an estimate of 80 with a 95 per cent confidence interval of  $\pm 2$  means that if the total population were surveyed rather than a sample, there is a 95 per cent chance that the result would lie between 78 and 82.

Full-time participation is defined as participation in full-time education or training or full-time work, or a combination of both part-time education or training and part-time work.

From 2012, data cubes on participation and engagement published by ABS to report the results of the Survey of Education and Work have been limited to study for a qualification only, instead of all study. This change affects the data cubes:

- Formal study, persons aged 15–64 years; and
- Fully engaged through formal study and/or employment, persons aged 15–64 years.

The sample in the Survey of Education and Work was expanded in 2013 to include people who were permanently unable to work. This may result in slightly lower participation rates than would otherwise be the case.

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 6227.0, *Education and Work*, May 2013

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 24 and table 25

As shown in table 6.6, full-time participation rates for young people in their mid–late teens were consistently higher than for those in their early to mid-20s. This is to be expected, as the 15–19-year age group includes a high proportion of full-time school students. In particular, it includes 15- and 16-year-olds who, from 2010 were subject to the National Youth

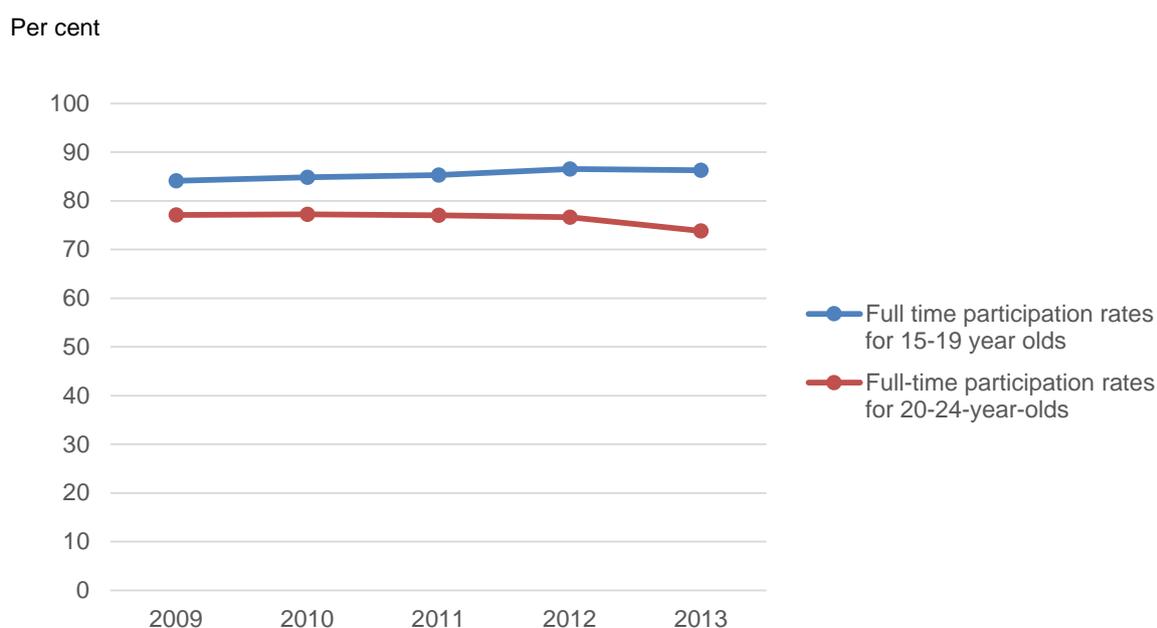
Participation Requirement<sup>45</sup> for all young people to participate in schooling until they complete Year 10, and to participate full-time in education, training or employment, or a combination of these activities, until the age of 17.

Since 2009, there has been an apparent increase in participation for 15–19-year-olds but, based on the Survey of Education and Work, a fall in participation rates for 20–24-year-olds.<sup>46</sup>

Figure 6.2 illustrates KPMs 1(f) and 1(g) over the period 2009–2013.

**Key performance measures 1(f) and 1(g)**

**Figure 6.2** Proportions of 15–19-year-olds and 20–24-year-olds in full-time education or training, in full-time work, or both in part-time work and part-time education or training, Australia, 2009–13 (per cent)



Source: ABS, Cat. No. 6227.0, *Education and Work*, May 2013

<sup>45</sup> The National Youth Participation Requirement is a component of [the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions](#). Further information is provided in Part 2.5: Supporting senior years of schooling and youth transitions.

<sup>46</sup> Falls in participation rates 2012–2013 are partly due to the expansion of the sample population of the Survey of Education and Work in 2013 to include people who were permanently unable to work.

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) has estimated that 81.3 per cent of 15–19-year-olds were engaged in education and training as at August 2013. This included school students (55.4 per cent), higher education students (15.6 per cent), publicly funded VET students (5.3 per cent) and apprentices and trainees (5.1 per cent)<sup>47</sup>. This estimate rose from 75.9 per cent in 2009 to 81.9 per cent in 2012 with a slight fall to 81.3 per cent in 2013<sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>47</sup> NCVER, *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics: young people in education and training 2013*; see also Part 9: Additional statistics, table 21

<sup>48</sup> NCVER, *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics: young people in education and training 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012*.

## Senior schooling and youth transitions

### 6.2 Student attainment

The attainment key performance measures (KPMs) specified in the [Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia 2012](#) measure the level of educational attainment achieved by young Australians by the time they have reached their early to mid-twenties.

KPM 7(a) and 7(b) measure the proportions of 20–24-year-olds who have completed Year 12 or equivalent<sup>49</sup> or attained an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II or III, or above. These measures reflect the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) targets for youth attainment in education and training.

|  |
|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Key performance measure 7(a)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Proportion of the 20–24-year-old population having attained at least Year 12 or equivalent, or AQF Certificate II or above</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Key performance measure 7(b)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Proportion of the 20–24-year-old population having attained at least Year 12 or equivalent, or AQF Certificate III or above</p> |
|--|

Table 6.7 reports KPMs 7(a) and 7(b) for the period 2009–2013. For comparison purposes, the table also reports the proportions of the 20–24-year-old population in this period, who had completed Year 12 or equivalent.

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<sup>49</sup> 'Year 12 or equivalent' includes the attainment of AQF Senior Secondary Certificates of Education issued by curriculum, assessment and certification authorities in each state and territory; senior secondary qualifications issued in other countries; and other recognised tertiary preparation qualifications such as the International Baccalaureate. Data collected through the Survey of Education and Work also include some respondents who identify Year 12 as their highest level of schooling completed but who may not have attained a formal Year 12 qualification.

**Table 6.7** Proportion of the 20–24-year-old population that has attained at least Year 12 or equivalent or AQF Certificate II or above; proportion of the 20–24-year-old population that has attained at least Year 12 or equivalent, or AQF Certificate III or above; proportion of the 20–24-year-old population that has attained at least Year 12 or equivalent; Australia, 2009–2013 (per cent)

| Year  | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
|   | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    |
| Proportion of the 20–24-year-old population that has attained at least Year 12 or equivalent, or AQF Certificate II or above  | 84.5 | 85.6 | 84.1 | 85.9 | 86.7 |
| CI±   | 1.6  | 1.3  | 1.3  | 1.3  | 1.5  |
| Proportion of the 20–24-year-old population that has attained at least Year 12 or equivalent, or AQF Certificate III or above | 83.5 | 84.5 | 82.7 | 84.6 | 85.7 |
| CI±   | 1.7  | 1.5  | 1.3  | 1.3  | 1.5  |
| Proportion of the 20–24-year-old population that has attained at least Year 12 or equivalent                                  | 77.1 | 78.0 | 74.9 | 76.3 | 77.5 |
| CI±   | 1.7  | 1.7  | 1.7  | 1.6  | 1.5  |

## Notes:

CI = Confidence interval

The percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals. Confidence intervals are a way of expressing the degree of sampling and measurement error associated with survey estimates. For example, an estimate of 80 with a 95 per cent confidence interval of  $\pm 2$  means that if the total population were surveyed rather than a sample, there is a 95 per cent chance that the result would lie between 78 and 82.

The sample population in the Survey of Education and Work was expanded in 2013 to include people who were permanently unable to work. This may result in slightly lower attainment rates in 2013 than would otherwise be the case.

Source: ABS, Cat. No. 6227.0, *Education and Work*, May 2013 See also Part 9: Additional statistics, tables 31 and 32

The proportion of 20–24-year-olds, who had attained Year 12 or equivalent or AQF Certificate II or above – KPM 7(a), rose from 84.5 per cent in 2009 to 86.7 per cent in 2013.

The COAG target for this measure is 90 per cent by 2015. Based on 2009–2013 data<sup>50</sup>, it appears unlikely that this target will be met at the national level by 2015. However, since 2009, rises have occurred in both retention to Year 12<sup>51</sup> and in participation in education, training and work by 15–19-year-olds<sup>52</sup>. These rises followed the implementation of the National Youth Participation Requirement<sup>53</sup>, and may translate to increased attainment levels for these students as they move into the 20–24-year-old age bracket from 2015.

The proportion of 20–24-year-olds, who had attained Year 12 or equivalent, or AQF Certificate III or above – KPM 7(b), rose from 83.5 per cent to 85.7 per cent between 2009 and 2013.

The COAG target for this measure is 90 per cent by 2020. Based on 2009–2013 data, this target is achievable at the national level by 2020. It is also likely that the increased retention to Year 12, and participation in education and training by 15–19-year-olds since 2009 will lead to higher levels of attainment for these students as 20–24 year-olds in 2020. This would have a positive impact on this measure, enhancing the likelihood that the target is achieved by 2020.

Figure 6.3 depicts the movement in the two attainment measures from 2009 to 2013, along with the proportion of 20–24-year-olds having attained at least Year 12 or equivalent.

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<sup>50</sup> The inclusion in the Survey of Education and Work 2013 of people permanently unable to work resulted in slightly lower attainment rates than would otherwise have been the case in 2013.

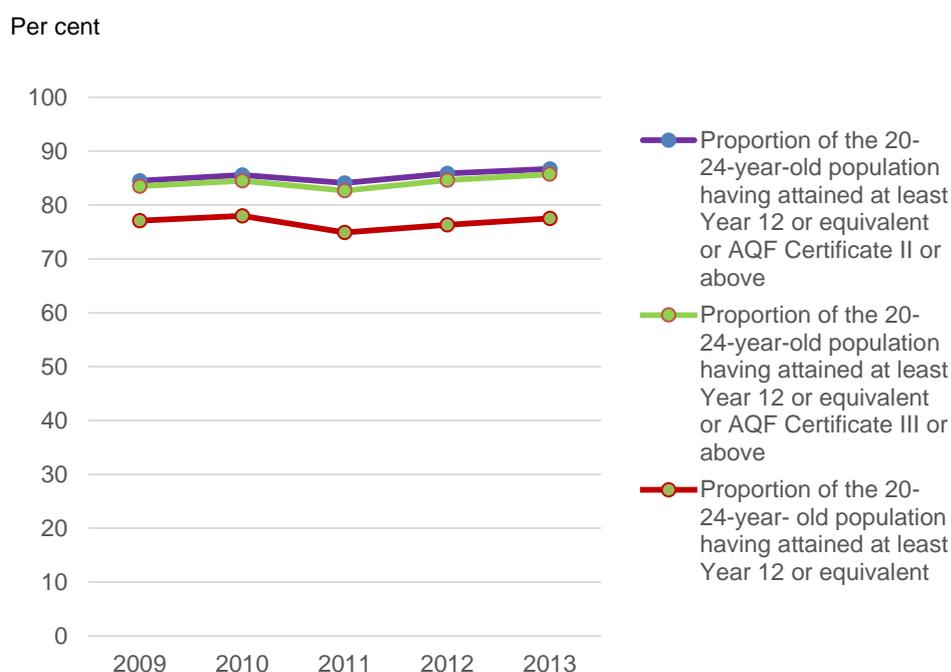
<sup>51</sup> As reported in Part 4.3: Student participation – progression and retention

<sup>52</sup> As reported in Part 6.2: Senior schooling and youth transitions – participation in education and work.

<sup>53</sup> From 2010, 15- and 16-year-olds in all states and territories were subject to the National Youth Participation Requirement for all young people to participate in schooling until they complete Year 10, and to participate full-time in education, training or employment, or a combination of these activities, until the age of 17.

## Key performance measures 7(a) and 7(b)

**Figure 6.3** Proportions of 20–24-year-olds having attained at least Year 12 or equivalent, or AQF Certificate II or above; 20–24-year-olds having attained at least Year 12 or equivalent, or AQF Certificate III or above; and proportion of the 20–24-year-olds having attained at least Year 12 or equivalent; Australia, 2009–2013 (per cent)



Source: ABS, Cat. No. 6227.0, *Education and Work*, May 2013

See also Part 9: Additional statistics, tables 31 and 32

In each of the years 2009–2013, there is little difference between the two attainment KPMs (a maximum difference of 1.4 percentage points), and there is parallel movement of the KPMs over the period<sup>54</sup>.

Both KPMs also closely parallel changes in the proportion of the 20–24-year-olds that has attained at least Year 12 or equivalent, which forms the major component of both measures. In 2013, 77.5 per cent of 20–24-year-olds had attained at least Year 12 or equivalent. A further 8.2 per cent, who had not attained Year 12, had attained Certificate III or above, and a further 1.0 per cent had attained Certificate II or above, but not Year 12 or Certificate III.

The proportion of young people completing Year 12 is not itself a KPM for schooling, as pursuing a vocational qualification post-Year 10 is a legitimate alternative to Years 11 and 12

<sup>54</sup> For the three data sets shown in table 6.7 and figure 6.3 the falls in 2011 data are not statistically significant and may reflect sampling variability in the Survey of Education and Work.

as a pathway to further education and work. However, as shown in figure 6.3, it is not only a major component of KPMs 7(a) and 7(b), but is also a determining component, with variations in the two KPMs closely following variations in Year 12 or equivalent attainment.

This has implications for predicting and influencing the COAG measures, as the rate of Year 12 completion for current secondary students can be used as an indicator for the future attainment rates for Year 12, or Certificate II or Certificate III, or above among 20–24-year-olds.

It is important to note that, while the attainment KPMs 7(a) and 7(b) refer to the completion of Year 12 or equivalent or an AQF VET Certificate, this does not imply equivalence between the award of a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education on the completion of Year 12 and either AQF Certificate II or AQF Certificate III. The Senior Secondary Certificate of Education is an AQF qualification but it has not been allocated to a particular level within the AQF. The AQF does not specify equivalence between Senior Secondary Certificates and other AQF qualifications<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup> The volume of learning required to attain an AQF Certificate II is typically 0.5–1 year; for Certificate III it is typically 1–2 years, and for a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education it is typically 2 years (AQF Second edition p. 14). In some instances, VET in Schools students have the opportunity to complete several Certificate II qualifications as a part of their Senior Secondary Certificate of Education.

**Part 7: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education – to be added**

## Part 8: Funding Australia's schools

### 8.0 Overview

This section provides information on six main areas:

1. Funding arrangements for Australian schools in 2013
2. Funding overview of government and non-government schools in 2013
3. Government school funding and trends
4. Non-government school funding and trends
5. Capital expenditure on government and non-government schools in 2012–13
6. Overview of *My School* financial information for the 2012 calendar year.

The report provides an outline of government (both Australian and state/territory) funding arrangements for each of the school sectors.

In line with state and territory government budgets, government school funding is historically reported on a financial year basis. The financial year reported is the period 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013. This is referred to as 2013 funding in this section of the report.

Non-government school funding is reported on a calendar year basis and reflects funding and expenditure for the 2013 calendar year except for data sourced from the Report on Government Services (ROGS), which are calculated for the 2012–13 financial year. (The cost per full time equivalent student derived from these financial year figures uses the average of the full-time equivalent student numbers for the 2012 and 2013 calendar years.)

Part 8.6 of the report provides high-level profiles of recurrent funding information for the 2012 calendar year published for individual schools on the *My School* website. These data were released at the same time (March 2014) as *My School* non-finance data for the 2013 school year. *My School* calendar year finance data will always lag by one year relative to most *My School* non-finance data.

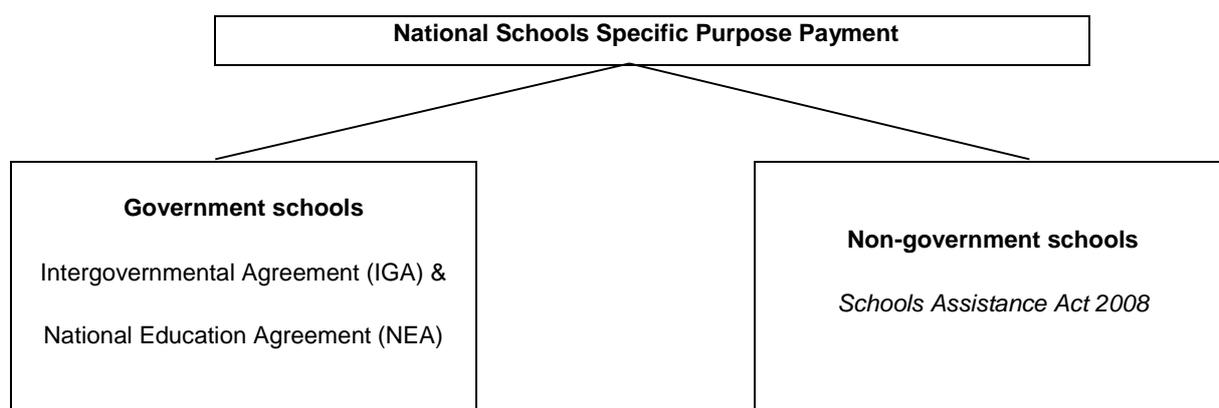
## 8.1 Funding arrangements in 2013

In 2013 Australian Government funding to schools was allocated under the framework for federal financial relations agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2009.

Under this framework, the Australian Government continued to provide school funding through the [Intergovernmental Agreement \(IGA\) on Federal Financial Relations](#); national partnerships, including the Digital Education Revolution and [Trade Training Centres in Schools](#), and the *Schools Assistance Act 2008*. National partnerships funding in 2013 reflects the different funding phases that are inherent in each partnership's aims and objectives

States and territories continued to fund specific school education initiatives and the bulk of government school costs for their jurisdictions.

Specific purpose education program funding is provided to state and territory governments as a National Schools Specific Purpose Payment (National Schools SPP) through the IGA under the *Federal Financial Relations Act 2009*. The non-government schools funding component of the National Schools SPP is determined by the *Schools Assistance Act 2008*.<sup>56</sup>



Other separate components of funding are provided through national partnerships and other school education programs funded by annual appropriations (Commonwealth Own-Purpose Expenses (COPEs)).

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<sup>56</sup> Prior to 2009, Australian Government program-based financial assistance was provided to state and territory governments for expenditure on government schools and Australian Government funding for government and non-government schools was provided under the same legislation. Due to the changes to Australian Government funding arrangements for government schools from 2009, cross-sectoral funding comparisons by program are no longer possible.

### National Schools Specific Purpose Payment – government schools component

The National Schools SPP for government schools is provided through the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations.

Associated with this funding is a National Education Agreement which sets out the objectives and outcomes for government schooling, the roles and responsibilities of each level of government, performance indicators and benchmarks, reporting mechanisms and ‘policy and reform directions’.

State and territory governments have discretion as to how to apply the National Schools SPP to achieve the agreed outcomes.

Under the National Schools SPP the previous recurrent, targeted and capital funding has been combined into an agreed base amount. This base amount is indexed each year according to a formula based on increases in Average Government School Recurrent Costs (AGSRC) and growth in full-time equivalent primary and secondary school enrolments.

Funding for Indigenous students in government schools, previously provided under the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000*, was also incorporated into the base amount.

The government school component of the National Schools SPP becomes part of the total state or territory government funding pool (which includes Australian and state and territory government funds). Each state and territory government then allocates funds from this total pool (or distributes resources) to schools based on its particular allocative mechanism (which is different for each state and territory).

Average Government School Recurrent Costs (AGSRC) are the benchmark for general recurrent funding levels and relate to the cost of educating a student in a government school. AGSRC are the basis of Australian Government recurrent funding for government and non-government school students. All school students are funded at a percentage of AGSRC.

The AGSRC amounts for primary and secondary school students are calculated based on state and territory government expense data. These AGSRC amounts are changed annually after consideration of movements in the data reported to ACARA through the SCSEEC National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) (Finance). Capital related items, such as the user cost of capital and depreciation, are excluded from the calculation of AGSRC.

### National Schools Specific Purpose Payment – non-government schools component

Australian Government funding for the non-government schools component of the National Schools SPP (for the 2009 to 2012 quadrennium, with funding under that quadrennium being extended to 2013) is determined by the *Schools Assistance Act 2008*. Funding under the Act continues to provide for general recurrent and capital purposes as well as targeted programs. Funding for the Indigenous Supplementary Assistance (ISA) is also provided under the Act.

The distribution arrangements for the non-government schools component of the National Schools SPP vary between systemic and non-systemic non-government schools. (See Part 10: Glossary for an explanation of systemic and non-systemic non-government schools.)

State and territory treasuries distribute Australian Government general recurrent grants directly to non-systemic independent schools.

Systemic non-government schools are paid through their system authorities. Like government education systems, non-government system authorities have the flexibility to distribute the general recurrent grants according to their own needs-based allocative mechanisms.

Australian Government funding for targeted programs for non-government schools is distributed through Catholic systemic school authorities and independent school associations in each state and territory. Funding for capital grants is made through Block Grant Authorities (BGAs).

The *Schools Assistance Act* also provides additional recurrent funding for Indigenous students in non-government schools called Indigenous Supplementary Assistance (ISA). Non-government schools in remote areas receive a higher rate of ISA for Indigenous students. Non-government schools in non-remote areas with more than 50 Indigenous boarding students from remote Indigenous communities also receive a higher rate of ISA for these students.

Funding for Indigenous students in non-government schools was previously provided through a number of different programs under the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000*. This funding was replaced by a single per student payment – Indigenous Supplementary Assistance. The Indigenous Funding Guarantee provides transitional funding to ensure that schools do not receive less funding in dollar terms than under the previous arrangements, taking into account enrolment changes.

A remoteness loading for non-government schools is provided in recognition of the higher cost of delivering education services in regional and remote areas of Australia. Non-government schools that have campuses located in defined remote areas receive a per student remoteness loading at 5 per cent, 10 per cent or 20 per cent of a school's socio-economic status (SES) funding rate for general recurrent grants, depending on the degree of remoteness of the school campus.

Non-government schools also receive funding for distance education students, at the base rate of 13.7 per cent of AGSRC on a full-time equivalent basis.

### National Partnerships

Additional funding for both government and non-government schools is provided by a number of special purpose national partnerships. Most of the national partnerships have been formulated through COAG and have as their basis an agreed national goal. The structure and conditions of the national partnerships vary, and include, in some cases, co-payments with state and territory government and non-government education authorities, facilitation payments, performance rewards based on negotiated outcomes and targets,

reform measures and the creation of pilot programs.

National partnerships over the period 2009–2013 included:

- Digital Education Revolution
- Nation Building and Jobs Plan
  - Building the Education Revolution
    - National School Pride Program
    - Primary Schools for the 21st Century
    - Science and Language Centres for 21st Century Secondary Schools
- Smarter Schools
  - Low Socio-economic Status School Communities
  - Literacy and Numeracy
  - Improving Teacher Quality
- Youth Attainment and Transitions
- Closing the Gap (Northern Territory)
- Trade Training Centres in Schools.<sup>57</sup>

Information on the content of national partnerships is provided in [Part 2: National initiatives and achievements](#).

### Other funding

There are other Australian Government payments, made to both the government and non-government sectors, which are termed Commonwealth Own-Purpose Expenses (COPEs). These are mostly administered by the Australian Government Department of Education and are funded through annual appropriations. Major school education programs in this category include:

- National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program
- National School Chaplaincy Program
- Quality Outcomes Program.

### Payments to states and territories

National Schools Specific Purpose Payments, for both government and non-government school sectors, are paid by the Commonwealth Treasury to state and territory treasuries. State and territory treasuries then distribute these funds to state and territory government education departments, non-government school education authorities and independent

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<sup>57</sup> While Trade Training Centres in Schools does not operate under national partnerships, payments made to the government sector have been made using the national partnerships framework.

schools.

National partnership payments are paid by the Commonwealth Treasury primarily to state and territory treasuries according to the terms of the individual partnership agreements.

#### Funding arrangements from 2014

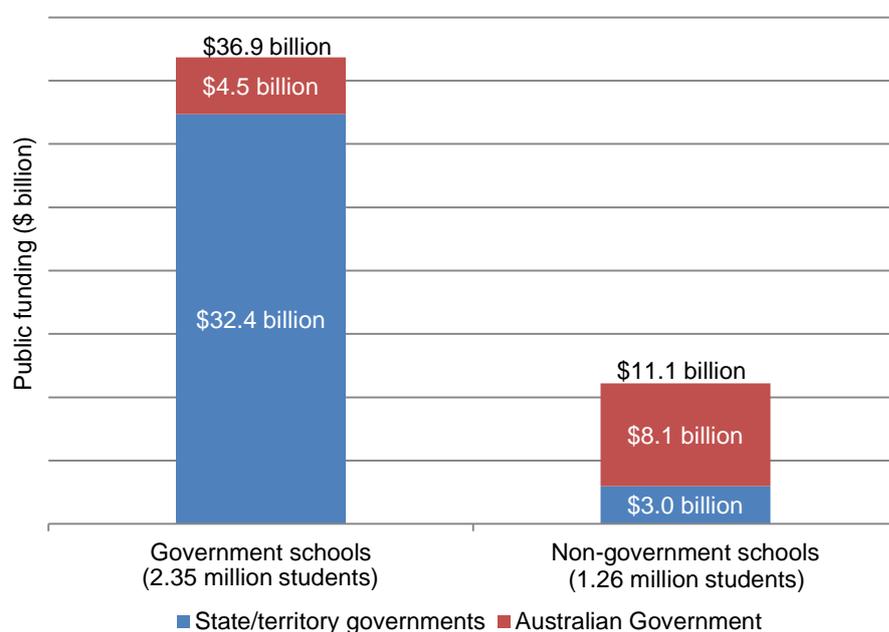
A new needs-based funding model for the provision of Australian Government funding for school education, contained in the Australian Education Act 2013, will take effect from January 2014. These funding arrangements provide that schools with students needing extra support will attract additional payment loadings.

## 8.2 An overview of government funding of schools in 2013

The Australian Government funding arrangements applying from 2009 were agreed by all governments under the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). Specified in the [Intergovernmental Agreement \(IGA\) on Federal Financial Relations](#), these arrangements are outlined in Part 8.1: Funding arrangements in 2013 that detail Australian Government school funding for 2013 (2012–13 expenditure).

Federal and state and territory government recurrent expenditure on school education in Australia for 2013 was \$48.0 billion. This is illustrated in Figure 8.1, broken down by government funding sources.

**Figure 8.1 Recurrent government funding for school education, Australia, 2012–13 (accrual basis)**



### Notes:

Depreciation and user cost of capital expenses relating to government schools have been attributed to states/territories based on ownership of the underlying assets. A portion of these assets will have been acquired through Australian Government capital contributions, with states and territories responsible for maintenance costs. Australian Government expenditure data in this table include only Australian Government specific purpose payments. Other Australian Government funding for schools and students is not included.

Student numbers are 2012–13 average full-time equivalent (FTE) student populations.

Sources: SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*, Productivity Commission, Canberra. Table 4A. 7; SCSEEC, National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), 2013

See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 49, Table 55 and Table 60

- Growth in recurrent funding between 2012 and 2013 is outlined as follows:
- **All schools** expenditure increased by 1.8 per cent.
  - Operating expenditure rose from \$47.1 billion in 2011–12 to \$48.0 billion in 2012–13, an increase of \$0.8 billion.
- **Government school sector** expenditure increased by 0.9 per cent.
  - Operating expenditure rose from \$36.5 billion in 2011–12 to \$36.9 billion in 2012–13, an increase of \$0.3 billion.
- **Non-government school sector** expenditure increased by 5.0 per cent.
  - Operating expenditure rose from \$10.6 billion in 2011–12 to \$11.1 billion in 2012–13, an increase of \$0.5 billion.

In 2013, the government school sector received 76.9 per cent of recurrent government funding while the non-government sector received 23.1 per cent.

Total government school education funding, on a student per capita basis, was on average \$15,703 for the government sector and \$8,812 for the non-government sector.

Table 8.1 below indicates the total government funding and student per capita funding from Australian and state/territory levels of government to the government and non-government sectors.

**Table 8.1 Recurrent government funding for school education, Australia, 2012–13 financial year (accrual basis)**

| 2013 government funding to schools<br>(\$ billion and \$ per capita) | Government   |                    | Non-government |                    | Total        |                    |
|--|--------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|
|  | (\$ billion) | \$ per FTE student | (\$ billion)   | \$ per FTE student | (\$ billion) | \$ per FTE student |
| State and territory governments                                      | 32.358       | 13,788             | 2.992          | 2,378              | 35.350       | 9,805              |
| Australian Government  | 4.495        | 1,915              | 8.096          | 6,434              | 12.592       | 3,493              |
| Total Australian/state/territory government funding                  | 36.853       | 15,703             | 11.088         | 8,812              | 47.941       | 13,298             |
| Average FTE students <sup>(a)</sup>                                  | 2,346,798    |                    | 1,258,298      |                    | 3,605,096    |                    |

(a) Average number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students, 2012 and 2013 calendar years. See Part 10: Glossary for definition of FTE.

Note:

Components may not add to totals due to rounding.

Sources: SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*, Productivity Commission, Canberra., Tables 4A.6, 4A.8, 4A.13, 4A.16 and 4A.18; SCSEEC, National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), 2013

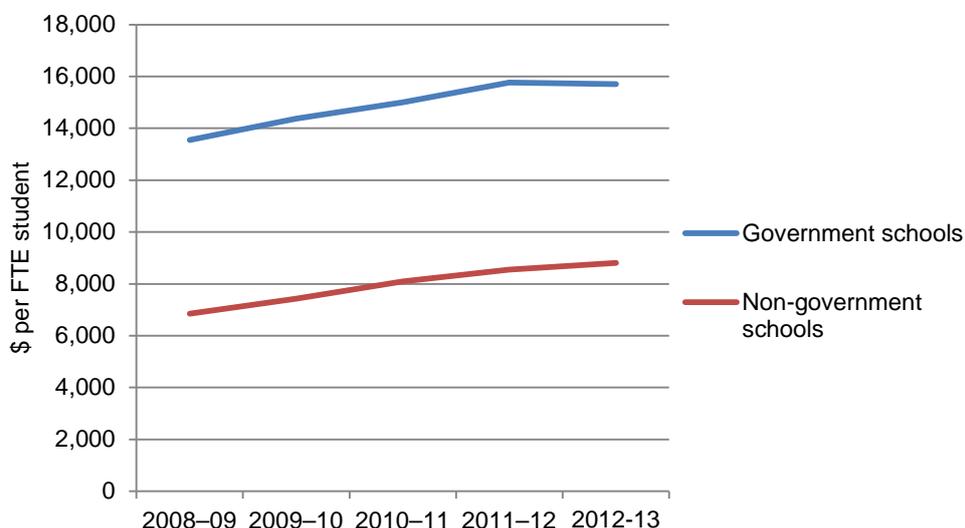
See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 49, Table 50 and Table 51

Total government funding per student over the past five years is outlined in the graph and table, Figure 8.2. This shows government school per student recurrent funding increasing over the period from 2008-09 to 2011-12 at a greater rate than for the non-government school sector and then levelling out in 2011-12 as the Building Education Revolution and the Digital Education Revolution National Partnerships reached its completion.

The growth in government school student per capita recurrent funding reflects award increases, government initiatives and also incorporates the changes in funding arrangements under the *Federal Financial Relations Act 2009* by the Australian Government from 1 January 2009 when there was an increase in government funding per primary student, a new broadbanded specific purpose payment, which included former capital funding in the recurrent base, and national partnership funding.

Funding movements within and between government and non-government schooling also reflect student profiles and related targeted needs funding.

**Figure 8.2 Total government per capita recurrent funding, government and non-government schools, 2008-09 to 2012-13 (actual \$ per FTE)**



| Figure 8.2 - source data (\$) | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Government schools            | 13,544  | 14,380  | 15,002  | 15,768  | 15,703  |
| Non-government schools        | 6,852   | 7,428   | 8,093   | 8,547   | 8,812   |

## National Report on Schooling in Australia 2013

Sources: SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*, Productivity Commission, Canberra., Tables 4A.13, 4A.16; MCEECDYA/SCSEEC, National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 49, Table 50 and Table 51 for government school data.

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Table 8.2 reflects the Australian Government's funding arrangements that commenced in 2009, which incorporate National Schools SPP and national partnership funding; and the Nation Building and Jobs Plan, which incorporates Building the Education Revolution. This then levels out in 2011-12 as the Building Education Revolution reached completion. The Nation Building and Jobs Plan program includes recurrent and capital expenditure elements.

**Table 8.2 Australian Government specific purpose payments for schools by government/non-government, recurrent/capital, Australia, 2012–13 financial year (accrual basis) (\$'000)**

| <b>Australia</b>   |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Government schools</b>  |                          |
| <b>Recurrent expenditure</b>   |                          |
| National Schools SPP   | 3,944,991 <sup>(a)</sup> |
| <b>Total recurrent – government schools</b>                                      | <b>3,944,991</b>         |
| <b>Capital expenditure</b>   |                          |
| Capital allocation   | <sup>(a)</sup>           |
| <b>Total capital – government schools</b>  | <b>0</b>                 |
| <b>Total recurrent &amp; capital – government schools</b>                        | <b>3,944,991</b>         |
| <b>National Partnership payments</b>   |                          |
| More support for students with disabilities                                      | 61,658                   |
| Rewards for Great Teachers   | 4,558                    |
| Improving Literacy and Numeracy  | 125,020                  |
| Smarter Schools  |                          |
| • Improving Teacher Quality  | 9,810                    |
| • Low SES School Communities   | 311,272                  |
| Digital Education Revolution   | 126,001                  |
| Trade Training Centres in Schools  | 130,013 <sup>(b)</sup>   |
| Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory                                       |                          |
| • Quality Teaching   | 12,550                   |
| • Additional Teachers  | 23,450                   |
| • Expansion of school enrolment and attendance measure                           | 1,769                    |
| <b>Total National Partnerships</b>   | <b>806,101</b>           |
| <b>Total National Partnerships, recurrent &amp; capital – government schools</b> | <b>4,751,092</b>         |
| <b>Non-government schools</b>  |                          |
| <b>Recurrent expenditure</b>   |                          |
| National Schools SPP   | 7,980,359 <sup>(a)</sup> |
| <b>Total recurrent – non-government schools</b>                                  | <b>7,980,359</b>         |

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| <b>Capital expenditure</b>                                    |                       |
| Capital allocation  | 0 <sup>(a)</sup>      |
| <b>Total capital – non-government schools</b>                 | <b>0</b>              |
| <b>Total recurrent &amp; capital – non-government schools</b> | <b>7,980,359</b>      |
| <b>National Partnership payments</b>                          |                       |
| More support for students with disabilities                   | 17,065                |
| Rewards for Great Teachers                                    | 3,046                 |
| Improving Literacy and Numeracy                               | 36,178                |
| Smarter Schools   |                       |
| • Improving Teacher Quality                                   | 8,190                 |
| • Low SES School Communities                                  | 51,636                |
| Digital Education Revolution                                  | 73,998                |
| Trade Training Centres in Schools                             | 51,887 <sup>(b)</sup> |
| <b>Total National Partnerships</b>                            | <b>242,000</b>        |
| <b>Total recurrent, capital &amp; National Partnerships</b>   | <b>8,222,359</b>      |
| <b>All schools</b>  |                       |
| <b>Total recurrent</b>  | <b>11,925,350</b>     |
| <b>Total National Partnership payments</b>                    | <b>1,048,101</b>      |
| <b>Total Nation Building &amp; Jobs Plan</b>                  | <b>0</b>              |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>12,973,451</b>     |

(a) From 1 January 2009 capital expenditure for government schools is included in the National Schools SPP. For consistency, the National Schools SPP for non-government schools includes capital grants totalling \$135.0m.

(b) The Trade Training Centres in Schools Program operates as a 'deemed' national partnership through 'Overarching Funding Agreements' with all government and non-government education authorities.

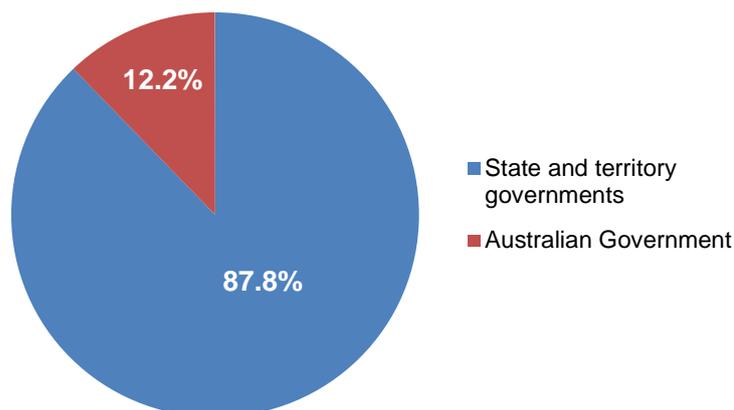
Note: National partnership payments incorporate recurrent and capital elements with the exception of Digital Education Revolution and Trade Training Centres in Schools, which are capital funding only.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training ; Final Budget Outcome (FBO) 2012–13, pp. 82–3; SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015 (ROGS)* table 4A.9.

### 8.3 Funding for government schools

Within Australia's federal system, responsibility for school education rests predominantly with state and territory governments. They are the major funders of government schools and in 2012–13 contributed 87.8 per cent (\$32.4 b) of total recurrent funding, with the Australian Government contributing the remaining 12.2 per cent (\$4.5 b).

**Figure 8.3** Total government recurrent expenditure per student, government schools, Australia, 2012–13 (%)



Source: SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*, Productivity Commission, Canberra, Table 4A.7

#### Australian Government funding for government schools

In 2009 the Australian Government committed to new funding arrangements for government schools (outlined in Part 8.1: Funding arrangements in 2013). These incorporated:

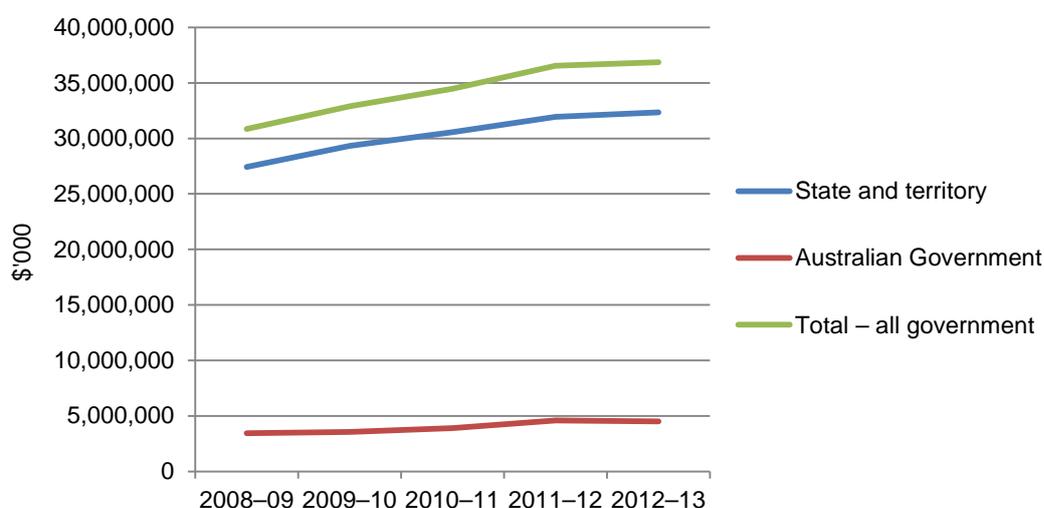
- **The National Schools Specific Purpose Payment** under the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) is based on primary and secondary enrolments and a per capita base amount. This is indexed annually according to increases in the Average Government School Recurrent Costs (AGSRC) and growth in enrolments.
- The Intergovernmental Agreement also covers **national partnership agreements**. Each national partnership agreement has its own conditions and funding is based on the achievement of educational outcomes.
- **Commonwealth Own-Purpose Expenses Annual Appropriations (COPEs)** include a range of specific purpose programs.

Under the IGA all state and territory governments are given flexibility in how much of this funding is to be allocated to recurrent and capital programs.

### Government school recurrent expenditure

The total recurrent expenditure by government education systems over the past five years is provided at Figure 8.4.

**Figure 8.4 Australian, state and territory government recurrent expenditure (actual \$'000), government schools, 2008–09 to 2012–13**



| <b>Figure 8.4 - source data (\$'000)</b> | 2008–09    | 2009–10    | 2010–11    | 2011–12    | 2012–13    |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| State and territory                      | 27,415,480 | 29,332,876 | 30,558,097 | 31,954,218 | 32,357,724 |
| Australian Government                    | 3,440,779  | 3,561,513  | 3,912,533  | 4,578,680  | 4,495,078  |
| Total – all government                   | 30,856,259 | 32,894,389 | 34,470,630 | 36,532,898 | 36,852,802 |

Sources: SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*, Productivity Commission, Canberra., Table 4A.8; MCEECDYA/SCSEEC, National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) (Finance), 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 49

Figure 8.4 shows government school recurrent expenditure has increased from \$30.9 billion to \$36.9 billion from 2008–09 to 2012–13, an increase of 19.4 per cent or an annual average increase of 4.6 per cent.

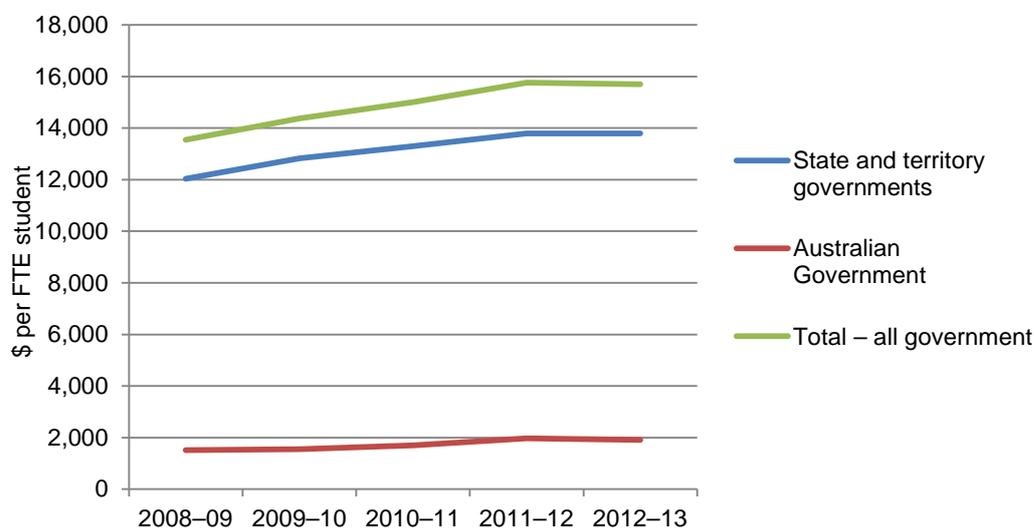
In 2011 the primary and secondary student government funding is set at 10.0 per cent of the AGSRC. (Primary funding increased from 8.9 per cent to 10.0 per cent of the AGSRC in 2009 to be in line with government secondary schools per capita funding.)

It should be noted that in 2009 the relative funding shares between the Australian and state and territory governments were also impacted by the Australian Government transferring former capital funding into its broadbanded recurrent program (National Schools Specific Purpose Payment). It should also be noted that funding arrangements, including the methodology for allocating funding, differ among states and territories. Historically, government school systems have not reported expenditure related to income received from parents and school communities under national reporting frameworks.

### Government school recurrent per capita expenditure

Per capita relativities from 2008–09 to 2012–13 are shown below in Figure 8.5.

**Figure 8.5 Australian, state and territory government recurrent expenditure per student, government schools (actual \$ per FTE student), 2008–09 to 2012–13**



| <b>Figure 8.5 - source data (\$)</b> | <b>2008–09</b> | <b>2009–10</b> | <b>2010–11</b> | <b>2011–12</b> | <b>2012–13</b> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| State and territory governments      | 12,034         | 12,823         | 13,299         | 13,792         | 13,788         |
| Australian Government                | 1,510          | 1,557          | 1,703          | 1,976          | 1,915          |
| Total – all government               | 13,544         | 14,380         | 15,002         | 15,768         | 15,703         |

Sources: SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*, Productivity Commission, Canberra., Table 4A.13; MCEECDYA/SCSEEC, National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) (Finance), 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 50

The recurrent student per capita expenditure (shown in Figure 8.5 above) shows similar movements to total government school expenditure. Expenditure per student has increased from \$13,544 to \$15,703 from 2008–09 to 2012–13, an increase of 15.9 per cent or an annual average increase of 3.8 per cent.

### Primary and secondary school recurrent per capita expenditure

Per capita recurrent expenditure in government schools has steadily increased over the past decade. Table 8.3 shows that in 2012–13 this expenditure reached \$14,520 for primary students and \$17,608 for secondary students.

**Table 8.3** Recurrent per capita expenditure on government schools, by level of education, Australia, 2008–09 to 2012–13 financial years (accrual basis) (actual \$)

| Financial year | Primary | Secondary | Total  |
|----------------|---------|-----------|--------|
| 2008–09        | 12,391  | 15,312    | 13,544 |
| 2009–10        | 13,240  | 16,132    | 14,380 |
| 2010–11        | 13,895  | 16,720    | 15,002 |
| 2011–12        | 14,515  | 17,746    | 15,768 |
| 2012–13        | 14,520  | 17,608    | 15,703 |

Note: Figures include state/territory and Australian Government contributions.

Sources: SCSEEC, National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), 2013; *National Report on Schooling in Australia* (previous years); SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*, Productivity Commission, Canberra. Table 4A.13

See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 51

Table 8.3 shows consistent growth over five years with a slight drop of 0.4 per cent in total per capita funding over 2011-12 to 2012-13 from \$15,768 to \$15,703.

Recurrent per capita funding for secondary schools decreased by 0.8 per cent from 2011-12 to 2012-13, while funding for primary school remained generally consistent over the same period.

Secondary schools have a higher rate of per capita expenditure than primary schools, mainly because of the complexity and range of the education services provision and the smaller student–teacher ratios in the last two years of schooling.

### Government schools – in-school and out-of-school expenditure

Table 8.4 below shows funding going to in-school and out-of-school activities for the government school systems.

**Table 8.4 Operating expenditure by government education systems, Australia, 2008–09 to 2012–13 financial years (accrual basis) (actual \$'000)**

| Area of expenditure       | 2008–09           | 2009–10           | 2010–11           | 2011–12           | 2012–13           |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| In-school expenditure     | 29,328,166        | 31,251,676        | 32,807,006        | 34,722,696        | 35,076,410        |
| Out-of-school expenditure | 1,528,093         | 1,642,713         | 1,663,624         | 1,810,202         | 1,776,393         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>30,856,259</b> | <b>32,894,389</b> | <b>34,470,630</b> | <b>36,532,898</b> | <b>36,852,802</b> |

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

Sources: SCSEEC, National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), 2013; *National Report on Schooling in Australia* (previous years); SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, Report on Government Services 2015, Productivity Commission, Canberra, Table 4A.10

See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 49

Out-of-school expenditure for government systems includes state office, regional and local functions supporting schools. In-school expenditure includes teaching and learning and school administration, and library functions within schools.

Expenditure on out-of-school support functions represents approximately five per cent of total government funding on state and territory government schools. The major component of funding, some 95 per cent, goes to fund schools directly.

**Table 8.5 Operating expenditure by government education systems, Australia, 2008–09 to 2012–13 financial years (accrual basis) (actual \$'000)**

| Area of expenditure              | 2008–09           | 2009–10           | 2010–11           | 2011–12           | 2012-13           |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>In-school expenditure</b>     |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Salaries (teaching)              | 15,776,884        | 16,414,504        | 17,096,556        | 18,178,507        | 18,260,491        |
| Salaries (non-teaching)          | 3,213,061         | 3,406,772         | 3,601,442         | 3,906,268         | 4,065,443         |
| Redundancies                     | 588               | 32,998            | 16,038            | 18,327            | 39,721            |
| Non-salary costs                 | 5,915,317         | 6,649,279         | 6,922,245         | 6,996,004         | 7,145,009         |
| User cost of capital             | 4,422,316         | 4,748,122         | 5,170,725         | 5,623,590         | 5,565,745         |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                  | <b>29,328,166</b> | <b>31,251,676</b> | <b>32,807,006</b> | <b>34,722,696</b> | <b>35,076,409</b> |
| <b>Out-of-school expenditure</b> |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Salaries (non-teaching)          | 884,212           | 946,314           | 1,037,481         | 1,099,922         | 1,021,658         |
| Redundancies                     | 2,810             | 13,866            | 5,397             | 17,692            | 50,933            |
| Non-salary costs                 | 612,934           | 652,729           | 587,948           | 664,627           | 669,869           |
| User cost of capital             | 28,137            | 29,805            | 32,798            | 27,961            | 33,932            |
| Subtotal                         | 1,528,093         | 1,642,713         | 1,663,624         | 1,810,202         | 1,776,393         |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>30,856,259</b> | <b>32,894,389</b> | <b>34,470,630</b> | <b>36,532,898</b> | <b>36,852,802</b> |

**Notes:**

Amounts include Australian Government non-capital-related Specific Purpose Payments and other grants made to states/territories. Depreciation and user cost of capital expenses included in the figures are based on assets owned by states/territories, some of which will have been acquired with Australian Government capital grants.

Totals may not add due to rounding.

Sources: SCSEEC, National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), 2013; *National Report on Schooling in Australia* (previous years); Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision (SCRGSP), Report on Government Services 2015, Productivity Commission, Canberra, Table 4A.10

See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 49

In-school expenditure substantially reflects teacher salaries expenditure, which accounts for some 63 per cent of in-school expenditure once the user cost of capital figure has been excluded for comparative purposes. The user cost of capital reflects the opportunity cost of being able to utilise capital funding for recurrent purposes (based on eight per cent of the written down value of capital assets). In-school non-salary costs account for some 24 per cent of in-school expenditure once the user cost of capital figure has been excluded. These expenditures include school materials, maintenance, cleaning and student transport costs.

## 8.4 Funding for non-government schools

Funding is provided to non-government schools by the Australian Government and by state and territory governments.

### Australian Government funding for non-government schools

The funding system introduced by the Australian Government in 2001 – based on the socio-economic status (SES) of each non-government school's community – continued in 2013.

The SES approach to school funding involves linking student address data to Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing data to obtain a measure of the capacity of the school community to support its school.

Schools with SES scores of 85 and below are funded by the Australian Government at 70 per cent of Average Government School Recurrent Costs (AGSRC). Schools with scores of 130 or above receive 13.7 per cent of AGSRC. Funding for schools with SES scores within this range receive proportional funding based on their individual SES scores.

Those non-government schools, which, because of their SES score, were entitled to less funding under the SES system when it was introduced in 2001, had their general recurrent funding maintained at their year 2000 per student funding rate. This funding is indexed each year according to increases in AGSRC.

For each new funding period, all non-government schools have their SES scores recalculated according to updated student address data and the information in the latest Census of Population and Housing. Schools therefore had their SES scores recalculated for the 2005–08 and 2009–13 funding periods.

Those year 2000 'funding maintained' (FM) schools that still had an SES score with a funding entitlement less than their current level of funding continued to have their funding maintained at their year 2000 per student funding rate with indexation.

Catholic systemic schools did not join the SES system until 2005. As a result of the 'no losers' commitment, FM arrangements were also created for these schools. Therefore, those Catholic systemic schools that had an SES score with a lower entitlement than previously funded had their funding maintained at their 2004 per student funding rates. This funding is indexed each year according to increases in AGSRC.

A transitional funding guarantee was made available under SES arrangements to schools that experienced a rise in their SES score between the 2005–08 and 2009–13 funding periods. These schools have had their funding frozen (with no adjustment for inflation) until the dollar amount associated with the school's new (higher) SES score is equal to or greater than the dollar amount it received at its lower SES score. This additional measure, defined as a funding guarantee, is separate to funding maintained schools arrangements. Therefore, under the SES funding arrangements, non-government schools are funded on their SES score, are funding maintained or are funding guaranteed.

The non-government sector also receives funding for National Partnerships associated with the National Education Agreement (NEA) under the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA).

## Per capita income

Non-government schools derive their income from Australian Government and state/territory government grants, fees and fundraising, including donations.

Table 55 in Part 9: Additional Statistics details this per capita income; some data are summarised as Table 8.6 below. The income shown in Table 8.6 funds both recurrent and capital applications.

**Table 8.6 Non-government school per capita incomes, by source, Australia, 2013 calendar year**

| Income source                | Catholic schools       |                   | Independent schools    |                   |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
|                              | Per capita amount (\$) | % of total income | Per capita amount (\$) | % of total income |
| Australian Government grants | 7,392                  | 53.6              | 5,844                  | 31.5              |
| State/Territory grants       | 2,427                  | 17.6              | 2,032                  | 10.9              |
| Total government grants      | 9,819                  | 71.2              | 7,876                  | 42.4              |
| Private income               | 3,966                  | 28.8              | 10,703                 | 57.6              |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>13,786</b>          |                   | <b>18,579</b>          |                   |

Notes:

Excludes amounts related to boarding facilities, and direct payments by the Commonwealth to students and/or parents.

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

Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training unpublished data..

See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 55

## Per capita expenditure

Details of expenditure in the non-government sector are also available in Tables 55 and 56 in Part 9: Additional Statistics, while Table 8.7 below summarises total per capita expenditure. The per capita figures reflect recurrent expenditure calculations, which are a mixture of cash and accrual based expenditures, including debt servicing of loans for capital and operating purposes.

Non-government school per capita expenditure differs from government school per capita determinations outlined in Part 8.3 as it includes some capital-related expenditure such as interest subsidies for the debt servicing of loans, and excludes user cost of capital, loan principal repayments and government subsidies for transport-related costs, which, historically, have not been applied to the non-government sector.

**Table 8.7 Non-government schools per capita expenditure, by affiliation, Australia, 2013 calendar year**

| Affiliation        | Per capita expenditure (\$) |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Catholic</b>    |                             |
| Primary            | 10,396                      |
| Secondary          | 16,175                      |
| Combined           | 16,467                      |
| <b>Independent</b> |                             |
| Primary            | 13,971                      |
| Secondary          | 21,661                      |
| Combined           | 18,506                      |

Notes:

Excludes amounts related to boarding facilities, and direct payments by the Commonwealth to students and/or parents.

Includes debt servicing of loans for capital and operating purposes.

Where applicable, expenditure of system offices is allocated across the schools in proportion to enrolments.

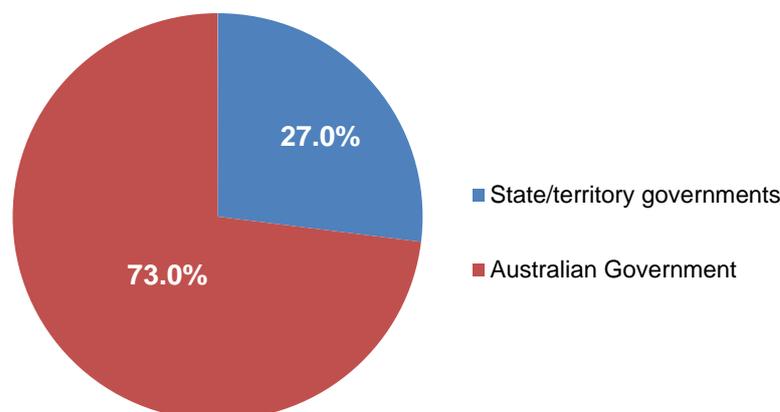
Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between the sums of component items and totals.

Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training unpublished data.

See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 56

Total recurrent expenditure on non-government school education from the Australian Government and state and territory governments in 2012–13 was approximately \$8,812 per student. Australian Government expenditure was \$6,434 per student, or 73.0 per cent of this total. State and territory recurrent expenditure was \$2,378 per student, or 27.0 per cent of the total. This is depicted in Figure 8.6.

**Figure 8.6** Total government recurrent expenditure per student, non-government schools, Australia, 2012–13 (%)



| Figure 8.6 - source data        | 2012-13 | Percentage |
|---------------------------------|---------|------------|
| State and territory governments | 2,378   | 27.0       |
| Australian Government           | 6,434   | 73.0       |
| Total - all government          | 8,812   | 100.0      |

Source: SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*, Productivity Commission, Canberra, Table 4A.16

### State and territory government recurrent funding for non-government schools

As well as providing recurrent grants to government schools, all states and territories fund non-government schools. State/territory governments used a variety of mechanisms for allocating funding to non-government schools in 2012.

New South Wales, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory allocated funding based on the former Australian Government Education Resources Index (ERI).

Victoria included both core and needs-based funding related to factors including socio-economic status, disability, Education Maintenance Allowance eligibility, remoteness and indigeneity.

In Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania the allocation mechanism included standard and needs-based components. In Queensland, need is assessed by reference to a variety of factors, including the Australian Government SES scores and a school resource index. In South Australia, both school and student-based measures of need are used, but there is no reference to either the former Australian Government ERI or current Australian Government SES scores. In Tasmania, need is assessed by exclusive reference to SES.

The Northern Territory has separate funding rates for primary, middle and senior secondary students and students attending remote schools. There is also a separate grant for students with severe disabilities – a per capita arrangement based on identified students in independent schools. For Catholic schools the grant is currently based on one per cent of enrolments.

Table 8.8 below outlines total Australian, state and territory recurrent expenditure on non-government schools in 2012–13.

Total recurrent expenditure on non-government school education from the Australian Government and state and territory governments in 2012–13 was approximately \$11.1 billion. Australian Government expenditure was \$8.1 billion, or 73.0 per cent of this total. State and territory recurrent expenditure was \$3.0 billion, or 27.0 per cent of the total.

**Table 8.8 Australian, state and territory government recurrent expenditure, non-government schools (\$'000) (2012–13 \$)**

|  | Australia  |
|--|------------|
| Australian Government specific purpose payments (excluding capital grants and including National Partnership payments – Literacy and numeracy) | 8,096,474  |
| State and territory government recurrent expenditure   | 2,991,789  |
| Australian, state and territory government recurrent expenditure   | 11,088,263 |

Note: Australian Government specific purpose payments include recurrent, targeted and Indigenous program expenditure, until 2008-09. From 2009-10 onwards, these categories are not separately reported but funds expended on these purposes are included in the total specific purpose payment provision.

Source: SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*, Productivity Commission, Table 4A.8

## 8.5 Capital expenditure

### State and territory capital expenditure for government schools

As shown in Table 8.9, capital expenditure by state and territory governments in government schools was \$1.9 billion in 2013 (the 2012–13 financial year).

This table combines funding provided from the Australian Government and state and territory sourced funding. It should be noted that it is not possible to separate this funding following the Australian Government's decision in 2009 to amalgamate specific purpose capital funding with a broad recurrent specific purpose payment under the [Intergovernmental Agreement \(IGA\) on Federal Financial Relations](#).

As Table 8.9 shows, there was an increased level of capital expenditure over the period 2008-09 to 2010-11. This expenditure has since dropped, as by the close of 2011, the majority of projects funded under the Australian Government's Building the Education Revolution program were completed physically and financially in government and non-government schools. Only a relatively minor part of this program's works required finalisation after 2011.

The variations in capital expenditure reflect both:

- the Australian Government's injection of capital funds under the Investing in Our Schools Program, Building the Education Revolution (BER), the Trade Training Centres and the Digital Education Revolution National Partnerships. (The National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan, including the BER, expired in December 2012.)
- specific initiatives by various state and territory governments to invest in school infrastructure.

Capital funding and expenditure will, by their nature, reflect the need for capital infrastructure development and building programs associated with growth cycles in enrolments generally, and more specifically, in growth regions and corridors in a state or territory, as well as having regard to the age and condition of existing capital stock. By contrast, changes in recurrent expenditure will reflect the ongoing teaching and curriculum costs associated with schools and be relatively smoother in nature.

**Table 8.9 Capital expenditure by state and territory governments in government schools, Australia, 2008–09 to 2012–13 financial years (accrual basis) (\$'000)**

| Financial year | NSW       | Vic.      | Qld.      | SA      | WA      | Tas.    | NT      | ACT     | Australia |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| 2008-09        | 607,518   | 521,230   | 668,141   | 50,616  | 269,326 | 38,896  | 44,223  | 92,504  | 2,292,453 |
| 2009-10        | 2,567,386 | 1,269,900 | 1,977,011 | 488,650 | 690,849 | 223,232 | 154,695 | 199,437 | 7,571,161 |
| 2010-11        | 1,799,683 | 1,835,015 | 1,437,641 | 440,642 | 820,969 | 200,907 | 106,052 | 198,547 | 6,839,455 |
| 2011-12        | 584,824   | 720,258   | 434,002   | 144,570 | 668,824 | 36,746  | 54,187  | 96,735  | 2,740,147 |
| 2012-13        | 426,911   | 444,307   | 345,810   | 106,720 | 465,354 | 8,356   | 19,416  | 74,055  | 1,890,928 |

**Notes:**

Figures include Australian Government capital grants contributions.

Components may not add to totals due to rounding.

Sources: SCSEEC, National Schools Statistics Collection, 2013; *National Report on Schooling in Australia*, 2009–13

See also Part 9: Additional Statistics Table 49

### Australian Government capital funding

Table 8.10 provides a summary of Australian Government capital funding in 2012.

The previous Specific Purpose Program capital element was rolled into the National Schools Specific Purpose Payment (recurrent funds) for government schools under the COAG arrangements that commenced in 2009. These funds can now be used flexibly by jurisdictions for either capital or recurrent purposes. Capital funding continues as a separate program for the non-government sector.

There are also National Partnership funded programs which incorporate programs of a capital nature. The Trade Training Centres and Digital Education Revolution Australian Government capital-funded programs are appropriated under the Federal Financial Relations Act 2009 and expended by states and territories through both recurrent and capital accounts based on the nature of the expenditure and the capitalisation thresholds that apply.

**Table 8.10 Australian Government specific purpose payments for schools by government/non-government, capital, Australia, 2012–13 financial year (accrual basis) (\$'000)**

| <b>Australia</b>  |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>Government schools</b>   |                |
| <b>Capital expenditure</b>  |                |
| Capital allocation  | (a)            |
| <b>Total capital – government schools</b>                                 | <b>0</b>       |
| <b>National Partnership payments</b>                                      |                |
| Digital Education Revolution  | 126,001        |
| Trade Training Centres in Schools   | 130,013        |
| <b>Total National Partnerships</b>  | <b>256,014</b> |
| <b>Total National Partnerships &amp; capital – government schools</b>     | <b>256,014</b> |
| <b>Non-government schools</b>   |                |
| <b>Capital expenditure</b>  |                |
| Capital allocation  | (a)            |
| <b>Total capital – non-government schools</b>                             | <b>0</b>       |
| <b>National Partnership payments</b>                                      |                |
| Digital Education Revolution  | 73,998         |
| Trade Training Centres in Schools   | 51,887         |
| <b>Total National Partnerships</b>  | <b>125,885</b> |
| <b>Total National Partnerships &amp; capital – non-government schools</b> | <b>125,885</b> |
| <b>Government and non-government schools</b>                              |                |
| <b>Total non-government capital</b>                                       | <b>0</b> (a)   |
| <b>Total National Partnership payments</b>                                | <b>381,899</b> |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>381,899</b> |

(a) From 1 January 2009 capital expenditure for government schools is included in the National Schools SPP. For consistency, the National Schools SPP for non-government schools includes grants totalling \$135.0m.

(b) The Trade Training Centres in Schools Program operates as a 'deemed' national partnership through 'Overarching Funding Agreements' with all government and non-government education authorities.

Sources: Australian Government Department of Education and Training (formerly Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)), Final Budget Outcome (FBO) 2012–13, pp. 82–3; SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*, (ROGS), Table 4A.9.

## 8.6 Overview of *My School* financial information

**Important note:** As indicated below there are key differences between *My School* finance data and National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) (Finance) and other finance data reported in Parts 8.1–8.5 of this report. The income-based finance data from *My School* should not be compared to the expenditure-based finance data quoted in previous subsections.

### *My School* financial reporting

In 2010, Education Ministers approved the publication of school financial information on a school by school basis on the *My School* website. This section of the report provides high-level profiles of recurrent funding information for the 2012 calendar year based on school financial details published on the *My School* website in March 2014.

*My School* financial reporting is designed to provide parents, teachers and governments with a clear picture of the resources provided to schools to support the education of their students.

The key financial measure reported on *My School* is school Net Recurrent Income and Net Recurrent Income per Student (NRIPS). Government and non-government schools and systems that allocate some of their gross income to capital purposes have these amounts shown and deducted from their gross income. Gross income that is allocated to capital expenses in the reporting year is included in the school's capital expenditure report.

The methodology and other associated material related to *My School* finance data classification may be obtained from the *My School* website.

*My School* finance data were developed to show the income available to a school, over a calendar year (not financial year), to deliver education services to students. *My School* income data include private funding that supports a school but exclude user cost of capital (a notional opportunity cost), payroll tax and the cost of transporting students to and from school.

In addition, it should be noted that private funding, as reported on *My School* for the government sector, is excluded from the NSSC (Finance) collection whereas payroll tax, student transport and user cost of capital are included in NSSC expenditure information. Also, the NSSC finance data are reported on a financial year basis. Therefore recurrent income information contained within this section and recurrent expenditure in the preceding sections are not directly comparable.

For government and systemic schools, where a system' or managing organisation (such as a district, region or state office) other than the school itself, incurs expenditure and manages finances for the school, each school's income is composed of all such funds used for and on behalf of the school plus any cash income received at the school level, as if each school were accounted for as a stand-alone entity. This approach is consistent with the principles of Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1004 – Contributions.

It also is important to note that the definitions and counting rules for schools and enrolments used for the My School website differ, in some respects, to those of the SCSEEC National Schools Statistics Collection (Non-Finance)<sup>58</sup> used for the reporting of school and student data elsewhere in this report.

This section provides summarised national recurrent income information by source and NRIPS information by school size and school sector derived from My School information.

### Recurrent Income

For 2012, the Australian Government funding comprised 16 per cent of the total gross recurrent income for government schools with the majority 79 per cent being funded by the state governments.

For non-government schools the Australian Government contributed 55 per cent of Catholic sector gross recurrent income and 31 per cent of independent sector gross recurrent income. Income from fees, charges and parent contributions contributed to 52 per cent of independent sector recurrent income and 23 per cent of Catholic sector recurrent income.

Table 8.11 below shows the movements in recurrent income between 2011 and 2012 by funding source.

**Table 8.11 Movements in recurrent income between 2011 and 2012**

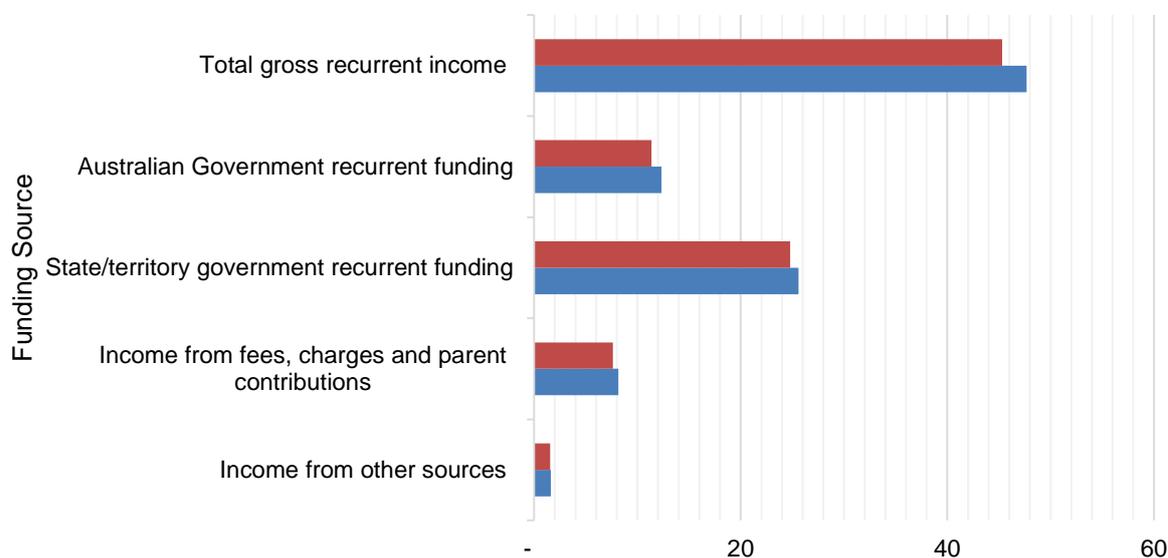
| Source  | 2011 (\$billion) | 2012 (\$billion) | Change |
|---|------------------|------------------|--------|
| Australian Government                           | 11.355           | 12.332           | 8.6%   |
| State Government                                | 24.800           | 25.588           | 3.2%   |
| Fees, Charges and Parental Contributions        | 7.625            | 8.150            | 6.9%   |
| Other Private Sources                           | 1.546            | 1.617            | 4.6%   |
| Total Gross Income                              | 45.326           | 47.687           | 5.2%   |
| Deductions (from Recurrent to Capital Services) | 1.779            | 1.805            | 1.5%   |
| Total Net Recurrent Income                      | 43.547           | 45.882           | 5.4%   |
| CPI change <sup>59</sup>                        |                  |                  | 2.2    |

<sup>58</sup> The National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) (Non-Finance) is published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as Cat. No. 4221.0, *Schools, Australia* and is the source of school number and student enrolment data reported elsewhere in this report, including in the Additional Statistics, and in previous editions of the *National Report on Schooling in Australia*. Data included in this section on a per school or per student basis cannot be directly compared to data reported elsewhere in this or previous reports. Further information on the NSSC (Non-Finance) is included in Part 10: Glossary.

<sup>59</sup> CPI changes used in this and subsequent tables represent changes from December quarter to December quarter, as per ABS cat. No. 6401.0, series ID A2325847F

These data are depicted graphically in Figure 8.7 below.

**Figure 8.7: Total recurrent Income between 2011 and 2012, by funding source (billions)**



|        | Income from other sources | Income from fees, charges and parent contributions | State/territory government recurrent funding | Australian Government recurrent funding | Total gross recurrent income |
|--------|---------------------------|--|--|---|------------------------------|
| ■ 2011 | 1,546,335,567             | 7,624,728,296                                      | 24,799,885,203                               | 11,355,231,475                          | 45,326,180,542               |
| ■ 2012 | 1,617,231,067             | 8,149,766,378                                      | 25,588,166,510                               | 12,332,258,668                          | 47,687,422,623               |

Source: ACARA

### Net Recurrent Income per Student (NRIPS)

As the number of students varies across years, showing income per student allows for a more informative comparison, particularly between sectors. Table 8.12 below depicts income per student.

**Table 8.12 Movements in income per student between 2011 and 2012**

| Source                                   | 2011      | 2012      | Change |
|--|-----------|-----------|--------|
| Australian Government                    | 3,219     | 3,438     | 6.8%   |
| State Government                         | 7,031     | 7,134     | 1.5%   |
| Fees, Charges and Parental Contributions | 2,162     | 2,272     | 5.1%   |
| Other Private Sources                    | 438       | 451       | 2.9%   |
| Total Gross Income                       | 12,850    | 13,296    | 3.5%   |
| Deductions                               | 504       | 503       | -0.2%  |
| Total NRIPS                              | 12,345    | 12,793    | 3.6%   |
| FTE student numbers                      | 3,527,396 | 3,586,605 | 1.7%   |
| CPI change                               |           |           | 2.2    |
| NRIPS (Govt.)                            | 12,048    | 12,370    | 2.7%   |
| NRIPS (Catholic)                         | 11,079    | 11,648    | 5.1%   |
| NRIPS (Independent)                      | 15,181    | 15,996    | 5.4%   |

Notes:

1. Deductions from Recurrent to Capital Services.
2. NRIPS (Net Recurrent Income Per Student) = Total Gross Income per student minus Deductions per

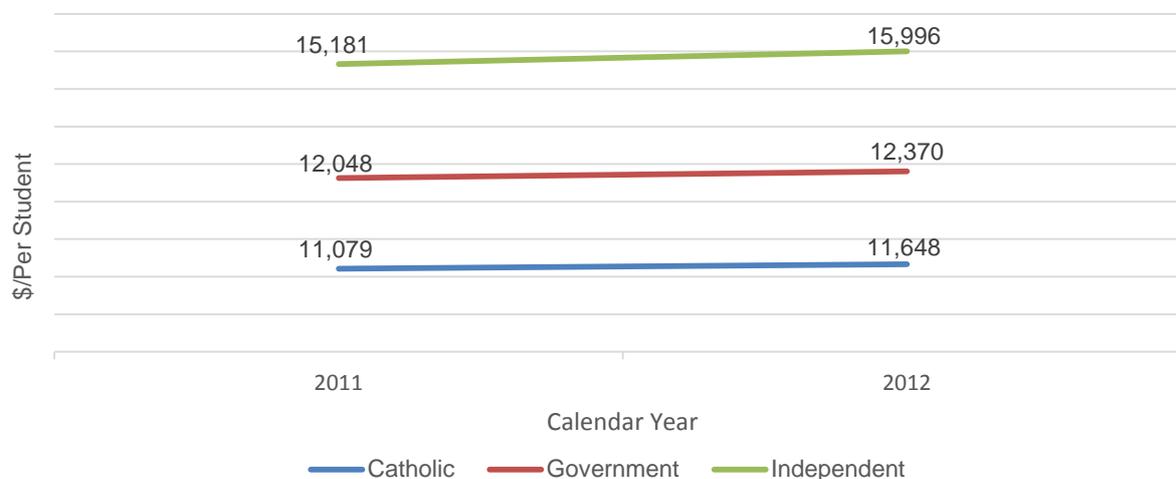
Source: ACARA

In 2012, the net recurrent income per student (NRIPS) was \$12,793. This is an increase of 3.62% over 2011.

Between 2011 and 2012, there was 2.68% increase for the government sector (to \$12,370), a 5.14% increase for the Catholic sector (to \$11,647), and a 5.37% increase for the independent sector (to \$15,996).

In both 2011 and 2012, NRIPS is highest for the independent sector, followed by the government sector, and then the Catholic sector. However, growth in the Catholic sector rate has significantly outpaced the other sectors to the point that Catholic sector NRIPS is just below that of the government sector in 2012.

Figure 8.8 shows that the NRIPS gap between the government and Catholic sectors is narrowing, however the gap between the independent sector and the other two sectors remains fairly constant.

**Figure 8.8: Trend in NRIPS between 2011 and 2012, by Sector (\$/Per Student)**

Source: ACARA

### Net recurrent income per student and school size

*My School* financial information indicates that generally, the larger the size of the school, the lower is its NRIPS. This is to be expected, due to economies of scale in larger schools where fixed and less variable funding components are spread over a larger student base, reducing NRIPS. There are also demonstrated relationships between remoteness and smaller school size, meaning that smaller schools are more likely to be in non-metropolitan areas and have access to needs-based funding support.

School size exerts a determining influence on a school's recurrent income. Generally, the lower a school's enrolment, the higher is its NRIPS.

The national average school NRIPS in 2012 was \$12,793 compared to \$12,345 in 2011, an increase of 3.62 per cent, and the average school full-time equivalent (FTE) funded enrolment was 356, based on 2012 FTE funded enrolments reported on *My School*.

As school size progressively increases above the average school size, the NRIPS progressively decreases due to the impact of key factors such as economies of scale and location. As school size decreases below the average school size, per student income rises markedly due to factors such as diseconomies of small scale and remote and very remote locations.

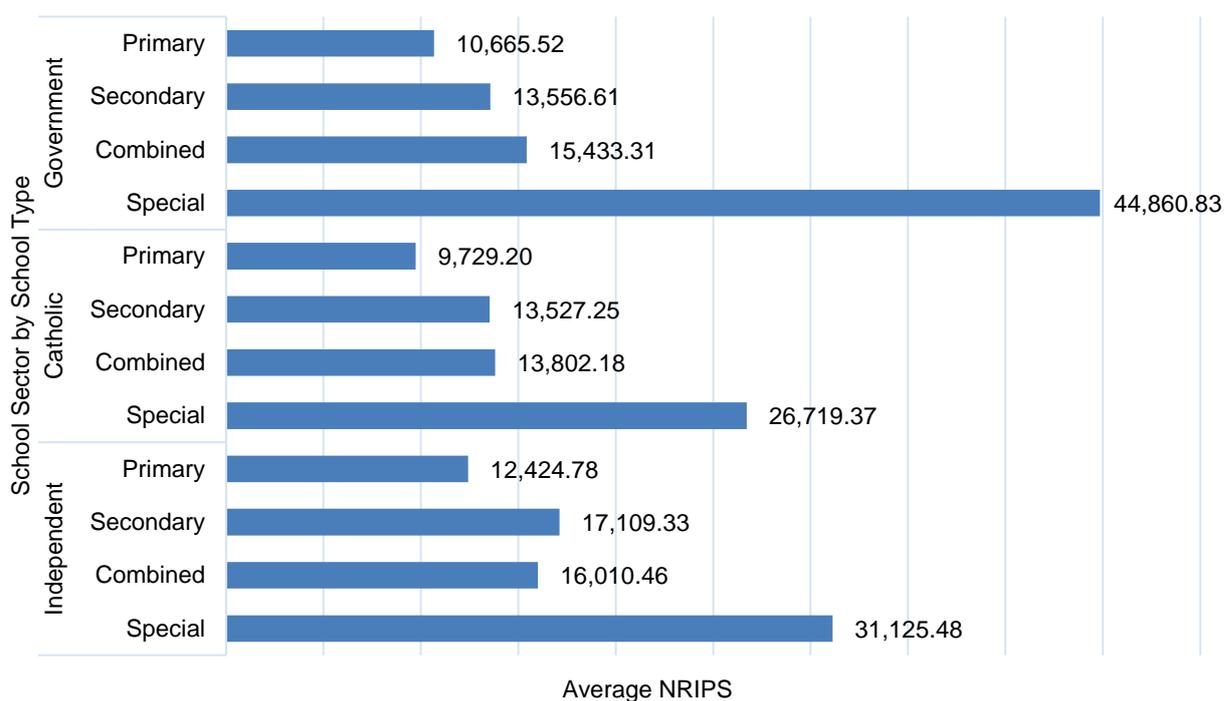
## Net recurrent income per student and school type

**Table 8.13** Average net recurrent income per student by school type, 2012

|                                    | Primary | Secondary | Combined | Special | All school types |
|------------------------------------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|------------------|
| 2012 Average NRIPS (\$)            | 10,508  | 13,684    | 15,581   | 41,923  | 12,793           |
| 2012 Average FTE funded enrolments | 272     | 730       | 380      | 53      | 280              |

Source: ACARA

Table 8.13 above provides details of the average number and NRIPS of schools by type and also reveals the layered nature of NRIPS according to school type, with primary schools having the lowest levels of NRIPS, followed by secondary, then combined and finally special schools.

**Figure 8.9** Distribution of school net recurrent income per student for school sectors by school type, 2012

Source: ACARA

Figure 8.9 highlights the relatively high costs of operating special schools and government combined schools. However, it should be noted that, within the government sector, combined schools are mainly established only in remote or sparsely populated areas and that their high cost of operation is related to their size and location.

## Part 10: Glossary

**Note on terms:** A major source of data reported in the *National Report on Schooling in Australia 2013* is the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC). The NSSC includes statistics on students, schools, and staff involved in the provision or administration of primary and secondary education, in government and non-government schools, for all Australian states and territories. The school census date for the collection, for all states and territories and all school sectors (affiliations), is the first Friday in August each year.

The NSSC is a joint undertaking of the Australian state and territory departments of education, the Australian Government Department of Education, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC). Data from the collection are published by the ABS in *Schools, Australia, 2013* (cat. no. 4221.0). Definitions of terms in this glossary are, for the most part, quoted or adapted from the NSSC glossary and explanatory notes; and from the *Notes, Instructions and Tabulations* document, which is available on request from the ABS.

### Apparent progression rates and apparent retention rates

As direct measurement of the change in circumstances of individual students progressing through the education system is not currently possible, apparent measures, based on aggregate student data, have been developed to provide indicative measurements of student engagement in secondary education.

Apparent progression rates measure the proportion of a cohort of full-time students that moves from one grade to the next at an expected rate of progression of one grade per year. See [Schools, Australia explanatory notes](#) for further information.

Apparent retention rates provide an indicative measure of the number of school students who have stayed in school, as at a designated grade and year. It is calculated by dividing the number of students in a cohort in a specific calendar year by the number of students in the same cohort in a previous reference year. It is expressed as a percentage of the respective cohort group against the cohort that those students would be expected to have come from, assuming an expected rate of progression of one grade a year. See [Schools, Australia explanatory notes](#) for further information.

### Estimated resident population

The Estimated Resident Population (ERP) series is used as a denominator to calculate students as a proportion of the population. The ERP is an estimate of the population of Australia, based on data from the quinquennial ABS Census of Population and Housing, and is updated quarterly using information on births, deaths, interstate migration and net overseas migration provided by state and federal government departments. For further details see ABS, Cat. No. 3101.0, [Australian Demographic Statistics, June 2014](#).

### Full-time equivalent student

A full-time student is one who undertakes a workload equivalent to, or greater than, what is prescribed for a full-time student of that year level. This may vary between states and territories and from year to year. The minimum workload for a full-time student would ensure that a student could complete a given year level in a year.

A part-time student is one who undertakes a workload less than what is specified as full-time. The full-time equivalent (FTE) value of a part-time student is calculated by dividing a student's workload into what is considered by the state or territory to be the minimum full workload for a full-time student. Methods for estimating the FTE value of part-time students vary between states and territories due to different policy and administrative arrangements. The recorded FTE value for a student is capped at 1. The FTE of students is calculated by adding the number of full-time students and the FTE value of part-time students.

### Full-time equivalent teaching staff

The full-time equivalent (FTE) value of staff is a measure of the level of staffing resources. Staff who are employed full-time and engaged solely on activities that fall within the scope of the NSSC have an FTE value of 1.0.

For staff not employed on a full-time basis, and/or engaged in a combination of in-scope and out-of-scope activities, the FTE value is calculated on the basis of the proportion of time spent on in-scope activities compared with staff who would be considered full-time.

Some states and territories are not able to calculate FTE values on a time-spent basis for all staff functions but use wages paid as a fraction of the full-time pay rate, or a resource allocation based formula. Some also use a pro-rata formula based on student or staff numbers to estimate aggregate FTE for some categories of staff. This includes staff at combined schools who are allocated to primary or secondary categories.

### Indigenous status

For the purposes of the NSSC, a student is classified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, based on information provided by the student, or their parent/guardian, on the school enrolment form. The Melbourne Declaration and national data collections use the term 'Indigenous' to refer to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Where possible, this report uses 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' in preference to 'Indigenous'.

### Grade and school level

All states and territories provide for 13 years of formal school education. Typically, schooling commences at age five, is compulsory from age six until at least age 15, and is completed at age 17 or 18. Primary education, including a preparatory year<sup>60</sup>, lasts for either seven or eight years and is followed by secondary education of six or five years respectively.

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<sup>60</sup> The preparatory year (first year of full-time schooling) is known as Preparatory in Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania, Kindergarten in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, Reception in South

For national reporting purposes, primary education comprises a pre-Year 1 grade followed by Years 1–6 in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. For national reporting purposes, primary education comprises a pre-Year 1 grade followed by Years 1–7 in Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia.

Junior secondary education includes the years from commencement of secondary schooling to Year 10, including ungraded secondary.

Senior secondary education comprises Years 11 and 12 in all states and territories.

Students attending special schools are allocated to either primary or secondary education on the basis of grade or school level where identified. Where the grade or school level is not identified, students are allocated to primary or secondary level of education according to the typical age level in each state or territory. (See below for definition of special schools.)

Combined schools include both primary and secondary students.

### **Major function of staff**

In some tables, staff have been categorised according to their major function, which is based on the duties in which they spend the majority of their time.

The functional categories for school staff are as follows:

- (a) Teaching staff are staff who spend the majority of their time in contact with students. They support students either by direct class contact or on an individual basis, and are engaged to impart school curriculum. For the purposes of this report, teaching staff includes principals, deputy principals, campus principals and senior teachers mainly involved in administration.
- (b) Specialist support staff are staff who perform functions to support students or teaching staff. While these staff may spend the majority of their time in contact with students, they are not employed or engaged to impart the school curriculum.
- (c) Administrative and clerical staff are staff whose main duties are generally of a clerical/administrative nature. Teacher aides and assistants are included in this category, as they are seen to provide services to teaching staff rather than directly to students.
- (d) Building operations, general maintenance and other staff are staff involved in the maintenance of buildings and grounds. Also included are staff providing associated technical

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Australia, Pre-primary in Western Australia and Transition in the Northern Territory. In some jurisdictions, part-time programs that precede the preparatory year are conducted in primary schools (for example, Kindergarten in Western Australia). However, these programs are outside the scope of the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) and data on them are not, in general, included in this report.

services, other janitorial staff and staff who service equipment. School cleaners, whether salaried or employed on contract, are excluded.

### National Schools Statistics Collection

The scope of the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) consists of all establishments that have as their major activity the administration or provision of full-time day primary, secondary and/or special education, or primary or secondary education by distance education. Major activity is based on the activity of students, or where this is not appropriate, for example, in administrative offices, on the activity of staff. The statistics in this publication do not include establishments, students or staff engaged in school-level education conducted by other institutions, in particular Technical and Further Education (TAFE) establishments.

The NSSC consists of government and non-government statistics. Government comprises all establishments (as defined), administered by the department/ministry of education under directors-general of education (or equivalent). Non-government comprises all such establishments not administered by the departments of education, including those establishments administered by any other government authority.

The two main sections of the NSSC are:

- non-finance statistics (numbers of schools, students and staff) collected for both government and non-government schools and published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in its annual *Schools, Australia* (Cat. No. 4221.0) publication
- finance statistics (expenditure on salaries and non-salary costs collected for government schools) published by ACARA in the National Report on Schooling in Australia.

### Primary education

See *Grade and school level*.

### School

A school is an education establishment that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- Its major activity is the provision of full-time day primary or secondary education or the provision of primary or secondary distance education.
- It is headed by a principal (or equivalent) responsible for its internal operation.
- It is possible for students to enrol and be active in a course of study for a minimum of four continuous weeks, excluding breaks for school vacations.

The term 'school' in this publication includes schools in institutions and hospitals, mission schools and similar establishments.

The term 'school' in this publication excludes preschools, kindergarten centres, pre-primary schools or pre-primary classes in, or attached to, non-special schools, senior technical and agricultural colleges, evening schools, continuation classes and institutions such as business or coaching colleges.

Multi-campus arrangements are counted as one school. Multiple schools that amalgamate into a single multi-campus school decrease school counts in this publication.

### **School sector**

The *National Report on Schooling in Australia* uses the term 'school sector' to distinguish between government schools, which are established and administered by state and territory governments through their education departments or authorities, and non-government schools, usually with some religious affiliation, which are established and operated under conditions determined by state and territory governments through their registration authorities.

School sector is also used to further distinguish between non-government schools as Catholic or independent. Catholic schools make up the largest group of non-government schools. Independent schools may be associated with other religions, other denominations, particular educational philosophies, or operate as single entities.

The NSSC/Schools Australia uses the term 'affiliation' rather than the term 'school sector' to make these distinctions.

A further distinction is sometimes made between systemic and non-systemic non-government schools. Systemic schools are formally affiliated with a group or system of schools. Non-systemic non-government schools do not belong to a system.

In Schools Australia and in this publication, Catholic non-systemic schools are counted as Catholic rather than as independent.

### **Secondary education**

See *Grade and school level*.

### **Special school**

A special school satisfies the definition of a school and requires one or more of the following characteristics to be exhibited by the student before enrolment is allowed:

- mental or physical disability or impairment
- slow learning ability
- social or emotional problems
- in custody, on remand or in hospital.

Special schools include special assistance schools, as defined under the *Schools Assistance Act 2008*.

## Staff

Staff are persons engaged in the administration and/or provision of day primary, secondary or special school education, or primary or secondary education by distance education at in- scope education establishments.

For further details on the definition of staff, see [Schools, Australia 2013 – Glossary](#)

## States and territories

Australia has a federal system of government comprising a national government, and the governments of the six states and two territories. In the *National Report on Schooling in Australia*, the national government is generally referred to as ‘the Australian Government’. The states and territories are listed in the order of New South Wales (NSW), Victoria (Vic.), Queensland (Qld), South Australia (SA), Western Australia (WA), Tasmania (Tas.), the Northern Territory (NT) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). This is the order used in ABS data collections, including Schools Australia, and in ABS publications, including *Yearbook Australia*.

## Student

A student is a person who, on the school census date, is formally enrolled at a school and is active in a primary, secondary and/or special education program at that school. Students may be enrolled at more than one school; however, jurisdictions employ strategies that ensure that, as far as possible, students are reported only once in this collection.

Persons not present at a school on the NSSC census date are included as students if they were expected to be absent for less than four continuous weeks (excluding school vacations).

Students undertaking VET in Schools (including through TAFE), school-based apprenticeships or traineeships, work placements or tertiary extension studies as a part of the student’s school enrolment are in scope for the NSSC. The workload of these subjects/programs (which may take place outside the school premises) is included in a student’s aggregate workload to determine whether a student is classified as full-time or part-time, and in calculating the full-time equivalent for part-time students.

## Student attendance

The National Student Attendance Data Collection is undertaken by ACARA in collaboration with state and territory education departments (which collect and collate attendance data from government schools in each jurisdiction), the non-government school sectors and the Australian Department of Education (which collects and collates attendance data from non-government schools). The collection is conducted for students in Years 1–10 over the Semester 1 period in each school year.

The agreed national key performance measure (KPM) in 2013 for the rate of student attendance is:

The number of actual full-time equivalent student-days attended by full-time students in Years 1–10 as a percentage of the total number of possible student-days attended over the period.

ACARA has developed the [National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting](#) to establish a nationally consistent set of parameters for the collection and reporting of student attendance data across jurisdictions and school sectors. The national standards have been endorsed by all states and territories and are published on the ACARA website.

The national standards are formally due for implementation from the 2014 reporting year. However, advice from jurisdictions and school sectors is that most components of the standards were implemented in most states and territories in 2013.

Key components outlined in the national standards are listed below, together with exceptions to the standards for the 2013 reporting year, identified by school authorities:

- Attendance rate calculation formula

Exceptions 2013:

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| NT government schools: | Possible school days for the NT may include days where a student is not expected to attend (for example, if a school was temporarily closed due to a natural event). While this is a deviation from the national standards, the impact is minimal and may result in a slight understatement in attendance.<br><br>The NT data provided includes a small number of part-time students. This is a deviation from the national standards, where only full-time students are in scope. While this is a deviation from the national standards, the impact is minimal. |
|------------------------|--|

- Actual days in attendance (numerator)

Exceptions 2013:

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| NSW government schools: | As only full day absences are centrally collected and reported in the attendance measure and part-day absences are not collected, actual days in attendance is overstated.   |
| NT government schools:  | The NT data provided includes a small number of part-time students. This is a deviation from the national standards, where only full-time students are in scope. While this is a deviation from the national standards, the impact is minimal. |

- Number of possible school days (denominator)

Exceptions 2013:

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| NSW government schools: | As students who change schools during the term are counted in the <i>number of possible school days</i> at both schools, the total <i>number of possible school days</i> is overstated.  |
| NT government schools:  | Possible school days for the NT may include days where a student is not expected to attend (for example, if a school was temporarily closed due to a natural event). While this is a deviation from the national standards, the impact is minimal and may result in a slight understatement in attendance. |

- Level of disaggregation

No exceptions identified for 2013:

- Data collection period

No exceptions identified for 2013:

- School types

Exceptions 2013:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| NSW government schools: | Schools classified as schools for specific purposes (SSP), intensive English centres (IEC), or distance education schools/centres (DEC) did not provide attendance data.  |
| Tas. government schools | Tasmania has one school of Distance Education and one school that is attached to a Juvenile Justice Centre. The attendance for students at these schools is not reported. |
| NT government schools   | Distance education schools are not included in the NT data. There have been issues in accurately recording attendance for these schools.                                  |

- Student enrolment types

Exceptions 2013:

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Vic. government schools: | Includes both full- and part-time students. It was not previously possible to remove part-time (Part-time students represent only 0.05% of cohort). |
| Qld government schools   | As noted in the standards, Queensland government schools exclude students enrolled full time at state level but across multiple schools.            |
| SA government schools    | Students enrolled full time at state level but across multiple schools in the same sector are excluded.   |

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| NT government schools | The NT data provided includes part-time students. This is a deviation from the national standards, where only full-time students are in scope. |
|-----------------------|--|

- Movement during collection period

Exceptions 2013:

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| NSW government schools: | Students who change schools during the term are counted in the <i>number of possible school days</i> at both schools, but absences are recorded only at the school where the absence was incurred. |
|-------------------------|--|

- Part-day absences

Exceptions 2013:

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| NSW government schools:  | Only full-day absences were centrally collected and reported in the attendance measure. Part-day absences were not collected. |
| Tas. government schools: | Only whole day absences are reported in 2013.   |
| NT government schools    | Students attending less than half a day are not included in the numerator.  |

- Ungraded students

Exceptions 2013:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| NSW government schools: | Ungraded students enrolled in schools for specific purposes were not included in the absence collections. |
|-------------------------|---|

- Treatment of incidents/absences

Exceptions 2013:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| NSW government schools: | Extended holidays where students were granted an exemption from attendance were not included in absence counts. |
| Vic. government schools | Accept school coding for absence reason.  |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Tas. government schools: | Disciplinary (out-of-school) incidents are treated as present in the 2013 attendance data.   |
| NT government schools:   | Possible school days may include days where a student is not expected to attend. For example, student attendance may not be expected if the school is closed due to a natural event; a student is being held at a remand centre; or a student has a dual enrolment at another school. However, these days are included in the possible school days calculations. |

## Survey of Education and Work

The [Survey of Education and Work](#), conducted annually by the ABS, provides selected information on participation in education, highest educational attainment, transition from education to work, and current labour force and demographic characteristics for the population aged 15–74 years. Data from *Education and Work* are used to report participation and attainment data, including key performance measures for schooling, in the *National Report on Schooling in Australia*.

## Teaching staff

Teaching staff are staff who spend the majority of their time in contact with students. They support students either by direct class contact or on an individual basis, and are engaged to impart school curriculum.

For the purposes of this report, teaching staff includes principals, deputy principals, campus principals and senior teachers mainly involved in administration. Teacher aides and assistants, and specialist support staff are excluded, except assistant teachers working in homeland learning centres and community schools in the Northern Territory.

## User cost of capital

In the government budget context, the user cost of capital is usually defined as the opportunity cost of funds tied up in capital assets used to deliver government services.

Capital charging is the actual procedure used for applying this cost of capital to the asset management process. As such, it is a means of representing the cost of capital used in the provision of government budgetary outputs.