

Low SES School Communities Smarter
Schools National Partnership
evaluation of staffing, management and
accountability initiatives

Results from the 2012 survey
of principals

Third Progress Report

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Glossary

ACARA	The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. Has oversight of NAPLAN.
ARIA	Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia—an index that underpins many location classifications.
COAG	Council of Australian Governments, an organisation consisting of the federal government, the governments of the eight states and territories and the Australian Local Government Association. NPs are implemented under the auspices of COAG.
CRES	Centre for Research on Education Systems, The University of Melbourne.
DEC	Department of Education and Communities, NSW (from April 2011).
DET	Department of Education and Training, NSW (until April 2011)
FTE	Full Time Equivalent.
HAT	Highly Accomplished Teacher (government sector) or equivalent (non-government sector). An initiative within the SSNP. A HAT models good teaching practice and mentors other teachers through supervision, demonstration and team teaching. A HAT usually has half the teaching load of a regular classroom teacher and is a member of the school executive.
ICSEA	Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage, a scale that represents levels of educational advantage associated with the educational and occupational background of parents of students. A school's ICSEA value is the average level of the educational advantage of its students. Developed by ACARA to assist with the interpretation of NAPLAN results.
Low SES SSNP	Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities Smarter Schools National Partnership.
MCEETYA	The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, (a Ministerial Council of COAG) which was replaced from July 2009 by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) and the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE).
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy. An annual national standardised literacy and numeracy testing program for students Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.
NP	National Partnership, agreements between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments made under the auspices of COAG outlining funding
ISP	Individual Student Plan
PD/PL	Professional development/Professional learning
SSNP	Smarter Schools National Partnership
STARTTS	The NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors

Summary

This report investigates the implementation and effectiveness of initiatives within the five reform areas of the *Low SES School Communities Smarter Schools National Partnership* (Low SES SSNP) as well as changes in the role of school principals. Improvements in school leadership, management and accountability are key goals of the Low SES SSNP.

The evaluation was commissioned on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education to address selected aspects of the bilateral National Partnership Agreement for Low SES School Communities between the Commonwealth and the NSW Government, and the associated implementation plan. The Low SES SSNP is one of a number of National Partnership Agreements created through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in order to improve student learning in Australian schools. The Low SES SSNP was implemented in schools across the government, Catholic and independent school sectors.

The evaluation addresses the effectiveness of initiatives funded through this Partnership to reform staffing and management practices at schools within low SES communities and to improve the public accountability of those schools. The broader goal of the Partnership is cultural change that will lead to a sustainable, more strategic and evidence-driven approach to managing schools that is ultimately transferable to other schools.

Australian and international research demonstrates the link between the low socioeconomic status of a school community and lower student learning outcomes. The strategy of school improvement pursued through the Partnership seeks to break this nexus by implementing a coordinated set of staffing, management and accountability reforms that in combination have been shown to lead to improvements in student learning. Schools could choose to implement initiatives that best meet their particular needs.

Schools participated in the Partnership over four years and joined it progressively in annual cohorts from 2009 to 2012. When joining the Partnership, schools engaged in a consultative process with their stakeholders to decide on the initiatives they wished to implement to address particular reform areas. This initial self-evaluation was the basis for selecting and developing strategies to best meet the needs of all students in the local context. The results of the consultation were distilled in a school plan which detailed agreed targets, strategies, resources, evaluation processes and outputs and which was then revised annually. The plan was updated annually during the four years of the Partnership. Participation in the Partnership provided schools with an opportunity to explore *leadership, management and accountability* in their school by developing plans and goals, strategies for achieving those goals, evaluation processes for the strategies and reporting mechanisms for the outcomes.

This report is based on the responses to an online survey by 328 principals of NSW schools participating in the Partnership. There were 636 schools in the Low SES SSNP when the survey was conducted in September and October 2012. Principals from 556 schools were approached—the remaining 80 principals were from schools involved in the evaluation of another SSNP at the time of the survey. The response rate of the 556 principals was 59.0%.

Questionnaires were mostly completed by school principals. Discussions with relieving or newly appointed principals sometimes resulted in the completion of the questionnaire being delegated to another senior staff member who was more familiar with their school's

involvement with the SSNP.

The distribution of principals across six school characteristics—ICSEA scores, type of school, enrolment size, NAPLAN reading scores and location—was reasonably representative of all the schools participating in the Partnership. Nevertheless, analyses were based on data weighted by sector, ICSEA and type of school to improve further the representativeness of the sample.

The initiatives discussed in this report are those that principals identified as funded under the Smarter Schools National Partnership. Additionally, an initiative is reported only if a principal also provided an assessment of its effectiveness, which led to some under-reporting of implementation.

The 62 initiatives included in the survey's questionnaire were grouped under five of the *Low SES SSNP* reform areas. The five reform areas were:

1. Attracting high performing teachers.
2. Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangements.
3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility.
4. Providing innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities.
5. Introducing accountability initiatives to promote a culture of continuous improvement.

Initiatives for Reform Area 4 were divided into two groups—one dealing with staff and a second dealing with students.

Implementation

All schools were required to implement activities from all six reform areas over the duration of their four year participation in the Partnership. Government schools were required to implement activities that addressed all six reform areas in each year of their participation and most Catholic schools adopted this approach, while independent schools were required to implement activities that addressed Reform Areas 1 and 4 in the first year in the Partnership. Schools could also choose to implement activities from the two other Smarter Schools National Partnerships—*Literacy and Numeracy* and *Improving Teacher Quality*—where these addressed a specific reform area.

All schools were also required to monitor and report their implementation of Partnership initiatives—an activity within Reform Area 5, *Accountability*.

The proportions of principals reporting that their school had implemented at least one initiative differed across reform areas:

<i>At least one initiative in any reform area</i>	97.4%
<i>At least one initiative in reform area . . .</i>	
1. <i>Incentives to attract high performing teachers and principals</i>	76.9%
2. <i>Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangements to attract, retain and develop staff</i>	74.5%
3. <i>School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility</i>	93.7%

3.1 Operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility to attract retain and develop staff	92.5%
3.2 Operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility to improve student learning outcomes	85.3%
4. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities	96.7%
4a: Providing innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers to attract, retain & develop staff	93.3%
4b: Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students	95.5%
4b.1 Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students to improve student learning outcomes	93.3%
4b.2 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes	73.9%
4b.3 Promote student wellbeing to improve student learning outcomes	73.9%
5: Accountability initiatives to promote a culture of continuous school improvement	91.9%

These values underestimate the actual level of implementation. For instance, of the eight schools recorded as not having implemented any SSNP-funded initiatives, four reported having implemented some SSNP-funded initiatives, but without any corresponding information about their perceived effectiveness. The structure of the questionnaire also meant that some missing responses could instead have been recorded as non-implementation. Additionally principals may not have recorded initiatives implemented in previous years that are no longer part of their present strategy.

The value for the incidence of activities in Reform Area 1 (76.9% of principals reported implementing at least one initiative) is likely to be lower than the real level of implementation because the questions were asked only in regard to teachers (attract high performing principals was not included in the questionnaire). Hence some initiatives in this reform area (and overall) may not have been reported. More generally, the link between individual initiatives and reform areas is not necessarily exclusive—some initiatives could be more or less relevant to more than one reform area.

The variation in the number of schools that implemented the 62 specific initiatives at least partly reflects the extent to which the initiatives were:

- generic or specialised;
- a potentially resource-intensive strategic focus in the school; and
- required of schools as a condition of participation in the Low SES SSNP.

For instance, the initiative most frequently reported by schools (88.4%) was *Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs, e.g. literacy & numeracy interventions* (from Reform Area 4), which could be implemented at *any* school, regardless of its particular circumstance. On the other hand, the least frequently implemented initiative through SSNP funding was *providing students with access to STARTTS* (1.3%), a highly targeted program for students who have experiences torture or trauma and which is relevant to a small proportion of schools.

Initiatives that were more frequently implemented were more likely to have already been implemented at the school before the Low SES SSNP. For instance, a high proportion of schools implemented the initiative *Relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff* (87.6%) with only a low proportion of those schools indicating that it was a new initiative

(10.4%). On the other hand, a lower proportion of principals reported *Employing Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs)*, but a higher proportion reported that it was a new initiative (89.2%).

More frequent implementation of initiatives that pre-dated the SSNP is to be expected—schools were likely to want to build on the initiatives in those areas that they had already determined were important and/or already made some progress in implementing—and was anticipated in the implementation plan for the Partnership. There were, however, also instances of schools beginning new initiatives—for instance, monitoring SSNP initiatives—that were both more likely to have been new and to have been implemented in many schools.

Implementation and school context

The report examined differences in the level of participation of schools across aspects of reform areas and individual initiatives for five school characteristics—ICSEA scores, type of school, NAPLAN reading test scores, enrolment size and location. The mostly high level of overall participation by schools in each of the reform areas meant that there was often little scope for differences in participation across school characteristics, although there was usually more scope for variation for individual initiatives and sometimes for initiatives grouped by the topic of particular questions, where those questions form only part of a reform area:

- *The larger the school, the more likely it was to have implemented at least one initiative in a reform area or part of a reform area.* A main driver of participation in reform areas and parts of reform areas and of the implementation of many individual initiatives was *the size of the school in terms of enrolments*. Low SES SSNP funding for schools was based on a school's enrolments (with a loading for more remote schools). Hence larger schools received more funding and were (all else equal) able to implement more initiatives. Although the overall measure, implementation of *at least one initiative*, is an exception, the pattern is not perfectly consistent across all reform areas, and sometimes differences only approach statistical significance, schools with 99 or fewer students usually have lower levels of implementation of initiatives than schools with 1,000 or more students—and the clearer differences were mostly between schools with 99 or fewer students and other schools.

The only major exception among the individual initiatives was the implementation of the accountability initiative *using the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher and school performance*. Smaller schools may be more likely than larger schools to be managed informally and the requirements of the Partnership for school plans may have provided an attractive opportunity for these schools to formalise their planning and approach to school improvement.

- Despite a pattern repeated across reform areas in which *secondary schools were more likely than primary or combined schools to have implemented at least one initiative in each of the reform areas*, the differences were statistically significant only for *accountability initiatives*. Combined schools had implementation rates similar to, or below, those of primary schools. A number of individual initiatives, however, had statistically significant differences, with all but one, *Team-based approaches to teaching and learning*, displaying higher implementation levels for secondary schools.
- *Metropolitan schools were more likely than provincial schools, and provincial schools more likely than remote schools, to have implemented at least one initiative in most reform areas*—a result that may reflect the combined effects of school size, funding

and/or other variables. The few exceptions—initiatives in management and staffing arrangements to attract retain and develop staff; management initiatives to promote student wellbeing; and accountability initiatives—showed a similar pattern, but without reaching statistical significance. Among the many individual initiatives with statistically significant differences, the only clear exception to this overall pattern was *providing assisted housing*, which was a feature of the responses of principals of remote schools.

- Principals' responses suggested that *schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile were less likely than other schools to have implemented at least one initiative in each of the reform areas*, but these differences were statistically significant only for initiatives *providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students to improve student learning outcomes*. The differences were, however, statistically significant for the implementation of a number of individual initiatives across all reform areas, although trends were not always consistent across categories. For instance, initiatives to *introduce curriculum and/or programs for students with particular needs* were least likely to be implemented in schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile (44.1%) and most likely to be implemented in the second lowest ICSEA quartile (71.1%).
- Across reform areas, there was at most a weak suggestion that *schools in the lowest quartile of NAPLAN reading scores* had lower levels of implementation than other schools. The differences were statistically significant for only one reform area, *staff recruitment and retention to attract high performing teachers*, and often any differences were clearest for the category of schools without a NAPLAN reading score, and these were schools with small enrolments. For many individual initiatives, however, there was a stronger tendency for schools in the lowest quartile to have lower levels of implementation. A notable exception was the higher likelihood of schools in the lowest quartile to have *provided attractive terms and conditions outside standard entitlements to attract high performing teachers*.

Effectiveness

Principals reported that the overwhelming majority of SSNP-funded initiatives implemented at their school were effective. Principals were asked about the effectiveness of each initiative implemented at their school and given five possible responses—*Not at all effective; Somewhat effective; Effective; Highly effective* and *Too early to tell*. Across SSNP-funded initiatives, on average 84.2% were judged as *effective*, including 42.6% rated as *highly effective*.

The overall high level of the reported effectiveness of the initiatives meant that comparisons of the effectiveness among initiatives or across school characteristics were in terms of the *Highly effective* response—there was often too little variation in the combined measure of *Highly effective or Effective* to provide meaningful differences. The identification of any differences, therefore, is against the background of mostly high levels of reported effectiveness.

While it would be desirable to identify the effectiveness of an initiative, the measured effectiveness of initiatives can be due several sources, including the initiative's:

- inherent nature (it could be an inherently effective or ineffective initiative)
- the intended outcome of the initiative (its goal could be easy or difficult to achieve)
- implementation (it could be well or poorly implemented by people with more or less

experience and with more or fewer resources).

The reported effectiveness of the initiatives varied across the intended outcomes and reform areas:

<i>Intended outcomes</i>	<i>Highly effective</i>	<i>Highly effective or effective</i>
<i>attracting high performing teachers</i> (Reform 1)	54.0%	87.3%
<i>attracting, retaining and developing staff</i> (Reforms 2, 3, and 4a)	44.9%	85.1%
<i>improving student learning outcomes</i> (Reforms 3 and 4b)	43.9%	85.2%
<i>promoting student wellbeing</i> (Reform 4b)	33.5%	77.9%
<i>promoting a culture of continuous school improvement</i> (Reform 5)	30.2%	80.5%

Although the initiatives implemented as part of Reform Area 5 were less likely than others to have been reported as *highly effective*, the cultural change associated with *promoting a culture of continuous school improvement* may simply be an inherently more difficult goal than improving staffing or learning profiles. Similarly *promoting student wellbeing*, may be more challenging than other goals. Comparisons of the effectiveness of initiatives (and of schools implementing those initiatives) measured against different types of effectiveness may therefore be problematic.

There was considerably greater variation in the proportion of principals who reported that particular initiatives were highly effective. The initiatives most frequently rated as *highly effective* were:

	<i>Highly effective</i>	<i>Effective or Highly effective</i>
<i>Providing assisted housing</i> (RA 1)	85.0%	85.0%
<i>Providing students with access to STARTTS</i> (RA 4b)	76.5%	100.0%
<i>Employing Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs)</i> (RA 2)	68.6%	86.4%
<i>Employing Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs)</i> (RA 3)	67.2%	89.9%
<i>Opportunities for professional learning & development</i> (RA 1)	63.8%	95.0%
<i>Employing or providing access to youth workers</i> (RA 4b)	58.3%	82.9%
<i>Use of new technologies in teaching</i> (RA 2)	57.2%	85.9%
<i>Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles within classrooms</i> (RA 3)	55.8%	86.6%
<i>Team-based approaches to teaching & planning</i> (RA 2)	54.7%	89.2%
<i>Other innovative & tailored learning opportunities for students</i> (RA 3)	54.4%	83.3%

These estimates of effectiveness provide only limited policy or program guidance about choices of initiatives to implement in other contexts. There are several further considerations:

- *purpose or intended outcome—effectiveness* for different initiatives can refer to different goals. Selection of programs depends on the expected outcomes.
- *cost effectiveness*—for a given budget, a less effective but cheaper initiative might be able to deliver greater improvement in, say, student learning than a more effective, but expensive initiative if it can be implemented in more schools. The survey did not collect information about implementation costs of the various initiatives.

- *multiple outcomes*—some initiatives may influence multiple Partnership outcomes, and judge their effectiveness on the basis of their contribution to one outcome only might be misleading.
- *unmeasured outcomes*—the measures of effectiveness used in the survey of principals focus on goals central to the Partnership—improved student learning outcomes, better staff recruitment, retention and development and changes to management culture. An initiative such as *promoting greater cooperation with other schools to share resources*, for instance, may have little direct effect on any of these outcomes, but may be effective in other ways if it leads to greater efficiency and flexibility in the use of resources.

There is a further issue about the generalisability of these results to other schools. Schools selected the initiatives they wished to implement on the basis of their own situational analysis, that is, on the basis of the needs of their particular school. Introducing the same initiatives in other schools may not produce the same results. These results are generalisable, however, in concert with the processes by which initiatives were selected—allowing schools, with appropriate stakeholder consultation, the flexibility to choose initiatives appropriate to their needs, skills and other resources and to implement them in ways appropriate to their particular circumstances with an emphasis on monitoring and evaluating their impact.

This point is reinforced by the negligible relationship between the effectiveness of initiatives and the extent to which they have been implemented. For instance, the first two initiatives listed above (assisted housing and access to STARTTS) are implemented in relatively few schools because they are mostly relevant to only a few schools—schools in rural areas for assisted housing and schools with students exposed to torture and trauma for STARTTS.

The effectiveness of initiatives was not related to whether they were in place before or after the school joined the Low SES SSNP, which may reflect contending considerations—pre-existing initiatives continuing, possibly in an expanded form, because the school believes them to be effective, and the opportunities provided by Partnership funding to address identified needs that previously could not be addressed at all or to address them in new ways.

Effectiveness and school context

Relatively few differences were found in the effectiveness of initiatives across schools of different types and operating in different contexts, which suggests that findings about the effectiveness of Partnership initiatives are generalisable across school settings if schools are able to select the initiatives that they consider best meet their own needs. There were no statistically significant differences in the proportion reported to be *highly effective* for the majority of individual initiatives across the range of school settings considered. Nevertheless some differences were evident:

- Principals of schools in the lowest quartile of ICSEA scores were less likely than principals of other schools to report that their school's SSNP-funded initiatives were *highly effective*. This pattern, however, was not uniform. Schools in the second lowest quartile frequently reported the highest levels of effectiveness—and the differences were stronger for staffing outcomes than student outcomes (for which they were sometimes not present) and for accountability (for which differences were rare).
- Overall, principals of primary schools were more likely to report that initiatives implemented at their school were *highly effective* than were principals of secondary schools or principals of combined schools. The differences among principals of primary

and secondary schools were often modest and, where present, inconsistent across initiatives. The strongest difference was a tendency for principals of primary schools to be more positive about the effectiveness of their initiatives in improving student outcomes.

- Principals of schools in the lowest NAPLAN reading test quartile and of schools without a NAPLAN reading test score were slightly more likely to report that their SSNP-funded initiatives were *highly effective* than were principals of other schools. The difference was mostly attributable to initiatives targeting staffing outcomes. The differences for initiatives linked to student and accountability were mostly not statistically significant.
- The size of a school (measured by its enrolments) had mostly only a modest and patchy effect on the likelihood of a principal describing their initiatives as *highly effective*. The overall differences are not statistically significant, although after statistical adjustment resulted in a lower proportion of *highly effective* initiatives reported in smaller schools. Differences were not statistically significant for initiatives promoting student learning or accountability. Schools with 99 or fewer students seemed to have less capacity to effectively implement management and staffing initiatives, but somewhat more effective outcomes for initiatives to promote student wellbeing.
- The perceived effectiveness of initiatives differed by location (metropolitan, provincial or remote) in selected instances. Any statistical significance can be mostly attributed to differences between the views of principals of metropolitan and provincial schools—sample sizes for remote schools were often smaller. Where there were differences, principals of metropolitan schools were consistently more likely to have viewed their initiatives as *highly effective* than principals of provincial schools. The values for remote schools did not always reflect the values for provincial schools. In particular, the effectiveness of initiatives to improve *staff recruitment and retention* and *innovative and flexible staffing arrangements* to improve student outcomes was relatively high—60.6% compared with the overall mean of 54.0% and 62.6% compared with the overall mean of 50.1% respectively.

The role of principal

Principals were satisfied about working at their school. They were asked *Overall, how do you feel about working at this school?* and their responses were *Very satisfied* (70.0%), *Satisfied* (25.2%), *Somewhat satisfied* (3.9%), *Dissatisfied* (0.4%) and *Very dissatisfied* (0.5%). Differences across the school categories were mostly slight, except that the overall satisfaction of principals was lower in:

- schools at the lower end of the ICSEA distribution.
- schools in remote areas.

Even so, the overall satisfaction of principals in these schools was still quite high.

Principals agreed that there had been a number of changes in aspects of their role since the beginning of the Low SES SSNP in their school. The aspects and the percentages of principals *agreeing* or *strongly agreeing* were:

<i>I spend more time on planning & whole school improvement</i>	91.0%
<i>I spend more time on teaching & learning issues</i>	78.4%
<i>My job has become more satisfying</i>	56.1%

<i>I am better organised</i>	55.8%
<i>I am better able to delegate</i>	79.0%
<i>I am better able to influence the direction in which the school is moving</i>	88.5%
<i>I have a better understanding of the strengths, weaknesses & needs of my staff</i>	84.0%
<i>I am better able to support targeted staff development</i>	94.8%
<i>The professional needs of my staff are better met</i>	94.7%
<i>My communication with staff has been enhanced</i>	69.1%
<i>I have been able to play a more proactive role in teacher recruitment & selection</i>	52.6%

The level of agreement with the statements usually varied only modestly and inconsistently across school characteristics such as school type, enrolment size, literacy levels, ICSEA and location. On average, however, *positive changes in the role of principal were more likely in primary than in other types of schools and in provincial rather than metropolitan or remote schools.*

In the context of questions about *adopting best practice performance management & staffing arrangements*, principals were asked to indicate the importance of each of the following sources of evidence they could use when evaluating teachers' performance and support/development needs: student test scores; other student learning outcomes; documented feedback from students, parents or teachers' peers or other evidence. The overwhelming majority of principals used multiple sources of evidence when reflecting on the abilities and needs of their teachers. The most important source of evidence was *Other measurable student learning outcomes*, where *other* can be taken to mean *other than test scores*. More than 95% of principals described this evidence as *Very important* (47.4%) or *Rather important* (47.7%). Emphasis is clearly given to student learning outcomes when evaluating teacher performance.

The frequency of use of the other four specified sources of evidence was similar. The importance of mentoring and supervision is reflected in the responses to feedback from peers. The prominence given to parent and student feedback may be surprising, but underlines the broader focus on the effectiveness of teachers in encouraging and facilitating student learning as a criterion for teacher evaluation. The use of test scores appears to be part of the mix of evidence rather than a sole criterion—and more than a quarter of principals attach little or no importance to test scores as a basis for teacher evaluation, which is quite distinct from their diagnostic use to improve student learning outcomes.

1. Introduction

This paper reports results from a survey of principals of NSW schools that are participating in the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities Smarter Schools National Partnership (the Low SES SSNP). The survey is part of two evaluations of the Low SES SSNP that have been commissioned on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education:

- *The evaluation of school staffing, management and accountability initiatives* being conducted by the University of Melbourne's Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES)
- *The evaluation of school external partnerships* being conducted by the University of Canberra's Education Institute in conjunction with CRES.

A single survey was conducted to meet the data needs of both evaluations. The approach was intended to minimise requests to schools for data about their programs. These evaluations have their origins in the 2008 changes to Commonwealth-State funding arrangements and the Council of Australian Government's (COAG's) subsequent approval of the National Education Agreement and creation of three Smarter Schools National Partnerships (SSNPs):

1. The *Literacy and Numeracy* SSNP
2. The *Improving Teacher Quality* SSNP
3. The *Low Socio-economic Status School Communities* SSNP.

The evaluations were commissioned on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education to address selected aspects of the bilateral National Partnership Agreement for Low SES School Communities between the Commonwealth and the NSW Government and of the associated implementation plan.

This report is part of the agreed work program for *the evaluation of school staffing, management and accountability initiatives*. A separate paper prepared by the University of Canberra reports survey results that relate to the *school external partnerships* evaluation. This report is the third in a series of progress reports that will contribute to a final report of the evaluation to be submitted in 2014. The final report will draw on information from further surveys of principals and teachers, a series of case studies, analyses of system- and school-level data and other research.

The purpose of the survey of principals of schools participating in the Low SES SSNP was to collect information to assist in the evaluation of the impact of reforms and initiatives. The survey provided principals with the opportunity to inform the evaluation about synergies with other programs, cooperation with other schools or community groups, difficulties in the implementation of the initiatives and any effects associated with redirection of resources and estimates of the extent of funding for particular initiatives.

The data collected through this survey is confidential and is not reported at either the school or sector level—no individual, school or sector is identified in any of the analyses contained in this report.

Several questions guide the analyses:

1. Which initiatives are schools implementing using SSNP funding?
2. Whether initiatives were new to the school or existed before SSNP funding?
3. Which initiatives have been most effective in:
 - attracting high performing teachers?
 - attracting, retaining and developing staff?
 - improving student learning outcomes?
 - promoting student wellbeing?
 - promoting a culture of continuous school improvement?

The next chapter of this report reviews some of the background and context to the Low SES SSNP. Chapter 3 provides a description of the way in which the survey was conducted and the representativeness of the sample. The following chapters examine the implementation of the reform areas and individual initiatives, their effectiveness and principals' responses to questions about their role and changes to it. A summary chapter and a chapter outlining further proposed work conclude the report. Four appendices are attached: Appendix A, which details the weighting procedure; Appendix B, which provides estimates of standard errors; Appendix C, which shows the number of responses on which some estimates are based; and Appendix D, which contains a copy of the survey's questionnaire.

2. Context

The Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians commits the Australian Government and the state and territory governments to working cooperatively with all school sectors to ‘focus on school improvement in low socio-economic communities’ (MCEETYA 2008: 16). The Low SES School Communities National Partnership addresses this commitment. Participating schools ‘will be better equipped to address the complex and interconnected challenges facing students in disadvantaged communities’ through the funding of school improvement programs (COAG 2008). Together with the *Literacy and Numeracy* and *Teacher Quality* National Partnerships, the Low SES SSNP is one of the three *Smarter Schools National Partnerships*. These three Partnerships have been designed to function independently, but they ‘are tightly integrated and mutually complementary processes of reform’ (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 2).

The Low SES School Communities National Partnership is part of a cross-sectoral approach to lifting achievement and educational outcomes within low SES communities. School staffing, management and accountability are three key areas of educational reform supported by the Smarter Schools National Partnerships, particularly the Low SES SSNP. A substantial body of research highlights the importance of these initiatives, particularly in combination, for school improvement. An effective policy environment emphasises the interconnection among strategies and initiatives and the need for a systematic rather than piecemeal approach (Elmore 2007).

Subsequent to the Smarter Schools National Partnerships, COAG has endorsed the *Empowering Local Schools* National Partnership, which supports participating schools to make more decisions at a local level so that they can respond better to the needs of their students and their local school community and hence improve educational outcomes for their students. This Partnership, which was implemented in 2012 and 2013, builds on some aspects of changes under the Low SES SSNP. It further emphasises the role of the principal and school executive in strategic planning and operational management, including staffing and budgets.

In NSW, 331 schools are participating in this *Empowering Local Schools* NP. The participation of the 229 NSW government schools in this Partnership is linked to the broader *Local Schools, Local Decisions* reform in NSW government schools, which also seeks to devolve greater decision-making to individual schools. The introduction of a new resource allocation model is central to these changes in the government sector and will give principals greater discretion in the use of their funding. As with the Low SES SSNP, these reforms seek a culture change in schools to underpin continual improvement in student learning outcomes.

The relationship between the socio-economic status of school communities and the academic achievements of their students is well documented in Australia and internationally. For instance, NAPLAN data show that students from more disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds achieve at lower levels compared with students from less disadvantaged backgrounds in Australia overall and in each of the states and territories

(COAG Reform Council 2010: 56). Results from PISA point to a similar pattern in all OECD countries (Field, Kuczera & Pont 2007: 41).

Schools that serve low SES communities often encounter other patterns of social disadvantage. They tend to teach higher proportions of Aboriginal, non-English speaking and refugee students, or work with families with a history of generational poverty. The initiatives supported by the Low SES SSNP include strategies to address the wider needs of these students as well.

An efficient school system maximises the relationship between a student's ability and their achievement and minimises any influence of extraneous factors such as social disadvantage. Despite the sound performance of Australian students on many achievement measures, the relationship between SES and school achievement is stronger in Australia than in many other countries (Lamb & McGaw 2007). Although this relationship has weakened in Australia since 2000, the apparent improvement in equity can be attributed to the 'lower proportion of [Australian] students achieving at the top levels' (COAG Reform Council 2010: 34). The effect of socioeconomic background on scores in achievement tests is mirrored in a range of other educational outcomes such as Year 12 completion and post school destinations.

Targeted financial support for low socio-economic school communities can improve student outcomes (Gustafsson 2003). The extent of any improvement, however, depends on the way in which those funds are used. The research emphasises the need for simultaneous complementary interventions over a range of school practices. For instance, McKinsey & Company (2007) in a comparison of the performance of many education systems found that school reforms were often unable to deliver substantial improvements in student outcomes because other aspects of school practice or organisation impeded improvement. Similarly, it is reported that UK schools using an amalgam of strategies suited to their context and stage of development had an increased chance of achieving long-term transformational change (Harris, Allen & Goodall 2008).

2.1 School staffing

Low SES SSNP staffing reforms focus on improving retention while also supporting initiatives to encourage quality teaching.

2.1.1 Staff retention

Researchers have documented the importance of retaining quality staff within low SES schools (Lamb & Teese 2005, Lamb 2007, Welch, Helme et al. 2007). Lamb and Teese's (2005) review of equity programs within disadvantaged schools in NSW found examples of successful and highly effective programs that were 'undermined by high staff turnover' (Lamb & Teese 2005: 133). The turnover in staff becomes a financial burden as schools need to reinvest to up-skill and build capacity once again. The long-term success of an initiative depends on the retention of expert staff, as 'continuity and stability in staffing are essential ingredients to a robust equity funding framework' (Lamb & Teese 2005: 150).

The Low SES SSNP addresses staff retention within Reform Area 1 with various 'incentives to attract high-performing teachers and principals' (Smarter Schools National

Partnership 2011). Incentives include:

- **Additional staffing resource incentives:** employing a temporary Highly Accomplished Teacher, employing temporary paraprofessionals.
- **School organisation incentives:** providing additional release for staff for professional development or team teaching.
- **Financial incentives:** one-off recruitment allowances, changing approaches to permanent and casual appointments, providing an allowance to high achieving teacher education students to undertake internships at targeted National Partnership schools.

2.1.2 Strategies to encourage quality teaching

The OECD report *Teachers Matter* found that reforms to build quality teaching in schools require a two-pronged approach. One dimension of reform needs to focus on attracting and retaining teachers to work in particular schools, while another addresses the status and effectiveness of teachers (OECD 2005). The report *How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top* encourages systems to invest in their staff and ensure that the right applicants become teachers as 'the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers' (McKinsey & Company 2007). The Low SES SSNP supports a range of measures to encourage quality teaching:

- employing high performing graduates, and/or ensuring that new graduates are mentored by more experienced teachers.
- employing paraprofessional staff with skills to provide in and out of classroom support to teachers and allow them more time to focus on student learning.
- providing opportunities for existing staff to access professional learning and build capacity through collaborative planning and team teaching opportunities.
- identifying an executive member with English as a Second Language (ESL) expertise to work across schools to lead professional learning and coordinate teaching and learning strategies.
- employing a teacher with expertise in Aboriginal student learning outcomes to work across schools and embed Aboriginal content and viewpoints across all curriculum areas.
- identifying an academic partner from a university to promote action research within the school setting and provide additional support for teaching and learning.
- using new technologies to allow access and sharing of resources.

The appointment of Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) (and their non-government sector equivalents) is a key strategy of the SSNP. A HAT is defined as an excellent teacher who models high quality teaching for his/her colleagues across school(s) and will lead other teachers in the development and refinement of their teaching practice to improve student learning outcomes within and across schools. The creation of paraprofessional positions through the National Partnerships is another key strategy to support quality teaching. Educational paraprofessional staff work under the guidance and supervision of teachers to support teaching and learning inside and outside the classroom, while operational paraprofessionals work under the guidance of school executive to fulfil non classroom based roles in schools.

Reform Area 4 of the Low SES SSNP provides opportunities for staff to participate in professional development, especially in data analysis, literacy and numeracy intervention programs, as well as in developing individual learning plans for students, homework centres and introducing strategies that meet the needs of ESL and refugee students (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011).

2.2 School management

School management reforms within the Low SES SSNP can be grouped by three themes: leadership capacity, instructional leadership and distributive leadership.

2.2.1 Leadership capacity

Research on effective schools working within disadvantaged communities in Melbourne found that leadership culture is a precondition for high-performance (Kellock, Burke et al. 2007). Hence Reform Area 1 of the Low SES SSNP involves strategies to attract high performing principals into disadvantaged schools. Government schools participating in the Low SES SSNP may offer (with regional director endorsement) a one-off recruitment allowance ‘up to a maximum of \$15,000 gross to attract principals to challenging schools’, with the qualifier that ‘the principal will be required to remain at the school for at least 3 years’ (NSW Department of Education and Training). Catholic schools have also documented various measures to attract high-performing principals into schools that are difficult to staff or may be geographically remote. (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 46). The Australian Productivity Commission sees ‘merit in offering higher remuneration for hard-to-staff positions as a way of signalling vacancies of the highest priority across the schools workforce’ (Productivity Commission 2012: 281).

Reform Area 2 incorporates building leadership capacity by encouraging schools to ‘adopt best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals’ (Smarter Schools National Partnership 2011). A clear role for principals ensures that schools are able to build ‘strong leadership with a clear vision and direction for the school and a high degree of leadership stability over time’ (Zbar, Kimber et al. 2008: 3). Mentoring and coaching for school leaders by matching ‘aspiring executive with experienced executive at other schools’ is supported ‘to increase the numbers of school leaders in particular areas’ (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 44). Targeted professional development for leadership such as the *NSW DET Analytical Framework for Effective Leadership and School Improvement in Literacy and Numeracy* and the *Team Leadership for Schools Improvement* programs are also provided (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 44). The Low SES SSNP also provides resources for schools to employ a Business Manager or Assistant Business Manager which may ease the administrative workload on leadership (NSW Department of Education and Training 2010).

2.2.2 Instructional Leadership

Some research suggests that successful school leaders should remain instructional leaders first and foremost and focus on the ‘the improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role’ (Elmore 2000: 20; Robinson 2007). Instructional leadership is encouraged by the Low SES SSNP through ‘principals working with school executive teams to provide teachers with the appropriate knowledge and skills to

implement strategies to improve outcomes for all students’ (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 46). School leaders involved in the Low SES SSNP will also be aware of the strategies that teachers are employing within classrooms, through the documentation of individual teacher professional learning plans, as teachers work with coaches/mentors to set goals, develop strategies and evaluate their own professional growth (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011).

2.2.3 Distributive Leadership

Distributive leadership is about building a model of leadership within schools that ‘is not top-down or overtly bureaucratic’ (Harris, Allen & Goodall 2008: 18). Fullan reports that an ‘organisation cannot flourish (or at least not for long) by the actions of the top leader alone . . . there needs to be leaders at many levels’ (Fullan 2002: 12). The Low SES SSNP provides school leaders with release time so that they can offer teachers focused, individualised professional learning in areas such as leadership development (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011: 44). Distributive leadership of this kind creates new teams and ‘spreads out leadership practice’, which has proven effective to ‘secure greater collective responsibility, decision making and support for the quality of teaching and learning’ (Harris, Allen & Goodall 2008: 18).

2.3 Accountability

Reform Area 5 of the Low SES SSNP encourages schools to set explicit goals, clearly describe strategies to achieve those goals and propose the methods to be used for assessing the success of the strategies—hence part of the broader emphasis on data analysis (Smarter Schools National Partnership 2011). The greater transparency inherent in these processes enhances the school’s management accountability, as well as contributing to a broader culture of evidence-based practices and reflection. The Low SES SSNP provides schools with many approaches to build greater accountability including (from Department of Education and Training 2011):

- Implementing a new accountability process for school executives in schools.
- Strengthening school development and accountability within whole-school planning, such as through interviews with members of the school community, monitoring of school performance, assessments of teachers and leaders, external evaluations and publish annual reports.
- Developing specialist teams within school clusters to visit schools regularly to assess outcomes in terms of the School Plan.
- Employing additional staff with specific skills in the creation and maintenance of databases for data collection.
- Engaging school leadership teams in school accountability processes across the various levels of the school.

2.4 The schools and reforms

The Low Socio-economic Status (SES) School Communities National Partnership seeks to improve the education and life opportunities of students from low socio-economic school communities (Smarter Schools National Partnerships 2011).

2.4.1 Participating schools

Initially 638, or about one in every six NSW schools were selected to participate in the Low SES SSNP. Schools progressively joined the Partnership between 2009 and 2012 for a period of four years. Compared with all NSW schools, the selected schools have a disproportionately greater number of students below national minimum literacy standards and, for secondary schools, lower Year 12 retention rates (CRES 2012).

2.4.2 The reforms

Schools selected from a menu of activities with the view of making measurable differences to the educational outcomes of their students. The activities could be selected from six reform areas:

- *Reform Area 1:* Incentives to attract high performing teachers and principals.
- *Reform Area 2:* Adoption of best practice performance management and staffing arrangements.
- *Reform Area 3:* Developing school operational arrangements that encourage flexibility and innovation.
- *Reform Area 4:* Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities.
- *Reform Area 5:* Strengthening school development and accountability mechanisms.
- *Reform Area 6:* Developing external partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities.

All schools were required to implement activities from all six reform areas over the duration of their four year participation in the Partnership. Government schools were required to address all areas in each year of their participation. Most Catholic schools adopted the same approach as government schools. Independent schools were required to include activities that addressed Reform Areas 1 and 4 in the first year of their participation. Schools could also choose to introduce strategies to address activities from the two other Smarter Schools National Partnerships—Literacy and Numeracy and Improving Teacher Quality—where these also addressed a specific reform area.

Table 1 Low SES SSNP reform areas and related initiatives

Reform area	Example of activity	Relevance of initiative		
		School Staffing	Management	Accountability
1. Incentives to attract high performing teachers & principals	Employing a Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT)	Highly	Relevant	<i>Slightly</i>
2. Adoption of best practice performance management & staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals	Development of school plans that articulate clear goals	Relevant	Highly	Highly
3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation & flexibility	Employing paraprofessionals	Highly	Highly	<i>Slightly</i>
4. Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities	Professional development for school executives & teachers to help them use & analyse student data (e.g. NAPLAN) to cater to student needs	Highly	Highly	Highly
5. Strengthen school accountability	Use of data	Highly	Highly	Highly

Table 1 lists five of the six reform areas of the Low SES SSNP and the initiatives to which they are related. The sixth reform area, *School partnerships*, is the subject of a separate evaluation and report. The matrix of reform areas and initiatives and the gradation of relevance emphasises the inter-relatedness of strategies for school improvement. The survey questionnaire is structured around the six Low SES SSNP *reform areas*. The following sections discuss each of the three initiatives central to this evaluation: Staffing, management and accounting.

3. The survey

An online survey was administered to principals of schools participating in the Low SES SSNP. Principals were invited to participate in the survey in an email sent to them on 5 September 2012. Sector representatives had previously contacted the principals about the survey and told them to expect an email from the evaluators. The email contained a web address for the questionnaire. Reminders were sent to principals on 20 September and 9 October. This report is based on responses received by 19 October.

3.1 The questionnaire

A questionnaire was prepared by CRES and the Education Institute, with advice from the Evaluation Unit of the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation of the NSW Department of Education and Communities¹ and a cross-sectoral working party. The questionnaire collected information from principals about the nature of the initiatives being run at their school, their relationship to the Low SES SSNP, as well as whether those initiatives preceded the SSNP, and any difficulties in implementing these initiatives.

The questionnaire was structured explicitly around the six reform areas of the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities Smarter Schools National Partnership:

- Reform 1. Incentives to attract high performing teachers.
- Reform 2. Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangements.
- Reform 3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility.
- Reform 4a. Provide innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers.
- Reform 4b. Provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students.
- Reform 5. Accountability initiatives to promote a culture of continuous improvement.
- Reform 6. School external partnerships.

This report focuses on Reform Areas 1 to 5, which are the *school staffing, management and accountability initiatives*. The questionnaire identified particular initiatives within these reform areas and asked whether these initiatives existed before the SSNP, whether they were funded through the SSNP and their effectiveness, among other matters. The questionnaire is included as Appendix D.

¹ Formerly the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET).

Table 2 Responses to the school principal survey

	% of population	N
Schools in the low SES school communities SSNP	---	636
School contacted (<i>target population</i>)	100%	556
All responses	64.0%	356
Responses fulfilling minimal criteria	59.0%	328

3.2 The sample

In general, questionnaires were completed by school principals. Discussions with relieving or newly appointed principals sometimes resulted in the completion of the questionnaire being delegated to another senior staff member who was more familiar with their school's involvement with the SSNP.

Table 2 shows the number of principals of schools participating in the Low SES SSNP, the number of responses to the survey and the per cent of the population responding. When the survey was conducted there were 636 schools in the Low SES SSNP. Principals from 556 schools were approached as part of the survey (the *target population*)—the remaining 80 schools were involved in the evaluation of another SSNP at the time of the survey and it was decided to approach these schools as a later part of the evaluation.

The questionnaire was begun by 356 principals. The analyses in this report are based on the 328 principals who completed the questionnaire up to and including the questions about *Reform 3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility*, which is about half-way through the parts of the questionnaire that address the *school staffing, management and accountability initiatives*. The response rate is therefore 59.0%.

3.3 Representativeness

Although a response rate of 59.0% would generally be considered satisfactory, there is still scope for bias in the responses because some categories of principals, with particular experiences of the Low SES SSNP, may have been more likely than other principals to respond to the survey. Table 3 explores this possibility.

Administrative data for six school characteristics were merged onto the population of the schools participating in the Low SES SSNP:

- *Affiliation of the school* (government, Catholic, independent).
- *Type of school* (primary, secondary, combined, special)
- *NAPLAN reading quartile*, estimated from the average across Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 of school means for the 2010 NAPLAN reading test after being normalised for the Low SES SSNP population. A fifth category is provided for schools that do not have any means for the reading test.
- *ICSEA quartiles*, estimated from the 2010 ICSEA, a scale based on the occupational and educational backgrounds of parent of students at the school, as well as the proportion of Aboriginal students and the ARIA index of the school. A small number of schools did not have an ICSEA score. Section 4.3.1 provides more details about the measure.
- *Enrolments*, based on the number of full-time equivalent enrolments at a school.
- *Location*, based on MCEETYA's variant of the ARIA index.

The extent to which principals of schools with these characteristics are over- or under-represented in the sample is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 also shows the distribution of the target population, the number who responded and response rates. For instance, 86.5% of schools in the Low SES SSNP were in the government sector, compared with 84.2% of schools represented in the survey. The lower-than-average response rate (57% compared with 59%) is consistent with government schools being very slightly under-represented in the sample (48.2%) compared with the target population (86.5%).

Compared with an average response rate of 59.0%, response rates were higher for:

- Catholic schools (76%)
- Secondary schools (62%)
- The highest two NAPLAN reading test quartiles (64.0% and 63.3%).
- The highest two ICSEA quartiles (64.9% and 65.6%)
- Schools with between 151 and 250 enrolments (70.5%).
- Metropolitan schools (62.7%).

There is no consistent pattern in these differences, although there is some indication that response rates might be slightly higher for the more advantaged or the better performing of the low SES SSNP schools. The sometimes apparently large differential response rates often correspond to small differences between the distributions of the target population

(column (3)) and of the sample (column(4)). For instance, though the response rate among schools in the third ICSEA quartile is higher than average by 6.6 percentage points, the distribution of the third ICSEA quartile sample and target population differs by only 2.8 percentage points. Overall, the sample was fairly representative of the target population.

There was also relatively little difference across these six school characteristics between the distributions of the Low SES SSNP schools and the schools in the target population—the target population was fairly representative of all Low SES SSNP participants.

Nevertheless, weighting the analyses so that they better accord with the distributions of certain key school characteristics in the Low SES SSNP population may improve the results. The relatively small overall sample size and the sometimes small number of schools in some categories limits any weighting design. Appendix B outlines a weighting schema based on the affiliation of the school, the type of school (with secondary and combined grouped together) and ICSEA quartiles (highest two versus the rest) for government primary schools only.

Table 3 Participation in the school principal survey by school characteristics

School characteristics	(1) Wtd % responded	(2) % of Low SES SSNP	(3) % of target population	(4) % of sample	(5) % responded	(6) No. of respondents
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	59.0%	328
<i>n =</i>	328	636	556	356	---	328
Affiliation of school						
Government	86.5	86.5	86.5	84.2	57.4	276
Catholic	9.7	9.7	9.9	12.8	76.4	42
Independent	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.0	50.0	10
Type of school						
Primary	68.4	68.4	71.2	72.3	59.8	237
Secondary	18.9	17.4	15.3	16.2	62.4	53
Combined	7.9	9.4	8.1	6.7	48.9	22
Special	4.7	4.7	5.4	4.9	53.3	16
NAPLAN reading quartile						
Highest quartile	19.9	20.9	20.0	21.6	64.0	71
Third quartile	20.7	20.7	19.6	21.0	63.3	69
Second quartile	19.4	20.9	21.0	18.9	53.0	62
Lowest quartile	24.3	20.7	21.6	22.6	61.7	74
Missing	15.8	16.7	17.8	15.8	52.5	52
ICSEA						
Highest quartile	24.7	25.4	24.7	27.2	64.9	87
Third quartile	25.6	24.7	24.1	26.9	65.6	87
Second quartile	24.8	24.9	25.2	22.8	53.3	73
Lowest quartile	24.8	25.0	26.0	23.1	52.5	74
Enrolments						
501 or more	18.3	17.6	16.4	17.0	61.5	56
251 to 500	22.8	23.4	24.3	22.9	55.6	75
151 to 250	22.7	19.0	18.9	22.6	70.5	74
51 to 150	14.8	17.9	17.3	15.2	52.1	50
50 or less	21.4	22.0	23.2	22.3	56.6	73
Location						
Metropolitan	45.8	41.4	43.3	46.0	62.7	151
Provincial	46.9	52.2	50.2	47.3	55.6	155
Remote	7.3	6.4	6.5	6.7	61.1	22

1. Based on the survey of principals, data supplied by NSW DEC and data from ACARA's MySchool website.

2. Column (1) is the weighted distribution of valid responses to the survey.

3. Column (2) is the distribution of all schools participating in the Partnership.

4. Column (3) is the distribution of all schools approached for the survey.

5. Column (4) includes all schools that provided meaningful responses.

6. Column (5) has the values in Column (2) divided by Column (4).

7. Column (6) is the number of responses. See Appendix B.

The first column in Table 3 shows the weighted distribution of the sample. The distribution of government, Catholic and independent schools now (necessarily) matches the corresponding distribution for the Low SES SSNP schools. Similarly the weighted proportions of primary (68.4%) and special (4.7%) schools match the proportions in the population of Low SES SSNP schools, although there is still some discrepancy for the proportions of secondary and combined schools which were treated as a single category in the weighting. And the distribution of the weighted sample across ICSEA quartiles is closer to the population distribution.

Weighting a sample on selected strata does not always improve the match between the distributions of the sample and population on other variables. Table 3 shows that the effect on the weighting on distributions for NAPLAN reading quartiles and enrolment and location categories offers little improvement in the correspondence between the population and sample and in some instances increases the discrepancy slightly. While weighting is intended to reduce any sample bias, it relies on measured characteristics. It cannot take into account characteristics such as *commitment to the Low SES SSNP* or *time management of principals* that are potentially important for the evaluation.

3.4 The experience of principals

Principals' knowledge of their school's involvement in the Partnership is likely to be related to their length of service at their current school. Table 4 shows the distribution of principals across three measures of experience—the year in which they were first appointed as a principal at their current school, the year in which they first joined the staff of their current school and the year in which they first became a principal of any school. The results point to the mobility of principals of schools in the Partnership. Nearly one in every five (19.3%) principals had first been principal of their current school in 2012, while nearly half (45.1%) had become principal of the school in the years 2010 to 2012.

Many of the more recently appointed principals, however, had been working at their school before becoming principal of that school—only 11.3% had first joined the school in 2013 and less than a third (31.8%) had started at the school in the years 2010 to 2012. Separate analyses show that 7.7% of all principals had been first appointed as a principal in 2012 after previously working at their current school, which is 40% of those who first became a principal of their current school in 2012. Another 31% had previous experience as a principal at another school.

Table 4 Principals by year when first appointed as principal at current school, to staff at current school and as principal at any school by sex (%)

<i>When first became:</i>	Principal at current school			Staff at current school			Principal at any school			
	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
2012		15.5	22.2	19.3	9.1	13.0	11.3	10.3	15.2	13.1
2011		19.9	13.3	16.2	13.1	10.0	11.3	8.4	8.1	8.2
2010		13.0	7.0	9.6	12.2	6.9	9.2	7.6	3.4	5.2
2009		8.4	12.9	11.0	11.0	11.6	11.4	7.2	7.5	7.4
2008		10.2	8.3	9.0	8.1	7.8	7.9	7.3	9.0	8.3
2006-07		12.8	14.1	13.5	14.3	14.4	14.4	15.0	11.2	12.8
2000-05		13.7	16.6	15.4	15.9	15.6	15.7	23.0	30.4	27.2
Before 2000		6.5	5.5	5.9	16.4	20.7	18.8	21.4	15.2	17.8
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
n		137	189	326	138	188	326	136	187	323
% by sex		43.0	57.0	100.0	n=327					

1. Based on the survey of principals, data supplied by NSW DEC.

2. Based on responses from 328 principals. Smaller n's are due to missing responses.

3. Per cents are weighted, n's are counts.

4. Implementation of initiatives

This chapter discusses the participation of schools in the staffing, management and accountability reform areas and the related initiatives funded under the Low SES SSNP. It presents information on the extent to which the various reform areas and initiatives were implemented overall and the extent to which schools with different characteristics implemented the reform areas and each initiative.

The five reform areas of *staffing, management and accountability* were:

1. Implementing incentives to attract high performing teachers and principals.
2. Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals.
3. Introducing school operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility.
4. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities.
5. Strengthening school accountability.

All schools were required to implement activities from each of these five reform areas over the duration of their four year participation in the Partnership. Government schools were required to address all areas in each year of their participation. Most Catholic schools adopted the same approach. Independent schools were required to include activities that addressed Reform Areas 1 and 4 in the first year of their participation. Schools could also choose to introduce activities from the two other Smarter Schools National Partnerships—*Literacy and Numeracy* and *Improving Teacher Quality*—where these addressed a specific reform area.

When joining the Partnership, schools engaged in a consultative process with their stakeholders to decide on the initiatives they wished to implement to address particular reform areas. This initial self-evaluation was the basis for selecting and developing strategies to best meet the needs of all students in the local context. The results of the consultation were distilled in a school plan which detailed agreed targets, strategies, resources, evaluation processes and outputs and which were then revised annually. All schools were required to monitor and report on Partnership-related activities.

4.1 The questions

The questionnaire grouped the initiatives under their reform areas. For each initiative, principals were asked:

- ◇ Whether the school had chosen to implement the initiative/incentive.
- ◇ Whether the initiative/incentive existed before the *Smarter Schools National Partnership (SSNP)* commenced.
- ◇ Whether the initiative/incentive was funded through the SSNP.
- ◇ For their view of the effectiveness of the initiative.

Principals were also asked to describe their implementation of *other* initiatives or incentives intended to contribute to the area of the reform.

Figure 1 Abbreviated questionnaire extract showing standard question structure

Reform 1. INCENTIVES TO ATTRACT HIGH PERFORMING TEACHERS

If any of the following incentives are part of this school's strategy to *attract high performing staff*, please indicate:

- whether the incentive existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the incentive is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the incentive so far in ***attracting high performing teachers***.

If the incentive is not part of this school's strategy, **do not select it**.

If any incentive is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<i>Incentive to attract high performing teachers</i>	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness of this incentive in attracting high performing teachers				
	Y	N	Y	N	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
a. Establishing leadership and strategic positions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Providing mentoring support to teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Providing assisted housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Other incentives to attract high performing teachers (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Figure 1 shows an abbreviated example of a set of questions. These questions address only some of the context of Low SES SSNP initiatives. Some schools will have implemented Low SES SSNP-related initiatives before the school joined the Low SES SSNP. For instance, schools typically have programs that focus on the needs of poorly, highly, or differently performing students. Initiatives falling under heading *Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs, e.g. literacy and numeracy interventions*, therefore may not be new. Some schools will have chosen to use funds from the Low SES SSNP to support or expand these already-existing programs.

Although the questions identified a school's initiative as pre-SSNP and/or SSNP-funded, they do not address all the subtleties of resource allocation to Low SES SSNP-related programs within a school. Schools may have broadened (new programs addressing more student learning needs or more students or both) or deepened (the same programs but with more resources) their programs or simply substituted funding used for an already-existing program with SSNP-funding and re-allocated the newly-freed funding to another purpose—a purpose that might lie outside the scope of the Low SES SSNP.

Although the questions asked about implementation of initiatives, they do not explicitly record non-implementation—principals were asked not to select initiatives that were not part of their school's strategy. Omitted responses can include principals who had only part-answered the questionnaire. Hence *implementation* is based only on responses where there is evidence that the respondent answered parts of the questionnaire beyond the relevant set of questions.

Table 5 lists the reforms and links them to the sets of questions in the survey's questionnaire and a particular goal. Care is required when comparing the effectiveness of initiatives across sets of questions because the meaning of effectiveness sometimes differs across sets of questions. This reflects the differences in the intended outcomes of the various reforms. Reform 1, for instance, is the introduction of incentives to attract high performing teachers and hence effectiveness is judged in terms of the extent to which the incentives achieve that goal. Reform 5, however, is about the introduction of accountability initiatives to promote a culture of continuous improvement and therefore effectiveness is assessed in terms of contributing towards that goal. Reform 4 is represented by two sets of questions, one focused on the learning of staff (4a) and one focused on the learning of students (4b).

Table 5 Reform area, measured effectiveness and the questionnaire

No.	Reform	Effectiveness in . . .	Q
1	Incentives to attract high performing teachers.	● attracting high performing teachers.	6
2	Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangements.	● attracting, retaining and developing staff.	7
3	School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility.	● attracting, retaining and developing staff. ● improving student learning outcomes.	10 11
4a	Provide innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers.	● attracting, retaining and developing staff.	12
4b	Provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students.	● improving student learning outcomes by providing opportunities. ● improving student learning outcomes through individualised support. ● promoting student wellbeing.	13 14 15
5	Accountability initiatives to promote a culture of continuous improvement.	● promoting a culture of continuous school improvement.	16

1. Questions about Reform 6, School external partnerships, were included in the survey and are the basis of a separate report.

2. The Effectiveness of the initiatives is discussed in the next section of this report.

Some initiatives can contribute to more than one goal and were included in more than one set of questions. This has sometimes resulted in slightly different measures of implementation, partly because the estimates are based on slightly different sub-sets of the sample of principals depending on the extent to which they completed the questionnaire.

4.2 Implementation

Implementation in this report refers to SSNP-funded initiatives—that is, initiatives where the principal indicated that they were funded through the SSNP. In addition, to confirm that this response was intended, a school was recorded as participating in the initiative only if the principal also answered the corresponding question about the initiative's effectiveness.

Table 6 shows the proportion of principals who reported implementing at least one SSNP-funded initiative by the reform area and question with which it was associated in the questionnaire. Just as the different reform areas can be relevant to varying degrees to the broader staffing, management and accountability initiatives and can be relevant to more than one reform area (see Table 1), so too the specific initiatives about which principals were asked can be relevant to varying degrees to more than one reform area. For instance, the specific initiative of *providing opportunities for professional learning and development*, which is included in Question 6 as *Reform Area 1* (Incentives to attract high performing teachers and principals), is also relevant to *Reform Area 4* (Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities). The values in Table 6 do not take this *spillover* effect into account and hence probably underestimate the extent to which schools have addressed the different reform areas.

Table 6 Per cent of principals reporting implementation of at least one SSNP-funded initiative by reform area and question number

Initiative	Implementation	
	%	n
At least one initiative	97.4	328
Reform areas . . .		
1. Incentives to attract high performing teachers (Q6)	76.9	328
2. Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangements to attract, retain and develop staff. (Q7)	74.5	328
3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility (Q10, Q11)	93.7	321
Q10. Operational arrangements that encourage innovation & flexibility . . . to attract, retain and develop staff	92.5	321
Q11. Operational arrangements that encourage innovation & flexibility . . . to improve student learning outcomes	85.3	318
4. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities	96.7	312
4a: Providing innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers to attract, retain & develop staff (Q12)	93.3	312
4b: Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students (Q13, Q14, Q15)	95.5	301
Q13. Provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students . . . to improve student learning outcomes	93.3	301
Q14. Provide individual learning support for students, . . . to improve student learning outcomes	73.9	300
Q15. Promote student wellbeing . . . to improve student learning outcomes	57.3	300
5: Accountability initiatives to promote a culture of continuous school improvement (Q16)	91.9	296

1. Values show the per cent of principals who reported the implementation of at least one SSNP-funded initiative (and reported its effectiveness) in a reform area or question number.
2. For reform areas including more than one question, the number of responses is that of the question with the highest number of responses.

There are other reasons why the values in Table 6 might underestimate the level of implementation of individual activities and hence of reform areas. Nearly all principals (97.4%) indicated that their school had implemented at least one SSNP-funded initiative. Of the eight schools recorded as not having implemented any SSNP-funded initiatives, four reported having implemented some SSNP-funded initiatives, but without any corresponding information about their perceived effectiveness. More generally, not providing a response about the effectiveness of an initiative would mean that its implementation was not recorded.

The structure of the questionnaire also meant that in some instances where principals did not answer the question, the absence of their response could instead have been recorded as non-implementation. For instance, principals of two of the eight schools recorded as not having implemented any SSNP-funded initiatives did not respond to *any* questions about Reform Areas 1 to 5, but did respond to some questions later in the questionnaire.

Table 6 shows that about three quarters (76.9%) of principals reported implementing at least one initiative for *Reform Area 1* (incentives to attract high performing teachers and principals). Question 6, however, which corresponds to this reform area, only asked principals about initiatives to attract teachers, not principals. Given the focus of the Low SES SSNP on management and leadership, it is possible that at least some schools had introduced initiatives to attract high performing principals. These initiatives would not have been reflected in the values in Table 6.

Nearly all principals reported that their school had implemented at least one initiative in *Reform Area 4* (96.7%), with only slightly lower proportions reporting implementing at least one initiative for teachers (93.3% for 4a) and at least one initiative for students (95.5% for 4b). Again these values are likely to underestimate the actual level of implementation of SSNP-funded initiatives because of the reasons provided above.

The proportion of schools that implemented at least one initiative in *Reform Areas 3 and 5*—93.7% and 91.9% respectively—was greater than 86.5%. On the other hand, only 74.5% of principals reported implementing at least one initiative in *Reform Area 2* (*Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangements to attract, retain and develop staff*).

Table 7 lists the 62 initiatives asked about in the nine standard questions that address *school staffing, management and accountability*, allowing for some repetition of initiatives with different effectiveness criteria. The initiatives are ordered from high to low by the per cent of schools that have used SSNP funding to implement the initiative. Table 7 also shows the per cent of principals that indicated the initiative did not exist before the SSNP.

Table 7 SSNP-funded initiatives by proportion of schools implementing

Q	Initiative	Implementation		New
		%	n	%
13	Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs	88.4	301	17.6
12	Relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff	87.6	312	10.4
16	Monitoring & evaluating the impact of new SSNP initiatives	81.8	296	88.4
12	Professional development opportunities to help teachers use/analyse student data to cater for student needs	78.4	312	25.8
12	Quality professional learning for school-based teams	77.0	312	34.0
13	Using student assessment & other data to identify student needs	76.7	301	12.9
10	Use of new technologies in teaching	76.1	321	23.4
16	Using the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher & school performance	75.6	296	17.0
13	Differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students	72.3	301	31.8
16	Using evidence . . . to inform decision-making and/or strategic direction setting	71.8	296	20.5
10	Team-based approaches to teaching & planning	69.4	321	30.0
11	Use of new technologies in teaching	67.7	318	18.3
6	Opportunities for professional learning & development	66.9	328	7.3
6	Mentoring support to teachers	61.2	328	35.7
16	Expanding the range of school activities that are evaluated	58.9	296	64.4
11	Curriculum and/or programs for students with particular needs	58.0	318	24.8
14	Providing Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for students needing assistance	55.3	300	21.3
6	Establishing leadership & strategic positions	53.3	328	62.3
10	Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles	52.7	321	57.9
14	PL for teachers on meeting individual learning needs	52.0	300	40.2
7	Professional learning plans for staff	51.1	328	41.2
13	Transition plans for students moving from primary to secondary school (s)	50.9	72	19.2
13	Transition plans for students moving from school to work, further training/education (s)	50.7	72	27.8
16	Making planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available	50.4	296	43.4
7	Supporting early career teachers professionally	49.3	328	12.6
12	Prof. dev. on a range of student wellbeing theories & approaches	48.2	312	34.9
11	Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles within classrooms	47.5	318	51.8
10	Greater cooperation with other schools to share resources	46.1	321	41.3
14	Providing students with access to learning support services	43.5	300	6.5
12	Prof. dev. on a range of behaviour management theories & approaches	43.3	312	35.4
12	Engaging staff through prof. dialogue on behaviour management	42.6	312	24.4
7	Managing the staffing mix & succession planning	41.2	328	35.3
15	PL for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives	41.2	300	24.4
6	Incentives to attract high performing early career teachers	37.8	328	56.2

Continued /-

Table 7 SSNP-funded initiatives by proportion of schools implementing—continued

Q	Initiative	Implementation		New
		%	n	%
10	Employing additional paraprofessionals in other support roles	37.8	321	71.4
10	Flexibility in timetabling and/or school's hours	36.8	321	57.7
10	Other arrangements that encourage innovation & flexibility	36.2	321	50.2
7	Revised staff performance review procedures	35.2	328	51.9
13	Transition plans for students moving from primary to secondary school (p)	32.9	236	19.2
12	Other innovative & tailored PL opportunities for teachers	31.7	312	35.7
11	Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside classrooms	30.1	318	61.5
15	Delivering a wellbeing program to students	29.4	300	27.6
7	Other performance management & staffing arrangements	22.7	328	42.8
11	Employing additional paraprofessionals in other support roles outside classrooms	22.1	318	70.9
12	Whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers & school executive	21.4	312	45.4
14	Other types of individual learning support for students	21.1	300	35.0
16	Other initiatives to improve accountability/promote a culture of continuous school improvement	21.1	296	37.1
11	Other school operational arrangements to encourage innovation & flexibility	20.8	318	42.9
13	Other innovative & tailored learning opportunities for students	20.6	301	35.9
15	Providing students with access to counselling services	20.2	300	10.4
15	Providing links to government wellbeing-related services for student and their families	20.2	300	35.1
10	Employing HATs	20.0	321	91.0
11	Out of school hours learning programs for targeted students	19.8	318	43.7
15	Providing students with access to health services	19.1	300	29.3
15	Providing links to non-government wellbeing-related services for students & their families	17.1	300	38.4
11	Employing HATs	16.5	318	89.2
6	Attractive terms and conditions outside standard entitlements	13.7	328	67.6
15	Other initiatives to promote student wellbeing	12.9	300	38.3
6	Other incentives to attract high performing teachers	7.0	328	79.7
15	Employing or providing access to youth workers	6.0	300	52.5
6	Assisted housing	1.5	328	35.7
15	Providing students with access to STARTTS	1.3	300	0.0

1. The initiatives are sorted from high to low implementation.
2. Q is the question number in the questionnaire (see Appendix D).
3. Per cents are weighted (see Appendix A), n's are counts.
4. Implementation means that a school both received SSNP funding for the initiative and that the principal answered the corresponding question about the initiative's effectiveness (see Figure 1).
5. Information for some initiatives was asked twice in regard to different reform areas.
6. New shows the per cent of SSNP-funded initiatives that did not exist before the SSNP (see Figure 1).
7. Approximate standard errors are provided in Appendix B.
8. (p) and (s) indicate values for primary and secondary schools respectively.

Adoption of the various SSNP-funded initiatives varied widely—from 88.4% for *Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs, e.g. literacy and numeracy interventions* to 1.3% for *Providing students with access to STARTTS* (Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors). Implementation of an initiative, however, does not capture the extent of a school's involvement or the absolute or relative amount of the resources a school has chosen to devote to a particular initiative or group of initiatives.

The variation in the number of schools implementing the different initiatives at least partly reflected the extent to which the initiative was:

- ◇ generic or specialised;
- ◇ a potentially resource-intensive strategic focus in the school; and
- ◇ required of schools as a condition of participation in the Low SES SSNP.

The initiatives most frequently reported by schools were, with one exception, generic and could be implemented at *any* school, regardless of its particular circumstances:

- *Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs, e.g. literacy & numeracy interventions.*
- *Implementing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff.*
- *Providing professional development opportunities to help teachers to use and analyse student data to cater to student needs.*
- *Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams e.g. involving executive, faculty and teachers within and beyond the school.*
- *Using student assessment and other data to identify student needs.*
- *Use of new technologies in teaching.*
- *Using the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher and school performance.*
- *Implementing differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students.*
- *Using evidence . . . to inform decision-making and/or strategic direction setting.*

The exception is *Monitoring and evaluating the impact of new SSNP initiatives*, which, by definition, is restricted to schools participating in the Low SES School Communities National Partnership. The initiative, however, is required of all schools participating in the Low SES SSNP and is consistent with the Partnership's goal of encouraging evidence-based school management strategies defined within the SSNP implementation plan (Smarter Schools National Partnership 2011). Because of the wording of the question, however, some principals may not have realised that this question referred to their situational analysis and implementation plan.

Among the ten initiatives that were *least* frequently implemented:

- two were specific to particular school contexts and hence not necessarily relevant to every school.
Providing assisted housing.
Providing students with access to STARTTS.
- four reflected a potentially resource-intensive strategic decision:
Other incentives to attract high performing teachers.

Employing or providing access to youth workers.
Employing highly accomplished teachers (HATs) or their equivalent.
Providing attractive terms & conditions outside standard entitlements.

- four were related to student wellbeing:
Providing links to government wellbeing-related services for students & their families
Providing students with access to health services
Providing links to non-government wellbeing-related services for students & their families.
Other initiatives to promote student wellbeing.

A key part to the Low SES SSNP was that schools were able to diversify their initiatives to fit their specific context and implement their existing initiatives along with the new, which research finds increases the likelihood for schools to achieve long term transformational change (Harris, Allen & Goodall 2008). Initiatives that were more frequently implemented were more likely to have already been adopted by the school before the Low SES SSNP. For the initiatives listed in Table 7, the correlation coefficient between the per cent of schools with SSNP-funded participation in an initiative and the per cent of schools reporting that the initiative was new was -0.25. For instance, a high proportion of schools participated in the initiative *Relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff* (87.6%) and a low proportion of participating schools indicated that it was a new initiative (10.4%), while a lower proportion of principals reported *Employing HATs*, but a high proportion reported that it was a new initiative (89.2%).

More frequent implementation of initiatives that pre-dated the SSNP was to be expected—schools were likely to want to build on the initiatives in those areas that they have already determined were important and/or already made some progress in implementing—and was anticipated in the implementation plan (National Smarter Schools Partnerships 2011). The few schools that implemented STARTTS, for instance, all introduced it before the National Partnerships began. There was, however, also clear evidence of many schools beginning new initiatives—for instance, monitoring SSNP initiatives is more likely to be both new and to have been implemented by most schools.

Linking the level of implementation to the reform areas listed in Table 5 is problematic. Comparisons between reform areas in aggregate were confounded by the number and content of the questions asked for each reform area—the more questions asked, the greater the likelihood that implementation in at least one initiative for that reform will be recorded. The extent to which individual initiatives were implemented, however, provides some indication of the engagement with the reform areas.

In terms of the reforms listed in Table 5, the more frequently implemented initiatives were in the areas of:

- Reform 4a, *providing innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers* (Q12)—three of the ten most-frequently implemented initiatives related to this reform.
- Reform 4b, *providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students* (Q13, Q14, Q15), especially the goal of improving learning outcomes for all students (Q13)—three of the ten most-frequently implemented initiatives related to this reform.

- Reform 5, *promoting a culture of continuous improvement* (Q16) —three of the ten most frequently implemented initiatives related to this reform.

These results are perhaps not too surprising. *Providing teachers with more professional learning* (Reform 4a), for instance, built on programs already widely available across schools and mostly already in place. Nevertheless, one of the initiatives, *providing quality professional learning for school-based teams*, was a new development in about a third of the schools. Another of the initiatives, *providing professional development opportunities to interpret student data*, was strongly encouraged among SSNP participants because it related to an underpinning goal of the National Partnership to shift schools to a more evidence-based and strategic approach to their activities (Smarter Schools National Partnership 2011).

Similarly, Reform 4b is at the heart of the mandate of SSNP schools—it would be surprising if schools did not seek, when given the opportunity, to provide more stimulating learning environments for their students. Initiatives that serve to create a more stimulating learning environment are particularly important within schools that serve low SES school communities for they play a crucial role in lifting the achievement levels and outcomes of young people (Friedlaender & Darling-Hammond 2007). This is exactly what Table 7 suggests they have done, through targeted programs, differentiated teaching and, again, focusing on student assessments to inform their teaching. Providing student support (Q14) and promoting student wellbeing (Q15), however, were sets of initiatives that were less frequently adopted.

Implementing the accountability initiatives (Q16) of Reform 5 is embedded in participation in this National Partnership. Schools were required to publish school plans, with goals, strategies for achieving those goals and measurable ways of assessing the extent to which those goals have been achieved. Hence *monitoring and evaluating the impact of new SSNP initiatives* should be universal among schools. While all schools were required to have formal implementation plans for the Partnership, the plans may not necessarily be used as a lever to *drive change to improve student, teacher and school performance*. That three-quarters of principals of participating schools were using the school plans in this way is consistent with a major expectation of the Partnership, as was the high incidence of the closely related initiative of *using evidence to inform decision making*.

Initiatives to use more technology in teaching and more team teaching were also among those more frequently reported by principals and are elements of Reform 3, *changes to school operational arrangements to encourage innovation and flexibility*. Similarly several initiatives to attract high performing teachers were implemented fairly widely.

Initiatives related to several reform areas were less widely implemented. Those related to certain aspects of Reform 4b, *providing student support or improving student wellbeing*, were less commonly adopted as were changes to adopt best practice performance management and staffing arrangements. Issues such as relevance (e.g. providing housing assistance or access to STARTTS) and cost (employing a HAT, for instance) were no doubt influential when schools decided on the initiative/s they wished to pursue through the SSNPs.

4.3 Implementation of initiatives and school context

The implementation of the various reform areas and the individual initiatives differs with a range of considerations, including the characteristics of the school. This section compares the range of initiatives schools chose to implement in the Low SES SSNP across several school contexts:

- the ICSEA score (from the 2010 NAPLAN analyses).
- the type of school—primary, secondary, combined and special.
- the mean score for the 2010 NAPLAN reading tests.
- the number of full-time equivalent student enrolments at the school.
- the location of the school.

Tables 8 to 12 show the per cent of schools in each category of the context variable that have implemented each initiative. For instance Table 8 shows the per cent of schools in each of the ICSEA quartiles that provided SSNP-funded *mentoring support for teachers*, as well as the overall level of participation across all ICSEA quartiles.

Each table includes measures of whether at least one initiative was implemented for each of the questions and, in the first row, for the implementation of at least one SSNP-funded initiative for any question. The often high level of these values (over 90%—see Table 6) means that statistically significant differences among school categories are uncommon. In addition, however, Tables 8 to 12 include those individual initiatives where the likelihood of implementation differs statistically significantly among categories of schools. Initiatives that were not significant are omitted.

4.3.1 ICSEA

The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is a scale that represents levels of educational advantage of a school associated with the educational and occupational background of the parents of students of that school. ICSEA was developed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting authority (ACARA) to assist with the interpretation of NAPLAN results. The scale has evolved over time and the values used here are for 2010. Although schools were not selected for the Low SES SSNP on the basis of their ICSEA score, schools participating in the partnership mostly have scores that are well below average. Schools were divided into quartiles based on their ordering on ICSEA (see Table 3). A small proportion of schools did not have an ICSEA score.

The truncation of the distribution of ICSEA scores (the schools are all low SES) means that it is less likely that a relationship between the implementation of a particular initiative and ICSEA scores will be observed. Nevertheless, there were sometimes substantial differences in implementation across ICSEA quartiles in Table 8.

- ◊ For the *staffing-related measures*, there was little difference among ICSEA categories in schools' implementation of initiatives related to *Staff recruitment and retention* (although schools in the lowest quartile are less likely to provide mentoring support to teachers) and *Management and staffing arrangements*. Although there was no statistically significant difference among ICSEA categories in implementation of at

least one initiative around *innovative and flexible school operational arrangements* and *providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities*, there were some differences in the extent to which particular initiatives were implemented. For the individual initiatives, it was mostly schools in the highest ICSEA quartile that reported higher levels of implementation and/or schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile that reported lower levels of implementation. For instance, 31.1% of schools in the highest ICSEA quartile had *employed a HAT* compared with an overall average of 20.2%; and only 63.1% of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile reported *Use of new technologies in teaching* compared with the average for all schools of 76.2%.

Table 8 Implementation of selected SSNP-funded initiatives by ICSEA quartiles (%)

Initiatives	ICSEA quartiles (%)	Highest	Third	Second	Lowest	Total	p
At least one initiative		97.7	97.4	97.0	97.4	97.4	1.00
6 Staff recruitment & retention to attract high-performing teachers		80.4	78.4	75.9	70.5	76.3	0.49
Providing mentoring support to teachers		74.2	58.3	62.7	49.5	61.2	0.01
7 Management & staffing arrangements to attract, retain & develop staff		73.7	76.9	79.8	71.3	75.4	0.63
10 Innovative & flexible school operational arrangements . . . to attract, retain & develop staff		92.5	92.4	91.4	85.5	90.5	0.37
Employing HATs		31.1	13.0	20.0	16.8	20.2	0.03
Greater cooperation with other schools to share resources		57.1	48.3	50.5	30.5	46.5	0.01
Use of new technologies in teaching		81.9	80.8	79.0	63.1	76.2	0.02
11 Innovative & flexible school operational arrangements . . . to improve student learning outcomes		85.7	85.6	86.6	74.3	83.1	0.12
Introduction of curriculum and/or programs for students with particular needs		55.9	62.2	71.1	44.1	58.3	0.01
12 Providing innovative & tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers to attract, retain & develop staff		93.4	88.0	91.4	82.1	88.7	0.12
Providing professional development opportunities to help teachers use/analyse student data to cater to student needs		80.2	86.8	83.0	64.1	78.5	0.00
Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams		81.7	84.1	78.7	61.4	76.5	0.00
Implementing relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff		93.0	93.5	91.0	71.8	87.3	0.00
Providing whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers & the school executive		36.4	24.1	18.9	8.1	21.9	0.00
Providing professional development on a range of behaviour management theories & approaches		43.1	48.7	50.1	30.0	42.9	0.05
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities for students to improve student learning outcomes		93.7	84.7	85.8	78.2	85.6	0.05
Using student assessment & other data to identify student needs		85.2	83.2	70.3	66.7	76.4	0.02
Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs, e.g. literacy & numeracy interventions		95.2	89.5	88.3	80.2	88.4	0.04
14 Providing individual learning support for students . . . to improve student learning outcomes		69.5	71.3	72.5	57.7	67.8	0.17
Transition plans for students moving from secondary school into work, further training or further education (secondary)		29.2	68.2	71.4	30.9	51.7	0.01
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing		53.5	59.5	54.6	40.8	52.2	0.11
Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives		47.4	52.6	37.6	24.9	40.7	0.00
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement		85.2	84.9	85.8	75.1	82.8	0.23
Making planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available		53.5	63.2	48.0	37.0	50.6	0.02
Expanding the range of school activities that are evaluated		50.4	67.4	70.1	46.2	58.6	0.01
Number of principals		87	87	73	74	321	---

1. Values show the per cent of schools participating in the SSNP-funded initiative and are weighted.

2. Values in bold show the per cent of schools that implemented at least one initiative from the corresponding question.

3. Total values may differ from corresponding values in other tables because of a small number of schools without an ICSEA value.

4. Numbers of principals are for the full sample—slightly fewer responded to Questions 10 and later in the questionnaire.

- ◇ For initiatives related to *improvement of student outcomes*, the only statistically significant difference for reporting *any* initiative in a question was for *providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students*—schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile (78.2%) were less likely than all schools (85.6%) to have implemented at least one initiative. Although there were no significant differences for the other summary measures related to improved student learning outcomes or student wellbeing, several individual initiatives were less likely than average to have been implemented by schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile.
- ◇ There was no statistically significant difference among ICSEA quartiles in the extent to which schools implemented *at least one* of the *accountability* initiatives, but schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile were less likely than other schools to have implemented *Making planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available* (37.0% compared with the overall average of 50.6%) and *Expanding the range of school activities that are evaluated* (46.2% compared with the overall average of 58.6%).

4.3.2 Type of school

Four types of school are identified in Table 9—primary, secondary, combined and special. Combined schools include public *Central* schools that mostly cater for enrolment from kindergarten to Year 10, as well as other schools that have enrolments to Year 12. Results for special and combined schools are not discussed because of the smaller number of responses.

The differences between types of schools in Table 9 were less consistent than those between ICSEA quartiles. Again there were few statistically significant differences for the summary measures—only the differences for having implemented at least one *Accountability* initiative were statistically significant. Across all the summary measures and individual initiatives, however, there was a tendency, albeit not always consistent, for higher levels of implementation of initiatives in secondary schools and lower levels in central schools, with primary schools between these two categories. This difference may reflect the relative size of the types of schools as well as the greater complexity and differentiation in secondary schools, although in the latter case, higher levels of initiative implementation by combined schools might be expected.

The implementation of a number of individual initiatives, however, differs with the type of school. Secondary schools were more likely than schools overall to have introduced several staffing initiatives designed to attract or retain staff or to improve student learning outcomes:

- establishing leadership and strategic positions (72.3% compared with 53.3% overall).
- managing the staffing mix and succession planning (57.3% compared with 41.2% overall).
- employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside classrooms (47.2% compared with 30.1% overall).
- employing additional paraprofessionals in other support roles (54.5% compared with 37.8% overall).

Table 9 Implementation of selected SSNP-funded initiatives by type of school (%)

(%)	Type of school (%)	Prim.	Sec.	Comb.	Spec.	Total	p
At least one initiative		97.8	98.3	90.8	100.0	97.4	0.17
6 Staff recruitment & retention . . . <i>to attract high-performing teachers</i>		76.6	82.2	71.6	68.8	76.9	0.10
<i>Establishing leadership & strategic positions</i>		50.6	72.3	44.6	31.3	53.3	0.00
7 Management & staffing arrangements to . . . <i>attract, retain & develop staff</i>		74.8	81.4	66.1	56.3	74.5	0.31
<i>Managing the staffing mix & succession planning</i>		39.1	57.3	30.6	25.0	41.2	0.02
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . . <i>to attract, retain & develop staff</i>		90.5	94.4	85.6	81.3	90.4	0.34
<i>Employing additional paraprofessionals in other support roles</i>		34.0	54.5	33.8	33.3	37.8	0.05
<i>Team-based approaches to teaching & planning</i>		72.3	66.1	65.0	46.7	69.4	0.01
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . . <i>to improve student learning outcomes</i>		82.8	88.3	75.3	68.8	82.6	0.50
<i>Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside classrooms</i>		24.9	47.2	24.6	46.7	30.1	0.00
<i>Out of school hours learning programs for targeted students</i>		10.0	55.6	29.6	0.0	19.8	0.00
12 Providing innovative & tailored professional learning opportunities to attract, retain & develop staff		89.2	91.8	85.6	75.0	88.7	0.17
<i>Providing professional development opportunities to help teachers use/analyse student data to cater to student needs</i>		79.3	83.9	79.6	40.0	78.4	0.00
<i>Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams</i>		74.9	87.8	74.6	66.7	77.0	0.02
<i>Implementing relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff</i>		90.7	83.9	78.9	73.3	87.6	0.01
<i>Providing whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers & the school executive</i>		18.8	35.0	19.3	6.7	21.4	0.04
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities . . . <i>to improve student learning outcomes</i>		84.8	89.6	85.6	81.3	85.6	0.74
<i>Implementing transition plans for students moving from primary to secondary school (s)</i>		---	59.2	31.1	---	50.9	0.02
<i>Transition plans for students moving from secondary school into work, further training or further education (s)</i>		---	62.8	21.9	---	50.7	0.00
14 Providing individual learning support for students . . . <i>to improve student learning outcomes</i>		66.8	77.7	57.9	56.3	67.7	0.23
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing		50.6	59.9	52.0	50.0	52.5	0.66
<i>Employing or providing access to youth workers</i>		2.3	15.5	5.0	21.4	6.0	0.00
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement		82.0	91.8	77.8	68.8	82.9	0.04
<i>Expanding the range of school activities that are evaluated</i>		56.1	73.0	40.4	71.4	58.9	0.02
<i>Other initiatives to improve accountability &/or promote a culture of continued school improvement</i>		24.8	13.9	4.2	28.6	21.1	0.05
<i>Number of principals</i>		237	53	22	16	328	---

1. Values show the per cent of schools implementing the SSNP-funded initiative and are weighted.

2. Values in bold show the percent of schools that implemented at least one initiative from the corresponding question.

3. Numbers of principals are for the full sample—slightly fewer responded to Questions 10 and later in the questionnaire.

Secondary schools were also more likely to have implemented some programs providing extended care for students:

- out of school hours learning programs for targeted students (55.6% compared with 19.8% overall).
- employing or provide access to youth workers (15.5% compared with 6.0% overall).

There were several initiatives that were more likely to have been implemented by primary schools:

- team based approaches to teaching and learning (72.3% compared with 69.4% overall).
- implementing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff (90.7% compared with 87.6% overall).

These differences between primary and secondary schools in the implementation of particular initiatives are consistent with the higher division of labour in secondary schools and the differing needs of primary and secondary school students.

Although secondary school principals were more likely to report that their school had implemented at least one accountability initiative (91.8%) than were primary school principals (82.0%), the only accountability initiative for which this difference was apparent was for *expanding the range of school initiatives that are evaluated* (73.0% for secondary schools compared with 56.1% for primary schools). In fact *other initiatives to improve accountability and/or promote a culture of continual improvement* were more likely to be implemented in primary schools (24.8%) than in secondary schools (13.9%).

4.3.3 Literacy

Schools were not selected for the Low SES SSNP on the basis of the literacy and numeracy levels of their students. Nevertheless, given the relationship between the socioeconomic status of a school, its students or community and student achievement, on average participating schools were towards the lower end of the distribution of NAPLAN Reading scores. There was, however, still considerable variation and overlap with the reading outcomes of students in schools that were not participating in the Low SES SSNP.

Table 10 shows the proportion of schools implementing selected SSNP-funded initiatives by quartiles based on their 2010 results in the NAPLAN reading test. The test results of schools for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 were standardised to the population values, an average value calculated for each school and the results converted to quartiles. The quartiles correspond to the distribution of reading *within* the sample (and hence within schools participating in the Low SES SSNP) and not to the population of all NSW schools. Some schools had no published results and these were allocated to a separate category labelled *None*. Results were not published mostly to avoid confidentiality concerns in schools with few students taking the tests. As with ICSEA, the criteria used to select Low SES SSNP schools mean relationships between literacy scores and implementation rates of Low SES SSNP initiatives are less likely to be found.

Table 10 Implementation of selected SSNP-funded initiatives by NAPLAN reading test scores (%)

<i>Initiatives</i>	<i>Reading quartile (%)</i>	<i>Highest</i>	<i>Third</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>Lowest</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>p</i>
At least one initiative		100.0	97.1	96.7	95.7	98.2	97.4	0.60
6 Staff recruitment & retention . . . to attract high-performing teachers		70.8	88.3	80.7	76.4	65.6	76.9	0.01
<i>Establishing leadership & strategic positions</i>		52.4	58.4	58.4	57.7	35.0	53.3	0.04
<i>Providing mentoring support to teachers</i>		62.6	77.5	63.0	56.1	43.9	61.2	0.00
<i>Providing attractive terms & conditions outside standard entitlements</i>		11.2	7.2	24.5	18.8	4.2	13.7	0.00
7 Management & staffing arrangements . . . to attract, retain & develop staff		74.6	79.0	79.3	74.2	62.8	74.5	0.65
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . . to attract, retain & develop staff		94.6	92.6	91.8	88.9	82.9	90.4	0.23
<i>Employing additional paraprofessionals in other support roles</i>		38.2	41.4	50.2	34.0	23.7	37.8	0.05
<i>Employing Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs)</i>		32.3	23.4	20.6	15.5	6.3	20.0	0.01
<i>Team-based approaches to teaching & planning</i>		75.3	73.4	77.6	64.7	54.2	69.4	0.01
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . . to improve student learning outcomes		83.3	91.5	82.6	79.3	75.2	82.6	0.26
<i>Employing highly accomplished teacher (HATs)</i>		24.4	23.5	16.8	11.3	4.9	16.5	0.01
12 Providing innovative & tailored professional learning opportunities . . . to attract, retain & develop staff		91.9	92.4	88.4	86.0	84.3	88.7	0.51
<i>Providing professional development opportunities to help teachers use/analyse student data to cater to student needs</i>		85.5	87.0	80.2	69.1	70.6	78.4	0.04
<i>Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams</i>		80.3	83.6	83.6	73.9	61.4	77.0	0.00
<i>Implementing relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff</i>		94.0	94.7	91.6	79.9	77.6	87.6	0.00
<i>Providing whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers & the school executive</i>		33.7	19.3	27.9	16.6	9.1	21.4	0.03
<i>Providing professional development on a range of student wellbeing theories & approaches</i>		67.7	41.1	53.9	40.5	38.9	48.2	0.00
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities to improve student learning outcomes		82.9	89.1	88.3	82.4	86.3	85.6	0.73
14 Providing individual learning support for students . . . to improve student learning outcomes		64.4	74.6	67.8	65.8	65.3	67.7	0.74
<i>Providing students with access to learning support services</i>		55.5	49.6	49.0	30.7	34.1	43.5	0.03
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing		53.4	61.9	58.4	45.7	42.0	52.5	0.07
<i>Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives</i>		53.3	50.3	42.0	29.0	32.5	41.2	0.01
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement		78.8	86.8	88.3	79.2	82.2	82.9	0.45
<i>Number of principals</i>		71	69	62	74	52	328	---

1. Values show the per cent of schools participating in the SSNP-funded initiative and are weighted.

2. Values in bold show the per cent of schools that implemented at least one initiative from the corresponding question.

3. Numbers of principals are for the full sample—slightly fewer responded to Questions 10 and later in the questionnaire.

There was only one statistically significant difference across literacy categories among the summary measures for each question—schools without a published NAPLAN score (65.6%) were less likely than schools overall (76.9%) to have implemented at least one initiative in *staff recruitment and retention to attract high performing teachers*. The other summary measures showed no significant differences.

Nevertheless, there are a number of individual initiatives in which there are significant differences in the extent to which they have been implemented in schools with differing literacy levels. In general, the differences were between schools without a published NAPLAN score or in the lowest literacy quartile and the schools in the highest, third and second literacy quartiles. There was little consistency in the differences among the upper literacy quartiles. The lower implementation rates for initiatives among schools without NAPLAN scores may reflect their enrolments and hence lower Partnership funding.

Table 10 shows that these differences are concentrated in the initiatives related to attracting, retaining and developing staff—innovative and flexible staffing arrangements and, especially, providing innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities. By comparison, few of the individual initiatives for improving student outcomes are significantly different across literacy categories. This may suggest that smaller schools and schools with lower student outcomes put proportionately more of their SSNP effort into initiatives designed to directly improve student learning outcomes rather than into initiatives to improve student learning outcomes indirectly through improved management and staffing.

4.3.4 Enrolments

The number of enrolments in a school is the main driver of level of participation in SSNP initiatives. School funding under the Partnership is proportional to enrolments—the more enrolments, the higher the funding (although location is also taken into account). Hence schools with more students implemented a greater range of initiatives. Table 11 shows that this extends to the summary measures—differences in whether schools had implemented at least one initiative in each question or reform area by schools with different numbers of students were all statistically significant or approximated significance.

Schools with more enrolments were generally more likely to have implemented at least one initiative in each area than schools with fewer enrolments. For instance, 80.3% of schools with 1,000 or more students had implemented at least one initiative in Reform Area 1, *Staff recruitment and retention to attract high performing teachers*, compared with 61.2% of the schools with 99 or fewer enrolments. The increase in implementation rates with increasing enrolments, though, is not always uniform. In this case, the highest rate of implementation is 87.2% for schools with between 500 and 999 students. In other cases, for instance, *Providing individual learning support for students*, implementation of at least one initiative among schools with 100 to 199 and 200 to 449 students was lower than for schools with 99 or fewer students—61.2% and 59.8% compared with 64.9% respectively.

Table 11 Implementation of selected SSNP-funded initiatives by the number of enrolments (%)

<i>Initiatives</i>	<i>Enrolments (%)</i>	<i>1000 or more</i>	<i>500-999</i>	<i>200-499</i>	<i>100-199</i>	<i>99 or fewer</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>p</i>
At least one initiative		100.0	98.6	94.0	100.0	95.8	97.4	0.11
6 Staff recruitment & retention . . . to attract high-performing teachers		80.3	87.2	77.3	78.8	61.2	76.9	0.00
<i>Establishing leadership & strategic positions</i>		75.1	70.7	52.6	34.3	30.1	53.3	0.00
<i>Providing incentives to attract high performing early career teachers</i>		50.7	41.8	36.0	43.7	20.1	37.8	0.01
<i>Providing mentoring support to teachers</i>		66.3	72.8	64.7	60.9	41.1	61.2	0.00
<i>Providing attractive terms & conditions outside standard entitlements</i>		19.4	19.7	14.2	12.4	2.8	13.7	0.03
<i>Providing opportunities for professional learning & development</i>		72.9	74.1	70.6	67.4	50.0	66.9	0.04
7 Management & staffing arrangements . . . to attract, retain & develop staff		83.6	83.2	73.1	66.8	64.1	74.5	0.06
<i>Implementing revised staff performance review procedures</i>		34.9	47.7	39.7	19.9	27.8	35.2	0.01
<i>Managing the staffing mix & succession planning</i>		54.9	56.7	36.6	29.8	25.8	41.2	0.00
<i>Other performance management & staffing arrangements</i>		26.5	33.7	19.6	21.5	11.8	22.7	0.05
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . . to attract, retain & develop staff		97.8	92.8	90.4	92.1	80.4	90.4	0.02
<i>Employing additional paraprofessionals in other support roles</i>		62.3	38.6	34.6	33.0	22.7	37.8	0.00
<i>Employing Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs)</i>		33.0	22.5	20.6	16.6	7.9	20.0	0.01
<i>Team-based approaches to teaching & planning</i>		77.7	79.1	69.7	61.2	57.3	69.4	0.01
<i>Use of new technologies in teaching</i>		85.4	86.6	68.2	65.8	72.4	76.1	0.01
<i>Other arrangements that encourage innovation & flexibility</i>		48.3	41.0	34.9	34.5	23.2	36.2	0.04
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . . to improve student learning outcomes		91.3	85.8	86.1	80.4	69.6	82.6	0.02
<i>Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside classrooms</i>		46.6	39.4	21.8	18.3	23.1	30.1	0.00
<i>Employing additional paraprofessionals in other support roles outside classrooms</i>		37.8	26.6	22.3	12.6	9.7	22.1	0.00
<i>Employing highly accomplished teachers (HATs)</i>		27.9	16.0	20.5	12.2	5.3	16.5	0.01
<i>Out of school hours learning programs for targeted students</i>		49.6	17.8	14.4	7.1	10.6	19.8	0.00
<i>Use of new technologies in teaching</i>		74.7	77.7	65.8	58.5	59.1	67.7	0.05

Continued/-

Table 11 Implementation of selected SSNP-funded initiatives by the number of enrolments (%)—continued

<i>Initiatives</i>	<i>Enrolments (%)</i>	<i>1000 or more</i>	<i>500-999</i>	<i>200-499</i>	<i>100-199</i>	<i>99 or fewer</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>p</i>
12 Providing innovative & tailored professional learning opportunities . . . to attract, retain & develop staff		96.0	91.9	82.9	95.2	80.7	88.7	0.01
<i>Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams</i>		91.2	88.7	73.6	70.6	59.4	77.0	0.00
<i>Providing whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers & the school executive</i>		45.7	26.1	17.9	11.3	5.5	21.4	0.00
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities . . . to improve student learning outcomes		92.6	90.7	73.6	91.0	83.4	85.6	0.01
<i>Implementing transition plans for students moving from primary to secondary school (p)</i>		54.9	41.9	38.1	31.5	25.1	39.1	0.03
<i>Transition plans for students moving from secondary school into work, further training or further education (s)</i>		56.7	63.2	45.6	23.6	0.0	50.7	0.05
14 Providing individual learning support for students . . . to improve student learning outcomes		83.8	68.9	61.2	59.8	64.9	67.7	0.04
<i>Providing students with access to learning support services</i>		63.1	43.2	44.1	29.1	36.8	43.5	0.01
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing		65.9	54.6	48.0	55.2	41.5	52.5	0.07
<i>Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives</i>		59.2	41.1	39.4	34.6	32.0	41.2	0.02
<i>Providing students with access to counselling services</i>		34.3	22.2	16.8	13.7	13.8	20.2	0.04
<i>Providing links to government wellbeing-related services for students & their families</i>		34.3	19.2	21.7	11.4	13.9	20.2	0.02
<i>Providing links to non-government wellbeing-related services for students & their families</i>		26.9	14.5	23.4	8.4	11.7	17.1	0.03
<i>Employing or providing access to youth workers</i>		14.1	1.5	9.8	0.0	4.6	6.0	0.00
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement		90.7	89.3	73.9	80.8	80.5	82.9	0.05
<i>Using the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher & school performance</i>		79.3	75.8	71.1	61.8	87.6	75.6	0.05
<i>Using evidence . . . to inform decision-making and/or strategic direction setting</i>		85.3	73.2	67.7	57.5	73.4	71.8	0.02
<i>Monitoring & evaluating the impact of new SSNP initiatives</i>		93.7	86.9	79.7	68.4	77.9	81.8	0.01
<i>Expanding the range of school activities that are evaluated</i>		71.2	70.3	51.9	47.3	51.1	58.9	0.01
<i>Number of principals</i>		56	75	74	50	73	328	---

1. Values show the per cent of schools participating in the SSNP-funded initiative and are weighted.

2. Values in bold show the percent of schools that implemented at least one initiative from the corresponding question.

3. Numbers of principals are for the full sample—slightly fewer responded to Questions 10 and later in the questionnaire.

Overall, implementation of at least one initiative to promote a culture of continuous improvement in schools showed a similar pattern—90.7% for schools with 1,000 or more enrolments compared with 80.5% for schools with 99 or fewer enrolments—despite the requirement for participating schools to monitor and evaluate the impact of initiatives. Smaller schools, however, were more likely than other schools to use their school plan to drive change (87.6% compared with the overall mean of 75.6%).

4.3.4 Location

Principals of schools in remote (and very remote) areas (89.9%) were slightly less likely to report implementing at least one SSNP-funded initiative than were principals of metropolitan (99.3%) or provincial (96.8%) schools. These differences may be influenced by the relative sizes of the schools—remote schools are typically smaller—and only partial reporting of SSNP initiatives by principals of remote schools.

The pattern of higher levels of reported implementation by principals of metropolitan schools, somewhat lower implementation for provincial schools and lower still for remote schools was repeated across most reform areas (although some summary measures only approached significance) and many individual initiatives. There were no significant regional differences, however, in the extent to which principal reported implementing at least one initiative in changed *management and staffing arrangements* to attract retain and develop staff or in *promoting student wellbeing*.

There were, however, a few exceptions. *Housing assistance*, for instance, was an initiative more likely to be reported by principals in remote schools, *Out-of-school learning programs for targeted students* were as likely to be used in remote schools as in metropolitan schools and less likely in provincial schools, and *Providing links to on-government wellbeing related services for students and families* was more frequent in remote than in provincial schools.

Table 12 Implementation of selected SSNP-funded initiatives by location (%)

<i>Initiatives</i>	<i>Location (%)</i>	<i>Metro</i>	<i>Prov.</i>	<i>Remote</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>p</i>
At least one initiative		99.3	96.8	89.9	97.4	0.02
6 Staff recruitment & retention . . . to attract high-performing teachers		84.7	72.5	55.7	76.9	0.00
<i>Establishing leadership & strategic positions</i>		65.5	45.5	27.0	53.3	0.00
<i>Provide incentives to attract high performing early career teachers</i>		46.1	33.6	11.8	37.8	0.00
<i>Providing mentoring support to teachers</i>		72.2	54.0	38.3	61.2	0.00
<i>Providing opportunities for professional learning & development</i>		74.8	62.5	45.7	66.9	0.00
<i>Providing assisted housing</i>		0.7	0.0	16.1	1.5	0.00
7 Management & staffing arrangements to . . . attract, retain & develop staff		78.4	71.4	70.0	74.5	0.25
<i>Managing the staffing mix & succession planning</i>		49.3	35.7	25.2	41.2	0.01
<i>10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . . to attract, retain & develop staff</i>		94.4	88.8	75.6	90.4	0.01

Continued/-

Table 12 Implementation of selected SSNP-funded initiatives by location (%)
—continued

Initiatives	Location (%)	Metro	Prov.	Remote	Total	p
Employment of additional paraprofs in learning support roles	63.2	46.2	29.1	52.7	0.00	
Employing HATs	28.4	13.3	11.9	20.0	0.00	
Team-based approaches to teaching & planning	79.3	61.8	56.9	69.4	0.00	
Greater cooperation with other schools to share resources	55.0	39.6	32.8	46.1	0.02	
Use of new technologies in teaching	82.9	71.1	65.5	76.1	0.03	
Other arrangements that encourage innovation & flexibility	43.3	33.0	12.4	36.2	0.01	
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . . to improve student learning outcomes	88.3	80.3	61.3	82.6	0.00	
Employing HATs	25.0	8.6	13.2	16.5	0.00	
Out of school hours learning programs for targeted students	26.5	12.4	25.0	19.8	0.01	
12 Providing innovative & tailored professional learning opportunities . . . to attract, retain & develop staff	92.6	87.8	70.0	88.7	0.00	
Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams e.g. involving executive, faculty & teachers within/beyond the school	88.4	72.4	32.1	77.0	0.00	
Implementing relevant & appropriate prof. learning for staff	91.5	87.2	64.8	87.6	0.00	
Providing whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers & school executive	36.4	9.4	3.4	21.4	0.00	
Engaging staff through professional dialogue on behaviour management	44.1	45.4	14.4	42.6	0.02	
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities . . . to improve student learning outcomes	90.2	82.7	75.6	85.6	0.05	
Using student assessment & other data to identify student needs	80.9	75.8	54.9	76.7	0.03	
Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs, e.g. L&N interventions	92.1	87.4	71.0	88.4	0.01	
Transition plans for students moving from sec school into work, further training or further education (s)	68.2	31.0	25.9	50.7	0.00	
14 Providing individual learning support for students . . . to improve student learning outcomes	71.8	66.5	49.0	67.7	0.07	
Providing students with access to learning support services	46.5	45.5	11.5	43.5	0.01	
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing	53.0	53.2	44.4	52.5	0.72	
Providing students with access to counselling services	26.9	16.2	3.4	20.2	0.01	
Providing links to government wellbeing-related services for students & their families	25.7	16.4	9.5	20.2	0.03	
Providing links to non-government wellbeing-related service for students & their families	22.2	12.3	15.7	17.1	0.04	
Employing or providing access to youth workers	9.2	2.2	9.5	6.0	0.01	
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement	85.7	81.8	72.5	82.9	0.24	
Monitoring & evaluating the impact of new SSNP initiatives	88.5	79.3	55.6	81.8	0.00	
Expanding the range of school activities that are evaluated	68.0	54.1	31.4	58.9	0.00	
Number of principals	151	155	22	328	---	

1. Values show the per cent of schools participating in the SSNP-funded initiative and are weighted.

2. Values in bold show the per cent of schools that implemented at least one initiative from the corresponding question.

3. Numbers of principals are for the full sample—slightly fewer responded to Questions 10 and later in the questionnaire.

5. Effectiveness of the initiatives

This section discusses principals' views on the effectiveness of the SSNP-funded initiatives that had been implemented at their school. Principals were provided with a five point scale—*Not at all effective*; *Somewhat effective*; *Effective*; *Highly effective* and *Too early to tell* (see Figure 1).

The discussion is based on the proportion of principals who believed that an initiative was *Highly effective* rather than the proportion *Effective* or *Highly effective* because the National Partnership itself is seeking the **most** effective ways to improve schools. In general, relatively few principals indicated that their initiatives had been *Not at all effective*, *Somewhat effective* or that it was *Too early to tell* and hence there was sometimes little variation in the residual between initiatives or across categories of schools.

All initiatives were judged by a majority of principals of the schools in which there were implemented as either *Effective* or *Highly effective*. Within that context of positive judgements about the *absolute* efficiency of the initiatives, however, some initiatives were viewed even more positively than others. This section mostly discusses the *relative effectiveness* of the initiatives within the separate reform areas and of the individual initiatives. It concludes by examining the differences in the reported effectiveness of the initiatives by several school characteristics.

5.1 Effectiveness of initiatives in SSNP reform areas

This section discusses the perceived effectiveness of the initiatives in the context of the reform areas and the type of effectiveness that is being measured (see Table 5). Table 13 shows the proportion of initiatives described as *highly effective* by principals who had implemented them at their school. The initiatives are grouped by reform areas, question numbers and the type of effectiveness. Although specific initiatives can be relevant to varying degrees to more than one reform area, the initiatives in Table 13 are allocated to reform areas on the basis of the question within which they were asked and hence the type of effectiveness that principals were asked to assess—for instance, whether the initiative was effective in *attracting high performing teachers and principals* or in *promoting student wellbeing*.

Because Table 13 focuses on groups of initiatives, the sample size is larger than the number of principals—schools typically implemented more than one initiative overall and often within reform areas and questions. Principals provided evaluations of 7,844 SSNP-funded initiatives of which 42.6% were judged by principals to be *highly effective* and 84.2% to be either *Highly effective* or *Effective*. The discussion of effectiveness in this section, therefore, is within a context of initiatives that principals overwhelmingly considered to have been effective or better. The issue is the extent of effectiveness.

The effectiveness of initiatives varies with the type of effectiveness that was being reported. The proportion of initiatives reported as *highly effective* was greatest for *attracting high performing teachers* (54.0%) followed by *attracting, retaining and developing staff* (44.4%), *improving student learning outcomes* (43.9%), *promoting student*

wellbeing (33.5%) and least for *promoting a culture of continuous school improvement* (30.2%).

The different levels of effectiveness for initiatives judged for different types of effectiveness may reflect the difficulty of the desired outcome as well as the type of initiatives or their implementation. For instance, the cultural change associated with *promoting a culture of continuous school improvement* may simply be an inherently more difficult task than improving staffing or learning profiles. Similarly *promoting student wellbeing*, which may seek to address particular student behaviours, may be more challenging than other goals. Comparisons of the effectiveness of initiatives (and of schools implementing those initiatives) measured against different types of effectiveness may therefore be problematic.

The differences in effectiveness across types of effectiveness are substantially reduced if the focus is expanded to include initiatives that principals judged to be *Effective*—and the ranking changes slightly, although *attracting high performing teachers* (87.3%) was still highest and *promoting student wellbeing* (77.9%) and *promoting a culture of continuous school improvement* (80.5%) was still lowest.

The differences across reform areas match the differences across type of effectiveness, apart from Reform Areas 3 and 4 which provide a different grouping of the initiatives. Table 13 shows that 50.1% of the initiatives under Reform Area 3, *School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility*, were *highly effective*, while 40.1% of those *providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities* were *highly effective*. Within Reform Area 4, initiatives targeting staff learning were only slightly more likely to be reported as *highly effective* (42.9%) than those addressing student learning directly.

Table 13 also provides estimates of the proportion of initiatives that had not been implemented prior to the school's participation in the SSNP—described as *new* in the table. Just over a third (35.1%) of initiatives had been implemented since the school joined the SSNP. The initiatives *promoting a culture of continuous school improvement* were more likely to have been introduced with the SSNP, although even for these initiatives, the majority were already in place before the SSNP—only 44.7% of these initiatives were new. The proportion of new initiatives was somewhat lower for those targeted towards *improving student learning* (30.0%) or *promoting student wellbeing* (28.6%). Staffing initiatives were somewhat more likely to be new—39.1% of initiatives *to attract high performing teachers* and 35.7% of initiatives *to attract, retain and develop staff* were new.

Grouping the initiatives under the reform areas provides a somewhat different picture of the introduction of new initiatives—43.8% of the initiatives under Reform Area 3, *School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility* are new, while only 25.8% of the initiatives in Reform Area 4, *providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities* were new.

Table 13 Effectiveness of SSNP-funded initiatives by reform area and question number

(%) Reform area/Question number	Effectiveness			New
	<i>Highly</i>	<i>Eff/Highly</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
All initiatives	42.6	84.2	7844	35.1
Reform areas . . .				
1. Incentives to attract high performing teachers and principals (Q6)	54.0	87.3	794	39.1
2. Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangement to attract, retain and develop staff. (Q7)	36.9	79.6	655	35.1
3. School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility (Q10, Q11)	50.1	87.2	2116	43.8
Q10. Operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility . . . to attract, retain and develop staff	50.1	86.4	1219	45.6
Q11. Operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility . . . to improve student learning outcomes	50.1	88.4	897	41.3
4. Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities	40.1	83.7	3207	25.8
4a: Providing innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers to attract, retain & develop staff (Q12)	42.9	86.6	1357	27.6
4b: Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students (Q13, Q14, Q15)	38.0	81.6	1850	24.5
Q13. Provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students . . . to improve student learning outcomes	43.5	83.8	819	21.9
Q14. Provide individual learning support for students, . . . to improve student learning outcomes	33.5	81.8	523	24.5
Q15. Promote student wellbeing . . . to improve student learning outcomes	33.5	77.9	508	28.6
5:Accountability initiatives to promote a culture of continuous school improvement (Q16)	30.2	80.5	1072	44.7
Type of effectiveness—Initiatives to . . .				
attract high performing teachers (Q6)	54.0	87.3	794	39.1
attract, retain and develop staff (Q7, Q10,Q12)	44.4	85.1	3231	35.7
improve student learning outcomes (Q11, Q13, Q14)	43.9	85.2	2238	30.0
promote student wellbeing (Q15).	33.5	77.9	508	28.6
promote a culture of continuous school improvement (Q16)	30.2	80.5	1072	44.7

1. Values for Effectiveness are Highly effective and Effective or Highly effective as a per cent of principals responding to the effectiveness question and values for New show the per cent of SSNP-funded initiatives that had not been implemented before the SSNP (see Figure 1).
2. Q refers to the question number in the questionnaire (see Appendix D) and the relationship between reform areas and questions is detailed in Table 5.
3. Per cents are weighted (see Appendix A), n's are counts.

5.2 Effectiveness of the individual initiatives

Table 14 lists the individual initiatives ordered by the per cent of principals who rated the initiative as *Highly effective*. The table also shows the per cent of principals who indicated that initiatives were either *Effective* or *Highly effective* as well as the per cent of schools that have introduced each initiative and the per cent of schools for which the initiative is *New*, that is, was not in place before the school joined the National Partnership.

The first line of Table 14 shows the proportions of all initiatives considered to be *Highly effective* (42.6%) or *Effective or Highly effective* (84.3%). Much of the following discussion is about comparing initiatives and possibly describing one initiative as less effective than another. These comparisons, however, are within an overall context of positive judgements by principals of the SSNP-funded initiatives that have been introduced at their schools.

The proportion of principals who reported the individual SSNP-funded initiatives as *highly effective* ranged from 85.0% for *Providing assisted housing* (which refers to attracting high performing teachers) to 18.8% for *Monitoring and evaluating the impact of new SSNP initiatives* (which refers to *promoting a culture of continuous school improvement*). The differences in the ratings of the effectiveness of the various initiatives reflect real differences in perceived effectiveness (which includes differences in the difficulty of the outcome), random variation (one standard error is less than two percentage points, so differences of four percentage points or more would usually be considered statistically significant) and targeting (the effectiveness of initiatives with a narrow and clearly defined target is more likely to be clearer).

Little attention should be given to small differences between the initiatives listed in Table 14. The values are frequently based on a small number of responses—the number of principals in schools that had implemented the particular initiative. Appendix B provides indicative values for the likely standard errors. The standard error for the difference between two estimates is larger still.

Direct comparison of the effectiveness of initiatives is complicated by the different purposes of the initiatives:

- *attracting high performing teachers* (Reform 1, Q6).
- *attracting, retaining and developing staff* (Reform 2, Q7; Reform 3, Q10; Reform 4a, Q12).
- *improving student learning outcomes* (Reform 3, Q11; Reform 4b, Q13; and Reform 4b, Q14).
- *promoting student wellbeing* (Reform 4b, Q15).
- *promoting a culture of continuous school improvement* (Reform 5, Q16).

The multiple goals can reflect differences between proximate and more distant outcomes. While some Low SES SSNP reforms focus on changes in school staffing, management and accountability practices, the ultimate goal of all reforms is to improve student learning outcomes.

5.2.1 Attracting, retaining and developing staff

Principals rated three sets of strategies, including 21 separate initiatives, on their effectiveness in attracting, retaining and developing staff—providing:

- improved performance management and staffing arrangements (Q7)
- more innovative and flexible operational arrangements (Q10)
- more innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers (Q12).

Some of these initiatives were also rated separately by principals for their effectiveness in improving student learning outcomes.

The effectiveness of the three elements in the phrase *attracting, retaining and developing staff* is not necessarily consistent. For instance, professional learning that is available in all schools may not be very effective in *attracting or retaining staff* (because it is available in all schools), but its *absence* might well have a negative effect on the ability to attract or retain staff. The professional learning may, however, be *highly effective* in *developing staff*, a characteristic consistent with its availability in a number of schools. In being asked to judge the effectiveness of the initiative, principals were being asked to form a summary judgement across these potentially divergent elements. Their responses do not provide a way of unpacking the constituent parts of their judgement.

The proportion of principals who rated the various initiatives as *highly effective* ranged from just over two-thirds (68.6%) to about a quarter (25.4%). On average the initiatives to introduce changes to operational arrangements were more likely to be judged as *highly effective* in *attracting retaining and developing staff* than were those structured around professional learning or management and staffing arrangements—although there was considerable overlap.

- ◇ Among the changed operational arrangements, *employing HATs* was judged *highly effective* for both *attracting, retaining and developing staff* (68.6%) and for *improving student learning outcomes* (67.2%). This corresponds to research findings which establish that supporting quality teaching practice, through initiatives such as HATs within schools, is a key measure to strengthen student achievement (Darling-Hammond 2000). The overwhelming majority of principals considered this a new initiative of the National Partnerships and, although potentially expensive to implement, it has been implemented in about a fifth of participating schools.

In contrast, *the use of new technologies in teaching* is an initiative more likely to have already been used in schools (only 23.4% of principals reported it as a new initiative) and it is widely implemented (76.1%), but considered to be *highly effective* by 57.2% of principals. Similarly the use of team-based approaches to teaching and planning is less likely to be new to schools (only 30.0% of principals reported it as a new initiative), it is widely implemented (69.4%), and also considered *highly effective* by many principals (54.7%) in attracting, retaining and developing staff.

Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles (52.8%) and *in other support roles* (53.8%) were initiatives that both rated as *highly effective* in attracting, retaining and developing staff. Both are reported as widely implemented and as pre-existing the National Partnerships.

- ◇ Initiatives providing greater opportunities for professional development were often reported to be *highly effective*, although there was considerable variation among the perceived effectiveness of the various initiatives. The generic initiative of *Providing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff* was judged by 53.6% of principals to be *highly effective* in *attracting, retaining and developing staff*. The initiative was widely implemented (87.6%) and mostly preceded the National Partnerships. The effectiveness of some more specific types of professional learning was also well regarded—51.5% of principals believed that *providing quality professional learning for school-based teams* was *highly effective*, as was the collection of other professional learning opportunities for teachers (52.3%). Fullan's research affirms that professional learning within school-based teams establishes a whole-staff culture that is supportive of change (Fullan 2001).

The effectiveness of other initiatives around professional learning in *attracting, retaining and developing staff* was less highly regarded by principals. For instance, initiatives related to student wellbeing and behaviour, were viewed by principals as *highly effective* in between 36.2% and 28.8% of cases. Even though this is lower than for more generic assessments, in absolute terms it is still possibly a quite substantial level of effectiveness—probably more so if relative costs are factored into the comparisons with other initiatives.

Professional development opportunities to help teachers use and/or analyse data to cater for student needs touches on some of the fundamental themes of the Partnership—around the use of evidence in formulating teaching strategies. The initiative was widely implemented (78.4%), however, just 37.0% of principals judged it to be *highly effective*.

- ◇ The reported effectiveness of initiatives in performance management and staffing arrangements was generally not as high as for the preceding two sets of employment conditions. *Supporting early career teachers professionally* was the initiative with the highest proportion of principals that judged it as *highly effective* (49.8%), while a collection of *other arrangements* received only slightly less support (46.4%). *Managing the staffing mix and succession planning*, which might be expected to bear directly on recruitment, was endorsed as *highly effective* by only 37.8% of principals, while *professional learning plans for staff* (27.4%) and *revised staff performance review procedures* (25.4%) were among the initiatives least positively evaluated.

5.2.2 Attracting high performing teachers

Initiatives to attract high performing teachers are closely aligned to those intended to attract, retain and develop teachers in general—a strategy that will attract high performing teachers is one that might also attract, retain and develop teachers in general. Attracting and retaining quality staff is regarded as central to the long term success of an equality funding framework (Lamb & Teese 2005). The initiatives included in the questionnaire for attracting high performing teachers were all rated above the overall average of 42.6% for being *highly effective*. The initiative with the highest rating was *providing assisted housing*—an initiative that might be used by a small number of mostly remote schools that have difficulty in attracting staff, and one that is also in step with recommendations made by the OECD report *Teachers Matter* that asserted that systems need to implement strategies of this kind to attract and retain teachers to work in particular schools (OECD

2005).

The broadly deployed initiative of *providing opportunities for professional learning and development*, with 63.8% of principals found it *highly effective*, was the second most highly rated individual initiative. It was widely implemented (66.9% of schools) and had a history of being used in schools—only 7.3% of principals reported implementing this initiative after the commencement of the National Partnerships. There were, however, varying types of professional learning), ranging from standard one day seminars to study leave to obtain formal qualifications.

Table 14 Implementation and effectiveness of SSNP-funded initiatives sorted by per cent rated *highly effective*

Q	Initiative	Participation		Effectiveness %		New	
		%	n	Highly	Eff/Highly	n	%
	All initiatives	---	---	42.6	84.2	7844	35.1
6	Providing assisted housing	1.5	328	85.0	85.0	5	35.7
15	Providing students with access to STARTTS	1.3	300	76.5	100.0	4	0.0
10	Employing HATs	20.0	321	68.6	86.4	69	91.0
11	Employing HATs	16.5	318	67.2	89.9	57	89.2
6	Opportunities for professional learning & development	66.9	328	63.8	95.0	221	7.3
15	Employing or providing access to youth workers	6.0	300	58.3	82.9	17	52.5
10	Use of new technologies in teaching	76.1	321	57.2	85.9	246	23.4
11	Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles within classrooms	47.5	318	55.8	86.6	151	51.8
10	Team-based approaches to teaching & planning	69.4	321	54.7	89.2	225	30.0
13	Other innovative & tailored learning opportunities for students	20.6	301	54.4	83.3	62	35.9
10	Employing additional paraprofessionals in other support roles	37.8	321	53.8	85.7	120	71.4
12	Relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff	87.6	312	53.6	93.4	276	10.4
6	Establishing leadership & strategic positions	53.3	328	53.6	86.8	174	62.3
10	Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles	52.7	321	52.8	91.9	169	57.9
12	Other innovative & tailored PL opportunities for teachers	31.7	312	52.3	93.4	102	35.7
12	Quality professional learning for school-based teams	77.0	312	51.5	92.4	242	34.0
13	Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs	88.4	301	51.3	88.2	268	17.6
11	Use of new technologies in teaching	67.7	318	50.6	87.0	216	18.3
6	Attractive terms & conditions outside standard entitlements	13.7	328	50.1	95.3	44	67.6
7	Supporting early career teachers professionally	49.3	328	49.8	86.4	163	12.6
6	Providing mentoring support to teachers	61.2	328	49.4	84.3	203	35.7
11	Other school operational arrangements to encourage innovation & flexibility	20.8	318	48.8	92.0	67	42.9
11	Curriculum and/or programs for students with particular needs	58.0	318	48.7	89.5	186	24.8
11	Employing additional paraprofessionals in other support roles outside classrooms	22.1	318	47.1	88.4	68	70.9
11	Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside classrooms	30.1	318	46.6	91.2	94	61.5
6	Incentives to attract high performing early career teachers	37.8	328	46.5	79.5	124	56.2
7	Other performance management & staffing arrangements	22.7	328	46.4	84.8	75	42.8
6	Other incentives to attract high performing teachers	7.0	328	45.3	70.7	23	79.7
10	Other arrangements that encourage innovation & flexibility	36.2	321	45.2	89.7	118	50.2
13	Using student assessment & other data to identify student needs	76.7	301	44.4	87.4	234	12.9
15	Providing students with access to health services	19.1	300	44.4	82.9	59	29.3
10	Increased flexibility in timetabling and/or school's hours	36.8	321	44.2	86.7	121	57.7
16	Using evidence . . . to inform decision-making and/or strategic direction setting	71.8	296	43.5	90.2	213	20.5
12	Whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers & school executive	21.4	312	43.4	80.6	69	45.4

Continued /-

Table 14 Implementation and effectiveness of SSNP-funded initiatives sorted by per cent highly effective—continued

Q Initiative	Participation		Effectiveness %		n	%
	%	n	Highly	Eff/Highly		
14 Other types of individual learning support for students	21.1	300	42.6	86.9	65	35.0
16 Using the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher & school performance	75.6	296	42.2	85.5	225	17.0
7 Managing the staffing mix & succession planning	41.2	328	37.8	83.3	134	35.3
12 Professional development opportunities to help teachers use/analyse student data to cater for student needs	78.4	312	37.0	80.0	245	25.8
15 Other initiatives to promote student wellbeing	12.9	300	36.8	80.2	40	38.3
12 Engaging staff through prof. dialogue on behaviour management	42.6	312	36.2	84.9	134	24.4
11 Out of school hours learning programs for targeted students	19.8	318	35.5	84.8	58	43.7
15 Delivering a wellbeing program to students	29.4	300	35.2	81.2	90	27.6
13 Transition plans for students moving from prim. to sec. school (p)	32.9	236	34.5	70.2	78	19.2
14 Providing ILPs for students needing assistance	55.3	300	33.4	81.9	167	21.3
15 Professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives	41.2	300	33.4	79.3	125	24.4
13 Transition plans for students moving from school to work, further training/education (s)	50.7	72	32.8	76.0	37	27.8
16 Other initiatives to improve accountability/promote a culture of continuous school improvement	21.1	296	32.5	86.4	65	37.1
13 Differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students	72.3	301	32.2	76.1	218	31.8
14 Providing students with access to learning support services	43.5	300	32.2	82.9	132	6.5
12 PD on a range of behaviour management theories & approaches	43.3	312	31.9	79.0	136	35.4
14 PL for teachers on meeting individual learning needs	52.0	300	31.1	78.5	159	40.2
13 Transition plans for students moving from prim. to sec. school (s)	50.9	72	30.5	76.3	37	19.2
12 PD on a range of student wellbeing theories & approaches	48.2	312	28.8	82.1	153	34.9
7 Professional learning plans for staff	51.1	328	27.4	73.1	168	41.2
15 Providing students with access to counselling services	20.2	300	26.5	77.8	61	10.4
10 Greater cooperation with other schools to share resources	46.1	321	26.3	74.2	151	41.3
7 Revised staff performance review procedures	35.2	328	25.4	71.7	115	51.9
15 Providing links to government wellbeing-related services for students & their families	20.2	300	25.3	64.3	61	35.1
16 Expanding the range of school activities that are evaluated	58.9	296	22.3	78.7	174	64.4
15 Providing links to non-government wellbeing-related services for students & their families	17.1	300	22.3	74.5	51	38.4
16 Making planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available	50.4	296	20.7	69.4	152	43.4
16 Monitoring & evaluating the impact of new SSNP initiatives	81.8	296	18.2	73.9	243	88.4

1. Q is the question number in the questionnaire (see Appendix D).

2. Per cents are weighted (see Appendix A), n's are counts.

3. Information for some initiatives was asked twice in regard to different reform areas and these initiatives are therefore listed with respect to each reform.

4. Values for some initiatives are provided separately for primary (p) and secondary (s).

5. Values for Effectiveness are provided for Highly effective and for Effective or Highly effective as a per cent of principals responding to the effectiveness question.

6. New shows the per cent of SSNP-funded initiatives that did not exist before the SSNP (see Figure 1).

7. Approximate standard errors are provided in Appendix B.

Creating broader management structures within organisations is regarded as an effective model of success (Fullan 2002). Providing talented individuals with opportunities to exercise authority and develop their skills by creating a clearer and possibly broader management structure also appears to have been successful in attracting high performing teachers—53.6% of principals considered *establishing leadership and strategic positions* to be a *highly effective* initiative, and it has been relatively widely used (53.3%) with a higher than average proportion of schools introducing changes after the National Partnerships began (53.3%). It may not be simply a matter of changing the management structure, however. Positions with designated higher duties may well involve higher salaries—and there may be a concern about taking talented teachers away from the classroom.

If *establishing leadership and strategic positions* is partly about creating new positions with more authority, responsibility and possibly higher pay, it could be an alternative to offering teachers *attractive terms and conditions outside standard entitlements*. The latter initiative was also viewed as *very effective* (50.1%), but was less widely implemented (13.7%) and more likely to have begun with the Partnership (67.6%).

Part of the goal of attracting high performing teachers is to attract talented teachers who are relatively new to the profession. The OECD suggests that education systems within most countries need to work towards key objectives that include a focus on supporting teachers in the early stages of their career and making teaching an attractive career choice (OECD 2005). Both of the Low SES SSNP initiatives relevant to these objectives were viewed positively by principals—49.4% thought that their *programs of providing mentoring support to teachers* was *highly effective*, while 46.5% reported that *incentives to attract high performing early career teachers* were *highly effective*. The more positive perceptions of providing mentoring and support were consistent with the strong support for the role of Highly Accomplished Teachers.

5.2.3 Improving student learning outcomes

Principals rated 18 initiatives on their effectiveness in improving student learning outcomes (Questions 11, 13 and 14). The proportion of principals who rated these initiatives as *Highly effective* ranged from just over two-thirds to just under a third. *Employing Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) or the sectoral equivalent (Teacher Educators, Leaders of Pedagogy, etc.)* was the initiative most likely to be rated as *highly effective* (67.2%), with 90% rating it as either *effective* or *highly effective*.

The initiative with the second highest effectiveness rating for improving student learning outcomes also involved additional staffing—*Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles within the classroom* (55.8%). Employing paraprofessionals *outside* the classroom, either in learning support (46.6%) or other roles (47.1%), while less likely to be judged as *highly effective* by principals, is nevertheless in the context of all initiatives, still rated highly. The effectiveness of paraprofessionals within schools is echoed in research which suggests that teachers who are supported in their role will better meet the challenges associated with working in a low SES school community (Zammit, Sinclair et al. 2007).

The results suggest that initiatives to employ more staff may be more effective in

improving student learning outcomes. These initiatives were also more likely to be new to the school, especially employing HATs (91.0%), but also employing paraprofessionals in the various administrative and learning support roles.

Programs targeted towards the learning need of individual students were also rated fairly highly in terms of effectiveness in improving student learning outcomes—e.g. *Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs* (51.3% principals rated as *highly effective*); *The introduction of curriculum and/or programs for students with particular needs* (48.7% principals rated as *highly effective*); and more broadly *Use of new technologies in teaching* (50.6% principals rated as *highly effective*).

On the other hand, an apparently related initiative such as *Implementing differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students*, was rated as *highly effective* by only 31.2% of principals. Independent learning programs, whether directly (33.4% rated *highly effective*) or through teacher professional learning (31.1% rated *highly effective*) also had relatively low rates of effectiveness—levels similar to those for transition plans.

5.2.4 Promoting student wellbeing

Question 15 includes nine initiatives that were rated by their effectiveness in promoting student wellbeing. The highest ranking is the STARTTS program with 76.5% of principals in the schools that had implemented the initiative rating it as *highly effective*. The program is highly specific, designed for victims of trauma and/or torture, and was implemented in only four of the responding schools.

Employing or providing access to youth workers is another initiative that was rated as *highly effective* by a relatively high proportion of principals (58.3%) but implemented in only a small number of schools (6.0%). The initiative was more likely to have been introduced after the commencement of the National Partnerships (new to 52.5% schools implementing it) than were many other initiatives.

Delivering a wellbeing-related program to students and *Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives* were initiatives perceived to be somewhat less effective—35.2% and 33.4% of principals judged them to have been *highly effective* respectively. These values are, however, in the context of overall positive judgements by principals of the effectiveness of these initiatives—81.2% and 79.3% of principal reported that these were *Highly effective or Effective* initiatives respectively. These are two of the more widely implemented initiatives—29.4% and 33.4% respectively.

Other initiatives in this reform area were less likely to be rated by principals as *highly effective*, although they may be less expensive to implement. For instance, *Providing links to government* (25.3%) [or non-government (22.3%)] *wellbeing-related services for students and their families* might not be very resource-intensive.

5.2.5 Promoting a culture of continuous school improvement

Reform Area 5, *creating a culture of continuous improvement in schools*, is central to the issue of the sustainability of changes associated with the SSNP when the program finishes and funding ceases. It is captured by the six initiatives of Question 16.

Many of the initiatives included in Question 16 touch on core parts of the Partnership—management centred on plans, setting goals, deciding on strategies and evaluating outcomes in an open and transparent way. Implementing cultural change of this type is widely acknowledged to be difficult. While a lower proportion of principals rated the relevant initiatives as *highly effective*, there was evidence of considerable penetration of change in participating schools. For instance, a fundamental initiative, *Using evidence (from a range of sources) to inform decision making and/or strategic direction setting* was rated as *highly effective* by only 43.5% of school principals, but the activity is more widely implemented than many others—71.8% of principals reported implementing this activity. Broader measures of effectiveness were more positive still—90.2% of principals judged the initiative as either *effective* or *highly effective*. Interestingly, many principals reported that evidence-based strategic approaches preceded the Partnership—only a fifth (20.5%) of principals identified it as a new activity.

Most of the comments about *Using evidence* also apply to the initiative *Using the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher and school performance*. The initiative was rated as *highly effective* by a similar proportion of school principals (42.2%) and the activity was marginally more common (75.6%). When combined with participation, the effective penetration of the initiative was quite high—but again, relatively few principals (17.0%) identified the strategic use of a school plan as a new activity in their school.

Despite fairly broad adoption of the initiatives, principals were less likely to link evaluating a wider range of school activities (22.3% of principals) and greater public openness about the planning and reporting processes (20.7% of principals) to the creation of a culture of continuous school improvement—perhaps reflecting the fact it takes time for new initiatives to become embedded in school culture, and bring about significant change. These two initiatives were more likely to be identified as *new* by school principals—64.4% and 43.4% respectively.

Monitoring and evaluating the impact of the new SSNP initiatives might be viewed as a guided modelling of the management style that the NPs want to foster. This initiative, was rated as *highly effective* by only 18.2% of principals. Again, however, implementation of the initiative was among the highest of any of the initiatives (81.8%) and, together with a broader measurement of effectiveness that incorporates both judgements of *highly effective* and *effective* (73.9% principals), they provide a more positive view of principals' judgements about the efficacy of the initiative.

5.2.6 Effectiveness and policy

The estimates of effectiveness in Table 14 provide only limited policy or program guidance about choices between initiatives.

A lower than average rating of an initiative for one type of effectiveness does not mean that it may not be effective in other ways. The measures of effectiveness used in the survey focus, quite appropriately, on goals central to the National Partnership—improved student learning outcomes, better staff recruitment, retention and development and changes to management culture. An initiative such as *greater cooperation with other schools to share resources*, for instance, is unlikely to have a direct effect on a school's ability to attract, retain and develop staff or on student outcomes and at most provide a modest nudge towards a culture of continuous improvement. Nevertheless the initiative may be effective in other ways if it leads to greater efficiency and flexibility in the use of resources.

It might be expected that initiatives that were rated as more effective would be more widely implemented. The results in Table 14 do not support this assumption. The correlation coefficient between the proportion of schools that have funded an initiative under the SSNP and the per cent rating that initiative as *highly effective* is -0.16 (and 0.06 for *effective or highly effective*), which indicate that there is only a negligible relationship between the effectiveness of initiatives and the extent to which they have been implemented.

The first two initiatives in Table 14 are implemented in relatively few schools (arguably because they are relevant to a limited number of schools—remote schools and schools with students who have directly or indirectly experienced torture or trauma) and were rated as *highly effective* by a high proportion of principals in those schools. Removing these two less frequently implemented initiatives from the calculations, however, still produces correlation coefficients that indicate little relationship between the frequency of the implementation of an initiative and principals' judgements about its effectiveness—0.06 and 0.15 respectively.

Nor were the more recently introduced initiatives necessarily the more effective. The correlation coefficient between the proportion of schools for which an initiative was introduced only after the commencement of the SSNP and the per cent of principals who rated that initiative as *highly effective* is only 0.05 (and -0.10 for *effective or highly effective*), which again corresponds to a negligible relationship. The absence of a relationship may reflect the opposing influences of pre-existing initiatives continuing because they are effective and the opportunities provided by National Partnership funding to address identified needs that previously could not be addressed at all or to address them in new ways.

5.3 Effectiveness and school context

Previous sections showed that some principals considered some initiatives to have been more effective than others. The results presented here suggest that many of the initiatives are viewed by principals of schools with different characteristics as about equally likely to have been *highly effective*.

On the other hand, some initiatives may be more effective in some schools than in others. This variation across types of schools can at times provide an insight into the relative usefulness of the initiatives as well as the challenges faced by schools in different contexts. This section examines the variation in the likelihood of principals describing their various

SSNP-funded initiatives as *highly effective* across five school characteristics (see Table 3):

- the school's ICSEA score for the 2010 NAPLAN reports.
- the type of school—primary, secondary, combined and special.
- the school's mean score for the 2010 NAPLAN reading tests.
- the number of enrolments at the school.
- the location of the school.

The focus on the *highly effective* response is in part because for many a very substantial majority of principals (90% or more) considered many of the SSNP-funded initiatives to have been either *effective* or *highly effective*. The variation in measures of the effectiveness of these initiatives across categories of school characteristics would have been constrained if a combined measure of either *effective* or *highly effective* had been used. Beyond this technical consideration, however, it is arguable that the focus should be on stand out results—initiatives that principals were confident had worked.

When examining the effectiveness of initiatives in different school contexts, it is possible to lose sight of the absolute level of the effectiveness of an initiative. For instance, if an initiative is considered by principals in primary schools to be less effective than in secondary schools, this does not necessarily mean that overall the initiative is ineffective in primary schools—it could still be quite effective, just not quite as effective as in another context.

This section draws on the results in five tables (Tables 15 to 19), each corresponding to one of the five school characteristics. These tables have a similar structure. They report the average proportion of SSNP-funded initiatives considered by principals to be *highly effective* categorised by a particular school characteristic. These averages are reported in two ways—as the observed per cents (in rows headed by *O*) and as statistically adjusted estimates (in rows headed by *A*).

The adjusted values are derived from linear regression techniques that control for the other four school characteristics that are not explicitly the subject of the table. These estimates, for instance, show the relationship between views about the effectiveness of an initiative and the type of school after removing any associated influences of ICSEA, mean NAPLAN reading scores, enrolment size and location. The adjusted estimates are really regression coefficients that have been normed around the sample mean and reproduce the sample mean when weighted and summed.

Each table shows estimates of statistical significance for each characteristic—*p* values. For the observed values, these are based on an F-ratio from a simple linear regression equation, while for adjusted values they are based on partial F-ratios. In the discussion, values of *p* of 0.05 or less are described as statistically significant.

Each table includes values for a summary measure of the per cent of all the SSNP-funded initiatives that a principal described as *highly effective* at their school. This summary measure is at best only a rough indicator of overall effectiveness of initiatives because it combines initiatives rated according to different types of effectiveness—for instance, effectiveness in attracting high performing teachers, effectiveness in improving student

learning outcomes and effectiveness in promoting a culture of continuous school improvement. Each table also includes values for summary measures for the initiatives listed under each of the questions that ask principals about their implementation of initiatives and the effectiveness of those initiatives (questions 6, 7 and 10 to 16 in the questionnaire). These summaries are averages of initiatives with the same measure of effectiveness.

The tables differ in the individual items included under each of the summary measures for each question. Frequently there are no individual items associated with a particular question because there was none that varied to any significant extent across categories of the school characteristic. In cases where individual items are included, they are usually statistically significant, either for the observed or adjusted estimates or both. Using statistical significance as a criterion for inclusion, however, biases selection in favour of initiatives that have been more frequently adopted. Hence in the discussion some items are described as *approaching statistical significance*. The inclusion of these initiatives was based on a judgement that sometimes included consideration of the R-square—a measure of the variation explained that is unaffected by the number of observations.

The large number of initiatives canvassed in the questionnaire, and hence reviewed here, mean it is likely that some apparently significant results are really due to chance. This is exacerbated by the sometimes small samples on which estimates are based—responses for the effectiveness of initiatives are available only for the subsets of schools that had implemented those initiatives. Greater confidence can be placed in results that exhibit a consistent trend across categories or across initiatives.

The considerable number of initiatives that are not included in the various tables point to the universality of many initiatives—their effectiveness does not depend on the characteristics of the school in which they have been implemented. The Low SES SSNP, however, with some constraints, mostly allowed schools to select the initiatives they wished to introduce and hence initiatives were more likely to be introduced in schools where staff perceived need for them. This is an important caveat on any inferences about the universality or context dependence of the effectiveness of the initiatives discussed below.

5.3.1 ICSEA

The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is derived from the 2010 NAPLAN tests and reflects the level of educational advantage associated with the social backgrounds of a school community. Though ICSEA is not a measure of SES, schools participating in the Low SES SSNP are concentrated towards the lower end of the distribution and have been grouped into quartiles from high to low scores. The truncated nature of the ICSEA distribution (the clustering of schools towards the lower end) means that it is less likely that there are differences in principals' reports of the effectiveness of initiatives across these quartiles—it is therefore more remarkable when any differences appear.

Initiatives implemented in schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile were less likely than initiatives implemented in other schools to be judged by principals as *highly effective*. The

summary measure for *All initiatives* shows that only 39.1% of initiatives implemented by schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile were reported by principals to have been *highly effective* compared with an average of 42.8%.

It is not possible, however, to conclude that initiatives were more effective in schools with higher ICSEA scores. Initiatives in schools in the highest ICSEA quartile were not the most likely to have been reported as *highly effective* (44.2%). Instead it was initiatives in schools in the *second lowest* ICSEA quartile (47.2%)—and there was little difference between the corresponding values for initiatives implemented in schools in the third and lowest quartiles (39.9% *highly effective* compared with 39.1%).

Adjusting these values for any influence of type of school, NAPLAN reading scores, the number of enrolments, and location point to lower levels of effectiveness in schools in the lowest quartile (37.1% of initiatives reported as *highly effective*) and higher levels in the second lowest quartile (46.9% of initiatives reported as *highly effective*).

To some extent, this finding is consistent with the literature that informs the Low SES SSNP—schools with low SES communities face greater educational challenges than other schools. Even within these schools, it might be expected that the initiatives would be less likely to be *highly effective* among those with the greatest educational disadvantage—and the results in Table 15 show that this is the case. It is a little surprising, however, that it is often not the initiatives in the highest ICSEA quartile of schools that were most likely to be judged as *highly effective*—rather it is initiatives implemented in schools in the second lowest ICSEA quartile.

Improving staffing outcomes

Principals of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile were less likely than principals of other schools to report that staffing and management initiatives were *highly effective* in improving staffing outcomes (Table 15).

◇ Initiatives to *attract high performing teachers*.

- The proportion of initiatives reported as *highly effective* by principals of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile was 45.3%, lower than the overall average of 55.0% and especially compared with the second lowest quartile, in which an average of 66.6% of SSNP-funded initiatives were judged to be *highly effective*.
- The effectiveness of initiatives to provide opportunities for professional learning and development differed across ICSEA quartiles. Again initiatives implemented in schools in the lowest quartile were the least likely to be reported as *highly effective*—43.9% compared with an overall proportion of 64.1% and with 85.7% in the second lowest quartile.

Table 15 Per cent of principals reporting *Highly effective* for selected SSNP-funded initiatives by ICSEA quartiles (%)

(%)	ICSEA quartiles	<i>Highest</i>	<i>Third</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>Lowest</i>	Total	R-sq	p
All initiatives	<i>O</i>	44.2	39.9	47.2	39.1	42.8	0.4	0.00
	<i>A</i>	45.0	42.0	46.9	37.1		0.4	0.00
6 Staff recruitment & retention to attract high-performing teachers	<i>O</i>	50.0	57.7	66.6	45.3	55.0	2.6	0.00
	<i>A</i>	48.8	59.5	66.7	44.8		2.7	0.00
Providing opportunities for professional learning & development	<i>O</i>	59.9	65.4	85.7	43.9	64.1	9.1	0.00
	<i>A</i>	57.8	66.1	86.5	44.7		8.5	0.00
7 Management & staffing arrangements to attract, retain & develop staff	<i>O</i>	43.5	38.3	38.7	28.7	37.5	1.2	0.06
	<i>A</i>	43.8	39.8	37.4	28.4		0.7	0.18
Supporting early career teachers professionally	<i>O</i>	51.1	56.6	64.5	31.0	50.4	6.2	0.02
	<i>A</i>	53.5	56.2	64.5	29.1		5.1	0.04
Implementing professional learning plans for staff	<i>O</i>	45.1	26.0	21.2	19.3	27.9	5.1	0.04
	<i>A</i>	43.0	26.1	20.3	22.4		2.8	0.20
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . . to attract, retain & develop staff	<i>O</i>	51.3	48.0	57.0	44.5	50.6	0.8	0.02
	<i>A</i>	51.2	50.0	57.5	41.8		1.0	0.01
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements to improve student learning outcomes	<i>O</i>	53.8	49.7	54.6	41.2	50.4	1.0	0.03
	<i>A</i>	56.0	51.7	53.6	37.5		1.2	0.01
12 Providing innovative & tailored prof learning opportunities to attract, retain & develop staff	<i>O</i>	45.1	39.8	47.9	37.5	43.0	0.6	0.04
	<i>A</i>	49.0	41.2	45.6	33.1		0.9	0.01
Implementing relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff	<i>O</i>	58.3	49.6	65.6	38.7	53.9	3.8	0.02
	<i>A</i>	62.3	50.7	61.3	37.6		2.9	0.05
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities to improve student learning outcomes	<i>O</i>	46.2	43.1	41.4	43.7	43.6	0.1	0.80
	<i>A</i>	45.7	45.5	41.1	41.8		0.1	0.79
14 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes	<i>O</i>	33.9	21.7	38.1	41.1	33.2	2.4	0.01
	<i>A</i>	38.4	22.9	36.5	35.6		1.6	0.04
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing	<i>O</i>	36.5	23.1	35.4	35.6	32.3	1.5	0.06
	<i>A</i>	37.4	28.0	34.3	27.9		0.6	0.36
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement	<i>O</i>	29.6	26.7	34.1	32.2	30.5	0.4	0.25
	<i>A</i>	27.7	27.8	33.9	33.2		0.3	0.36
Making planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available	<i>O</i>	24.3	13.9	14.8	37.3	21.1	4.5	0.08
	<i>A</i>	25.4	13.9	11.9	39.7		5.1	0.05

1. Values are per cent of principals of schools participating in the SSNP-funded initiative reporting that the initiative was Highly effective or either Effective or Highly effective.

2 *O* are observed values, *A* are adjusted values based on a regression including school type, NAPLAN reading scores, enrolment size and location.

3. *p* values are the probability of no relationship between Highly effective and ICSEA quartiles derived from the *F* and partial *F* ratios of corresponding regression equations.

4. Values for totals differ from the corresponding values in Tables 13 and 14 because of a small number of missing cases for ICSEA.

5. The number of SSNP-funded initiatives on which the per cents highly effective are based are shown in Appendix C, Table C5.

- ◇ Initiatives in *management and staffing arrangements*.
 - Management and staffing arrangement initiatives implemented to *attract, retain and develop staff* in schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile, while not statistically significant, were less likely to be reported as *highly effective* than were all initiatives—28.7% compared with 37.5%. Statistical adjustment made little difference to this pattern.
 - Initiatives to *Support early career teachers professionally* were again least likely to be reported as *highly effective* by principals of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile (31.0% rated the initiatives as *highly effective*) and most likely among principals of schools in the second lowest ICSEA quartile (64.5% rated them as *highly effective*). Statistical adjustment made little difference to this pattern.
 - *Implementing professional learning plans for staff* was least likely to be reported as *highly effective* by principals of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile (19.3% rated the initiative as *highly effective*) and most likely among principals of schools in the highest ICSEA quartile (45.1% of rated the initiative as *highly effective*). After statistical adjustment, however, the relationship was no longer statistically significant.
- ◇ Initiatives in *innovative and flexible staffing arrangements*.
 - Innovative and flexible staffing arrangements implemented to *attract, retain and develop staff* were less likely to be reported as *highly effective* by principals of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile (44.5%) than in Partnership schools overall (50.6%) and especially compared with schools in the second lowest quartile (57.0%). Statistical adjustment strengthened the relationship slightly.
- ◇ Initiatives to provide *innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for staff*.
 - *Innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities* were also less likely to be considered *highly effective* in *attracting, retaining and developing staff* by principals of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile—37.5% compared with an average of 43.0%. A similar pattern was evident for initiatives *implementing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff*. Statistical adjustment made little difference to the estimated values.

Improving student outcomes

Principals of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile were also less likely than principals of other schools to report that some types of initiatives were *highly effective* in improving staffing learning outcomes (Table 15). The results were more mixed than for initiatives that targeted staffing outcomes.

- ◇ Initiatives in *innovative and flexible staffing arrangements*.
 - Innovative and flexible staffing arrangements implemented to *improve student learning outcomes* were less likely to be described as *highly effective* by principals of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile (41.2%) than in Partnership schools overall (50.4%) and especially compared with schools in the highest (53.8%) and the second lowest (54.6%) quartiles. Statistical adjustment strengthened the

relationship slightly.

- ◇ Initiatives providing *innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students*.
 - The extent to which initiatives implemented to *provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students* in order to *improve student learning outcomes* were reported as *highly effective* was not related to the ICSEA quartile of the school—the differences across quartiles were negligible.
- ◇ Initiatives providing *individual learning support for students*.
 - Initiatives implemented to *provide individual learning support for students* to *improve student learning outcomes* were more likely to be reported as *highly effective* in schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile (41.1% of initiatives were reported as *highly effective*) than in schools overall (33.2%). This was mainly the result of a very low value for schools in the third quartile (21.7%). After statistical adjustment there was little difference between the values for the highest (38.4%), second (36.6%) and lowest (35.6%) quartiles, although the value for the third quartile (22.9%) remained lower.
- ◇ The effectiveness of initiatives *promoting student wellbeing* did not vary with the ICSEA quartile of the school—the differences were not statistically significant before or after statistical adjustment.

Improving accountability

Overall, there were no statistically significant differences among ICSEA quartiles in the proportions of principals who reported that the strategies designed to *promote a culture of continuous improvement* in their schools were *highly effective*. After statistical adjustment, however, the initiative *making planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available*, was more likely to be reported as *highly effective* by principals of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile—37.3% of principals of schools in the lowest quartile described the initiative as *highly effective* compared with an average for the initiative overall of 21.1%.

5.3.2 Type of school

Table 16 identifies four types of schools—primary, secondary, combined and special. The majority of principals who responded to the survey were from primary schools, with fewer secondary and combined schools and few special schools represented. The following discussion does not refer to the results for special schools because they are based on the judgements of a smaller number of principals.

It might be expected that the staffing, management and accountability challenges of the different types of schools, which have different levels of funding and discipline-specific staff, would result in different levels of effectiveness of SSNP-funded initiatives. Nevertheless, the differences among principals of primary and secondary schools were often modest and, where present, inconsistent across initiatives.

These features are reflected in the results for the summary measure across all initiatives—principals of primary schools (44.9%) were slightly more likely to evaluate their SSNP-funded initiatives as *highly effective* than were principals of secondary (38.5%) or

combined (34.6%) schools, although the differences across school types were statistically significant and were little changed by statistical adjustment. Perhaps the strongest feature of the results in Table 16 was the tendency for principals of primary schools to be more positive about the efficacy of their initiatives in improving student outcomes.

Improving staffing outcomes

Of the four broad summary measures related to staffing outcomes in Table 16, only two were significantly different across types of school, especially after statistical adjustment. Some individual initiatives were also statistically significant.

- ◇ Initiatives to *attract high performing teachers*.
 - After statistical adjustment the proportion of initiatives reported as *highly effective* by primary school principals was 57.4%, higher than the overall average of 54.0% and higher than the 42.2% secondary school principals.
 - After statistical adjustment, primary school principals were more likely to report that their initiatives in establishing leadership and strategic positions were more likely to describe those initiatives as *highly effective* than were secondary school principals—59.5% compared with 35.1%. Principals of combined schools, however, were even more likely to report that their initiatives were *highly effective* (84.1%).
- ◇ Initiatives to introduce *innovative and flexible staffing arrangement to attract, retain and develop staff* showed no significant difference across types of school in the extent to which principals described them as *highly effective*. After statistical adjustment, however, the individual initiative in team-based teaching showed strong differences, with 74.5% of principals of combined schools reporting that the initiatives were *highly effective*, 59.6% of primary school principals, and only 30.7% of high school principals. The more complex grade-level mix in combined schools may provide greater scope for successful innovation in team teaching.
- ◇ Differences between types of school in the proportions of initiatives *providing innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities to attract, retain and develop staff* reported as *highly effective* were statistically significant (before and after statistical adjustment). Differences between primary and secondary schools were modest, but the value for combined schools (27.1%) was well below the overall average (42.9%). There were no statistically significant differences for individual initiatives.

Improving student outcomes

Initiatives to improve student learning outcomes are characterised overall for the broader measures by stronger differences among school types in the proportion reported as *highly effective*. The pattern is generally for higher values for primary schools, followed sometimes fairly closely by secondary schools, while combined schools have mostly markedly lower values. For instance,

- ◇ 35.6% of initiatives providing *individual learning support* for students were described as *highly effective* by primary school principals, but only 31.0% of initiatives in secondary schools and 6.6% of initiatives in combined schools were reported to have been *highly effective*.

Table 16 Per cent of principals reporting *Highly effective* for selected initiatives by type of school (%)

(%)	Type of school	Primary	Sec.	Comb.	Special	Total	R-sq	p
All initiatives	O	44.9	38.5	34.6	39.7	42.6	0.5	0.00
	A	45.2	37.8	35.3	37.3		0.5	0.00
6 Staff recruitment & retention to attract high-performing teachers	O	56.5	49.4	52.0	34.8	54.0	0.2	0.63
	A	57.4	42.2	56.0	59.5		1.0	0.05
Establishing leadership & strategic positions	O	57.3	43.2	80.1	0.0	53.6	4.4	0.06
	A	59.5	35.1	84.1	12.9		5.4	0.03
7 Management & staffing arrangements to attract, retain & develop staff	O	38.2	38.0	34.7	11.5	36.9	0.4	0.46
	A	39.6	31.9	33.4	22.4		0.5	0.31
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . .to attract, retain & develop staff	O	52.1	43.4	52.5	44.7	50.1	0.4	0.21
	A	52.3	41.5	56.1	45.6		0.6	0.08
Team-based approaches to teaching & planning	O	58.4	40.0	65.7	28.6	54.7	2.1	0.21
	A	59.6	30.7	74.5	34.2		4.3	0.02
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements to improve student learning outcomes	O	53.8	43.2	43.6	43.8	50.1	1.0	0.04
	A	53.0	47.7	37.1	41.8		0.7	0.08
Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams	O	56.6	38.3	17.2	28.6	46.6	7.4	0.08
	A	56.9	43.6	0.0	28.3		8.3	0.03
12 Providing innovative & tailored prof learning opportunities to attract, retain & develop staff	O	43.6	44.7	27.1	50.0	42.9	0.9	0.01
	A	43.9	43.3	26.9	53.8		0.7	0.02
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities to improve student learning outcomes	O	48.6	33.7	35.6	32.3	43.5	2.4	0.00
	A	49.0	37.0	36.8	1.9		2.4	0.00
Implementing differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students	O	39.9	16.1	11.3	28.6	32.2	5.9	0.01
	A	41.6	12.0	7.1	29.7		6.5	0.00
14 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes	O	35.6	31.0	6.6	53.8	33.5	2.8	0.00
	A	35.0	36.1	4.7	44.8		2.5	0.00
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing	O	36.6	27.2	3.5	67.9	33.5	5.1	0.00
	A	34.3	38.2	0.5	54.4		4.4	0.00
Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives	O	39.0	22.1	0.0	83.3	33.4	9.1	0.01
	A	34.8	44.0	0.0	37.8		6.3	0.03
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement	O	32.2	25.5	29.7	20.4	30.2	0.4	0.29
	A	33.5	20.4	34.0	16.8		1.0	0.01

1. Values are per cent of principals of schools participating in the SSNP-funded initiative reporting that the initiative was Highly effective or either Effective or Highly effective.

2 O are observed values, A are adjusted values based on a regression including category variables for ICSEA with additional controls for enrolment size, NAPLAN reading scores and location.

3. p values are the probability of no relationship between Highly effective and ICSEA quartiles derived from the F and partial F ratios of corresponding regression equations.

4. The number of SSNP-funded initiatives on which the per cents highly effective are based are shown in Appendix C, Table C2.

- ◇ 36.6% of initiatives *promoting student wellbeing* were described as *highly effective* by primary school principals, but only 27.2% of initiatives in secondary schools and 3.5% of initiatives in combined schools were reported to have been *highly effective*.
- ◇ 35.6% of initiatives *promoting student wellbeing* were described as *highly effective* by primary school principals, but only 31.0% of initiatives in secondary schools and 6.6% of initiatives in combined schools were reported to have been *highly effective*.

The pattern for the initiatives *providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities to improve student learning outcomes* was slightly different. Again a higher proportion of initiatives in primary schools (48.6%) were described as *highly effective*, but there was little difference between secondary schools (33.7%) and combined schools (35.6%).

The individual initiatives included in Table 16 approximate the overall pattern for the broader category of which they are a part.

Improving accountability

Overall, principals' judgements about the effectiveness of their various strategies to promote a culture of continuous improvement did not differ significantly by the type of their school. Statistical adjustment, however, increased the differences among the categories. Initiatives implemented in combined and primary schools were more likely to be described by principals as *highly effective* (34.0% and 33.5% respectively) than were initiatives implemented in secondary schools (20.4%). None of the individual initiatives showed statistically significant differences.

5.3.3 Literacy

There was only a modest relationship between the NAPLAN reading quartile in which a principal's school was located and his or her likelihood of describing their implementation of an SSNP-funded initiative as *highly effective*—and even where differences are statistically significant, they are still mostly small and not necessarily consistent. The overall summary measure is an appropriate guide in this respect. The differences between categories in Table 17 are statistically significant, with schools in the lowest quartile having the highest value (46.2% of the initiatives were *highly effective*) but the difference from the overall mean (42.6%) was not particularly large and there was no trend across the other categories. Statistical adjustment increases the differences only slightly.

Improving staffing outcomes

Principals' judgements about the effectiveness of initiatives are only modestly related to the NAPLAN reading categories for some of the broad summary measures of staffing outcomes and often only after statistical adjustment. Results for several individual initiatives, however, show a significant relationship.

- ◇ Differences in the proportion of initiatives described as *highly effective* were not statistically significantly different among NAPLAN reading quartiles for the broad summary measures for *staffing recruitment and retention to attract high performing teachers* and for *management and staffing arrangements*.

Table 17 Per cent of principals reporting *Highly effective* for selected initiatives by NAPLAN reading scores (%)

<i>Initiatives</i>	Reading quartile (%)	<i>Highest</i>	<i>Third</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>Lowest</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>R-sq</i>	<i>p</i>
All initiatives	<i>O</i>	41.4	42.3	40.2	46.2	42.5	42.6	0.2	0.00
	<i>A</i>	40.1	39.9	38.3	46.9	47.8		0.4	0.00
6 Staff recruitment & retention to attract high-performing teachers	<i>O</i>	54.3	54.9	50.5	60.8	43.6	54.0	0.6	0.34
	<i>A</i>	54.4	51.2	45.8	61.1	59.0		1.1	0.06
7 Management & staffing arrangements to attract, retain & develop staff	<i>O</i>	38.5	42.3	32.8	39.6	25.9	36.9	0.8	0.30
	<i>A</i>	33.0	36.7	31.4	44.4	39.1		0.8	0.24
Other performance management & staffing arrangements	<i>O</i>	37.7	52.1	43.9	67.3	15.4	46.4	7.6	0.23
	<i>A</i>	24.2	36.8	53.0	91.5	23.9		11.7	0.04
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . .to attract, retain & develop staff	<i>O</i>	49.1	49.8	46.6	55.1	49.7	50.1	0.4	0.33
	<i>A</i>	47.0	48.1	43.4	56.8	58.7		0.9	0.02
Team-based approaches to teaching & planning	<i>O</i>	55.4	54.3	46.1	65.0	50.0	54.7	1.7	0.44
	<i>A</i>	48.7	55.8	37.0	68.2	68.9		4.6	0.03
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements to improve student learning outcomes	<i>O</i>	52.5	49.4	55.0	46.3	47.0	50.1	0.4	0.48
	<i>A</i>	51.3	46.8	56.1	48.8	47.4		0.4	0.49
12 Providing innovative & tailored prof learning opportunities to attract, retain & develop staff	<i>O</i>	39.9	41.0	40.5	50.8	41.4	42.9	0.8	0.04
	<i>A</i>	37.7	38.9	40.7	53.1	44.3		1.1	0.01
Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams	<i>O</i>	59.4	51.2	40.7	64.3	34.4	51.5	4.6	0.03
	<i>A</i>	53.3	43.4	45.0	72.7	35.5		5.2	0.01
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities to improve student learning outcomes	<i>O</i>	43.8	42.6	38.2	46.2	47.4	43.5	0.5	0.44
	<i>A</i>	41.7	41.2	36.2	47.2	53.3		0.8	0.17
14 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes	<i>O</i>	29.0	31.9	26.5	40.6	42.2	33.5	1.6	0.09
	<i>A</i>	32.6	29.9	30.1	41.4	33.8		0.7	0.44
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing	<i>O</i>	33.0	28.3	28.3	33.3	54.7	33.5	1.4	0.14
	<i>A</i>	37.3	27.3	32.5	34.3	39.7		0.6	0.55
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement	<i>O</i>	24.9	31.0	31.0	30.6	33.6	30.2	0.6	0.22
	<i>A</i>	25.1	30.0	27.3	28.6	42.6		0.8	0.07

1. Values are per cent of principals of schools participating in the SSNP-funded initiative reporting that the initiative was Highly effective or either Effective or Highly effective.
2. *O* are observed values, *A* are adjusted values based on a regression including category variables for ICSEA with additional controls for school type, enrolment size and location.
3. *p* values are the probability of no relationship between Highly effective and ICSEA quartiles derived from the *F* and partial *F* ratios of corresponding regression equations.
4. The number of SSNP-funded initiatives on which the per cents highly effective are based are shown in Appendix C, Table C3.

- ◇ After statistical adjustment, initiatives implemented in schools in the lowest NAPLAN reading quartile (56.8%) and those implemented in schools without a score (58.7%) were more likely to be described as *highly effective* than the overall average (50.1%), while the proportions described as *highly effective* for those implemented in schools in other quartiles were below average. After statistical adjustment, the proportion of initiatives in *Team-based approaches to teaching and learning* described as *highly effective* was similarly higher than average for schools in the lowest quartile and for schools without a score.
- ◇ Initiatives to attract, retain and develop staff by *providing quality professional learning for school-based teams* were more likely to be considered *highly effective* by principals of schools in the lowest NAPLAN reading quartile (50.8% compared with a mean for all schools of 42.9%), with no trend apparent across the other categories. The differences remain significant after statistical adjustment.

Improving student outcomes

There are no significant differences across NAPLAN reading categories in the likelihood of principals viewing initiatives related to improved student learning outcomes or improved student wellbeing as *highly effective*.

Improving accountability

There are no significant differences among NAPLAN reading categories in the extent to which principals judged the various strategies designed to promote a culture of continuous improvement in their school as *highly effective*.

5.3.4 Enrolments

In general, school size (as measured by enrolments) had only a modest and patchy effect on the likelihood of a principal describing an SSNP-funded initiative as *highly effective*. The overall summary measure in Table 18 shows that there are no significant differences based on school size, except after statistical adjustment the proportion of initiatives implemented in smaller schools described as *highly effective* was 38.0%—lower than the average of 42.6% for all schools.

Improving staffing outcomes

Principals' views about the effectiveness of their SSNP-funded initiatives in *management and staffing* differ with the number of enrolments at their school. The most significant differences were found between principals in small schools with 99 or fewer students and larger schools with 100 or more students. For example, proportionally more principals (47.2%) of schools with 1,000 or more enrolments described their initiatives in *management and staffing* as *highly effective* compared with principals (24.0%) of smaller schools with less than 100 students. Statistical adjustment alters the estimates only slightly.

Table 18 Per cent of principals reporting *Highly effective* for selected initiatives by the number of enrolments at the school (%)

<i>Initiatives</i>	<i>Enrolments (%)</i>	<i>1,000 or more</i>	<i>500-999</i>	<i>200-499</i>	<i>100-199</i>	<i>99 or fewer</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>R-sq</i>	<i>p</i>
All initiatives	<i>O</i>	41.8	42.9	44.3	43.1	40.7	42.6	0.1	0.24
	<i>A</i>	42.5	41.9	45.1	44.3	38.0		0.2	0.02
6 Staff recruitment & retention to attract high-performing teachers	<i>O</i>	58.9	56.2	52.7	52.6	45.3	54.0	0.4	0.54
	<i>A</i>	61.6	55.4	52.1	52.9	43.6		0.5	0.37
7 Management & staffing arrangements to attract, retain & develop staff	<i>O</i>	47.2	32.7	37.6	44.6	24.0	36.9	2.2	0.01
	<i>A</i>	45.1	29.1	36.3	44.0	23.7		1.9	0.01
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . .to attract, retain & develop staff	<i>O</i>	48.0	52.1	49.7	52.6	48.7	50.1	0.2	0.69
	<i>A</i>	49.5	51.4	49.8	52.7	45.0		0.2	0.76
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements to improve student learning outcomes	<i>O</i>	43.9	51.1	55.7	50.6	50.7	50.1	0.7	0.19
	<i>A</i>	41.9	49.4	54.3	52.8	53.0		0.5	0.30
12 Providing innovative & tailored prof learning opportunities to attract, retain & develop staff	<i>O</i>	45.7	46.6	41.0	39.7	39.0	42.9	0.5	0.20
	<i>A</i>	44.2	44.6	43.8	43.0	36.3		0.2	0.68
Implementing relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff	<i>O</i>	67.9	57.6	49.8	55.3	36.3	53.6	4.9	0.01
	<i>A</i>	66.1	55.6	53.4	61.8	31.1		3.0	0.08
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities to improve student learning outcomes	<i>O</i>	36.8	42.8	47.6	44.2	47.1	43.5	0.6	0.27
	<i>A</i>	38.1	41.2	48.3	46.4	42.4		0.4	0.55
14 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes	<i>O</i>	32.8	25.3	35.3	34.0	41.8	33.5	1.1	0.22
	<i>A</i>	33.6	25.6	38.4	36.4	33.9		0.8	0.35
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing	<i>O</i>	21.1	31.7	42.1	38.9	44.1	33.5	3.1	0.00
	<i>A</i>	15.7	30.0	45.6	45.1	30.1		3.6	0.00
Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives	<i>O</i>	9.3	38.2	33.3	52.3	50.6	33.4	9.4	0.02
	<i>A</i>	0.1	35.6	48.1	59.8	47.4		10.5	0.01
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement	<i>O</i>	32.3	29.0	32.4	27.8	28.7	30.2	0.1	0.83
	<i>A</i>	38.1	29.4	32.0	25.9	24.7		0.6	0.21

1. Values are per cent of principals of schools participating in the SSNP-funded initiative reporting that the initiative was Highly effective or either Effective or Highly effective.
2. *O* are observed values, *A* are adjusted values based on a regression including category variables for ICSEA with additional controls for school type, NAPLAN reading scores and location.
3. *p* values are the probability of no relationship between Highly effective and ICSEA quartiles derived from the *F* and partial *F* ratios of corresponding regression equations.
4. The number of SSNP-funded initiatives on which the per cents highly effective are based are shown in Appendix C, Table C4.

This is the only summary measure for staffing initiatives for which there is any statistically significant relationship—the proportions of initiatives described as *highly effective* were little different across school size categories for *staff recruitment and retention to attract high performing teachers*, *innovative and flexible staffing arrangements* and *providing innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities*.

There were, however, statistically significant differences for individual initiative *to implement relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff* to attract, retain and develop staff. These initiatives were far more likely to be reported as *highly effective* by principals of large schools (with 1,000 or more students—67.9%) than by principals of small schools (with 99 or fewer students—36.3%). Although the differences are reduced overall after statistical adjustment, the value for small schools declines further to 31.1% of these initiatives being reported as *highly effective*.

Improving student outcomes

School size had no influence on the effectiveness of initiatives to improve student learning outcomes. The differences across enrolment categories for all three student learning outcome summary measures were not statistically significant—nor were there any statistically significant differences for the individual initiatives.

There were, however, statistically significant differences across enrolment categories for the summary measure for management initiatives to promote student wellbeing—initiatives in larger schools were less likely to be described as *highly effective* (21.1% in schools with 1,000 or more students) and more likely to be described as *highly effective* in smaller schools (44.1% in schools with 99 or fewer students). Statistical adjustment, while still preserving statistical significance, changes this pattern markedly for the smallest schools—their value falls to 30.1%, which, although below the overall average of 33.5%, is still above the corresponding value for the largest schools, which fell to 15.7%.

This pattern is echoed more strongly for the individual initiative, *providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives*—9.3% of these initiatives in the largest schools were described as *highly effective* while in the smallest schools, 50.6% of the initiatives were described as *highly effective*. The differences are, if anything, greater after statistical adjustment. Among other possible explanations, this may reflect a previously unmet demand for these programs in smaller schools.

Improving accountability

There were no significant differences among categories of enrolment size in the extent to which principals judged the various strategies designed to promote a culture of continuous improvement in their school as *highly effective*.

5.3.5 Location

Location is based on three categories—metropolitan, provincial and remote (which includes very remote). These categories are based on measures used by MCEETYA to categorise public schools and which, in turn, are a variant of the Access/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA). ARIA assigns scores to locations on the basis of their accessibility (usually by road distance) to towns of different sizes. Non-government schools have been allocated to the categories on the basis of categories of nearby public schools.

The location of a school was related to principal's view about the effectiveness of initiatives only for selected initiatives (Table 19). Although sample sizes for remote schools are adequate for the summary measures, any statistical significance for individual initiatives is mostly due to differences between metropolitan and provincial schools. Table C5 shows the often small sample sizes for the values for rural schools for individual initiatives.

Where there are statistically significant differences, principals of metropolitan schools are consistently more likely to report that their initiatives were highly effective than were principals of provincial schools. Differences among categories were statistically significant for the overall summary measure, but were relatively small—44.5% of initiatives in metropolitan schools were described as highly effective, compared with 40.3% of initiatives in provincial schools and 42.8% of initiatives in remote schools. These values were almost unchanged by statistical adjustment.

Improving staffing outcomes

- ◇ Initiatives around *staff recruitment and retention to attract high performing teachers* were slightly more likely to be described by as *highly effective* by principals of metropolitan schools (57.1%) than of provincial schools (48.3%). Principals of remote schools were the most likely to describe these initiatives as highly effective (60.6%). Statistical adjustment reduced these differences and they were no longer statistically significant.
- ◇ The effectiveness of initiatives in the *provision of innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities to attract, retain and develop staff* was higher than average in metropolitan schools (46.6% described as *highly effective* in metropolitan schools compared with the overall average of 42.9%). The corresponding value for principals of provincial schools (40.0%) was less than the overall average and lower still for principals of remote schools (30.5% described these initiatives as *highly effective*). The differences were substantially reduced by statistical adjustment and were no longer statistically significant.

The extent to which initiatives to *implement relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff* were described as *highly effective* was also higher than average in metropolitan schools (61.5% in metropolitan schools compared with the overall average of 53.6%) and lower in provincial schools (47.3%). The relatively low value for remote schools (36.2%) is based on 14 schools (see Table C5). These differences were substantially reduced by statistical adjustment.

- ◇ Although location differences in the proportion of initiatives rated highly effective for *innovative and flexible staffing arrangements* were not statistically significant, differences to an initiative within that question, *Team-based approaches to teaching and planning*, were statistically significant. Principals of metropolitan schools (62.1%) were more likely to report that initiatives around *Team-based approaches to teaching and planning* were highly effective in attracting, retaining and developing staff than were principals of provincial (49.1%) schools. While the corresponding value for remote schools is substantially lower (28.9%), it is based on only 13 schools. The differences are unlikely to be related to factors such as the type of school or the school's enrolment size because the adjusted values are little different from the observed values. Instead it may point to the relatively greater importance of other

challenges in attracting, retaining and developing staff faced by provincial and remote schools.

Improving student outcomes

- ◇ The proportion of all the initiatives implemented to *provide innovative and flexible staffing arrangements to improve student learning outcomes* described as *highly effective* was slightly higher than average in metropolitan schools (52.1%) than in provincial schools (45.9%) and higher again in remote schools (62.6%). These differences were strengthened by statistical adjustment.

Employing additional paraprofessionals in roles outside the classroom was evaluated more positively in metropolitan schools than in provincial schools. Principals of metropolitan schools (48.1%) were more likely to report that *Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside the classroom* was *highly effective* in improving student learning outcomes than were principals of provincial (36.8%) schools. The corresponding value for remote schools was 83.8%, but this is based on the responses of only 8 principals. Statistical adjustment increased these differences.

Principals of metropolitan schools (68.4%) were also more likely to report that *Employing additional paraprofessionals in other roles outside the classroom* was *highly effective* in improving student learning than were principals of provincial (26.3%) schools. The corresponding value for remote schools (69.8%) was also higher than for provincial schools, but again was based on a small number of responses (four principals). Statistical adjustment for other school characteristics reinforced this pattern.

- ◇ Although overall the effectiveness of *management initiatives to promote student wellbeing* did not differ statistically significantly across the categories of location, it did for two of the individual initiatives. After statistical adjustment, initiatives to *provide professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing* were more likely to be judged as *highly effective* by principals of metropolitan schools (47.7%) than by principals of provincial (21.6%) schools. The corresponding value for remote schools (11.5%) was lower still, but based on the responses of only seven principals.

One of the less frequently implemented initiatives, *to provide students with access to counselling services*, was more likely to be considered *highly effective* by principals of metropolitan schools (33.8%) than by principals of provincial schools (12.1%). The apparently high value of 100.0% for remote schools is based on the response of just one principal.

Improving accountability

There were no statistically significant differences for location categories in the extent to which principals judged the various strategies designed to promote a culture of continuous improvement in their school as *highly effective*.

Table 19 Per cent of principals reporting *Highly effective* for selected initiatives by location of the school (%)

<i>Initiatives</i>	<i>Location (%)</i>	Metro	Prov.	Remote	Total	R-sq	p
All initiatives	<i>O</i>	44.5	40.3	42.8	42.6	0.3	0.00
	<i>A</i>	44.5	40.2	43.4		0.1	0.00
6 Staff recruitment & retention initiatives <i>to attract high-performing teachers</i>	<i>O</i>	57.1	49.3	60.6	54.0	0.8	0.04
	<i>A</i>	55.8	50.7	62.7		0.4	0.23
7 Management & staffing arrangements <i>to attract, retain & develop staff</i>	<i>O</i>	40.1	34.7	25.5	36.9	0.7	0.10
	<i>A</i>	38.2	36.5	28.6		0.2	0.60
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements <i>...to attract, retain & develop staff</i>	<i>O</i>	51.3	49.4	44.1	50.1	0.2	0.39
	<i>A</i>	51.7	49.1	42.4		0.1	0.48
Team-based approaches to teaching & planning	<i>O</i>	62.1	49.1	28.9	54.7	3.3	0.03
	<i>A</i>	63.0	48.6	24.9		2.6	0.05
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements <i>to improve student learning outcomes</i>	<i>O</i>	52.1	45.9	62.6	50.1	0.8	0.03
	<i>A</i>	51.9	45.3	68.5		1.2	0.01
Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside classrooms	<i>O</i>	48.1	36.8	83.8	46.6	7.2	0.04
	<i>A</i>	50.9	29.9	99.9		10.9	0.00
Employing additional para professionals in other support roles outside classrooms	<i>O</i>	58.4	26.3	69.8	47.1	8.4	0.03
	<i>A</i>	62.0	18.8	82.0		13.7	0.01
12 Providing innovative & tailored prof learning opportunities <i>to attract, retain & develop staff</i>	<i>O</i>	46.6	40.0	30.5	42.9	0.8	0.01
	<i>A</i>	44.2	42.0	37.1		0.1	0.60
Implementing relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff	<i>O</i>	61.5	47.3	36.2	53.6	3.1	0.02
	<i>A</i>	55.0	52.2	51.9		0.1	0.93
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities <i>to improve student learning outcomes</i>	<i>O</i>	43.7	43.7	41.1	43.5	0.0	0.82
	<i>A</i>	47.5	40.1	36.3		0.4	0.18
14 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes	<i>O</i>	31.2	34.8	48.2	33.5	0.5	0.29
	<i>A</i>	31.9	34.1	46.7		0.3	0.44
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing	<i>O</i>	34.4	30.8	46.8	33.5	0.9	0.11
	<i>A</i>	36.1	28.6	46.1		0.8	0.10
Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives	<i>O</i>	41.1	27.1	21.3	33.4	3.3	0.14
	<i>A</i>	47.7	21.6	11.5		5.9	0.02
Providing students with access to counselling services	<i>O</i>	33.8	12.1	100.0	26.5	10.0	0.01
	<i>A</i>	37.1	7.0	91.5		9.9	0.06
16 Accountability initiatives ... to promote a culture of continuous school improvement	<i>O</i>	31.8	28.3	31.3	30.2	0.2	0.35
	<i>A</i>	32.4	28.2	26.4		0.2	0.45

1. Values are per cent of principals of schools participating in the SSNP-funded initiative reporting that the initiative was Highly effective or either Effective or Highly effective.
2. *O* are observed values, *A* are adjusted values based on a regression including category variables for ICSEA with additional controls for school type, NAPLAN reading scores and enrolment size.
3. *p* values are the probability of no relationship between Highly effective and ICSEA quartiles derived from the *F* and partial *F* ratios of corresponding regression equations.
4. The number of SSNP-funded initiatives on which the per cents highly effective are based are shown in Appendix C, Table C5.

6. The role of the principal

This chapter examines responses to two survey questions about the role of the principal—their overall satisfaction with the work they do at their school and changes to their role since the National Partnerships began. It also discusses the types of evidence they use to guide their provision of teacher support and development.

6.1 Principals' satisfaction with their work

The final question of the survey asked principals about their level of satisfaction with working at the school—*Overall, how do you feel about working at this school?*—with the response options *Very satisfied*, *Satisfied*, *Somewhat satisfied*, *Dissatisfied*, *Very dissatisfied*, and *Don't know*. This question is not directly related to any changes resulting from the Low SES SSNP—it is intended to simply reflect the current satisfaction of principals with their job at their schools. The level of satisfaction within the principal class is an important measure as they play a key role in establishing the climate for successful school reform (McKinsey & Company 2007).

Table 20 shows the percentage distribution of principals' responses to this question overall and for several school characteristics. It should be noted that 270 principals (82% of respondents) completed this question. Overwhelmingly 95% of principals described themselves as either *Very satisfied* (70%) or *Satisfied* (25.2%). In contrast, 4% of principals indicated that they were *Somewhat satisfied*. Only 1% of principals expressed dissatisfaction in their role. One principal responded as *Dissatisfied* from a provincial school, and one principal from a remote school indicated *Very dissatisfied*.

The concentration of responses around *Very satisfied* makes it less likely that substantial difference will be found in different types of schools—they are more likely to vary only between levels of satisfaction. Nevertheless, some differences among types of schools are significant; in particular, principals of schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile were less likely to be *Very satisfied* (56.9%) than principals overall (70.0%).

Instead of focusing on the proportion of principals who were *Very satisfied*, it is possible to construct a mean level of satisfaction that takes the full range of responses into account. A somewhat arbitrary scoring system was used—*Strongly dissatisfied* is scored as -100, *Dissatisfied* as -50, *Somewhat satisfied* as +25, *Satisfied* as +50 and *Very satisfied* as +100. The values for the resulting means are shown in Table 20 and reveal significant differences for ICSEA quartiles and school location. Further analysis suggested that these differences (if not the absolute values) are fairly robust across different assumptions about the relative values attributed to the responses. The satisfaction of principals appears to be lower for the lowest ICSEA quartile. Despite this, the majority of principals (56.9%) still described themselves as *Very satisfied*—most of the difference is in the breakdown between *Satisfied* (a higher than average proportion of principals in the lowest ICSEA quartile describe themselves as *Satisfied*) and *Very satisfied*.

Table 20 The overall satisfaction of principals with their work at their school

	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Somewhat satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Number of schools</i>
Total %	0.5	0.4	3.9	25.2	70.0	100.0	82.8	270
Type %							0.45	270
Primary	0.0	0.0	5.2	23.0	71.8	100.0	84.6	196
Secondary	0.0	2.3	0.0	31.0	66.7	100.0	81.0	40
Combined	5.7	0.0	0.0	24.7	69.6	100.0	76.3	20
Special	0.0	0.0	7.1	35.7	57.1	100.0	76.8	14
NAPLAN-Reading %							0.15	270
Highest quartile	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.5	76.5	100.0	88.2	54
Third quartile	0.0	0.0	1.6	22.5	75.9	100.0	87.6	61
Second quartile	0.0	2.0	5.5	20.5	72.0	100.0	82.6	53
Lowest quartile	2.3	0.0	6.8	27.6	63.3	100.0	76.5	55
Missing	0.0	0.0	5.7	32.8	61.5	100.0	79.3	47
ICSEA %							0.04	263
Highest quartile	0.0	0.0	5.0	25.2	69.8	100.0	83.6	77
Third quartile	0.0	1.6	1.4	17.2	79.9	100.0	88.0	72
Second quartile	0.0	0.0	5.1	22.4	72.4	100.0	84.9	56
Lowest quartile	2.2	0.0	4.9	36.0	56.9	100.0	74.0	58
Enrolments %							0.20	270
501 or more	0.0	0.0	0.0	21.5	78.5	100.0	89.2	46
251 to 500	0.0	0.0	3.2	21.5	75.3	100.0	86.8	62
151 to 250	0.0	1.9	3.6	32.5	62.0	100.0	78.2	56
51 to 150	3.1	0.0	4.3	22.4	70.2	100.0	79.4	45
50 or less	0.0	0.0	8.0	27.1	64.9	100.0	80.4	61
Location %							0.03	270
Metropolitan	0.0	0.0	3.2	22.6	74.2	100.0	86.3	124
Provincial	0.0	0.8	4.5	27.4	67.3	100.0	81.7	128
Remote	7.1	0.0	5.4	27.1	60.4	100.0	68.3	18

1. Based on the survey of principals, data supplied by NSW DEC and data from ACARA's MySchool website.

2. Means are calculated from the response set Very dissatisfied -100, Dissatisfied -50, Somewhat satisfied +25, Satisfied +50 and Very satisfied +100. There were no Don't know responses.

3. Values in italics in the column headed Mean are the probability of no relationship from a GLM-based F-ratio.

4. Highlighted values are statistically significant differences $p < 0.05$.

5. See Weighting section and Appendix B for description of variables. Values are weighted.

Even though the majority of principals across all school types were *Very satisfied* with their work, the principals in metropolitan and provincial schools expressed much higher levels of satisfaction compared to their colleagues in remote schools. The difference largely reflects the *Very dissatisfied* response from one of the 18 remote school principals.

6.2 Changes in the role

Principals were asked about *changes* to their role since the beginning of the Low SES SSNP in their school. Question 9 provided them with 11 statements about their role as a principal and they could *Strongly agree*, *Agree*, *Disagree* or *Strongly disagree* with those statements (see the questionnaire in Appendix D). Additionally they could indicate *Don't know* or *Too early to tell*.

The eleven statements are all positively worded in the sense that agreement implies a change that is consistent with the intent of the Low SES SSNP—that is, that the principal (and the school leadership more broadly) has a greater focus on formulating the strategic direction of the school and an enhanced ability to move the school in that direction.

The 11 statements and the distribution of responses are outlined in Table 21. All the statements elicited, on average, a positive response, although some more than others. Statements with which at least 90% of principals *Agreed* or *Strongly agreed* were:

- *The professional needs of my staff are better met*
- *I am better able to support targeted staff development*
- *I spend more time on planning and whole school improvement.*

The positive response to these statements suggest that principals felt the Low SES SSNP enabled them to become better instructional leaders who are able to focus on the teaching and learning occurring within their school (Elmore 2000; Robinson 2007).

Statements with which fewer than 60% of principals *Agreed* or *Strongly agreed* were:

- *I have been able to play a more proactive role in teacher recruitment and selection*
- *My job has become more satisfying*
- *I am better able to delegate*
- *My communication with staff has been enhanced.*

The variation in the level of agreement is to be expected. The differences in levels of agreement across statements could reflect the differing emphases in the programs adopted by schools, the degree of difficulty in making change across areas, the school's initial situation and the number of years in which the school has been participating in the Partnership. For instance:

- ◇ *I am better able to support targeted staff development* taps one of the broader and more easily identifiable aspects of the *Low SES SSNP*. A feature of the initiative is the availability of funding to improve access to teacher development, both in quantity and strategically.

- ◇ *My communication with staff has been enhanced* had one of the lower levels of agreement, but this does not necessarily imply that principals think that their communication with their staff is poor. Perhaps they believed that their communication with staff was already satisfactory before the *Low SES SSNP* and that this was an area where there was little room for improvement.

The relationships among responses to the statements were always positive. Not only were principals more likely to agree than disagree with all eleven statements, but agreement with any one item was more likely to be associated with agreement with other items. While evident, this pattern was mostly modest. It was also fairly uniform, although responses to some statements were more closely related to each other—for instance, responses to *I am better able to influence the direction in which the school is moving*, *I have a better understanding of the strengths, weaknesses and needs of my staff*, *I am better able to support targeted staff development* and *My communication with staff has been enhanced* were slightly more strongly related to each other than to responses to other statements.

Table 21 Changes in the principal's role since the beginning of the Low SES SSNP

<i>The following changes have occurred since the beginning of the Low SES SSNP in this school:</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Too early to tell</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Number of schools</i>
<i>I spend more time on planning & whole school improvement (%)</i>	41.9	49.1	5.0	1.3	1.5	1.3	100.0	56.9	321
<i>I spend more time on teaching & learning issues (%)</i>	22.8	51.6	20.1	1.8	1.5	2.2	100.0	32.7	308
<i>My job has become more satisfying (%)</i>	16.6	39.5	23.9	4.7	8.0	7.4	100.0	20.1	318
<i>I am better organised (%)</i>	13.9	41.9	30.9	4.1	4.5	4.6	100.0	14.9	319
<i>I am better able to delegate (%)</i>	12.2	56.8	19.9	4.1	2.8	4.3	100.0	22.0	322
<i>I am better able to influence the direction in which the school is moving (%)</i>	36.2	52.3	6.5	1.3	3.4	0.3	100.0	52.1	321
<i>I have a better understanding of the strengths, weaknesses & needs of my staff (%)</i>	27.0	57.0	12.3	0.6	3.0	0.3	100.0	42.7	321
<i>I am better able to support targeted staff development (%)</i>	37.5	57.3	2.3	0.2	2.5	0.3	100.0	57.1	322
<i>The professional needs of my staff are better met (%)</i>	44.0	50.3	2.1	0.2	2.4	1.0	100.0	61.9	322
<i>My communication with staff has been enhanced (%)</i>	14.7	54.4	21.4	2.3	2.4	4.8	100.0	25.3	318
<i>I have been able to play a more proactive role in teacher recruitment & selection (%)</i>	15.9	36.7	29.8	6.6	5.8	5.2	100.0	13.1	319

1. Based on the survey of principals.

2. Means are calculated from the response set scored Strongly disagree -100, Disagree -33.3, Agree +33.3 Strongly agree +100, with Don't know and Too early to tell excluded and are therefore based on fewer than the number of school principals.

3. Values are weighted.

Responses to the statements are summarised by the means in Table 21. These values are calculated by scoring *Strongly disagree* as -100, *Disagree* as -33.3, *Agree* as +33.3 and *Strongly agree* as +100. Responses of *Don't know* and *Too early to tell* are omitted. While the scoring is somewhat arbitrary (*Disagree* and *Agree* could, for instance, have been scored as minus and plus 50, rather than 33.3), the values in Table 21 correspond to the more detailed responses—the values are all positive, indicating a balance of agreement over disagreement, and are higher for those statements with which more principals agreed. Omitting *Don't know* and *Too early to tell* responses is possibly only important for the two statements for which these responses are more frequent—*My job has become more satisfying* and *I have been able to play a more important role in teacher recruitment and selection*.

The variation in these means across the eleven statements and six school characteristics is shown in Table 22. Statistically significant differences are highlighted and these differences are the basis of the following discussion. Agreement with:

- ◇ *I spend more time on planning and whole school improvement* is distributed fairly evenly across all school types.
- ◇ *I spend more time on teaching and learning issues* is greater in schools with higher ICSEA values and in smaller schools.
- ◇ *My job has become more satisfying* is greater in schools with higher NAPLAN reading means and in schools with higher ICSEA values.
- ◇ *I am better organised* is greater in smaller schools. There is no sign of improvement in larger schools, possibly because higher levels of organisation were already well established as an institutional imperative, whereas in smaller schools, the focus on school strategy has provided an organisational framework.
- ◇ *I am better able to delegate* is distributed fairly evenly across all school types.
- ◇ *I am better able to influence the direction of the school* is less in only the schools with enrolments of 501 or more students.
- ◇ *I better understand the strengths, weaknesses and needs of my staff* is greater in primary, and to a lesser extent, combined schools. The level of agreement is least in secondary and special schools.
- ◇ *I am better able to support targeted staff development* is also higher in primary schools and in schools with higher NAPLAN Reading scores.
- ◇ *The professional needs of my staff are better met* is higher in primary and secondary schools, schools with higher NAPLAN reading scores and schools with higher student enrolments.
- ◇ *My communication with staff has been enhanced* is marked lower in schools with 501 enrolments or more.
- ◇ *I have been able to play a more proactive role in teacher recruitment and selection* is distributed fairly evenly across all school types.

Table 22 provides considerable detail about the specific changes to the role of principal in different types of schools. While the detail can be important, it can hide broader patterns. The right-most column in Table 22 shows the means for a principal component based scale, derived from the mean agreement scores across all eleven statements. This summarises the responses to the 11 aspects of the role into a single measure with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 100. Unlike the agreement means, zero on this scale is not the mid-point between agreement and disagreement, but the average level of agreement. A negative score can, and generally is, still consistent with overall agreement.

Table 22 Changes in the principal's role since the beginning of the Low SES SSNP by school characteristics

	<i>I spend more time on planning & whole school improvement</i>	<i>I spend more time on teaching & learning issues</i>	<i>My job has become more satisfying</i>	<i>I am better organised</i>	<i>I am better able to delegate</i>	<i>I am better able to influence the direction of the school</i>	<i>I better understand the strengths, weaknesses & needs of my staff</i>	<i>I am better able to support targeted staff development</i>	<i>The professional needs of my staff are better met</i>	<i>My communication with staff has been enhanced</i>	<i>I have been able to play a more proactive role in teacher recruitment and selection</i>	<i>Principal components scale</i>
Total	56.9	32.7	20.1	14.9	22.0	52.1	42.7	57.1	61.9	25.3	13.1	0.0
Type	<i>0.83</i>	<i>0.39</i>	<i>0.88</i>	<i>0.12</i>	<i>0.06</i>	<i>0.11</i>	<i>0.03</i>	<i>0.01</i>	<i>0.02</i>	<i>0.49</i>	<i>0.13</i>	<i>0.01</i>
Prim.	58.5	37.4	22.8	21.9	25.9	56.8	47.3	61.3	63.9	28.9	16.6	13.5
Sec.	50.6	10.4	3.5	-16.4	11.6	37.7	31.0	49.6	66.4	7.3	4.6	-47.0
Comb.	50.8	47.8	43.0	33.3	25.4	42.9	37.1	43.7	40.6	33.3	20.2	-3.2
Special	68.9	33.3	16.7	12.8	2.6	58.3	33.3	50.0	50.0	28.6	-12.8	-5.4
NAPLAN-R	<i>0.23</i>	<i>0.24</i>	<i>0.02</i>	<i>0.49</i>	<i>0.10</i>	<i>0.30</i>	<i>0.93</i>	<i>0.04</i>	<i>0.01</i>	<i>0.34</i>	<i>0.21</i>	<i>0.91</i>
Hi quartile	65.4	41.1	31.2	20.8	21.2	48.6	45.6	63.7	72.3	22.1	2.9	11.9
3rd q'ile	56.3	34.3	24.4	17.0	31.9	52.8	39.8	60.5	61.7	22.4	8.8	-6.7
2nd q'ile	51.7	30.1	18.1	10.3	22.1	47.9	42.8	54.4	63.2	25.9	17.4	1.3
Low q'ile	56.1	24.3	16.8	9.3	21.4	54.4	42.0	55.5	57.2	27.5	25.8	-5.3
Missing	54.9	37.1	6.4	19.0	8.1	57.5	43.9	50.4	55.4	28.7	4.5	2.4
ICSEA	<i>0.12</i>	<i>0.01</i>	<i>0.01</i>	<i>0.15</i>	<i>0.95</i>	<i>0.88</i>	<i>0.52</i>	<i>0.52</i>	<i>0.06</i>	<i>0.25</i>	<i>0.10</i>	<i>0.97</i>
Hi quartile	60.1	47.1	32.7	18.3	18.7	50.0	40.0	55.9	63.0	22.5	9.0	5.4
3rd q'ile	55.4	30.6	19.0	19.9	23.8	55.7	41.1	60.8	65.9	22.5	5.8	-3.3
2nd q'ile	63.6	28.4	23.2	12.2	28.9	48.8	45.0	58.9	68.3	24.2	17.4	-3.5
Low q'ile	45.6	25.4	4.3	7.9	17.5	51.3	43.6	52.6	50.4	31.6	21.3	-0.4
Enrolments	<i>0.69</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.89</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.17</i>	<i>0.01</i>	<i>0.07</i>	<i>0.42</i>	<i>0.02</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.49</i>	<i>0.13</i>
501 or more	47.8	12.9	15.8	-6.2	27.8	34.6	32.4	54.1	73.1	5.3	5.7	-29.8
251 to 500	64.8	34.4	23.6	10.1	20.0	54.5	43.1	62.9	63.2	28.1	26.2	10.4
151 to 250	56.3	34.1	19.9	18.3	29.1	58.0	48.4	58.6	59.2	31.5	11.9	11.0
51 to 150	57.0	37.8	25.9	23.1	13.0	52.6	32.3	55.1	56.6	28.7	16.4	-13.1
50 or less	56.5	43.7	16.9	29.8	16.5	58.0	52.3	53.0	57.6	32.4	3.5	18.1
Location	<i>0.04</i>	<i>0.92</i>	<i>0.28</i>	<i>0.05</i>	<i>0.97</i>	<i>0.58</i>	<i>0.32</i>	<i>0.72</i>	<i>0.09</i>	<i>0.07</i>	<i>0.90</i>	<i>0.02</i>
Metro.	60.5	31.9	22.1	5.6	19.9	51.3	37.6	55.0	62.4	19.0	10.4	-9.1
Provincial	56.1	34.8	21.0	24.9	25.9	55.7	49.4	62.2	65.6	31.3	17.9	17.0
Remote	37.5	24.7	1.9	6.6	7.6	35.1	30.6	36.2	32.9	26.5	-1.8	-54.1

1. Based on the survey of principals, data supplied by NSW DEC and data from ACARA's MySchool website.

2. Values are means with the response set scored Strongly disagree -100, Disagree -33.3, Agree +33.3 Strongly agree +100, with Don't know and Too early to tell excluded.

3. Values in italics next to school characteristics are probability of no relationship from a GLM-based F-ratio.

4. Highlighted values are statistically significant differences $p \leq 0.05$.

5. See Weighting section and Appendix B for description of variables.

6. The number of cases varies across values, but is mostly around 300. Values are weighted.

7. Values for the principal components scale are based on only 217 schools because any response with a missing value for any of the 11 items, including Don't know or Too early to tell, was deleted.

Table 23 Importance of selected sources of evidence as a guide to teacher performance support/development

<i>Importance in providing an evidence base to guide teacher performance support/development</i>	Not used	Not very important	Rather important	Very important	Total	Number of schools
<i>Test scores of students (%)</i>	7.3	19.5	49.1	24.2	100.0	312
<i>Other measurable student learning outcomes (%)</i>	1.0	3.9	47.7	47.4	100.0	311
<i>Documented student feedback on teaching (%)</i>	14.6	14.3	42.0	29.1	100.0	309
<i>Documented parent feedback (%)</i>	13.1	15.9	47.3	23.7	100.0	307
<i>Documented feedback from peers (%)</i>	12.7	9.4	44.3	33.6	100.0	301
<i>Other evidence to guide teacher performance support/development (%)</i>	45.8	1.5	28.2	24.5	100.0	312

1. Percentages for Part of school strategy are based on 328 schools. All other percentages are based on the Number of schools using the strategy.
2. Effectiveness refers to attracting, retaining and developing staff.
3. Percentages are weighted.

Responses to the statements were all, to varying degrees, positively related—principals who agreed with a statement were more likely to agree with other statements, while principals who disagreed with a statement were more likely to disagree with other statements. While this pattern should not be over-emphasised—the average inter-correlation coefficient was 0.41—it provides the basis for summarising the responses of principals to 11 statements into a single scale. Investigation of the results suggested that there is indeed only one scale and that each of the various statements contributes to the scale more or less equally.

This scale, which might be termed *Change in principal's role associated with the Low SES SSNP* has a statistically significant relationship to only two school characteristics—the type of school and the school's location:

- ◇ The impact of the Low SES SSNP on the principal's role has been greatest on primary schools (+13.5), less on combined (-3.2) and special (-5.4) schools and least on secondary schools (-47.0). The difference between primary and secondary schools is 0.6 standard deviations, which would typically be considered reasonably large. These results do not mean that principals of secondary schools have not responded positively about the influence of the initiatives on their role, merely that their responses have been less positive than those of principals of primary schools.

Simply comparing the levels of agreement of principals of primary and secondary schools across the eleven statements confirms this interpretation—principals of primary schools have higher mean agreement than principals of secondary schools for all statements except *The professional needs of my staff are better met*.

- ◇ The impact of the Low SES SSNP on changes in the principal's role has been greatest on schools in provincial areas (+17.0) and least on schools in remote areas(-54.1), with schools located in metropolitan areas closer to the overall mean (-

9.1). The difference between the means is just over 0.7 standard deviations, which is usually considered substantial. Again a simple comparison of the mean agreement with each of the eleven statements of principals of schools in the two locales shows lower levels of agreement for remote schools.

6.3 Evidence for teacher evaluation

As part of the section that asked about the Low SES SSNP reform of *adopting best practice performance management & staffing arrangements*, principals were provided with a list of possible sources of evidence they could use when evaluating teachers' performance and support/development needs, and asked to indicate how important each was at their school.

Table 23 shows the distribution of their responses across the categories *Not used*, *Not very important*, *Rather important* and *Very important*. All the specific categories were measurable or documented, and clearly the overwhelming majority of principals use multiple sources of evidence when reflecting on the abilities and needs of their teachers. The most important source of evidence was *Other measurable student learning outcomes*, where *other* can be taken to mean *other than test scores*. More than 95% of principals described this evidence as *Very important* (47.4%) or *Rather important* (47.7%). Emphasis is clearly given to student learning outcomes.

The frequency of use of the other four specified sources of evidence was similar. The importance of mentoring and supervision is reflected in the responses to feedback from peers. The prominence given to parent and student feedback may be surprising, but underlines the broader focus on the effectiveness of teachers in encouraging and facilitating student learning as a criterion for teacher evaluation. The use of test scores appears to be part of the mix of evidence rather than a sole criterion—and more than a quarter of principals attach little or no importance to them as a basis for evaluation, which is quite distinct from their diagnostic use to improve student learning outcomes.

7. Conclusions

This report has investigated the implementation and effectiveness of initiatives within the five reform areas of the *Low SES School Communities Smarter Schools National Partnership* (Low SES SSNP) as well as changes in the role of school principals. Improvements in school leadership, management and accountability are key goals of the Low SES SSNP.

The 328 school principals who responded to the survey are fairly representative of the principals of all schools participating in the Partnership across six school characteristics—ICSEA scores, type of school, enrolment size, NAPLAN reading scores and location. Nevertheless, analyses were based on data weighted by sector, ICSEA and type of school to improve further the representativeness of the sample.

Implementation

The estimates of implementation for some reform areas are lower than expected. For instance, every school participating in the Partnership should have implemented *At least one initiative in any reform area*. The survey found that 97.4% of principals had implemented at least one initiative.

Implementation requires responses about initiatives that indicate that the initiative is SSNP-funded and that describe its effectiveness—hence the results may underestimate the true level of implementation. Of the eight principals who were recorded as reporting no initiatives, two provided no responses to any questions about Reform Areas 1 to 5, but did respond to some later questions about Reform Area 6 or their job satisfaction; two reported only initiatives that were not SSNP-funded and existed before the Partnership began; and four reported some SSNP-funded initiatives sometimes without any other information at all and sometimes simply without any judgement about their effectiveness. The response patterns for the latter four were unusual—for instance, reporting the implementation of all initiatives or treating responses to questions about funding and pre-existence of the initiatives as if they were mutually exclusive.

The estimate for Reform Area 1 (76.9% of principals reported implementing at least one initiative) may underestimate the actual level of implementation because the questions were asked only in regard to teachers—incentives to attract high performing principals were excluded from the questionnaire because of concern over the quality of evaluations that might reflect directly on the respondents—hence some initiatives in this reform area (and overall) may have been missed.

More generally, the link between individual initiatives and reform areas is not necessarily exclusive—some initiatives could be more or less relevant to different reform areas and hence linking them to only one reform area may underestimate the extent to which reform areas have at least one implemented initiative.

For the other reform areas:

- Reform Area 4, *Providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities*, in which 96.7% of principals reported implementing at least one initiative, approximated universal implementation, as did both of its separate parts for staff (93.3%) and students (95.5%).
- Reform Area 5, *Accountability*, included several initiatives directly related to participation in the Partnership and, although the extent to which these were reported was somewhat lower than might have been expected, the overall value of 91.9% is still quite high. Nevertheless only 81.8% of principals reported that their school *monitored and evaluated the impact of new SSNP initiatives*, an activity required as a condition of participation in the Partnership.
- Reform Area 3, *School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility*, was implemented in 93.7% of schools. It included initiatives such as *Use of new technologies in teaching* (implemented in 76.1% of schools) and *Team-based approaches to teaching and learning* (implemented in 69.4% of schools).
- Reform Area 2, *Adopting best practice performance management and staffing arrangements to attract, retain and develop staff*, was implemented in 74.5% of schools.

The variation in the number of schools implementing the 62 specific initiatives at least partly reflects the extent to which the initiatives were:

- ◇ generic or specialised;
- ◇ a potentially resource-intensive strategic focus in the school; and
- ◇ required of schools as a condition of participation in the Low SES SSNP.

For instance, the initiative most frequently reported by schools (88.4%) was *Targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs, e.g. literacy & numeracy interventions* from Reform Area 4. On the other hand, the least frequently implemented SSNP-funded initiative was *providing students with access to STARTTS* (1.3%), a highly targeted program for students who have experienced torture or trauma and which is relevant to a small proportion of schools.

Initiatives that were more frequently implemented were more likely to have already been implemented at the school before the Low SES SSNP. For instance, a high proportion of schools implemented the initiative *Relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff* (87.6%) with only a low proportion of those schools indicated that it was a new initiative (10.4%). On the other hand, a lower proportion of principals reported *Employing Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs)*, but a higher proportion reported that it was a new initiative (89.2%).

More frequent implementation of initiatives that pre-dated the SSNP is to be expected—schools are likely to want to build on the initiatives in those areas that they have already determined are important and/or already made some progress in implementing—and was anticipated in the implementation plan for the Partnership. There are, however, also instances of schools beginning new initiatives—for instance, monitoring SSNP initiatives—that are both more likely to have been new and to have been implemented in many schools.

Implementation and school context

The mostly high level of overall implementation by schools in each of the reform areas means that there is often little scope for differences across school characteristics:

- *The larger the school, the more likely it is to have implemented at least one initiative in a reform area or part of a reform area.* Low SES SSNP funding for schools is based on a school's enrolments (with a loading for more remote schools). Larger schools received more funding and principals of these schools reported more initiatives than smaller size schools. Although the pattern is not perfectly consistent across all reform areas, and sometimes differences only approach statistical significance, schools with 99 or fewer students usually reported lower levels of implementation of initiatives than schools with 1,000 or more students—and the clearer differences are mostly between schools with 99 or fewer students and other schools.

The only major exception among the individual initiatives is the implementation of the Accountability initiative *using the school plan to drive change to improve student, teacher and school performance*. Smaller schools may be more likely than larger schools to be managed informally and the requirements of the Partnership for school plans may have provided an attractive opportunity for these schools to formalise their planning and approach to school improvement.

- Despite a pattern repeated across reform areas in which *secondary schools were more likely than primary or combined schools to have implemented at least one initiative in each of the reform areas*, the differences were statistically significant only for *accountability initiatives*. Combined schools had implementation rates similar to, or below, those of primary schools. A number of individual initiatives, however, did have statistically significant differences, with all but one, *Team-based approaches to teaching and learning*, displaying higher implementation levels for secondary schools.
- *Metropolitan schools were more likely than provincial schools, and provincial schools more likely than remote schools, to have implemented at least one initiative in most reform areas.* The few exceptions—initiatives in management and staffing arrangements to attract retain and develop staff; management initiatives to promote student wellbeing; and accountability initiatives—showed a similar pattern, but without reaching statistical significance. Among the many individual initiatives with statically significant differences, the only clear exception to this overall pattern was *providing assisted housing*, which was a feature of the responses of principals of remote schools.
- Principals' responses suggested that *schools in the lowest ICSEA quartile were less likely than other schools to have implemented at least one initiative in each of the reform areas*, but these differences were statistically significant only for initiatives *providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students to improve student learning outcomes*. The differences were, however, statistically significant for the implementation of a number of individual initiatives across all reform areas.
- Across reform areas, the general pattern was that *schools in the lowest quartile of NAPLAN reading scores* reported lower levels of implementation than other schools but the differences were statistically significant for only one reform area: *staff*

recruitment and retention to attract high performing teachers. Any differences were often clearest for small schools without any NAPLAN reading scores, which tended to have lower implementation levels. For many individual initiatives, however, there was a strong tendency for schools in the lowest quartile to have lower levels of implementation. A notable exception was the higher likelihood of schools in the lowest quartile to have *provided attractive terms and conditions outside standard entitlements to attract high performing teachers.*

Effectiveness

Principals reported that the overwhelming majority of SSNP-funded initiatives were effective. Across all the SSNP-funded initiatives implemented in schools, 42.6% were judged to be *highly effective* and 84.2% to be either *effective* or *highly effective*.

The overall high level of the reported effectiveness of the initiatives meant that comparisons of the effectiveness among initiatives or across school contexts were in terms of the extent to which they were *highly effective*—there was often too little variation in the combined measure of *Highly effective* or *Effective* to provide meaningful differences. The discussion of differences, therefore, is in the context of a mostly high level of reported effectiveness.

Although the initiatives implemented as part of Reform Area 5 were less likely than others to have been reported as *highly effective*, the cultural change associated with *promoting a culture of continuous school improvement* may simply be an inherently more difficult goal to achieve within the limited time of the Partnership so far than, for instance, improving staffing or learning profiles. Similarly *promoting student wellbeing*, may be more challenging than other goals. Comparisons of the effectiveness of initiatives (and of schools implementing those initiatives) measured against different types of effectiveness may therefore be problematic.

The principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of SSNP initiatives in this report provide only limited policy or program guidance about choices of initiatives to implement in other contexts. There are several further considerations:

- *purpose or intended outcome*—*effectiveness* for different initiative can refer to different goals. Selection of programs depends on the expected outcomes.
- *cost effectiveness*—for a given budget, a less effective but cheaper initiative might be able to deliver greater improvement in, say, student learning than a more effective, but expensive initiative if it can be implemented in more schools. The survey did not collect information about implementation costs of the various initiatives.
- *multiple outcomes*—some initiatives may influence multiple Partnership outcomes, and judge their effectiveness on the basis of their contribution to one outcome only might be misleading.
- *unmeasured outcomes*—the measures of effectiveness used in the survey of principals focus on goals central to the Partnership—improved student learning outcomes, better staff recruitment, retention and development and changes to management culture. An initiative such as *promoting greater cooperation with other schools to share*

resources, for instance, may have little direct effect on any of these outcomes, but may be effective in other ways if it leads to greater efficiency and flexibility in the use of resources.

Schools selected the initiatives they wished to implement—presumably on the basis of the needs of their particular school. Introducing the same initiatives in other schools may not produce the same results. These results *are* generalisable, however, in concert with the processes by which initiatives were selected—allowing schools, with appropriate stakeholder consultation, the flexibility to choose initiatives appropriate to their needs, skills and other resources and to implement them in ways appropriate to their particular circumstances with an emphasis on monitoring and evaluating their impact.

For instance, the two individual initiatives with the highest proportion of principals reporting them to be *highly effective*—assisted housing and access to STARTTS—are implemented in relatively few schools because they are mostly relevant to only a few schools—schools in rural areas for assisted housing and schools with students exposed to torture and trauma for STARTTS.

The effectiveness of initiatives was not related to whether they were in place before or after the school joined the Low SES SSNP, which may reflect contending considerations—pre-existing initiatives continuing, possibly in an expanded form, because the school believes them to be effective, and the opportunities provided by Partnership funding to address identified needs that previously could not be addressed at all or to address them in new ways.

Effectiveness and school context

Differences in the perceived effectiveness of initiatives across schools of different types and operating in different contexts were more the exception than rule. For the majority of individual initiatives, there were no statistically significant differences in the proportion reported to be *highly effective*. Nevertheless, there were some differences:

- Principals of schools in the lowest quartile of ICSEA scores were less likely than principals of other schools to report that their school's SSNP-funded initiatives were *Highly effective*. This finding is consistent with the literature that informs the Low SES SSNP—schools with low SES communities face greater educational challenges than other schools. This pattern, however, was not uniform. Schools in the second lowest quartile frequently reported the highest levels of effectiveness—and the differences were stronger for staffing outcomes than student outcomes (for which they were sometimes not present) and for accountability (for which differences were rare).
- Overall, principals of primary schools were more likely to report that initiatives implemented at their school were *highly effective* than were principals of secondary schools or principals of combined schools. The differences among principals of primary and secondary schools were often modest and, where present, inconsistent across initiatives. The strongest difference was a tendency for principals of primary schools to be more positive about the effectiveness of their initiatives in improving student outcomes.
- Principals of schools in the lowest NAPLAN reading test quartile and of small schools

without a NAPLAN reading test score were slightly more likely to report that their SSNP-funded initiatives were *highly effective* than were principals of other schools. The difference was mostly attributable to initiatives targeting staffing outcomes. The differences for initiatives linked to student and accountability were mostly not statistically significant.

- The size of a school (measured by its enrolments) had only a modest and patchy effect on the likelihood of a principal describing their initiatives as *highly effective*. The overall differences are not statistically significant, although after statistical adjustment resulted in a lower proportion of *highly effective* initiatives reported in smaller schools. Differences were not statistically significant for initiatives promoting student learning or accountability. Schools with 99 or fewer students seemed to have less capacity to effectively implement management and staffing initiatives, but reported somewhat more effective outcomes for initiatives to promote student wellbeing.
- The perceived effectiveness of initiatives differed by location (metropolitan, provincial or remote) only in selected instances. Any statistical significance can be mostly attributed to differences between the views of principals of metropolitan and provincial schools—sample sizes for remote schools were often smaller. Where there were differences, principals of metropolitan schools were consistently more likely to have viewed their initiatives as *highly effective* than principals of provincial schools (values for remote schools are omitted when based on fewer than 20 responses): For instance, for initiatives overall, 44.5% of principals of metropolitan schools reported their initiatives to be highly effective compared with 40.3% of principals of provincial schools and 42.8% for principals of remote schools.

The values for remote schools did not always reflect the values for provincial schools. In particular, the effectiveness of initiatives to improve *staff recruitment and retention* and *innovative and flexible staffing arrangements* to improve student outcomes were relatively high—60.6% compared with the overall mean of 54.0% and 62.6% compared with the overall mean of 50.1% respectively.

The role of principal

Principals were satisfied about working at their school. Overall 70.0% were *Very satisfied* and a further 25% were *Satisfied* (25.2%). The question was at the end of the questionnaire and was answered by 270 principals (82% of respondents).

Principals agreed that there had been a number of changes in aspects of their role since the beginning of the Low SES SSNP in their school—changes consistent with the staffing, management and accountability goals of the Partnership. For instance, 91.0% of principals agreed or strongly agreed that they now spend more time on planning and whole school improvement.

Although the reported changes usually varied only modestly and inconsistently across school characteristics such as school type, enrolment size, literacy levels, ICSEA and location, overall *positive changes in the role of principal were more likely in primary than in other types of schools and in provincial rather than metropolitan or remote schools.*

In the context of questions about *adopting best practice performance management & staffing arrangements*, the overwhelming majority of principals used multiple sources of evidence when reflecting on the abilities and needs of their teachers. The most important source of evidence was *Other measurable student learning outcomes*, where *other* can be taken to mean *other than test scores*. More than 95% of principals described this evidence as *Very important* (47.4%) or *Rather important* (47.7%). Emphasis is clearly given to student learning outcomes when evaluating teachers.

The frequency of use of the other four specified sources of evidence was similar. The importance of mentoring and supervision is reflected in the responses to feedback from peers. The prominence given to parent and student feedback may be surprising, but underlines the broader focus on the effectiveness of teachers in encouraging and facilitating student learning as a criterion for teacher evaluation. The use of test scores appears to be part of the mix of evidence rather than a sole criterion—and more than a quarter of principals attach little or no importance to them as a basis for staff evaluation—a task which is distinct from their diagnostic use to improve student learning outcomes.

8. Next steps

The Principal Survey was part of an on-going evaluation of the Low SES School Communities National Partnership in New South Wales. The final report of the evaluation is due to be submitted by November 2014. This section outlines activities currently underway as part of the evaluation and those that will be undertaken in the coming months.

- A survey of teachers in schools participating in the Partnership, collected information in March 2013 about teachers' perspectives on how schools were implementing National Partnership initiatives in the areas of school staffing, management and accountability and school external partnerships. It finished on 5 April.
- A meeting with the Project Reference Group was held on 27 March 2013.
- An analysis of teachers' responses to the survey will be prepared as part of the report to be submitted in November 2013.
- The principal and teacher surveys are part of the preparation of a larger database on schools' participation in the Partnership. Administrative data on enrolments, attendance, staffing, school finances, program participation and student outcomes from 2006 onwards is being sought. These will be combined with other data, for instance, from the separately conducted Cross-sectoral Impact Survey, to form the basis of an evaluation of the impact of the Partnership. Negotiations over access to these data are being conducted. The data are expected to contribute to the November 2013 report.
- Schools are required to formulate and submit plans that outline the initiatives that they have and intent to implement under the National Partnerships. These provide valuable detail about the content and extent of the activities of schools and, when received and after analysis, will contribute to the larger database.
- School-level NAPLAN data to 2011 has been received and will be used to enhance the main database and to inform the selection of schools for the case studies. Data for the 2012 NAPLAN testing program is expected by mid-2013.
- Visits will be made to schools as part of case studies of selected schools participating in the Low SES SSNP. Schools involved in the 2012 case studies will be followed up by phone. A report of the case studies will be submitted in July 2013.

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Appendix A: Weighting of the sample

Weighting a sample is intended to remove non-response bias. The results in Table 2 suggest that any bias in the sample is quite limited across a range of school characteristics. Weighting therefore only offers the potential of modest improvement to the results presented in this report.

Table A1 Structure and calculation of the weights

Strata	Low SES SSNP population		Survey of principals sample		Weight
	n	%	n	%	
Total	636	100.0	328	100.0	1.0000
Government					
<i>Primary</i>	167	26.3	93	28.4	0.9261
High ICSEA	210	33.0	105	32.0	1.0315
Low ICSEA	70	11.0	34	10.4	1.0618
<i>Secondary/combined</i>	73	11.5	28	8.5	1.3446
<i>Special</i>	30	4.7	16	4.9	0.9670
Catholic					
<i>Primary</i>	51	8.0	36	11.0	0.7306
<i>Secondary/combined</i>	11	1.7	6	1.8	0.9455
Independent					
<i>Primary</i>	7	1.1	3	0.9	1.2034
<i>Secondary/combined</i>	17	2.7	7	2.1	1.2525

Based on the survey of principals, data supplied by NSW DEC and data from ACARA for the *MySchool* website. The formula for the weight for a given stratum is (%Low SES SSNP population) divided by (%Survey of principals sample). No Catholic or independent special schools are participating in the Low SES SSNP. Further details of the weighting are provided in section 3. *Weighting in this report.*

Appendix B: Standard errors for per cent estimates

Table B1 Standard errors for per cent estimates

n/p	50%	55%/45%	60%/40%	65%/35%	70%/30%	75%/25%	80%/20%	85%/15%	90%/10%	95%/5%
330	1.76	1.75	1.72	1.68	1.61	1.52	1.41	1.26	1.05	0.77
315	1.86	1.85	1.82	1.77	1.70	1.61	1.49	1.33	1.11	0.81
300	1.96	1.95	1.92	1.87	1.80	1.70	1.57	1.40	1.18	0.86
290	2.03	2.02	1.99	1.94	1.86	1.76	1.63	1.45	1.22	0.89
280	2.11	2.10	2.07	2.01	1.93	1.83	1.69	1.51	1.27	0.92
260	2.27	2.26	2.22	2.16	2.08	1.96	1.81	1.62	1.36	0.99
240	2.44	2.43	2.39	2.33	2.23	2.11	1.95	1.74	1.46	1.06
220	2.63	2.61	2.57	2.51	2.41	2.27	2.10	1.88	1.58	1.14
200	2.84	2.82	2.78	2.71	2.60	2.46	2.27	2.03	1.70	1.24
180	3.07	3.06	3.01	2.93	2.82	2.66	2.46	2.19	1.84	1.34
160	3.35	3.33	3.28	3.19	3.07	2.90	2.68	2.39	2.01	1.46
140	3.67	3.65	3.59	3.50	3.36	3.18	2.93	2.62	2.20	1.60
120	4.06	4.04	3.98	3.87	3.72	3.52	3.25	2.90	2.44	1.77
100	4.55	4.53	4.46	4.34	4.17	3.94	3.64	3.25	2.73	1.98
90	4.85	4.83	4.75	4.63	4.45	4.20	3.88	3.47	2.91	2.11
80	5.21	5.18	5.10	4.97	4.77	4.51	4.16	3.72	3.12	2.27
70	5.63	5.60	5.51	5.37	5.16	4.87	4.50	4.02	3.38	2.45
60	6.15	6.12	6.02	5.87	5.63	5.32	4.92	4.39	3.69	2.68
50	6.81	6.78	6.68	6.50	6.25	5.90	5.45	4.87	4.09	2.97
40	7.71	7.67	7.56	7.36	7.07	6.68	6.17	5.51	4.63	3.36
30	9.03	8.99	8.85	8.61	8.28	7.82	7.22	6.45	5.42	3.94
20	11.26	11.21	11.04	10.74	10.32	9.75	9.01	8.04	6.76	4.91

Values are standard errors and can be interpreted directly as per cents. They are derived from the formula

$$se = \sqrt{(1-n/N)} * \sqrt{p*(1-p)/(n-1)}$$

where: $\sqrt{(1-n/N)}$ is the finite population correction; and
 $\sqrt{p*(1-p)/(n-1)}$ is the formula for the standard error of a binomial.
 N is 556, the population for the survey;
 n can be read from the right hand column of the table
 p is the per cent read from the top row of the table and expressed as a proportion.

For example, if 88.4% (n=301)-of schools participated in a particular initiative, the standard error of that estimate is:

$$se = \sqrt{(1-301/556)} * \sqrt{0.884*(1-0.884)/(301-1)} = 0.0125 \text{ or } 1.25\%.$$

An approximate value can be read directly from the table by taking n=300 and p between 85% and 90% (i.e. between 1.40% and 1.18%.

Values in this table will slightly over-estimate the size of the standard errors for per cents of *Highly efficient* or *Efficient* or *Highly efficient*.

Approximate 95% confidence intervals can be constructed using the estimate +/- 1.96*se.

Appendix C: Number of initiatives on which per cents *highly effective* are based

Table C1 Number of implemented SSNP-funded initiatives on which the per cents *Highly effective* in Table 15 are based

(%)	ICSEA quartiles	<i>Highest</i>	<i>Third</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>Lowest</i>	Total
All initiatives		2256	2114	1844	1453	7667
6 Staff recruitment & retention to attract high-performing teachers		238	197	179	162	776
Providing opportunities for professional learning & development		65	60	48	44	217
7 Management & staffing arrangements to attract, retain & develop staff		175	176	154	140	645
Supporting early career teachers professionally		43	44	34	40	161
Implementing professional learning plans for staff		45	45	39	36	165
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . .to attract, retain & develop staff		367	322	286	223	1198
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements to improve student learning outcomes		238	251	225	166	880
12 Providing innovative & tailored prof learning opportunities to attract, retain & develop staff		398	371	321	234	1324
Implementing relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff		79	74	64	52	269
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities to improve student learning outcomes		240	214	186	160	800
14 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes		148	139	125	96	508
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing		158	144	112	79	493
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement		294	300	256	193	1043
Making planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available		60	56	52	39	207

1. Values are the number of respondents on which the corresponding observed per cents in Table 15 are based.

2 Corresponding values in Tables 13 and 14 are different because some schools did not have an ICSEA score.

Table C2 Number of implement SSNP-funded initiatives on which the per cents Highly effective in Table 16 are based

(%)	Type of school	Primary	Second.	Comb.	Special	Total
All initiatives		5602	1451	486	305	7844
6 Staff recruitment & retention to attract high-performing teachers		573	149	49	23	794
Establishing leadership & strategic positions		121	38	10	5	174
7 Management & staffing arrangements to attract, retain & develop staff		475	117	37	26	655
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . .to attract, retain & develop staff		892	213	76	38	1219
Team-based approaches to teaching & planning		169	35	14	7	225
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements to improve student learning outcomes		625	184	56	32	897
Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams		170	46	16	10	242
12 Providing innovative & tailored prof learning opportunities to attract, retain & develop staff		976	245	84	52	1357
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities to improve student learning outcomes		568	160	60	31	819
Implementing differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students		156	39	16	7	218
14 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes		376	89	32	26	523
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing		335	113	32	28	508
Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives		82	27	10	6	125
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement		782	181	60	49	1072

1. Values are the number of respondents on which the corresponding observed per cents in Table 16 are based.

2 Values for the adjusted estimates are slightly lower because the underlying regression equations include ICSEA quartiles that have a small number of missing cases (see Table C1).

Table C3 Number of implement initiatives on which the per cents *Highly effective* in Table 17 are based

<i>Initiatives</i>	Reading quartile	<i>Highest</i>	<i>Third</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>Lowest</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Total</i>
All initiatives		1759	1779	1607	1657	1042	7844
6 Staff recruitment & retention to attract high-performing teachers		173	185	164	182	90	794
7 Management & staffing arrangements to attract, retain & develop staff		146	147	139	145	78	655
Other performance management & staffing arrangements		16	22	18	12	7	75
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . .to attract, retain & develop staff		291	276	252	249	151	1219
Team-based approaches to teaching & planning		53	50	47	47	28	225
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements to improve student learning outcomes		195	221	178	192	111	897
12 Providing innovative & tailored prof learning opportunities to attract, retain & develop staff		321	303	268	284	181	1357
Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams		53	56	49	52	32	242
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning oppor-tunities to improve student learning outcomes		171	176	164	185	123	819
14 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes		118	116	107	104	78	523
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing		121	122	102	103	60	508
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement		223	233	233	213	170	1072

1. Values are the number of respondents on which the corresponding observed per cents in Table 17 are based.

2 Values for the adjusted estimates are slightly lower because the underlying regression equations include ICSEA quartiles that have a small number of missing cases (see Table C1).

Table C4 Number of implement initiatives on which the per cents *Highly effective* in Table 18 are based

<i>Initiatives</i>	<i>Enrolments</i>	<i>1,000 or more</i>	<i>500-999</i>	<i>200-499</i>	<i>100-199</i>	<i>99 or fewer</i>	<i>Total</i>
All initiatives		1658	1988	1683	1091	1424	7844
6 Staff recruitment & retention to attract high-performing teachers		165	213	188	115	113	794
7 Management & staffing arrangements to attract, retain & develop staff		130	188	151	76	110	655
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . .to attract, retain & develop staff		263	306	266	167	217	1219
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements to improve student learning outcomes		207	234	190	118	148	897
12 Providing innovative & tailored prof learning opportunities to attract, retain & develop staff		275	346	284	209	243	1357
Implementing relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff		52	64	59	46	41	276
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities to improve student learning outcomes		160	200	166	126	167	819
14 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes		108	123	114	69	109	523
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing		138	117	109	66	78	508
Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives		31	31	25	17	16	125
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement		212	261	215	145	239	1072

1. Values are the number of respondents on which the corresponding observed per cents in Table 18 are based.

2 Values for the adjusted estimates are slightly lower because the underlying regression equations include ICSEA quartiles that have a small number of missing cases (see Table C1).

Table C5 Number of implement initiatives on which the per cents *Highly effective* in Table 19 are based

<i>Initiatives</i>	<i>Location</i>	Metro	Prov.	Remote	Total
All initiatives		4017	3441	386	7844
6 Staff recruitment & retention to attract high-performing teachers		427	330	37	794
7 Management & staffing arrangements to attract, retain & develop staff		332	287	36	655
10 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements . . .to attract, retain & develop staff		643	518	58	1219
Team-based approaches to teaching & planning		117	95	13	225
11 Innovative & flexible staffing arrangements to improve student learning outcomes		466	378	53	897
Employing additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside classrooms		47	39	8	94
Employing additional para professionals in other support roles outside classrooms		38	26	4	68
12 Providing innovative & tailored prof learning opportunities to attract, retain & develop staff		680	622	55	1357
Implementing relevant & appropriate professional learning for staff		133	129	14	276
13 Providing innovative & tailored learning opportunities to improve student learning outcomes		402	369	48	819
14 Providing individual learning support for students to improve student learning outcomes		265	235	23	523
15 Management initiatives to promote student wellbeing		280	204	24	508
Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives		60	58	7	125
Providing students with access to counselling services		37	23	1	61
16 Accountability initiatives . . . to promote a culture of continuous school improvement		522	498	52	1072

1. Values are the number of respondents on which the corresponding observed per cents in Table 19 are based.

2 Values for the adjusted estimates are slightly lower because the underlying regression equations include ICSEA quartiles that have a small number of missing cases (see Table C1).

Appendix D: The questionnaire



CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON
EDUCATION SYSTEMS
MELBOURNE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Low SES Smarter Schools National Partnerships Survey for Principals

Welcome to the *Low SES Smarter Schools National Partnerships Survey* for Principals. This survey gathers information on the implementation of external partnerships and staffing, management and accountability initiatives in NSW schools participating in the *Low SES Smarter Schools National Partnership* (SSNP). The information will be used to help to identify changes that may have occurred as a result of schools' participation in the SSNP. NSW Government, Catholic and Independent schools receiving SSNP funding are expected to participate in evaluation activities.

The impact of the Low SES SSNP initiatives is being evaluated by research teams from the Education Institute at the University of Canberra and the Centre for Research on Education Systems (CRES) at the University of Melbourne. The evaluation has been contracted on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education. The responses from this survey will be analysed by both research teams and published in their evaluation reports. **No schools or individuals will be identified in any published reports from the Low SES SSNP Survey for Principals.**

This survey should take around 30 to 40 minutes. If you do not complete it at one session ***you can save your responses and return to complete it at a later time.***

More information, including contact details for technical support, is provided in the **Information Brochure (LINK)**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. What is the name of your current school?

SELECT FROM DROP-DOWN LIST

2. Which year did you become principal at *this* school?

☐ 2012 ☐ 2011 ☐ 2010 ☐ 2009 ☐ 2008 ☐ 2006-2007 ☐ 2000-2005 ☐ before 2000

3. In which year were you first a member of staff at this school?

☐ 2012 ☐ 2011 ☐ 2010 ☐ 2009 ☐ 2008 ☐ 2006-2007 ☐ 2000-2005 ☐ before 2000

4. In which year did you first become a principal at *any* school?

☐ 2012 ☐ 2011 ☐ 2010 ☐ 2009 ☐ 2008 ☐ 2006-2007 ☐ 2000-2005 ☐ before 2000

5. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female

Reform 1. INCENTIVES TO ATTRACT HIGH PERFORMING TEACHERS

6. If any of the following incentives are part of this school's strategy to *attract high performing staff*, please indicate:

- whether the incentive existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the incentive is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the incentive so far in **attracting high performing teachers**.

If the incentive is not part of this school's strategy, **do not select it**.

If any incentive is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<i>Incentive to attract high performing teachers</i>					Effectiveness of this incentive in attracting high performing teachers				
	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N					
a. Establishing leadership and strategic positions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Providing incentives (such as additional support, professional development and career advancement) to attract high performing early career teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Providing mentoring support to teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Providing attractive terms and conditions outside standard entitlements	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Providing opportunities for professional learning and development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Providing assisted housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Other incentives to attract high performing teachers (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Reform 2. ADOPTING BEST PRACTICE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

7. If any of the following initiatives are part of this school's strategy to *adopt best practice performance management and staffing arrangements*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in **attracting, retaining and developing staff**.

If the initiative is not part of this school's strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

					Effectiveness of initiative in attracting, retaining and developing staff				
<i>Initiative to adopt best practice performance management and staffing arrangements</i>	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N					
a. Implementing revised staff performance review procedures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Supporting early career teachers professionally	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Managing the staffing mix and succession planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Implementing professional learning plans for staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Other performance management and staffing arrangements (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. How important is each of the following in providing an evidence base to guide teacher performance support/development at this school?

<i>Evidence of teacher performance</i>	Not used	Not very important	Rather important	Very important
a. Test scores of students	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Other measurable student learning outcomes	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Documented student feedback on teaching	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Documented parent feedback	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Documented feedback from peers	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Other evidence to guide teacher performance support/ development (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. To what extent do you agree that the following *changes* have occurred since the beginning of the Low SES SSNP in this school?

<i>Changes that have occurred in this school</i>	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Too early to tell	Don't know
a. I spend more time on planning and whole school improvement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. I spend more time on teaching and learning issues	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. My job has become more satisfying	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. I am better organised	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. I am better able to delegate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. I am better able to influence the direction in which the school is moving	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. I have a better understanding of the strengths, weaknesses and needs of my staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. I am better able to support targeted staff development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. The professional needs of my staff are better met	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. My communication with staff has been enhanced	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k. I have been able to play a more proactive role in teacher recruitment and selection	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Reform 3. SCHOOL OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS THAT ENCOURAGE INNOVATION AND FLEXIBILITY

10. If any of the following initiatives are part of this school's strategy to institute *operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in **attracting, retaining and developing staff**.

If the initiative is not part of this school's strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

					Effectiveness of initiative in attracting, retaining and developing staff				
<i>School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility</i>	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N					
a. Employment of additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Employment of additional paraprofessionals in other support roles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Employment of Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) or the sectoral equivalent (Teacher Educators, Leaders of Pedagogy, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Team-based approaches to teaching and planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Increased flexibility in timetabling and/or school's hours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Greater cooperation with other schools to share resources	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Use of new technologies in teaching	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Other school operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. If any of the following initiatives are part of this school's strategy to institute *operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in **improving student learning outcomes**.

If the initiative is not part of this school's strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

					Effectiveness of initiative in improving student learning outcomes				
<i>School operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility</i>	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N					
a. Employment of additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles within classrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Employment of additional paraprofessionals in learning support roles outside of classrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Employment of additional paraprofessionals in other support roles outside of classrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Employment of Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) or the sectoral equivalent (Teacher Educators, Leaders of Pedagogy, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Introduction of curriculum and/or programs for students with particular needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Out of school hours learning programs for targeted students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Use of new technologies in teaching	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Other school operational arrangements that encourage innovation and flexibility (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Reform 4. PROVIDE INNOVATIVE AND TAILORED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHERS

12. If any of the following initiatives are part of this school's strategy to *provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for teachers*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in **attracting, retaining and developing staff**.

If the initiative is not part of this school's strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

Initiative to provide innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for professional development for teachers	Effectiveness of initiative in attracting, retaining and developing staff													
	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP											
	Y	N	Y	N										
a. Providing professional development opportunities for teachers to help them use and analyse student data, including NAPLAN, to cater to student needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	Not at all effective	☐	Somewhat effective	☐	Effective	☐	Highly effective	☐	Too early to tell	☐
b. Providing quality professional learning for school-based teams (e.g., involving executive, faculty, and teachers within and beyond this school)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Implementing relevant and appropriate professional learning for staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Providing whole school professional learning in ESL pedagogy for classroom teachers and school executive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Providing professional development on a range of student wellbeing theories and approaches	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Providing professional development on a range of behaviour management theories and approaches	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Engaging staff through professional dialogue on behaviour management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Other innovative and tailored professional learning opportunities for teachers (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Reform 4. PROVIDE INNOVATIVE AND TAILORED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

13. If any of the following initiatives are part of this school's strategy to *provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in **improving student learning outcomes**.

If the initiative is not part of this school's strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

Initiative to provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness of initiative in improving student learning outcomes				
					Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N					
a. Using student assessment and other data to identify student needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Implementing targeted approaches to improve outcomes of students with identified needs (e.g., literacy and numeracy interventions)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Implementing differentiated teaching methods to better meet the needs of all students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Implementing transition plans for students moving from primary school into secondary school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Implementing transition plans for students moving from secondary school into work, further training or further education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Other innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. If any of the following initiatives are undertaken by this school to *provide individual learning support for students*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is being funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in ***improving student learning outcomes***.

If the initiative is not undertaken by this school, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<i>Initiative to provide individual learning support for students</i>					Effectiveness in improving student learning outcomes				
	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N					
a. Providing professional learning for teachers on meeting individual learning needs (e.g., training teachers in how to create Individual Learning Plans for students)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Providing students with access to learning support services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Providing Individual Learning Programs (ILPs) for students needing assistance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Other types of individual learning support for students (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

15. If any of the following initiatives are undertaken by this school to *promote student wellbeing*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in ***promoting student wellbeing***.

If the initiative is not undertaken by this school, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<i>Initiative to promote student wellbeing</i>					Effectiveness in promoting student wellbeing				
	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N					
a. Providing professional learning for all staff on student wellbeing initiatives	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Providing students with access to counselling services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Delivering a wellbeing program to students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Providing students with access to health services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Providing links to government wellbeing-related services for students and their families	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Providing links to non-government wellbeing-related services for students and their families	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Employing or providing access to youth workers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Providing students with access to the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. Other initiatives to promote student wellbeing (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Reform 5. ACCOUNTABILITY INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

16. If any of the following accountability initiatives are part of this school's strategy to *promote a culture of continuous school improvement*, please indicate:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the initiative so far in ***promoting a culture of continuous school improvement***.

If the initiative is not part of this school's strategy, **do not select it**.

If any initiative is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

Initiative to strengthen school accountability and promote a culture of continuous school improvement					Effectiveness in promoting a culture of continuous school improvement					
	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	
	Y	N	Y	N						
a. Using the school plan to drive change to improve <i>student, teacher and school</i> performance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
b. Using evidence (from a range of sources) to inform decision making and/or strategic direction setting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
c. Making planning and/or reporting processes within the school more publicly available	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
d. Monitoring and evaluating the impact of new SSNP initiatives	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
e. Expanding the range of school activities that are evaluated	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
f. Other initiatives to improve accountability and/or promote a culture of continuous school improvement (Please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Reform 6. SCHOOL EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS—parents/carers

17. If this school undertakes any of the following activities *to engage with parents/carers*, please indicate:

- whether the activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far in ***building parent/carer engagement in the school.***

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<i>To engage with parents/carers, this school:</i>	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in building parent/carer engagement in the school				
					Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N					
a. Provides English language and/or literacy classes for parents/carers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Provides sessions for parents/carers on how to support student learning at home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Invites parents/carers to help out in the classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Invites parents/carers to talk to students about their culture, work or life experiences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Invites parents/carers to help out with excursions, carnivals, canteen duty, fundraising etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Holds regular parent/teacher interviews about students' progress	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Has a documented strategy to lift parents'/carers' expectations of their children's education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Provides extended transition to school programs for potential future cohorts of students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. Provides orientation activities for cohorts of students in the year prior to entry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. Dedicates resources/staff to the parent/carer and community engagement role	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k. Has a documented strategy to improve communication with parents/carers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l. Translates newsletters into community languages	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
m. Undertakes other activities to engage with parents/carers (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

- 18.** Thinking of all the ways in which parents and carers can engage with this school, roughly what proportion of *this school's students* have parents or carers who participate in the following activities?

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

<i>School activities that involve parent or carer participation</i>	Proportion of students whose parents/carers participate					
	0%	1%-24%	25% - 49%	50% - 74%	75% -100%	Don't know
a. Parent/teacher interviews	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Canteen duty and administrative roles (e.g., library duty)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Working bees	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Excursions and camps	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Learning support roles (e.g., reading)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Giving presentations to students about their culture, work or life experiences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Fundraising	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. School governance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. Parent organisations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. Festivals, fetes and cultural events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k. Other activities that involve parent or carer participation (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

- 19.** Thinking of how this school *engages parents/carers*, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

<i>How this school engages parents/carers</i>	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
a. This school makes all parents/carers feel welcome and valued	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. In this school, parents /carers are encouraged to be partners with the school in the education of their child	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. I make it a priority to engage with the parents/carers of students and/or to delegate this responsibility to other staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Parents /carers can access this school and teachers at a time that is convenient to them	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Teachers make it a priority to engage with parents/carers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

20. Generally speaking, to roughly what proportion of students in this school do the following statements apply?

Proportion of students whose:	0%	1-24%	25%-49%	50%-74%	75%-100%	Don't know
a. Parents/carers have the confidence to engage with school staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Parents/carers are active partners with this school in supporting their child's learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Parents/carers respond to requests from this school to volunteer their time in any role (e.g., fundraising, canteen etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Parents/carers expect their child to complete Year 12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Parents/carers expect their child to do further study or training (such as university or TAFE) after they complete school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Parents/carers respond promptly to invitations from this school to attend a meeting to discuss their child (including parent/teacher interviews)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Parents/carers actively seek out ways to support this school in achieving its goals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Parents/carers initiate meetings with school staff to discuss their child	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21. There are occasions when you communicate directly with a parent or carer to discuss their child (apart from parent/teacher interviews), and usually this is in person, over the phone or via email. Thinking of all the times you have communicated directly with parents/carers this year, what was the *main purpose of the communication*?

	How often this applied (% of total communications)						
Main purpose of communicating directly with parent/carers about their child (excluding parent/teacher interviews)	0%	1-24%	25%-49%	50%-74%	75%-100%	Did not contact parents	Don't know
a. To discuss their child's behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. To share good news with the parent/carers about their child	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. To discuss legal issues (e.g., protection orders, child custody arrangements)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. To advise and assist the parent/carers to liaise with other services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Other purposes of direct communication with parents/carers (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

- 22.** Thinking of all the times you have wanted to communicate with a parent or carer this year to *discuss their child*, how often did the following apply?

	How often this applied (% of total communications)						
<i>When I initiated contact with a parent or carer to discuss their child:</i>	0%	1-24%	25%-49%	50%-74%	75%-100%	Did not contact parents	Don't know
a. The parent/carers was difficult to get hold of	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. I was confident that the parent/carers understood me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. I felt threatened	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. I understood what the parent/carers was saying	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. I felt satisfied that the interaction had served its purpose	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

- 23.** What are the main levers and/or barriers to this school's *engagement with parents or carers of students*?

Describe

Reform 6. SCHOOL EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS—*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community*

24. If this school undertakes any of the following activities to engage with *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) parents and/or community* please indicate:

- whether the partnership activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

To engage with the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community</i> , this school:	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in building ATSI parent and community engagement in the school					Effectiveness in supporting student learning					
					Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N											
a. Invites ATSI community members to provide support in classrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Invites ATSI community members to speak to students about their culture, work or life experiences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Has a documented strategy to engage the ATSI community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Dedicates resources/staff to engage with the ATSI community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Ensures that I or other members of the school executive attend ATSI community meetings to share information about school activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Undertakes other activities to engage with the ATSI community (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

25. Approximately what proportion of this school's student population is *Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI)*?

(IF 0% SELECTED, WILL SKIP TO SECTION J)

- ☐ 0%
 ☐ 1% to 24%
 ☐ 25% to 49%
 ☐ 50% to 74%
 ☐ 75% or more
 ☐ don't know

26. How well do the following statements describe this school's *relationship with ATSI parents and/or community*?

<i>This school's relationship with the ATSI community</i>	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Members of the ATSI community are often present at this school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Members of the ATSI community provide support in some classrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This school has an effective partnership with the ATSI community to support student learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

27. What are the main levers and/or barriers to this school's *engagement with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) parents and/or community*?

Describe

Reform 6. SCHOOL EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS—*English as a second language (ESL)*

28. If this school undertakes any of the following activities to engage with parents and communities that *speak English as a second language*, please indicate:

- whether the partnership activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it**.

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

<i>To engage with ESL parents and communities, this school:</i>					Effectiveness in building ESL parent and community engagement in the school					Effectiveness in supporting student learning										
					Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know
					Y	N	Y	N												
a. Invites ESL parents or community members to provide support in classrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐			
b. Invites ESL parents or community members to speak to students about their culture, work and life experiences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐			
c. Has a documented strategy to engage ESL parents and communities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐			
d. Dedicates specific resources/staff to engage with ESL parents and communities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐			
e. Ensures that I or members of the school executive regularly attend ESL community meetings to share information about school activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐			
f. Undertakes other activities to engage with ESL parents and communities (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐			

29. Approximately what proportion of this school's student population speaks *English as a second language*?

(IF 0% SELECTED, SKIPS TO SECTION K)

☐ 0% ☐ 1% to 24% ☐ 25% to 49% ☐ 50% to 74% ☐ 75% or more ☐ don't know

30. What are the main levers and/or barriers to this school's engagement with *English as a second language (ESL) parents and/or community*?

Describe

K. SCHOOL EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS—*Employers and the wider community*

31. If this school undertakes any of the following activities to engage with *employers and the wider community*, please indicate:

- whether the partnership activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it**.

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

To engage with employers and the wider community, this school:					Effectiveness in building engagement with employers and the wider community					Effectiveness in supporting student learning				
	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective
	Y	N	Y	N										
a. Invites community members to talk to students about their life experiences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Invites employers and/or community members to talk to students about work and careers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Invites employers and/or community members to help with fundraising	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Collaborates with employers to provide work experience opportunities for students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Undertakes other activities to engage with employers and/or the wider community (Please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

32. What are the main levers and/or barriers to this school's engagement with *employers and the wider community*?

Describe

Reform 6. SCHOOL EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS—other education and training providers

33. Does your school work in partnership with one or more TAFE or training providers?

☐ Yes ☐ No **(Skip to Q35)**

34. From your experience of this school's partnership with one or more *TAFE or training providers*, please indicate if this involves any of the following activities and:

- whether the activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

Through partnership with one or more TAFE or training providers, this school:					Effectiveness in raising students' career aspirations					Effectiveness in supporting student learning						
	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know
	Y	N	Y	N												
a. Arranges orientation visits to the training provider's facilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Arranges for students from this school to receive teaching at the training providers' facilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Arranges for teachers from the training provider to teach students at this school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Invites teachers from the training provider to talk to students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Invites teachers from the training provider to talk to parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Offers VET Certificate courses to students while at school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Engages in other partnership activities with training providers <i>(Please specify)</i>	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

35. Does your school work in partnership with one with one or more universities?

☐ Yes ☐ No **(Skip to Q37)**

36. From your experience of this school's partnership with one or more *universities*, please indicate if this involves any of the following activities and:

- whether the partnership activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it.**

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

Through partnership with one or more universities, this school:	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in raising students' career aspirations					Effectiveness in supporting student learning					
					Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N											
a. Arranges orientation visits to the university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Arranges for students to receive teaching at the university's facilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Arranges for university staff to conduct some teaching at this school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Arranges for university staff to conduct professional learning for teachers at this school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Invites university staff to talk to students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Invites university staff to talk to parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Offers university-accredited units of study to students while at this school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Engages in other partnership activities with universities (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

37. Does your school work in partnership with one with one or more secondary schools?

☐ Yes

☐ No (Skip to Q39)

38. From your experience of this school's partnership with one or more *secondary schools*, please indicate if this involves any of the following activities and:

- whether the activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it**.

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

Through partnership with one or more secondary schools, this school:					Effectiveness in supporting students' transitions					Effectiveness in supporting student learning				
	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective
	Y	N	Y	N										
a. Arranges student visits to a partner school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Arranges for partner school staff to teach at this school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Invites partner school staff to talk to students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Invites partner school staff to talk to parents of students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Engages in other partnership activities with secondary schools (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

39. Does your school work in partnership with one with one or more primary schools?

☐ Yes ☐ No (Skip to Q41)

40. From your experience of this school's partnership with one or more *primary schools*, please indicate if this involves any of the following activities and:

- whether the activity existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the activity is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it**.

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

Through partnership with one or more primary schools, this school:					Effectiveness in supporting students' transitions					Effectiveness in supporting student learning				
	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective
	Y	N	Y	N										
a. Provides some teaching in a partner school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Shares professional learning for teachers with a partner school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Engages in other partnership activities with primary schools (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

- 41.** Does your school work in partnership with one or more preschools/early childhood service providers/play groups?

☐ Yes ☐ No **(Skip to Q43)**

- 42.** From your experience of this school's partnership with one or more *preschools, early childhood care/service providers or play groups*, please indicate if this involves any of the following activities and:

- whether the initiative existed prior to the Low SES SSNP;
- whether the initiative is funded through the Low SES SSNP; and
- your assessment of the effectiveness of the activity so far.

If the activity is not undertaken, **do not select it**.

If any activity is part of this school's strategy, please answer **all** parts of the question.

Through partnership with one or more preschools, early childhood service providers or playgroups, this school:	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in supporting students' transitions					Effectiveness in supporting student learning					
					Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell	Don't know	Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N											
a. Hosts orientation visits including parent events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Supports sharing of staff, with staff from this school conducting some teaching at preschools, early childhood service providers or playgroups	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Offers literacy learning to preschool students where appropriate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Engages in other partnership activities with preschools, early childhood service providers or play groups (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

- 43.** Does your school engage in partnerships with other education and training providers?

☐ Yes ☐ No **(Skip to Q45)**

44. This school:	Existed prior to SSNP		Funded under SSNP		Effectiveness in supporting student learning				
					Not at all effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Highly effective	Too early to tell
	Y	N	Y	N					
a. Engages in partnerships with other education and training providers (<i>Please specify</i>)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Key features of the partnership(s):

YOU, THIS SCHOOL AND ITS COMMUNITY

45. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
a. I feel supported by the parents of students at this school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. I feel connected to the broader community that this school is part of	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. I feel supported professionally at this school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. There is a school wide student behaviour policy that is understood by all members of the school community and consistently applied	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Classroom teachers are effective in identifying and managing students with challenging behaviours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Negotiating and planning a phased program of support for students with challenging behaviours is a feature of this school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Student behaviour management has been a key focus of this school in the implementation of the Low SES SSNP initiatives	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

46. Overall, how do you feel about working at this school?

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied
- ☐ Dissatisfied
- ☐ Very dissatisfied
- ☐ Don't know

Thank you for participating in the survey