



Education &  
Communities

Public Schools NSW

Dr Abigail Groves  
Inquiry Manager  
Public Accounts Manager  
Parliament of New South Wales  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

MT14/226

Dear Dr Groves

**Follow up of the Auditor-General's Performance Audits April 2012 – August 2012**

I write in response to your correspondence dated 25 February 2014 to Ms Jane Simmons and myself in regard to the proof transcript and to the questions taken on notice.

Please find attached our corrections to the transcript and responses to the questions taken on notice and additional questions raised by the Public Accounts Committee.

Should you require additional clarification, please contact Ms Simmons on 9561 1191 or myself on 9561 8252.

Yours sincerely

Brian Smyth King  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT

12 March 2013

**Follow up of the Auditor-General's Performance Audits Apr 2012 – Aug 2012**  
**Questions taken on notice: 13 February 2014**

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**1. How many Aboriginal teachers are employed by the department of Education and communities?**

963, this includes principals

**2. What will the new business intelligence platform being developed by the Department tell us? How will this information transparently indicate progress towards the 2018 target of halving the gap in reading, writing, and numeracy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students? What data will be reported and how will it be reported?**

Business Intelligence is drawing together from across the Department different data sources that will establish comprehensive baseline and data information for decision making. When developed, the new business intelligence platform will deliver standard reports which plot and track actual performance of all students against Public Schools NSW targets for NAPLAN Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

As new data is added each year, the reports will present a progressive picture of performance towards the 2018 target of halving the gap in literacy and numeracy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. It will also provide the capacity to monitor learning progress for each student from 2008 to the current time.

At the system level, this increased capacity for data analysis and monitoring will provide timely information about the effectiveness of our approach at a system and school level to improving literacy and numeracy learning for Aboriginal students in NSW public schools.

The platform will have the capacity to link different types of student performance data across different test programs such as NAPLAN and the Higher School Certificate.

**3. How does the Teaching English Language Learners program that the Department referred to in its submission assist teachers in providing support to Aboriginal students?**

The Teaching English Language Learners (TELL) program assists teachers in developing the academic language and literacy of all students who are learning Standard Australian English as an additional language or dialect, including Aboriginal students. It also assists teachers to recognise the cultural and linguistic resources which students bring to the classroom, including the literacy practices with which they are familiar. These are essential components of literacy programs designed to engage Aboriginal students and improve their literacy standards, if their main home language is a traditional Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander language, or creole but not Aboriginal English or other non-standard dialect of English.

The Teaching English Language Learners (TELL) provides 24 hours registered professional learning for class teachers, K-12 covering how students learn an additional language, English as an additional language pedagogy, the complexity of academic language demands across the curriculum and the importance of validating students' past experiences and 'cultural capital'.

Additionally, the Capability Framework- Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander EAL/D learners is a national initiative to increase teacher capacity to better meet the language learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who speak a language other than Standard Australian English. It aligns with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. The Department is committed to implementing the Framework across NSW Public Schools.

### Additional questions

- 1. Are you able to tell the Committee what proportion of students enrolled in NSW public school identified as Aboriginal in 2005?**

In 2005 there were 35,966.4 full time equivalent Aboriginal students enrolled in NSW government schools which was 4.8% of all student enrolments.

- 2. Are you able to tell the committee how many principals of NSW government schools are Aboriginal?**

19 identify as Aboriginal (as at 28/2/14)

- 3. Are you able to tell the Committee what, if any, reporting requirements apply to independent schools in relation to literacy and numeracy? Do these requirements differ from those that apply to government schools and if so, how?**

Reporting requirements which apply to independent schools in relation to literacy and numeracy include:

*The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014 which focusses on accelerating improvements in the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. There are six domains and one of which is literacy and numeracy. The Plan requires that NSW provide reports at the statewide level which incorporates government, catholic and independent sectors NAPLAN results in reading, writing and numeracy.*

National Partnership Agreement and Project Agreement reporting requirements that apply to independent schools are the same as for government schools. All school sectors are subject to the following literacy and numeracy reporting requirements within National Partnership and Project Agreements:

- Under the Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership Agreement, the government and non-government school sectors contributed to the 2013 progress and annual reports to the Commonwealth. These included details on the NSW approach to improving literacy and numeracy in participating schools, evidence of demonstrated improvements in literacy and numeracy outcomes in these schools based on NAPLAN and local measures, the approaches adopted to improve teacher capacity in literacy and numeracy teaching, and showcases of best practice in literacy and numeracy within participating schools.
- For the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership Agreement, the government and non-government school sectors have contributed to progress and annual reports to the Commonwealth. These include information from participating schools on targeted literacy and numeracy

intervention programs, language programs for Aboriginal students, and initiatives for English language learners.

- Under the Investing in Focus Schools Project Agreement, participating schools contribute to NSW progress and annual reports to the Commonwealth through the provision of information on whole-school English literacy and numeracy strategies, and the provision of professional learning to teachers and education workers to support the delivery of English literacy and numeracy strategies.
- In addition, all school sectors in NSW are to provide annual reports to the NSW Minister for Education outlining the sector's progress in implementing actions under the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan.