



SCHOOLS FOR ALL OVERSIGHT GROUP

2nd Quarterly Executive Summary

June 2016 (Actions reported to 31 May 2016)

Introduction

This executive summary provides an overview of key progress made across the sectors to implement the recommendations of the *Schools for All Children and Young People – Report of the Expert Panel on Students with Complex Needs* (Expert Panel Report). The summary should be read in conjunction with the individual quarterly reports of the Association of Independent Schools ACT (AISACT), Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn (CE) and the Education Directorate (EDU).

The objectives of the Schools for All Program are to:

- progress the implementation of the fifty recommendations of the *Schools for All Children and Young People – Report of the Expert Panel on Students with Complex Needs* by 16 December 2016;
- reinforce a student-centred vision that gives priority to each student's needs in education policy and practice, particularly those with complex needs and challenging behaviours; and
- implement systemic cultural change, including major policy and program reform necessary to ensure that all recommendations can be sustained in the long term to support all students, particularly those with complex needs and challenging behaviours.

The Schools for All Program is a three year program of system reform. The Program is well underway, with a strong focus on strengthening processes and referral pathways to better support the needs of students with complex needs and challenging behaviours; and increased transparency and availability of policies and processes for families and staff.

Indicators of Broader Jurisdictional Cultural Change

The program is already demonstrating indicators of cultural change through strengthened collaboration between EDU, CE and AISACT. This has resulted in increased information sharing at the strategic level through the Program Board and the operational level through the monthly Program Working Group and individual Project Working Groups.

The program has also resulted in strengthened cross-directorate collaboration. EDU, the Community Services Directorate (CSD) and ACT Health continue to work collaboratively through the Better Services Taskforce and other forums including the Strengthening Families Committee to ensure that service provision with respect to children and young people with complex needs and challenging behaviours, and their families, is offered in a strategic and client focussed manner. EDU, CE and AISACT, through the Improving Educational Outcome for Students in out of Home Care Committee, are negotiating a partnership agreement with CSD to better meet the needs of students who live in out of home care.

The Restrictive Practices Oversight Steering Committee (RPOSC) is informing the development of appropriate oversights for restrictive practice in the ACT. This Committee has representatives from EDU, Justice and Community Safety (JaCS), CSD, Human Rights Commission, ACT Health, Solicitor General, Chief Minister Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD).

Change is being seen through the implementation of the Positive Behaviour for Learning Framework in EDU and CE which focuses on whole-school expectations and strategies for developing positive behaviour.

EDU and CE are seeing significant change through a strengthened case management approach: EDU’s Network Student Engagement Teams (NSETs) and CE’s Student/School Engagement Teams (SSETs). These teams provide a range of supports to schools when responding the needs of students with complex needs and challenging behaviours.

Emeritus Professor Tony Shaddock has been engaged by both EDU and CE as a strategic advisor and critical friend to ensure sustainable system change is achieved. In order to ensure the Schools for All Expert Panel Report is used as a driver for system change, both EDU and CE have aligned the recommendations to existing frameworks. EDU has mapped the recommendations against *Great Teachers by Design*, *Great Teaching by Design* and *People, Practice and Performance*. Catholic Education has mapped the recommendations to *Principles of Pedagogy*; the *Collaboration on Student Achievement Model (COSA)*; and the *Archdiocesan Wellbeing and Diversity Framework*. The Archdiocesan Wellbeing and Diversity Framework is based on the National Safe Schools framework. It will be launched at a Lead Conference on Wellbeing in July 2016.

EDU is working with Planning and Performance Branch of the Directorate and Professor Helen Berry, Professor of Health Research at the University of Canberra and Adjunct Professor at Australian National University Climate Change Institute, to develop an Evaluation Framework to measure the Schools for All program outcomes. This process has identified cornerstone recommendations that are critical change elements.

AISACT has considered each recommendation and acknowledge a strong desire to build on existing reforms, improvements and initiatives in so far as is practical and possible. As an independent governing body representing 18 independent schools that are separate and autonomous entities, AISACT has noted all the recommendations, and specifically the 26 which refer to each Independent School or the AIS, and the ACT Government response. An indication of this commitment is evidenced in the agenda of both AISACT Board and Executive Committee meetings. Further, the Executive Committee has established a Schools for All sub-committee to provide it with advice on strategies, opportunities and approaches in direct reference to the Schools for All project and the responses to the recommendations from the Expert Panel Report.

Key Progress

Each sector is committed to continual improvement and cultural change and acknowledges that this commitment extends beyond the closure of a recommendation. [Table 1](#) lists the recommendations closed to date. [Table 2](#) lists key achievements under selected chapters of the Expert Panel Report.

Table 1: Recommendations Closed to Date		
Recommendation	Date of Closure	Rationale and Evidence
ACT Government		
<p>3.1 Agreed That the ACT Government, when responding to the recommendations of the Law Reform Advisory Council’s review of the Discrimination Act 1991, considers issues of consistency between Commonwealth and ACT discrimination law when applied in the context of education services.</p>	<p>June 2016</p>	<p>The ACT Government has acted on this recommendation in consideration of the Law Reform Advisory Council (LRAC) recommendations and commenced changes to the <i>Discrimination Act 1991</i> (ACT). Initial changes, which include alignment of the definition of disability with the Commonwealth <i>Disability Discrimination Act</i> (1992), are summarised in the <i>Discrimination Amendment Bill 2016</i>. Further changes may be considered later in the year. Any proposed changes will be consulted on by EDU and JaCS.</p> <p>Closure report endorsed by the Program Board and Oversight Group.</p>

Recommendation	Date of Closure	Rationale and Evidence
Education Directorate		
<p>10.4: That EDU resource and establish within each NSET a Learning Difficulties Partner position with specialised expertise in assessing and responding to students with learning difficulties (Project 3).</p>	June 2016	<p>This recommendation has been addressed through the appointment of an additional Disability Education Partner (DEP) to each NSET, with the role of all DEPs including learning difficulties.</p> <p>Closure report endorsed by the Program Board and Oversight Group.</p>
<p>12.2: That EDU and the Community Services Directorate develop a protocol to allow for the timely referral of students with complex needs and challenging behaviour, and their families, to the Strengthening Families Program.</p>	June 2016	<p>EDU and CSD have reviewed the existing protocol and strengthened it through a commitment statement to support the Strengthening Families Project and embed the Strengthening Families approach within the Schools for All program of system reform.</p> <p>Closure report endorsed by the Program Board and Oversight Group.</p>
<p>12.6: That EDU, CE, and each Independent School, develop guidelines which regulate access to schools by NDIS service providers.</p>	June 2016	<p>This work has been completed by EDU with guidelines developed and provided to schools. FAQs, policy and guidelines are also available on the public website. This information has been shared with CE and AIS ACT to adapt as needed.</p> <p>Closure report endorsed by the Program Board and Oversight Group.</p>
<p>12.7: That EDU evaluate the Pilot Projects currently being undertaken at Black Mountain and Cranleigh Schools, and, if suitable, consider developing an ongoing program of therapy specialists at key school sites across the ACT.</p>	June 2016	<p>The Evaluation Report has been written and a summary of the report has been published on the EDU website. Information from the report was used to inform the establishment of initial allied health positions for specialist schools. Recruitment has been undertaken for these initial positions, including Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech Pathology.</p> <p>Closure report endorsed by the Program Board and Oversight Group.</p>
<p>15.1: That EDU, CE and each Independent School, make clear in their strategic plans a) how their student-centred vision and principles and operationalised with respect to priorities, targets and indicators; and b) how the various components, services and programs that they provide contribute to the implementation of their student-centred vision.</p>	June 2016	<p>The new School Improvement Framework <i>People, Practice and Performance</i> was announced by the Minister for Education on 1 April 2016.</p> <p>This articulates that the ultimate goal of school improvement is to improve outcomes for students, including levels of achievement and wellbeing.</p> <p>Closure report endorsed by the Program Board and Oversight Group.</p>
<p>15.6: That the Minister for Education and Training establish an appropriately constituted advisory group to consider progress reports from ETD CE and AIS on their response to and implementation of the recommendations of this Expert Panel report. ETD, CE and AIS should provide progress reports annually to the advisory group for three years, with the first reports to be provided in November 2016.</p>	March 2016	<p>Oversight Group was established in February 2016 and all processes for reporting are in place and have been endorsed. Meetings are scheduled for 2016 with the final report to the Minister for Education due December 2016.</p> <p>Closure report endorsed by the Program Board and Oversight Group.</p>

Recommendation	Date of Closure	Rationale and Evidence
Catholic Education		
12.1: That EDU, CE, and each Independent School (a) develop and implement a case management framework for students with complex needs and challenging behaviour; and (b) support all schools to identify or recruit suitably qualified staff to act as case managers, including, for example, social workers, welfare officers, and/or community development workers.	June 2016	Catholic Education has implemented a case management framework to respond to requests from teachers for support in identifying and/or responding to particular needs of all students, including those with complex needs and challenging behaviour. Closure report endorsed by the Program Board and Oversight Group.
13.4: That EDU, CE, and AISACT, cooperate to (a) make available to all member schools existing online learning modules in: autism spectrum disorder; dyslexia and significant reading difficulties; motor coordination difficulties; speech, language and communication needs; understanding and managing behaviour; understanding hearing loss; and/or other courses as identified by member schools; and (b) ensure that these learning modules are complemented by follow-up support including face to face assistance, workshops and coaching components.	June 2016	Catholic Education has increased the opportunities for staff to participate in the Online Training courses during this reporting period to build the capacity of both teaching staff and Learning Support Assistants. These online learning modules are complemented by follow-up support including face-to-face assistance, workshops and coaching components. Closure report endorsed by the Program Board and Oversight Group.

Table 2: Key Achievements against chapter headings

Legal and Policy Context (3.2, 4.1):

Both EDU and CE are underway with the review and redevelopment of Policy and Guidelines to better support schools in understanding processes and legal requirements to support the needs of students with complex needs and challenging behaviours. Both sectors have acted swiftly to provide policy advice and process to schools, specifically in providing immediate advice in the area of withdrawal spaces and restrictive practice. All sectors have access to the University of Canberra Disability Standards for Education (DSE) online modules. The ACT Government has commenced changes to the *Discrimination Act 1991* (ACT). The main change impacting education is a broadening of the definition of disability to make it consistent with the definition in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwth). All sectors will continue to refine Policy and Guidelines to reflect best practice.

School Culture and Relationships (6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4)

As at June 2016, 78 out of 118 ACT primary schools are participating in KidsMatter. 30 out of 54 ACT high schools are participating in MindMatters. The ACT has the highest uptake in Australia. The Australian Government has provided a response to the *Report of the National Mental Health Services and Program Review* that includes a proposed integrated end-to-end school based program building on the success of KidsMatter and MindMatters. Further announcements will be made by the government following the election.

The Minister's Student Congress, was held on Friday 10 June 2016 with the theme of the congress "*How do we create positive student teacher relationships?*" The information gathered from students on this day will be used to create tools to support student voice.

Settings and Placements (7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5)

EDU is consulting with Families ACT and the Youth Coalition, to develop guidelines to support Action Research Projects on appropriate primary school supports. A Statement of Requirements has been developed for the engagement of a consultant to work with EDU to develop a *Continuum of Educational Support* for Students at Risk (High-School only). CE has offered wellbeing grants, the focus of which was to enhance existing programs and to support future new initiatives in wellbeing, pastoral care and/or behaviour support in schools. Key areas for the project include: whole school professional learning in response to an area of need; a project that will respond to staff or student wellbeing; an adjustment to current allocated personnel hours for staff employed to respond to the wellbeing of students; a targeted project that will support parent engagement.

Physical Environment and Infrastructure of Schools (8.1, 8.2)

All ACT schools have spaces available for safe, self-directed withdrawal. This quarter, EDU has finalised the plan for allocating \$3million to enhance these spaces and develop safe sensory spaces in existing schools during the 2016-2017 financial year. The process has been agreed by executive and was advertised to schools in week 10 of Term 2. Schools will be able to apply for match-funding of up to \$150,000 (depending on enrolments) to enhance or develop indoor or outdoor spaces to support all students, particularly those with complex needs and challenging behaviour. Schools must consult with appropriate staff (such as Occupational Therapists) in the Network Student Engagement Team in the development of their proposal, to ensure these will

meet the needs of a range of students. The Directorate will use the *Functional Brief for New Schools* as a guide to ensure spaces are as close to the agreed standard as possible within the restrictions of current environments. Proposals will be evaluated and prioritised by the Director Student Engagement and School Network Leaders to ensure the wellbeing of all students is considered in the proposal and priorities in each Network are accommodated.

The Functional Brief has been endorsed by the sustainable Delivery of Public School Facilities Working Group and Executive Steering Committee. The Functional Brief and Technical Specifications will be presented to the Chief Minister and the Minister for Education in July. The Functional Brief includes principles of universal design and guidelines for flexible classrooms including small group learning spaces and links to outdoor areas and provides guidance about how to develop and use school environments to enhance learning outcomes for all students, including those with disability and/or complex needs and challenging behaviour. The Functional Brief and Technical Specifications will be shared with AIS ACT and CE for their information and use as appropriate.

AISACT continues to work with schools to review current provision for calming/sensory spaces and is looking to connect with appropriate organisations, for example Learning Environments Australasia – to provide advice about the requirements of such spaces so that schools might audit current facilities to determine whether they comply with best practice, and to provide advice on processes and specific requirements to be considered should schools be in a position to further develop these places.

Supporting Student Behaviour (9.1)

EDU has 15 schools implementing Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL). 2 PBL coaches are working with schools to implement the program.

The Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) framework adopted by the Communities@Work Galilee School has been designed around the needs of students presenting with complex and challenging behaviours. When scaled across an entire school or system, the framework has the potential to drive significant improvements in how students presenting with complex needs are supported. This is expanded on in the case study included in the AISACT quarterly report. AISACT will work with Galilee School in consideration of providing professional learning to Member Schools on the PBS model developed.

CE's Wellbeing and Diversity Team (WDT) and the School/Student Engagement Teams (SSET) enable CE to bring together those with expertise, school based knowledge, coaching capacity, leadership and evidence based approaches to plan collaboratively and coordinate a consistent response to the wellbeing and diversity of schools and students. The approach has been specifically designed to address the wellbeing and diversity of all students. This is expanded on in the case study included in the CE quarterly report.

Targeted Services and Supports (10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.5, 10.6)

Both NSETs (EDU) and SSETs (CE) provide a multidisciplinary service to schools to support the needs of students with complex needs and challenging behaviours. These teams work closely with teachers to build capacity and understanding of students with complex needs and challenging behaviours, establish collaborative response teams which includes students, parents/carers, schools and external agencies, provide school and family access to external consultants and agencies, support student transitions, provide access to an extended range of assessments to support student wellbeing and learning (cognitive, mental health, autism, language, hearing).

EDU has focused on strengthening the multidisciplinary NSET teams and is currently in the process of recruitment for Clinical Leader (NSET), Speech Pathologist, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapists (NSET), Speech Pathologist, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapists (Specialist Schools). Communication is currently being prepared to ensure that schools and families are aware of the role of NSET/Specialist School allied health and the interface of these supports with NDIS-funded allied health supports and the Child Development Service. An NSET flowchart for intake has been developed and is currently being trialed. Further work will take place on improving case management and referral processes.

Protecting Student and Staff Safety (11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4, 11.5, 11.6, 11.7)

EDU has published a *Safe and Supportive Schools* Policy. Guidelines and supporting materials have been developed and feedback has been received from CSD and the Human Rights Commission, which will be incorporated into the policy. The *Safe and Supportive Schools* Policy requires principals to review and approve any plan that proposes the use of restrictive practices and to keep a record of these plans with a date of review. It requires principals to present plans to School Network Leaders who will seek advice from Director Student Engagement, where needed. The *Safe and Supportive Schools* Policy and Guidelines require schools to report each occasion of the use of restrictive practice to School Network Leaders. Further review and revision of the policy is underway.

CE has developed a *Supportive, Safe and Respectful Schools* policy, currently awaiting approval.

Professional Learning to Meet Diverse Student Needs (10.7, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13.4, 13.5, 13.6, 13.7)

Building the capacity of staff to meet the needs of students with complex needs and challenging behaviours has been a significant focus during the reporting period. EDU and AISACT held professional learning lead by Tim Dansie, Registered Psychologist. These sessions were well attended with attendees providing positive feedback, particularly on the opportunity to network with peers and share effective strategies.

A committee has been established, led by the Teacher Quality Institute with EDU, CE, AISACT, University of Canberra (UC) and Australian Catholic University (ACU) to review and improve the theoretical and practical relevance of teacher education units with respect to teaching students with complex needs and challenging behaviours.

EDU is exploring a partnership with Professional Practice and Leadership Division, Victorian Department of Education to use the *Inclusive Education Learning Needs Analysis Survey*, to review qualifications, experience and professional learning needs of all staff and determine preferred learning modes. This will inform induction programs and continued development of professional learning courses.

Both EDU and CE have increased the opportunities for staff (teachers, school leaders and learning support assistants) to participate in the Online Training courses during this reporting period. Officers from Wellbeing and Diversity team at CE have also trialled the new Personalised Learning Module to determine the appropriateness of the material for all Learning Support Teachers.

EDU offered 10 Teacher Scholarships for Cohort 3 (group) in April 2016, totalling \$40,000. Strengthening of the Teacher Scholarship application and reimbursement process for Cohort 24 onwards will include: define expectation that scholarship recipient will share their knowledge and practice within their school and across the system; on request of payment at the completion of studies the recipient will identify evidence of professional learning. This could happen through a community of practice, delivering system professional learning, presenting at conferences, writing a journal article, mentoring or coaching others.

CE is in the process of training all their LSAs in a Cert IV Education Support. EDU is developing a policy platform to progress this initiative.

Leadership and System Issues (15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5)

EDU's new School Improvement Framework *People, Practice and Performance* was announced by the Minister for Education on 1 April 2016. This articulates the ultimate goal of school improvement is to improve outcomes for students, including levels of achievement and wellbeing.

CE's *Principles of Pedagogy* are being used by school leaders in the development of a student-centred vision within their Strategic Plans.

EDU's K-10 reporting template format is not yet finalised although 38 schools have elected to implement the latest draft with some flexibilities for Semester One 2016 reporting processes. Further consultation on common reporting templates is progressing. CE is currently engaged in a review of the function of reports in addressing student progress in the personal and social-emotional realms.

Program Director sign off (EDU)

July 2016

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