

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 2009-10**

**Outcome**                                       **2**  
**DEEWR Question No.**           **EW424\_10**

Senator Payne provided in writing.

**Question**

*Literacy and Numeracy results – Indigenous students*

Can you confirm that the 2009 NAPLAN report shows that 9 out of 10 Indigenous students in the Northern Territory are failing to reach basic reading and writing benchmarks by the time they get to year 9? What steps is the government taking to improve this outcome.

**Answer**

No, this data is not yet available. The expected MCEECDYA release date for Indigenous data for 2009 NAPLAN is 18 December 2009.

The 2008 NAPLAN data for the Northern Territory (NT) shows that in 2008:

The Australian Government is working collaboratively with states and territories to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage, in line with the COAG commitment to halve the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade. The Australian Government is contributing to the development of an Indigenous Education Action Plan which will set out the actions needed to make progress towards closing the gaps.

The Australian Government is also managing the development of an evidence base of effective practice in literacy and numeracy, which will assist states and territories to make better informed decisions in supporting students' literacy and numeracy development, particularly for those falling behind.

The Australian Government has committed the following funding to support the educational needs of students in the NT, including Indigenous students:

- **National Education Agreement:** \$266 million from 2009-10 to 2012-13 to assist students to acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in society and employment in a globalised economy.
- **Closing the Gap Northern Territory National Partnership:** \$44.2 million from 2009-10 to 2011-12 to support the commitment to close the gap on Indigenous educational disadvantage, in relation to quality teaching and accelerated literacy for Indigenous students. These initiatives are embedded in the Smarter Schools National Partnerships for Literacy and Numeracy, Teacher Quality and Low SES.
- **National Partnership for Literacy and Numeracy:** \$14.9 million from 2008-09 to 2011-12 to enable states and territories to implement initiatives that clearly demonstrate evidence for accelerating improvement in student performance in literacy and numeracy. This effort will focus on schools whose students are most in need of support. Targets will be set for literacy and numeracy improvements for Indigenous students.

- **National Partnership for Low SES Communities:** \$70.1 million from 2008-09 to 2014-15 to fund a range of within school and broader reforms aimed at addressing the complex and interconnected challenges facing students in disadvantaged communities, including Indigenous students.
- **National Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality:** \$5.4 million from 2008-09 to 2012-13 to improve teacher and school leader quality to sustain a quality teaching workforce. A highly skilled workforce is essential to the improvement of literacy and numeracy outcomes.
- **Literacy and Numeracy Pilots in Low SES communities:** \$3.3 million from 2008-09 to 2010-11. These pilots have a significant focus on support for Indigenous students and increasing community engagement to assist with early interventions for students, so that they are well prepared for school and can fully participate in literacy and numeracy programs.
- **Closing the Gap: Expansion of Intensive Literacy and Numeracy Programs for Underachieving Indigenous Students:** \$3.4 million in 2009-10 for the expansion of intensive literacy and numeracy programs for underachieving Indigenous students; and \$1.2m in two other Literacy and Numeracy projects called 'Books In Homes' and 'Making up lost time in literacy', MULTILIT.