School education: a quick guide to key internet links

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This Quick Guide provides links to:

• information about the policy and administrative framework for school education
• individual school information
• school funding information
• statistics—including student achievement statistics
• Indigenous education
• Australian organisations
• international organisations and overseas education departments and
• state and territory government websites.

Policy and administrative framework

• The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians agreed to by the Australian Government and state and territory government education ministers in 2008, sets the goals and directions for Australian schooling.

• The Department of Education (DoE) has major responsibility for Australian Government school education programs, with two major exceptions:
  – the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet has responsibility for Indigenous affairs, including school education programs for Indigenous students. However, information about specific Indigenous school programs is on the DoE’s website
  – the Department of Industry has major responsibility for vocational education and training in schools (VETIS).

• The Education Council is a standing council of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). Its membership includes Australian Government and state and territory government education ministers. It replaced the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) from 1 July 2014. The Education Council’s website includes an archive of the publications and communiques of the SCSEEC and its predecessors.

• The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is responsible for the development of the national curriculum, the National Assessment Program and national data collection and reporting.

• The National Report on Schooling in Australia, published by ACARA since 2009, provides an overview of school education in Australia, key statistics and funding information. Earlier editions (1989–2008) were
published by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) and its predecessors and are available on the Education Council’s website.

- The annual Report on Government Services, published by the Productivity Commission, provides an overview of school education in Australia, key statistics and funding information.
- The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) provides ‘national leadership for the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership’. Its work includes the development of professional standards, national registration and professional learning for teachers.

Information about schools

- School term dates
- The My School website, managed by ACARA, provides information about all schools in Australia, and includes key statistical data, financial information and school-wide National Assessment Program (literacy and numeracy) results.
- M Harrington, Schools by Commonwealth Electoral Division, 2012, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2013. The information for individual schools includes school name, location and school type. For non-government schools, campus information, affiliation and Commonwealth funding arrangements under the socioeconomic status (SES) system are also provided. The website includes a list of school enrolments by electorate.

School funding

- Australian Government funding for schools is provided under the Australian Education Act 2013 and the Australian Education Regulation 2013. The Guide to the Australian Education Act 2013 provides a detailed explanation of the legislation.
- The legislation is in accord with COAG’s National Education Reform Agreement.
- M Harrington, Funding the National Plan for School Improvement: an explanation, Background note, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 26 June 2013. Provides an explanation of the then proposed school funding arrangements for 2014.

Australian Government funding for schools prior to 2014

- COAG’s Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (IGA) provided for the Australian Government’s National Schools Specific Purpose Payment (SPP) for government schools. Funding was provided according to the terms of the IGA’s National Education Agreement (NEA).
- The COAG Reform Council reported annually on the Agreement’s progress.
- The Schools Assistance Act 2008 provided funding for the non-government school component of the National Schools SPP and the Schools Assistance Regulations 2009 specified the performance and accountability requirements under the Act. Further information was provided in the Schools Assistance Act 2008 Administrative Guidelines: Commonwealth Programs for Non-government Schools, 2009 to 2013/2014: 2013 Update.
- The Schools Assistance Act 2008: Report on Financial Assistance Granted to each State in Respect of … This annual report provides funding information by program and a summary of general recurrent and capital grants for individual non-government schools. Latest issue is 2011.
- Other targeted funding for schools was provided through a number of COAG National Partnerships.
- M Harrington, Australian Government funding for schools explained: 2013 update, Background note, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 8 March 2013. Explains the previous funding arrangements and includes a brief history of Australian Government funding for schools and historic funding and statistical information.

Statistics

- Australian Bureau of Statistics—key statistics about schools are provided in Schools, Australia, published annually.
• The annual Report on Government Services, published by the Productivity Commission, provides an overview of school education in Australia, key statistics and funding information.

Student achievement statistics
• The National Assessment Program (NAP), managed by ACARA, includes the annual National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 and three-yearly NAP Sample Assessments in Science Literacy, Civics and Citizenship, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Literacy.
• The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a three-yearly international survey of the reading, mathematics and science capabilities of 15-year-old students.
• Progress in International Reading and Literacy Study (PIRLS), a project of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), is a five-yearly international assessment of the reading ability of students in Year 4.
• The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), an IEA project, is a four-yearly international survey of the mathematics and science achievement of students in Year 4 and Year 8.

Other international statistics
• Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators provides annual comparative data on the education systems of member and partner countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
• UNESCO Institute for Statistics

Indigenous education
• The National Indigenous Reform Agreement (Closing the Gap) sets out the education targets for Indigenous Australians. The COAG Reform Council, which ceased on 30 June 2014, reported annually on the Agreement’s progress.
• The Closing the Gap Agreement is supported by the National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory, Schedule B sets out the Schooling Implementation Plan.
• The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014, endorsed by COAG in May 2011, committed Australian governments to ‘a unified approach to closing the gap in education outcomes’ between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Annual reports recorded the progress of the Plan.
• The Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000 (IETA Act) provides funding for some Australian Government targeted programs for Indigenous schools students. The IETA Act Program Guidelines provide information about these programs—latest issue is 2013.
• The annual Report on Government Services: Indigenous Compendium, published by the Productivity Commission, collates relevant data from the Report on Government Services. The Productivity Commission also publishes the biannual report, Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage. This report provides information across a range of areas, including education.

Australian organisations
The following are some educational organisations that represent the interests of school education stakeholders and/or undertake research relating to school education. The Australasian Education Directory provides a comprehensive listing of educational organisations.
• Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia
• Australian Council for Educational Research
• Australian Council of Deans of Education
• Australian Council of State School Organisations
• Australian Education Union
• Australian Parents Council—represents the interests of parents of non-government school students.
• Australian Primary Principals Association
• Australian Secondary Principals Association
• Independent Education Union of Australia
• Independent Schools Council of Australia
• National Catholic Education Commission
• Save Our Schools—a public education advocacy organisation.

International organisations and overseas education departments

International organisations
• The European Community’s Eurydice Network provides information and analysis of European education systems and policies.
• Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD)—Early Childhood and Schools
• United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – Education for the 21st Century

Overseas education departments
• Great Britain: Department for Education
• United States:
  – Department of Education—includes links to state education departments.
  – Education Commission of the States provides access to information about federal and state education policies, legislation, research and statistics.

State and territory government websites

Australian Capital Territory (ACT)
• Find an ACT school
• Education and Training Directorate
• Board of Senior Secondary Studies

New South Wales (NSW)
• Find a NSW government school
• Find a NSW non-government school
• Department of Education and Communities
• Board of Studies NSW—includes responsibility for non-government schools.

Northern Territory (NT)
• Find a NT school
• Department of Education
• Northern Territory Board of Studies

Queensland
• Find a Queensland school
• Department of Education, Training and Employment
• Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority

South Australia (SA)
• Find a SA school
• Department for Education and Child Development
• South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE Board of SA)
Tasmania
- Find a Tasmanian school
- Department of Education
- Tasmanian Qualifications Authority

Victoria
- Find a Victorian school
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

Western Australia (WA)
- Find a WA government school
- Find a WA non-government school
- Department of Education
- Department of Education Services—has responsibility for non-government schools.
- School Curriculum and Standards Authority

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