

SECTION A

PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORTING

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A1 The organisation

Our vision and values

Our vision is that all children and young people in the ACT learn, thrive and are equipped with skills to lead fulfilling, productive and responsible lives. We aim to deliver the highest quality education through the best education system in the nation. This ambition relates to all phases of education, beginning with our early childhood and primary schools, our high schools, colleges and specialist schools for students with disabilities, and through to the ACT tertiary sector.

We strive for excellence so that children and families can choose the ACT public school system, based firmly on the quality of educational experience the programs offer and the opportunities for students to excel. We value honesty, excellence, fairness and respect. We believe that by embracing and demonstrating these values, we will provide the best schooling environment – an environment that will allow each and every child and young person to achieve their best and contribute to society.

Our role

Our role is to provide early intervention education programs; public school education at preschool, primary school, high school and senior secondary college levels; registration of non-government schools and home education; and the planning and coordination of vocational education and training.

Table A1.1 shows an increase in the total number of students from 2009 to 2011. There was growth in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students with special needs over the same period. To maintain learning and teaching quality in public schools, the Directorate increased employment of school leaders and teachers. The number of school leaders and teachers increased to 3,990 in 2010-11 from 3,923 in 2009-10.

Table A1.1: Enrolments in ACT public schools, 2009 to 2011

	2009	2010	2011
Total students	38,280	38,853	39,010
Students with special needs	1,783	1,869	1,848
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	1,082	1,208	1,283

Source: *School Census February 2011*, ACT Directorate of Education and Training

The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians 2008* recognised that successful completion of schooling has a profound influence on the economic wellbeing of young people. School completion and higher levels of educational attainment are linked to greater employment opportunities, economic and social prosperity, better health, reduced levels of obesity and longer life expectancy. Young people who do not complete school tend to be significantly disadvantaged, with increased likelihood of unemployment, greater risk of offending behaviour, greater susceptibility to the influences of drug and alcohol misuse, homelessness, anti-social behaviour and lower life-long income.

We recognise that our role includes developing the capabilities of children and young people for citizenship, community engagement and intellectual understanding. The challenge, which we readily embrace, is to ensure that every young person remains positively engaged in schooling and has access to productive learning pathways for overall individual and social wellbeing.

Our structure

Following the ACT Government's acceptance of recommendations from the Hawke Review, the Education and Training Directorate came into effect on 17 May 2011. The Directorate is headed by the Director-General, Dr Jim Watterston who together with the Deputy Director-General (Ms Diane Joseph), and three Executive Directors (Mr Phillip Tardif, Ms Jayne Johnston and Ms Leanne Cover) form the Senior Executive Team.

There are four divisions in the Directorate, namely School Improvement; Strategy and Coordination; Corporate Services; and Tertiary and International Education. The roles and responsibilities associated with each division are listed in Table A1.2.

Table A1.2: The structure of Directorate divisions

Divisions	Branches	Responsibilities
School Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Student Support • Learning and Teaching • School Network Belconnen • School Network North/Gungahlin • School Network South/Weston • School Network Tuggeranong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridging the achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and all students • Building the capacity of schools and providing targeted support to meet the needs of students with disabilities • Building the cultural competency of the Directorate • Supporting curriculum implementation • Improving teacher quality and leadership capacity • Delivering early childhood learning and development services to schools • Ensuring services and programs are delivered through an integrated and comprehensive approach across school networks • Enhancing accountability, increasing availability and data usage • Building the capacity of teachers
Strategy and Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information, Communications and Governance • Planning and Performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering, interpreting and assessing data • Reporting performance of the organisation • Responding to the national reform agenda • Maintaining effective and strategic relationships with the Council of Australian Governments • Working with other ACT agencies to ensure Canberra's social planning includes an educational focus • Overseeing the Directorate's overall information strategy • Managing effective communications within the Directorate, as well as with government, the community and media • Overseeing processes relating to legal matters and risk management • Managing records

Divisions	Branches	Responsibilities
Corporate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance and Corporate Support Human Resources Schools Capital Works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing budget and financial arrangements Organising recruitment and staffing of the teaching workforce Coordinating Teacher Quality National Partnership reforms Collecting and analysing workforce data Implementing workplace health and safety improvement strategy Managing industrial relations Developing and implementing all workplace agreements
Tertiary and International Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and Tertiary Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing vocational education and training Managing career and transition support Organising welfare and support of overseas fee-paying students

Source: Planning and Performance Branch

Our clients and stakeholders

We believe that everyone matters and the views and involvement of our clients are critical to the achievement of our vision. Our clients include over 60,000 school students and 20,000 vocational education and training learners in the ACT, and their families and carers whom we interact with on a daily basis.

We know that improved learning and teaching outcomes for children and young people are supported by establishing partnerships and proactively and productively engaging with parents, industry and the broader community.

School environments are enriched by the involvement of community associations, professional organisations, health care and early learning providers, and the rich resource of volunteers. Our links with the community extend more broadly to engagement with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, community organisations that make use of school facilities and our colleagues in the non-government education system.

The Directorate continues to engage with clients and stakeholders. This includes regular meetings with key stakeholder groups, such as the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations, the Australian Education Union and the ACT Principals' Association. Another is the process of community consultation, which allows all stakeholders to have a say on issues of importance to them. This included consultation on the review into special education.

With the release of *Excellence and Enterprise: Advancing Public Schools of Distinction* which included ideas from students, school staff, parents, community members and stakeholder groups, we now have a clear way forward for further improving secondary schooling and creating tailored and meaningful student

pathways and transitions. The Directorate recognises and continues to encourage the contribution of the tertiary sector, training organisations, employer associations and the myriad of national working parties and expert advisory bodies.

Achievement of our strategic priorities requires productive relationships with stakeholders. The National Education Agreement emphasises the importance of productive client-based relationships. The Directorate delivered important elements of the education revolution by building effective partnerships with a host of contracted service providers. Together, we have refreshed, refurbished and rejuvenated educational infrastructure to support learning and teaching and improve student access to state-of-the-art educational facilities and learning environments.

We aim to provide clients and stakeholders with dependable educational services and accurate advice. This acknowledges the critical role we play in providing information and data in supporting the work of the media, research institutions, universities and Commonwealth agencies with independent charters to raise the standard of educational outcomes.

We maintain effective relationships with our employees and their representatives, so that together we can establish high performing work cultures which are recognised as satisfying and rewarding. We know that in order to be a responsive, innovative and high achieving organisation that delivers on its commitments, we must invest in our staff and current and future leaders.

A2 Overview

Our performance

The Directorate performed very well in achieving its strategic priorities in 2010-11. Some strategic achievements included:

- 87 percent of public school year 12 students achieved a Year 12 Certificate in 2010
- ACT students performed best in the nation for all year levels and domains in terms of mean score with the exception of years 5 and 7 students in spelling in NAPLAN 2010
- ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved above the national minimum standard in all tests and all year levels compared with the national results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in NAPLAN 2010
- 91 percent of 2009 year 12 graduates were employed or studying in 2010
- 94 percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students progressed to year 12 in 2010
- 85 percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved a Year 12 or a VET Certificate in 2010
- Individual learning plans were developed for all students with learning difficulties
- 80 percent of students and parents and carers were satisfied with the education at public schools
- 94 percent of staff were retained by the Directorate
- two schools with world class learning facilities opened for the 2011 school year
- a student to computer ratio of 1:1 was achieved for year 9 to 12 students in public schools and colleges
- Phase 1 of the Australian Curriculum was implemented in public schools
- the new *Contractor Management Framework* won the *Safe Work ACT Award* for the Best Workplace Health and Safety Management System—Public Sector category. The Framework was automatically nominated for the *National Safe Work Australia Award*
- early intervention focus in injury prevention saw a decrease in five day injury claims to 74 from 80. Average time lost in terms of weeks incapacitated decreased from 2,104 in 2009-10, to 2,071 in 2010-11.

Our performance is discussed in detail in Sections A8, A9, B and C.

Our planning framework

The Directorate's vision, priorities and performance measures are expressed in the *Strategic Plan 2010-2013: Everyone matters*. Priorities in the Strategic Plan are derived from the higher level education and training objectives contained in the Canberra Plan and the associated underpinning plans – the Social, Spatial, Economic and Climate plans. The Canberra Plan provides a basis for achievement against these important government objectives. The hierarchy of the Directorate's planning framework is presented in Figure A2.1.

Figure A2.1: Education and Training Directorate strategic planning framework



Source: Planning and Performance Branch

Our Strategic Plan is underpinned by key organisational planning documents. The work program for the period 2010-11 was contained in the Operational Plan. The Operational Plan provides details of key priorities and activities for the Directorate on an annual basis.

The Operational Plan broadly outlines activities for the year and links performance measures from the Strategic Plan against these activities. There is regular reporting against these activities to the senior executive. Activities in the Operational Plan are translated into priorities and activities for the business areas of the Directorate, through annual business plans. Schools also address the priorities of the Strategic Plan and the Operational Plan through annual school plans. The *School Improvement 2011* guides school planning processes. School plans, endorsed by school boards, are prepared annually and published on school websites.

The Directorate has a number of internal controls designed to monitor and manage risk involved in delivering against the Strategic Plan. The Internal Audit Program and the Risk Management Framework are the primary risk management tools used to manage, monitor and report on the Directorate's risk management and audit functions.

More information on the Directorate's governance arrangements including risk management and audit program is provided at Sections C1 to C5.

Our organisational environment

The Canberra Plan: Towards Our Second Century places the ACT school system in a forward looking context. With 'excellent education, quality teaching and skills development' being one of the plan's seven strategic themes, the Directorate is an integral player in achieving the city's overall vision to be both sustainable and creative.

We benefit from being geographically small in size. Our urban nature is almost entirely metropolitan. Being located within the state of NSW creates opportunities for partnership. Canberra's status as the nation's capital adds a significant global flavour with our educational institutions delivering services to over 7,000 international students in any one year.

Underpinning our desire to be a sustainable and creative city is a need to also be a clever city, with a well educated and appropriately skilled workforce. Currently around 71 percent of our citizens between the ages of 25 and 64 years have a post-school qualification. Whilst this is above the national average our ambition is to increase this number.

Through the National Education Agreement and associated National Partnerships, the Directorate works closely with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations to translate and implement national policy into local practice. The creation of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) has fulfilled an important role in the development of a national approach to curriculum and assessment. The Directorate works closely with ACARA to support the rollout of the Australian Curriculum.

The Minister for Education and Training represents the ACT on the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs and the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment. The Directorate is represented on Senior Official Committees and working groups to support these councils.

The Directorate ensures that, through the Government Schools Education Council and the Non-government Schools Education Council, ACT schools are supported by an effective governance structure. The *Education Act 2004* requires that each public school has a school board as a way of sharing authority between the Directorate, the school and the local school community. The role of boards includes establishing the strategic direction and priorities for the school and developing strong relationships between the school and the community.

The Directorate works closely with other ACT government agencies to deliver on its priorities. To deliver full service programs related to early childhood development, education and care, the Directorate works collaboratively with the ACT Health and Community Services Directorates. Amongst other outcomes, this has led to the opening of Child and Family Centres and the expansion of the Maternal and Child Health program.

To increase the likelihood of successful student transitions through the school system and beyond, the Directorate has collaborated with the Canberra Institute

of Technology (CIT) and the University of Canberra. Collaboration with CIT has delivered innovations such as the incorporation of Flexible Learning Centres in the new Gungahlin College. A partnership between the Directorate and the University of Canberra involved activities and initiatives towards achieving the shared vision for public schools and tertiary education. In recognition of the partnership, two public schools have been renamed:

- Kaleen High School to University of Canberra High School, Kaleen
- Lake Ginninderra Senior Secondary College to University of Canberra Senior Secondary College, Lake Ginninderra.

To plan for future schooling needs and advise on appropriate use of land adjacent to school environments, the Directorate, through the School Planning Committee, maintains a close working relationship with the ACT Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (formerly ACT Planning and Land Authority). Amongst other outcomes, this has supported the implementation of the school renewal program that has delivered new schools and colleges with state-of-the-art technologies, linked to the public library service and serving a range of other community needs.

The Directorate seeks opportunities for collaboration with other jurisdictions to deliver benefits to the ACT. Through service agreements and memoranda of understandings the ACT has negotiated arrangements addressing the curriculum, assessment and professional development needs of its teaching workforce. For example, the NSW Department of Education provides NAPLAN testing and marking services for all ACT students.

Organisational name and leadership

As a consequence of the Hawke Review, the ACT Government reorganised the ACT Public Service. On 17 May 2011, the Department of Education and Training was renamed the Education and Training Directorate. There was no change to the role and responsibilities of the agency. The agency head was renamed Director-General.

Following significant renewal in 2009-10 the composition of the Directorate's leadership team remained stable during 2010-11. The team as at 30 June 2011 comprised: Dr Jim Watterston, Director-General; Ms Diane Joseph, Deputy Director-General; Ms Leanne Cover, Executive Director, Tertiary and International Education; Ms Jayne Johnston, Executive Director, School Improvement and Mr Phillip Tardif, Executive Director, Corporate Services.

Legislation

The Directorate has responsibility for the following ACT legislation:

- *Education Act 2004*
- *Board of Senior Secondary Studies Act 1997*
- *Training and Tertiary Education Act 2003*
- *ACT Teacher Quality Institute Act 2010.*

A3 Highlights

Improving learning and teaching

Improving learning and teaching is the core business of the Directorate. In 2011, Phase 1 of the Australian Curriculum was successfully implemented. Kindergarten to year 6 students studied English and science, year 7 students studied English, mathematics, science and history and year 9 students studied English, mathematics and science from the Australian Curriculum.

The Australian Curriculum will be released in three phases and fully implemented in ACT schools by the start of 2013. The curriculum will offer mobile families access to consistent study programs and streamlined pathways throughout the years of schooling and beyond. With more standardised approaches to teaching and learning, the curriculum contributes to the development of a portable education sector; more open to the employment of suitably qualified and registered teachers, regardless of origin.

In April 2011, the third National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) report confirmed that the ACT continued to be the highest performing jurisdiction. Students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 at all ACT schools undertook tests in reading, writing, language conventions and numeracy. The headline summary indicated that for all year levels and domains in terms of mean score, with the exception of years 5 and 7 spelling, the ACT ranked first in the nation, or equal first with New South Wales and Victoria (see Figures A9.1-A9.3). The Directorate's *Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2009-2013* continued to guide us in building quality teaching and school leadership in order to improve students' literacy and numeracy outcomes. To deliver ongoing improvements, public schools' literacy and numeracy coordinators accessed a range of professional learning programs such as Tactical Teaching Reading, Tactical Teaching Speaking and Listening and Incorporating Strategies for an Inclusive Curriculum.

To encourage intercultural understanding and multilingual capabilities in children and young people, all ACT primary schools delivered 60 minutes per week of language instruction to students in years 3 to 6 and 150 minutes per week was offered to all students in years 7 and 8. The Directorate introduced improved processes and procedures to ensure recruitment and retention of staff with appropriate language and pedagogy skills. Foreign embassies also provided support in this initiative. During the year, teachers of Chinese and Japanese languages attended workshops focusing on pedagogy and student engagement.

As a result of the Review of Special Education in the ACT, the Directorate developed the *Excellence in Disability Education in ACT Public Schools: Strategic Plan 2010-2013*. The plan, which was launched on 7 September 2010, provides direction for special education improvement in public schools. More broadly, a cross-sectoral Disability Education Working Group comprising representatives of the Catholic, independent and public school systems was established. The Working Group built closer collaboration between the school sectors.

Box A3.1: Leading literacy learning at Charles Conder Primary School

At Charles Conder Primary School, each day begins with an uninterrupted literacy block which focuses on tasks within a balanced literacy program. Physical Education, Band and teacher's release are all timetabled after 11am. Every morning the whole school engages in WALRUS (We All Learn to Read with Understanding and Support). During this time students are encouraged to select their own reading material, share a book with a friend or reading buddy or read to the teacher. This provides an opportunity for parents, carers and teachers to read with the children in the classroom.

The Chief Minister's Reading Challenge provided an additional incentive for the students at Charles Conder Primary School to focus on reading. This year the ambassador for the Chief Minister's Reading Challenge, Virginia Haussegger, visited the school to encourage children to read for the love of it. This annual event which started in 2006, challenges children to read 12 books in a year, with eight books coming from the Chief Minister's booklist. In 2011, 56 schools registered for the Challenge with a total of 16,910 students participating in the event. This was more than double the participants from the previous year.



Virginia Haussegger encouraging students to read for the love of it.

In NAPLAN 2010, Aboriginal and Torres Islander students attending ACT schools achieved above the national minimum standard in all tests and all year levels when compared with the national results. To close the achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students, six Indigenous Literacy and Numeracy Officers were deployed. Five of these officers supported teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Kindergarten to year 4. The other officer focused on transition support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from year 6 to year 7.

The trend of improving the retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from year 10 to year 12 continued during the year, with 94 percent of students progressing with their studies. This compared with 85 percent in 2009. Of the 44 students, 41 achieved a Year 12 and/or a Vocational Education and Training (VET) Certificate. To maintain this positive momentum, attendance and participation were identified as key priorities in the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters: Strategic Plan 2010-2013*, launched in September 2010. Programs such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Aspirations Program, and appointment of Indigenous education officers and workers, took place in schools to support attendance and participation.

Box A3.2: The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Scholarship Program

In its second year, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Scholarship Program invited year 11 students who were interested in pursuing a career in teaching to apply and present evidence to demonstrate their commitment to their studies. The aim of this scholarship was to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers in ACT public schools. The five scholarships of \$5,000 per annum support college students to focus on their studies, including through the purchase of a laptop computer or other equipment to support their educational pathway.

This year a strong field of candidates applied and the application process was rigorous. Students presented evidence across seven key competencies at a roundtable selection panel. The panel reported that all applicants presented very well, making the selection process competitive.

The recipients for 2011, pictured with the Minister for Education and Training Mr Andrew Barr were: Alex Leon, Kiriwai Howe, Jesse Williams (Stromlo High School students, who are all currently attending Canberra College), Jinneecka Klenka (Canberra High School student, now studying at Melba Copland Secondary School) and Stephanie Pollard (who attended Campbell High School and is currently studying at Dickson College).



Improving the school environment

Improving the school environment is a key enabler for learning and teaching in schools. The Directorate is committed to providing students and teaching staff with schools and facilities that promote student-centred learning, support student health and wellbeing, embed environmental sustainability principles, support integration of information and communication technology into learning and teaching, promote safety and security of students, staff and visitors by minimising security risks, be eco-friendly and provide suitable spaces for joint community use. These principles were applied in the design of all new buildings and refurbishments completed during the year.

At the start of the 2011 school year, the Directorate opened two schools, Gungahlin College and Namadgi School. These schools are equipped with seamless access to innovative ICT learning resources through flexible learning spaces. Construction of the new Harrison Secondary School commenced in July 2010 and school facilities were progressively handed over to the school during the year. All 68 Primary Schools for the 21st Century (P21) projects, funded through Australian Government's Building the Education Revolution program were completed.

Other completed capital works included a new performing arts centre at Calwell High School; a new language learning centre at Narrabundah College; a refurbished canteen at Copland campus of Melba Copland Secondary School; and an artificial sports field at Gold Creek School. Water tanks and security fences were installed at six schools.

During the year, solar power systems were installed at 25 public schools. Under the ACT Solar Schools program, solar panels capable of generating around 1 megawatt (1,000 kilowatts) of power were installed at schools across the ACT public school system. This installation will continue over the next three years. When complete, it will be the largest solar photovoltaic project in Canberra and one of the largest in Australia. It will generate about 1,500 megawatt hours of electricity back into the grid and help to offset about 1,600 tonnes of carbon dioxide each year. The energy generated is enough to power about 200 houses for a year.

Student wellbeing and behaviour support have been enhanced during the year through the introduction of the *Essential Skills for Classroom Teachers Learning Package*. The package was developed for new teachers and outlines the fundamental skills required for establishing and maintaining positive classrooms. Positive responses were received from over 200 new teachers regarding the training package. The program will continue in 2012 and will be further enhanced by a Train-the-Trainer module for executive staff, and an advanced skills course for ongoing development.

In collaboration with ACT Health, the School Youth Health Nurse Program was successfully implemented in all ACT public high schools. The program provided support for students to quit smoking. The nurse became the first point of contact for young people, their families and school community members seeking information, advice and support in health matters. During its second year of operation the program provided 1,896 individual consultations with students and facilitated over 400 groups with approximately 6,000 students participating. Of these consultations,

52 percent related to mental health issues, 20 percent to general health and adolescent development, 16 percent to sexual health and 12 percent to drug and alcohol issues.

In recognition of the benefits that information and communication technology and infrastructure contribute to education, and to facilitate ACT students adapting to a digital world, wireless networks were enabled in all ACT public schools and colleges. A ratio of 1:1 in terms of students to computers in years 9 to 12 was also achieved. The Directorate successfully deployed 1,532 new ACT Government-funded computers to public primary schools.

The Connected Learning Communities (cLc) virtual learning environment was successfully implemented during the year. The cLc incorporates five key elements of the Smart Schools: Smart Students initiative: podcasting; video conferencing; parent portal; digital portfolio and video on demand. Other features include wikis, blogs, surveys, online quizzes, online tasks, and instant messaging across all schools. In April 2011, GagggleMail (the student email component of the cLc) went live for 38,000 users. The email system allows students to use a unique email address from any cLc accessible location. GagggleMail will also allow schools to create distribution lists for parents and outside organisations.

Box A3.3: Summit on cyber safety, Who R U in the Digital World?

As more ACT students go online the Directorate's imperative is to continue to raise cyber safety awareness. On 18 March 2011, 280 participants attended the National Convention Centre to be part of the ACT's first student summit on cyber safety, *Who R U in the Digital World?* Sponsored by the Directorate, InTACT and the Australian Federal Police, the Summit was an initiative of the ACT Safe School Taskforce and provided the opportunity for year 9 students and their teachers to discuss the academic, social and wellbeing potential of new technologies and the issues that affect them as citizens of the digital age.



Ms Robyn Moore presenting at the summit

Students and teachers at the summit took part in workshops and had the opportunity to hear from leading speakers in cyber safety. The summit concluded with the students making a declaration to the Minister about what it takes to lead responsibly in a digital world, and a school-based commitment to action. The summit received outstanding feedback from participants with the summit deemed to be a great success. Schools are now implementing the declaration and commitments through a variety of engagement strategies.

A new library software solution commenced roll out to all ACT public schools. The software, Oliver, is a centralised web-based library solution which will allow all school libraries to interact with each other and will improve the sharing of resources. Oliver will be introduced on a school by school basis with a goal of 16 schools per term being transferred to the new system. It will be used in all ACT schools by the end of 2011.

Improving student pathways and transitions

Improving student pathways and transitions is a key strategy in ensuring that our schools continue to develop engaging, coherent learning programs that cater for the increasing diversity of interests and needs of our students.

In May 2010, the Minister announced an ACT Tertiary Taskforce, chaired by the Director-General with representation from ACT industry and education institutions and other stakeholders. In preparing its report on a vision for ACT tertiary education, the taskforce consulted extensively with approximately 100 stakeholders. Additional community consultation was also invited via the Directorate website.

In December 2010, the taskforce provided its report *Learning Capital: An integrated tertiary education system for the ACT*, which included 12 recommendations to the ACT Government. The Minister launched the report on 9 February 2011. The ACT Government formally responded to the taskforce report in April 2011. The response agreed to establish a Learning Capital Council to support greater integration of the ACT tertiary system which was a critical element of the taskforce recommendations.

The publication, *Excellence and Enterprise: Advancing Public Schools of Distinction*, was released on 24 May 2011, and is the Directorate's framework for improving secondary schooling in the ACT. The publication outlines eleven key directions that are organised under three broad themes: advancing distinctive public secondary schools; flexibility, pathways and partnerships; and strengthening the system.

The aim of this framework is to ensure high schools and colleges continue to adapt to meet the changing needs of students. Innovation, such as different models of schooling will be encouraged. An example is already in action with the partnership between the University of Canberra, Lake Ginninderra College and Kaleen High School.

In the 21 months since the Directorate began implementing the National Partnership (NP) Agreement for the Productivity Places Program (PPP) between the ACT and Commonwealth Governments, the ACT has seen unprecedented successes in terms of training outcomes for participants. In particular, the ACT has seen a very low rate of attrition of participants, compared with the national attrition rate of 65 percent. The attrition rate of the first PPP cohort was 18 percent for job seekers and 11 percent for existing workers. The low attrition rate had significant consequences for the ACT's PPP budget in 2010-11, due to the assumptions underlying the Commonwealth's NP funding model regarding anticipated attrition rates.

Australian School-based Apprenticeships (ASBAs) offer students the opportunity to achieve a nationally recognised vocational qualification by combining paid work and training as part of their education program, contributing towards their Year 12

Certificate. In 2007 the ACT Government set a target of 500 new ASBAs in the ACT each year. In 2010 there were 524 ASBA commencements in the ACT. This was a 30 percent increase on the previous year.

The ACT Youth Commitment Signing Ceremony took place on 18 May 2011. The Youth Commitment aims to establish a shared responsibility between stakeholders and organisations who serve young people to ensure that no young person is lost from education, training or employment. Approximately 140 stakeholders, including representatives from government, educational institutions, community and youth agencies and business, signed a statement demonstrating their commitment to increasing the educational engagement, attainment and successful post-school transitioning of young people in the ACT. This Statement of Commitment included a pledge to use the Pathways Planning process.

Coinciding with the introduction of the ACT youth participation and attainment requirements, enrolments in years 10 and 12 have increased in ACT public schools. According to the August 2010 census, year 10 enrolments were up by 8.8 percent since the August 2009 census. Similarly, year 12 enrolments were up by 6.4 percent since the August 2009 census.

To lay the foundation for a child's future success in learning and life more access to high quality early childhood education was provided during the year. In 2010, eight schools joined the existing five early childhood schools in offering 15 hours per week of early childhood education. The schools achieved increased enrolments, positive learning outcomes for children and an increased sense of cross-family connectedness. The number of classes provided at each school was increased to meet demand in 2010 and 2011. To ensure access to well trained and qualified staff for preschools, the ACT Government negotiated a training package with the Canberra Institute of Technology to provide Certificate III in Children's Services. During the year, 117 out of 120 school assistants completed the course.

Improving leadership and corporate development

Improving leadership and corporate development is a key enabler for achieving improvements in the three other priority areas outlined in the Strategic Plan. Highlights and achievements made during the year in this priority area are discussed below.

Attracting, retaining and developing our leaders, teachers and support staff are critical activities of the Directorate. During the year, 450 casual teachers and school support staff were assessed and approved to work in our schools. In addition, 221 new teachers took up temporary and permanent positions in ACT public schools.

In 2010-11, work commenced to develop a framework for school autonomy in relation to staffing. School autonomy will involve principals in making decisions and being responsible for the selection, development and management of staff. School autonomy is being introduced in several phases:

- Phase 1 in 2010 involved the two new schools opening in 2011, Gungahlin College and Namadgi School.

- Phase 2 in 2011 involved Amaroo School, Calwell High School, Dickson College, Duffy Primary School, Gungahlin College, Namadgi School, Turner Primary School and Weetangera Primary School.
- Phase 3 will involve additional schools from 2012.

At 30 June 2011, 3,283 teachers were employed in ACT public schools. This represented an increase of 1 percent over the previous year when 3,249 teachers were employed. Importantly, the Directorate achieved a 94 percent staff retention rate. This continues the positive trend recorded in 2009 when a retention rate of 93 percent was achieved.

The Directorate's Strategic Plan, Operational Plans for 2010 and 2011, and the *School Improvement Strategy – Core Principles*, provided the main drivers for the professional learning and development of teaching staff. In the reporting period, the main priorities were in the areas of: teaching and learning; the school environment (including information and communication technologies); student pathways and transitions; and leadership development.

The New Educator Support Program for new teachers builds capability and confidence of teachers in their first three years of teaching. It provided up to 15 days training for each new teacher. Four modules were offered. The attendance numbers for the four modules was in excess of 500 participants.

In 2010-11, the Leading to Leadership program was delivered to 130 staff aspiring to be principals, deputies and executive teachers. In addition, 11 new principals, 15 deputy principals and 57 executive teachers participated in the School Leadership Orientation programs.

Professional development workshops for school leaders continued in the areas of ICT, financial management, evidence-based practice and meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and special needs students.

Targeted scholarships build teacher capability in specific areas of educational need. In 2010-11, teacher scholarships were given for the:

- Graduate Certificate in Early Childhood Education at the University of Canberra. This program commenced in February 2010 with 32 enrolments. Twenty-one teachers graduated in December 2010, a further six are expected to graduate in December 2011 and five teachers withdrew from the course. Eighteen teachers commenced the Graduate Certificate in Early Childhood Education at the University of Canberra in February 2011.
- Graduate Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. This course commenced in semester 2 of 2010 with 25 enrolments. Eighteen teachers completed this course in June 2011 and seven teachers withdrew from the course. Nine teachers commenced the year long Graduate Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages in February 2011.

Individual scholarships were awarded to 12 teachers in February 2011. Some of the fields in which tertiary studies are being pursued include educational leadership, quality teaching and education for the sensory impaired.

Box A3.4: 2011 Public Education Awards

The 2011 Public Education Awards ceremony was held on 27 May 2011 as part of the Public Education Week celebrations to honour some of the ACT's leading teachers and support staff. The awards were a testament to the quality of education and training in ACT public schools.

The 2011 awards were a partnership between the Directorate, the Australian Education Union and the Canberra Institute of Technology.

School-based non-teaching staff were offered training in areas such as information technology, first aid, building maintenance and repairs, and also personal skills, such as writing job applications for promotion positions. A total of 72 courses were offered, with approximately 600 participants.

The delivery of Respectful Workplaces training to approximately 1,000 employees during 2011 was a key element of the Directorate's implementation of the ACT Public Service's *Respect, Equity and Diversity Framework*. It demonstrates the Directorate's commitment to reducing the risk of psychological injury to employees, as required under the *Workplace Safety Act 2008* and the *Workplace Health Strategic Plan 2008-12*. The provision of high quality, easy to use systems, processes and procedures that embed best practice were advanced during the period.

On 12 October 2010, our *Contractor Management Framework* won the *Safe Work ACT Award* for the Best Workplace Health and Safety Management System—Public Sector category. The Framework was automatically nominated for the *National Safe Work Australia Awards*.

The early intervention focus adopted by the Directorate has seen a sustained reduction in the incidence of workplace injuries reaching five days incapacity and average time lost (average number of weeks off for workers' compensation per 1,000 employees). The number of five day claims reduced from 80 claims (in the previous year) to 74 claims in 2010-11. This continues the downward trend from 2006-07 when 101 claims were made. The average number of weeks lost decreased from 2,104 in 2009-10, to 2,071 in 2010-11.

A total of 533 staff Accident/Incident Reports were received during the 2010-11, which is a decrease from the previous year's figure of 732. For students and third parties, the number decreased from 1,043 in 2009-10 to 966 during the reporting period.

High quality client, community and stakeholder engagement is critical to creating a school system that is supported and delivers expected outcomes. The Directorate has a number of specific partnership programs with ACT community groups and leaders who support public education. These include ACT Children's Week, the Returned and Services League of Australia Woden Valley Sub-Branch Incorporated, School Volunteer Program ACT Incorporated, and the Australian Business Community Network.

In 2010, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group developed an operational plan that articulated three priorities for the period 2010-12. These priorities aim to provide increased opportunities for parents and caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in ACT schools in curriculum and policy advice.

The Disability Education Reference Group had significant involvement in providing feedback during the development of the Directorate's disability education Strategic Plan 2010-2013.

Box A3.5: Launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan 2010

On 6 July 2010 during NAIDOC week at Birrigai Outdoor School, the Minister for Education and Training Mr Andrew Barr MLA launched the Directorate's inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan, *Reconciliation Matters*. The launch was a success with over 300 families, schools and central office staff and community organisations attending to celebrate together and offer their support. Aunty Laura Bell welcomed attendees to Ngunnawal Country and showed her support for the commitment to the reconciliation journey. Mr Terry Williams, Chairperson of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, Mr Bradley Bell, Chairperson of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Committee and the United Ngunnawal Elder Council were present. The event served to promote and strengthen relationships with key stakeholders.



Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance at the launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

A4 Outlook

Achieving successful outcomes and helping children and young people reach their full potential are key drivers in everything we do.

Our Strategic Plan provides the vision for our work. It articulates our four focus areas: learning and teaching; school environment; transitions and pathways; and corporate leadership, and the priorities that underpin these goals.

The Directorate will undertake a range of activities in each of these areas during 2011-12. These include:

Learning and teaching

- continue providing practical support to schools to implement Phase 1 learning areas of the Australian Curriculum
- contribute to consultation on Phase 2 of the Australian Curriculum covering geography, languages and the arts for kindergarten to year 12
- develop best practice exemplars that can be shared with other schools, including school-wide curriculum plans and units of work
- provide high quality professional development for teachers particularly where the Australian Curriculum differs from the current curriculum
- measure and report on literacy and numeracy achievement in all our schools and provide targeted support to raise standards
- implement Smarter Schools National Partnerships
- continue implementation of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters: Strategic Plan 2010-2013*

School environment

- implement the *Excellence in Disability Education in ACT Public Schools: Strategic Plan 2010-2013*
- garner community support to implement programs aimed at creating safe and supportive learning environments for all students, staff, helpers, parents and visitors
- strengthen partnerships with other government agencies to ensure a co-ordinated approach to environmental sustainability
- increase teachers' and school leaders' capabilities to use digital technology to improve student learning
- continue the implementation of the Connected Learning Communities virtual learning environment
- implement improved governance for ICT

Student pathways and transitions

- implement the Early Childhood Reform Agenda
- implement a communication and professional development strategy for school leaders and early childhood teachers
- implement teacher scholarships to support the upgrading of qualifications to meet new standards
- continue with implementation of Training and Tertiary Education reforms to improve business processes to support stakeholders
- prioritise and implement agreed actions from the *Excellence and Enterprise - Advancing Public Schools of Distinction* report under each key theme:
 - advancing distinctive public secondary schools
 - flexibility, pathways and partnerships
 - strengthening the system
- further develop strategies to increase student attendance rates to ensure all young people are fully engaged in learning and being part of society

Leadership and corporate development

- finalise and implement a school leaders' strategy to ensure strong and sustainable leadership in our schools
- improve access to school data including the establishment of the ACT's Our Schools Online website
- build capacity in the use of data to assist improved school performance and planning
- continue the implementation of greater school-based autonomy
- focus on evaluation, including partnering with research bodies and strengthening the evidence base to support the implementation of outcomes for children and young people.

We have an ambitious work program to complete in 2011-12. In addition, the Directorate is required to achieve an efficiency saving of \$2.7m during the year. This saving, which was identified in the ACT Budget 2011-12, is part of a whole of government savings initiative. We are confident that our management team and planning approaches will enable us to achieve our work plan whilst delivering the required savings.

A8 Strategic indicators

In January 2010 the Directorate launched its *Strategic Plan 2010-2013: Everyone matters*. The Strategic Plan provides direction to the organisation, and informs its clients and stakeholders about key priorities. Specifically, the plan identifies four priority areas: learning and teaching; school environment; student pathways and transitions; and leadership and corporate development.

Under these priority areas performance indicators have been identified to allow for monitoring of progress over time.

Learning and teaching

'To ensure students succeed through quality teaching that engages them and supports the development of capabilities for life'

Year 12 attainment and completion

Attainment of year 12 or equivalent qualification is recognised as a key to better employment outcomes and social inclusion. It is one of the three strategic targets identified by the Council of Australian Governments for education reform in Australia.

Box A8.1: Year 12 attainment

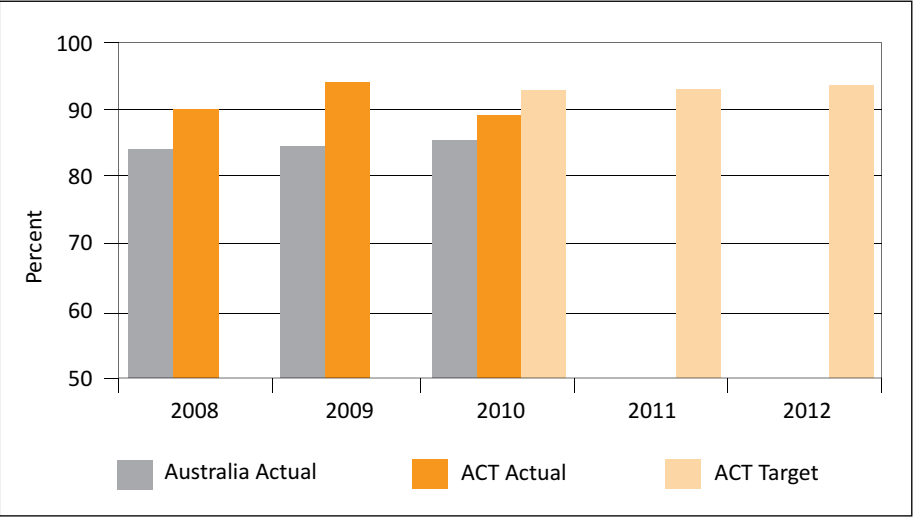
The proportion of the 20-24 year old population having attained at least a year 12 or equivalent qualification (Australian Qualifications Framework certificate II or above) is calculated as the number of 20-24 year olds that self-identify as having attained a year 12 or equivalent qualification divided by the estimated potential year 12 population (an estimate of a single year age group which could have attended year 12 that year, calculated as the estimated resident population aged 15-19 divided by five).

The proportion of the 20-24 year old population having attained at least a year 12 or equivalent qualification is obtained from the ABS Survey of Education and Work (SEW). The 2010 SEW was conducted in May 2010 with the results released in November 2010.

A data quality statement on this measure can be obtained from http://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/103345/education-agreement-2009.pdf

The ACT has the highest proportion of year 12 attainment in Australia. Figure A8.1 shows that for the last three years, the ACT's proportion of 20-24 year olds who attained a year 12 or equivalent qualification remained higher (approximately 90%) than the national average (approximately 85%).

Figure A8.1: Proportion of young people aged 20-24 who have attained a Year 12 Certificate or equivalent or Certificate II or above



Source:

1. ACT Education and Training Directorate Budget Paper 4, 2011-12
2. Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Survey of Education and Work 2010*

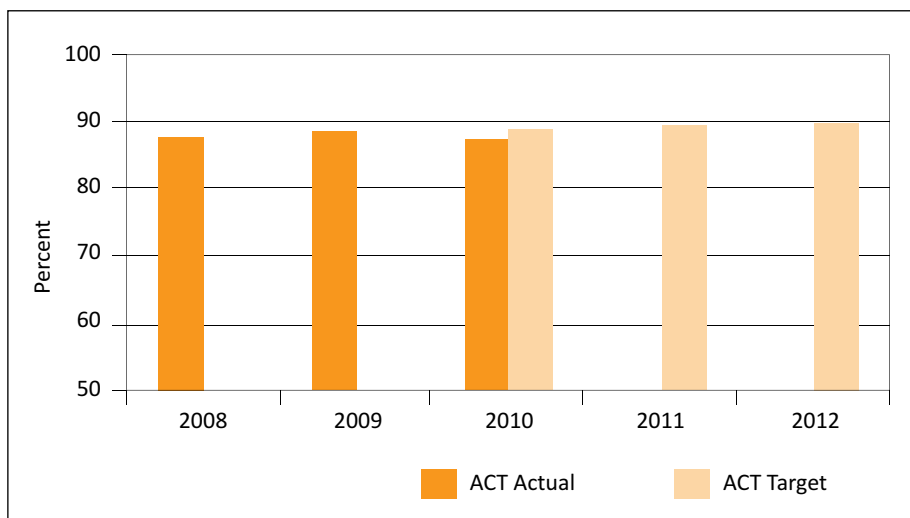
Year 12 completion

Box A8.2: Year 12 completion

Year 12 completion is the number of students who meet the requirements of a Year 12 Certificate or equivalent expressed as a percentage of year 12 enrolments. Data is obtained from the Board of Senior Secondary Studies and the Directorate School Census in February.

Estimates are calculated based on the number of students completing the requirements of the ACT Year 12 Certificate divided by the number of year 12 students as per ACT School Census, February of the reference year.

Figure A8.2 shows that the ACT public school completion rate for year 12 was 87 percent in 2010, slightly below the target of 88.5 percent. To improve secondary schooling in the ACT, the Directorate has undertaken a number of activities, detailed in the *Excellence and Enterprise* publication released in May 2011. This will assist in engaging and retaining students to year 12 and increasing the completion rate. There is no comparable data at the national level.

Figure A8.2: Percentage of year 12 public school students who received a Year 12 Certificate

Source: ACT Education and Training Directorate Budget Paper 4, 2011-12

School environment

'To meet each student's academic, social, emotional and physical needs by ensuring all ACT public schools provide positive and success-oriented learning environments'

Student attendance

Attendance at school is essential for learning and for enabling students to benefit from the full range of educational programs offered at school.

Box A8.3: Student attendance

Student attendance rate is the number of actual full-time equivalent student-days attended by full-time students in years 1 to 10 as a percentage of the total number of possible student-days attended over the period.

Attendance is recorded for the first semester in the reporting year.

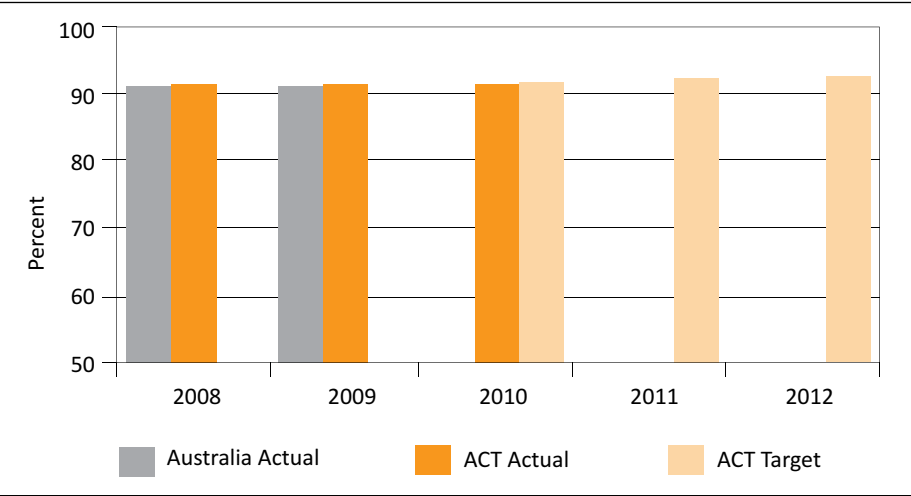
Attendance data are collected through the electronic school management system at the school. For primary school attendance data, teachers record student attendance daily (to the level of half day attendance). High school attendance data are recorded at each teaching period and entered into the electronic school management system. Absence data are aggregated at the end of each term and entered in the school management system. The school management system is included into the central database.

A data quality statement on this measure can be obtained from www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs

The attendance rate of public school students from years 1 to 10 was 91.7 percent in 2010, compared with 91.4 percent in 2009 (Figure A8.3). The Directorate, through the school improvement framework, has set in place strategies to increase the attendance and engagement of students, particularly at high school and college.

The national attendance rate for public schools in 2009 (latest available data) was similar to the previous year at 91 percent, slightly lower than the ACT’s attendance rate.

Figure A8.3: School attendance in public schools, years 1 to 10



Sources:

1. ACT Education and Training Directorate Budget Paper 4, 2011-12
2. Productivity Commission, *Report on Government Services 2010*, Table 4A.95 for 2008 data, and *Report on Government Services 2011*, Table 4A.135 for 2009 data

Note:

1. Australian rate is an average of states and territories' years 1 to 10 average.

Student satisfaction

Student satisfaction is an important indicator of student engagement leading to positive learning outcomes.

Box A8.4: Student satisfaction

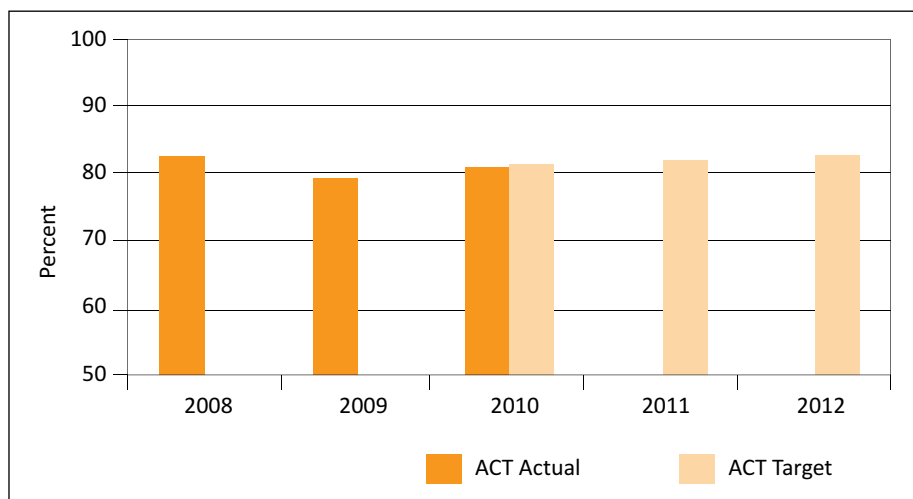
Student satisfaction is based on a survey of students from years 5 to 12 at ACT public schools, excluding students at specialist schools. The survey is conducted in May and June each year. Responses are sought from primary and high school students to 34 questions and to 36 questions for college students. The questions are grouped according to the four domains of school improvement: teaching and learning, leading and managing, student environment and community involvement, as well as a group of questions relating to overall satisfaction.

In determining overall student satisfaction, the question 'Overall I am satisfied I am getting a good education at this school' is used. Responses are collected on a five point scale with only statements of 'agree' or 'strongly agree' used to calculate overall satisfaction rates.

In 2010, 13,782 students responded to the survey.

From 2008 to 2010, overall student satisfaction (across primary, high and college sectors) with the quality of the education received at public schools has remained around 80 percent (Figure A8.4). There is no nationally consistent comparative data.

Figure A8.4: Overall student satisfaction with the education at public schools



Source: ACT Education and Training Directorate Budget Paper 4, 2011-12

Student pathways and transitions

'To provide learning pathways for students resulting in an educated and skilled workforce that meets the present and future needs of the ACT and region'

Student destination

The proportion of year 12 graduates engaged in study or employment six months after completing year 12 reflects performance of the educational system in preparing students for further study or employment.

Box A8.5: Student destination post-school

Destination data is based on a survey of graduates who successfully complete year 12 in the ACT. Graduates from the previous year are surveyed in May of the reference year.

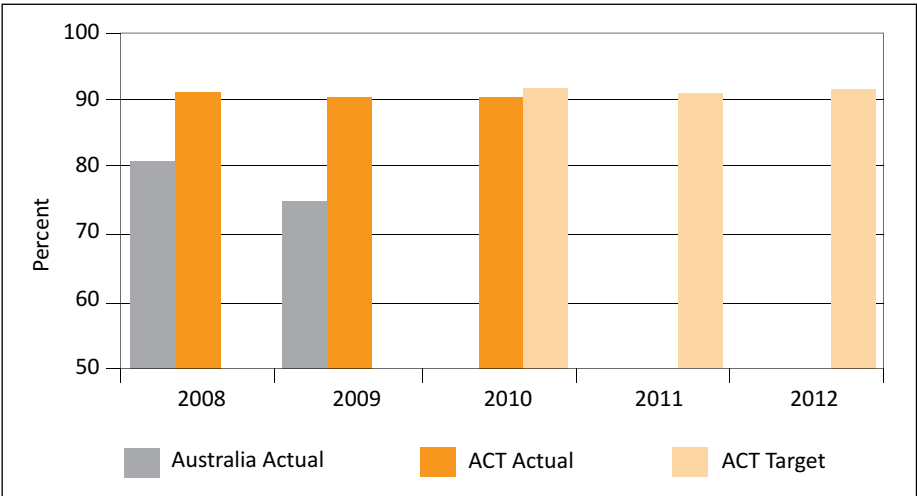
The survey frame is drawn from the Board of Senior Secondary Studies administrative records and the population of interest is defined as those graduates who were awarded a Year 12 Certificate from an ACT college, school or the Canberra Institute of Technology. The population excludes graduates who are full-fee paying students and graduates whose usual residence was overseas.

There were 4,026 year 12 graduates in 2009. Of these, 3,560 graduates were contacted for the survey. Contact was made between 15 July and 12 August 2010. There were 2,908 graduates who completed the survey, providing a response rate of 81.7 percent.

As shown in Figure A8.5, more than 90 percent of the 2008 and 2009 ACT public school year 12 graduates were engaged in tertiary studies or employment in 2009 and 2010, respectively.

Nationally, the percentage of 2008 year 12 graduates who were studying or employed full-time in 2009 was 74.5 percent compared with 80.7 percent of 2007 year 12 graduates studying or employed full-time in 2008.

Figure A8.5: Percentage of public school year 12 graduates studying or employed six months after completing year 12



Sources:

1. ACT Education and Training Directorate Budget Paper 4, 2011-12
2. Productivity Commission, *Report on Government Services 2010*, Table 4A.91, and *Report on Government Services 2011*, Table 4A.133

Notes:

1. Australian rate is for 15-24 years old engaged in full-time studies or employment in May 2008 and 2009 after finishing year 12 in 2007 and 2008, respectively.

Leadership and corporate development

'To ensure that the Directorate is recognised as a responsive, innovative and high-achieving organisation that delivers on its commitments'

Parent and carer satisfaction

The satisfaction of parents and carers with education in public schools shows the confidence of stakeholders in the educational policies and performance of the Directorate.

Box A8.6: Parent and carer satisfaction

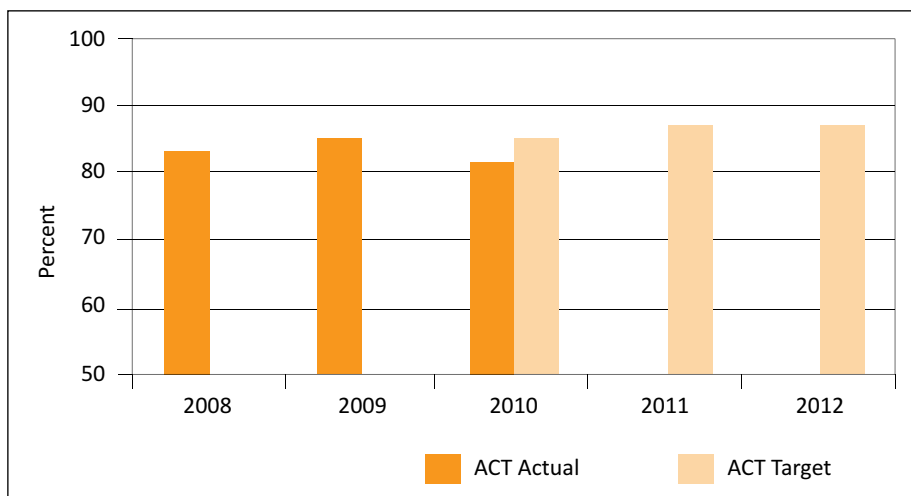
Parent and carer satisfaction is based on a survey of parents and carers of students attending ACT public schools. The survey is conducted in May and June each year. Responses are sought from parents and carers to 15 questions. The questions are grouped according to the four domains of school improvement: teaching and learning, leading and managing, student environment and community involvement, as well as a group of questions relating to overall satisfaction.

In determining overall parent and carer satisfaction, the question 'Overall I am satisfied with my child's education at this school' is used. Responses are collected on a five point scale with only statements of 'agree' or 'strongly agree' being used to calculate overall satisfaction rates.

In 2010, 8,504 parents and carers of students responded to the survey.

Figure A8.6 indicates that the Directorate enjoyed a high level of parent and carer satisfaction in 2010 (over 80%). To engage parents and carers and improve their satisfaction with education services, the Directorate established the Community Liaison section in 2010. There is no nationally consistent comparative data on parent and carer satisfaction.

Figure A8.6: Overall satisfaction of parents and carers with the education provided at public schools



Source: ACT Education and Training Directorate Budget Paper 4, 2011-12

Staff retention

Staff retention is an indicator of the health of an organisation.

Box A8.7: Staff retention

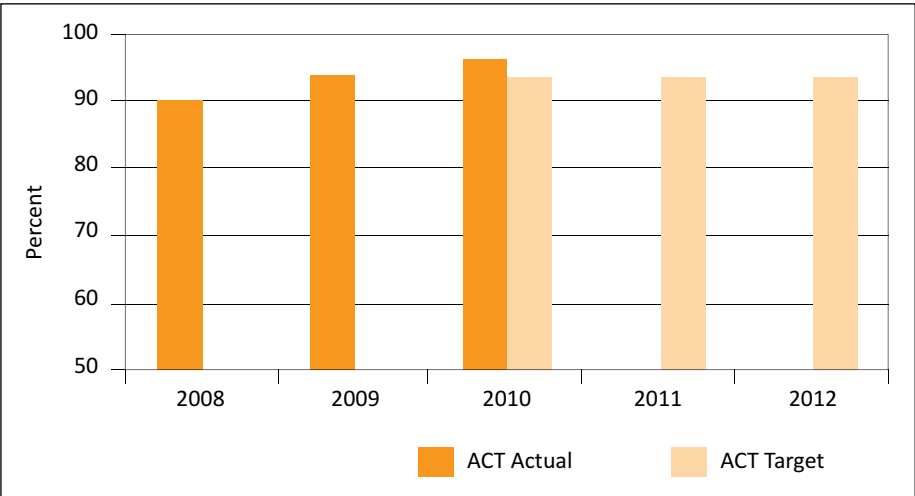
The staff retention rate is expressed as a percentage of all staff retained in the financial year.

The rate is calculated by dividing the number of permanent staff employed at 30 June of the preceding year plus the number of commencements during the financial year, minus the number of separations in the same financial year, by the number of staff at 30 June of the preceding year and commencements during the financial year.

The indicator is based on the headcount of all permanent school-based and office-based staff in all classification streams. Staff on long service leave are excluded from these counts.

The Directorate has historically maintained a high staff retention rate with 94 percent for 2010, slightly up from 2009 (Figure A8.7). This high retention rate indicates staff satisfaction with management and a commitment to achieving corporate goals. There is no nationally consistent comparative data.

Figure A8.7: Staff retention rate



Source: ACT Education and Training Directorate Budget Paper 4, 2011-12

A9 Analysis of agency performance

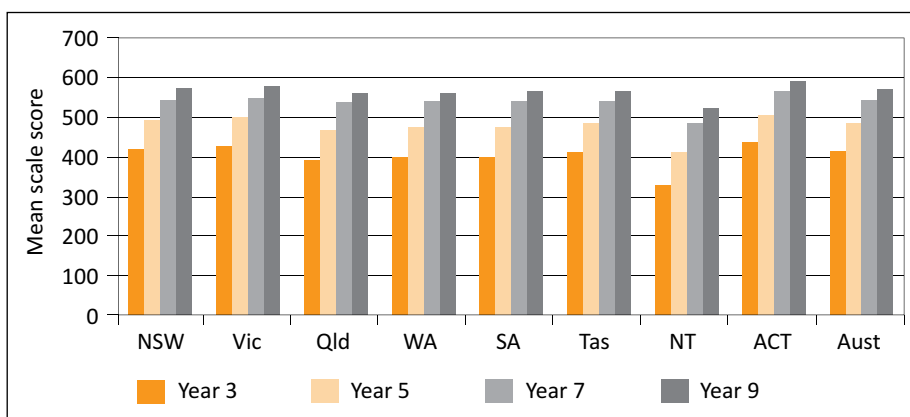
To meet its objective of working in partnership with parents and the community to ensure students are supported and engaged to achieve their full potential, the Directorate has identified priority areas. The performance of the Directorate against these priorities over the 2010-11 is reported in this section.

Enhanced performance in literacy and numeracy

All ACT school students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 sat the third cycle of NAPLAN tests in May 2010. Final results for 2010 NAPLAN testing were released in April 2011. The ACT ranked first in the nation, or equal first with New South Wales and Victoria, in mean scores for all year levels and domains, with the only exceptions being years 5 and 7 spelling.

The ACT mean score results in reading for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students were the highest in Australia and significantly higher than the national mean, maintaining the trend commenced in 2008 and 2009. Between 94 and 97 percent of students achieved at or above the national minimum standard.

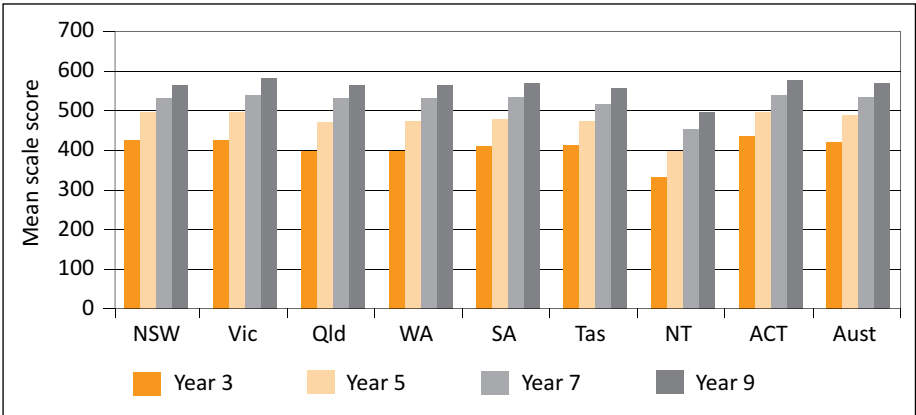
Figure A9.1: Mean scale score in reading for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 by jurisdiction, NAPLAN 2010



Source: Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy National Report 2010

Results in writing showed improvement across all year levels with the year 3 mean score significantly higher than ACT results in 2008 and 2009. ACT mean score results for years 3, 5 and 7 have improved each year relative to other jurisdictions. Between 88 and 97 percent of students achieved at or above the national minimum standard.

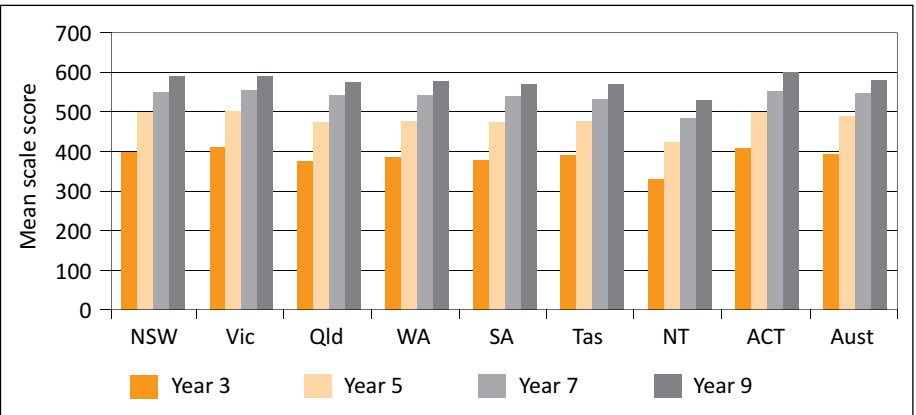
Figure A9.2: Mean scale score in writing for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 by jurisdiction, NAPLAN 2010



Source: Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy National Report 2010

In numeracy the ACT, with Victoria and New South Wales, had the highest mean score across all year levels. The results were significantly higher than the national mean in all years except year 7, where ACT results were equivalent. Overall, between 95 and 97 percent of students achieved at or above the national minimum standard in numeracy.

Figure A9.3: Mean scale score in numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 by jurisdiction, NAPLAN 2010



Source: Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy National Report 2010

ACT female students achieved higher mean scores in the literacy domains than ACT male students. ACT males achieved higher mean scores in numeracy, consistent with Australian trends. A higher proportion of females than males achieved above the national minimum standard in all tests and all year levels with the exception of years 7 and 9 numeracy.

Implemented the Australian Curriculum

In December 2010, the nation's Ministers for Education agreed to the ongoing development of an Australian Curriculum covering English, mathematics, science and history. Locally, the ACT cross-sectoral Australian Curriculum implementation committee guided implementation of Phase 1.

Commencing in 2011, kindergarten to year 6 classes were taught English and science. Year 7 students were taught English, mathematics, science and history. Year 9 students undertook studies in English, mathematics and science. By 2013 all ACT schools will be teaching the full Australian Curriculum from kindergarten to year 10.

Implementation of the Australian Curriculum was supported through a range of professional learning opportunities for teachers across the ACT. Phase 1 units of work were mapped to the ACT curriculum framework *Every chance to learn* and then uploaded to the Directorate's teaching and learning website for shared access.

Box A9.1: Australian Curriculum comes of age



On 9 and 10 December 2010, the Directorate led professional development for 145 curriculum coordinators from schools across all sectors. The training addressed the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, with two of the six Train-the-Trainer modules focusing on the implementation process and timeline.

Improved teacher quality

The ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) was established in mid 2010 to create, manage and maintain leading edge teaching standards in the ACT. Full operation commenced in 2011 with responsibilities covering teacher registration, accreditation of pre-service teacher education programs, and certification of teachers in the ACT against national standards. The annual report of TQI is annexed to this annual report, and provides detailed analysis on TQI activities and achievements.

To improve teaching quality, 39 teachers undertook either individual scholarship programs with a range of universities or the targeted Graduate Certificate in Early Childhood Studies with the University of Canberra. There were a number of workshops to support teacher quality in schools. Workshops targeted at building teacher knowledge and understanding in English as a second language (ESL) included Teaching ESL Students in Mainstream Classrooms, ESL in the Mainstream for the Early Learner, Time for Talk and Incorporating Strategies for an Inclusive

Curriculum. Teachers were awarded scholarships for the Graduate Certificate in Teachers of English to Speakers of other Languages.

The Directorate recognises that professional learning and leadership underpin quality teaching, and provided support for school leaders in facilitating professional discussion workshops. The annual professional discussion, implemented in all ACT public schools and colleges from term 1, 2011 is an extension of the Professional Pathways process, which requires principals to assess classroom teacher performance for improved learning and teaching outcomes.

Increased workforce skills

The Productivity Places Program (PPP) is part of the Commonwealth Government's Skilling Australia for the Future initiative and aims to reduce skills shortages and increase the productivity of workers and industry. In 2010-11, 2,586 qualifications were commenced under PPP. This training is additional to training delivered under existing programs, such as Australian Apprenticeships and the Priorities Support Program. Approximately 1,157 qualifications were completed successfully during the reporting period. As of 30 June 2011, 2,356 participants were continuing to work towards finishing their qualifications, some of which can take up to three years to complete.

Under the PPP, 94 percent of the qualifications allocated to existing workers in 2010-11 were for Certificate IV and above. Twenty-nine percent of allocated qualifications were Diplomas or Advanced Diplomas. Of the qualifications allocated for job seekers in 2010-11, 47 percent were at Certificate III and 32 percent at Certificate IV level.

Improved services for students with disabilities

The Directorate developed the *Excellence in Disability Education in ACT Public Schools: Strategic Plan 2010-2013* (Disability Plan) following the outcomes of a review of special education in the ACT. Launched on 7 September 2010, the Disability Plan provides direction for special education improvement across all school sectors in the ACT.

The Disability Plan also proposes online delivery of learning for teachers and learning support assistants in the domains of behaviour management and disability education. An external specialist was engaged to prepare a training package designed to build staff capacity. The online training package has been successfully trialled and evaluated in the United Kingdom, New South Wales and the Northern Territory.

In June 2011 the Directorate hosted an annual information seminar about schooling options for parents of preschool children with a disability moving to primary school. More than 40 parents and carers considering an application for support or placement of their child in a disability education program attended this seminar. Parents met representatives from the Directorate, the Catholic Education Office and the Association of Independent Schools, to access information on the type of support and programs provided for students with a disability.

The Language Difficulties Conference held in June 2011 and co-organised by the Directorate, the Catholic Education Office and Therapy ACT brought together 100

teachers drawn from each system, to share and learn about promising practices in supporting the learning of students with language difficulties. The conference was an example of Directorate efforts to align disability education strategies, build capacity and foster increased collaboration.

A cross-agency Post School Transitions Joint Advisory Group met in June 2011 with the aim of enhancing community capacity to support young people with a disability and their families and to maximise their potential for citizenship. The group developed a work plan for 2011-12 that includes a broadening of the disability focus at the Canberra Careers Market, developing better information tools for families in planning post school transitions, and aligning actions in post school transitions across whole of government.

The Directorate entered into a contract with House with No Steps (HWNS) to coordinate and arrange work experience and social placement opportunities for year 9 and 10 ACT public school students with a disability. HWNS will work with students, parents and schools to identify the young person's interests and abilities and find suitable placements where possible.

The Directorate provides transport services for students with special needs. In 2010-11, 549 students with special needs received transport services. No formal complaints were received by the Directorate about this service.

Box A9.2: Crash hot drummers spread joy



The Crash Hot Drum Troupe comprises of students from The Woden School, Black Mountain School, Malkara and Cranleigh specialist schools.

The Crash Hot Drum Troupe started this year as an auditioned group with members picked for their musical skills and their stagecraft from the four specialist schools in Canberra: The Woden School, Black Mountain School, Malkara and Cranleigh.

The troupe has performed at various school events as well as Step into the Limelight, the creative and performance showcase for ACT public schools, and the Belconnen Community Festival. There are eight students in the troupe with at least one representative from each of the schools.

The troupe also performed at the International Day of Disability in ACT.

Addressed gaps in learning achievement

The Directorate's Reconciliation Action Plan 2010-2011 (RAP) partners the Directorate's Strategic Plan and expresses our strong commitment to closing the learning achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other students in the ACT. Copies of the RAP were sent to schools at the end of 2010. The RAP is available on the Directorate's website.

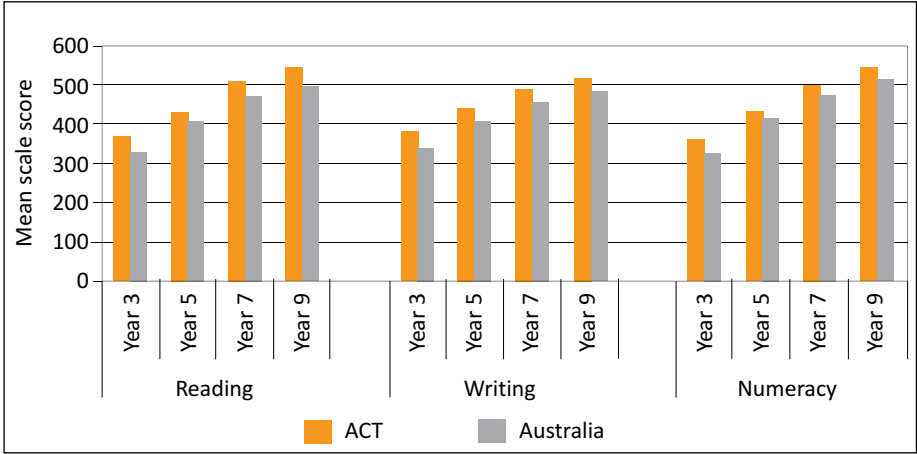
The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters: Strategic Plan 2010-2013* was developed by the Directorate in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, the Australian Education Union, the Network Principals' Reference Group and the ACT Community Services and Health Directorates. The Plan provides strategies to enable individuals to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

The Directorate, in collaboration with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and the Gugan Gulwan Community Centre entered into a joint-project entitled *Closing the Gap*, which will run over 2011 and 2012 to support and improve literacy outcomes of at risk year 6 to year 9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Tuggeranong Valley. The project provides \$500,000 over two years for an administrative staff member, a classroom teacher and a learning support assistant at Gugan Gulwan Community Centre and is governed by an Expert Advisory Committee.

In September 2010, a working group was established to explore how sport can be used to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students get more out of school. Research indicates children exposed to physical activity at primary school age are more inclined to develop the skills and habits that will make them active and healthy adults. A forum attended by members of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group and the Sport and Recreation Minister's Advisory Council discussed how it might develop strategies to better engage students across all ACT schools through sport.

In the ACT, a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved above the national minimum standard in NAPLAN 2010 in all tests and all year levels when compared with national results. A higher proportion of ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved in the top two performance bands across all year levels and all domains compared with national results.

Figure A9.4: Mean scale score in reading, writing and numeracy by year level for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, ACT and Australia, NAPLAN 2010



Source: Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy National Report 2010

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' participation in Australian School-based Apprenticeships (ASBAs) rose by 85 percent in the school year 2010 when compared with 2009 commencements. The number of ASBAs who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander as a proportion of total ASBA commencements rose from 5.1 percent in 2009 to 6.7 percent in 2010. In order of popularity, the top four ASBAs chosen by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2010 were in the occupation areas of community recreation, construction, business and retail.

Implemented school improvement

The core principles and key initiatives described in *School Improvement 2011* assist the Directorate to strengthen and consolidate its approach to school and system improvement. The document sets out the Directorate's priority areas for school improvement and the expectations and support available to assist schools in achieving system objectives. The document complements strategies contained in the Operational Plan 2011.

To monitor the impact of school improvement cycles, external validation of 21 public schools took place between late August and early September 2010. Schools undergoing validation were assessed by a three-member external panel of experienced school leaders, sourced from public and/or non-government schools across the ACT. An externally contracted Lead Validator provided the panels with training, advice and supervision to ensure consistency of validation across the ACT's public school system.

The Lead Validator noted that schools undergoing validation had experienced significant systemic change across this four-year cycle of improvement, most notably the introduction of a networked approach to principal support and accountability. In addition, there had been substantial school building and refit programs. In summary, the Lead Validator found that in 2010 a majority of schools had explicit curriculum documents to guide teaching and were actively engaged in the Quality Teaching Program. It was evident that school targets for lifting literacy and numeracy outcomes were supported by a range of effective programs. All schools in the validating group for 2010 reported progress towards improvements in their NAPLAN results.

A further important element of school improvement advanced during the year was the implementation of the initiative to reduce the average class size. In 2010, 70 additional teachers were appointed to ACT public schools (10 in primary schools, 50 in high schools and 10 in colleges). Average class size was reduced to 21.4 in primary schools (kindergarten to year 6) and high schools, and 19.4 in colleges.

Student absenteeism can lead to lower educational outcomes. The Directorate is exploring options for providing and analysing data on the effectiveness of the SMS Notify System on reducing student absenteeism. This system notifies parents and carers if students are not at school.

Established directions for high school and college sector reform

The Directorate undertook consultation with the community to reform the high school and college sector. The consultation led to the release of the Excellence and Enterprise Framework which is aimed at delivering a more distinctive secondary school system, increasing the diversity and choice of learning available to students including through other learning providers. The framework encourages better support to students with learning difficulties and a greater range of options to address behavioural and engagement issues.

The Directorate will continue to build community confidence in public schools by implementing strategies that enable our high schools and colleges to:

- demonstrate high quality teaching and learning and provide learning programs that challenge, excite and engage all young learners
- deliver more personalised and diversified learning pathways for students in ways that suit their interests and advance their aspirations
- enhance young peoples' learning and career pathways by more effectively collaborating with other schools
- innovate in ways that extend and diversify the curriculum and promote improved access to, and success, in learning
- establish partnerships and proactively and productively engage with parents, industry and the broader community
- access an exciting capital works program to provide facilities and infrastructure to support contemporary teaching and learning
- become more flexible and responsive to local needs through increased autonomy.

Implemented the education participation policy

The ACT Youth Commitment was developed to ensure that no young person in the ACT is lost from education, training or employment. In August 2010, the Directorate announced that young people in the ACT will have individual Pathways Plans within four years, to support student transitions through school and on to further education, training and employment. The plans provide opportunities for young people to identify strengths, interests and goals and outline the steps needed to attain individual goals. Through the plans, young people explore the different learning opportunities available to them, and learn to manage change as a planned process.

A Youth Attainment and Transitions ACT Regional Forum was held on 2 September 2010. The Forum provided participants with the opportunity to learn more about two new programs: School Business Community Partnership Brokers, and Youth Connections. They also discussed ways of sharing information and best practice, networking with other key stakeholders in the region and developing strategies to support the ACT Youth Commitment.

Developed next generation online learning environments

The Directorate developed online teaching and learning resources including the delivery of a new virtual learning environment called Connected Learning Communities (cLc). A phased roll-out of cLc saw 20 early adopting schools provided with intensive training in cLc coordination and principles of cyber-safety.

Engagement of students and teachers with the cLc exceeded expectations, with the cLc surpassing Google as the most hit website within ACT public schools in late August 2010. The cLc homepages have been enhanced based on feedback from users.

Online capacity of cLc was increased to meet the demand. By May 2011, the virtual environment had an average of 4,000 hits per day. For the start of the 2011 school year wireless networks were available to all ACT public schools and colleges. Discussions are ongoing between the Directorate and the ACT Government ICT services provider to further improve the user experience of the cLc; prepare for the next version of the cLc (*LIFE*); and plan for the introduction of a parent portal in term 4, 2011.

The online learning portal Atomic Learning went live in February 2011. Atomic Learning has been integrated within the cLc and allows users to access resources that improve their skills in a wide range of software and hardware including interactive whiteboards, Adobe and Microsoft. A combination of instructional videos and self paced learning products offer significant benefits including 'just in time' access to professional learning for staff and students.

The National Secondary Schools Computer Fund allowed for the deployment of 9,241 computers to ACT public high schools and colleges by December 2010. By March 2011 over 5,044 notebook computers were also deployed through this program, bringing the ratio of students to computers in years 9 to 12 in ACT public schools to 1:1. The ACT Government invested in primary schools' ICT with 1,532 additional computers deployed to schools as of December 2010.

In June 2011, all teachers gained access to free-to-air television through SchoolsNET, the Directorate's media server solution. Teachers can record television programs through this new product to enhance student learning.

Facilitated safe and inclusive learning environments

The Directorate's promotion of safe and inclusive environments was guided by the *Equity and Diversity Plan 2010-2013* which sits alongside the ACT Public Service's *Respect, Equity and Diversity Framework*.

The fundamental skills required for establishing and maintaining positive classrooms were outlined to over 200 new educators (teachers in their first year of employment) who took part in the *Essential Skills for Classroom Teachers* professional learning package. The program will continue and will be further enhanced by a Train-the-Trainer module for executive staff, and an advanced skills course for ongoing development.

The ImpACT—Behaviour Management module (an interactive scenario-based training tool) was trialled with small groups of new educators in October and November 2010 and will be rolled out to all new teachers as part of the Essential Skills program in 2011. In addition, the ImpACT program on critical incidents training continued to be offered to school executives in conjunction with the Australian Federal Police and was rated highly by participants as excellent training in the event of a crisis occurring in schools.

In 2011 the Behaviour Support Partners program commenced in schools. The program helps schools and teachers to engage students with behavioural difficulties in learning. The partners work with the schools to develop plans to manage behaviour and bullying and work with new educators in schools to support the development of their skills in classroom behaviour management. Individual teachers receive assistance in cases of complex student issues that impact on learning. Six partners work intensively on these issues in particular schools for up to two years, and a further four partners operate across the school networks.

Students representing all Canberra schools took part in an innovative cyber safety summit *Who R U in the Digital World* in March 2011. The student summit was an initiative of the ACT Safe Schools Taskforce and was supported by the ACT Government, the Australian Federal Police and ACT Government IT provider: InTACT.

Implemented a nationally consistent approach to early childhood education

The Directorate continued to provide universal access to 15 hours of preschool education across public schools. In 2010, eight schools joined the existing five early childhood schools in offering early childhood education. The early childhood schools continued to increase enrolments and positive learning outcomes for children, and increase cross-family connectedness.

A national census of early childhood workers reported that more ACT preschool staff (78.2%) have a four year bachelor degree when compared to the national average (50.2%); and the highest proportion of long day care staff are qualified to diploma level or above (71.4% in ACT versus 59.0% nationally).

The Directorate, along with the Community Services Directorate, held a consultative forum for early childhood teachers on the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*. The Directorate's intention is to provide assistance in understanding the requirements of the new legislation.

Implemented Council of Australian Governments reforms

In the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to work towards increasing the qualifications and skill level of the Australian population. The vocational education and training programs administered by the Directorate contribute significantly to increasing the proportion of 20-64 year olds with, or working towards, post-school qualifications in Certificate III, Certificate IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma.

Through the National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions the ACT and Australian Governments commit to work towards achieving improvements in high level outcomes for schooling agreed by COAG in the National Education Agreement. This work includes achieving improvements in the numbers of young Australians making successful transitions from schooling into further education, training or employment.

Provided flexible and responsive vocational training options

The Directorate contracts registered training organisations to provide vocational training to the ACT community under the Priorities Support Program (PSP). The PSP assists disadvantaged people who find it difficult to access, or be successful in, vocational training qualifications ranging from statement of attainment to diploma.

In 2010-11 the Directorate allocated 70 percent of PSP places for training at Certificate I and II, 23 percent at Certificate III, and seven percent at Certificate IV levels. Of the PSP participants who commenced training in 2010-11, 89 percent had completed, or were continuing to work towards a qualification or statement of attainment, as at 30 June 2011. Of the PSP participants who completed a qualification or skill set in 2010-11, 55 percent achieved at Certificate III level or above.

The Directorate fosters partnerships with employers that improve the commencement, retention and completion of Australian Apprenticeships. This collaborative approach to skills development is highlighted in the ACT Joint Group Training Program (JGTP), where the ACT and Australian Governments fund group training organisations (GTOs) to employ and manage the training, additional care and support of persons in Australian Apprenticeships. The training of 412 apprentices and trainees was supported by GTOs through the JGTP in 2010-11.

Under the Australia Apprenticeships Program, of the apprentices and trainees who completed a qualification in 2010-11, 87 percent achieved at Certificate III level or above. Of the Australian apprentices who commenced their training in 2010-11, 92 percent worked towards a qualification at Certificate III level or above.

The ACT's performance in providing vocational education and training outcomes continues to rank among the highest in the nation. The ACT exceeds the national average on several vocational education and training (VET) performance indicators:

- 88.7 percent of ACT VET graduates (students who completed a VET qualification in 2009) were employed after training, compared to 76.3 percent nationally
- 82.5 percent of module completers (students who successfully completed part of a VET course) were employed after training, which is the highest rate for this group in the nation for 2010.

The Directorate provides vocational education and training in schools. Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) is undertaken by students in years 10, 11 and 12 who are currently enrolled in school. In 2010, a total of 844 SWL placements for both public and non-government ACT school students were coordinated by the Directorate.

Enhanced environmental sustainability in schools

The ACT Climate Change Strategy 2007-2025 continues to guide the Directorate's activities in environmental sustainability and in supporting schools to become carbon neutral by 2017.

To promote sustainability in our schools the Directorate published *What is a Sustainable School?* during the reporting period. This publication complements the ACT Sustainable Schools Initiative and supports school communities in becoming environmentally sustainable. Detailed discussion of school and office sustainability is provided in **Section C21**.

A workshop for teachers titled 'Teaching in an Environmentally Sustainable Future' was held at the Australian National University in July 2010 to help staff plan and deliver programs that support teaching and learning around sustainability in schools.

In July 2010, a government sponsored competition 'Your city, your vision' asked Canberra school students for their ideas on how to develop our city sustainably. Students were asked to create their vision for a sustainable Canberra in 2030 in any narrative or visual art form.

In sponsoring this competition, the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (previously ACT Planning and Land Authority) incorporated UNICEF's principles of child-friendly planning (from *Building Child Friendly Cities – A Framework for Action*) and entries were judged by the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment. Entries were displayed at the 'Kids Teaching Kids' workshop on creating a sustainable Canberra at the Albert Hall on 1 September 2010 and expressed a wide range of ideas, showing how much our young people care about the environment, their future and their city.