

Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education
References Committee

Inquiry into Commonwealth Funding for Schools

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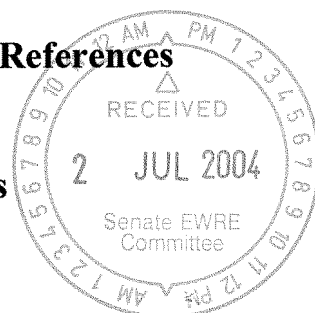
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Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee

Inquiry into Commonwealth funding for schools



Introduction

The education of young people is critical to the economic and social development of the nation. A quality education enables young people to make a successful transition to an independent adult life, and contribute to the social, cultural and economic futures. Clearly, schools play a significant role in the lives of young people as they grow and develop.

The aim of this Submission is to illustrate, with reference to the conditions in the State of Queensland, the various implications and impacts of Australian Government funding arrangements for schools.

The principles of the Government's schools funding package and the effect of these principles on - (a) the capacity of all schools to meet current and future school needs and to achieve the Adelaide Declaration (1999) on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century.

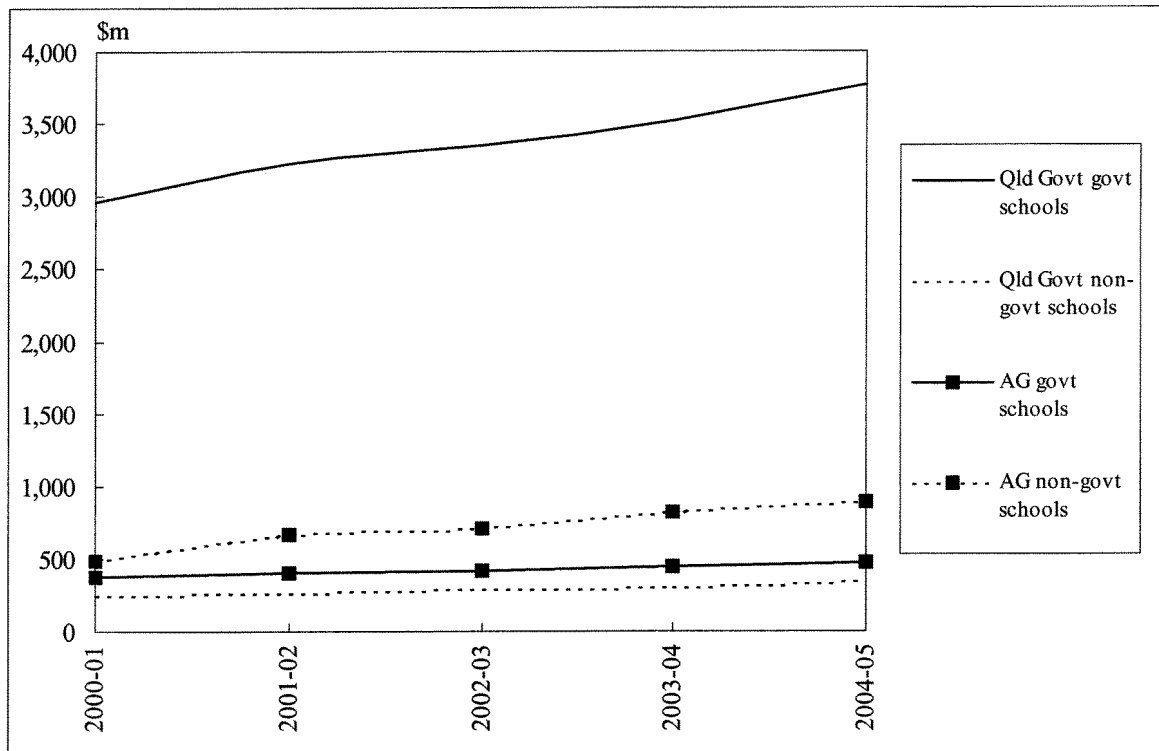
The scope for shared action on schooling matters between the Australian Government and the States and Territories is informed by the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century endorsed at the April 1999 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) meeting. The goals provide broad directions to help schools and education authorities to develop the capacity of knowledge, understanding, skills and values all Australian students need for a productive and rewarding life in an educated, just and open society.

MCEETYA is the national vehicle for all jurisdictions to work collaboratively on issues of strategic national importance in the area of education.

The Queensland Government is committed to delivering the very best education possible for every Queensland child, in turn enhancing their full economic and social potential and contribution to the ongoing development of the State. This is reflected in Queensland's investment in school education, which amounted to over \$4.1 billion in own-sourced funding to government and non-government schools in 2004-05 (see Figure 1)¹. This includes over \$3.7 billion towards government schools and over \$343 million to non-government schools – a 7.6 per cent increase in funding on the previous year.

¹ Including capital funding and corporate overheads.

Figure 1: Budgeted expenditure on school education in Queensland, Queensland Government and Australian Government, \$ million, 2000-01 to 2004-05



Source: Education Queensland Analysis/Australian Government Budget Papers

Between 2000-01, the first year of the previous four-year schools quadrennial round, and 2004-05, Queensland Government budgeted expenditure on school education increased by \$913.7 million over the period. This includes an increase in funding of \$813.5 million for government schools, and \$100.2 million for non-government schools. By comparison, the Australian Government budgeted expenditure on schools within Queensland increased by \$506 million over the period, with increases to government schools in the State accounting for less than a fifth of this increase. Overall, Australian Government funding to government schools represents only 12 per cent of Queensland Government's investment in the sector.

The high priority afforded to education by the Queensland Government is reflected in that education accounts for approximately 25 per cent of general government sector expenditure and our investment in education, measured as a proportion of Gross State Product (GSP) per capita, was above the national average in 2003-04². This significant funding base demonstrates the Queensland Government is able to effectively meet its obligations and responsibilities to all students as required by the National Goals for Schooling, and accordingly Queensland seeks that the Australian Government similarly boosts its investment in school funding over the next four years, over and above the funding offer presented to date.

² Includes all education-related costs across the State Government, including TAFE and transportation of students.

In summary:

- In 2004-05, the Queensland Government will budget more than \$4.1 billion for schooling. By comparison, the Australian Government has identified around \$1.3 billion for Queensland schools.
- Since the first year of the current quadrennium, Queensland has increased spending on schools by over \$913 million compared to a \$389 million increase by the Commonwealth.
- In the interests of all young Queenslanders, and in meeting the National Goals, the Australian Government should significantly increase its schools expenditure to Queensland over the next four years, over and above the funding offer presented to date.

The next section provides an summary of the joint States and Territory position as well as the Queensland perspective on the implications and impacts of :

(d) - application of the framework of principles for the funding of schools that has been endorsed by state and territory governments through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs; and

(b) - the role and responsibility of the Australian Government, in partnership with state and territory governments, for quality and equity in public funding for government and non-government schools across Australia and for promoting efficiency and effectiveness in the allocation of public funds for schooling, including effects on enrolment trends in the government and non-government sectors

State/Territory joint funding position

In December 2003, State/Territory Education Ministers released a comprehensive position paper entitled *Education: A Level Playing Field* for moving towards more effective Australian Government funding (see [Attachment 1](#)). The State/Territory proposals include:

- The AGSRC must be maintained by the Australian Government as the means of determining indexation of school grants.
- The AGSRC is to be used to determine indexation of general recurrent grants and targeted programs.
- General recurrent per capita funding provided by the Australian Government for all students (government and non-government) should be a minimum of 13.7 per cent of AGSRC commencing in 2005.
- The States Grants legislation should be drafted such that general recurrent grants are not less than the amount determined by the formula for calculating total per capita funding.
- There should be no 'tying' of general grants to specific programs, with this specified in the legislation, quadrennial agreement and the quadrennial guidelines.
- Per capita supplementary funding provided by the Australian Government for Indigenous students in government schools should be the same as the supplementary amount provided to Indigenous students in non-government schools.
- The Australian Government should continue funding for the National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS) and increase funding in line with the percentage increase of the AGSRC.

- Funds provided by the Australian Government for Indigenous English as a Second Language (ESL) students should have parity with funding for ESL New Arrivals.
- The supplementary per capita funding provided by the Australian Government for students with a disability in government schools should be increased to match the supplementary per capita amount for students with a disability in non-government schools.
- The Australian Government should provide additional targeted funding per annum to support students to move beyond the compulsory years of schooling, thereby supporting the significant investment of States and Territories.
- The Australian Government should reinstate the National Asian Languages and Studies of Asia Strategy (NALSAS) at funding levels adjusted for growth from 2002.
- The Australia Government is asked to cooperate in ensuring a more results focussed approach, which supports better information to parents in all Australian schools.

It is noted that under these proposals that no school sector would be made worse off as a result – the proposals seek to achieve a level playing field of schools funding which appropriately addresses the educational needs of all students on an equitable basis.

Queensland reiterates its support for the joint States and Territory position and calls on the Australian Government and the members of the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee to consider these proposals as a basis for ensuring more efficient, effective and equitable schools funding for the next quadrennium.

Funding quantum issues

Specifically, the Queensland Government considers that the Australian Government's funding position, which favours non-government schools over public education, is inconsistent with the central tenet of the National Goals for Schooling that governments deliver high quality educational services for all students.

According to the 2004-05 Australian Government Budget Papers, government schools in Queensland are estimated to receive \$467.1 million in funding (including under the IESIP program), with non-government schools to receive a total of \$890.6 million in funds. On the basis of these nominal estimates, non-government schools in the State will receive approximately 2.1 times more funding from the Australian Government than Queensland's government schools³.

The Australian Government's schools funding policies effectively increases the funding inequities between government and non-government schools. According to Australian Government budget estimates, the funding share for Queensland's government schools has declined from 37.7 per cent in 2000-01 to an estimated 34.4 per cent in 2004-05. This is expected to decline further to 31.9 per cent by 2007-08. Conversely, the relative share of general recurrent funding to non-government schools is projected to increase from 62.3 per cent in 2000-01 to 65.6 per cent in 2004-05, to 68.1 per cent by the end of the next four-year quadrennium. These funding trends do not follow Queensland's enrolment

³ This includes IESIP funding, reflecting the incorporation of this previously separately identified budget line item in general recurrent funding data for non-government schools in 2004-05.

growth trends, where the number of enrolled full-time students in government schools increased by 9,930 students between 2001 and 2003⁴.

Funding methodology issues

Queensland has also consistently argued that the Australian Government's methodology to drive schools funding outcomes is fundamentally flawed on the basis of a range of objective criteria, including efficiency, effectiveness and equity concerns.

AGSRC model

The growth of the per capita general recurrent grants to government schools is determined as a percentage of the Average Government School Recurrent Costs (AGSRC) index amounts for primary and secondary schools for a given year. While Queensland supports the continuation of this methodology of linking supplementation to the growth in total state government expenditure for schooling, the current AGSRC arrangements create an inequity between primary and secondary students. The States and Territories will attract general recurrent grants at the rate of 8.9 per cent of AGSRC for each primary student and ten per cent of AGSRC for each secondary student enrolled in government schools. In 2004, the initial rate of AGSRC supplementation funding per student is \$539 in primary government schools and \$830 in secondary government schools.

This differential means that Australian Government funding for primary government school students is not only based on a lower cost per student but a lower percentage of this amount is provided compared to secondary students. There are no justifiable public policy grounds for this inequity that leads to the under-supporting of primary students in government schools by the Commonwealth. This measure is also at odds with the Commonwealth's approach to provide minimum funding levels to the non-government sector set at 13.7 per cent of the AGSRC for both primary and secondary schools.

SES model

The socioeconomic status (SES) funding model for non-government school provides primary and secondary students, for both independent schools and, as of January 2005, Catholic systemic schools, the same proportion of their respective AGSRC for each score on the SES scale, from a minimum of 13.7 per cent of the AGSRC to 70 per cent of the AGSRC. This minimum level of funding to non-government students, at both primary and secondary schools, represents an additional inequity in the Australian Government's funding growth methodology. The Australian Government should provide funding to government schools students to at least the minimum per capita rate provided to non-government schools of 13.7 per cent of the AGSRC.

The SES model is claimed by the Australian Government to be needs based. However, around half of non-government schools (including 60 per cent of Catholic systemic schools) will receive 'funding maintenance' status under the SES model by the end of the funding quadrennium, as opposed to funding that would be received if SES scores are applicable. It is also noted that Catholic and other systemic schools in the non-government

⁴ By comparison, the number of full-time students enrolled in the State's non-government schools increased by 9,031 students over the same period.

sector do not use the Commonwealth's SES mechanism to allocate funding internally within their own system.

In 2001, there were 254 funding-maintained schools nationally, and this is expected to grow to around 1,200 non-government schools in 2005. Over the next four years it is expected that the Australian Government will spend an extra \$2 billion on non-government schools above the SES entitlements. This clearly illustrates that the SES funding model is not meeting its stated policy intentions. Further, the SES model is inefficient as it pays no regard to the total level of resources available to a student or school, including the financial capacity of non-government schools gained from existing facilities, investments, bequests, fees or income from State Government sources.

Enrolment Benchmark Adjustment (EBA)

The EBA government schools enrolment 'clawback' model continues to apply to States and Territories for the next four years. It is Queensland's position that the EBA is fundamentally flawed as the baseline year is just a point in time and it does not take account of natural enrolment growth in the non-government sector. Whereas, the per capita funding mechanism currently used deals appropriately with changes in government and non-government student enrolments. Hence, the EBA should be removed from the next quadrennium agreement.

Students with disabilities

Within the per capita element of the program, the Australian Government provides a differential funding rate for students with disabilities, based on attendance of government and non-government schools. In advice tendered by the Australian Government prior to the April 2004 MCEETYA meeting, this differential remains largely unchanged with initial 2004 per capita assistance for students with disabilities in government schools at \$129, compared to \$654 for a student with a disability in a non-government schools – a funding differential of 5.07 times. In other words, students with disabilities in government schools will continue to receive less than a fifth of the per capita funding afforded to their counterparts in non-government schools, and thus represents an inequitable usage of funding to Australian schools for this educationally disadvantaged student cohort.

Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme (IESIP) – Supplementary Recurrent Assistance (SRA)

The Australian Government has confirmed that the disparity in funding rates for Indigenous students, on the basis of attendance of either government or non-government schools, will remain. Non-government schools will receive up to 4.13 times more per capita funding through IESIP-SRA than government schools. Queensland believes that the Australian Government should fund government school Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at the level allocated to those attending non-government schools on a per capita basis. In addition, these per capita amounts should be increased by the percentage increase in the AGSRC through the life of the next four-year quadrennium agreement.

Furthermore, the Australian Government has announced that SRA rates for metropolitan areas will remain at the 2004 rate, rather than indexation being applied, as is the case for rural/provincial areas. This is designed to put into effect the Australian Government's

policy intention of targeting Indigenous education funding to non-metropolitan areas. As a consequence, 8.5 per cent of the current Queensland Indigenous education funding, will be 'frozen' at the 2004 rate.

Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme (IESIP) – Strategic Projects

The Australian Government announced \$128.1 million nationally over four years for the strategic projects element of the IESIP program. The previously separately identified National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS) are to be absorbed into this program element. It is vital to the success of Indigenous programs that the Commonwealth make a strong commitment to this program, given the important progress being made through this initiative. It is critical that NIELNS funding is escalated for the percentage increase in the AGSRC.

Indigenous Education Direct Assistance (IEDA)

The following changes proposed for the IEDA program over the next four years are likely to have significant consequences:

- Under the rebadged Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS), in-class tutorial assistance will only be made available in Years 4 and 6 for primary students, as well as students in Year 8. This contrasts with the assistance provided under the current funding arrangement where all indigenous students who fall into the bottom 20% of the literacy ratings in primary school (ie Years 1 through to 7), and to Year 12 in some specially approved schools are eligible for targeted assistance. Similarly, schools in provincial and metropolitan areas with less than 20 Indigenous students will not be eligible for individual or small in-class tuition assistance under the new proposals. Indigenous students in Years 10, 11 and 12 may access supplementary tuition, but this will be restricted to 50 per cent of remote and ten per cent of non-remote students.
- The Vocational and Education Guidance for Aboriginals Scheme (VEGAS) will be abolished.

The combined effect of these policy changes is expected to reduce overall access by Indigenous students to effective tuition assistance over the next quadrennium period.

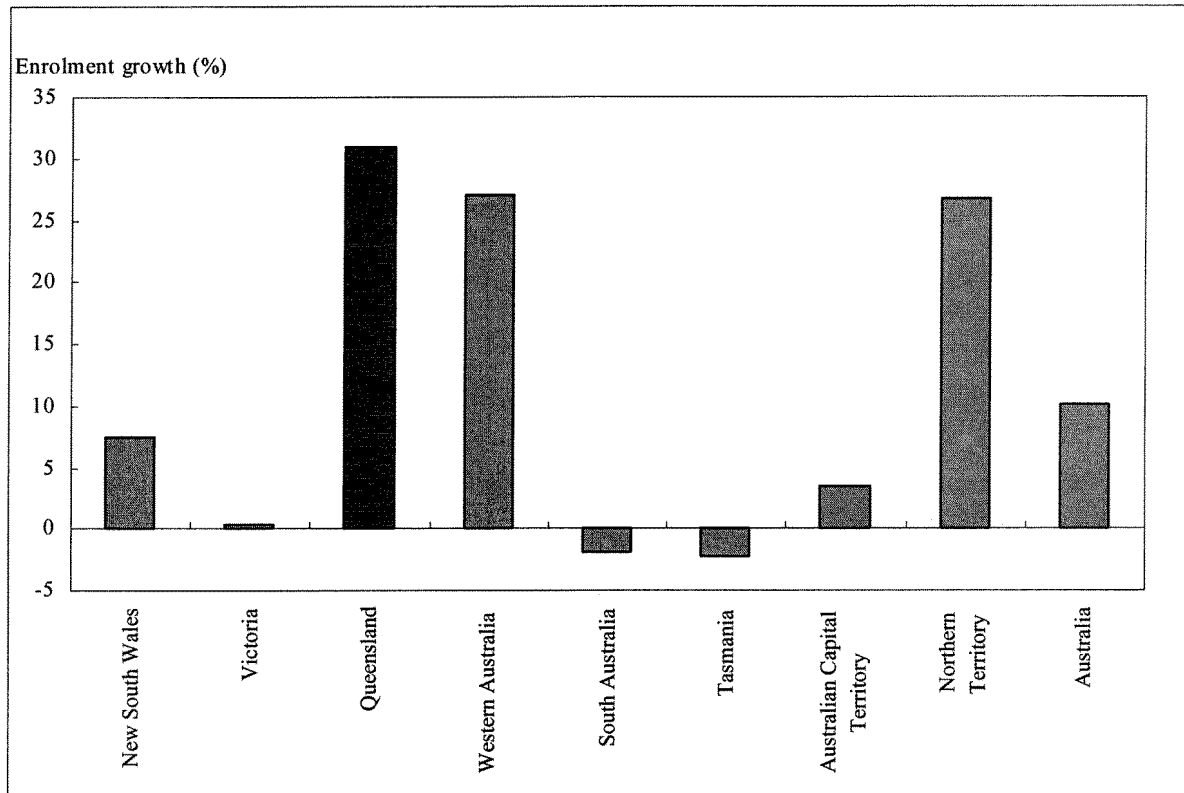
In summary, as has been illustrated above, the mechanisms which determine the distribution of Australian Government schools funding is driven by a multiplicity of funding models which treat students with similar characteristics inequitably, but which also appear inconsistent with each other and with the Australian Government unable to rationalise their program design on the basis of standard equity, efficiency or effectiveness criteria.

Queensland school education circumstances, and funding position

Finally, each jurisdiction must retain the right to conduct individual negotiations with the Australian Government to account for individual circumstances affecting the provision of school education in their State or Territory. The Queensland education system is characterised by significant diversity, which poses a range of challenges in the provision of quality education services across this State (see Attachment 2 for a broad profile of the Queensland schooling system). These include:

Enrolment growth issues - Queensland has the highest growth of all the States and Territories over the past 20 years (see Figure 2). A range of factors, namely natural population growth within the State, as well as interstate and overseas migration has influenced this. Queensland Government policies to promote participation in the school system have also contributed to enrolment growth.

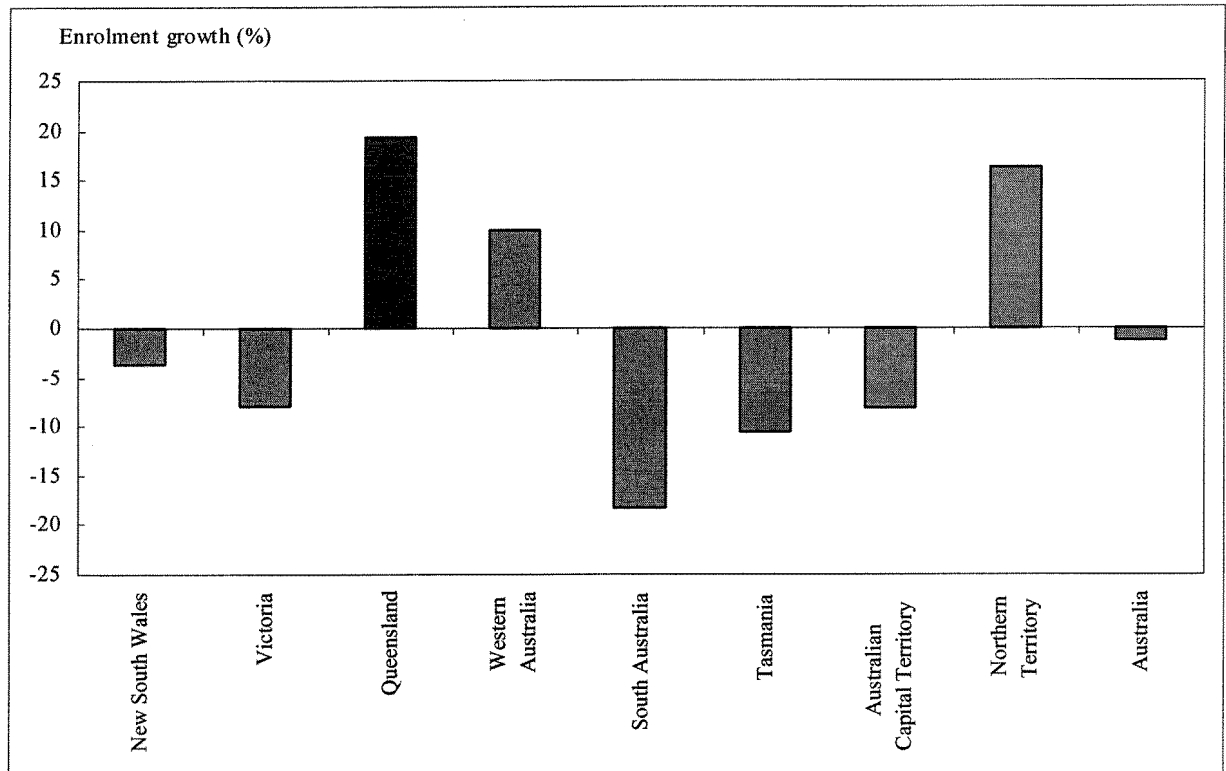
Figure 2: Full-time student enrolment growth, government and non-government schools, States and Territories and Australia, per cent, 1983 to 2003



Source: ABS, 2003.

In conjunction with this broader trend, Queensland has also experienced significant enrolment growth in its government school sector (see Figure 3). From 1983 to 2003, the number of full-time enrolments in government schools has risen from 373,097 students to 445,025 – an increase of 19 per cent over the period.

Figure 3: Full-time student enrolment growth, government schools, States and Territories and Australia, per cent, 1983 to 2003



Source: ABS, 2003.

This rapid enrolment growth has created additional pressures on Queensland to deliver capital works for new schools as well as investment to fund the expansion of current schools. From 2000-01 to 2004-05, Australian Government capital funding as a percentage of the Queensland capital works program has declined from 20 per cent to 14 per cent.

The Australian Government capital funding methodology should maintain the same Commonwealth-State relativities to address the increased capital costs associated with rapid enrolment growth. In 2004-05 the Queensland Government will provide a record \$336.7 million for its education capital works program – an increase of 22.7 per cent on the last financial year – and accordingly call on the Australian Government to match this capital funding growth.

Population decentralisation issues - Queensland is the most decentralised of all the mainland States. This means there is a need to provide education services and infrastructure in regional and remote areas where diseconomies of scale, exacerbated by continuing declining rural populations, poses significant challenges.

In particular, there are a number of 'dispersion' factors, including high costs, involved in ensuring that distance is not a barrier to learning. The Commonwealth Grants Commission (CGC) recognises the importance of these dispersion factors in its 2004 Review of Commonwealth funding arrangements. In the case of educational services in Queensland, there are significant costs associated with providing a large number of small schools in regional, rural and remote areas; there are over 500 small primary schools in rural and remote areas in the State alone. Unlike schools in metropolitan locations, schools in

regional, rural and remote communities find it especially challenging and costly to provide their students with a broad subject curriculum, provide access to online technology, and provide specialist support to students. The following illustrates the difficulties and additional costs associated with dispersion.

Dispersion of educational services in Queensland

Longreach District is 252,000km², spanning 1,000km from Birdsville in the west to Alpha in the east and 700km from Hughenden in the north to Blackall in the south. This district is larger than the entire state of Victoria (227,600km²). The time taken to travel between schools is a significant factor that affects provision to the area. Currently it takes approximately eight hours to drive from Longreach to Birdsville or Bedourie State Schools. Consequently, much education service provision requires staff use of aircraft or two days travel extracted from the working week, especially for students with special education requirements.

In the Longreach District there are 23 government schools (including preschool, primary and secondary schools) and an Environmental Education Centre. The total student population enrolled in the District is 2,059 students. The government school sector is responsible for educating 80 per cent of primary school students and 100 per cent of secondary school students. There is no private provision for secondary schooling in this District.

Roma District is the largest of the Queensland School Districts covering a total area of 332,825km² making it approximately five times larger than Tasmania, and larger than Victoria. Distances between schools and the Roma District Office play a significant role in the delivery of education services. For example, District officers and teaching staff travel over 650km from Roma to Thargomindah, and approximately 600km between Eromanga and Roma. Most of the towns in the District are approximately 200km from the Roma office.

There are 33 government schools in the Roma District serving a total student population of 3,276. There is one private secondary school in this District.

The reasons the cost of providing education services to students in the Longreach and Roma Districts is higher than equivalent services in metropolitan areas include: small population density leading to higher costs; infrastructure costs per student are higher; smaller class sizes lead to a higher staff-student ratio; the costs of providing telecommunications throughout Queensland are very high, and travel costs associated with professional development and education coordination are higher.

Further information on the additional costs of education service provision in Queensland due to population dispersion is provided in [Attachment 3](#).

In most regional and rural communities in Queensland, a government school is the only affordable and local choice for parents when educating their children. Over half of all government schools are located in rural and remote locations throughout the State, and School Districts such as the Torres Strait Islands, Chinchilla, South Burnett, Isis-Burnett, Roma, Emerald and Darling Downs had the proportion of non-government schools to government schools at below 20 per cent as at August 2003. Therefore, higher relative funding from the Australian Government to the non-government sector does not necessarily flow through to regional and remote areas of the State for the benefit of students in these regions with a relatively high proportion of government schools, and thereby does not aid effective parental choices.

It is submitted that the Australian Government should increase funding to Queensland in recognition of the State's population distribution, and consider the implications of its school funding flows to the State's regional and rural locations when allocating funds to the school sectors.

Students with relatively higher educational needs - Costs in schooling are related to factors such as student characteristics, such as socio-economic status and cultural background, as well as school characteristics including size and location. According to Productivity Commission data for 2002, students with a relatively higher cost of

educational services provision, such as Indigenous students, students with a disability and students attending schools in remote areas, are not distributed evenly with relatively higher proportions of each cohort attending government schools in Queensland.

Indigenous Students

Consistent with the broad diversity of its population, Queensland has a significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth population. According to 2001 ABS Census data, 40.7 per cent of the State's Indigenous population were aged 0-15 years, compared to 21.6 per cent of the non-Indigenous population. The median age of the Indigenous population was 19 years in Queensland, compared with 36 years for the non-Indigenous population. The different age structure for the Indigenous population necessitates the need for the State to deliver high quality educational services to this growing youth cohort.

In 2003, there were 35,327 full-time Indigenous students attending Queensland schools (or six per cent of all students). This represented 28 per cent of the total number of Indigenous students in Australia. Of these, 30,629 (or 87 per cent of total full-time Indigenous students) attended government schools and 4,608 (or 13 per cent) attended non-government schools. There were 23,522 full-time Indigenous students attending primary schools compared with 11,715 attending secondary schools. Proportionally, there were more Indigenous people attending school (28.9 per cent) than the rest of the population (17.1 per cent), due to the younger age profile of the State's Indigenous population.

Students with disabilities

According to the Productivity Commission, there were 16,868 full-time equivalent students with disabilities in Queensland in 2002. Of this total, 14,480 students (or 86 per cent of the total students with disability population) attended government schools, compared to 2,388 students (or 14 per cent) whom attended non-government schools. Students with disabilities had higher relative representation in the government school sector, with students with disabilities in government schools representing 3.2 per cent of all students compared with 1.3 per cent in non-government schools.

With a relatively young Indigenous population as well as significant growth in the number of students with disabilities (from 8,600 in 1996 to 14,400 in 2002), these trends are likely to persist into the foreseeable future. However, the overall Australian Government funding distribution does not reflect that there is a relatively greater representation of students with proportionately higher costs of educational service provision (such as Indigenous students, students with a disability, students attending schools in remote locations) within Queensland government schools. Therefore, funding flows from the Australian Government should be increased to take into account the school sector attendance of educationally disadvantaged students with higher relative costs of service provision.

In summary:

- Queensland reiterates its support for the joint State and Territory position and calls on the Australian Government and the members of the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee to consider these proposals as a basis for ensuring more efficient, effective and equitable schools funding for the next quadrennium.
- Funding for primary government school students is not only based on a lower cost per student but a lower percentage of this amount is provided compared to secondary students.
- The minimum level of funding to non-government schools, through the SES mechanism, is greater than that of the government school sector, thereby treating similar students differently on the basis of school sector attendance.
- The Enrolment Benchmark Adjustment (EBA) should be abolished.
- There remains a significant funding differential per capita between government schools as compared to non-government schools for students with disabilities and Indigenous students.
- Supplementary funding for Indigenous students should be equally applied regardless of where they live or the school attended, and that, against the background of continuing educational disadvantage for young Indigenous people, eligibility to access Australian Government direct assistance programs should not be tightened.
- Queensland seeks to ensure that the unique circumstances impacting on school education within the State is properly accounted for in Australian Government funding levels and mechanisms. Factors for consideration should include the following: significant enrolment growth; decentralised population and the impact on parental choice; and the uneven distribution of students with relatively higher educational needs (eg Indigenous students, students with disabilities, students in remote areas) across school sectors.
- A one-size-fits-all funding approach by the Australian Government will not effectively meet the educational needs of young people in different jurisdictions

c) the effectiveness of accountability arrangements for state, territory and Federal governments' funding of government and non-government schools

State and Territory Governments adopt a variety of accountability and performance measures to facilitate the operation of schools, to inform effective long-term policy planning, and to satisfy the needs of parents and the community for information on the performance of students and their schools. This includes reporting to their respective Parliaments on the performance of students and schools through Annual Reports. In addition to these requirements at a State level, the Australian Government sets a range of conditions, including data requirements and educational accountability measures, on States and Territories and other educational authorities in receipt of funding.

In addition to meeting the *States Grants (Primary and Secondary Education Assistance) Act* and *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act* conditions over the past four years, Queensland has also undertaken a range of initiatives for greater accountability and transparency including:

- Reporting to parents on student and school level performance: The Queensland Government introduced the School Improvement and Accountability Framework, including School Annual Report and Operational Plans (SAROP).
- Reporting to parents against national literacy and numeracy benchmarks: The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) provides parents with information on their child's progress against the Years 3, 5 and 7 national benchmarks from 2004.
- Developing a *Schools Reporting* consultation paper (see [Attachment 4](#)) which identifies key principles for effective reporting and invites feedback on the eight major proposals designed to improve the quality and consistency of student and school reporting to parents and the Queensland community.

Nevertheless, the Australian Government continues to expand quadrennium reporting requirements disproportionate to its funding contribution. State and Territory Ministers have previously emphasised the need for performance measures to be strategic by nature and focussed on results, with a greater consistency with performance measures under the general *States Grants (Primary and Secondary Education Assistance) Act*. These measures should build on the performance measures already reported in other national reports such as the Annual National Report on Schooling (ANR) and the Productivity Commission Report on Government Service Provision.

Furthermore, in the current Indigenous Education Agreement (IEA), there are over 120 measures against which jurisdictions are required to report upon. The Australian Government has also flagged a number of additional accountability and reporting provisions on education authorities in order to receive Indigenous education funding to schools. The Australian Government should work in conjunction with the States and Territories through the MCEETYA forum to deliver greater national consistency and reliability in Indigenous education reporting and accountability arrangements.

Some of the new conditions outlined by the Australian Government will negatively impact on the capability of Queensland's school education system. Of particular concern is the conditions expressed in Sections 12(1) (k) and (l) of the *Schools Assistance (Learning Together – Achievement through Choice and Opportunity) Bill 2004* for States to agree that the appointments of staff in each government school will be made with the approval of the principal, or governing body. Further, the Bill requires the State to commit to providing principals strengthened autonomy over, and responsibility for, education programs, budgets, and other aspects of the schools' operation. These proposed provisions are inappropriate for a large decentralised State such as Queensland, where a centralised staff transfer system is required to attract and retain quality teachers in rural and remote areas. This transfer system relies on both the ability to place teachers into rural and remote schools and the ability to transfer them back into cities and metropolitan centres after their country service if the teachers so wish – this serves to strike a fair balance that ultimately favours students in these localities. Queensland has sought assurances from the Australian Education Minister that funding conditions for the 2005-08 will not adversely affect the operation of our state-wide education systems.

In summary, it is important not to place too much more pressure on already stretched resources at a school level to collect data rather than performance information. Consistent with this, governments need to work together to develop key high level performance data that will drive continuous improvement in our school systems. This should be undertaken

more comprehensively than the current 'scatter-gun' approach to trying to collect a range of data rather than information.

In summary:

- States/Territories have a comprehensive range of accountability and performance measures to facilitate the operation of schools, to inform effective long-term policy planning, and to satisfy the needs of parents and the community for information on the performance of students and their schools.
- The Australian Government proposes to put in place additional accountability and reporting obligations on the States in return for no increased funding other than indexation under the 2005-08 schools quadrennium.
- While Queensland is not opposed to the intent and direction of the accountability and reporting provision as outlined by the Australian Government, there is concern that the number of accountabilities keeps growing and that they are likely to impose additional administrative burdens on States and the school sectors.
- Further, the additional reporting measures appear to lack purpose and value in terms of enhancing our understanding of student and school performance in accordance with the National Goals and also in an international context.

Conclusion

Against the background of fundamental economic and social transformation affecting Australia, the role of governments in providing world-class school education systems remains as relevant as ever. The centrality of school education in the social, cultural and economic development of children and young people is recognised in the aspirational National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century, which serves as a guide of strategic schooling education priorities for all levels of government.

For its part, the Queensland Government provides support to the achievement of the National Goals through its significant funding and programs for schools, which is tailored to meeting the needs of all students regardless of background and location. In a policy environment where other levels of government can have major influence in shaping the direction of education systems, it is imperative that the Australian Government complement the priorities of the States through its own policy and funding directions.

Finally, the Queensland Government submits that the common State and Territory position on school education funding, *Education: A Level Playing Field*, will more effectively meet the commonly agreed objectives of the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century. This funding position will also benefit all schools in both the government and non-government sectors, with no sector being disadvantaged by the proposals. Accordingly, we call on the Australian Government and the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee to consider these proposals as a basis for ensuring more efficient, effective and equitable schools funding for the next quadrennium.

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Education: A Level Playing Field

**Towards a negotiated
Commonwealth-State Schools
Grants Agreement 2005-08**

**A position paper released by
State and Territory Education
Ministers**

MCEETYA, 5 December 2003

TOWARDS A NEGOTIATED STATES GRANTS AGREEMENT

The Australian Government is being asked to level the playing field around the following elements:

Firstly, the recurrent per capita funding provided by the Australian Government to government schools should be increased to at least the minimum provided to non-government schools. The least funding provided to non-government schools is 13.7% of the Average Government Schools Recurrent Cost AGSRC, while government schools currently receive 8.9% for primary and 10.0% for secondary. Funding for government school students should be increased to 13.7%, which is the minimum provided to non-government schools.

Secondly, any supplementary per capita funding for targeted purposes needs to be equitable across government and non-government school students. At present the Australian Government provides Indigenous students in non-government schools with approximately 3.6 times the amount of supplementary per capita assistance provided to their peers in government schools. A similar situation exists for students with a disability.

Thirdly, the Australian Government is being asked to cooperate in ensuring a more results focused approach which supports better information to parents.

These adjustments would improve Australian schooling with respect to the 1999 Adelaide Declaration for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century, which outlined the inspirational National Goals for Schooling.

The Australian Government shares with States and Territories responsibility for the effectiveness of national efforts to achieve nationally agreed goals for all students.

Specific purpose funding for schools is best applied in collaboration with State resources to achieve improved student learning outcomes.

The Australian Government has specific responsibilities for issues that go beyond the influence of individual states and territories and impact on student learning opportunities and outcomes.

The issues and proposals set out in this paper present the Australian Government with the opportunity to cooperatively negotiate an equitable approach to the States Grants.

This paper presents specific recommendations for moving toward more effective Australian Government funding.

A summary of the key recommendations follows:

Funding Parity

- General recurrent per capita funding provided by the Australian Government for all students (government and non-government) should be a minimum of 13.7% of Average Government Schools Recurrent Cost commencing in 2005.

Enrolment Benchmark Adjustment

- The States Grants Legislation should be drafted such that general recurrent grants are not less than the amount determined by the formula for calculating total per capita funding.
- There should be no “tying” of general grants to specific programs, with this specified in the legislation, Quadrennial Agreement, and the Quadrennial Guidelines.

Indigenous

- Per capita supplementary funds provided by the Australian Government for Indigenous students in government schools should be the same as the supplementary amount provided to Indigenous students in non-government schools.
- The Australian Government should continue funding for the National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, and increase funding in line with the percentage increase of the Average Government School Recurrent Cost.
- Funds provided by the Australian Government for Indigenous English as a Second Language (ESL) students should have parity with funding for ESL New Arrivals.

Disability

- The supplementary per capita funding provided by the Australian Government for students with a disability in government schools should be increased to the supplementary per capita amount for students in non-government schools.

Transition

- The Australian Government should provide additional targeted funding of \$130 million per annum to support students to move beyond the compulsory years of schooling, thereby supporting the significant investment of States and Territories.

Languages

- The Australian Government should re-instate the National Asian Languages and Studies of Asia Strategy at funding levels adjusted for growth from 2002.

Accountabilities

- The Australian Government is being asked to cooperate in ensuring a more results focused approach which supports better information to parents in all Australian schools.

The additional resource implications arising from these recommendations are costed as estimates based on forecast enrolments and average cost projections⁵. The total estimated additional Australian Government funding required to fund the enhancements is outlined below.

Estimated additional Australian Government funding required 2004-05 to 2007-08 (\$)

| | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | Total |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Total Unchanged | 1,627,799,607 | 1,741,385,131 | 1,861,669,874 | 1,988,607,387 | 7,219,461,999 |
| Total Proposed | 2,730,179,614 | 2,914,654,181 | 3,110,832,941 | 3,318,834,428 | 12,074,501,169 |
| Total Additional | 1,102,380,007 | 1,173,269,050 | 1,249,163,068 | 1,330,227,041 | 4,855,039,169 |

⁵ Enrolment estimates are forecasts projected from 2001 enrolments. AGSRC is projected to increase at 7% per year. Targeted per capita funding is projected to increase at 5% per year.

The additional funding represents an increase of approximately 15.5 percent on the current estimated total expenditure by the Australian Government for the next Quadrennial Agreement.

Estimated percentage increase for additional Australian Government funding required for 2004-05 to 2007-08 (%)

| | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | Total |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Est. Total Funding | 7,076,525,000 | 7,551,786,000 | 8,047,292,000 | 8,635,164,000 | 31,310,767,000 |
| Est. Additional Funding | 1,102,380,007 | 1,173,269,050 | 1,249,163,068 | 1,330,227,041 | 4,855,039,166 |
| Percentage Increase | 15.6% | 15.5% | 15.5% | 15.4% | 15.5% |

A MINIMUM LEVEL OF RECURRENT FUNDING FOR ALL STUDENTS

Maintaining Average Government School Recurrent Cost (AGSRC) Indexation

The Australian Government Minister for Education, Science and Training has stated in Federal Parliament that both he and the Treasurer are agreed that the Average Government School Recurrent Cost (AGSRC) indexation of Australian Government money to state government schools will continue.

The Average Government Schools Recurrent Cost (AGSRC) continues to be an effective mechanism for ensuring that annual Australian Government financial supplementation for schooling is proportionately linked to the growth in total State government expenditure for schooling.

This provides indexation for both general recurrent and targeted program grants.

Recommendations

- 1. AGSRC must be maintained by the Australian Government as the means of determining indexation for school grants.**
- 2. AGSRC is to be used to determine indexation of General Recurrent Grants and Targeted Grants.**

Funding Parity

The current Australian Government funding arrangements for state school students using the AGSRC create an inequity between government and non-government students. Schedule 2 of the current States Grants legislation describes general recurrent grants for government schools. Primary school students receive 8.9 percent of primary AGSRC while secondary students receive 10 per cent of secondary AGSRC. This disparity is in addition to the fact that the AGSRC for primary is lower than that of secondary. The 2003 AGSRC rate is \$6,056 for primary and \$8,021 for secondary.

The minimum funding for the non-government sector as a percentage of AGSRC is 13.7% of the AGSRC.

In many parts of regional Australia there are no effective choices for people, with government sector being the sole provider of school education services. To restrict the

maximum percentage of the AGSRC that drives the funding levels to the government sector to below the minimum level provided to the non-state sector effectively discriminates against these communities.

A positive action to help address this issue would be to equalise and then increase the level of funding for primary and secondary government school students to the same as the lowest level of funding provided under the Socio-Economic Status (SES) based model used by the Australian Government to fund non-government schools. This would lead to government school students being funded at a rate of 13.7% of primary and secondary AGSRC, rather than the current rates of 8.9% and 10% of primary and secondary AGSRC respectively.

Table 1 outlines the estimated additional funding to bring the government school percentage of AGSRC to be in-line with the minimum non-government percentage (13.7%) commencing in 2005.

Table 1: Estimated additional Australian Government General Recurrent funding for Government school primary and secondary students 2004-05 to 2007-08 (\$)

| | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | Total |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Total Unchanged | 1,549,148,240 | 1,656,131,246 | 1,769,174,758 | 1,888,200,776 | 6,862,655,020 |
| Total Proposed | 2,257,245,438 | 2,412,460,970 | 2,576,646,665 | 2,749,966,546 | 9,996,319,619 |
| Total Additional | 708,097,198 | 756,329,725 | 807,471,907 | 861,765,770 | 3,133,664,599 |

Recommendation

- 3. General recurrent per capita funding provided by the Australian Government for all students (government and non-government) should be a minimum of 13.7% of AGSRC commencing in 2005.**

Abolition of the Enrolment Benchmark Adjustment (EBA)

The funds identified by the EBA process are part of the recurrent expenditures of government schools and help produce the outcomes accounted for through the Annual National Report.

To ensure predictability for schools funding, legislation should be drafted to ensure that the actual level of funding for schools is defined, rather than as a maximum level, as is currently the case.

Recommendations

- 4. The States Grants Legislation should be drafted such that general recurrent grants are not less than the amount determined by the formula for calculating total per capita funding.**
- 5. There should be no “tying” of general grants to specific programs, with this specified in the legislation, Quadrennial Agreement, and the Quadrennial Guidelines**

PARITY IN TARGETED FUNDING – *Responding equitably to need*

The Australian Government provides more per capita targeted program funding for a student in a non-government school than a student in a government school – there are no grounds for this student inequity.

Targeted programs are to meet the fundamental requirements of the *National Goals* the funds should be allocated to meet the needs of the students regardless of the sector of their school. In this way the Australian Government will help to guarantee the equity of outcomes for all students in its stated priorities.

Indigenous Students

Under the guidelines associated with the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000* per capita assistance for Indigenous students differentiates between government and non-government school students.

The Australian Government provides Indigenous students in non-government schools approximately 3.6 times the amount of supplementary per capita assistance provided to their peers in government schools.

Table 2 outlines the estimated additional funding required to provide the same per capita funds for Indigenous students in government schools as those provided for Indigenous students in non-government schools.

Table 2: Estimated additional Australian Government funding for Government school IESIP - SRA students 2004-05 to 2007-08 (\$)

| | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | Total |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Total Unchanged | 60,610,500 | 66,336,638 | 72,600,452 | 79,554,016 | 279,101,606 |
| Total Proposed | 218,197,800 | 238,811,895 | 261,361,627 | 286,394,457 | 1,004,765,779 |
| Total Additional | 157,587,300 | 172,475,258 | 188,761,175 | 206,840,441 | 725,664,174 |

Recommendation

- Per capita supplementary funds provided by the Australian Government for Indigenous students in government schools should be the same as the supplementary amount provided to Indigenous students in non-government schools.**

National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS)

It is vital to the success of Indigenous programs that the Australian Government commit to the continuation of the National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS) at least at the funding level provided for 2001-2004 as there are demonstrated outcomes from the respective projects.

Table 3 outlines the estimated funding required to continue with NIELNS escalated for the percentage increase in AGSRC.

Table 3: Estimated additional Australian Government funding to continue NIELNS (\$)

| | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Total Additional | 20,189,371 | 21,602,627 | 23,114,811 | 24,732,847 | 89,639,656 |

Recommendation

7. **The Australian Government should continue funding for the National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS), and increase funding in line with the percentage increase of the AGSRC.**

English as a Second Language (ESL) to Indigenous Students

Funding provided for teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to Indigenous students needs to be in line with funding provided for ESL New Arrivals. Currently, Indigenous ESL students are provided with \$3,079 per capita per year. This should be increased to match the \$4,207 per capita available for ESL assistance for New Arrivals.

Table 4 outlines the estimated additional funding to provide Indigenous ESL students with the same per capita funding as New Arrival ESL students.

Table 4: Estimated additional Australian Government funding for Government school Indigenous ESL students 2004-05 to 2007-08 (\$)

| | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | Total |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Total Unchanged | 5,752,539 | 5,752,539 | 5,752,539 | 5,752,539 | 23,010,156 |
| Total Proposed | 8,446,194 | 8,868,504 | 9,311,929 | 9,777,525 | 36,404,152 |
| Total Additional | 2,693,655 | 3,115,965 | 3,559,390 | 4,024,986 | 13,393,996 |

Recommendation

8. **Funds provided by the Australian Government for Indigenous English as a Second Language (ESL) students should have parity with funding for ESL New Arrivals.**

Students with Disabilities

Per capita supplementary payments for students with a disability are approximately five times higher for students attending a non-government school compared with students attending a government school. This discrimination between students on the basis of school sector should be removed under the new funding legislation.

Table 5 outlines the estimated additional funding to provide the same per capita funds for students with disabilities in Government schools as those provided for students with disabilities in non-government schools.

Table 5: Estimated additional Australian Government funding for Government school students with disabilities 2004-05 to 2007-08 (\$)

| | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Total Unchanged | 12,288,328 | 13,164,709 | 14,142,125 | 15,100,056 | 54,695,218 |
| Total Proposed | 62,448,880 | 66,902,619 | 71,869,814 | 76,737,989 | 277,959,302 |
| Total Additional | 50,160,552 | 53,737,910 | 57,727,689 | 61,637,933 | 223,264,084 |

Recommendation

9. **The supplementary per capita funding provided by the Australian Government for students with a disability in government schools should be increased to match the supplementary per capita amount for students in non-government schools.**

Young People Transitioning from school

States and Territories are continuing to develop flexible pathways to assist young people to attain a Year 12 certificate or its equivalent, and make the transition from schooling to employment. The systems put in place by States and Territories anticipate the many recommendations of the Australian Government's Youth Pathways Action Plan 2001.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) in schools is a pathway increasingly utilised by young people. Funding of \$20million per annum (indexed by the CPI as from 2002) is provided via the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) Agreement to assist with delivery of VET in schools in government and non-government sectors.

The Australian Government has a responsibility to support young people in the senior years of school. Hence, the Australian Government should supplement the current high-level financial investment of States and Territories in the senior years.

In line with the resolution of ANTA Ministerial Council, in May 2002, the Australian Government should provide \$130 million additional funding per annum (see Table 6) to support a comprehensive and sustainable response to young peoples transitions from education and training to work.

Table 6: Estimated additional Australian Government funding for young people transitioning from school (\$)

| | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | Total |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Total Additional | 130,000,000 | 130,000,000 | 130,000,000 | 130,000,000 | 520,000,000 |

Recommendation

- 10. The Australian Government should provide additional targeted funding of \$130 million per annum to support students to move beyond the compulsory years of schooling, thereby supporting the significant investment of States and Territories.**

Languages

The Australian Government has amalgamated the former Community Languages Element that supported after hours ethnic schools and insertion classes, and the Priority Languages Element that supported targeted languages in mainstream schools, into one broad banded program.

Grants to foster the learning of Asian languages and Studies of Asia (National Asian languages and Studies of Asia Strategy – NALSAS) were phased out in 2002 (\$27.5 million was allocated in 2002).

The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) Student Learning and Support Services Taskforce is developing a new National Statement on the purpose and nature of languages education to provide an overarching framework for State, Territory and Australian Government activities. A four year National Plan based on the Statement is also being developed as the basis for a shared commitment to action across the Australian Government, States and Territories. The National Statement and National Action Plan will be presented to MCEETYA in 2004 for endorsement.

All States and Territories opposed the decision to cease NALSAS funding and made strong representations to the Australian Government Minister for Education, Science and Training seeking to have the funding reinstated.

The cessation of NALSAS funding had significant implications for States and Territories, as many of the initiatives established with this funding have not been able to be continued.

Table 7 outlines the estimated additional funding to re-instate the National Asian languages and Studies of Asia Strategy (NALSAS) at funding levels adjusted for growth from 2002.

Table 7: Estimated Australian Government funding to re-instate the NALSAS (\$)

| | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Total Additional | 33,651,931 | 36,007,566 | 38,528,096 | 41,225,063 | 149,412,656 |

Recommendation

- 11. The Australian Government should re-instate the National Asian languages and Studies of Asia Strategy (NALSAS) at funding levels adjusted for growth from 2002.**

RESULTS FOCUSED ACCOUNTABILITY

The joint contribution of the Australian Government, States and Territories to schooling is accounted for via the reporting mechanism of the Annual National Report on Schooling in Australia.

All State and Territory Ministers have agreed that measures should be strategic and focused on results. For example, there are over 200 measures within the IESIP Agreement alone against which States and Territories are required to report. These should be more focused on those which add value.

The legislation should not provide the power to make regulations concerning education targets.

Measures and targets are those agreed to through the MCEETYA process, and determined by the Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce.

States and Territories are working with the Australian Government to develop consistent curriculum outcome statements in English, Mathematics, Science and Civics and Citizenship and to enhance reporting to parents of the Years 3, 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy benchmarks.

Recommendation

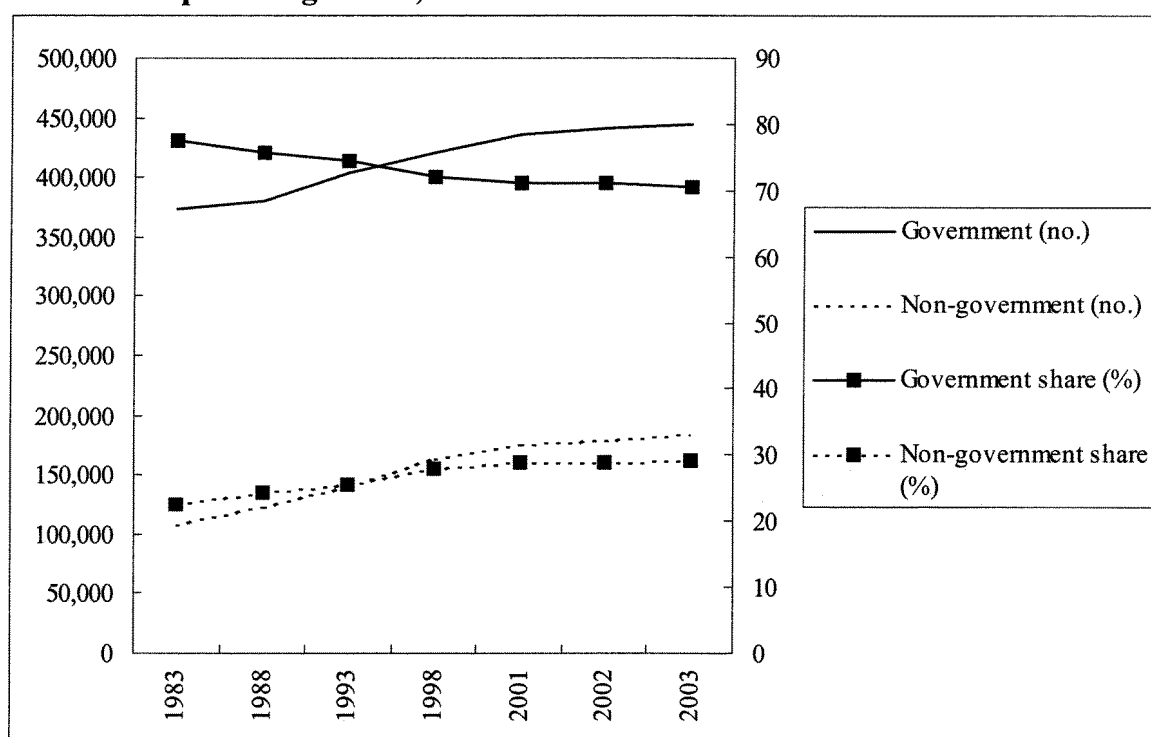
- 12. The Australian Government is being asked to cooperate in ensuring a more results focused approach which supports better information to parents in all Australian schools.**

Queensland School Education Sector: A Profile

Student enrolments

In 2003, there were 629,771 full-time students attending Queensland schools, representing 19 per cent of total Australian full-time student enrolments. Of these students in Queensland, 445,025 students (or 71 per cent) attended government schools and 184,746 (or 29 per cent) attended non-government schools. The proportion of full-time students attending non-government schools has increased significantly in recent years, up by seven percentage points since 1983.

Queensland student full-time enrolments, government and non-government schools, number and percentage share, 1983 to 2003



Source: ABS, 2003.

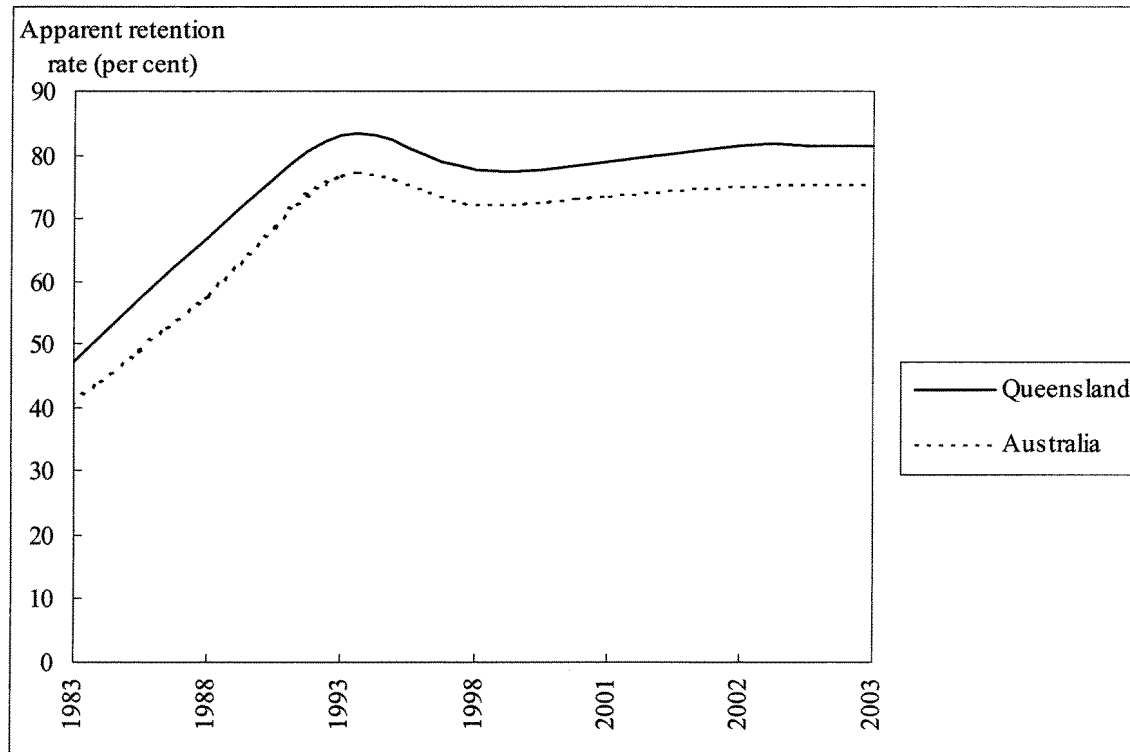
The number of Queensland primary students has increased from 293,131 in 1983 to 381,406 in 2003 – an increase of 89,275 students or 23 per cent. Growth in secondary school enrolment growth has been even more significant, with the number of students increasing from 146,833 students in 1978 to 248,365 in 2003, an increase of 101,532 (or 41 per cent).

Education participation

The extent to which students remain in school from their first secondary year (Year 8) to the later years of schooling (Years 11 and 12) can be measured by the apparent retention rate. The apparent retention rate for all schools to Year 12 increased from 47.2 per cent in 1983 to 81.5 per cent in 2003 (75.4 per cent for Australia). This was higher than any other State or Territory except the Australian Capital Territory (89.7 per cent). The apparent retention rate for males was 77.6 per cent in 2003. This was lower than the rate for

females, which was 85.7 per cent. The apparent retention rate from Year 10 to 12 in Queensland was 81.5 per cent in 2003 (76.9 per cent for Australia), with the rate for males at 78.2 per cent and 84.9 per cent for females. The apparent retention rate for full-time students from Year 10 to Year 12 in non-government schools (90.6 per cent) was considerably higher than that for government schools (76.4 per cent).

Apparent retention rates, full-time students, Years 7/8 to Year 12, per cent, Queensland and Australia, 1983 to 2003



Source: ABS, 2003.

Learning outcomes

The Queensland Government is committed to improving student achievement in key learning areas. The Year 2 Diagnostic Net is a standardised tool to map children's development in literacy and numeracy. In 2002, no additional support was required for 72.6 per cent of students in reading, 82.8 per cent in writing, and 77.5 per cent in numeracy. In addition, in August 2002, all government school students in Years 3, 5 and 7 participated in literacy and numeracy testing conducted by the Queensland Studies Authority. The results demonstrated improvement in Year 3 literacy and numeracy, and Year 5 and Year 7 numeracy. Of the 18 possible curriculum area comparisons for literacy and numeracy achievement, eight indicated improvement between 2001 and 2002, while nine indicated similar performance levels.

National literacy and numeracy benchmarks have been established for all Year 3 and Year 5 students. The benchmarks represent essential elements of literacy and numeracy at a minimum acceptable standard for these Year levels. In 2002, approximately 92.6 per cent of Queensland's Year 3 students and 83 per cent of Year 5 students achieved the national benchmark for reading. For numeracy, approximately 91.8 per cent of Queensland's Year 3 students and 88.7 per cent of Year 5 students achieved the national benchmark.

Achievements for Queensland's Indigenous students against the national benchmarks were generally lower than that for the total student cohort. In 2001, 71.6 per cent of Year 3 Indigenous students and 57.3 per cent of Year 5 Indigenous students achieved the national reading benchmarks. Approximately 79 per cent of the State's Year 3 Indigenous students and 54.4 per cent of Year 5 Indigenous students achieved the national benchmark for numeracy.

The latest national data indicates that in 2001 Queensland's benchmark performance was similar to that for Australia for Year 3 reading and numeracy and was slightly lower than for Australia for Year 5 reading and numeracy. Queensland Indigenous student achievements against the national benchmarks were below the national average, with the exception of performance against Years 3 and 5 reading benchmarks.

Queensland Population Dispersion Costs

There are a number of 'dispersion' factors, including high costs involving in ensuring that geographic distance is not a barrier to learning. The Commonwealth Grants Commission (CGC) recognises the importance of these dispersion factors in its 2004 Review of Commonwealth funding arrangements. The following provides information on the costs associated with providing services to education in regional and remote areas of Queensland:

- **Telcommunication costs:** Telephone calls in areas with dispersed populations are 31 per cent higher than costs in South-East Queensland, with costs in the most expensive School District (Torres Strait) being 4.64 times those in Brisbane. In addition, total data telecommunications costs for schools in the State are estimated to total \$9 million.
- **School grant payments:** Grants to Queensland government schools are adjusted according to the School Grants Index, which incorporates a freight cost factor. Freight costs in areas with dispersed populations are 20.4 per cent higher than costs in South-East Queensland. Freight costs in the most expensive locality (Longreach) are 3.3 times those in Brisbane. Total freight costs applied to school grants for all Districts is estimated to total \$83 million.
- **Travel costs:** Costs attributable to areas with dispersed populations are approximately 140 per cent higher than costs in the South-East Queensland region, with the total costs in the most expensive locality (Torres Strait) 78 times higher than those in South-East Queensland.
- **Staffing costs:** Approximately 24.5 per cent of permanent full-time employees, and 21.4 per cent of all employees (excluding casual employees), receive either Locality Allowance or Remote Area Incentive Scheme payments. The total locality allowance in the State is \$12.1 million, with \$12.008 million attributable to the cost of staff outside of South-East Queensland. The Remote Area Incentives Scheme applies to 214 government schools in the more remote areas of the State, with teachers receiving a compensation cash benefit for each year of service. The total actual cost of the Scheme is estimated at \$8.6 million. Salary costs for replacement teachers to allow for itinerant teachers' travel time are 14.02 per cent higher outside of South-East Queensland. Non-cash incentives also allow for a consideration of remoteness.
- **Recruitment:** Personnel officers are employed in Districts to attend to staff relocation and leave management. Approximately \$2.8 million is attributable to the cost of staff in areas outside of South-East Queensland, with the cost of employing these staff at 24 per cent more than would be required if the populations in these regions were in South-East Queensland.
- **Teacher housing:** The cost of teacher housing, including acquisitions, upgrades, construction, minor maintenance and leasing, in regions outside of South-East Queensland is estimated to total \$9.434 million.

In total, Education Queensland estimates that the State's population distribution represents an additional cost to government education providers in the order of \$54.5 million.

Queensland Government *Schools Reporting Consultation Paper* (attached).

Schools Reporting

consultation paper

parents



communities



students

employers



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Foreword

The Queensland Government's extensive Education and Training Reforms for the Future (ETRF) agenda covers all phases of learning and is supported by a significant increase in the investment we make in our schools.

At the heart of these reforms is a commitment to provide the very best education possible for every young Queenslander. We cannot achieve this alone – our schools must work in partnership with students, their parents, employers and the community. To be effective, this partnership needs to be built on an honest and open sharing of information.

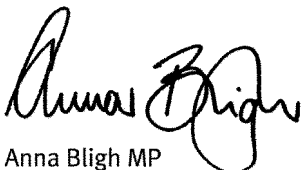
The Government firmly believes that students and their parents have a right to know about how well students are doing at school. Students, parents and the community are also entitled to information about the achievements of our schools. It is also important that information on student outcomes is relevant and meaningful for employers.

Queensland schools, both state and non-state, already achieve great outcomes for students and the community. But there is still more that can be done. It is important that we know what information parents need and how best this can be presented to help students and their parents make decisions for the future.

We also need to know what information about school outcomes the broader community needs. Schools mirror the communities they serve and it is essential that this information contributes to school improvement and does not become a simplistic comparison of performance through the publication of unhelpful league tables.

I am pleased to release this consultation paper about how we can improve school reporting to students, parents, school communities, employers and the wider community. The Government has identified a number of key issues that require careful consideration and analysis. I invite you to consider the issues raised and the proposals suggested and to provide your views.

I value your opinion and look forward to receiving your comments as we work together to further improve educational outcomes for young Queenslanders. These issues are a high priority for the Government and I propose to report back to you by the end of this year.



Anna Bligh MP
Minister for Education and
Minister for the Arts

April 2004

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Better information about students and schools

The Queensland Government is building an education and training system that provides the very best education possible and enables every young Queenslander to reach their full potential.

To achieve this objective, stronger partnerships are being built with students, their parents and the community.¹ As part of that partnership, the Government is committed to improving the information that is provided about student and school performance and the outcomes achieved.

Regular reporting to students and their parents helps them plan future learning experiences and improve student learning outcomes. Reporting to the community about schools will help achieve standards of excellence, drive improvement in Queensland schools and improve accountability.

What is reporting all about?

All schools have reporting systems to provide feedback to students and their parents about individual student outcomes and to the school community about the school's performance. Some of the sources of this information may be reliable and grounded in evidence, and others may not.

Reporting involves detailing how well a child is doing at school. What do they do well? What, if anything, do they need extra help with? What areas require more effort? Reporting is also used to comment on how well schools are performing. What does the school offer? What does it excel in? What could it improve? What makes it distinctive? Overall, do students perform as well as students at similar schools?

Reporting is an issue for all schools. This paper presents proposals for improving the way all Queensland schools, both state and non-state, provide accurate, timely and meaningful information and advice to students, parents, school communities and the broader community. It looks at what information could be provided and how best to provide it.

What research says

Parents play a critical role in determining how well their children do at school. Research tells us that children do better at school when parents play an active role in their education. Once children start school, parents rely on teachers to tell them how their child is going and how they can help their child achieve his or her full potential.

The importance of high quality reports for improving students' educational experiences cannot be overstated. Research shows that regular feedback allows students and parents to track progress and achieve better outcomes, and provides an early warning system for detecting any problems.

Consistency in reporting across schools is essential to minimise disruptions when children move from one school to another. On average, 25 per cent of students change address each year. When similar reporting strategies are used across schools, everyone benefits. For students and parents, this produces an immediate understanding of what the student report means regardless of the school attended. For teachers and educators it means a similar reporting strategy can be used regardless of where they work. Teachers also benefit from having an immediate sense of a new student's strengths and abilities when he or she joins a class.

Parents are entitled to access information about schools that will help them make informed decisions about their child's future, such as choosing a school, where possible, that has the attributes they value most and that they believe will be of most benefit to their child.

Regular reporting by schools can improve school performance. Schools and education systems need good data to track progress over time, to determine the effectiveness of special programs

¹ In this paper, the term parent refers to parents, caregivers and significant others who have a care-giving role in a student's life.

and targeted resource allocations, to track the impact of policies and to determine the success of initiatives.

When schools are required to regularly report on their performance, they document not only their successes but also areas for improvement. Regular reporting encourages schools to continuously set goals for improvement, to put in place strategies for reaching these goals and to regularly review their performance. This creates a culture of self-evaluation and leads to a process of continuous school improvement, where each year a school aims to do better than it did in the previous year. As well, schools use data to make better decisions. By regularly reviewing performance, schools are better able to identify any potential problems early and to take appropriate action to fix or prevent problems from arising.

What happens in Queensland

Every year, all schools provide a report to parents about students' outcomes. In some years, all students participate in statewide tests and receive reports about their results. At other times, such as in Year 6 and 10, only a sample of Queensland students participates in a test. At these times, summary results are reported and no reports are provided to parents.

This table shows current reporting arrangements for each year level of school.

| Year | Assessment | Schools involved | Report |
|----------------|---|--|---|
| Each Year 1–12 | School-devised assessments | All schools | School report – the content of which is at the discretion of each school. State schools provide reports twice a year. |
| 1–3 | The Year 2 Diagnostic Net is a standardised tool used to map children's development in literacy and numeracy. | All state schools and most non-state schools | In Years 1, 2, and 3, schools provide a standard report about each student's development in Reading, Writing and Numeracy. The summary results of Year 2 students are also reported to Queensland Parliament. |
| 3 | All students in Year 3 participate in national tests of literacy and numeracy skills. | All schools | The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) provides a report to parents about each student's results. Summary results are also reported to Queensland Parliament and in national reports. |
| 5 | All students in Year 5 participate in national tests of literacy and numeracy skills. | All schools | The QSA provides a report to parents about each student's results. Summary results are also reported to Queensland Parliament and in national reports. |
| 6 | Every year a sample of Year 6 Queensland students participates in a national test on Science (2003), Civics and Citizenship (2004) or Information and Communication Technologies (2005). | A sample of students is drawn from all schools | Summary results are reported in state, national and international reports. Parents do not receive reports about individual student performances. |
| 7 | All students in Year 7 participate in national tests of literacy and numeracy skills. | All schools | The QSA provides a report to parents about each student's results. Summary results are also reported to Queensland Parliament and in national reports. |
| 10 | Every year a sample of Year 10 Queensland students participates in a national test on Science (2003), Civics and Citizenship (2004) or Information and Communication Technologies (2005). Every three years, a sample of Queensland students (aged 15 years) participates in international tests covering Reading, Mathematical and Scientific Literacy. | A sample of students is drawn from all schools A sample of students is drawn from all schools | Summary results are reported in state and national reports. Parents do not receive reports about individual student performances. Summary results are reported in state, national and international reports. Parents do not receive reports about individual student performances. |
| 12 | Moderated school-based assessments and the Queensland Core Skills Test | All schools | The QSA provides a Senior Certificate to every student completing Year 12 which records achievement in senior subjects, vocational education and training and other recognised learning. Tertiary Entrance Statements are issued to eligible students. |

Note: In 2003 issuing of the Year 10 (or Junior) certificate ceased with the introduction of the ETRF initiative.

Other initiatives under way

In 2001, the Government established the Assessment and Reporting Taskforce, with expert and stakeholder representation, to devise a suitable assessment and reporting framework for Queensland state schools.

This taskforce found that, within state schools, there was a need to build knowledge and skills in assessing student achievement and to develop a way of reporting the results of assessment in a standardised way for Years 1 to 10.

Since 2002, Education Queensland has provided an extensive range of professional development opportunities to support state school teachers in developing and maintaining high-level assessment skills. More than 21 000 teachers have already benefited from nearly 700 sessions conducted across the state in a professional development program that is available to all state school teachers.

Another component of work related to reporting involves making sure state school curriculum planning gives greater consistency across classrooms and schools, and greater continuity across year levels. Education Queensland and the QSA are working together to produce curriculum planning resources that will provide teachers and parents with a clear understanding of the range, balance and continuity of learning that every Queensland state school student will need as they move into the senior phase of learning.

Work has also been under way in the non-government sector to develop effective ways to communicate student achievement to parents. For example, Brisbane Catholic Education has been developing effective ways to communicate student achievement to their parent communities. Reporting is seen as a process that actively involves students, teachers and parents.

As a result of the ETRF reforms, consideration is being given to a further statewide assessment process in Year 9. There is a view that the current five-year gap in statewide moderated assessment between Years 7 and 12 is too long. A Year 9 assessment could help students to position themselves for senior schooling.

Our next steps

The Queensland Government believes that a reporting system that provides better information about students and schools should be based on agreed principles, better presentation of written reports, regular reporting on student and school performance, easy-to-understand terms, more opportunities to involve parents and improved methods to keep track of student learning.

Your comments and suggestions on these proposals are important in helping investigate how to build on existing practices to create a reporting system that best meets the needs of students, parents, teachers, employers and the community. Your support and involvement will help develop a shared approach to best-practice reporting that meets the needs of each stakeholder group.

Your feedback is invited on each of the following eight proposals. A summary of the proposals and a feedback form is provided at the end of this paper and is also available electronically at <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/reporting>.

Principles for effective reporting

Proposal 1 – Common principles for effective reporting about students and schools should drive Queensland's education system across all state, Catholic and independent schools.

Key principles for effective reporting across all schools are needed to drive the continuous improvement of all Queensland schools. Based on what has been learnt from researchers, educators and parents, these principles should focus on the needs of students, parents and the community and should underpin the reporting initiatives of all schools.

Proposed principles

1. All students and parents are entitled to confidential reporting that is responsive to individual needs, constructive and used to plan future learning.
2. All students and their parents need to be aware of students' strengths and weaknesses across a broad range of indicators including curricular and extracurricular school activities, and social development.
3. All parents can expect to regularly receive clear and consistent reports on their child's progress and to have opportunities to discuss their child's progress with teachers.
4. All parents should have the opportunity to be involved in the development and implementation of any reporting processes at their school.
5. All parents and the community are entitled to regular and easy-to-understand reporting on how all Queensland schools are performing against their stated philosophy, ethos and educational programs.
6. School communities should have access to information about school performance that uses clear, broad, agreed-upon indicators that avoid superficial comparisons of schools or sectors.

Have your say

- Do you agree with the proposed principles for school reporting? Yes/No/Don't know
- Should these principles apply to both state and non-state schools? Yes/No/Don't know
- What changes or additions would you make to these principles?
- Will these principles help improve reporting for students and schools? Yes/No/Don't know

Better recording of student achievement

Proposal 2 – Student identification numbers should be issued to all students from when they first enrol in a Queensland school.

With the introduction in 2006 of the Youth Participation in Education and Training Act, all Year 10 students in state and non-state schools will be registered with the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) and assigned a student number. This will enable students' achievements to be recorded throughout their senior phase of learning.

It is proposed to extend this system of registration to students when they first enrol in formal education. This will help education sectors track the movement and progress of students throughout their school life and potentially provides the technological platform for all students and parents to access information online. Any proposal would be administered under the requirements of privacy laws.

Have your say

- Would there be benefits from introducing a statewide student number for all Queensland students when they first start school? Yes/No/Don't know
- Should this system be extended across Australia given the increased mobility of families? Yes/No/Don't know

Better reporting to students and parents

Proposal 3 – The format for reports on the Year 3, 5 and 7 tests should be easy for parents and students to understand.

Most Queensland students participate in national literacy and numeracy tests in Years 3, 5 and 7. The results of these tests are shared with parents and are used to help track the progress of students. However, these reports need to be made easier for students and parents to read and understand.

From this year, for the first time, the individual student reports will show how each student performed in comparison to the national benchmarks for Reading, Writing and Numeracy. The national benchmarks are the nationally agreed minimum results expected for students at each year level. Benchmarks represent the minimum acceptable standard without which a student

will have difficulty making progress at school. Teachers will continue to receive detailed reports on all facets of this testing regime.

Attachment 1 shows a revised reporting format developed by the QSA.

Have your say

- Do you favour the draft reports presented in Attachment 1? Yes/No/Don't know
- Are these examples easy to understand? Yes/No/Don't know
 - If No, what could be improved to make them easier to understand?

Proposal 4 – All Queensland schools should provide written reports at least twice a year.

Schools have many strategies for sharing information with parents and written reports represent an effective way of reporting on student outcomes. Presently, state schools are required to provide formal reports to parents at least once a semester. There are no minimum standard requirements imposed by Government for reporting to parents of students attending non-state schools. There are standards in place governing reporting arrangements in many areas of non-state schooling. As such, it is proposed that all Queensland schools provide written reports on student outcomes at least twice a year. This would be a minimum requirement which should not prevent schools from providing additional written reports.

Discussing student progress

At Hillbrook Anglican School, in addition to formal written reports to parents and parent-teacher interviews, teachers and parents are encouraged to be in regular contact on an informal basis to discuss student performance and development. The school encourages teachers and parents to make contact to discuss students' progress. Teachers are encouraged to telephone parents on a regular basis, particularly to convey positive messages, not just when a problem arises.

Have your say

- Should all Queensland schools provide written reports on student outcomes at least twice a year? Yes/No/Don't know
- Should schools supplement written reports with additional progress reports during each semester? Yes/No/Don't know
 - If Yes, how regularly?

Proposal 5 – Written reports should be consistent, comprehensive and easy to understand.

Schools report student results to parents in a variety of ways. Some schools report on the progress students have made to achieving learning outcomes and use terms such as Beginning, Emerging and Competent. Others use a five-point scale through the use of terms such as Very High Achievement, High Achievement, Sound Achievement, Limited Achievement, Very Limited Achievement, or A, B, C, D, and E.

Given the diverse range of educational experiences available in Queensland schools, no single approach to reporting is likely to meet the needs of all students and their communities. However, it is possible to introduce a consistent framework for written reports that may include a common results scale which is easily understood by both parents and students. It is acknowledged, however, that for some students and schools the use of a common results scale may be inappropriate.

Proposed framework for written reports

The following framework could create greater consistency in the written reports that are provided by Queensland schools for all students.

Areas of learning

Outlines the areas of learning the student has covered in the reporting period — for example, subjects, key learning areas, rich tasks, vocational educational programs.

Results

Records how well the student achieved in each area of learning in the reporting period.

A common five-point scale could be used to report results. The scale could use terms that indicate the student's progress in relation to the standard expected at the year, such as:

Very high standard

High standard

Satisfactory standard

Approaching standard expected at this year

Below standard expected at this year

The above results scale may not be the best option for students at particular stages of development, students with special needs, or for specific schools or schooling sectors.

Attendance

Records the number of days the student was absent from school.

Additional sections

To be determined by the school in consultation with the school community, but may include the following:

Attributes

Information about how well the student has developed personally and socially. While the information could relate to areas of learning, it would provide additional detail that adds value to the report. Possible examples include: study habits, social development, behaviour, attitude, homework, citizenship, and participation in extracurricular activities such as music and sport.

Areas for further development and extension

Details of any aspect of learning and extracurricular activity that required further development and would provide options for parents to help their child achieve more. This would also cater for gifted and talented students.

Student views

Students would self-evaluate their performance over the period of the report and outline their goals for the next period.

Have your say

- Does the proposed framework for written reports in Proposal 5 include the information you believe a written report must cover? Yes/No/Don't know. Why?
- Should all schools be required to adopt a five-point results scale as outlined in Proposal 5? Yes/No/Don't know
- Would the common five-point results scale and terms proposed meet the requirements of parents and students for information on student progress? Yes/No/Don't know
- Are the terms appropriate for the early phase of learning, Years 1 to 3? Yes/No/Don't know — If No, what terms do you suggest for these years?
- Should the report show how each student is performing in comparison to others? Yes/No/Don't know
- Should the report show how each student is performing in comparison to his/her previous performance? Yes/No/Don't know

Proposal 6 – All Queensland schools should establish a relationship with parents early in the year followed by a parent-teacher interview each semester.

Many schools have innovative strategies and excellent practices for involving parents in the education of their children. These schools have typically invested significant amounts of time and

resources into working with their students, parents and local community to develop strategies that best suit their own community.

To establish a relationship early in the year, some schools hold school open days so that families can visit the classroom, meet the teachers, and see what students are experiencing. Other schools hold breakfasts or evening barbecues for staff, students and parents. Parent–teacher interviews early in the school year are another way to establish positive relationships between the school and parents.

Bringing the school to the community

In 2003 the teachers from Murgon State High School travelled to Cherbourg to hold a parent–teacher night. Later that year, the Cherbourg community including parents, students and elders, with the assistance of the Cherbourg Shire Council, visited the school. This has helped forge new relationships and stronger links between the community and the school.

Best-practice schools tailor regular discussions about student progress to fit the needs of parents, including:

- providing a choice of interview times so that all parents can attend
- sending letters to parents before the interview to indicate what questions the teacher would like to ask and possible questions the parents may like to ask the teacher
- visiting some families at home or other places outside the school, which can be valuable for parents who are uncomfortable about visiting the school
- making special arrangements for families who are not fluent in English and acknowledging cultural differences.

The involvement of students in parent–teacher interviews enables students to take more responsibility for their own learning and to have their opinions considered.

Students taking the lead

At Varsity College, students in Years 7–9 attend the parent–teacher interviews and lead the discussion. These students show their parents and teachers examples of their work and explain the objectives of the task, the skills they applied, how they performed against the objectives and why they were awarded the grading they received. This process requires students to analyse their own performance (with teacher guidance) and communicate it to their parents. Teachers support students during the interview to ensure that other aspects of performance such as working in teams or groups, and behaviour, are addressed.

Have your say

- What is the best way for all schools to establish a relationship with parents early in the school year?
- Should schools conduct parent–teacher interviews at least once a semester to discuss student reports? Yes/No/Don't know
- What should be the minimum time for each interview?
- What other actions could schools take to encourage greater involvement by parents in their child's education?

Better reporting to the school community

Proposal 7 – All Queensland schools should produce information annually that provides a complete picture of each school's performance and outcomes achieved.

In Queensland, we have a comprehensive range of information about our state schools that allows them to see how they are progressing and how they compare with other state schools.

Parent forum

Petrie Terrace State School conducts parent forums to encourage parents to get involved in the school. The forums occur at least once a term and cover a range of topics such as behaviour management, grants and facilities, teaching philosophies or any subject of interest. With a focus on information sharing, the meetings are well received by the school community.

Through the collection of extensive school-based information, Education Queensland has implemented a school improvement and accountability framework in the state school system. Each year, every state school prepares a school annual report and operating plan, and every three years, conducts a school review as part of quality assurance processes. The content, format and distribution of these reports are mostly at the discretion of the school.

Non-state schools, once they have been accredited, are required to report annually to the school community on the results of their school improvement processes. They are required to document their school improvement strategies and priorities and report on their achievements and progress towards these goals. Non-state schools also report to the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board through cyclical school reviews on their continuing compliance with legislated accreditation criteria. Most schools also publish a wealth of information in their prospectuses.

It is proposed that every Queensland school should produce information annually that is accessible through a dedicated website and includes statistics and explanations that are targeted to the needs of parents and the broader community to provide a complete picture of a school's outcomes.

The information that could be made available includes:

- subjects offered at the school
- performance on Year 2 Diagnostic Net with comparisons to the state average
- performance on statewide tests (e.g. Year 3, 5, 7) with comparisons to the state average and national benchmarks
- ratio of computers to students
- information about student destinations after leaving secondary school (e.g. university, TAFE, employment, other)
- a summary of student, parent and teacher satisfaction with the school
- retention/completion rates for the senior phase of learning
- a summary of staff skills and professional development undertaken during the year
- school progress toward targets identified in its previous annual report
- social climate of the school including behaviour management strategies and relationships with the broader community, such as employers and industry
- strategies used for involving parents in their child's education.

Have your say

- Would the provision of information listed under Proposal 7 help parents when making decisions about their child's future learning? Yes/No/Don't know
- What sort of information would you find helpful to get a well-rounded impression of what schools are achieving?
- Should all schools produce information annually that is accessible through a dedicated website? Yes/No/Don't know

Better reporting to the community

Proposal 8 – Year 12 outcomes for all Queensland schools should be publicly available.

Given the significant level of government and personal investment in education, the Government is also investigating options for providing more detailed information to the broader community.

From 2006, the law will change to ensure that all young people in the senior phase of learning are either 'learning or earning'. As well, a new Senior Certificate is being developed to meet the aspirations of Queensland students.

In Victoria, student outcome data is shared with the community through the release of the Victorian Certificate of Education School Performance Data. Examples of recent reports are presented in Attachment 2.

It is proposed in Queensland to publish Year 12 outcomes for all schools using data from the Senior Certificate.

The report, published in December of each year, would include data on all state and non-state schools offering the Senior Certificate. The report would highlight the diverse range of pathways that students pursue in the senior phase of learning and the breadth of programs offered by Queensland schools.

Possible options for this report include:

- learning options and number of enrolments in each — for example, the number of Authority and Authority-Registered subjects and the number of VET certificates
- percentage of school completions
- indicators of student performance, for example
 - the median OP score for the school
 - the number of Year 12 students seeking an OP score who gained a score between 1 and 10
 - the number of Year 12 students who achieved a result of sound or above in three or more QSA subjects
 - the number of Year 12 students seeking a VET certificate who gained one.

A second report, published midyear, would provide information on the post-school destinations of Queensland Year 12 students. This report could include:

- university study
- vocational education and training
- apprenticeship or traineeship arrangements
- part-time or full-time work
- looking for work
- engaged in other activities.

The information would then be published in major newspapers across Queensland. It is proposed to publish the data listing schools in alphabetic order and carrying text on what the data means and what conclusions can and cannot be drawn from it. This proposal is not about generating school ranking systems such as simplistic league tables.

In schools with low numbers of Year 12 students, there are real concerns that it may be possible to identify individual students from the data presented. To counter this concern, data from schools with small numbers of Year 12 students (for example, 15 students or less) would be exempt from publication.

Have your say

- Do you favour the model outlined in Proposal 8? Yes/No/Don't know
- Has the core information that would be of benefit to students, parents and the broader community been covered in the proposed reports? Yes/No/Don't know
- Is there any other information you would like included?

Conclusion

Your comments and feedback on these proposals are a vital part of improving Queensland's education system. Please complete the form below and return it by 30 June 2004 to:

Strategic Policy and Education Futures Division, Department of Education and the Arts
PO Box 33, Brisbane Albert St QLD 4002
Fax: 07 3237 1175
Email: StrategicPolicy@qed.qld.gov.au

All responses will be collated and reports posted on the Department of Education and the Arts website at <http://education.qld.gov.au>

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Attachment 1: Revised QSA reporting format

| Queensland Years 3, 5 and 7 Literacy and Numeracy Tests | |
|--|---|
| 2004 | 37 |
| | Student's name Year 3 School |
| DRAFT | Dear Parents/Carers This report describes your child's results in the Queensland Year 3 Literacy and Numeracy Tests. As the results in this report form only part of the information about your child's achievement for the year, it is important that you consider these results along with other assessment information gathered by the school. The Queensland Years 3, 5 and 7 Literacy and Numeracy Tests were taken by more than 155,000 students in over 1400 schools throughout Queensland. These tests are part of a national testing program that includes all states and territories in Australia. Your child was tested in the following areas: Literacy: reading and viewing, writing and spelling Numeracy: measurement and data, number and space. If you would like further explanation, your child's school has more information about the tests. Yours sincerely Kim Bannikoff Director Queensland Studies Authority |
| |   |

What the results mean

The comments in this section describe average results.

Literacy

Reading and Viewing

Students generally understand well-structured written material that deals with topics that are familiar to or of interest to them. They are able to find specific information and draw simple conclusions when reading or viewing that material. Students generally recognise and understand the purpose of this written material.

Spelling

Students generally use the look of words, their sounds, function and meaning to spell words that they use often in their writing, for example *house, looked and eight*.

Writing

Students generally write about topics that are of interest to them. They are able to logically order two or more ideas. Students usually construct and punctuate simple sentences well and may use more complex sentences when they want to add interest to their writing.

Numeracy

Measurement and Data

Students compare, order and measure (in centimetres), in order to solve everyday problems. They read and record the time.

Students interpret information displayed on simple graphs and in tables, and make statements about the likely occurrence of familiar events.

Number

Students generally use mental, written and electronic calculations to solve a variety of everyday problems that require an understanding of the relationships among numbers.

Space

Students commonly identify and visualise 2-D and 3-D shapes and objects, and recognise the same shape in a different orientation. They locate positions on simple grids and maps using directions such as left and right, north and south.

2004

DRAFT V7

Your child's results at a glance

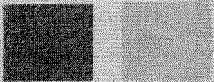
Legend



Your child's results.



The average results for students in Queensland at this year level.



The results for most students in Queensland.



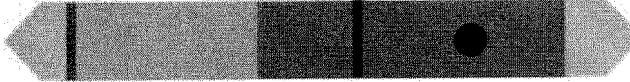
The national benchmark. This is the minimum result expected at this year level. There are benchmarks for reading, writing and overall numeracy only.

Literacy

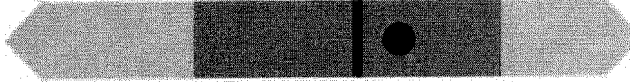
Reading & viewing



Writing

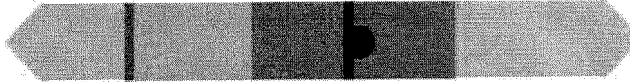


Spelling

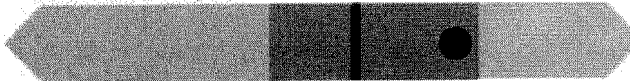


Numeracy

Overall



Measurement & data



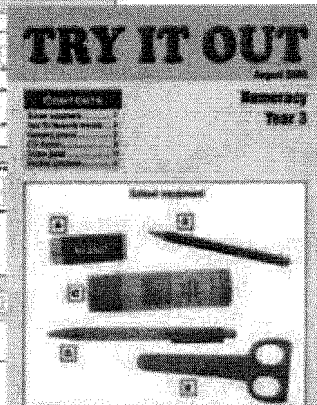
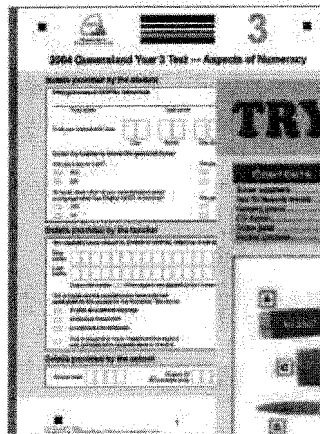
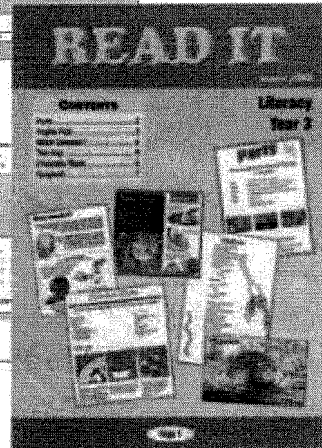
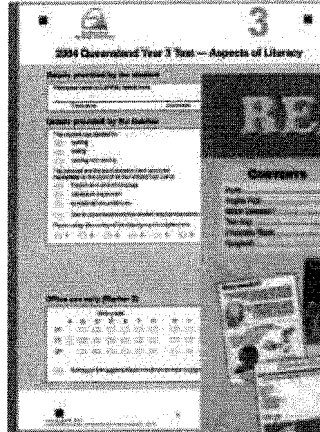
Number



Space



2004



Queensland
Studies Authority

DRAFT V7

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Attachment 2: Victorian Certificate of Education School Performance Data – sample of published data

| School | Locality | Number of level 3/4 VCE Studies | Number of VET Certificates | Availability of IB | Number of students enrolled in level 3/4 VCE studies | Number of students enrolled in VET Certificates | Number of students enrolled in VCAL | Percent applying for tertiary places | Percent satisfactory VCE completions | Percent satisfactory VET module completions | Median Study Score | Percent 40+ Study Scores |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Academy of Mary Immaculate | Fitzroy | 38 | 1 | | 127 | 14 | | 95 | 98 | 33 | 32 | 9 |
| Adken College | Greenvale | 21 | 3 | | 48 | 6 | | 85 | 100 | 92 | 30 | 5 |
| Albert Park College | Albert Park | 37 | 13 | | 101 | 33 | 18 | 86 | 94 | 74 | 23 | 1 |
| Alexandra SC | Alexandra | 24 | 4 | | 93 | 39 | 15 | 88 | 100 | 69 | 30 | 5 |
| Alia College * | Hewitson East | 17 | | | 12 | | | 78 | 89 | 29 | 29 | 4 |
| Alphington GS | Alphington | 24 | 3 | | 91 | 24 | 1 | 92 | 98 | 95 | 28 | 1 |
| Altona SC | Altona | 27 | 12 | | 107 | 163 | 29 | 65 | 85 | 70 | 24 | 0 |
| Apollo Bay P-12 College | Apollo Bay | 19 | | | 27 | | | 90 | 100 | | 30 | 11 |
| Aquinas College | Ringwood | 42 | 14 | | 306 | 96 | 12 | 88 | 99 | 81 | 32 | 9 |
| Arcat Community College | Arcat | 28 | 15 | | 107 | 101 | | 46 | 99 | 81 | 26 | 1 |
| Ashwood SC | Ashwood | 27 | 6 | | 84 | 5 | | 82 | 97 | 43 | 29 | 5 |
| Assumption College | Kilmore | 36 | 22 | | 276 | 84 | 12 | 95 | 100 | 87 | 30 | 6 |
| Ave Maria College | Aberfeldie | 35 | 3 | | 232 | 31 | | 95 | 100 | 49 | 31 | 10 |
| Avila College | Mount Waverley | 37 | 6 | | 220 | 36 | 19 | 91 | 99 | 91 | 33 | 13 |
| Bacchus Marsh College | Bacchus Marsh | 30 | 12 | | 164 | 113 | 19 | 73 | 98 | 65 | 28 | 4 |
| Bacchus Marsh Grammar | Bacchus Marsh | 22 | 10 | | 87 | 23 | | 81 | 100 | 62 | 31 | 3 |
| Balmbridge College | Hamilton | 28 | 19 | | 109 | 64 | 21 | 63 | 97 | 68 | 28 | 4 |
| Bairnsdale SC | Bairnsdale | 40 | 29 | | 270 | 185 | | 70 | 96 | 67 | 28 | 6 |
| Ballaarat HS | Ballaarat | 37 | 37 | | 306 | 129 | 27 | 72 | 95 | 66 | 29 | 5 |
| Ballaarat and Clarendon College | Ballaarat | 37 | 13 | | 213 | 20 | | 90 | 100 | 80 | 35 | 22 |
| Ballaarat Christian College | Sebastopol | 13 | 2 | | 26 | 2 | | 57 | 100 | 88 | 29 | 6 |
| Ballaarat GS | Ballaarat | 41 | 6 | | 297 | 62 | 30 | 92 | 100 | 63 | 35 | 23 |
| Ballaarat SC | Wendouree | 50 | 33 | | 240 | 195 | | 89 | 88 | 81 | 27 | 3 |
| Balmoral HS * | Balmoral | 19 | 6 | | 14 | 7 | | 100 | 100 | 62 | 29 | 0 |
| Bairym HS | Bairym North | 44 | 3 | | 504 | 6 | | 93 | 99 | 89 | 35 | 20 |
| Bairnsdale SC | Heidelberg West | 24 | 4 | | 96 | 7 | 17 | 48 | 85 | 27 | 24 | 3 |
| Bayside Christian College | Frankston | 26 | 7 | | 41 | 12 | | 96 | 100 | 96 | 30 | 7 |
| Bayside College | Newport | 49 | 12 | | 237 | 162 | 11 | 65 | 91 | 93 | 26 | 1 |
| Baywater SC | Baywater | 27 | 24 | | 90 | 37 | 10 | 51 | 98 | 73 | 26 | 1 |
| Bayview College | Portland | 23 | 6 | | 35 | 25 | | 74 | 95 | 89 | 29 | 9 |
| Beaconsfield College | Palmerston | 39 | 6 | | 274 | 11 | | 85 | 99 | 72 | 31 | 8 |
| Beaufort SC | Beaufort | 18 | 8 | | 32 | 10 | | 61 | 91 | 73 | 28 | 5 |
| Beechworth SC | Beechworth | 26 | 8 | | 68 | 57 | 9 | 79 | 100 | 32 | 31 | 4 |
| Bellarine SC | Drysdale | 39 | 20 | | 195 | 82 | 24 | 63 | 92 | 69 | 29 | 4 |
| Belmont HS | Belmont | 40 | 31 | | 266 | 90 | 15 | 81 | 98 | 75 | 30 | 4 |
| Benalla College | Benalla | 49 | 42 | | 344 | 344 | 23 | 71 | 87 | 63 | 30 | 7 |
| Bendigo Senior SC | Bendigo | 70 | 74 | | 1269 | 510 | 101 | 66 | 95 | 69 | 30 | 6 |
| Bentleigh SC | Bentleigh East | 33 | 8 | | 116 | 92 | 6 | 58 | 92 | 55 | 28 | 4 |
| Berwick SC | Berwick | 38 | 20 | | 333 | 99 | 69 | 68 | 92 | 72 | 28 | 5 |
| Berwick Ladies College | East St Kilda | 21 | | | 97 | | | 98 | 100 | | 36 | 19 |
| Black Hills College | Hawthorn East | 29 | 14 | | 148 | 75 | | 100 | 100 | 36 | 36 | 31 |
| Blackburn College | Moorooburn | 41 | | | 188 | | | 85 | 100 | 80 | 32 | 9 |
| Birchip P12 School | Birchip | 19 | 7 | | 23 | 2 | | 94 | 94 | 32 | 32 | 11 |
| Blackburn HS | Blackburn | 37 | 2 | | 222 | | | 90 | 99 | 33 | 31 | 10 |
| Boort SC | Boort | 20 | 3 | | 28 | 6 | | 89 | 100 | 69 | 34 | 14 |
| Borama Heights College | Borama | 31 | 20 | | 131 | 80 | 31 | 47 | 92 | 76 | 27 | 6 |
| Braemar SC | Glendon | 37 | 5 | | 193 | 59 | 21 | 63 | 96 | 55 | 22 | 1 |

Summary of consultation questions

This questionnaire is available electronically at <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/reporting>.

Proposal 1 – Common principles for effective reporting about students and schools should drive Queensland’s education system across all state, Catholic and independent schools.

Have your say

- Do you agree with the proposed principles for school reporting? Yes/No/Don’t know
- Should these principles apply to both state and non-state schools? Yes/No/Don’t know
- What changes or additions would you make to these principles?
- Will these principles help improve reporting for students and schools? Yes/No/Don’t know

Proposal 2 – Student identification numbers should be issued to all students from when they first enrol in a Queensland school.

Have your say

- Would there be benefits from introducing a statewide student number for all Queensland students when they first start school? Yes/No/Don’t know
- Should this system be extended across Australia given the increased mobility of families? Yes/No/Don’t know

Proposal 3 – The format for reports on the Year 3, 5 and 7 tests should be easy for parents and students to understand.

Have your say

- Do you favour the draft reports presented in Attachment 1? Yes/No/Don’t know
- Are these examples easy to understand? Yes/No/Don’t know
 - If No, what could be improved to make them easier to understand?

Proposal 4 – All Queensland schools should provide written reports at least twice a year.

Have your say

- Should all Queensland schools provide written reports on student outcomes at least twice a year? Yes/No/Don’t know
- Should schools supplement written reports with additional progress reports during each semester? Yes/No/Don’t know
 - If Yes, how regularly?

Proposal 5 – Written reports should be consistent, comprehensive and easy to understand.

Have your say

- Does the proposed framework for written reports in Proposal 5 include the information you believe a written report must cover? Yes/No/Don’t know. Why?
- Should all schools be required to adopt a five-point results scale as outlined in Proposal 5? Yes/No/Don’t know
- Would the common five-point results scale and terms proposed meet the requirements of parents and students for information on student progress? Yes/No/Don’t know
- Are the terms appropriate for the early phase of learning, Years 1 to 3? Yes/No/Don’t know
 - If No, what terms do you suggest for these years?
- Should the report show how each student is performing in comparison to others? Yes/No/Don’t know
- Should the report show how each student is performing in comparison to his/her previous performance? Yes/No/Don’t know

Proposal 6 – All Queensland schools should establish a relationship with parents early in the year followed by a parent–teacher interview each semester.

Have your say

- What is the best way for all schools to establish a relationship with parents early in the school year?
- Should schools conduct parent–teacher interviews at least once a semester to discuss student reports? Yes/No/Don’t know
- What should be the minimum time for each interview?
- What other actions could schools take to encourage greater involvement by parents in their child’s education?

Proposal 7 – All Queensland schools should produce information annually that provides a complete picture of each school’s performance and outcomes achieved.

Have your say

- Would the provision of information listed under Proposal 7 help parents when making decisions about their child’s future learning? Yes/No/Don’t know
- What sort of information would you find helpful to get a well-rounded impression of what schools are achieving?
- Should all schools produce information annually that is accessible through a dedicated website? Yes/No/Don’t know

Proposal 8 – Year 12 outcomes for all Queensland schools should be publicly available.

Should information collected from all school annual reports be available on a dedicated website for easier access for people interested in a school’s performance and achievements? Yes/No

Have your say

- Do you favour the model outlined in Proposal 8? Yes/No/Don’t know
- Has the core information that would be of benefit to students, parents and the broader community been covered in the proposed reports? Yes/No/Don’t know
- Is there any other information you would like included?

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback. Please return this form and an attachment with your written responses by 30 June 2004 to: Strategic Policy and Education Futures Division, Department of Education and the Arts, PO Box 33, Brisbane Albert St QLD 4002 Fax: 07 3237 1175 Email: StrategicPolicy@qed.qld.gov.au

To assist us in collating this information, please advise:

1. Are you a: (tick as many as apply)

- Parent
- Student
- Teacher
- Employer
- School principal
- Other school staff?
- Other (please specify) _____

If you are representing an organisation, please state the name of the organisation _____ and your title of office _____

2. Do you have any children who are currently attending school?

- Yes, Please go to Q3
- No, Please go to Q5

3. Do they attend:

- A state school?
- A Catholic school?
- An independent school?

4. Please indicate the year level(s) of your children at school:

Preschool/prep year 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 Other _____

5. What is your highest educational qualification?

- Beyond Year 12
- Completed senior high school (Year 12)
- Completed primary school or junior high school (up to Year 10)
- Other (please specify) _____

6. If you live in Australia, what is your postcode? _____ If you live overseas, please specify where _____

7. Would you like to be kept up to date about the progress of this paper’s consultation? Yes/ No
If yes, please provide your contact details:

Name _____

Postal address _____

Email _____

Please tick preferred communication method.