

## SECTION A

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# PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORTING

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# A1 The organisation

## Our vision and values

The vision of the Directorate 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 deliver quality education in one of the highest performing education systems in the nation. This is reflected in the high level learning experiences provided for every student every day at our early childhood, primary and high schools, colleges and our specialist schools. The learning and teaching quality extends to the VET sector with our students achieving the best training outcomes in Australia.

Fulfilment of our vision is supported by our values of honesty, excellence, fairness and respect. Belief in these values is fundamental to ensuring our children and young people aspire to, and achieve, their potential. The Directorate promotes a connected and inclusive culture where everyone matters. The interconnected nature of our school system promotes our ability to positively influence the lives of young people in the ACT.

### Box A1.1: World Education Games 2012

On Friday 16 February 2012, year 8 student Zoe Clark (pictured front row, third from left) was flown to Sydney to attend the World Education Games briefing day. Only nine students from across Australia were selected to represent each state and territory and be ambassadors during the World Education Games, which took place from 6 to 8 March 2012.



Zoe was selected to represent the ACT and Campbell High School due to her outstanding efforts in the Spellodrome Challenge Day late in 2011 and her exemplary application for the position.

## Our role

The Directorate provides services to children and young people both directly through public schools and indirectly through regulation of non-government schools and home education, and to people of all ages through the planning and coordination of vocational education and training in the ACT.

We focus on developing the capabilities of children and young people for citizenship, community engagement and successful labour market outcomes. Our programs ensure that young people are engaged in schooling and training for overall individual and social wellbeing.

The ACT public education system continued to expand. The February census collection for schools in 2012 noted 40,074 students attending 84 public schools (Table A1.1). This number included 1,890 students with special needs and 1,337

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The number of school leaders and teachers increased to 4,100 in 2012. The 2012 Teachers' Enterprise Agreement introduced a number of incentives to attract, recruit and retain high performing teachers in ACT public schools.

**Table A1.1: Enrolments in ACT public schools, 2009 to 2012**

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total students	38,280	38,853	39,010	40,074
Students with special needs	1,783	1,869	1,848	1,890
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	1,082	1,208	1,283	1,337

Source: ACT Education and Training Directorate, *School Census February 2012*.

The Directorate has responsibility for 84 schools:

- 48 preschool to year 6 schools (including four Koori preschools)
- nine year 7 to 10 high schools
- eight year 11 and 12 secondary colleges
- five early childhood schools (preschool to year 2)
- four specialist schools
- seven preschool to year 10 schools (including one Koori preschool)
- one kindergarten to year 10 school
- one year 6 to 10 school
- one year 7 to 12 school.

In addition to these public schools, educational facilities providing specialist programs to students include Birrigai Outdoor School and the Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre.

Finally, the Instrumental Music Program provided tuition across public schools and supported the Directorate's concert band and ensemble programs.

## Our structure

The Directorate is structured around four divisions, namely: Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement; Strategy and Coordination; Tertiary Education and Performance; and Corporate Services.

The Directorate underwent change in the senior executive team in 2012 with the departure of Dr Watterston from the Director-General position on 4 April. Ms Diane Joseph became the Director-General.



The Director-General, the Deputy Director-General (Ms Leanne Cover) and three Executive Directors (Ms Jayne Johnston, Mr Mark Whybrow and Mr Stephen Gniel) form the Senior Executive Team.

The Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement Division comprises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Student Engagement and Learning and Teaching Branches. The major responsibilities of the Division are:

- development of policy, strategic planning and management of school support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- delivery and coordination of disability education, student wellbeing and behaviour support
- provision of early intervention programs, curriculum support and professional learning
- support for quality teaching and literacy and numeracy
- support for early childhood, early intervention and Koori preschool program
- delivery and coordination of the Arts programs and performances through music.

The Strategy and Coordination Division includes the Information, Communications and Governance Branch and the Office for Schools. The major responsibilities of the Division are:

- provision of strategic advice to the Minister and the Directorate
- promotion of a strong and collaborative culture through effective communication and links with internal and external partners and the broader community
- deployment of information and communication technology (ICT) into learning environments
- administration of audit, risk and records management functions
- provision of legal advice to schools and other internal stakeholders

and, through the Office for Schools:

- implementation of ACT Government policy on school education for all school age students
- leadership and management to drive continuous improvement in the delivery of early childhood, primary and secondary education in ACT public schools.

The Tertiary Education and Performance Division includes the branches of Planning and Performance, and Training and Tertiary Education. The primary responsibilities of the Division are:

- collection, management, reporting and dissemination of a large range of Directorate data, and data relating to education and training in the ACT

- development of corporate strategic plans and associated planning processes
- administration of local, national and international assessment programs
- provision of advice on school planning and development
- coordination and planning of vocational education and training services in the ACT
- implementation of local and national reforms in skills and workforce development
- support to, and liaison with, the tertiary education sector in the ACT
- promotion and management of international education students in public schools.

Finance and Corporate Support, Human Resources, and Schools Capital Works are three branches in the Corporate Services Division. The primary responsibilities of the Division are:

- the overall management of the Directorate's budget, including financial policy development, financial reporting and financial services
- to lead and build a sustainable and highly skilled workforce capability
- to ensure the safety of our workforce and proactively intervene for positive outcomes for individuals and workplaces
- the provision of innovative, inspiring and safe learning environments through the management of new capital works, capital upgrades, environmental sustainability and repairs and maintenance of schools.

#### **Box A1.2: Farewell to former Director-General Dr Jim Watterston**



The Directorate said farewell to Dr Jim Watterston on Wednesday 4 April 2012 at the Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning. Dr Watterston moved to the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development as Deputy Secretary of School Education.

Since joining the Directorate in July 2009, Dr Watterston made an invaluable contribution to education and training across the ACT, including shaping the Directorate's school support systems, with a greater focus on collaboration and teamwork through the introduction of the School Network Model.

## **Our clients and stakeholders**

We know that collaborative partnerships with our clients and stakeholders are instrumental to improving learning and teaching outcomes for children and young people. Views and involvement of our clients are vital to the achievement of our vision. Our clients include over 67,000 school students, approximately 30,000 VET learners and their families.

Our links with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the non-government education sector are critical to enhance outcomes for all students and young people in the ACT.

The Directorate engaged with clients and stakeholders through a number of regular meetings with groups such as: ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations, the Australian Education Union, the ACT Principals' Association, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group and the Disability Education Reference Group. There was also a strong commitment to community engagement as reflected in consultation on the development and refurbishment of a number of new and existing schools.

The Training and Tertiary Education Forum, the Government Schools Education Council, the Non-government Schools Education Council and the Learning Capital Council provide opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the formulation of education policy or provide input to specific initiatives.



## A2 Overview

### Our performance in summary

The Directorate performed very well in achieving its strategic priorities in 2011-12, including:

- in NAPLAN 2011, ACT students across all year levels and domains achieved mean scores higher than the Australian average. There were noticeable improvements from 2010 results in year 5 spelling, grammar and punctuation, and year 7 spelling
- the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the ACT above the national minimum standard was higher than the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Australia in all tests and all year levels in NAPLAN 2011
- 88 percent of public school year 12 students achieved a Year 12 Certificate in 2011
- 93 percent of 2010 public school year 12 graduates were employed or studying in 2011
- the attendance rate of public school students in years 1 to 10 in 2011 was 91 percent
- 90 percent of year 10 public school students in 2011 proceeded to public colleges in 2012
- 95 percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in public schools achieved a Year 12 Certificate in 2011
- 80 percent of students and 83 percent of parents and carers were satisfied with the education at public schools in 2011
- 98 percent of parents were satisfied with the learning and developmental progress of their child attending an early intervention program in 2012
- 89 percent of parents were satisfied with the education of their child attending a disability education program in 2011
- ACT public schools had the second best student to teacher ratio in 2011, second only to the Northern Territory
- the number of apprentices and trainees in training in the ACT increased by 20 percent in 2011, compared with a national increase of two percent
- 86 percent of ACT VET graduates were employed after training, compared with 77 percent nationally
- the participation of ACT 15-19 year-olds in VET courses grew by seven percent in 2011, compared with four percent nationally
- the number of ACT VET students from non-English speaking backgrounds rose by 21 percent in 2011, compared with six percent nationally
- 60 percent of apprentices and trainees in the ACT who commenced in trades occupations in 2011 were aged 19 years or younger, compared with 52 percent nationally in 2011
- 93 percent of staff were retained by the Directorate during 2011-12.

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

## Our planning framework and direction setting mechanisms

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: Towards Our Second Century* and the associated underpinning 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: Planning framework**



Source: Planning and Performance Branch

Our Strategic Plan is underpinned by key organisational planning documents. The work program for the period 2011-12 was contained in the operational plans for 2011 and 2012 which provided details of key priorities and activities for the Directorate for each of the calendar years.

The operational plans broadly outline activities for the year and link performance measures from the Strategic Plan against these activities. There is regular reporting against the activities to the senior executive. Activities in the operational plans are translated into priorities and activities for business areas of the Directorate through annual business plans. Schools also address the priorities of the Strategic Plan and the operational plans through annual school plans. *School Improvement in ACT Public Schools: Directions 2010-2013*, together with the operational plans, guide school planning processes. School plans, endorsed by school boards, are published on school websites.

The Directorate has a number of internal controls designed to monitor and manage risk in delivering the Strategic Plan. The Internal Audit program and the *Risk Management Framework* are the primary risk management tools 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 the 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, work undertaken by the Directorate is integral to achieving the plan's overall vision.

Underpinning the goal to be a sustainable and creative city is a need to be a clever city, with a well educated and appropriately skilled workforce. In 2011, the ACT Government established the Learning Capital Council to provide leadership on tertiary education and workforce development and to promote closer collaborations between education providers and stakeholders from industry and government. During the reporting period, the Learning Capital Council met three times to develop strategies to promote ACT tertiary education internationally and domestically. In 2011, 77 percent of our citizens between the ages of 25 and 64 years had a formal qualification. While this was above the national average, our aim is to increase this proportion even higher.

Our metropolitan status provides opportunities for efficient service delivery to the community. In December 2011, the ACT Chief Minister and the NSW Premier signed a memorandum of understanding to strengthen collaboration in planning and delivering essential services for regional development. Education was one of the priorities to progress for cross-border service provision. In addition, the Directorate has a service agreement with the NSW Department of Education to provide NAPLAN testing and marking services for all ACT students.

Through the *National Education Agreement*, the *National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development* and associated National Partnerships, the Directorate worked with the Australian Government to translate and implement national policy into local practice. In particular, the Directorate maintained strong working relationships with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relationships and the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education.

The Directorate worked collaboratively with the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority in the development of national curriculum and standards of achievement and the administration of national assessment and reporting programs.

The Directorate supported the work of the ACT Teacher Quality Institute and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership in the development of national professional standards for teachers and principals.

The Minister for Education and Training represents the ACT on the Standing Council for School Education and Early Childhood and the Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills 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, all 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 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.

#### **Box A2.1: Giralang Primary School and the Rats of Tobruk**

The Directorate has a number of partnerships with community organisations to provide a broader learning experience to students. An example of this is the collaboration between Giralang Primary School and the Rats of Tobruk Association since 1999. The school is the custodian of the ceremonial banner of the Association. The school built a Memorial Wall in the front entrance to commemorate the Rats of Tobruk. Governor-General of Australia, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO, unveiled stage one of the Memorial Wall at the 2012 ANZAC Assembly at the school.



The Directorate also works in alignment with the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies, the authority responsible for the certification of senior secondary school studies in public and non-government schools in the ACT.

In 2011-12, the Directorate assisted the ACT Accreditation and Registration Council (ARC) through a period of significant change. ARC was the statutory authority responsible for the accreditation and registration of VET and higher education courses and providers. During the reporting period, these responsibilities were transferred to Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

To enhance the likelihood of successful student transitions through the school system and beyond, the Directorate has strong links with Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), the Australian National University (ANU), the Australian Catholic University and the University of Canberra (UC). Collaboration with CIT delivered innovations such as the incorporation of Flexible Learning Centres in Gungahlin College. The ANU Secondary College Program is a collaboration between the Directorate and the ANU. The program provides advanced learning experiences and opportunities to year 11 and 12 students undertaking science subjects, including biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics. The program also offers Japanese language.

A partnership between the Directorate and the University of Canberra involved the delivery and management of teaching and learning activities at the University of Canberra High School Kaleen and the University of Canberra Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra. Through this partnership, pre-service teachers had access to the classroom environment to develop their teaching skills. Similarly, teachers and students from the school and the college had access to the University's learning environment and resources.

The partnership with the University of Canberra was further advanced with the establishment of the INSPIRE Centre. The INSPIRE Centre serves as a hub of excellence in ICT education. The centre facilitates research and promotes innovative use of ICT in school education among pre-service and in-service teachers.

The Directorate collaborates with other ACT government agencies to deliver on its priorities. In early childhood development, education and care programs, the Directorate works collaboratively with the Community Services (CSD) and Health Directorates. Collaboration with CSD is instrumental in the implementation of the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) and in the development of early childhood education and care programs.

#### **Box A2.2: Launch of the AEDI 2012 at Mount Rogers Primary School**

On 1 May 2012, the national launch of the second data collection for the AEDI was held at Mount Rogers Primary School.



The AEDI measures five key areas of young children's development: physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, and communication skills and general knowledge. Nationally more than 7,500 public and non-government schools took part in the data collection.

The Directorate has implemented a number of health initiatives in partnership with the Health Directorate. Notable are the School Youth Health Nurse Program, kindergarten health checks and nurses in ACT specialist schools.

To plan for future schooling needs and advise on appropriate use of land adjacent to school environments, the Directorate ensures a close working relationship and collaboration with the ACT Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (formerly ACT Planning and Land Authority) and the Economic Development Directorate (incorporating the Land Development Authority).

## **Response to significant organisational change and revision to administrative arrangements**

Dr Chris Bourke was appointed the Minister for Education and Training on 22 November 2011 replacing Mr Andrew Barr MLA. Mr Barr was the Minister from 2006 until the appointment of Dr Bourke in 2011.

The Directorate experienced change in the composition of the senior executive team with the departure of Dr Jim Watterston from the Director-General position in April 2012. The team as at 30 June 2012 comprised: Ms Diane Joseph, Director-General; Ms Leanne Cover, Deputy Director-General; Ms Jayne Johnston, Executive Director, Tertiary Education and Performance; Mr Stephen Gniel, Executive Director, Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement and Mr Mark Whybrow, Executive Director, Corporate Services.

## **Role in administration of 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.*

Amendments and updates to the legislation are discussed in Section B4.

## A3 Highlights

### Noteworthy operational achievements and progress against key outputs

The *Strategic Plan 2010-2013: Everyone matters* and the *Operational Plans 2011 and 2012* provide the direction for setting organisational priorities and outcomes. There are four priority areas identified in the Strategic Plan, that are also reflected in the operational plans: Learning and Teaching; School Environment; Student Pathways and Transitions; and Leadership and Corporate Development. There were a number of noteworthy achievements under each priority area and significant progress was made in delivering key outputs.

## Learning and Teaching

### Implementing the Australian Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum was implemented for kindergarten to year 10 English, science, mathematics and history from primary to year 9. Year 10 history will start from 2013.



- Continued implementation of Phase 1 of the Australian Curriculum in all public schools.
- In 2012, 14 ACT Public 'Lead Schools' provided contributions to the Australian Curriculum work samples project.
- Actively participated in the development of Phase 2 learning areas of the Australian Curriculum.
- Provided high quality professional development for teachers to support them in implementing the Australian Curriculum.

# Learning and Teaching

## Raising standards in literacy and numeracy

Through building the knowledge and capability of our staff and providing the best learning environment for our students we advanced educational standards. Our students continued to achieve excellent results in NAPLAN.



- Increased focus by principals on their role as instructional leaders, imparting their knowledge of literacy and numeracy best practice in the classroom.
- A Literacy and Numeracy Conference assisted teachers in targeting support to enable students to perform to their full potential, including addressing challenges in meeting the diverse needs of the students.
- Trialled new approaches to teaching literacy and numeracy, including action learning programs.
- Literacy and numeracy coordinators and field officers provided specialist support to teachers to build on their knowledge and capacity to improve literacy and numeracy.
- Increased use of diagnostic tools, such as IMPROVE, to track student performance and identify areas needing intervention.



## Learning and Teaching

### Strengthening early childhood education



We understand how critical it is to nurture and support our young children through early childhood and schooling. Forty-four schools delivered 15 hours of preschool education in 2012.

- Continued implementation of 15 hours per week of free preschool education in 44 public preschools.
- Employed a number of strategies to ensure qualified early childhood teachers were appointed to support increased access to preschool programs. Strategies included scholarships and prioritised recruitment.
- Continued early childhood intervention programs for children who have, or are at risk of having, a disability or delay in development, which focused on learning through play, participation, exploration and experimentation.
- Continued the \$6.21 million upgrade of public preschool units to ensure compliance with the National Quality Standards.

## Learning and Teaching

### Closing the learning achievement gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

We implemented programs and initiated projects to close the learning achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students. Our inclusive school environment and curriculum were effective in meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.



- 131 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from year 5 to year 12 nominated to participate in the Aspirations Program designed to increase progression to tertiary studies.
- Awarded 11 scholarships of \$5,000 per annum to year 11 and 12 students under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Scholarship Program.
- Offered Koori Preschool Programs to provide an early childhood education program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Provided specific tutorial assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students based on their individual needs.
- Placed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officers in high schools to improve attendance, support high school to college transition and strengthen relationships between schools and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

## School Environment

### Building excellence in disability education

We helped students with disability to achieve their full potential by offering them a range of specialist settings and programs. Our schools focused on making education and training accessible to students with disability.



- Commenced the development of a guide to disability education services for parents and carers of students with disability.
- Established a service agreement for the delivery of therapy services in schools.
- Continued to provide early intervention programs of up to nine hours per week to three and four year-old children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Signed the *More Support for Students with Disabilities National Partnership*, providing ACT public education with \$2.7 million to support disability education.
- Designated a Disability Education Coordinator at 82 of 84 schools to build capacity for meeting the needs of students with disability.
- Commenced the development of a training package for staff to improve compliance with the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*.

## School Environment

### Promoting innovative, inspiring and safe learning environments

We provided a range of curricular and extracurricular activities to make learning fun and inclusive. Students from different schools are singing in the fifth 'Step into the Limelight' gala performance. The 2011 theme, Seasons, was explored through dance, drama, music and new media, showcasing the talent of ACT public schools.



- Opened the INSPIRE Centre, a joint collaboration with the University of Canberra for the promotion of ICT in learning and teaching.
- The Environment Centre at the Gold Creek School was named a finalist in the Green Building Award category for the United Nations Association of Australia World Environment Day Awards 2012.
- In 2011, the Instrumental Music Program held its 26th annual school band festival featuring up to 40 bands. The Senior Concert Band was nominated for two Canberra Area Theatre Awards for its performances at Step into the Limelight.
- Secondary school facilities for year 7 and 8 students opened at Harrison School at the start of the 2012 school year. The school received the first ever 5 Green Star Design rating in the ACT.
- Implemented the School Youth Health Nurse Program. Four youth health nurses were employed in public schools.
- Implemented stage 2 of the Connected Learning Communities virtual learning environment across all public schools.
- Solar power systems were installed at 19 public schools.

## School Environment

### Strengthening student engagement

We provided opportunities for our students to experience the global significance of learning. The visit of President Obama of the United States of America at Campbell High School on 17 November 2011 provided the senior students of the school with an opportunity to discuss various global issues with a high profile international personality.



- Implemented improvements to reporting and monitoring of attendance, particularly for primary school students.
- Provided schools with support services to address learning barriers faced by students.
- Strengthened student leadership in schools through establishment of School Representative Councils for high schools in the South/Weston Network and primary schools in the Belconnen Network.
- Achievement Centres continued to operate at three sites. Centres supported students in year 7 and 8 who did not experience a successful transition to high school or who were not successfully engaged in learning.



# Student Pathways and Transitions

## Improving secondary education in ACT public schools

Improved student pathways and transitions was a key strategy in ensuring that our schools continued to develop engaging, coherent learning programs that catered for the increased diversity of interests and needs of our students.



- Established Secondary Schooling Innovation Fund to provide seed funding to develop innovative approaches to support secondary education renewal under the *Excellence and Enterprise* framework.
- Implementation of the Virtual Learning Academy (VLA) commenced. The VLA provided an online integrated framework to improve educational provision for students with high academic ability. The pilot program focused on the year 7 to 10 science curriculum.
- Enrolled students in the new Science, Mathematics and Related Technologies (SMART) program at Gungahlin College.
- Offered a learning program and pathways plan for students from preschool to year 12 with extension to the University of Canberra under the Gungahlin Connected program.
- Secured Commonwealth funding for the Tuggeranong Sustainable Living Trade Training Centre for the delivery of nationally recognised qualifications in hospitality, construction, automotive and horticulture trades.
- Commenced processes for accelerated pathways for gifted and talented students.



## Student Pathways and Transitions

### Implementing training system enhancements for skills and workforce development



The Directorate aims to develop a skilled workforce to address emerging productivity challenges. The Training Excellence Awards recognise the valuable contribution students and organisations make to vocational education and training in the ACT.

- Identified a clear strategy to achieve training outcomes of increased qualification commencements and completions under the *National Partnership for Skills Reform*.
- Allocated additional funding for 526 job seekers and 1,464 existing workers to achieve VET qualifications under the Productivity Places Program.
- Developed a professional learning program for teachers to build a range of skills to enhance their online teaching practices. The skills, with a focus on mobile devices, were applied across all curriculum areas.
- Awarded scholarships to teachers to upgrade their qualifications.
- Exceeded our target to deliver 25,503 government funded course enrolments in VET by 26 percent.
- Exceeded our target to deliver 217 enrolments by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in government funded higher level VET qualifications by 92 percent.

## Student Pathways and Transitions

### Monitoring students through the education system to appropriate and successful outcomes

We provided our students with access to a vocational education and training experience program, and guidance for a smooth transition from school to working life. Pictured are Andria Bencich and Nathan Ballard, with their teacher Megan Lewis, from Erindale College who won a gold medal at the International Secondary Schools Culinary Challenge in Taiwan.



- Created more than 100 employment opportunities across the ACT Government for students to achieve a nationally recognised vocational qualification under Australian School-based Apprenticeships (ASBA).
- Offered CIT Central Courses program to year 9 and 10 students to provide an opportunity to try out a career while at school. The program delivered courses in seven different disciplines.
- Established four Re-engaging Youth Network Boards to provide a greater level of collaboration across community and government to support young people who were disengaged or at risk of disengaging from education.
- Commenced design work on a new purpose built facility for the Canberra College Cares (CCCares) program. CCCares is a national award winning program providing educational and support facilities to young pregnant and parenting students and their children.
- Moving Forward Officers at each college facilitated the transition of students into and out of the college sector and access to further education, training or employment.

## Student Pathways and Transitions

### Supporting successful transitions for all students

Our schools offered opportunities for our students to ensure a smooth transition to working life. Different career oriented options were available for students to test career choices against the realities of the workplace.



- Delivered alternative education programs to provide nationally accredited vocational qualifications to year 9 to 12 students at risk of disengaging from education.
- Increased Structured Workplace Learning placements from 850 to 945 under the *National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions*.
- Provided three sponsorships of \$10,000 per annum to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students undertaking teaching studies at the University of Canberra.
- Provided 46 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students an ASBA in Certificate II and Certificate III courses.
- Through the ACT Youth Commitment implemented the *ACT Career and Transition Framework* to provide a comprehensive approach to supporting young people in managing career and transition processes.
- Established supported work experience placements for year 9 and 10 students with disability attending public schools.
- Established the Learning Capital Council (LCC) to support greater integration of the ACT tertiary education system and promotion of ACT education locally, nationally and internationally.

# Leadership and Corporate Development

## Empowering local schools

Empowering ACT schools allowed principals greater flexibility to select, build and manage high performing teaching teams and provided greater transparency in resource allocation. Prime Minister Julia Gillard, pictured with principal Gai Beecher, visited Gungahlin College to hear the benefits of empowering principals in running autonomous schools.



- Empowering ACT (eACT) schools are contributing to the national empowerment agenda through the *Empowering Local Schools National Partnership*. Twenty-three schools participated in 2011-12.
- Recruitment of over 80 staff members occurred using local area selection. Selection fields demonstrated a breadth of applicants from overseas, interstate and the non-government sector.
- eACT schools undertook school based recruitment in 2012, with teacher applicants able to apply to the school of their choice.
- Schools were provided with training, resources and online systems to support decision making.

## Leadership and Corporate Development

### Strengthening leadership and system support

Attracting, retaining and developing our leaders, teachers and support staff are critical for a high performing system. In the picture Ms Feyi Akindoyeni is delivering a keynote speech on 'Message matters—now more than ever' at the iLead Conference in May 2012.



- Launched the *ACT School Leadership Strategy*, our commitment to building and maintaining leadership capability in every ACT public school.
- Conducted the school leadership conference, iLead, in May 2012 which provided high quality professional learning for school leadership teams.
- Increased pathways into teaching through employment and support of Teach for Australia and Teach Next programs.
- Presented Recognition of Service Awards to over 1,900 staff members as acknowledgement of long service. Over 160 staff received recognition for 30 years of service, while five staff were recognised for 40 years of service.



# Leadership and Corporate Development

## Supporting respect, equity and diversity



As part of the ACT Government's *Respect, Equity and Diversity Framework* the Directorate values staff and students for their differences, experiences, knowledge, abilities and backgrounds. Pictured are Wannia School students demonstrating their commitment to the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

- Commenced development of an action plan to support the ACT Government's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy*. The Strategy aims to attract, recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Pilot Refugee Action Support programs were carried out to provide assistance to refugee students to develop their literacy skills, improve achievement, participation and engagement in schooling.
- Student summit – It's a matter of respect: Countering Racism was attended by 140 students and 60 teachers.
- Clusters of schools in each School Network developed Reconciliation Action Plans.
- Provided more than 400 staff with Respectful Workplaces training.



## Major challenges

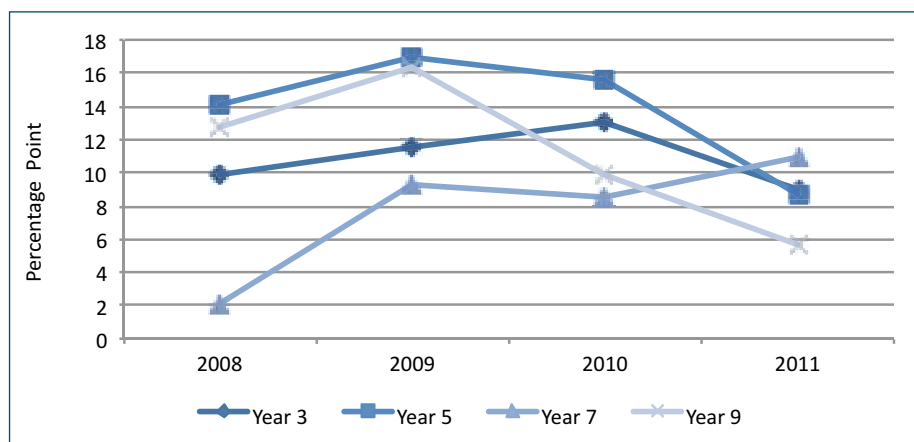
### Closing the learning achievement gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Closing the learning achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students remains a priority, and a challenge, for the Directorate. One of the Council of Australian Governments' 'Closing the Gap' targets is to halve the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade. This is measured through results in NAPLAN.

In the ACT, a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved above the national minimum standard in NAPLAN 2011 in all tests and all year levels when compared with national results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. However, a gap remained between the achievement of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the ACT.

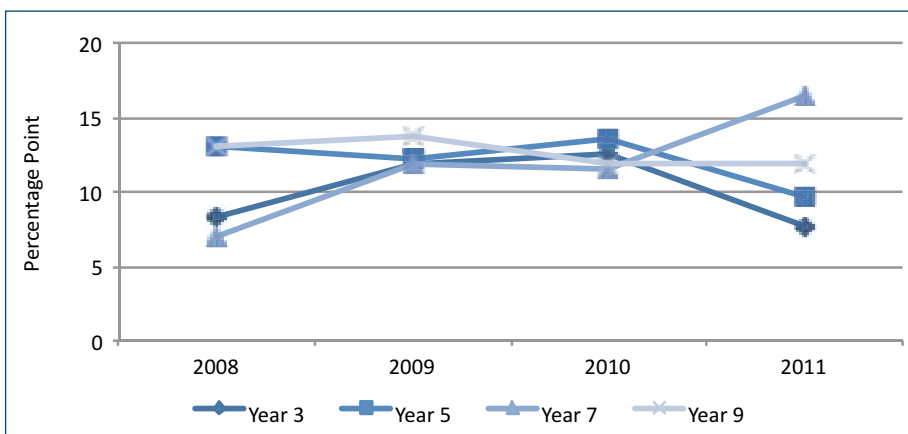
As shown in the figures below, the gap between the achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the ACT over the period from 2008 to 2011 narrowed for year 3, 5 and 9 students, while for year 7 students it increased.

**Figure A3.1: Learning achievement gap in reading, 2008 to 2011**



Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, NAPLAN Reports 2008 to 2011

**Figure A3.2: Learning achievement gap in numeracy, 2008 to 2011**



Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, NAPLAN Reports 2008 to 2011

The Directorate continued to implement the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters: Strategic Plan 2010-2013* (the Plan), with 2011 being the first full year of implementation of the Plan. The Plan provides clear direction for closing the learning achievement gap and it is aligned with the Directorate's *Strategic Plan 2010-2013: Everyone matters*.

Actions in the Plan targeted at closing the gap included:

- placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education workers in schools to provide support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their teachers in the school environment, including through classroom support
- allocation of teacher resources for literacy and numeracy to primary schools with a significant enrolment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- provision of additional professional development for Literacy and Numeracy Officers to ensure there was an understanding across the system of the particular needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- provision of specific tutorial assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students based on individual need.

## Taylor Primary School

The Taylor Primary School site was closed on Wednesday 14 March 2012 due to damage discovered at the school following heavy rainfall. Findings regarding the safety of the site from experts including an independent structural engineer indicated that the school site should remain closed until rectification works could be undertaken.

Following the closure of the site, staff and students from Taylor Primary School were relocated to Namadgi School in Kambah. The relocation followed extensive consultation with Taylor and Namadgi families and community, including through regular community meetings organised by the Directorate. The principals of Namadgi School and Taylor Primary School worked closely together to ensure the relocation progressed smoothly and to minimise the impact on staff and students.

Namadgi School was able to accommodate all Taylor Primary School students in separate buildings. Taylor Primary School operates as its own community school whilst on the Namadgi site, until rectifications at the Taylor Primary site are completed.

The Directorate worked closely with the staff, students, families and community at Taylor Primary School to ensure they were kept informed, and that their needs were considered in the decision making processes.

The 2012-13 Budget provided \$13.26 million over two years for the rectification and upgrade of the Taylor Primary School site. The project will also reconfigure the early childhood educational spaces within the school in order to increase the number of childcare places at the school.

The refurbishments of the site are scheduled for completion at the end of 2013. Classes are expected to return at the beginning of 2014.

### **Teaching Staff Enterprise Agreement**

The *Teaching Staff Enterprise Agreement 2009-2011* nominally expired on 30 June 2011. The bargaining process for a replacement agreement was extensive, with bargaining commencing in March 2011. During the bargaining process, and in support of its claim, the Australian Education Union (AEU) instituted protected industrial action in the form of stoppages on two occasions and a range of partial work bans.

In-principle agreement to a replacement agreement was achieved on 26 November 2011. The AEU withdrew the work bans following the in-principle agreement. Bargaining representatives continued to meet from December 2011 through to March 2012 to finalise the details of the enterprise agreement documentation.

In March 2012 an employee ballot was conducted and employees overwhelmingly voted to endorse the proposed *ACTPS Education and Training (Teaching Staff) Enterprise Agreement 2011-2014*. Fair Work Australia subsequently approved the agreement and it came into effect in April 2012.

The agreement delivered initial pay increases of five percent, to be followed by total increases of seven percent in subsequent years. For most classroom teachers this translated to an increase of nearly 15 percent over the life of the agreement.

A joint Directorate-AEU Implementation Committee is overseeing the implementation of the agreement.

## A4 Outlook

### Priorities

Achieving successful outcomes and helping children and young people reach their full potential will remain the key drivers for our operations in 2012-13.

Our *Strategic Plan 2010-2013: Everyone matters* provides the vision for our work. It articulates our four focus areas: Learning and Teaching; School Environment; Student Pathways and Transitions; and Leadership and Corporate Development, and the priorities that underpin these areas.

The Directorate will undertake a range of activities in each of these areas during 2012-13.

### Learning and teaching

- Continue the implementation of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters: Strategic Plan 2010-2013*.
- Complete the full implementation of all four learning areas of Phase 1 of the Australian Curriculum from kindergarten to year 10 for the 2013 school year.
- Continue to participate in the development of Phases 2 and 3 of the Australian Curriculum.
- Plan the implementation of the Australian Curriculum in years 11 and 12 in consultation with ACARA and the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies.
- Provide high quality professional development to teachers to improve learning outcomes.
- Measure and report on literacy and numeracy achievement in all public schools and provide targeted support to meet identified NAPLAN targets.
- Finalise the rollout of 15 hours of preschool education at additional public preschool units.

### School environment

- Continue the implementation of the *Excellence in Disability Education in ACT Public Schools: Strategic Plan 2010-2013*.
- Involve school communities in creating safe and supportive learning environments for all students, staff, volunteers, parents and visitors.
- Improve buildings and other infrastructure at public schools to provide a safe and engaging learning environment.
- Promote environmental sustainability in public schools to achieve carbon neutrality by 2017.
- Continue the implementation of the virtual learning environment: *Connected Learning Communities*.

- Develop a *Student Engagement Framework* to enhance the engagement of all students.
- Complete construction of Bonner Primary and Franklin Early Childhood Schools for the 2013 school year.

#### Box A4.1: Franklin Early Childhood School

Progress has been made on the construction of Franklin Early Childhood School for children from birth to eight years of age. The school includes a 120 place childcare centre and will accommodate 300 preschool to year 2 students. The school is due to open in 2013.



### Student pathways and transitions

- Continue implementing the *Excellence and Enterprise* framework with a focus on implementing programs funded by the Secondary Schooling Innovation Fund.
- Implement reform of tertiary education in the context of national and ACT reform agendas.
- Continue to implement structural reforms in the administration and coordination of the Directorate's VET sector business processes and systems.
- Collaborate with the Australian Government in planning and implementing national reforms in skills development.
- Improve access to career education in public schools.
- Develop strategies to increase student attendance rates to ensure all young people are fully engaged in learning.
- Support successful transitions for all students.

### Leadership and corporate development

- Extend implementation of the Empowering Local Schools initiative to more public schools.
- Implement the *School Leadership Strategy* to ensure strong and sustainable leadership in public schools.
- Promote and share best practice in leadership, teaching and learning across networks and schools.
- Continue to provide Respectful Workplaces training to all staff.
- Implement the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Action Plan*.

## Likely trends and changes in the operating environment

In 2012-13, and the years that follow, the delivery of services by the Directorate will continue to be impacted by the growth in the population in the ACT, particularly by the rate of growth in the population aged under 20 years old. Population growth in the ACT to 31 December 2011 was 1.8 percent, well above the national growth rate of 1.4 percent.

Population growth and distribution in the ACT requires consideration to ensure education services are delivered where they are needed. Traditionally, greenfields housing developments, such as Molonglo and Gungahlin, have made up the majority of new development in the ACT. In coming years the proportion of urban infill developments will increase. This may increase enrolment pressure on some ACT public schools.

The Directorate has an ambitious program for 2012-13. In addition, the ACT 2012-13 Budget identified savings as part of the whole of government initiative. The Directorate is confident that through the management team and planning processes a workplan will be achieved within budget and consistent with previous years' performances.

Student engagement with technology has increased over recent years, and this trend will continue in the future. ACT public school teachers will continue to be recognised as the largest users of national digital curriculum content.

The Directorate is increasingly adopting various social media to connect with students and the community. Examples include schools establishing Facebook and Twitter presences to more effectively manage information delivery from schools to local communities.

### Box A4.2: Gungahlin College named Microsoft Innovative Pilot School 2012

The Directorate hosted the national Microsoft Partners in Learning for Schools Forum at the INSPIRE Centre. School leaders and teachers from each state and territory from across Australia met for two days to foster collaboration and learning among schools. Gungahlin College was chosen as the ACT's pilot school for 2012 to help teachers and school leaders use technology in teaching and learning more effectively. Gungahlin College joined 19 other Australian schools in the Microsoft Partners in Learning for Schools Pilot Program to develop the best methods for incorporating technology into their classrooms.





## Assessment of significant risks and issues facing the Directorate in the future

The Directorate remains committed to the comprehensive Council of Australian Government's (COAG) reform agenda. From 2012-13 the Directorate will be involved in more than 20 partnerships with the Australian Government to improve educational and training outcomes for ACT students. The partnerships include work in early childhood, literacy and numeracy, teacher quality, skills development, disability and school empowerment reforms. The pace of reform is likely to increase as new partnerships are implemented, across some of the more challenging reform areas. The Directorate has identified strategies to mitigate the risks particular to each COAG reform.

The Directorate is currently working with the Australian Government, other state and territory governments and the independent and Catholic school sectors in the development of a new national school funding model. The aim of the new school funding model is to ensure that Australian students perform in the top five countries in the world by 2025. This will be achieved by every school getting the funding it needs for every student.

There is an increasing demand for the integration of ICT systems as part of education programs. The compatibility of ICT systems, and anticipating advances in technology and future demands must be considered in the assessment of system updates. It is the role of the Directorate's ICT Committee to develop strategic change management policies to mitigate this risk.

The ongoing attraction and retention of high quality staff and the provision of a safe, inclusive and productive workplace needs to be a focus in the context of the contemporary labour market and changes to the ACT Public Service.

In March 2011 the ACT Government announced changes to the structure of the ACT Public Service. An aim of the changes was to foster greater coordination, cohesion and alignment of effort by ACT public servants. In June 2012 the ACT Public Service values and behaviours were launched. The values were respect, integrity, collaboration and innovation. They were supported by 10 signature behaviours, to provide an indication of what the values would look like in practice.

The Directorate's values aligned closely with the ACT Public Service values. During 2012-13, the Directorate will continue work to further align and embed the new ACT Public Service values. This work will be undertaken in conjunction with continued respect, equity and diversity training, and will ensure consistency of behaviours and expression of the values right across the Directorate. This work will be particularly important in the context of the empowering local schools initiative, to ensure that principals and school staff are adequately supported.

## A8 Strategic indicators

The Directorate launched its *Strategic Plan 2010-2013: Everyone matters* in January 2010. The Strategic Plan guides 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.

Performance indicators have been identified in each of these priority areas 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

Attainment of a year 12 or equivalent qualification is recognised as a key to better employment outcomes and social inclusion. It is a strategic target identified by the COAG 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 who self-identify as having attained a year 12 or equivalent qualification divided by the estimated population aged 20-24 years.

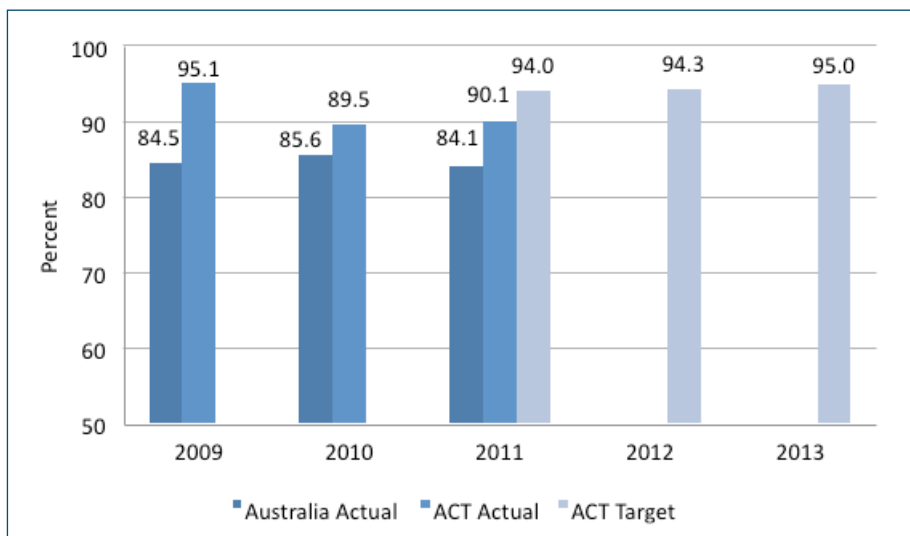
The proportion of the 20-24 year-old population having attained at least a year 12 or equivalent qualification was obtained from the ABS Survey of Education and Work (SEW). The 2011 SEW was conducted in May 2011 with the results released in November 2011.

However, the measurement of this indicator at the ACT level using the SEW is to be discontinued in this report and nationally in the future due to the inability of the SEW to reliably measure change year on year at the jurisdiction level. As a result, caution is urged in the interpretation of this measure.

A data quality statement on this measure can be obtained from [http://www.pc.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/114920/04-government-services-2012-partb.pdf](http://www.pc.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/114920/04-government-services-2012-partb.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 than the national average.

**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 Government Budget Paper 4, 2012-13
2. Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Survey of Education and Work 2011*

## Year 12 completion

An alternative measure of the achievement of the population in completing a secondary school qualification is the proportion awarded a Year 12 Certificate.

### Box A8.2: Year 12 completion

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

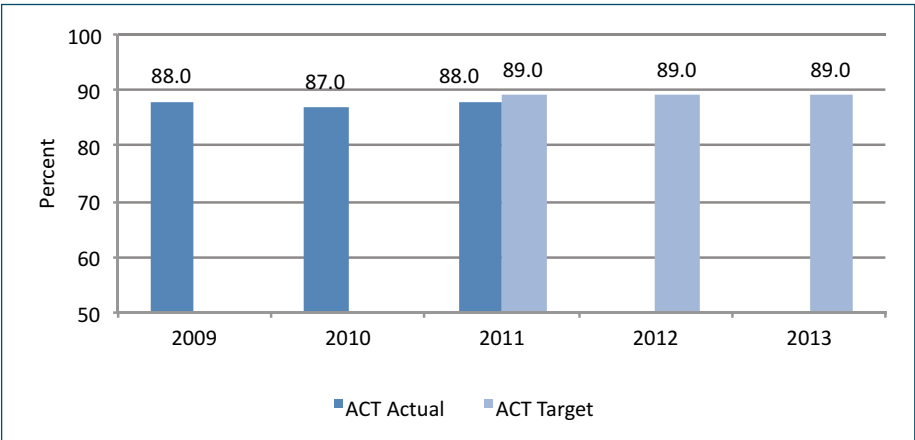
Estimates are calculated based on the number of students completing the requirements of the ACT Year 12 Certificate divided by the number of year 12 students as at the ACT School Census, February of the reference year.

Further information on the quality of this measure can be obtained by emailing to [ETDAnnualReport@act.gov.au](mailto:ETDAnnualReport@act.gov.au)

Figure A8.2 shows that the ACT public school completion rate for year 12 was 88 percent in 2011, an improvement from 87 percent in 2010. The implementation of the *Excellence and Enterprise* framework, focusing on student engagement and retention, will assist in meeting the target for year 12 completion in future years.

There is no comparative data at the national level.

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



Source: ACT Government Budget Paper 4, 2012-13

## 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

The 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.

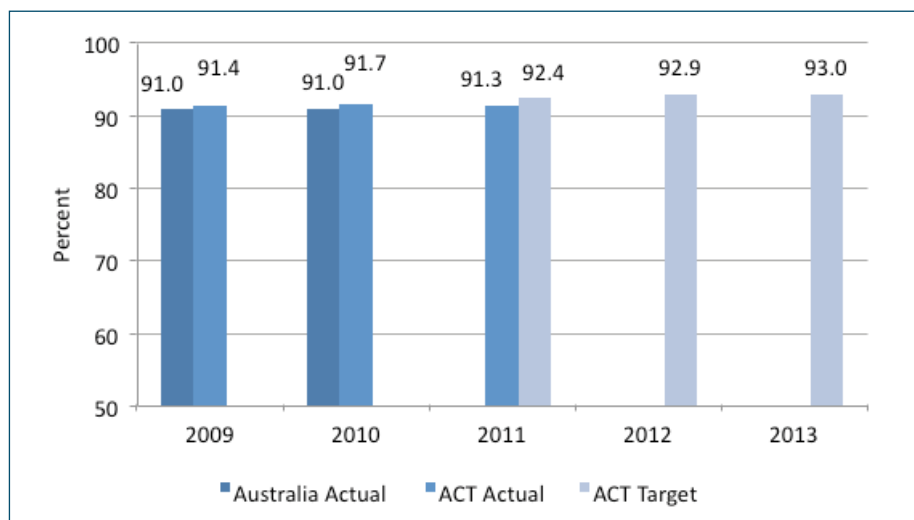
A data quality statement on this measure can be obtained from

[www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs)

The attendance rate of public school students from years 1 to 10 was 91.3 percent in 2011, compared with 91.7 percent in 2010 (Figure A8.3). The Directorate has set in place strategies to increase the attendance and engagement of students, particularly at high schools and colleges.

The national attendance rate for public schools in 2010 (latest available data) was the same as the previous year at 91.0 percent, lower than the attendance rate for ACT public school students.

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



Source:

1. ACT Government Budget Paper 4, 2012-13
2. Productivity Commission, *Report on Government Services 2011*, Table 4A.135 for 2009 data, and *Report on Government Services 2012*, Table 4A.110 for 2010 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 35 items and to 37 items for college students.

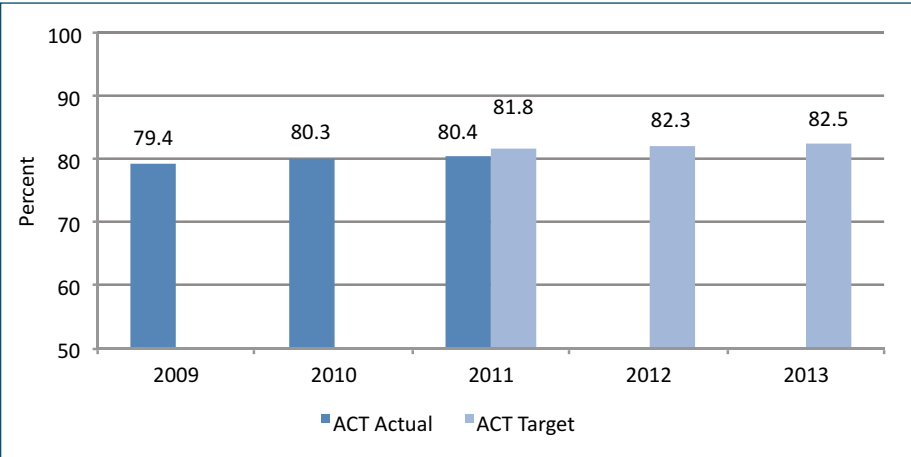
In determining overall student satisfaction, the question 'Overall I am satisfied I am getting a good education at this school' is used. Responses are collected on a five point scale with only statements of 'agree' or 'strongly agree' used to calculate overall satisfaction rates.

In 2011, 13,939 students responded to the survey.

Further information on the quality of this measure can be obtained by emailing to [ETDAnnualReport@act.gov.au](mailto:ETDAnnualReport@act.gov.au)

From 2009 to 2011, overall student satisfaction (across primary, high and college sectors) with the quality of the education received at public schools increased slightly (Figure A8.4). There is no comparative data at the national level.

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



Source: ACT Government Budget Paper 4, 2012-13

## 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 and 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 were full-fee paying international students.

There were 4,112 year 12 graduates in 2010. Of these, 3,442 graduates were contacted for the survey. Contact was made from 11 to 31 May 2011. There were 2,811 graduates who completed the survey, a response rate of 81.7 percent.

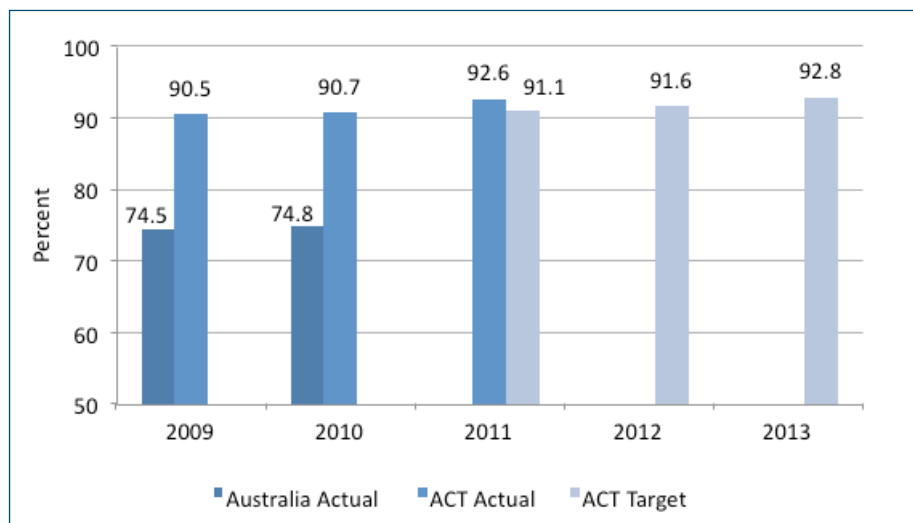
Further information on the quality of this measure can be obtained by emailing to [ETDAnnualReport@act.gov.au](mailto:ETDAnnualReport@act.gov.au)



As shown in Figure A8.5, the percentage of year 12 graduates engaged in study or employment increased from 90.7 percent in 2010 to 92.6 percent in 2011.

Nationally, the latest available data was for 2010. The percentage of 2009 year 12 graduates who were studying or employed full-time in 2010 was 74.8 percent, a slight increase from 2009. The ACT has continued to maintain high levels of success with 90 percent or more of graduates engaged in study or employment over the last three years.

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



Source:

1. ACT Government Budget Paper 4, 2012-13
2. Productivity Commission, *Report on Government Services 2011*, Table 4A.133, and *Report on Government Services 2012*, Table 4A.108

Note:

1. Australian rate is for 15-24 years old engaged in full-time study or employment in May 2009 and 2010 after finishing year 12 in 2008 and 2009 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 17 questions.

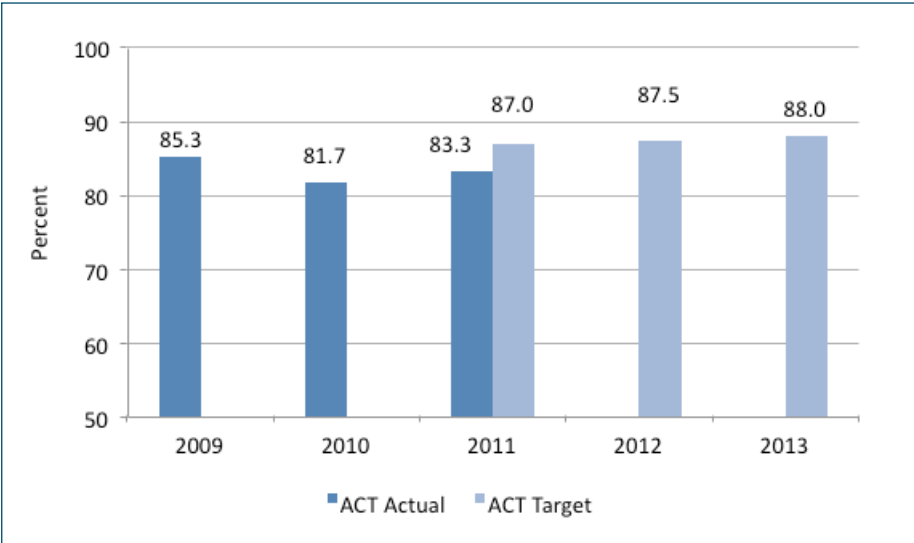
In determining overall parent and carer satisfaction, the question ‘Overall I am satisfied with my child’s education at this school’ is used. Responses are collected on a five point scale with only statements of ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ being used to calculate overall satisfaction rates.

In 2011, 8,518 parents and carers of students responded to the survey.

Further information on the quality of this measure can be obtained by emailing to [ETDAnnualReport@act.gov.au](mailto:ETDAnnualReport@act.gov.au)

Figure A8.6 indicates that there was a high level of parent and carer satisfaction with education at public schools over the last three years. Satisfaction levels improved from 81.7 percent in 2010 to 83.3 percent in 2011. There is no comparative data at the national level on parent and carer satisfaction.

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



Source: ACT Government Budget Paper 4, 2012-13

**Staff retention**

Staff retention is an indicator of the satisfaction of the workforce of an organisation, including satisfaction with management and commitment to achieving corporate goals. While some turnover of staff is important to ensure the organisation is generating new ideas and skills, stability is essential to maintain corporate knowledge and culture. The Directorate has set its staff retention target at 92 percent to adequately balance these competing needs of new ideas and stability.

**Box A8.7: Staff retention**

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

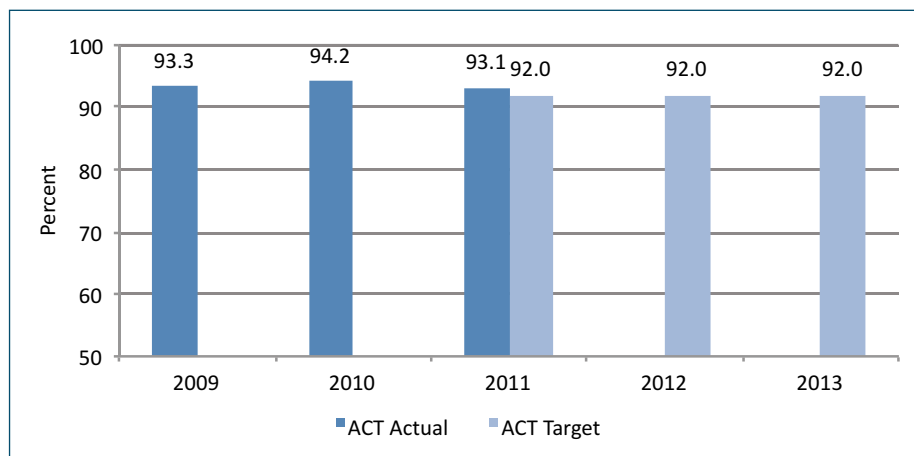
The rate is calculated by dividing the number of permanent staff employed at the last pay day in June of the preceding year plus the number of commencements during the financial year, minus the number of separations in the same financial year, by the number of staff at the last pay day of the preceding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

Further information on the quality of this measure can be obtained by emailing to [ETDAnnualReport@act.gov.au](mailto:ETDAnnualReport@act.gov.au)

The Directorate has historically maintained a high staff retention rate. The retention rate of 93.1 percent in 2011 was similar to previous years and close to the target (Figure A8.7). There is no comparative data at the national level.

**Figure A8.7: Staff retention rate**



Source: ACT Government Budget Paper 4, 2012-13

## A9 Analysis of agency performance

The Directorate continued to work towards achieving strategic and operational priorities identified in the *Strategic Plan 2010-2013* and the *Operational Plans 2011* and *2012*. There are four priority areas identified in the Strategic Plan, that are also reflected in the operational plans: Learning and Teaching; School Environment; Student Pathways and Transitions; and Leadership and Corporate Development. Significant progress was made in achieving outcomes against these priorities in 2011-12.

### Learning and Teaching

The outcome sought under the Learning and Teaching priority is to ensure students succeed through quality teaching that engages them and supports the development of capabilities for life. The Directorate identified the following four operational priorities: Implementing the Australian Curriculum; Raising standards in literacy and numeracy; Closing the learning achievement gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and Strengthening early childhood education.

#### Priority 1: Implementing the Australian Curriculum

The Directorate implemented Phase 1 learning areas of the Australian Curriculum over 2011 and 2012. From 2012, ACT schools taught English, mathematics and science from kindergarten to year 10 and history from primary to year 9. From 2013, history will be taught to year 10 completing the rollout of Phase 1 of the Australian Curriculum.

**The Directorate led the way in implementing the Australian Curriculum.**

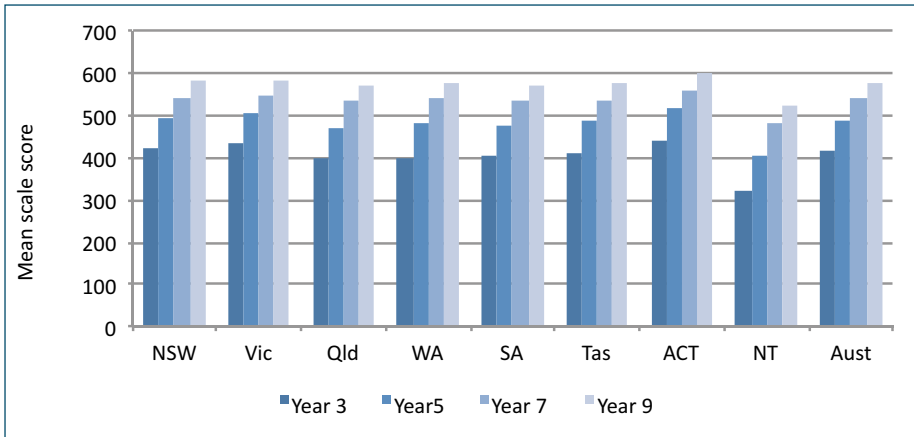
#### Priority 2: Raising standards in literacy and numeracy

The Directorate raised standards in literacy and numeracy. Students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 at all ACT schools undertook tests in reading, writing, language conventions and numeracy in May 2011 for NAPLAN.

ACT students across all year levels and domains achieved mean scores higher than the Australian average. There were noticeable improvements from 2010 results in year 5 spelling, and grammar and punctuation, and year 7 spelling.

The ACT excelled in reading, performing the highest in the country for all year levels and ahead of the Australian average, a trend that has continued since 2008. Across all year levels the ACT had a greater percentage of students achieving in the top performance bands compared with the achievement in other jurisdictions.

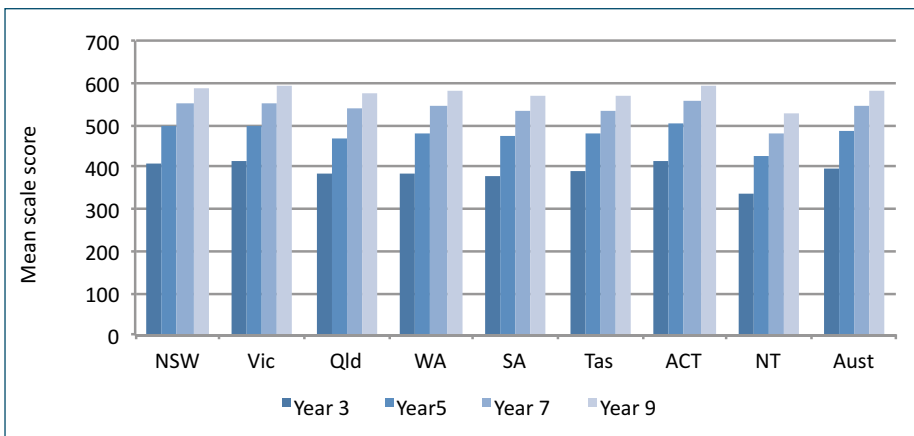
**Figure A9.1: Mean scale scores in reading for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 by jurisdiction, NAPLAN 2011**



Source: Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2012, *National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy National Report 2011*

In numeracy the ACT, along with Victoria and New South Wales, had the highest mean score across all year levels. Between 95 and 97 percent of students in all year levels achieved at or above the national minimum standard.

**Figure A9.2: Mean scale scores in numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 by jurisdiction, NAPLAN 2011**



Source: Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2012, *National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy National Report 2011*

**NAPLAN 2011 results confirmed that ACT students continued to be amongst the highest performing in Australia.**

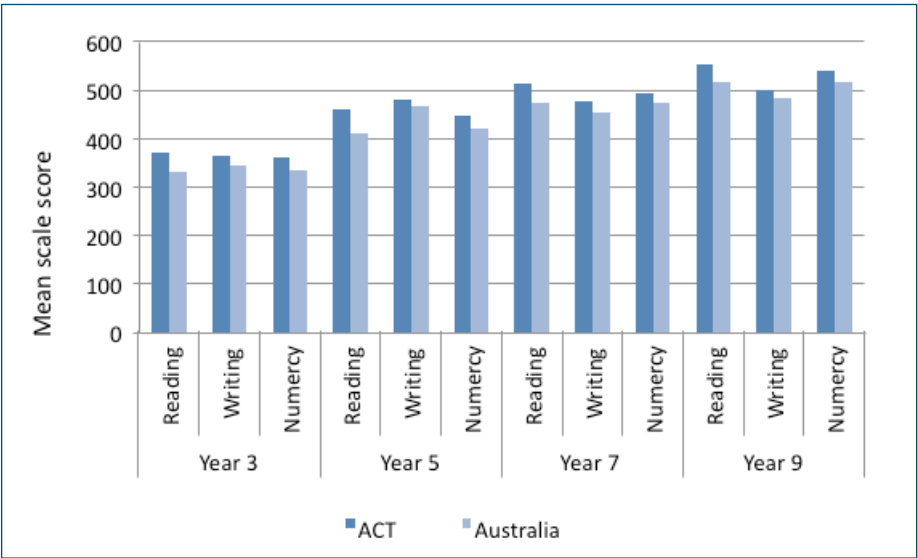
**Priority 3: Closing the learning achievement gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students**

Implementation of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Matters: Strategic Plan 2010-2013* continued to provide a clear direction for closing the learning achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students.

The mean scale score for ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was higher than the Australian average in all domains and all year levels. 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.

There was an increase of 19 points in the mean scale score for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in year 5 reading from NAPLAN 2008 to NAPLAN 2011. However, there remained a gap between the performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students in the ACT.

**Figure A9.3: Mean scale scores of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in reading, writing and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in the ACT and Australia, NAPLAN 2011**



Source: Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2012, *National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy: Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy National Report 2011*

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the ACT achieved higher than the Australian average in NAPLAN 2011. A gap remained, however, between their performance and the performance of other students in the ACT.**

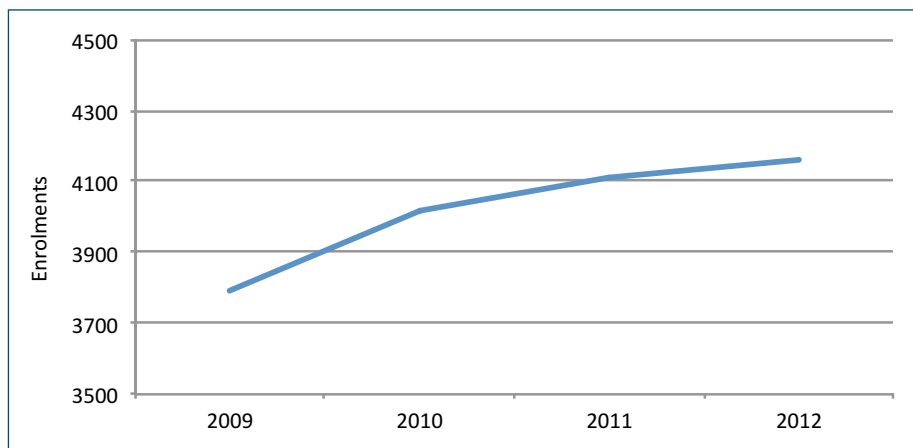


#### Priority 4: Strengthening early childhood education

The Directorate made significant progress in extending early childhood education in public schools. The number of public schools offering 15 hours of early childhood education in the preschool year increased from 16 in 2011 to 44 in 2012. From 2013, all public schools with preschool units will deliver 15 hours of education.

Preschool enrolments in public schools increased steadily from 3,792 in 2009 to 4,159 in 2012. In August 2011, 1,092 of these children were accessing the maximum entitlement of 15 hours of preschool education per week.

**Figure A9.4: Preschool enrolments in public schools, 2009 to 2012**



Source: ACT Education and Training Directorate, February census 2009 to 2012

The proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the ACT in 2011, at 107 percent, was well above the benchmark of 94 percent specified by the Australian Government in the *National Partnership for Early Childhood Education*. The proportion of children enrolled in ACT preschools is affected by enrolments of children living in NSW.

As at February 2012 census, 199 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were enrolled in preschool programs at public schools including 69 enrolments in the Koori Preschool program. This was an increase from 172 enrolments in February 2011.

To improve the quality of early childhood education in public schools, the proportion of teachers in 2011 who were four year university trained and who were delivering early childhood education met the national partnership benchmark target of 80 percent.

**The ACT substantially exceeded the 2011 target of 94 percent of the proportion of children who were enrolled in and attending an early childhood education program.**

## School Environment

This objective in the Strategic Plan aims to meet each student's academic, social, emotional and physical needs by ensuring all ACT public schools provide positive and success-oriented learning environments. Building excellence in disability education; promoting innovative, inspiring and safe learning environments; and strengthening student engagement are the operational priorities.

### Priority 5: Building excellence in disability education

The Directorate continued with the implementation of actions and priorities of the *Excellence in Disability Education Strategic Plan 2010-2013* during the reporting period. The 2011-12 Budget provided an additional \$20 million over four years to support initiatives for disability education under the Plan.

Individual Learning plans were in place for 97 percent of all students with disability. This was an increase from 95 percent in 2010 and in line with the Directorate's target.

Parent and carer satisfaction for disability and special education programs and services decreased slightly from 90 percent in 2010 to 89 percent in 2011. The Directorate has implemented a number of additional strategies under the Plan to ensure that satisfaction with disability education remains at high levels.

Parents and carers of students attending specialist schools recorded higher levels of satisfaction in 2011 than in 2010. At 94 percent in 2011, this was an 11 percent increase from the result for 2010.

**Feedback from the community on disability and special education programs and services was very positive with high levels of parent and carer satisfaction with their child's education in 2011.**

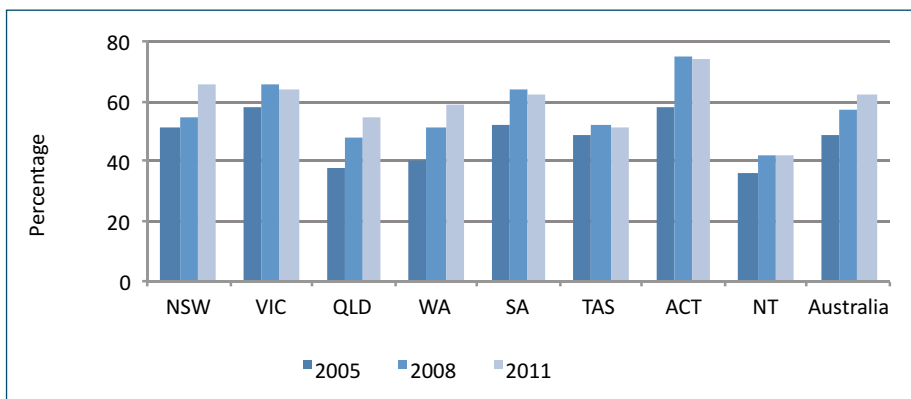
### Priority 6: Promoting innovative, inspiring and safe learning environments

The Directorate continued to enhance the learning environment through introducing innovative learning technologies in public schools. A number of projects were implemented during the reporting period that built on the performance of the ACT public schools in adopting and utilising innovative technologies.

The Directorate achieved the 1:1 student to computer ratio for all students in years 9 to 12 in 2010-11. To maintain the 1:1 ratio, 350 additional netbook computers were deployed in public schools during 2011-12.

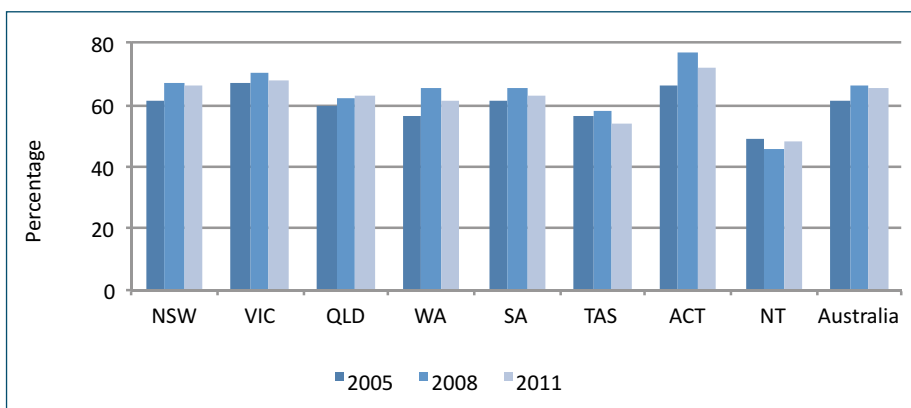
In the *2011 National Assessment Program – Information and Communication Technology Literacy*, ACT students in years 6 and 10 had higher scores than the national average. The ACT had highest percentage of students in years 6 and 10 reaching the Proficient Standard in 2011.

**Figure A9.5: Percentage of year 6 students attaining the proficient standard by jurisdiction in 2005, 2008 and 2011**



Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, *National Assessment Program - ICT Literacy and Numeracy, Years 6 and 10 Report 2011*

**Figure A9.6: Percentage of year 10 students attaining the proficient standard by jurisdiction in 2005, 2008 and 2011**



Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, *National Assessment Program - ICT Literacy and Numeracy, Years 6 and 10 Report 2011*

ACT public schools adopted innovative approaches to promote environmental sustainability. Across ACT public schools, water consumption increased by 3.3 percent between 2010-11 and 2011-12. This reflected better water management practices within schools as well as the success of savings measures implemented centrally across the Directorate.

Harrison School's secondary facility was opened, providing the latest in information technology to support student learning and an inclusive setting for students with special needs.

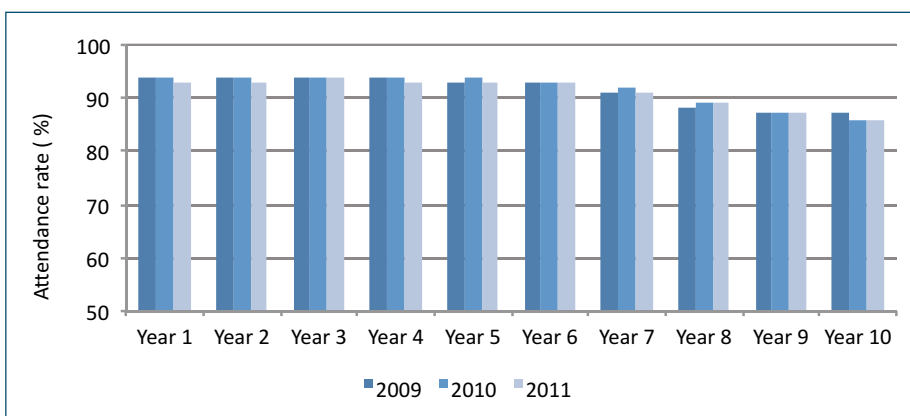
**ACT students in years 6 and 10 scored higher in the 2011 National Assessment Program – Information and Communication Technology Literacy than students nationally.**

### **Priority 7: Strengthening student engagement**

The Directorate continued to provide student support services to improve student wellbeing in public schools. A range of professionals provided support services, including school counsellors, pastoral care coordinators and school nurses.

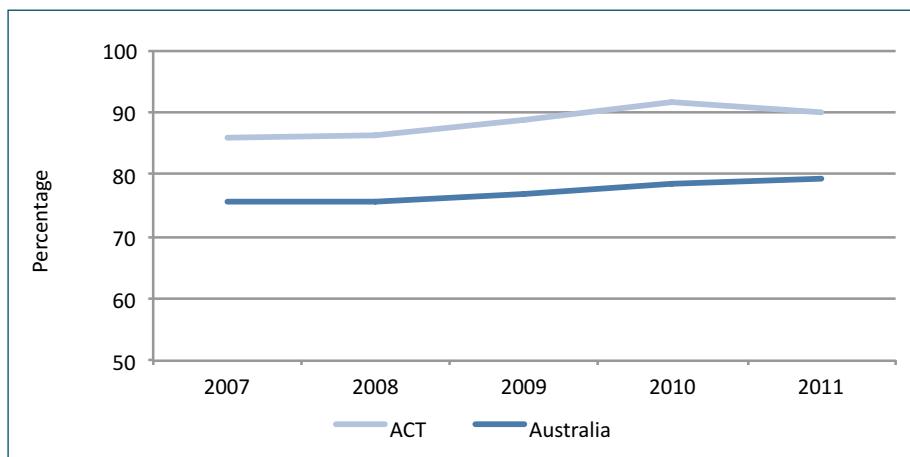
Attendance at school is essential for learning and for enabling students to benefit from the full range of educational programs offered at school. Attendance is an accepted indicator of student engagement. Student attendance rates for ACT public schools were reasonably stable in 2011, with changes of only one percentage point between 2009 and 2011.

**Figure A9.7: Student attendance rates, 2009 to 2011**



Source: ACT Education and Training Directorate, unpublished data

Other factors being constant, a high or increasing apparent retention rate suggests that a large number of students are continuing to participate in school education. The year 10 to 12 apparent retention rate for all ACT students increased between 2007 and 2011 and was significantly higher than the Australian rate. The rate for the ACT declined marginally from 2010 to 2011.

**Figure A9.8: Apparent retention rate of ACT and Australian students, 2007 to 2011**

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics: National Schools Statistics Collection Table 64a

**From 2007 to 2011, the ACT year 10 to 12 retention rate continued to be significantly higher than the Australian year 10 to 12 retention rate.**

## Student Pathways and Transitions

This objective in the *Strategic Plan 2010-2013: Everyone matters* is focussed on providing learning pathways for students resulting in an educated and skilled workforce that meets the present and future needs of the ACT and region. There are four operational priorities under Student Pathways and Transitions: Improving secondary education in ACT public schools; Implementing training system enhancements for skills and workforce development; Monitoring students through the education system to appropriate and successful outcomes; and Supporting successful transitions for all students.

### Priority 8: Improving secondary education in ACT public schools

The Directorate has continued to prioritise the improvement of secondary education in ACT public schools through the implementation of a range of initiatives. The *Excellence and Enterprise* framework builds on successful aspects of the provision of local secondary education and broad learning and training choices and incorporates new initiatives to improve technologies, introduce more flexible structures and increase community partnerships.

The priorities included in the *Excellence and Enterprise* framework are embedded in the Directorate's *Operational Plan 2011* and *Operational Plan 2012* to ensure that outcomes for students attending public secondary schools are achieved by guiding planning and decision-making across the Directorate.

The outcome of this was that in 2012 there was a 0.5 percent increase in enrolment of high school students in public schools.

Strong interest in the provision of public school year 11 and 12 education was affirmed with the February 2012 School Census showing a 1.4 percent increase in students attending public colleges. This continued the trend of increased enrolments over the previous three years.

Maintaining a high level of secondary education participation, the percentage of year 10 public school students who proceeded to public secondary college education increased from 89 percent in 2010 to 90 percent in 2011.

### **ACT public schools continued to show strong enrolments in years 11 and 12. Enrolments increased in years 7 to 10.**

#### **Priority 9: Implementing training system enhancements for skills and workforce development**

In 2011, the ACT continued to lead the nation with the highest proportion of the working age population (20-64 year olds) who had, or were studying towards, a non-school qualification (78 percent). This compared with the national average of 67 percent.

The ACT also had the highest proportion of the working age population with a non-school qualification at 72 percent compared with the national average of 62 percent.

In 2011, 60 percent of year 12 students received a nationally recognised vocational qualification, meeting the Directorate's target for this reporting period.

The ACT had the highest proportion of VET graduates with improved employment status in 2011 at 69 percent. This compared with the national average of 62 percent.

From December 2010 to December 2011 there was a 20 percent increase in the number of apprentices and trainees in training in the ACT. This increase compared with a two percent increase nationally for the same period.

In the 12 months to December 2011, the number of apprentices and trainees in the ACT who cancelled or withdrew from their training contract decreased by four percent. This compared with a national increase in cancellations and withdrawals of six percent over the same period.

### **The ACT continued to lead the nation in the proportion of the working age population with a non-school qualification.**

#### **Priority 10: Monitoring students through the education system to appropriate and successful outcomes**

The Directorate continued to undertake initiatives that resulted in a high proportion of students completing year 12 in 2011. Eighty-eight percent of year 12 public school students received a Year 12 Certificate, up from 87 percent in 2010.



Of those students who completed year 12 in 2011, 51 percent received a Tertiary Entrance Statement. This exceeded the Directorate's target of 50 percent.

The Directorate's survey of graduates is an important indicator of the success of the education system in delivering outcomes for students. The survey showed that 93 percent of public school students who completed year 12 in 2010, were employed or studying in 2011, an increase of two percent from the previous year.

**A high proportion of ACT public school students successfully completed year 12 and moved into further education or employment.**

### **Priority 11: Supporting successful transitions for all students**

*The Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership* (YAT NP), a bilateral agreement between the Directorate and the Australian Government, focussed on increasing the educational engagement and attainment of young people and improving their transition to post-school education, training and employment.

Under the participation measure in YAT NP, the ACT increased the number of young people participating in year 12 or an equivalent vocational education and training qualification by 420 students, well above the target in the YAT NP of 216.

The Directorate's continued support of VET in schools saw a 10 percent increase in Structured Workplace Learning placements from 2010 to 2011.

One ASBA student was awarded the 2011 ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student, Apprentice/Trainee of the Year.

**The number of young people participating in year 12 or vocational education and training substantially increased.**

## **Leadership and Corporate Development**

The strategic objective under Leadership and Corporate Development is to support staff effectiveness and performance, in support of better outcomes for all students.

The Directorate identified three operational priorities: empowering local schools; strengthening leadership and system support; and supporting respect, equity and diversity.

### **Priority 12: Empowering local schools**

The empowering ACT schools (eACT) initiative aims to develop innovation and further improve teaching and learning through increased management at the local level. Principals have been given the information, tools and flexibility to better respond to local school community needs. The project supports the Australian Government's *Empowering Local Schools National Partnership* which is driving a similar agenda across the country.

**ACT public schools were increasingly empowered through local and national initiatives to effectively respond to the learning and teaching needs of their school community at the local level.**

### **Priority 13: Strengthening leadership and system support**

The ACT continued to be a high performing public school system delivering on its focus of strong leadership and support to school communities.

The Directorate's annual satisfaction survey showed that school staff satisfaction with the high level of expectations at school increased from 83 percent in 2010 to 86 percent in 2011.

In a survey of non-school staff in late 2011, 83 percent of staff were satisfied with their job overall.

**The satisfaction rate for school staff increased to 86 percent in 2011, while the satisfaction rate for non-school staff was 83 percent.**

### **Priority 14: Supporting respect, equity and diversity**

The Directorate is committed to further developing and maintaining an ethical and respectful workplace that provides positive opportunities for employee contribution and career satisfaction.

To achieve these aims and in accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (ACT) training sessions on Respectful Workplaces were attended by principals and central office managers and senior officers. A total of 20 training sessions were delivered to over 400 staff as part of the ongoing delivery of this training. The training forms the cornerstone of the Directorate's implementation of the *Respect, Equity and Diversity (RED) Framework* and its commitment to reducing the risk of psychological injuries in the workplace.

The continuing provision of training for RED contact officers resulted in the majority of schools having a contact officer able to facilitate information sessions for staff.

The Directorate's 2011 staff survey showed that 85 percent of non-school based employees felt their workplace reflected the values of the RED Framework. The survey also showed that 90 percent of employees felt that their professional views and opinions were respected by their colleagues, and that 86 percent of employees valued diversity, teamwork, consultation and sharing of ideas.

**Over 85 percent of surveyed Directorate staff expressed satisfaction that their workplace reflected the values of the RED Framework.**