
3 School education

This chapter focuses on performance information — equity, effectiveness and efficiency — for government funded school education in Australia. Reporting relates to government funding only, not to the full cost to the community of providing school education. Descriptive information and performance indicators are generally reported for:

- government primary and secondary schools
- non-government primary and secondary schools
- school education as a whole (government and non-government primary and secondary schools).

Schooling aims to provide education for all young people. The main purposes of school education are to assist students in:

- attaining knowledge, skills and understanding in key learning areas
- developing their talents, capacities, self-confidence, self-esteem and respect for others
- developing their capacity to contribute to Australia’s social, cultural and economic development.

This year, the chapter has been enhanced by including:

- an increased disaggregation of capital-related data items
- data for full time equivalent (FTE) school enrolments by gender
- a time series of recurrent expenditure per student using comparable, accrual based data.

Section 3.1 contains a profile of school education in Australia. This section provides the context for assessing performance indicators in the subsequent sections. Section 3.2 includes the framework of performance indicators for school education, and section 3.3 presents and discusses the available data relating to this framework. In section 3.4, future directions in the development and reporting of performance indicators for school education are discussed. The chapter concludes with jurisdictions’ comments in section 3.5 and definitions of key terms and indicators in section 3.6.

Supporting tables

Supporting tables for chapter 3 are provided on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report. The files are provided in Microsoft Excel format as \Publications\Reports\2005\Attach3A.xls and in Adobe PDF format as \Publications\Reports\2005\Attach3A.pdf.

Supporting tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 3A.3 is table 3 in the electronic files). These files can be found on the Review web page (www.pc.gov.au/gsp). Users without Internet access can contact the Secretariat to obtain these tables (see details inside the front cover of the Report).

3.1 Profile of school education

Service overview

Schools are the institutions within which organised school education takes place. They are differentiated by the type and level of education they provide, their ownership and management, and the characteristics of their student body. The formal statistical definition of schools used for this chapter is:

... an establishment that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- its major activity is the provision of full time day primary, secondary or special school education or primary or secondary distance education
- it is headed by a principal (or equivalent) responsible for its internal operation
- it is possible for students to enrol and be active in a course of study for a minimum of four continuous weeks (excluding breaks for school vacations) (ABS 2004).

Student performance can be affected by factors that may be partly or totally outside the influence of the school system, such as student commitment, family environment (including wealth, parents' educational attainment and support for the child) and the proximity of the school to other educational facilities. It is beyond the scope of this Report to consider the effect of all factors, but this section provides some context for the performance information presented later in the chapter. Further information is provided in appendix A.

Roles and responsibilities

Under constitutional arrangements the State and Territory governments have responsibility to ensure the delivery of schooling to all children of school age. They determine curricula, regulate school activities and provide most of the funding. State and Territory governments are directly responsible for the administration of government schools, for which they provide the majority of government expenditure. Non-government schools operate under conditions determined by State and Territory government registration authorities and also receive Australian, State and Territory government funding.

The Australian Government funds government and non-government schools through specific purpose payments. The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) — comprising Australian, State and Territory, and New Zealand education ministers — is the principal forum for developing national priorities and strategies for schooling.

Funding

Australian, State and Territory government recurrent expenditure on school education was \$27.0 billion in 2002-03 (table 3.1). Expenditure on government schools was \$21.8 billion, or 80.6 per cent of the total. Government schools account for most of the expenditure by State and Territory governments. These governments also contribute to the funding of non-government schools and provide services used by both government and non-government schools. More information, including on Australian Government spending on Indigenous specific programs, can be found in tables 3A.6 and 3A.7.

Nationally, State and Territory governments provided 91.4 per cent of total government recurrent expenditure on government schools in 2002-03, and the Australian Government provided 8.6 per cent. In contrast, government expenditure on non-government schools in that year was mainly provided by the Australian Government (71.5 per cent), with State and Territory governments providing 28.5 per cent (table 3.1).

The expenditure data presented in this and the 2004 Report represent recurrent expenditure that was recorded using accrual-based accounting principles. These data are not directly comparable with data presented in earlier reports for two reasons. First, data presented in the 2003 and earlier reports also included recurrent grants made by the Australian Government for capital expenditure and excluded notional user cost of capital (UCC) for State and Territory governments. Second,

data presented in the 2001 and earlier reports were recorded using cash-based accounting principles.

For the 2004 Report, these changes mean that the reported expenditure by the Australian Government on both government schools and all schools will be lower than in 2000-01 and earlier years, and expenditure by State and Territory governments on government schools and all schools will be higher. Australian Government recurrent grants for capital contribute to the assets base on which the State and Territory depreciation and notional UCC charge are calculated.

Table 3.1 Government recurrent expenditure on school education, 2002-03 (\$ million)^{a, b, c}

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Government schools									
Australian	620	419	363	190	141	51	30	49	1 863
States and territories	7 015	4 367	3 649	2 115	1 483	548	359	374	19 910
Total	7 634	4 786	4 012	2 304	1 624	600	389	423	21 773
Non-government schools									
Australian	1 240	994	677	366	285	74	78	45	3 759
States and territories	552	292	299	170	98	31	31	26	1 499
Total	1 792	1 286	976	535	382	105	109	71	5 257
All schools									
Australian	1 860	1 413	1 040	555	425	125	108	94	5 622
States and territories	7 567	4 659	3 948	2 284	1 581	579	389	399	21 408
Total	9 427	6 072	4 989	2 840	2 006	705	498	493	27 030

^a See notes to table 3A.9 for definitions and other data caveats. Data presented here are expenditure, including notional UCC and excluding capital grants (which equates to recurrent expenditure). ^b Based on accrual accounting. ^c Totals may not add due to rounding.

Source: MCEETYA (2004b, unpublished); Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); Australian, State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 3A.9.

Some data are presented on government funding of non-government schools. Caution needs to be taken when comparing data on the relative efficiency of government and non-government schools because governments provide only part of the funding for non-government schools. Governments provided 57.3 per cent of non-government school funding in 2002, with the remaining 42.7 per cent sourced from private fees and fundraising (MCEETYA 2004a, statistical annex, p. 31).

Size and scope

Descriptive information on the numbers of students, staff and schools can be found in tables 3A.1–3A.4.

Structure

The structure of school education varies across states and territories. These differences can influence the interpretation of data presented under common classifications. Formal schooling consists of six to seven years of primary school education followed by five to six years of secondary school education, depending on the State or Territory (figure 3.1). All states and territories divide school education into compulsory and non-compulsory components based on age, not grade. School education is compulsory in all states and territories for people between 6 and 15 years of age (16 years of age in SA and Tasmania).

Figure 3.1 Structure of primary and secondary schooling, 2002

<i>Level</i>	<i>NSW, Vic, Tas, ACT</i>	<i>WA, SA, NT^a</i>	<i>Qld^b</i>
Year 12	SECONDARY	SECONDARY	SECONDARY
Year 11			
Year 10			
Year 9			
Year 8			
Year 7			
Year 6	PRIMARY	PRIMARY	PRIMARY
Year 5			
Year 4			
Year 3			
Year 2			
Year 1			
Pre-year 1	Kindergarten (NSW, ACT) Preparatory (Vic, Tas)	Pre-primary (WA) Reception (SA) ^c Transition (NT) ^d	

^a In some places in the NT, secondary schooling begins at year 7. ^b Pre-year 1 is not included in the pattern of study in Queensland. In addition to preschool in 2003, Queensland conducted a trial of preparatory year of schooling for pre-year 1 at selected schools. ^c SA has an intake for each term. ^d The NT has an intake for terms 1–3.

Source: Adapted from MCEETYA (unpublished).

Schools

At the beginning of August 2003, there were 9607 schools in Australia. The majority of schools were government owned and managed (72.1 per cent) (table 3.2). Settlement patterns (population dispersion), the age distribution of the population, and educational policy influence the distribution of schools by size and level in different jurisdictions. For school education as a whole in 2003, the NT had

the highest proportion of very small primary schools (those with 20 or fewer students) (16.2 per cent) and the highest proportion of secondary schools with 300 or fewer students (36.8 per cent). Nationally, 62.3 per cent of all secondary schools enrolled over 600 students (table 3A.12). A breakdown of primary and secondary schools by size for government, non-government and all schools is reported in tables 3A.10, 3A.11 and 3A.12 respectively.

Table 3.2 Summary of school characteristics, August 2003

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Government schools (no.)									
Primary	1 650	1 222	970	517	437	142	66	88	5 092
Secondary	367	261	180	97	74	39	22	11	1 051
Combined ^a	65	54	86	94	78	25	3	46	451
Special schools ^b	104	78	47	70	20	8	4	5	336
Total	2 186	1 615	1 283	778	609	214	95	150	6 930
Non-government schools (no.)									
Primary	517	446	243	154	116	31	26	17	1 550
Secondary	148	103	80	39	22	7	6	8	413
Combined ^a	209	131	119	91	59	28	10	8	655
Special schools ^b	32	17	3	2	3	1	1	–	59
Total	906	697	445	286	200	67	43	33	2 677
All schools (no.)									
Primary	2 167	1 668	1 213	671	553	173	92	105	6 642
Secondary	515	364	260	136	96	46	28	19	1 464
Combined ^a	274	185	205	185	137	53	13	54	1 106
Special schools ^b	136	95	50	72	23	9	5	5	395
Total	3 092	2 312	1 728	1 064	809	281	138	183	9 607
Proportion of schools that are government schools (%)									
Primary	76.1	73.3	80.0	77.0	79.0	82.1	71.7	83.8	76.7
Secondary	71.3	71.7	69.2	71.3	77.1	84.8	78.6	57.9	71.8
Combined ^a	23.7	29.2	42.0	50.8	56.9	47.2	23.1	85.2	40.8
Special schools ^b	76.5	82.1	94.0	97.2	87.0	88.9	80.0	100.0	85.1
All schools	70.7	69.9	74.2	73.1	75.3	76.2	68.8	82.0	72.1
Proportion of primary schools (%)									
Government	75.5	75.7	75.6	66.5	71.8	66.4	69.5	58.7	73.5
Non-government	57.1	64.0	54.6	53.8	58.0	46.3	60.5	51.5	57.9
All schools	70.1	72.1	70.2	63.1	68.4	61.6	66.7	57.4	69.1

^a Combined primary and secondary schools. ^b Special schools provide special instruction for students with physical or intellectual disabilities and students with social problems.

Source: ABS (2004); tables 3A.1, 3A.2 and 3A.3.

Student body

There were 3.3 million FTE student enrolments in primary and secondary schools in August 2003. Nationally, the proportion of FTE students enrolled in all schools was

greater in primary schools (58.0 per cent) than in secondary schools (42.0 per cent). Across jurisdictions, the proportion of FTE students enrolled in all primary schools was highest in the NT (67.6 per cent) and lowest in the ACT (52.8 per cent) (table 3.3).

Table 3.3 FTE student enrolments, August 2003^{a, b}

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Total FTE student enrolments at level of education ('000)									
Primary schools	626.5	455.9	381.8	205.0	158.0	46.3	31.8	25.3	1 930.6
Secondary schools	482.4	365.3	249.7	130.0	94.2	37.5	28.5	12.1	1 399.7
All schools	1 108.9	821.2	631.5	335.0	252.3	83.8	60.3	37.4	3 330.3
Proportion of FTE students who were enrolled in government schools (%)									
Primary schools	71.0	69.5	75.0	73.1	69.8	77.7	63.9	79.8	71.7
Secondary schools	63.5	60.4	64.3	62.4	64.5	70.9	57.3	71.6	62.9
All schools	67.7	65.4	70.7	68.9	67.8	74.7	60.8	77.1	68.0
Proportion of FTE students who were female (all schools) (%)									
Primary schools	48.7	48.5	48.8	48.3	48.6	48.7	48.7	48.6	48.6
Secondary schools	49.6	49.9	49.5	49.4	50.0	50.6	49.2	49.7	49.7
All schools	49.1	49.1	49.1	48.7	49.1	49.6	48.9	49.0	49.1
Proportion of FTE students who were enrolled in primary education (%)									
Government schools	59.2	59.0	64.1	64.9	64.5	57.5	55.5	69.9	61.1
Non-government schools	50.8	49.0	51.7	53.0	58.8	48.6	48.5	59.8	51.3
All schools	56.5	55.5	60.5	61.2	62.6	55.2	52.8	67.6	58.0

^a Students enrolled in special schools are included, with special school students of primary school age included in the primary figures and those of secondary school age included in the secondary figures. ^b Results of calculations may vary from the table due to rounding differences.

Source: ABS (2004, unpublished); tables 3A.1, 3A.2 and 3A.3.

Differences in schooling structures influence enrolment patterns. Primary school education in Queensland, WA, SA and the NT, for example, includes year 7 whereas all other jurisdictions include year 7 in secondary school. As a result, the proportion of students enrolled in primary school education would be expected to be higher in the above mentioned jurisdictions than in others (table 3.3).

Nationally, the proportion of FTE students enrolled in government schools was 68.0 per cent. Across jurisdictions, the proportion of FTE students enrolled in government schools was highest in the NT (77.1 per cent) and lowest in the ACT (60.8 per cent) (table 3.3).

The proportion of FTE students in all schools who were female was 49.1 per cent nationally. Across jurisdictions, Tasmania had the highest proportion of female enrolments in all schools (49.6 per cent) and WA the lowest (48.7 per cent).

Nationally, the proportion of FTE students enrolled in primary schools was greater in government schools (61.1 per cent) than in non-government schools (51.3 per

cent). Across jurisdictions, the proportion of FTE students enrolled in government primary schools was highest in the NT (69.9 per cent) and lowest in the ACT (55.5 per cent) (table 3.3).

Total full time student enrolments in schools in Australia were relatively stable over the five years to 2003, increasing by approximately 0.7 per cent each year between August 1999 and August 2003. Enrolments in individual jurisdictions grew at different rates, with total enrolments increasing by 1.5 per cent each year in Queensland and declining by 0.4 per cent each year in Tasmania (table 3A.14).

The proportion of full time students enrolled in non-government schools increased between 1999 and 2003 in all states and territories. Total non-government school enrolments expanded by an average of 2.2 per cent per year, while the expansion in full time government school enrolments was 0.1 per cent per year (table 3A.14). The expansion of full time enrolments in non-government schools, however, was from a lower base than that for government schools. In absolute terms, full time students in government schools increased from 2 247 674 in 1999 to 2 254 632 in 2003. Full time students in non-government schools increased from 978 976 in 1999 to 1 063 988 in 2003 (table 3A.13).

Part time secondary students form a significant proportion of enrolments in some jurisdictions. Part time courses are available to secondary students, including mature age students attending colleges and those studying years 11 or 12 or short courses (lasting five to 22 weeks). The proportion of secondary school students who were enrolled part time in 2003 varied considerably across jurisdictions, partly because jurisdictions' education authorities have different policy and organisational arrangements for part time study as well as different definitions of what constitutes part time study. The number of part time courses available also varied considerably across jurisdictions. In 2003, SA had the highest proportion of part time government secondary school students (10.3 per cent) and the ACT had the lowest (0.3 per cent) (table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Part time secondary school students in government schools

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Part time secondary school students in government schools (no.) ^a									
1999	3 323	2 495	4 063	4 199	6 545	3 203	6	1 032	24 866
2000	3 638	2 489	3 868	4 154	7 015	3 538	7	977	25 686
2001	2 809	2 827	3 930	4 948	6 932	2 853	3	1 006	25 308
2002	2 455	3 029	4 096	4 880	7 099	2 684	10	1 052	25 305
2003	2 647	3 093	3 786	2 583	6 623	2 578	48	888	22 246
Proportion of secondary school students in government schools who were part time students (%) ^b									
1999	1.1	1.1	2.6	4.8	9.9	10.7	–	11.6	2.8
2000	1.2	1.1	2.5	4.8	10.7	12.0	–	10.9	2.9
2001	0.9	1.3	2.5	5.7	10.6	10.0	–	11.3	2.8
2002	0.8	1.4	2.6	5.6	11.0	9.6	0.1	11.7	2.8
2003	0.9	1.4	2.3	3.1	10.3	9.3	0.3	9.6	2.5

^a Absolute number of part time secondary students (not FTE). ^b Absolute number of part time secondary students divided by absolute number of full time and part time secondary students (not FTE). – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: ABS (2004); table 3A.1.

Special needs groups

Certain groups of students in school education have been identified as having special needs. These special needs groups include:

- Indigenous students
- students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE)
- students with disabilities
- geographically remote students
- students from families of low socioeconomic status.

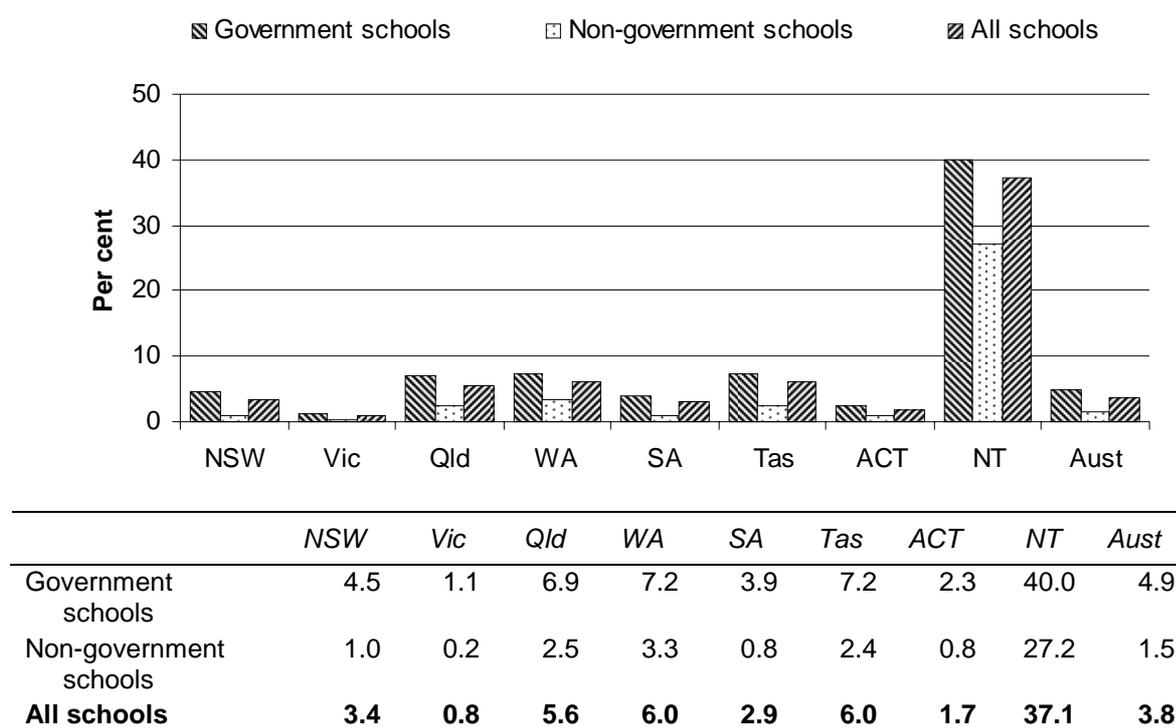
Government schools provide education for a high proportion of students from special needs groups. In 2003, 87.5 per cent of Indigenous students and 81.7 per cent of students with disabilities, for example, attended government schools (tables 3A.15 and 3A.17). This chapter reports on the proportions of Indigenous students, LBOTE students, students with disabilities and students who are geographically remote. Care needs to be taken in interpreting this information because some definitions of special needs students differ across states and territories.

Indigenous students

The proportion of full time Indigenous students in NT schools was 37.1 per cent in 2003, far higher than the proportion in any other jurisdiction. The jurisdictions with the next highest proportions of full time Indigenous students were WA and Tasmania (both 6.0 per cent), while Victoria had the lowest (0.8 per cent) (figure 3.2). In absolute terms, NSW (37 118) and Queensland (35 237) had the largest numbers of full time Indigenous students, together accounting for 57.5 per cent of all Indigenous students enrolled in Australian schools (table 3A.15). Table 3A.15 provides additional information on Indigenous enrolments.

In all jurisdictions, the proportion of Indigenous students was higher in government schools than in non-government schools. Nationally, the proportion of Indigenous students was 4.9 per cent for government schools and 1.5 per cent for non-government schools (figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Indigenous students as a proportion of all students, 2003^a



^a Full time students.

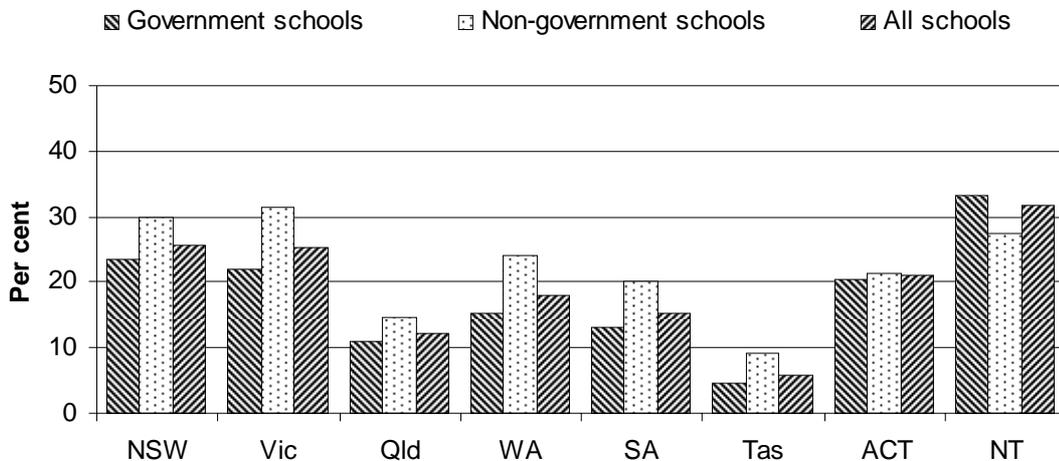
Source: ABS (2004); table 3A.15.

LBOTE students

The proportion of LBOTE students is based on data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2001 Census of Population and Housing (figure 3.3). Students are counted as having a language background other than English if their home language is not English or if they (or at least one parent) were born in a non-English speaking country.

Non-government schools had a higher proportion of LBOTE students than government schools in all jurisdictions except the NT in 2001. Across school education as a whole, the NT had the highest proportion of LBOTE students (31.8 per cent) (which is influenced by the inclusion of Indigenous students whose home language is not English). New South Wales and Victoria also had relatively high proportions of LBOTE students (25.6 per cent and 25.3 per cent respectively), while Tasmania had the lowest proportion (5.9 per cent) (figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 Students from a language background other than English as a proportion of all students, 2001



Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); table 3A.16.

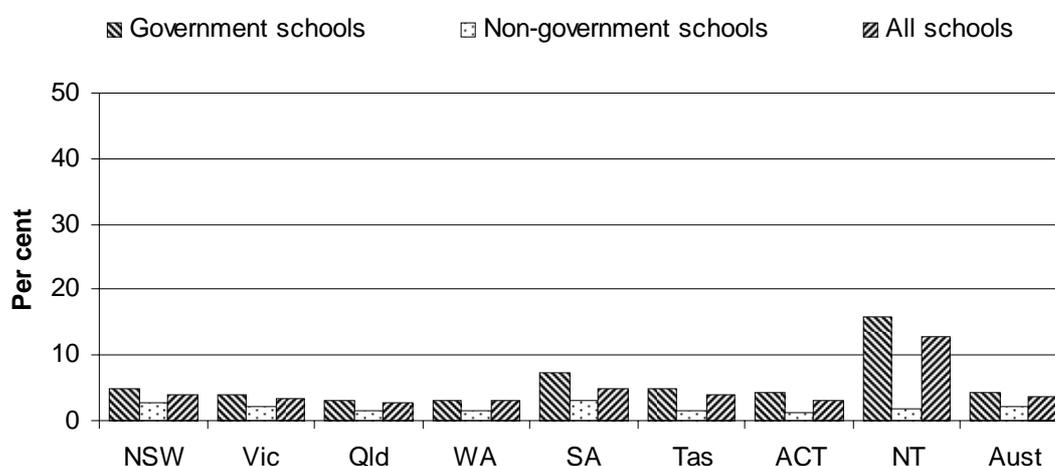
Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities are educated in both mainstream and special schools. Students with disabilities are those students who satisfy the criteria for enrolment in special education services provided in the State or Territory in which they are enrolled. These criteria vary across jurisdictions. Criteria relating to social or emotional impairment, for example, exist in some jurisdictions (such as NSW) but not others (such as the ACT). The NT had the highest proportion (12.8 per cent) of

students with disabilities in 2003, while Queensland had the lowest proportion (2.7 per cent) (figure 3.4).

Nationally, the proportion of students with disabilities was approximately twice as high in government schools (4.4 per cent) compared with non-government schools (2.1 per cent). The proportion of students with disabilities was approximately three times as high in government schools compared with non-government schools in Tasmania and the ACT, and around eight times as high in government schools compared with non-government schools in the NT.

Figure 3.4 Funded students with disabilities as a proportion of all students, 2003



Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); table 3A.17.

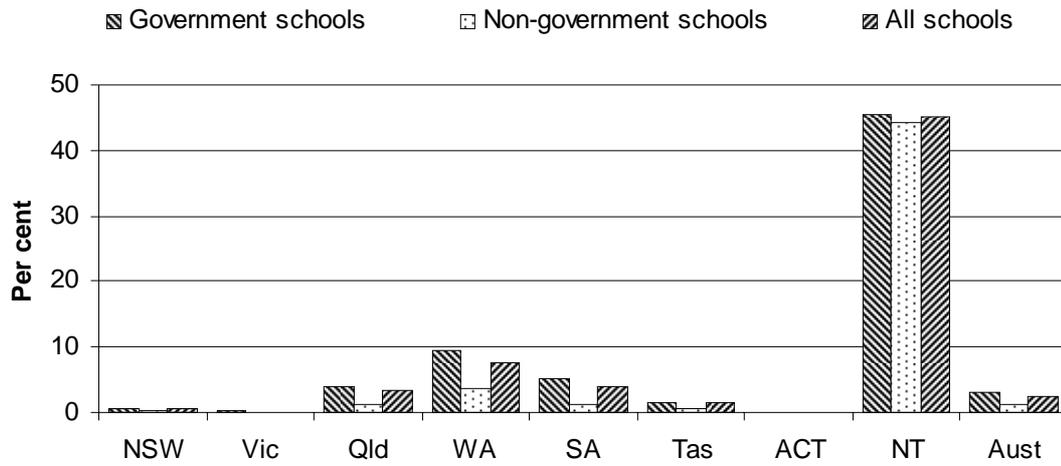
Geographically remote students¹

Identification of geographically remote students is based on the metropolitan, provincial and remote zones as stated in the MCEETYA agreed classification. The NT had by far the highest proportion (45.0 per cent) of students attending schools in remote areas in 2003, while WA had the next highest proportion (7.6 per cent) for all schools. Victoria had the lowest proportion (0.1 per cent) for all schools (figure 3.5). (The ACT has no remote areas.)

¹ To investigate the possibility that these data may understate the proportion of students in remote areas as a result of relying on school location rather than students' home location, the 2001 data were compared with data derived from the 2001 Census. The two data sets were found to be similar, except that Tasmania had about one third more remote area students in the Census data. This result may be indicative for the 2003 data.

Nationally, the proportion of students enrolled in schools in remote areas in 2003 was more than twice as high in government schools compared with non-government schools. Table 3A.18 includes data relating to metropolitan and provincial areas, as well as remote areas (see section 3.6 for definitions of remoteness and other geographic classifications).

Figure 3.5 Students attending schools in remote areas as a proportion of all students, 2003



	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Government schools	0.7	0.2	4.1	9.3	5.1	1.6	..	45.3	3.1
Non-government schools	0.3	–	1.3	3.7	1.3	0.6	..	44.2	1.2
All schools	0.6	0.1	3.3	7.6	3.9	1.4	..	45.0	2.5

.. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); table 3A.18.

3.2 Framework of performance indicators

This chapter provides performance indicators on the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of government expenditure on all schools in Australia. It does not compare the efficiency of government and non-government schools. Governments own and operate government schools, and have a direct interest in the equity, efficiency and effectiveness of their operation. In addition, governments are committed to providing access to education for all students. Box 3.1 describes the national goals for schooling, as endorsed by the MCEETYA.

Box 3.1 **National goals for schooling in the 21st century**

The MCEETYA endorsed in April 1999 the following set of national goals for school education.

Preamble

Australia's future depends upon each citizen having the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life in an educated, just and open society. High quality schooling is central to achieving this vision.

This statement of national goals for schooling provides broad directions to guide schools and education authorities in securing these outcomes for students.

It acknowledges the capacity of all young people to learn, and the role of schooling in developing that capacity. It also acknowledges the role of parents as the first educators of their children and the central role of teachers in the learning process.

Schooling provides a foundation for young Australians' intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development. By providing a supportive and nurturing environment, schooling contributes to the development of students' sense of self-worth, enthusiasm for learning and optimism for the future.

Governments set the public policies that foster the pursuit of excellence, enable a diverse range of educational choices and aspirations, safeguard the entitlement of all young people to high quality schooling, promote the economic use of public resources, and uphold the contribution of schooling to a socially cohesive and culturally rich society.

Common and agreed goals for schooling establish a foundation for action among State and Territory governments with their constitutional responsibility for schooling, the Australian Government, non-government school authorities and all those who seek the best possible educational outcomes for young Australians, to improve the quality of schooling nationally.

The achievement of these common and agreed national goals entails a commitment to collaboration for the purposes of:

- further strengthening schools as learning communities where teachers, students and their families work in partnership with business, industry and the wider community;
- enhancing the status and quality of the teaching profession;
- continuing to develop curriculum and related systems of assessment, accreditation and credentialling that promote quality and are nationally recognised and valued; and
- increasing public confidence in school education through explicit and defensible standards that guide improvement in students' levels of educational achievement and through which the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of schooling can be measured and evaluated.

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.1 (Continued)

These national goals provide a basis for investment in schooling to enable all young people to engage effectively with an increasingly complex world. This world will be characterised by advances in information and communication technologies, population diversity arising from international mobility and migration, and complex environmental and social challenges.

The achievement of the national goals for schooling will assist young people to contribute to Australia's social, cultural and economic development in local and global contexts. Their achievement will also assist young people to develop a disposition towards learning throughout their lives so that they can exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens of Australia.

Goals

1. Schooling should develop fully the talents and capacities of all students. In particular, when students leave schools they should:

- 1.1 have the capacity for, and skills in, analysis and problem solving and the ability to communicate ideas and information, to plan and organise activities and to collaborate with others;
- 1.2 have qualities of self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, and a commitment to personal excellence as a basis for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members;
- 1.3 have the capacity to exercise judgment and responsibility in matters of morality, ethics and social justice, and the capacity to make sense of their world, to think about how things got to be the way they are, to make rational and informed decisions about their own lives and to accept responsibility for their own actions;
- 1.4 be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life;
- 1.5 have employment related skills and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways as a foundation for, and positive attitudes towards, vocational education and training, further education, employment and life-long learning;
- 1.6 be confident, creative and productive users of new technologies, particularly information and communication technologies, and understand the impact of those technologies on society;
- 1.7 have an understanding of, and concern for, stewardship of the natural environment, and the knowledge and skills to contribute to ecologically sustainable development; and
- 1.8 have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to establish and maintain a healthy lifestyle, and for the creative and satisfying use of leisure time.

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.1 (Continued)

2. In terms of curriculum, students should have:

2.1 attained high standards of knowledge, skills and understanding through a comprehensive and balanced curriculum in the compulsory years of schooling encompassing the agreed eight key learning areas:

- the arts
- English
- health and physical education
- languages other than English
- mathematics
- science
- studies of society and environment
- technology

and the interrelationships between them;

2.2 attained the skills of numeracy and English literacy, such that every student should be numerate, able to read, write, spell and communicate at an appropriate level;

2.3 participated in programs of vocational learning during the compulsory years and have had access to vocational education and training programs as part of their senior secondary studies; and

2.4 participated in programs and activities which foster and develop enterprise skills, including those skills which will allow them maximum flexibility and adaptability in the future.

3. Schooling should be socially just, so that:

3.1 students' outcomes from schooling are free from the effects of negative forms of discrimination based on sex, language, culture and ethnicity, religion or disability; and of differences arising from students' socioeconomic background or geographic location;

3.2 the learning outcomes of educationally disadvantaged students improve and, over time, match those of other students;

3.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have equitable access to, and opportunities in, schooling so that their learning outcomes improve and, over time, match those of other students;

3.4 all students understand and acknowledge the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to Australian society and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians;

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.1 (Continued)

3.5 all students understand and acknowledge the value of cultural and linguistic diversity, and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, such diversity in the Australian community and internationally; and

3.6 all students have access to the high quality education necessary to enable the completion of school education to year 12 or its vocational equivalent and that provides clear and recognised pathways to employment and further education and training.

Source: Adapted from MCEETYA (1999).

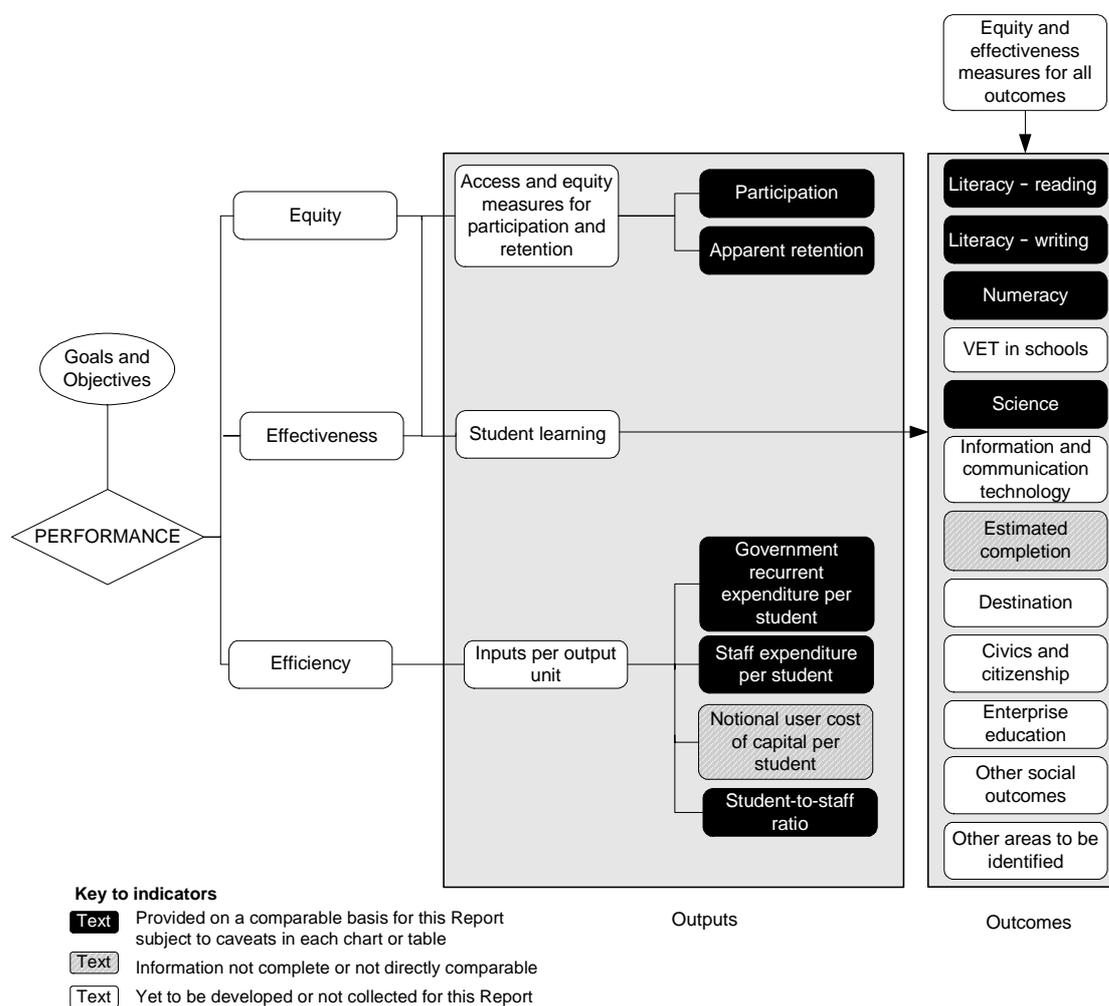
The performance of school education is reported against the indicator framework in figure 3.6. This framework is consistent with the national goals for schooling (box 3.1). The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2005 Report (figure 3.6). For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (see section 1.6).

3.3 Key performance indicator results

Different delivery contexts and locations influence the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of school education services. Appendix A contains short statistical profiles on each State and Territory, which may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter.

The effectiveness indicators for school education in this chapter are based on the achievement against the national goals for schooling. Access and equity objectives of school education can be assessed by comparing outcomes for special needs groups, such as Indigenous and LBOTE students, with those for all students through indicators such as reading and writing literacy, numeracy, estimated completion rates, apparent retention rates and age participation rates. Outcomes are compared for special needs groups for available indicators where possible.

Figure 3.6 Performance indicators for all schools



Outputs

Equity and effectiveness

Access and equity measures for school education participation and retention are reported.

Participation

‘Participation’ has been included as an output indicator of equity-effectiveness (box 3.2).

Box 3.2 Participation

'Participation' (school participation rate) is included as an output — access indicator of governments' objective to develop fully the talents and capacities of young people through participation in post-compulsory schooling.

The indicator is defined as the number of 15–19 year old full time school students, as a proportion of the estimated resident population of the same age.

Holding other factors constant, a higher or increasing participation rate suggests an improvement in educational outcomes through greater access to school education. Participation rates in school education need to be interpreted with care because rates are influenced by jurisdictional differences in, for example:

- compulsory school age, year and age/grade structures
- the extent of part time enrolment in schools (tables 3.4 and 3A.3).

This indicator does not provide information on young people who develop their talents and capacities through other options for delivering post-compulsory education and training — for example, work-based training and enrolment in technical and further education (TAFE) delivered programs. This indicator also does not provide information on the contribution of participation in schooling to the development of the students' talents and capacities.

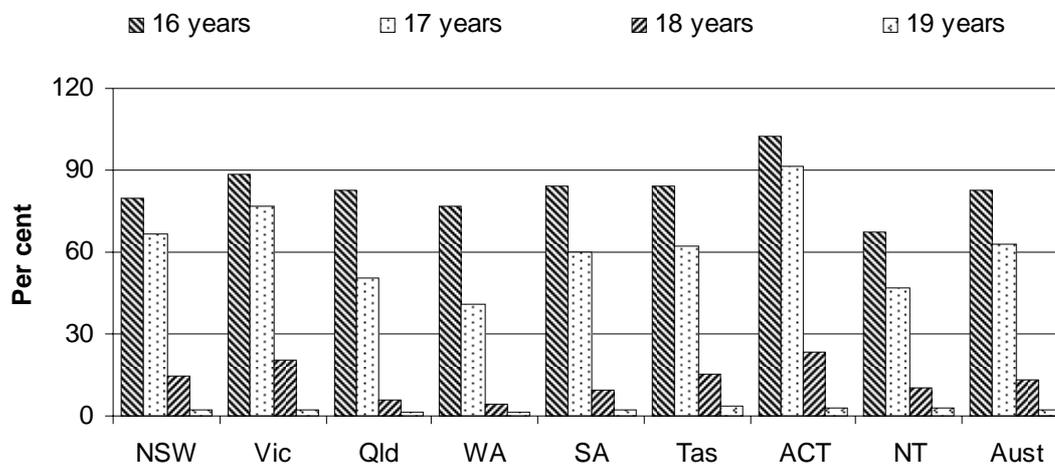
A broader participation indicator that accounts for some of these factors is reported in the 'Education preface'.

Nationally, 50.3 per cent of 15–19 year olds were enrolled in schools in 2003 (table 3A.37). Participation rates varied by jurisdiction, age and gender.

- The ACT had the highest overall participation rate of 15–19 year olds (61.5 per cent) and the NT had the lowest rate (41.8 per cent).
- Participation rates for females were 1.0–2.5 percentage points higher than those for males in all jurisdictions except the ACT, where male participation was 1.4 percentage points higher than female participation.
- Participation rates declined as students exceeded the maximum compulsory school age (16 years for SA and Tasmania, and 15 years for other jurisdictions) (figure 3.7).

Participation rates in the ACT in 2003, as in the past, were higher than those in other jurisdictions for all ages except 19 year olds, for whom Tasmania had the highest rate (3.3 per cent). The higher participation rates in the ACT are partly a result of the enrolment in the ACT of NSW residents from surrounding areas.

Figure 3.7 **School participation rates, by age of students, all schools, 2003^{a, b, c}**



^a Proportion of the population who were not of compulsory school age in some jurisdictions, but who were enrolled as full time students in August 2003. ^b School is compulsory for 16 year olds in SA and Tasmania. ^c The higher participation rates in the ACT are partly a result of the enrolment in the ACT of NSW residents from surrounding areas.

Source: ABS (2004); table 3A.37.

Apparent retention

‘Apparent retention’ has been included as an output indicator of equity-effectiveness (box 3.3).

Box 3.3 Apparent retention

‘Apparent retention’ — that is, progression to final years of schooling — is included as an output – access indicator of governments’ objective to develop fully the talents and capacities of young people through longer participation to higher levels of schooling.

The indicator is defined as the number of full time school students in a designated level/year of education as a percentage of their respective cohort group (which is either at the commencement of their secondary schooling or at year 10). Data are reported for the proportion of:

- people commencing secondary school and continuing to year 10
- people commencing secondary school and continuing to year 12
- year 10 students continuing to year 12.

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.3 (Continued)

Data are also reported for all students and Indigenous students, and for government and non-government schools. Holding other factors constant, a higher or increasing apparent retention rate suggests that students have greater exposure to schooling over their lives which is likely to result in improved educational outcomes. The term 'apparent' is used because the indicator is derived from total numbers of students in each of the relevant year levels, rather than by tracking the retention of students individually. Apparent retention to year 12 is a long standing measure that is presented as an indicator of the extent to which students progress to their final year of schooling.

Apparent retention rates are influenced by a wide range of factors, including student perceptions of the benefits of schooling, the availability of employment and further educational alternatives, socioeconomic status and population movements. Care needs to be taken in interpreting apparent retention rates in school education because rates are influenced by jurisdictional differences in:

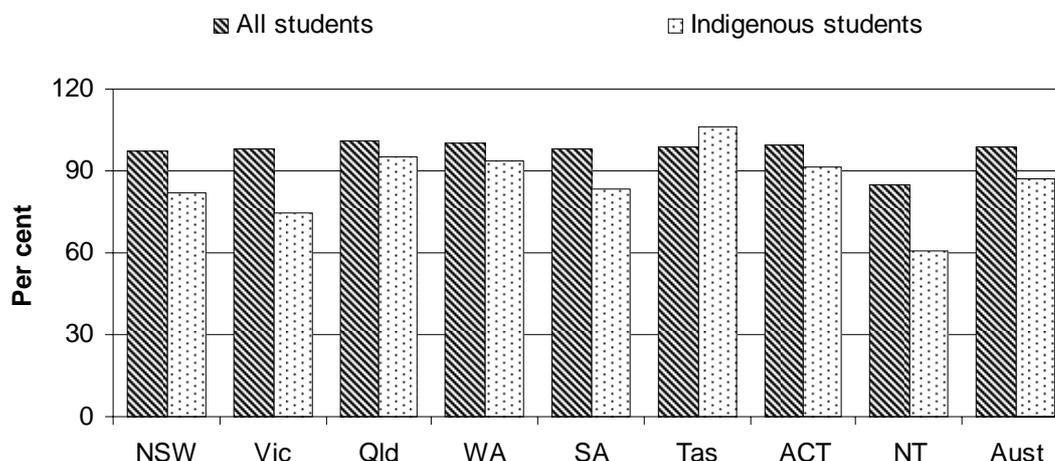
- enrolment policies across jurisdictions, which contribute to different age/grade structures
- the extent of part time year 12 enrolment in schools.

The indicator has been consistently reported over time, but does not reflect factors such as:

- students repeating a year of education or returning to education after a period of absence and thus being included in the year 10 cohort in 2001 but not in the year 12 cohort in 2003
- interstate movement of students
- movement between the government school sector and the non-government school sector
- the impacts of migration and full fee paying overseas students
- varying enrolment patterns in which students choose to complete their secondary schooling in TAFE institutes.

Apparent rates of retention from the commencement of secondary school to year 10 provide one measure of the equity of outcomes for Indigenous students. Apparent retention rates for all students were commonly 97–100 per cent in 2003, except in the NT (85.0 per cent) with a national proportion of 98.5 (figure 3.8). High rates are to be expected because normal year level progression means students in year 10 are generally of an age at which schooling is compulsory. Rates for Indigenous students, however, were considerably lower than those for all students in all jurisdictions except Tasmania. The national retention rate for Indigenous students was 87.2 per cent, or 11.3 percentage points lower than that for all students.

Figure 3.8 **Apparent rates of retention from year 7 or 8 to year 10, full time secondary students, all schools, by Indigenous status 2003^{a, b, c, d}**



^a Apparent retention rates are affected by factors that vary across jurisdictions. For this reason, variations in apparent retention rates over time within jurisdictions may be more useful than comparisons across jurisdictions. ^b Retention rates can exceed 100 per cent for a variety of reasons, including student transfers between jurisdictions after the base year. ^c The exclusion of part time students from standard apparent retention rate calculations has implications for the interpretation of results for all jurisdictions, but particularly for SA, Tasmania and the NT where there is a high proportion of part time students (table 3A.3). ^d Ungraded students are not included in the calculation of apparent retention rates. This exclusion has particular implications for the NT, where 43 per cent of Indigenous secondary students are ungraded (compared with an average of 7.5 per cent for the rest of Australia). As a result, Indigenous apparent retention rates may misrepresent the retention of students in secondary schooling in the NT.

Source: ABS (2004); table 3A.38.

The apparent rate of retention from year 10 to year 12 has been derived by expressing the number of full time school students enrolled in year 12 in 2003 as a proportion of the number of full time school students enrolled in year 10 in 2001.

Factors affecting apparent retention can combine to result in a year 12 cohort that is substantially different in composition from the corresponding year 10 cohort — for example:

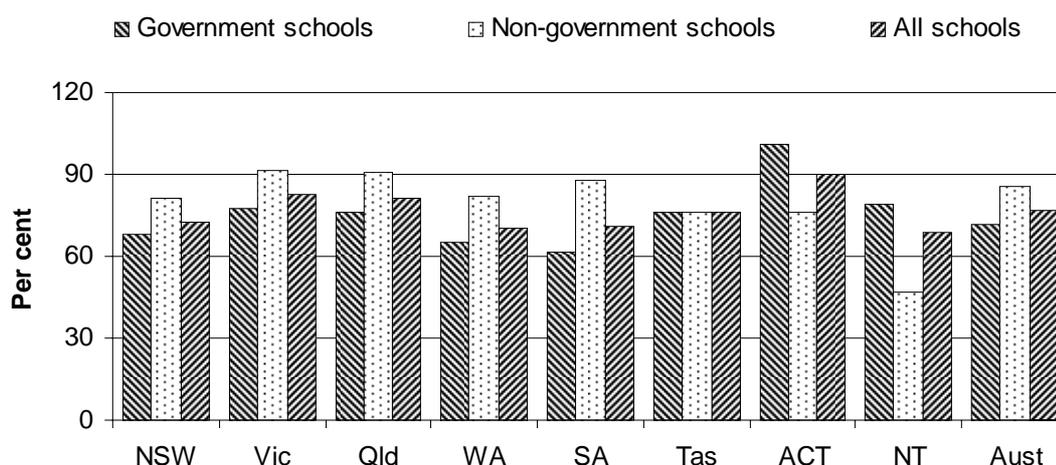
- in SA, if part time students are included in the 2003 year 12 total, then the apparent retention rate becomes 86.8 per cent, compared with 70.7 per cent for full time students only (ABS 2002, 2004; table 3A.39)
- in some jurisdictions, young people may choose to complete their post-compulsory education in the TAFE system rather than continue at school. In NSW, for example, 4525 students aged 15–19 years undertook their Higher School Certificate or other tertiary preparation studies through TAFE institutes in 2003 (NSW Government unpublished).

Work being undertaken to improve this measure is discussed in section 3.4.

Nationally, the apparent retention rate from year 10 to year 12 for all schools was 76.9 per cent in 2003. Across jurisdictions, the apparent retention rates for all schools ranged from 90.3 per cent in the ACT to 68.7 per cent in the NT. Nationally, the apparent retention rate from year 10 to year 12 for government schools was 71.9 per cent in 2003. Across jurisdictions, the apparent retention rates for government schools ranged from 101.0 per cent in the ACT to 61.8 per cent in SA (figure 3.9).

One reason for the ACT rate exceeding 100 per cent is that a number of students in non-government schools in the ACT change to government schools for years 11 and 12. This arrangement has the effect of reducing the retention rate for non-government schools and increasing the retention rate for government schools.

Figure 3.9 Apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12, full time secondary students, by school type, 2003^{a, b, c}



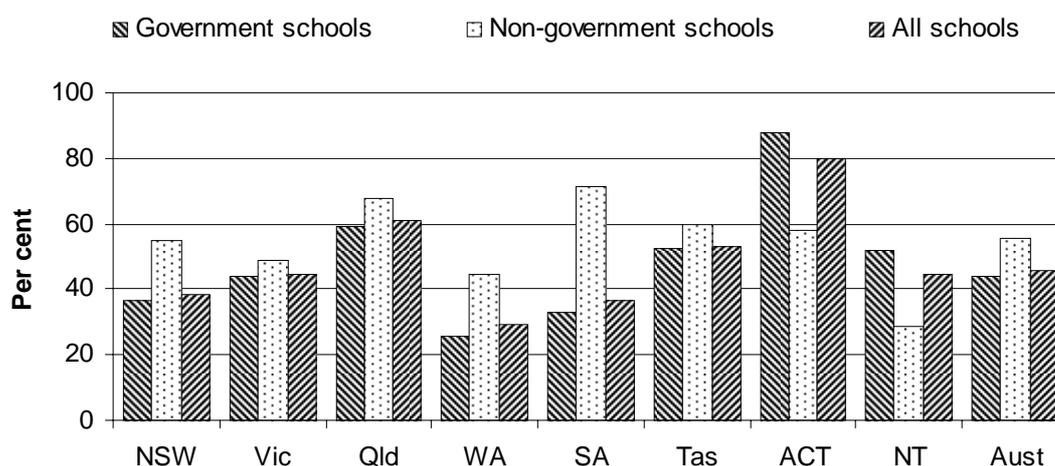
^a Apparent retention rates are affected by factors that vary across jurisdictions. For this reason, variations in apparent retention rates over time within jurisdictions may be more useful than comparisons across jurisdictions. ^b Retention rates can exceed 100 per cent for a variety of reasons, including student transfers between government and non-government schools after the base year. ^c The exclusion of part time students from standard apparent retention rate calculations has implications for the interpretation of results for all jurisdictions, but particularly for SA, Tasmania and the NT where there is a high proportion of part time students (table 3A.3).

Source: ABS (2004); table 3A.39.

For all schools, apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12 for Indigenous students in 2003 ranged from 79.7 per cent in the ACT to 29.3 per cent in WA (figure 3.10). In interpreting this indicator, note that about 10–20 per cent of Indigenous students leave school before year 10 (figure 3.8) so are not included in the base year for retention from year 10 to year 12. Nationally, Indigenous retention

from year 10 to year 12 for all schools in 2003 was 45.7 per cent (figure 3.10), or 31.2 percentage points lower than the rate for all students.

Figure 3.10 **Apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12, Indigenous full time secondary students, 2003^{a, b, c}**



^a Apparent retention rates are affected by factors that vary across jurisdictions. For this reason, variations in apparent retention rates over time within jurisdictions may be more useful than comparisons across jurisdictions. ^b The exclusion of part time students from standard apparent retention rate calculations has implications for the interpretation of results for all jurisdictions, but particularly for SA, Tasmania and the NT where there is a high proportion of part time students (table 3.4). ^c Ungraded students are not included in the calculation of apparent retention rates. This exclusion has particular implications for the NT, where 43 per cent of Indigenous secondary students are ungraded (compared with an average of 7.5 per cent for the rest of Australia). As a result, Indigenous apparent retention rates may misrepresent the retention of students in secondary schooling in the NT.

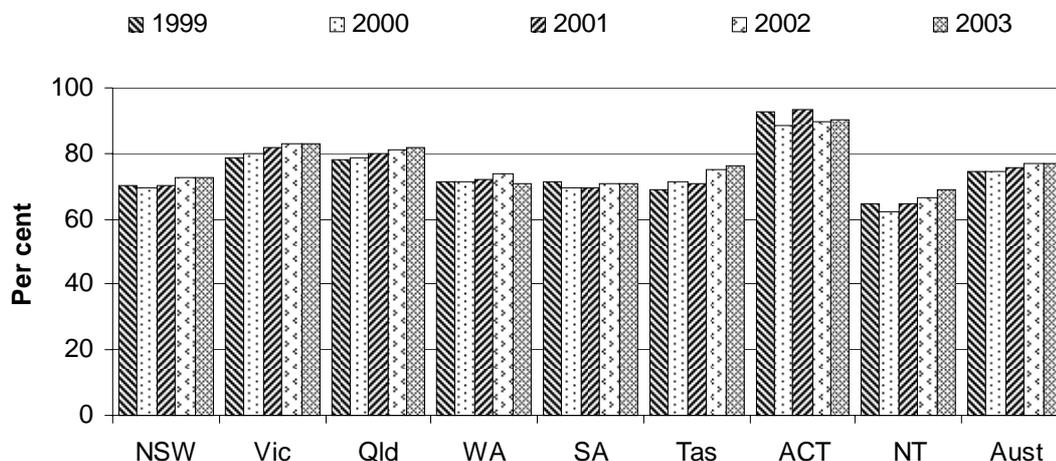
Source: ABS (2004); table 3A.39.

Between 1999 and 2003, the apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12 in all schools increased in all jurisdictions except WA, SA and the ACT where rates declined slightly (figure 3.11).

Efficiency

Governments have an interest in achieving the best results from their expenditure on schooling, both as owners and operators of government schools, and as the major providers of funds to the non-government school sector. An objective of the Review of Government Service Provision is to publish comparable estimates of costs. Ideally, such comparison includes the full range of costs to government. Where the full costs cannot be measured, cost estimated on a consistent basis is the best approach.

Figure 3.11 Apparent rates of retention from year 10 to year 12, full time secondary students, all schools^{a, b, c}



^a Apparent retention rates are affected by factors that vary across jurisdictions. For this reason, variations in apparent retention rates over time within jurisdictions may be more useful than comparisons across jurisdictions. ^b The exclusion of part time students from standard apparent retention rate calculations has implications for the interpretation of results for all jurisdictions, but particularly for SA, Tasmania and the NT where there is a high proportion of part time students (table 3.4). ^c Ungraded students are not included in the calculation of apparent retention rates. This exclusion has particular implications for the NT, where 43 per cent of Indigenous secondary students are ungraded (compared with an average of 7.5 per cent for the rest of Australia). As a result, Indigenous apparent retention rates may misrepresent the retention of students in secondary schooling in the NT.

Source: ABS (2004); tables 3A.48, 3A.58, 3A.67, 3A.77, 3A.86, 3A.98, 3A.109 and 3A.120.

Two key adjustments were made this year to the data reported for the efficiency indicators included in this chapter, to improve comparability across jurisdictions. The first adjustment was to include estimates of payroll tax for WA and the ACT, together with actual amounts for other jurisdictions. The second was to include a consistent, notional UCC of 8 per cent for all jurisdictions. Table 3.5 shows information on the comparability of the source expenditure data used for this chapter.

Table 3.5 Comparability of expenditure — items included, 2002-03

	NSW	Vic	Qld ^a	WA ^b	SA	Tas	ACT ^b	NT
Salaries	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Superannuation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Basis of estimate</i>	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Cash
Workers compensation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Payroll tax ^c	✓	✓	✓	✓ Imputed	✓	✓	✓ Imputed	✓
<i>Basis of estimate</i>	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	..	Accrual	Accrual	..	Cash
Termination and long service leave	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Basis of estimate</i>	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Cash
Sick leave	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Depreciation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Rent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	na
<i>Basis of estimate</i>	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	na
Utilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Basis of estimate</i>	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Accrual	Cash
Umbrella department costs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Basis of apportionment^d</i>	Per FTE student	Formula	Formula	Formula	Per student	Per FTE student	Formula	Per student
Notional UCC ^c	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

^a Sick leave in Queensland is embedded in the salary structure and not separately recorded. ^b Education departments in WA and the ACT are exempt from payroll tax. ^c Efficiency indicators in this chapter are adjusted for differences in payroll tax and notional UCC. ^d Umbrella department costs are apportioned according to: use (including enrolment) in Victoria; cost drivers (mainly student numbers) in Queensland; activity-based costing in the ACT; and pro rata costs based on expenditure in the NT. **na** Not available. **..** Not applicable. **✓** Included. **✗** Excluded. FTE = full time equivalent.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

Government recurrent expenditure per student

‘Government recurrent expenditure per student’ is included as an output — efficiency indicator (box 3.4).

A proxy indicator of efficiency is the level of government inputs per unit of output (unit cost). Nationally, in-school government expenditure per FTE student in government primary schools was \$8165 in 2002-03. In-school government expenditure per FTE student in government primary schools in 2002-03 ranged from \$11 510 in the NT to \$7347 in Victoria (figure 3.12).

Nationally, in-school government expenditure per FTE student in government secondary schools was \$10 561 in 2002-03. In-school government expenditure per FTE student in government secondary schools ranged from \$15 634 in the NT to \$9643 in SA (figure 3.12).

Nationally, out-of-school government expenditure per FTE student in government secondary schools was \$511 in 2002-03. Out-of-school departmental overheads per FTE student in government schools ranged from \$1973 in the NT to \$373 in NSW (figure 3.12).

Box 3.4 Government recurrent expenditure per student

‘Government recurrent expenditure per student’ is included as an output — efficiency indicator of governments’ objective to provide education in an efficient manner.

The indicator is defined as government recurrent expenditure per FTE student. It is reported for in-school primary, in-school secondary and out-of-school services, and for government and non-government schools.

Holding other factors constant, a low or decreasing government recurrent expenditure per FTE student represents better or improved efficiency. Efficiency data are difficult to interpret. While high or increasing government recurrent expenditure per student may reflect deteriorating efficiency, it may also reflect changes in the aspects of the schooling (broader curricula, higher quality education or increased accessibility), or the characteristics of the education environment (such as population dispersion). Similarly, low or decreasing expenditure per student may reflect improving efficiency or lower quality (less effective education) or more narrowly defined curricula. Efficiency data need to be interpreted within the context of the effectiveness and equity indicators to derive a holistic view of performance.

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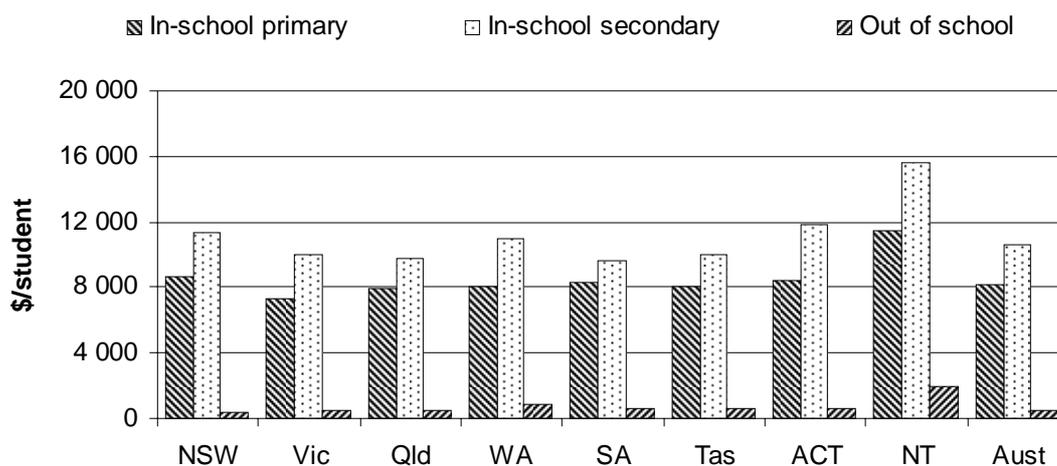
Box 3.4 (Continued)

A number of factors may influence government recurrent expenditure per student. Differences in the costs of educating students can be driven by:

- influences beyond the control of governments, such as a high proportion of geographically remote students and/or a dispersed population, as well as migration between states and territories
- policy changes in education
- various approaches that education departments and schools apply in managing resources
- economies of scale.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission, when calculating relativities between states and territories to distribute Australian Government general purpose grants, accounts for influences beyond a jurisdiction's control (called 'disabilities') that affect the jurisdiction's cost of providing services and capacity to raise revenue. In relation to education, the assessment includes a variety of disability factors that measure disabilities such as the size of the jurisdiction, the dispersed nature of the population and the sociodemographic distribution of the population. This Report does not, however, make any cost adjustments based on any of the above factors. These factors may need to be considered when examining each jurisdiction's expenditure per student.

Figure 3.12 Government recurrent expenditure per FTE student, government schools, 2002-03^{a, b}

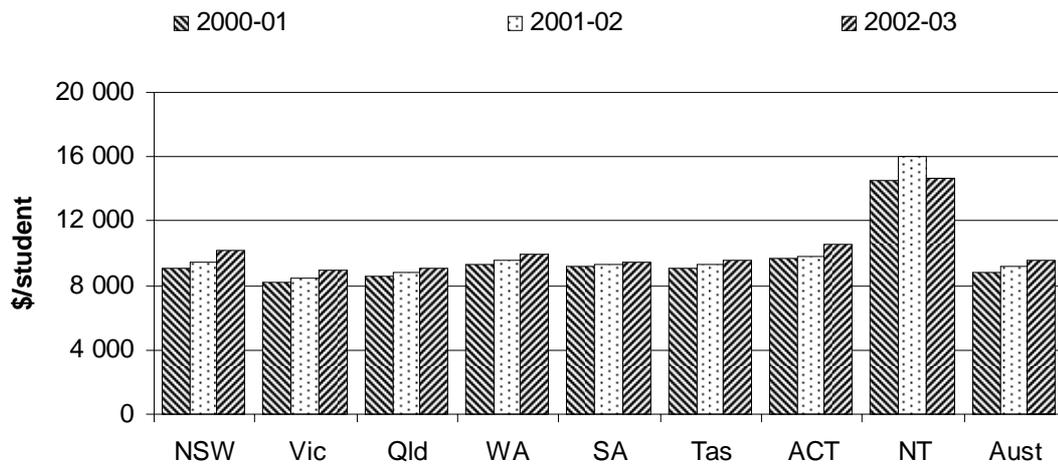


^a See notes to tables 3A.7 and 3A.8 for definitions and data caveats. ^b Payroll tax estimates have been included for WA and the ACT for comparability reasons.

Source: ABS (2004); MCEETYA (2004b); table 3A.8.

Government expenditure per FTE student in government schools in 2002-03 ranged from \$14 709 in the NT to \$8927 in Victoria. It increased (in average real terms) between 2000-01 and 2002-03 in all jurisdictions (figure 3.13). Nationally, the average real increase between 2000-01 and 2002-03 was 4.1 per cent per year (table 3A.9).

Figure 3.13 **Government real recurrent expenditure per FTE student, government schools (2002-03 dollars)^{a, b, c}**

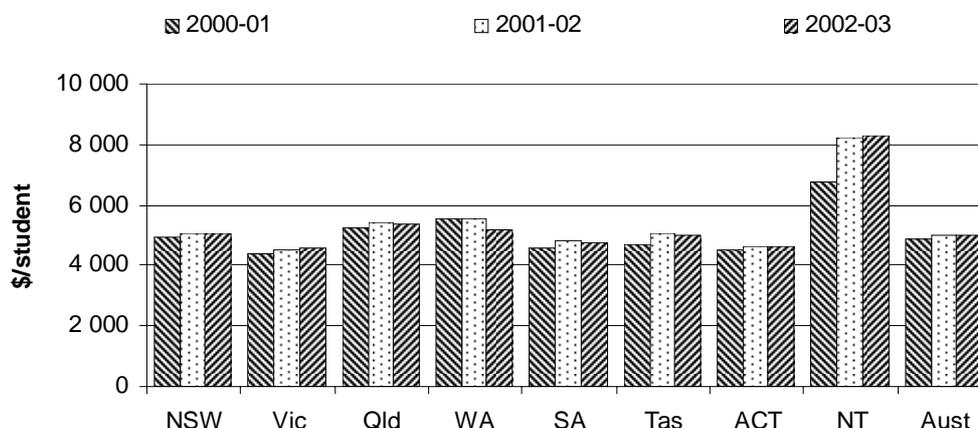


^a See notes to tables 3A.7 and 3A.8 for definitions and data caveats. ^b Data for 2000-01 and 2001-02 have been adjusted to 2002-03 dollars using the gross domestic product (GDP) price deflator. ^c Payroll tax estimates have been included for WA and the ACT for comparability reasons.

Source: ABS (2004); MCEETYA (2004b); table 3A.9.

In 2002-03, government expenditure per FTE student in non-government schools ranged from \$8270 in the NT to \$4549 in Victoria (figure 3.14). It increased (in average real terms) between 2000-01 and 2002-03 in all jurisdictions except WA (figure 3.14). Nationally, the average real increase between 2000-01 and 2002-03 was 1.0 per cent per year (table 3A.9).

Figure 3.14 Government real recurrent expenditure per FTE student, non-government schools (2002-03 dollars)^a



^a The sum of Australian Government specific purpose payments for non-government schools, and State and Territory government payments to non-government schools. Data on State and Territory government payments to non-government schools are not fully comparable across jurisdictions.

Source: ABS (2004); Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished); State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 3A.9.

Staff expenditure per student

‘Staff expenditure per student’ is included as an output — efficiency indicator (box 3.5).

Box 3.5 Staff expenditure per student

‘Staff expenditure per student’ is included as an output — efficiency indicator of governments’ objective to provide education in an efficient manner.

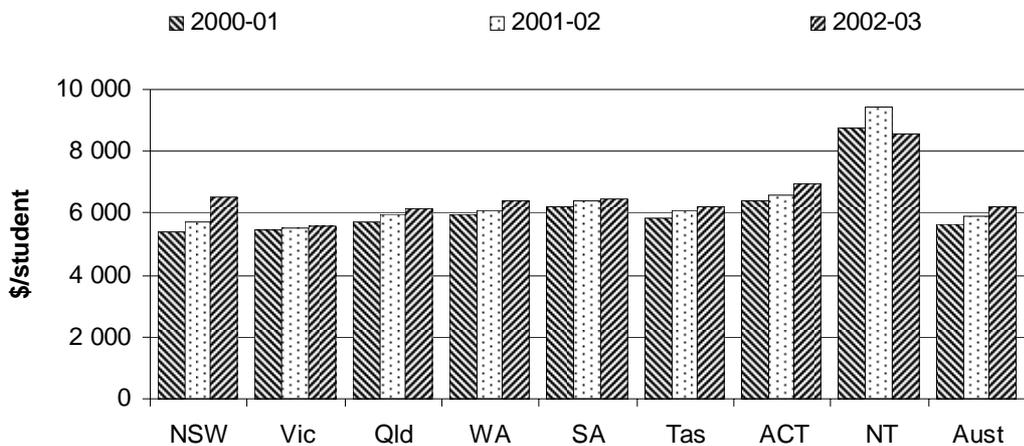
The indicator is defined as government expenditure on staff per FTE student. Expenditure on staff is the major component of spending on schools.

Holding other factors constant, a low or decreasing government expenditure on staff per FTE student represents better or improved efficiency. Efficiency data are difficult to interpret and this indicator in particular is partial in nature as it does not reflect the full cost per student. While high or increasing government expenditure on staff per student may reflect deteriorating efficiency, it may also reflect improvements in schooling (through higher quality teachers), or the characteristics of the education environment (broader curricula such as information technology and the need for teachers with new skills). Similarly, a low or decreasing expenditure on staff per student may reflect improving efficiency or lower quality (less effective education) or more narrowly defined curricula. Efficiency data need to be interpreted within the context of the effectiveness and equity indicators to derive a holistic view of performance.

Expenditure on staff is the major component of government recurrent expenditure on government schools (\$14.1 billion), accounting for 64.9 per cent of the total, in 2002-03. Of this expenditure, 80.0 per cent was on in-school teachers and 20.0 per cent was on other staff (table 3A.7).

Government expenditure on staff per FTE student ranged from \$8773 in the NT to \$5418 in NSW in 2000-01, and from \$8592 in the NT to \$5603 in Victoria in 2002-03. Nationally, the average real increase between 2000-01 and 2002-03 was 4.8 per cent (figure 3.15).

Figure 3.15 Real government recurrent expenditure on staff per FTE student, government schools (2002-03 dollars)



Source: ABS (2004); MCEETYA (2004b); table 3A.8.

Notional user cost of capital per student

‘Notional UCC per student’ has been included as an output — efficiency indicator (box 3.6).

The notional UCC per FTE government school student in 2002-03 averaged \$1179 nationally. Across jurisdictions, it was highest in the NT (\$1609) and lowest in SA (\$709) (table 3A.9).

The Steering Committee accepts that the asset valuation data, from which the notional UCC has been calculated, are not fully comparable across jurisdictions (table 3A.42). It also recognises that the treatment of costs in the past has not fully recognised the cost of public capital used by agencies to deliver services — that is, capital has generally been considered ‘free’. This can lead to significant underestimation of costs of those services for which government capital

is a major input. Using an imperfect costing of government capital, therefore, is preferable to not costing it at all and also provides an incentive to improve data over time. Changes have been made to the data definitions for asset reporting and valuation methods this year to improve the comparability of asset values data that are used to calculate the notional UCC.

Box 3.6 Notional user cost of capital per student

‘Notional UCC per student’ has been included as an output — efficiency indicator of governments’ objective to provide education in an efficient manner.

This indicator is defined as the dollars of UCC per FTE student.

The notional UCC for government services is the cost of funds tied up in capital used to produce services (for example, land and buildings owned by government schools). The notional UCC makes explicit the opportunity cost of using the funds to provide services rather than investing elsewhere or retiring debt. When comparing the costs of government services, it is important to account for the notional UCC because it is:

- often a significant component of the cost of services
- often treated inconsistently (that is, included in the costs of services delivered by most non-government service providers, but effectively costed at zero for many government service providers).

The UCC reflects the annual UCC per student, and is set at 8 per cent of the value of non current physical assets (for example, land, buildings, plant and equipment).

Holding other factors constant, a low or decreasing UCC per student represents better or improved efficiency. Efficiency data are difficult to interpret and this indicator in particular is only partial in nature as it does not reflect the full cost per student. While high or increasing UCC per student may reflect deteriorating efficiency, it may also reflect changes in the aspects of the schooling (broader curricula, enhanced facilities), or the characteristics of the education environment (such as population dispersion). Similarly, low or decreasing UCC per student may reflect improving efficiency or lower quality (less effective education) or fewer facilities or reduced capital maintenance. Efficiency data need to be interpreted within the context of the effectiveness and equity indicators to derive a holistic view of performance.

Student-to-staff ratio

The ‘student-to-staff ratio’ has been identified as an output — efficiency indicator (box 3.7).

Box 3.7 **Student-to-staff ratio**

The 'student-to-staff ratio' has been identified as an output — efficiency indicator of governments' objective to provide education in an efficient manner.

The student-to-teacher ratio is defined as the number of FTE students per FTE teacher. Data are reported for primary schools, secondary schools and non-teaching staff. The student-to-teacher ratio presents the number of students per teacher where teachers are classified in a way that can be compared across jurisdictions. A low ratio means there are a small number of students per teacher. (The ratio is not a measure of class size.)

Holding other factors constant, a high or increasing student-to-teacher ratio represents better or improved efficiency. While higher or increasing student-to-teacher ratios may reflect improving efficiency, they may also reflect lower quality or less effective schooling (through more narrowly focused curricula or less teacher time per student). Specifically a higher ratio could indicate an efficient school system, because desired outputs are produced with a small number of inputs. This indicates efficiency, however, only when output quality and outcomes are the same as (or higher than) those in the other systems being compared.

Similarly, while lower or decreasing student-to-teacher ratios may reflect decreasing efficiency, they may also reflect more effective schooling (through broader curricula or more teacher student time), or the changing characteristics of school populations and teaching roles (such as increasing numbers of small rural schools, more students with special needs or more administrative commitments for teachers). Specifically a lower ratio could indicate a higher quality education system, if it is assumed that teachers have more time for each student and that this results in better student outcomes. There is, however, no clear agreement in international literature that smaller class sizes necessarily improve outcomes.

Interpretation can be enhanced by more comprehensive student outcome data, as well as by information on teacher quality, experience and qualifications. The ratios presented in this Report are aggregated across all subjects and year levels, so they do not reflect the fact that a lower ratio may be more important for certain subjects and/or year levels.

The ratio needs to be interpreted with care because it can be affected by a number of factors, including:

- the proportion of small rural schools — for example, a large proportion of small rural schools can significantly lower the overall average student-to-teacher ratio, while a large proportion of students in metropolitan schools can raise the ratio
- the proportion of special needs students — for example, special schools catering for students with disabilities generally have significantly lower student to teacher ratios than those of mainstream schools because additional resources are required in mainstream schools for these students

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.7 (Continued)

- the degree to which administrative work is undertaken by people classified as teachers (such as principals, deputy principals and senior teachers)
- other inputs to school education (for example, non-teaching staff, computers, books and laboratory equipment).

The ratio of 'FTE students to FTE non-teaching in-school staff' (table 3A.43) needs to be interpreted with care because it can be affected by:

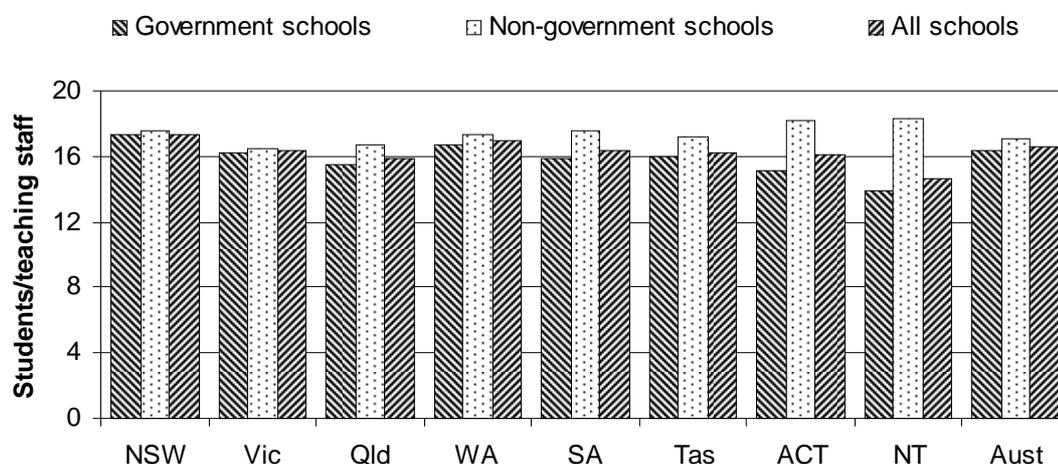
- the amount of administrative work undertaken by staff nominally classified as teachers (such as principals, assistant principals and senior teachers)
- the proportion of administrative work undertaken outside the school (because administrative tasks such as personnel management are centralised in some jurisdictions but undertaken at the school level in others)
- the extent to which technology is applied to teaching, learning and school administration
- the extent to which there are support staff in the classroom setting and whether these staff are classified as teaching or non-teaching
- the degree to which schools contract out services.

Efficiency data need to be interpreted within the context of the effectiveness and equity indicators to derive a holistic view of performance.

Nationally, for government primary schools, the student-to-teacher ratio was 16.4 in 2003. Across jurisdictions, it ranged from 17.3 in NSW to 13.9 in the NT. Nationally, for non-government primary schools, the student-to-teacher ratio was 17.1 in 2003. Across jurisdictions, it ranged from 18.3 in the NT to 16.5 in Victoria. Nationally, for all primary schools, the student-to-teacher ratio was 16.6 in 2003. Across jurisdictions, it ranged from 17.3 in NSW to 14.6 in the NT (figure 3.16).

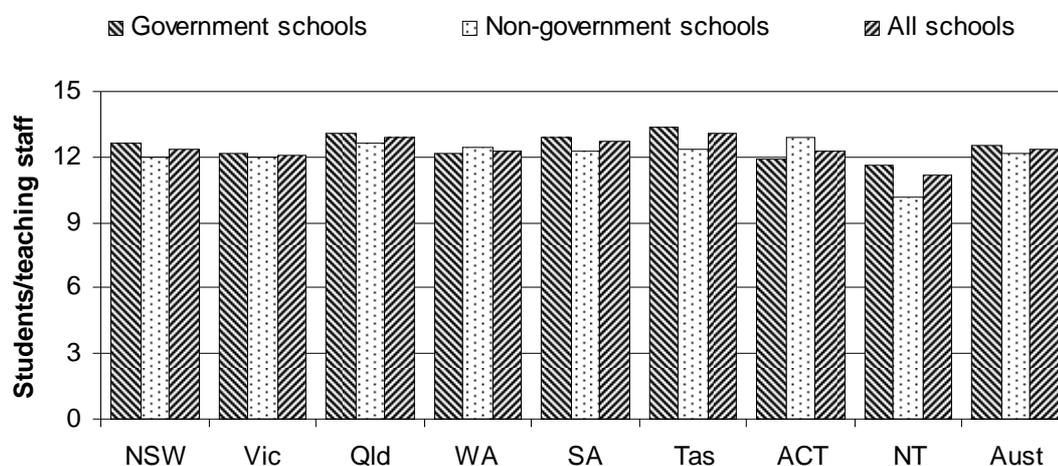
Nationally, for government secondary schools, the student-to-teacher ratio was 12.5 in 2003. Across jurisdictions, it ranged from 13.4 in Tasmania to 11.6 in the NT. Nationally, for non-government secondary schools, the student-to-teacher ratio was 12.1 in 2003. Across jurisdictions, it ranged from 12.9 in the ACT to 10.2 in the NT. Nationally, for all secondary schools, the student-to-teacher ratio was 12.4 in 2003. Across jurisdictions, it ranged from 13.1 in Tasmania to 11.1 in the NT (figure 3.17).

Figure 3.16 Ratio of FTE students to FTE teaching staff, primary schools, 2003



Source: ABS (2004); table 3A.43.

Figure 3.17 Ratio of FTE students to FTE teaching staff, secondary schools, 2003



Source: ABS (2004); table 3A.43.

Nationally, for all government schools, the student-to-teacher ratio was 14.6 in 2003. Across jurisdictions, it ranged from 15.0 in NSW to 13.1 in the NT. Nationally, for all non-government schools, the student-to-teacher ratio was 14.3 in 2003. Across jurisdictions, it ranged from 15.0 in the ACT to 13.8 in Victoria. Nationally, for all schools, the student-to-teacher ratio was 14.5 in 2003. Across jurisdictions, it ranged from 14.8 for WA and SA, to 13.3 in the NT (table 3A.43). Refer to table 3A.43 for further detail on student-to-staff ratios.

Outcomes

Nationally comparable learning outcomes

The Steering Committee has identified ‘literacy’ and ‘numeracy’ as outcome indicators of school education (boxes 3.8–3.10). Nationally comparable learning outcomes data for 2001 for reading and writing literacy, and numeracy are reported in tables 3A.19–33. Data for 2002 and 2003 were not available for the 2005 Report.

Literacy — reading

‘Literacy — reading’ has been identified as an outcome indicator (box 3.8).

Box 3.8 Literacy — reading

‘Literacy — reading’ has been identified as an outcome indicator of governments’ objective that young Australians should attain high standards of knowledge, skill and understanding in core curriculum areas.

The indicator is defined as the proportion of assessed year 3 and 5 students who achieved the national reading benchmark for a given year, reported by sex, Indigenous status and LBOTE status. The benchmarks describe nationally agreed minimum acceptable standards for reading literacy at years 3 and 5. Student performance is measured (or assessed) by State-based testing programs which are equated by a national process designed to (or intended to) allow comparable reporting against the benchmarks.

Holding other factors equal, a high or increasing proportion of students achieving the reading benchmark is desirable. This indicator is affected by socioeconomic circumstances, age, length of time spent in schooling, and LBOTE and Indigenous status.

Literacy — writing

‘Literacy — writing’ has been identified as an outcome indicator (box 3.9).

Box 3.9 Literacy — writing

‘Literacy — writing’ has been identified as an outcome indicator of governments’ objective that young Australians should attain high standards of knowledge, skill and understanding in core curriculum areas.

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.9 (Continued)

The indicator is defined as the proportion of assessed year 3 and 5 students who achieved the national writing benchmark for a given year, reported by sex, Indigenous status and LBOTE status. The benchmarks describe nationally agreed minimum acceptable standards for writing literacy at years 3 and 5. Student performance is measured (or assessed) by State-based testing programs which are equated by a national process designed to (or intended to) allow comparable reporting against the benchmarks.

Holding other factors equal, a high or increasing proportion of students achieving the writing benchmark is desirable. This indicator is affected by socioeconomic circumstances, age, length of time spent in schooling, and LBOTE and Indigenous status.

Numeracy

‘Numeracy’ has been identified as an outcome indicator (box 3.10).

Box 3.10 Numeracy

‘Numeracy’ has been identified as an outcome indicator of governments’ objective that young Australians should attain high standards of knowledge, skill and understanding in core curriculum areas.

The indicator is defined as the proportion of assessed year 3 and 5 students who achieved the national numeracy benchmark for a given year, reported by sex, Indigenous status and LBOTE status. The benchmarks describe nationally agreed minimum acceptable standards for numeracy at years 3 and 5. Student performance is measured (or assessed) by state-based testing programs which are equated by a national process designed to (or intended to) allow comparable reporting against the benchmarks.

Holding other factors equal, a high or increasing proportion of students achieving the numeracy benchmark is desirable. This indicator is affected by socioeconomic circumstances, age, length of time spent in schooling, and LBOTE and Indigenous status.

Mathematical literacy was the major focus for the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2003 survey and results are expected to be available in late 2004.

Other outcomes

Vocational education and training (VET) in schools

The Steering Committee has identified ‘VET in schools’ as an outcome indicator of school education (box 3.11). Data, however, were not available for the 2005 Report.

Box 3.11 VET in schools

‘VET in schools’ participation and attainment have been identified as outcome indicators of governments’ objective that young Australians should attain employment related skills.

Participation is defined as the number of school students undertaking VET (with new apprenticeships and traineeships disaggregated) as part of their senior secondary school certificate in a calendar year, as a proportion of all school students undertaking a senior secondary school certificate in that year.

Attainment is defined as the number of school students enrolled in a senior secondary school certificate in a calendar year who have completed at least one VET unit of competency/module, as a proportion of all school students undertaking a senior secondary school certificate in that year.

Data collections for ‘VET in schools’ indicators are being developed (see section 3.4 for details).

Science

The Steering Committee has identified ‘science’ literacy as an outcome indicator of school education (box 3.12). Data, however, were not available for the 2005 Report.

Science learning outcomes data for 15 year olds were presented for the year 2000 in the 2003 Report. These data which were collected by the PISA are included in tables 3A.34–3A.36.

Box 3.12 Science

‘Science’ — that is, scientific literacy — has been identified as an outcome indicator of governments’ objective that young Australians should attain high standards of knowledge, skill and understanding in core curriculum areas.

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.12 (Continued)

The indicator is defined as the proportion of assessed year 6 primary students who achieve the science literacy benchmark. The benchmark cut score is set through an expert, informed process, but is necessarily subjective.

Holding other factors equal, a high or increasing proportion of students achieving the science literacy benchmark is desirable.

Information and communication technology

The Steering Committee has identified ‘information and communication technology’ as an outcome indicator of school education (box 3.13). Data, however, were not available for the 2005 Report.

Box 3.13 Information and communication technology

‘Information and communication technology’ has been identified as an outcome indicator of governments’ objective that young Australians should be confident, creative and productive users of new technologies.

Information and communication technology is a measure of the percentage of students achieving a particular standard. Data collections for information and communication technology indicators are being developed (see section 3.5 for details).

Estimated completion

‘Estimated completion’ is included as an outcome indicator (box 3.14).

Box 3.14 Estimated completion

‘Estimated completion’ is included as an outcome indicator of governments’ objectives to develop fully the talents and capacities of young people through participation in schooling and for students to attain high standards of knowledge, skills and understanding through a comprehensive and balanced curriculum in the higher years of schooling.

(Continued on next page)

Box 3.14 (Continued)

This indicator is defined as the number of students who obtain a year 12 (or equivalent) certificate as a percentage of the potential year 12 population. It is reported by socioeconomic status decile and location. Geographic isolation is determined using the agreed MCEETYA Geographic Location Classification. Socioeconomic status is determined according to the ABS Index of Disadvantage on the basis of postcode of students' home addresses. Low socioeconomic status is the average of the three lowest deciles, medium socioeconomic status is the average of the four medium deciles and high socioeconomic status is the average of the three highest deciles.

Holding other factors constant, a higher or increasing estimated completion rate suggests an improvement in educational outcomes for young people from particular socioeconomic or geographic backgrounds. The aggregation of all postcode locations into three categories — high, medium and low — means there may be significant variation within the categories. Low deciles, for example, will include locations ranging from those of extreme disadvantage to those of moderate disadvantage.

The Australian Government developed a method of estimating the proportion of young Australians who complete year 12, disaggregated by locality, socioeconomic background and gender. Under this method, completion rates of secondary schooling are estimated by expressing the number of students who obtain a year 12 (or equivalent) certificate as a percentage of the potential year 12 population. (For the definition of the potential year 12 population, see section 3.6.) The Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce of MCEETYA is reviewing this method, with the aim of improving the national comparability of data.

The Australian Government uses the estimate of completion rates because information on participation and retention rates is generally not available by socioeconomic background or geographic location. Completion rate estimates are primarily used as indicators of trends. Comparisons across jurisdictions are not recommended and need to be made with care, for the following reasons:

- assessment, reporting and requirements for obtaining year 12 certificates vary across states and territories — for example, from moderated school-based assessment to a mix including external and internal assessment, and from completion of a pattern of study to a prescribed level of attainment
- inaccuracies arise from using both home postal address and school location address in compiling completion rates data. Small changes in population or completions can affect the estimates of completion rates, particularly for smaller states and territories

- students completing their secondary education in TAFE institutes are included in reporting for some jurisdictions and not in others, and the proportion of these students also varies across jurisdictions. In Victoria, for example, over 2715 people aged 15–19 years have undertaken studies toward their Higher School Certificate or university entrance in TAFE institutes in 2003.

Estimates of year 12 completion rates in 2003 by socioeconomic background, location and gender are provided in tables 3.6 and 3.7. Estimated completion rates for students from low and medium socioeconomic backgrounds were 16 percentage points and 12 percentage points respectively below those for students from a high socioeconomic background in 2003 (table 3.6). Estimated completion rates in all socioeconomic categories were higher for female students than for male students, (except in the ACT for the medium socioeconomic category).

Table 3.6 Estimated year 12 completion rates, by socioeconomic status and gender, 2003 (per cent)^{a, b, c}

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT^d</i>	<i>NT^d</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Low socioeconomic status deciles									
Male	58	58	63	49	46	54	np	11	56
Female	71	71	74	60	69	67	np	13	69
All students	64	64	69	54	58	60	np	12	63
Medium socioeconomic status deciles									
Male	59	59	70	62	57	62	78	36	62
Female	69	75	77	68	79	72	71	43	72
All students	64	67	73	65	68	67	75	39	67
High socioeconomic status deciles									
Male	73	77	74	73	73	78	78	np	75
Female	78	87	76	80	91	92	82	np	83
All students	75	82	75	76	82	85	80	np	79
Total									
Male	62	65	69	62	59	61	78	26	64
Female	72	79	76	70	80	73	82	32	75
All students	67	72	72	66	69	67	80	29	69

^a Data are estimates only. They express the number of year 12 completions (year 12 certificates issued by State and Territory education authorities) as a proportion of the estimated population that could attend year 12 in that calendar year. There are variations in assessment, reporting and certification methods for year 12 across states and territories. ^b The ABS Index of Disadvantage has been used to calculate socioeconomic status on the basis of postcode of students' home addresses. ^c Low socioeconomic status is the average of the three lowest deciles, medium socioeconomic status is the average of the four middle deciles and high socioeconomic status is the average of the three highest deciles. ^d The populations in the high socioeconomic deciles of the NT and the low socioeconomic deciles of the ACT are too small to produce meaningful results. **np** Not published.

Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished).

Estimated completion rates varied across jurisdictions in 2003. Nationally, the rate for the low socioeconomic status deciles was 63 per cent. Across jurisdictions, rates

for the low socioeconomic status deciles ranged from 69 per cent in Queensland to 12 per cent in the NT. Nationally, the rate for all students in the medium socioeconomic status deciles was 67 per cent. Across jurisdictions, rates ranged from 75 per cent in the ACT to 39 per cent in the NT. Nationally, the rate for all students in the high socioeconomic status deciles was 79 per cent. Across jurisdictions, rates ranged from 85 per cent in Tasmania to 75 per cent in NSW and Queensland respectively. Nationally, the rate for all students in all socioeconomic status deciles was 69 per cent. Across jurisdictions, rates ranged from 80 per cent in the ACT to 29 per cent in the NT (table 3.6).

Nationally, the estimated completion rate was higher in the metropolitan zone (72 per cent) than any other area. Across jurisdictions, rates for the metropolitan zone ranged from 80 per cent in the ACT to 66 per cent in WA. Nationally, the estimated completion rate in provincial cities was 62 per cent. Across jurisdictions, rates for provincial cities ranged from 68 per cent in Queensland to 39 per cent in the NT. Nationally, the estimated completion rate for other provincial and remote areas was 69 per cent. Across jurisdictions, rates for other provincial and remote areas ranged from 76 per cent in Queensland to 36 per cent in the NT. Nationally, the estimated completion rate for very remote areas was 34 per cent. Across jurisdictions, rates for very remote areas ranged from 65 per cent in Queensland to 6 per cent in the NT (table 3.7).

Gender differences are also evident with completion rates higher for females for all localities in all jurisdictions. Nationally, in the metropolitan zone, the female completion rate was 76 per cent compared with 67 per cent for males. Across jurisdictions, rates for females in the metropolitan zone ranged from 85 per cent in Tasmania to 70 per cent in WA compared with males, which ranged from 78 per cent in the ACT to 62 per cent in SA.

Nationally, in other provincial and remote areas, the female completion rate was 78 per cent compared with 60 per cent for males. Across jurisdictions, rates for females in other provincial and remote areas ranged from 85 per cent in Queensland to 41 per cent in the NT, compared with males which ranged from 69 per cent in Queensland to 32 per cent in the NT (table 3.7). Time series data on completion rates are shown in tables 3A.40 and 3A.41.

Table 3.7 Estimated year 12 completion rates, by locality and gender, 2003 (per cent)^{a, b}

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas ^c	ACT	NT ^d	Aust
Metropolitan zone^c									
Male	67	68	71	63	62	73	78	..	67
Female	75	79	76	70	80	85	82	..	76
All students	70	74	73	66	71	79	80	..	72
Provincial cities^d									
Male	54	58	67	57	..	52	..	34	58
Female	63	72	70	63	..	61	..	43	66
All students	59	65	68	60	..	56	..	39	62
Other provincial and remote^e									
Male	58	58	69	65	52	47	..	32	60
Female	74	82	85	78	81	70	..	41	78
All students	66	70	76	71	66	58	..	36	69
Very remote^f									
Male	44	..	56	28	35	..	..	6	30
Female	60	..	76	34	48	..	..	6	38
All students	51	..	65	31	41	..	..	6	34
All areas									
Male	62	65	69	62	59	61	78	26	64
Female	72	79	76	70	80	73	82	32	75
All students	67	72	72	66	69	67	80	29	69

^a Data are estimates only. They express the number of year 12 completions (year 12 certificates issued by State and Territory education authorities) as a proportion of the estimated population that could attend year 12 in that calendar year. There are variations in assessment, reporting and certification methods for year 12 across states and territories. ^b Definitions are based on the agreed MCEETYA Geographic Location Classification. ^c Major urban statistical districts (including Hobart) with populations over 100 000. ^d Provincial city statistical districts (including Darwin) with populations between 25 000 and 99 999. ^e Encompasses other provincial areas and remote areas of the MCEETYA classification. ^f This is the very remote area of the MCEETYA classification. .. Not applicable.

Source: Department of Education, Science and Training (unpublished).

Destination

The Steering Committee has identified 'destination' as an outcome indicator of school education (box 3.15). Data, however, were not available for the 2005 Report.

The Education preface of this Report discusses the destinations of year 12 leavers and early school leavers in 2003 at the national level, and examines the proportions of male and female students attending other educational institutions in 2003 after leaving school in the previous year (table B.4).

Box 3.15 Destination

'Destination' has been identified as an outcome indicator of governments' objective to develop fully the talents and capacities of young people through schooling. The aim is to provide information about what happens to students after they leave school.

The Steering Committee has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

Civics and citizenship

The Steering Committee has identified 'civics and citizenship' as an outcome indicator of school education (box 3.16). Data, however, were not available for the 2005 Report.

Box 3.16 Civics and citizenship

'Civics and citizenship' has been identified as an outcome indicator of governments' objective that students be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life through broader curricula.

Civics and citizenship is a measure from year 6 and year 10 of:

- percentage of students achieving a particular standard in civic knowledge
- percentage of students achieving a particular standard in citizenship participation, skills and civic values.

Data collections for civics and citizenship indicators are being developed (see section 3.4 for details).

Enterprise education

The Steering Committee has identified 'enterprise education' as an outcome indicator of school education (box 3.17). Data, however, were not available for the 2005 Report.

Box 3.17 Enterprise education

'Enterprise education' has been identified as an outcome indicator of governments' objective to develop fully the talents and capacities of young people through broader curricula.

The Steering Committee has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

Other social outcomes

The Steering Committee has identified 'other social outcomes' as an outcome indicator of school education (box 3.18). Data, however, were not available for the 2005 Report.

Box 3.18 Other social outcomes

'Other social outcomes' has been identified as an outcome indicator of governments' objective to develop fully the talents and capacities of young people through broader curricula.

The Steering Committee has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

3.4 Future directions in performance reporting

Participation, retention and completion rates

The participation, apparent retention and completion rates included in this Report may not reflect the increasing number of students who are enrolling in school part time or choosing to pursue their senior secondary studies or an equivalent VET qualification at TAFE. These measures are under examination, and supplementary participation measures are reported in the 'Education preface'.

Nationally comparable reporting of learning outcomes

The MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce is developing performance measures to assess outcomes in a range of learning areas. This work

will provide additional nationally comparable data that will be incorporated into the Review's performance indicator framework.

Year 7 literacy and numeracy

Education ministers directed the MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce in July 2003 to undertake a review of the year 7 reading and numeracy benchmarks. A report on the review outcomes and associated advice on implementation of the revised benchmark descriptions were provided to ministers in December 2003. Year 7 literacy and numeracy data previously collected (and those to be collected annually in the future) are expected to be reported annually from 2005.

Enhanced literacy and numeracy measures

Education ministers have agreed to pursue a broadening of the national reporting framework to enhance reporting of literacy and numeracy outcomes at the years 3, 5 and 7 levels. Three areas for potential enhancements to the reporting of literacy and numeracy outcomes were identified: reporting an extended range of student achievement so as to be consistent with information from the national sample assessments; reporting against a common scale in order to improve understanding of student development; and development of a more nationally consistent approach to improve national comparability of test results. A report was provided to ministers in December 2003, and the MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce is continuing its work in this area.

VET in schools

Education ministers have endorsed two new indicators for VET in schools, replacing five measures previously approved or noted. Participation and attainment data for VET in schools are expected to be collected and reported annually from 2005. These new indicators are detailed below.

- Participation is a measure of school students undertaking VET (with new apprenticeships and traineeships disaggregated) as part of their senior secondary school certificate in a calendar year, as a proportion of all school students undertaking a senior secondary school certificate in that year.
- Attainment is a measure of school students enrolled in a senior secondary school certificate in a calendar year who have completed at least one VET unit of competency/module, as a proportion of all school students undertaking a senior secondary school certificate in that year.

Science

Education ministers have agreed to an approach to measuring students' scientific literacy at year 6. The first assessment was undertaken in October 2003, with further assessments to be undertaken at three year intervals. Year 6 science literacy data are expected to be available in 2005 and reported triennially.

Civics and citizenship

Education ministers have agreed to a national civics and citizenship assessment of students at years 6 and 10 every three years. The first national sample assessment was undertaken in October 2004. Years 6 and 10 civics and citizenship assessment data are expected to be available in early 2005 and reported triennially.

Information and communication technology

Education ministers have agreed to a national information and communication technology assessment of students at years 6 and 10 every three years. The MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce has developed a definition of information and communication technology literacy, and the first assessment is scheduled to be undertaken in 2005, with further assessments to be undertaken at three year intervals. Years 6 and 10 information and communication technology literacy data are expected to be available in 2006 and reported triennially.

Enterprise education

The MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce is working on developing key performance measures for enterprise education.

Attendance measures

The MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce is working on developing key performance measures for attendance.

Nationally consistent definitions

The collection of nationally comparable data depends on, among other factors, nationally consistent definitions of groups against which educational achievement and outcomes can be reported. National definitions have been developed for gender,

Indigenous status, LBOTE students, geographic location and socioeconomic status and have been nationally agreed. National definitions for all items (except students with disabilities) will be applied to data collection instruments in 2005 for literacy and numeracy testing and the year 6 national sample assessment. The nationally agreed definitions will be applied to all new student enrolments from 2006 for all national reporting requirements on student outcomes.

The MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce is working on a definition for students with disabilities.

3.5 Jurisdictions' comments

This section provides comments from each jurisdiction on the services covered in this chapter. Appendix A contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. These data cover a range of demographic and geographic characteristics, including age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (such as Indigenous and ethnic status).

Australian Government comments

“ The Australian Government introduced the Schools Assistance (Learning Together — Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Bill 2004 into the Parliament in 2004 with the legislation taking effect from 1 January 2005.

The purpose of the legislation is to provide the Australian Government’s specific purpose funding for government and non-government schools for the 2005 to 2008 quadrennium. As well as general recurrent funding it provides funding for special purpose grants in relation to, for example, assistance for students with disabilities, geographically isolated students, newly arrived students from non-English speaking backgrounds, the learning of languages other than English and school buildings. In addition the legislation also includes provisions for implementing the Australian Government’s national priorities in schooling. These priorities include measures to promote greater national consistency in schooling, better reporting to parents, transparency of school performance, and improved Indigenous education outcomes.

Following on from its Review of Teaching and Teacher Education the Government has established a National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership. Run for and by the profession, the Institute is based in Canberra. The Institute’s key functions are: professional standards development and ensuring accreditation of leaders and teachers; professional learning courses linked to professional standards including quality assured teacher preparation courses; research and communication and promotion of the profession.

The Government is establishing 24 Australian Technical Colleges throughout Australia for students in Years 11 and 12. The colleges will be linked to and endorsed by industry and run autonomously by principals who will be able to engage teaching staff on a performance pay basis.

Over the last two years there has been significant progress in the development of nationally consistent reporting on student outcomes. The first national sample assessment of Year 6 students’ scientific literacy took place in October 2003, and the first national sample assessment of Year 6 and year 10 students’ civics and citizenship education knowledge and skills was undertaken in October 2004. The first national sample assessment of Year 6 and year 10 students’ ICT skills and understanding is currently being developed, with the main survey to take place in October 2005.

In addition, Ministers agreed during 2004 to implement common definitions in the school sector of students’ sex, Indigenous status, language background and socioeconomic background (as measured by parents’ occupation and educational attainment). By 2006 all reporting of student outcomes for these student groups will be on a consistent basis across the country.

”

New South Wales Government comments

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The NSW Government has allocated record funding to education and training over recent years. The 2004-05 budget of \$9.2 billion represented an increase of \$717 million over the previous year's budget. NSW spent an average of \$10 139 per student in 2002-03, which is above the Australian average of \$9605.

NSW has Australia's most comprehensive state-wide testing program, with years 3 and 5 Basic Skills Literacy and Numeracy tests, the years 7 and 8 English Language and Literacy Assessment, the School Certificate in Year 10 and the Higher School Certificate in Year 12. Over the next four years over \$500 million will be allocated to the Department's Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. Since 1995, over \$1.3 billion has been allocated to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes. A priority for NSW is improving literacy and numeracy amongst the lowest achieving students.

In 2004, under the Government's class size reduction program, Kindergarten class sizes were reduced to a state-wide average of less than 20 in Priority Schools Funding Program schools which serve lower socio-economic communities. The program will be expanded to all Kindergarten classes in 2005. By 2007, class sizes will be reduced to a state-wide average of 20 students in Kindergarten; 22 students in Year 1; and 24 students in Year 2. The state's investment in the class size reduction program will be \$462.5 million over the next four years including \$88.35 million in capital funding. Already, more than 420 NSW primary schools have benefited from the allocation of 181 new teaching positions.

NSW is providing \$144 million over four years to significantly enhance professional development for teachers in Government schools. Over \$16.5 million was provided to Government schools in Term 1, 2004 under the Professional Learning Policy for Schools.

NSW continues to make significant investments in technology for teaching and learning. Over \$795 million is being invested over four years for technology initiatives, including over \$540 million for the continuing Computers in Schools program. This includes a strong commitment to school based technical support and training involving identifying standard solutions and support mechanisms to improve the functionality and reliability of school computer systems.

New suspension centres are being created in NSW to expand support options for students with disruptive behaviour. Over \$58 million will be allocated to improve the range of support options for disruptive students. Eight new behaviour schools and seven new tutorial centres will be established by 2007. This will bring the total number of behaviour schools to 35 and tutorial schools to 40 in NSW.

”

Victorian Government comments

“ The Victorian Government believes that education is the key to our children's future and Victoria's prosperity. Education opens the door to high quality jobs, to a full and creative life and a sense of common citizenship.

The Government has set a number of goals and targets for the education and training system and considerable progress has been made towards achieving these. The targets include improving the standard of literacy and numeracy in primary schooling with 2001 data showing that the percentage of Victorian primary students achieving the national reading and numeracy benchmarks was at or above the Australian average. In 2003, 77.5 per cent of young people aged 19 completed year 12 or its equivalent, an improvement over 2001 data. Participation in education and training by young people aged 15 to 19 in rural and regional Victoria is at very high levels, at 92.3 per cent for 2003.

As a result of the Government's investment in school education, class sizes in prep to year 2 have been reduced from an average of 24.3 students in 1999 to 20.9 students in 2003, the lowest level on record since 1973. Reduced class sizes have increased the effectiveness of key strategies designed to improve the acquisition of foundation skills in literacy and numeracy. \$49.5m is being phased in over four years to fund the equivalent of 256 full-time primary school welfare officer positions to provide support to students who are at risk of disconnecting from school.

In November 2003, the Blueprint for Government Schools was released. The Blueprint outlines the Government's reform agenda for a highly effective government school system for Victoria. With a common preferred vision of the future, this system places students at the centre, is values driven and develops effective teachers, leaders and schools. Initiatives under the Blueprint are being implemented from 2004 and include leadership and teacher professional development, creating and supporting a performance and development culture, a new funding model for schools and other strategies to drive school improvement.

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) provides an alternative pathway to the Victorian Certificate of Education for students in years 11 and 12. In 2003 the VCAL was implemented on a statewide basis following a successful trial in 2002. In 2004, 316 providers delivered the VCAL to 8066 students.

Over 34 000 students who were enrolled in Year 12 in 2003 participated in the second On Track survey. On Track follows up on the Managed Individual Pathways program that assists 15 to 19 year-old students with individual career and education plans and support to implement those plans. Data collected for On Track provides a picture of the destinations of students after they leave school and highlights the diversity of options young people pursue, including university, TAFE or other vocational education and training programs, apprenticeships or traineeships, and employment.

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Queensland Government comments

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The Queensland Government's ongoing commitment to educational reform is reflected through the review of the *Education General Provisions Act 1989* (EGPA) and Regulation. This Act provides the legislative foundation for education in Queensland. It sets out fundamental requirements for all schools such as the compulsory schooling requirements and specific requirements for state schools including the establishment and management of schools.

The aim of the review is to develop a sound legislative regime that facilitates innovative educational practice in Queensland schools and reflects modern legislative principles. The Government released a consultation paper *Education Laws for the Future* in October 2004. The new legislation will implement the next stage of the Education and Training Reforms for the Future (ETRF) by providing the foundation for the introduction of the universally available, non-compulsory, full time preparatory year from 2007, followed by an increase in the compulsory school starting age by 6 months in 2008. The review is supported by an extensive policy development process drawing on international best practice and is being informed by the views of major stakeholders and the community.

In October 2004, following extensive public consultation, the Queensland Government announced changes to the way that schools report on student and school performance. By mid-2005, every school will be required to publish information about the school and its outcomes. From 2006, written student reports and parent-teacher interviews will be provided at least twice a year by all schools, both state and non-state. In 2006, the Queensland Studies Authority will release summary information on each school that had students in Year 12 the previous year. Every child at every school in the state will be assigned a unique student identifier. The Year 3, 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy test reports to parents have been redesigned to be easier for parents to read and understand. These initiatives will assist parental involvement in education and school improvement.

In November 2004, the Queensland Government announced that it will implement all 84 recommendations of a landmark independent review of the Board of Teacher Registration. There will be new requirements for teachers to renew their registration every five years. Teachers wishing to continue in the profession will need to undertake continuing professional learning and maintain their skills through teaching experience. The reforms will also make it easier for non-school teachers with valuable skills and qualifications — such as scientists and TAFE teachers — to become school teachers in Queensland. The implementation of these recommendations will strengthen the professional standards of Queensland teachers.”

Western Australian Government comments



The Department of Education and Training is committed to students achieving the highest standards of learning possible.

Achievement targets have been developed for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 to define the standards expected of students at these year levels. These form part of the Outcomes and Standards Framework and will assist schools to focus on improvement and to clearly describe to parents where their child's performance sits in relation to the standards.

The very successful Monitoring Standards in Education sample testing program at years 3, 7 and 10 and Western Australian Literacy and Numeracy Assessment full-cohort testing program at years 3, 5 and 7 have been augmented by the introduction of MSE9. In 2004, MSE9 tested the reading, viewing and mathematics performance of all year 9 government school students.

A strategy operating across the education and vocational education and training sectors is intended to increase the effective participation of young people in education and training. It seeks to ensure that all 15 to 19 year olds have access to suitable learning programs, appropriate learning environments, and career development services to enable them to make successful transitions between school and adult life.

The strong emphasis on improving literacy and numeracy standards continued with 120 FTE specialist teachers supporting schools in addressing the needs of students through the Getting it Right strategy.

The Department's operational plan for Aboriginal education has established long term plans in key priority areas to improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students. The plan has a particular focus on literacy, numeracy and retention rates of Aboriginal students.

The Behaviour Management and Discipline strategy was extended in 2004 to include 100 primary schools. The strategy has had a focus on the management of student behaviour in lower secondary schools, with an extra 60 FTE teachers appointed to 35 schools to reduce class sizes in years 8 and 9; and 30 schools funded to implement programs, services and strategies to meet the needs of years 8 and 9 students with challenging behaviours.

A major strategy, Building Inclusive Schools, is being implemented to ensure that the culture and pedagogy of schools are genuinely inclusive.



South Australian Government comments

“ During 2003, the activities for the year have been driven by the belief that the achievement and well being of learners is the single most important consideration for the department and its activities.

Student retention continued as one of the department's key priorities in 2003. From the commencement of 2003, the minimum school leaving age for South Australian students was raised from 15 to 16. The Futures Connect initiative was launched concurrently to assist students to engage with more meaningful education and training programs for their individual circumstance, as well as assisting their transition into employment, training or further education. The Student Mentoring Program also commenced to support students returning or remaining at school to re-engage with the curriculum. Forty-five priority schools were involved in the program, with eighty teacher mentors supporting approximately 800 students throughout the year.

In addition to retention, student attendance received significant attention as a critical area in 2003. The Ministerial Taskforce on Absenteeism continued their work with Department of Education and Children's Services working in partnership with the South Australian Police to develop a Memorandum of Understanding on truancy issues and to develop a training and development package to support schools in addressing such issues.

Partnerships were fostered through Working Together for Indigenous Youth (WTIY) initiative, to support Indigenous people to negotiate regional and local agreements related to education of their children and local priorities.

The importance of literacy and numeracy was acknowledged throughout 2003. The South Australian Literacy and Numeracy Network was launched as an online resource and provides parents, students, educators and community members with a coordinated and streamlined source of information, advice, services and programs related to literacy and numeracy learning. There have been a number of other initiatives focussing on literacy and numeracy development, among them, the site based Literacy, Numeracy and ICT Learning Project in 2003 which enabled nine sites involved in the project to perform their own research that explores the interface between literacy, numeracy, ICT and learning.

Student well being issues were progressed throughout 2003, through such initiatives as the Drug Strategy, beyondblue national research initiative into depression in youth and the department's Active for Life initiative which is promoting healthy life practices in children and young people.

By the end of 2003, progress had been made towards a unified model of local management through the development of guidelines for site learning plans and District Support Plans to assist sites and districts in achieving their strategic goals.”

Tasmanian Government comments

“ The development and implementation of a new curriculum, the Essential Learnings Framework covering the years from birth to year 10 continued to be a major priority for Tasmanian Government schools with an increased number of schools being involved in the project. Some schools from the Catholic sector also began to participate in the project.

Additional funding was provided to implement the Government’s policy to reduce class sizes in early childhood years to 25 students and early intervention and Strong Start pilot programs to support parents of young children began in some areas of the State. These programs support young parents, child and health carers and the education community to work together.

The recommendations of the Inclusion Review were implemented which included new guidelines for enrolment in special schools and the development of Individual Education Plans for students with disabilities within the curriculum reform process. The model for allocating special education funding was revised and additional funds were provided by the Tasmanian Government to meet the educational needs of an increased number of students with disabilities.

Other key educational initiatives included the development of a literacy and numeracy plan was developed to ensure continuing improvement in the literacy and numeracy performance of students in Tasmanian schools (including the appointment of literacy and numeracy support staff); the Managing and Retaining Secondary Students at school program was extended with the provision of additional teachers in secondary schools; on-line facilities were provided for both students “at risk” of continuing their education and also for gifted students in primary schools; and a new drug policy was implemented and implementation workshops were conducted around the State.

The requirements of the Teachers Registration Act 2000 were met with teachers registered by the Teachers Registration Board by 31 December 2002. The School Improvement Review process was enhanced with approximately eighty schools commencing the review process with their communities in early 2003 which lead to the development of a School Improvement Plan for each participating school.

A new school levy policy was developed to ensure that all students in Government schools have access to the full curriculum and the range of learning opportunities necessary for their education, regardless of the financial circumstances of their family. This new policy was accompanied with increased financial support for the children of low income families.

Following its destruction by fire, a new Reece High School was built and opened at the commencement of the 2003 school year. This school provides purpose built first class facilities to suit the new curriculum framework within Tasmania with a key feature being the incorporation of new and emerging ICT infrastructure within the buildings. The innovative educational design continues to be widely recognised and the project has won both National and International design awards.

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Australian Capital Territory Government comments

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The ACT Government believes that education is of strategic importance and a key investment in the future of the Territory. Education provides a foundation for the intellectual, physical and social development of young Canberrans leading to a productive and rewarding life.

The Department of Education and Training delivers quality education services through government preschools and schools; registers non government schools; and administers vocational education and training in the ACT.

In 2004 the new Education Act was passed by the ACT Legislative Assembly replacing and bringing together a number of previous Acts. This will take effect from 1 January 2005.

The School Excellence Initiative was launched in 2004. The initiative aims to lift the high standards in student learning, innovation and best practice in ACT government schools, focusing on the key areas that enhance student achievement and learning. The initiative is supported by an improvement framework which provides areas of focus and self assessment tools for schools. It is being complemented by the development of a new ACT curriculum framework, following extensive consultation based on the discussion paper entitled *Every Chance to Learn*.

In 2004 Student Pathways plans have been in place for all students in year 10 in government schools and will be expanded into years 9, 11 and 12 in 2005. Pathways Planning provides an opportunity for students to collaboratively plan their learning pathways through identifying their needs, capacities, personal strengths, interests and goals. Youth workers supporting students will be in all government high schools by 2005.

The student centred approach to appraising the educational needs of students with disabilities has been refined in 2004 and has been extended to the non government school sector. The government has committed increased funding to both sectors for students with a disability in 2004-05.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning commenced operations in new premises in 2004. This purpose-designed facility reflects the government's commitment to the best possible professional learning opportunities for teachers and to providing information communication technology (ICT). Improvements in ICT infrastructure including 'Student Digital Passkey', school website enhancements and improved technical support for student computing will be implemented in government schools in 2005.

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Northern Territory Government comments

“ In 2003 the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) has seen the introduction of several new initiatives building on the successes of programs already in place. Some highlights in 2003:

DEET's commitment to improving the capture and management of student level information continued through the implementation of the Student Administration and Management System in all government schools. As part of the initial roll-out process, all students were assigned a unique identifier, allowing for the electronic transfer of student information between schools and giving schools and the system the capacity to track student activity and performance.

An attendance program commenced in March 2003. This program employed attendance officers to identify students at-risk and not attending school. Appropriate strategies to re-engage the students with schooling have been developed.

A national tender was awarded to Charles Darwin University to review secondary education in the NT. An extensive and comprehensive program of consultations was undertaken, to allow members of the NT community to contribute to the review.

Kalkaringi Community Education Center had three Indigenous students successfully complete their Northern Territory Certificate of Education (NTCE). These are the first Indigenous students to attain an NTCE through schooling in their home community in the history of the Northern Territory. The school received two awards in the National Awards for Quality Schooling and was a finalist in the prestigious Best Schools awards run by *The Australian* Newspaper.

The Interactive Distance Learning project continued to help meet the challenges of remoteness through the application of education activities to over a 100 remote school of the air locations, as well as providing teacher professional development opportunities to 90 remote schools. The ongoing challenge of this technology is the expansion of delivered activities and the provision of educational activities for remote indigenous students and communities.

Accelerated Literacy, a specific English literacy teaching approach, has been trialled in six NT schools with some encouraging results for both Indigenous and non indigenous students in urban and remote settings. The program aims to improve literacy levels for students who are not currently meeting national benchmarks. During the pilot, student progress in reading and comprehension was regularly and comprehensively monitored and outcomes for the majority of students have been outstanding.

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3.6 Definitions of key terms and indicators

Apparent retention rates	The number of full time students in a designated year of schooling, expressed as a percentage of their respective cohort group at an earlier base year — for example, the percentage of full time students who continued to year 12 in 2001 from respective cohort groups at year 10. In this example, the rate is calculated by dividing the total number of full time students in year 12 in 2001 by the total number of full time students in year 10 in 1999.
Full time equivalent student	The FTE of a full time student is 1.0. The method of converting part time student numbers into FTEs should be based on the student's workload compared with the workload usually undertaken by a full time student. The FTE of part time primary students was included for the first time for 2001.
Full time student	A person who satisfies the definition of a student and undertakes a workload equivalent to, or greater than, that usually undertaken by a student of that year level. The definition of full time student varies across jurisdictions.
Geographic classification	<p>Geographic categorisation is based on the agreed MCEETYA Geographic Location Classification which, at the highest level, divides Australia into three zones (the metropolitan, provincial and remote zones). A further disaggregation comprises five categories: metropolitan and provincial zones each subdivided into two categories, and the remote zone. Further subdivisions of the two provincial zone categories and the remote zone category provide additional more detailed classification options. When data permit, a separate very remote zone can be reported along with the metropolitan, provincial and remote zones, as follows.</p> <p><i>A. Metropolitan zone</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mainland State capital city regions statistical divisions: Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth statistical divisions.2. Major urban statistical districts (100 000 or more population): ACT–Queanbeyan, Cairns, Gold Coast–Tweed, Geelong, Hobart, Newcastle, Sunshine Coast, Townsville, Wollongong. <p><i>B. Provincial zone (non-remote)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Provincial city statistical districts plus Darwin statistical division. Provincial city statistical districts and Darwin statistical division (50 000–99 999 population): Albury–Wodonga, Ballarat, Bathurst–Orange, Burnie–Devonport, Bundaberg, Bendigo, Darwin, Launceston, La Trobe Valley, Mackay, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Wagga Wagga. Provincial City Statistical Districts (25 000–49 999 population): Bunbury, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Geraldton, Gladstone, Shepparton, Hervey Bay, Kalgoorlie–Boulder, Lismore, Mandurah, Mildura, Nowra–Bomaderry, Port Macquarie, Tamworth, Warrnambool.

	<p>4. Other provincial areas (CD ARIA Plus score \leq 5.92)</p> <p> Inner provincial areas (CD ARIA Plus score < 2.4)</p> <p> Outer provincial areas (CD ARIA Plus score > 2.4 and < 5.92)</p> <p>C. <i>Remote zone</i></p> <p>5. Remote zone (CD ARIA Plus score > 5.92)</p> <p> Remote areas (CD ARIA Plus score > 5.92 and \leq 10.53)</p> <p> Very remote areas (CD ARIA Plus score > 10.53)</p>
Government recurrent expenditure per full time equivalent student	Total government recurrent expenditure divided by the total number of FTE students. Expenditure is based on the National School Statistics Collection (MCEETYA 2004b), with adjustments for notional UCC charges and payroll tax. Notional UCC is included for all jurisdictions and payroll tax estimates are included for those jurisdictions not subject to it (WA and the ACT). Expenditure figures are in financial years and student numbers are in calendar years, so the total number of students is taken as the average of two years. When calculating the 2000-01 average expenditure per student, for example, the total expenditure figure is at 2000-01 but the total student number figure is the average of student numbers from 2000 and 2001.
Indigenous student	A student of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin who identifies as being an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. Administrative processes for determining Indigenous status vary across jurisdictions.
In-school costs	Costs relating directly to schools. Staff, for example, are categorised as being either in-school or out-of-school. They are categorised as in-school if they usually spend more than half of their time actively engaged in duties at one or more schools or ancillary education establishments. In-school employee related expenses, for example, represent all salaries, wages awards, allowances and related oncosts paid to in-school staff.
Language background other than English (LBOTE) student	A status that is determined by administrative processes that vary across jurisdictions.
Out-of-school costs	Costs relating indirectly to schools. Staff, for example, are categorised as being either in-school or out-of-school. They are categorised as out-of-school if they do not usually spend more than half of their time actively engaged in duties at one or more schools or ancillary education establishments. Out-of-school employee related expenses, for example, represent all salaries, wages awards, allowances and related oncosts paid to out-of-school staff.
Part time student	A student undertaking a workload that is less than that specified as being full time in the jurisdiction.
Participation rate	The number of full time school students of a particular age, expressed as a proportion of the estimated resident population of the same age at June.
Potential year 12 population	An estimate of a single-year age group that could have participated in year 12 that year, defined as the estimated resident population aged 15–19 years, divided by 5.
Real expenditure	Nominal expenditure adjusted for changes in prices, using the GDP price deflator and expressed in terms of final year prices.

Socioeconomic status	As per footnotes to table 3A.40, which provides definitions specific to each table. Elsewhere in the Report, socioeconomic status data are presented that are not fully comparable across jurisdictions because administrative processes for determining socioeconomic status vary across jurisdictions.
Source of income	In this chapter, income from either the Australian Government or State and Territory governments. Australian Government expenditure is derived from specific purpose payments (current and capital) for schools. This funding indicates the level of monies allocated, not necessarily the level of expenditure incurred in any given financial year. The data provide, therefore, only a broad indication of the level of Australian Government funding.
Student-to-staff ratios	The number of FTE students per FTE teaching and non-teaching staff. Students at special schools are allocated to primary and secondary. The FTE of staff includes those who are generally active in schools and ancillary education establishments.
Student	A person who is formally (officially) enrolled or registered at a school, and is also active in a primary, secondary or special education program at that school. Students at special schools are allocated to primary and secondary on the basis of their actual grade (if assigned); whether or not they are receiving primary or secondary curriculum instruction; or, as a last resort, whether they are of primary or secondary school age.
Student, primary	A student in primary education, which covers pre-year 1 to year 6 in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and the ACT, pre-year 1 to year 7 in WA, SA and the NT, and year 1 to year 7 in Queensland.
Student, secondary	A student in secondary education, which commences at year 7 in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and the ACT, and at year 8 in Queensland, SA, WA and the NT.
Students with disabilities	Students included in the annual system reports to Department of Education, Science and Training. The definitions of students with disabilities are based on individual State and Territory criteria, so data are not comparable across jurisdictions.
Teacher	Teaching staff have teaching duties (that is, they are engaged to impart the school curriculum) and spend the majority of their time in contact with students. They support students, either by direct class contact or on an individual basis. Teaching staff include principals, deputy principals and senior teachers mainly involved in administrative duties, but not specialist support staff (who may spend the majority of their time in contact with students but are not engaged to impart the school curriculum) (MCEETYA 2002b).
Ungraded student	A student in ungraded classes who cannot readily be allocated to a year of education. These students are included as either ungraded primary or ungraded secondary, according to the typical age level in each jurisdiction.

3.7 References

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