Non-Government Reform Support Annual Report

2018

Association of Independent Schools of South Australia

<u>**Non–Government Reform Support Fund**</u>

<u>**Association of Independent Schools of South Australia – Annual Report 2018**</u>

<u>**Executive Summary**</u>

In 2018 the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia (AISSA) implemented a comprehensive suite of activities to achieve agreed actions in support of the objectives of the Reform Support Fund.

The three national priorities of the Reform Support Fund, as identified by the Commonwealth, have been an intentional focus of this activity. Independent schools were supported to participate in the first national online national assessment of literacy and numeracy. Moreover, a second phase of schools participated in readiness activities for 2019, demonstrating progress in the transition to online National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing in 2020. Building staff capacity to improve the quality and consistent application of definitions under the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) has resulted in staff in schools being better equipped to review and refine processes and procedures to ensure that a consistent, whole of school approach to identifying reasonable adjustments, data collection and collection of evidence occurs. Assisting school boards to meet their legislative obligations and develop and refine knowledge of financial management, accountability and school improvement has resulted in the development of greater expertise in the governance of Independent schools.

In addition to the implementation of national priorities, 2018 Reform activity facilitated through the AISSA was situated in enhancing school leadership and strengthening of quality teaching and learning - two core principles underpinning improvement in student learning. The AISSA has employed a model of individualised support, provided to each Independent school through an expert consultancy team. Senior Educational Consultants have worked with leadership teams to implement their school strategic initiatives, and consultants with deep content and pedagogical knowledge have fostered the development of instructional leaders and quality teaching in schools. The AISSA has assisted schools to transform classroom practice through in-school and cross-school professional teams centred on building teacher capacity in learning design, effective assessment and moderation practices. Raising awareness of national teacher certification accreditation has remained a priority, as has inducting early career teachers into the teaching profession.

School leadership was enhanced through two key strategies – working directly with school leaders and leadership teams, in addition to a professional program that supported instructional leadership, change management and the building of leadership capacity and innovation in education. Two key platforms - the Leadership Institute; and Centre for Innovation, have worked closely together to support Independent schools in their leading-edge innovation work and foster the learning and development of established and aspiring leaders, including school Board members.

Evidence of impact across Reform activity was demonstrated through a range of data sources including surveys and focus groups which were informed by evidence-based evaluation principles. Additionally, impact was identified through schools' documentation including strategic planning, curriculum documentation and classroom practice.

South Australia has a long-standing commitment to cross-sector collaboration and the Heads of the three sectors – Government, Catholic and Independent – have worked together on issues of common interest for South Australia, with a range of formal and informal structures and processes in place.

Whilst the AISSA has supplemented the activities described in this report through AISSA membership subscriptions, the AISSA's reserves and a relatively small amount from workshop attendance fees, the provision of support to Independent schools to reform education could not have been achieved without the financial assistance of the Commonwealth government.

Project Report

PROJECT TITLE:

The implementation and delivery of an online National Assessment Program (including NAPLAN)

Project description:

Schools were supported to participate in the online delivery of NAPLAN in 2018 and additionally, schools were assisted to prepare to participate in the online delivery of NAPLAN in 2019.

Summary of project's achievement

Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes	Achievement against indicators of success
Supporting schools to meet their national obligations for participation in the National Assessment Program has been a long-term objective of the AISSA. In particular, facilitating a smooth transition to the online mode of NAPLAN commenced at the AISSA in 2016 and has grown in momentum each subsequent year. In 2018, 17 schools participated in NAPLAN online. This successful participation was underpinned by a sector strategy that supported a whole of school change management process, including training and ongoing liaison with school-based NAPLAN Coordinators so that they were equipped to understand and operate the Platform dashboard as well as work with other key school stakeholders including leadership, IT staff, Test Administrators, students and families. In addition to training workshops, seminars were held to familiarise school staff with the national NAPLAN test protocols and the resultant implications for administering tests in an online environment. Workshops supporting analysis of the Student and School Summary Report (SSSR) were provided once the results had been released. An additional 35 schools explored their readiness for NAPLAN online through participating in the Term 3 School Readiness Test (SRT). Once again, sector training workshops encompassed change management, school preparation activities and Platform familiarisation to facilitate a positive SRT experience for schools. A formalised cross-sector NAPLAN online working group met fortnightly throughout the year, ensuring consistency of messaging and support was provided to all South Australian schools.	Indicators of success met: • 18% of schools participated in NAPLAN online in 2018 • 38% of schools undertook 2019 NAPLAN online readiness activities.

PROJECT TITLE:

Quality assurance and support for the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with a Disability

Project description:

This project developed teacher capacity in improving the quality and consistent application of definitions under the NCCD.

Summary of project's achievement Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes	Achievement against indicators of success
National disability legislation, including the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) and *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (DSE), informed the NCCD's professional learning opportunities undertaken with 54 schools this year. Building staff capacity through a series of centralised external and internal workshops, individualised clinics and school visits ensured that school leaders, key contacts and classroom teachers were able to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement regarding decision making and data collection practices. As a result, procedures and processes for identifying levels of adjustments, consultation with parents/carers, and evidence collection were refined to ensure that informed professional judgements were made to a high standard. Arising from this project, staff in schools were better equipped to review and refine processes and procedures to ensure that a consistent, whole of school approach to identifying reasonable adjustments, data collection and collection of evidence occurred. This approach contributed to the improvement of Students with Disability's (SWD) access and participation in education and increased support and improved outcomes for students in schools. It also prompted the review of teacher practices, including the development of effective whole school pedagogical approaches to personalised learning and curriculum development.	Indicators of success met: • building on the work undertaken in 2017, 53% of schools were supported in their application of the NCCD • building on the work undertaken in 2017, 34% of schools were supported to participate in the moderation process

PROJECT TITLE:

Improving governance and financial management practices

Project description:

The AISSA has assisted school boards to meet their legislative and other obligations and identify opportunities for improvement, including financial management, accountability and school improvement. A major conference organised by the AISSA supported governing councils of Independent schools to further develop knowledge and understanding about effective governance and the role of the board in school improvement and innovation. To enable board members to increase their understanding of financial matters and accountability, a workshop on understanding school finances was held. A workshop for less experienced board members enabled them to better understand their role and responsibilities in the specific context of school board membership.

Summary of project's achievement Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes	Achievement against indicators of success
The 2018 AISSA Governance Conference – Leading Schools Strategically into the Future involved participation by the governing councils and school boards from 38 schools across the State. Keynote speaker, Charles Leadbeater, challenged Boards to consider their role in providing education and learning approaches that will enable young people to successfully navigate the contemporary world. Greg Whitby, Executive Director, Catholic Education Paramatta, focused on the ways Boards can ensure there is close alignment between future focused pedagogies and building redevelopments. This opportunity increased Board members' capacities for strategic thinking and strategic planning processes.	92% of governors participating in professional learning reported enhanced understanding about governance practices.
The improvement of financial literacy capacity and capability was fostered through a workshop facilitated by John Somerset, Somerset Education. Members from four school boards were involved in improving their financial management skills.	
Fourteen school boards were represented at a workshop outlining Boards' school registration responsibilities. Participants were familiarised with the governance responsibilities required to ensure their schools and board were registration ready.	
Board members new to the governance role were inducted through a workshop facilitated by David Spear, Director VUCA. Outcomes for the 11 school boards represented included a more comprehensive understanding of their roles and responsibilities including legal, compliance and fiduciary obligations.	

PROJECT TITLE:

Improving quality teaching and learning

Project description:

The AISSA has directly supported Independent schools to identify and address their professional learning priorities to build school and teacher capacity to improve student outcomes through the Australian Curriculum, with a particular emphasis on the general capabilities, the Personal and Social capability and Design and Digital technologies. Work has been undertaken with schools to transform classroom practice through a program to develop in-school and cross-school professional teams centred on building teacher capacity in learning design, effective assessment and moderation practices with a focus on numeracy and literacy. Expert guidance was provided to support the development of effective transition pedagogies and methodologies as students move from early learning to school. Raising awareness of national teacher certification accreditation remained a priority, as did supporting the certification of teachers as Highly Accomplished and / or Lead teachers. New teachers across the sector were provided with a formal opportunity to be inducted in the profession through involvement in the AISSA Early Career Teacher Program.

Summary of project's achievement Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes	Achievement against indicators of success
Curriculum Reference groups were convened regularly to support both Primary (76 schools) and Secondary (64 schools) Curriculum Leaders. These groups provided leaders of learning across the sector with the opportunity to strengthen their leadership capacity and to collaborate as a sector on the most recent directions from both ACARA and other relevant curriculums such as the SACE.	All schools participating in professional learning reported an increased understanding of curriculum and effective pedagogical practices.
The lenses of the Australian Curriculum general capabilities, Personal and Social capability and Design and Digital Technologies were used to provide a comprehensive range of strategies to build school and teacher capacity. Curriculum Leaders considered how the general capabilities have been informed by national and international research and reflected on how teacher pedagogy could be enhanced to develop the capabilities as part of a site specific school improvement agenda. As a result, many schools are now beginning to embed this work in their individual contexts and have connected with a range of targeted projects both within AISSA and beyond. Individual schools have been directly supported by AISSA consultants to improve student outcomes through targeted work on the Australian Curriculum general capabilities. Ten schools were involved in a cross-sector two-day workshop centred on schools designing educational innovation change initiatives to foreground the general capabilities in their school. Resulting from this, all schools launched a change project in their school during the program and documented their project impact as a case study.	
Twenty-four schools involved in the Student Agency in the Personal and Social capability project worked in partnership with ACARA to enhance the implementation of the Personal and Social capability and develop notions of student agency. Thought leaders, Charles Leadbeater, Jan Owen (Foundation for Young Australians) and Michael Bunce (University of East London) contributed to the work. This work included three face-to-face workshops and 1:1 clinics with individual schools. All participants developed a project plan with outcomes achieved including a range of school solutions that promote agency such as blended learning environments where students co-create learning; student led advisory groups; student initiated learning design and self-assessment.	

Bespoke support to implement the Design and Technologies and Digital Technologies subjects was offered to schools on request. This included supporting school leaders to identify teacher professional learning needs and working with teachers to design student learning.	
The AISSA has assisted schools to transform classroom practice through in-school and cross-school professional teams centred on building teacher capacity in learning design, effective assessment and moderation practices. This was undertaken with a focus on numeracy and literacy practice. Ongoing professional learning, designed to be responsive to specific school needs and contexts, was provided by the AISSA both centrally and in schools. Participating schools and teachers grew in their knowledge, understanding and skills to become highly effective designers of learning - bringing together the 'what' (Australian Curriculum) and the 'how' (pedagogy / learning and teaching cycle). Assessment capacity and the use of contemporary evidence-informed pedagogical understandings in daily practice were strengthened. Teachers were supported to improve student literacy and numeracy outcomes in English and Mathematics in addition to enhancing literacy and numeracy outcomes within other learning areas.	90% of participants indicate improved skills in making consistent and valid judgements about student learning.
The now South Australian Department for Education Transition to School Position Paper and associated rubric informed the professional learning and work undertaken with five schools this year. Centralised workshops, along with individualised work with schools, supported key leaders and teachers to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in their current transition to school practices. Achieved outcomes included a review of pedagogical approaches and practices by schools. Moreover, approaches for effective communication strategies with families were strengthened. This resulted in the building of stronger partnerships with school community members involved in the transition to school programs and processes. Ongoing research through this professional learning enabled schools to work collaboratively together and towards a common goal, contributing to improved student outcomes for all children transitioning into their first year of school.	All participating schools have improved knowledge of transition practices.
The AISSA has continued to implement processes for certifying teachers as Highly Accomplished or Lead Teachers and to raise the awareness of teacher certification. In 2018, the Assessor Training Program was conducted twice by the SA Teacher Certification Committee (SATCC) with five educators/leaders from AISSA completing the course, resulting in a total of 27 trained assessors who have also promoted and supported certification in their 17 schools. Information sessions were held both centrally and in schools engaging with potential applicants and their leaders across 12 schools. An intensive and now pre-requisite series of three workshops commenced in 2018 with participants from 22 schools. Across the Independent sector, there are currently five teachers who have been certified as Highly Accomplished and one as a Lead teacher.	No teacher successfully achieved certification in 2018 but five teachers have indicated that they are ready to apply for certification in 2019.

The early career teacher program was established to support the induction of teachers into the profession and specifically focussed on primary and secondary teachers in their first three years of teaching. Teachers from 11 schools accessed expert advice and support, including working alongside a school-based mentor. The development of classroom strategies that increased student engagement and learning were fostered, as were collegial networks and the sharing of early teaching experiences. All participants implemented a school-based project that had been developed with their mentor. Participating teachers expressed an increased confidence and greater satisfaction from the classroom experience. They also indicated that they had been supported in the collection of evidence progressing from the Graduate to Proficient teacher career stage.	All early career teachers participating in the early career teacher program reported enhanced understanding and confidence as a teacher.

PROJECT TITLE:

Enhancing School Leadership

Project description:

School leadership was enhanced through two key strategies – working directly with school leaders and leadership teams, in addition to a professional program that supported instructional leadership, change management and leadership capacity and innovation in education.

Summary of project's achievement Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes	Achievement against indicators of success
The AISSA Senior Educational Consultants work as a team to provide strategic advice and support to schools and leadership teams. This has provided individualised school improvement advice that facilitates progress towards the realisation of each school's strategic improvement directions. As a result, leaders have been supported in the implementation of school initiatives and in their understanding of state regulatory requirements, national education obligations and reform directions. The articulation of advice in support of each individual school's strategic objectives is underpinned by the AISSA High Impact School Improvement Tool, an online repository comprising best practice research, resources and case studies. This repository is available to all schools.	93% of school leaders participated in school improvement activities.
The Schooling for First World Economies program comprised ten schools, who worked closely with thought leader Yong Zhao to explore the evolving possibilities and challenges in creating schools which will build future thinkers and innovators. The guiding principles of the work have been student autonomy, product-oriented learning and the global campus. The program involved workshops, Skype sessions with Professor Zhao and two opportunities for schools to meet individually with Professor Zhao. Achieved outcomes included the development of leaders' capacities and capabilities to lead significant processes of change in their schools and to establish a range of innovative approaches to teaching and learning. As a consequence, schools have fostered the development of student generated approaches to problems worth solving, entrepreneurial thinking through the establishment of school-based businesses, development of a school within a school model, entrepreneurship and social enterprise. All schools developed a project plan, contributed to a student-led website and will present their research at a symposium in 2019. The Creating Cultures of Thinking program involved ten school leadership teams working closely with Ron Ritchhart, Harvard University 'Project Zero', to explore creating cultures of thinking in their school context. Schools have engaged deeply with the eight cultural forces to identify specific actions for progress and achievement, resulting in more robust explications of the cultural forces in each school context. This has been evidenced widely in schools' documentation including strategic planning, curriculum documentation and classroom practice. Most schools also committed to further whole-site professional learning led by champion teachers and leaders from the project.	99% of participants report improved understanding of leadership, change and innovation.

Fourteen secondary school curriculum leaders and ten primary school curriculum leaders were intensively supported through targeted leadership programs that included individualised clinics, extended workshops and networked impact hubs. All leaders were supported to implement a change initiative in their school using a range of evidence-based change models. The work was supported by input from relevant educational thought leaders. All leaders developed and actioned a project plan which identified measures of impact.	

PROJECT TITLE:

Gifted and Talented Program

Project description:

The AISSA has supported schools to develop tailored programs and strategies that have targeted improving outcomes for highly able learners. This three-year program has been co-developed by the AISSA and Flinders University and uses a design thinking methodology.

Summary of project's achievement Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes	Achievement against indicators of success
2018 was the second year in this three-year program, an educational innovation delivered with Flinders University. This project seeks to support 27 schools to develop programs and strategies for their specific context that target improved outcomes for highly able learners. Design thinking methodology was applied, with 2018 focussing on the teacher as practitioner and the development of a school prototype. Schools participated in workshops and school-based coaching clinics. The themes arising from this project were presented at a meeting of the ACARA Curriculum Directors and also shared with Principals of Independent schools. Resulting from this, 22 schools have developed school prototype initiatives, with the range of aspects researched for implementation including: acceleration, differentiation, evaluation, dispositions, thinking and learning and the social emotional wellbeing of highly able learners. Each prototype presentation is housed on the AISSA website as a shared resource for all.	82% of participants have developed and implemented a prototype to raise outcomes for highly able learners.

PROJECT TITLE:

Education Innovation

Project description:

The AISSA has supported schools to conceptualise and design new futures to amplify and scale principled practices, environments and innovations. This has occurred through providing advice, information and assistance, as well as leading impact hubs - innovative and collaborative spaces for school leaders to create, test, implement and grow approaches that respond to future possibilities for student centred learning and teaching.

Summary of project's achievement Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes	Achievement against indicators of success
This project works in synergy with the AISSA Leadership strand Schooling for First World Economies Project. Leading impact hubs were established which facilitated opportunities for planning, recursive thinking, testing and implementing of initiatives by schools involved in Schooling for First World Economies as well as curriculum leaders involved in a Leading Learning for Impact and Innovation project. All leaders developed and actioned an innovation project plan. Additional outcomes to those described in the AISSA Leadership strand include the development of ways of evidencing and tracking the general capabilities, designing learning principles, implementation of innovative pedagogies including design thinking, designing new middle school practices, implementation of curriculum approaches, project-based learning, wellbeing frameworks and learning management systems.	All participants involved in this initiative have developed an innovation project plan.

Financial Statement

The implementation and delivery of an online National Assessment Program	FTE	Reform Support Fund funding	Other funding	Total funding
Employee expenses		161,282	-	161,282
Administration expenses		15,021	-	15,021
Subscription expenses		894	-	894
Occupancy expenses		25,376	-	25,376
Direct project expenses:				
- Professional development		2,948	-	2,948
- Other project expenses		1,252	-	1,252
Total	**1.33**	**206,773**	**-**	**206,773**

Quality assurance and support for the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with a Disability	FTE	Reform Support Fund funding	Other funding	Total funding
Employee expenses		360,566	-	360,566
Administration expenses		34,343	-	34,343
Subscription expenses		2,045	-	2,045
Occupancy expenses		58,020	-	58,020
Direct project expenses:				
- Professional development		6,740	-	6,740
- Other project expenses		2,863	-	2,863
Total	**3.04**	**464,576**	**-**	**464,576**

Improving governance and financial management practices	FTE	Reform Support Fund funding	Other funding	Total funding
Employee expenses		15,091	11,932	27,023
Administration expenses		2,841	-	2,841
Subscription expenses		169	-	169
Occupancy expenses		4,800	-	4,800
Direct project expenses:		-		
- Governance project		32,576	-	32,576
- Professional development		558	-	558
- Other project expenses		237	-	237
Total	**0.25**	**56,272**	**11,932**	**68,204**

Improving quality teaching and learning	FTE	Professional learning – Australian Curriculum	Moderation and learning design	Student transition	Teacher Certification	Early Career Teacher Program	Reform Support Fund funding	Other funding	Total funding
Employee expenses		533,133	238,988	13,263	18,470	14,355	307,170	511,037	**818,208**
Administration expenses		44,908	21,857	1,163	1,453	1,119	26,467	44,033	**70,501**
Subscription expenses		2,674	1,302	69	87	67	1,576	2,622	**4,198**
Occupancy expenses		75,868	36,925	1,964	2,455	1,891	44,714	74,390	**119,103**
Direct project expenses:									
- Early career program		-	-	-	-	1,606	603	1,003	**1,606**
- Moderation project		-	121	-	-	-	45	76	**121**
- Professional development		8,813	4,289	228	285	220	5,194	8,641	**13,835**
- Other project expenses		5,744	3,822	2,097	2,121	2,093	5,961	9,916	**15,877**
Total		**671,139**	**307,304**	**18,784**	**24,872**	**21,350**	**391,730**	**651,719**	**1,043,449**
Reform Support Fund funding		242,981	125,291	9,758	7,925	5,775			
Other funding		428,158	182,013	9,026	16,947	15,575			
FTE	**6.23**	3.97	1.93	0.10	0.13	0.10			

Enhancing School Leadership	FTE	Leading continuous improvement	Building leadership capacity programs	Reform Support Fund funding	Other funding	Total funding
Employee expenses		322,744	128,321	184,153	266,912	**451,066**
Administration expenses		24,408	9,587	13,879	20,116	**33,995**
Subscription expenses		1,453	571	826	1,198	**2,024**
Occupancy expenses		41,235	16,196	23,447	33,984	**57,430**
Direct project expenses:		-	-	-	-	**-**
- Leadership		53,473	-	21,831	31,642	**53,473**
- Professional development		4,790	1,881	2,724	3,948	**6,671**
- Other project expenses		2,035	799	1,157	1,677	**2,834**
Total		**450,138**	**157,355**	**248,016**	**359,476**	**607,493**
Reform Support Fund funding		197,149	50,867			
Funding from other contributions		252,989	106,488			
FTE	**3.01**	2.16	0.85			

Gifted and Talented Program	FTE	Reform Support Fund funding	Other funding	Total funding
Employee expenses		32,191	55,789	87,981
Administration expenses		2,536	4,395	6,930
Subscription expenses		151	262	413
Occupancy expenses		4,284	7,424	11,708
Direct project expenses:				
- Professional development		498	862	1,360
- Other project expenses		211	366	578
Total	**0.61**	**39,871**	**69,099**	**108,970**

Education Innovation	FTE	Reform Support Fund funding	Other funding	Total funding
Employee expenses		37,778	38,829	76,607
Administration expenses		2,867	2,947	5,814
Subscription expenses		171	175	346
Occupancy expenses		4,843	4,978	9,822
Direct project expenses:				
- Professional development		563	578	1,141
- Other project expenses		239	246	485
Total	**0.51**	**46,461**	**47,754**	**94,215**

Overall expenses	Total FTE	Total reform support fund funding	Total other funding	Total funding
Non-government reform support fund	14.98	1,453,700	1,139,980	2,593,680