

# Interim School Funding Agreement 2025



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# Interim School Funding Agreement 2025

## PRELIMINARIES

1. The Parties acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which Australians live, learn and work, and pay respects to their Elders past, present and future.
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and knowledge are fundamental to shaping and improving education systems and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students. The Parties to this *Interim School Funding Agreement 2025* (2025 Agreement) will encourage and support self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, to significantly improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.
3. All Parties have committed to working in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders as part of the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* (Closing the Gap Agreement). The Parties express their thanks to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC) and the Coalition of Peaks for their significant engagement and work in partnership. to strengthen the education system, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
4. The Parties acknowledge the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and ways of learning to Australia's education system. The Parties commit to supporting the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to design and deliver reforms to increase education equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
5. Australia has a strong education system, but it can be improved and more equitable for some students. To do that, governments and school systems, in partnership with families, will continue to support every student to succeed so that no one is held back or left behind.
6. All Australian governments have agreed to uphold the vision for Australian schooling outlined in the *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration* (the Mparntwe Education Declaration) for a world class education system that encourages and supports every student to be the very best they can be, no matter where they live or what kind of learning challenges they may face.
7. Specifically, this 2025 Agreement will support the Mparntwe Education Declaration's 2 interrelated goals - that the Australian education system promotes excellence and equity and that all young Australians become confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners, and active and informed members of the community. An equitable system also needs to build on and include local, regional and national cultural knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
8. All Parties recognise teachers, educators, support staff and school leaders are vital to achieving these education goals for young Australians. All Parties commit to working together to foster high-quality teaching and leadership, including through developing

well-prepared pre-service teachers, and building a diverse educator workforce that is reflective of the contemporary Australian population.

9. A high-quality, equitable and inclusive school education system has the power to transform lives and support young people to realise their full potential by providing the skills they need to participate in society and the economy.
10. The Parties acknowledge that learning is a partnership with parents, carers and others in the community, all of whom have a role to play in nurturing students' success at school and in life.
11. The Parties also recognise the importance of agency in empowering students to be active and engaged in their learning.
12. The Parties also affirm their continued commitment to the implementation of *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31*.
13. This 2025 Agreement sets out the shared intention of the Parties to work in partnership to improve education outcomes for all Australian students and build on the capability and capacity of the education workforce. The Bilateral Agreements between the Commonwealth and individual state and territory governments set out the specific intentions for the relevant state or territory and the Commonwealth, building on the shared intention in this 2025 Agreement, and the strategies and initiatives that will be pursued to deliver them.
14. This 2025 Agreement operates in the context of, and gives effect to, requirements under the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act). The Act sets out conditions on states and territories for grants of financial assistance based on the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS). The SRS is made up of a base funding amount for every student plus additional loadings for schools with students with greater needs. This 2025 Agreement and its schedules satisfy the requirements of paragraphs 22(2)(a) and (b) of the Act.
15. The Parties recognise that the constitutional responsibility for school education lies with states and territories. States and territories have in place their own regulatory frameworks, local policies and priorities intended to maximise students' educational outcomes. Non-government approved authorities and approved system authorities have their own policies and priorities intended to maximise students' educational outcomes.
16. Subsection 78(3) of the Act requires approved system authorities to distribute all Australian Government recurrent funding in accordance with a needs-based funding arrangement that is compliant with subsection 78(5) of the Act. This approach recognises that approved system authorities are best placed to understand the individual needs of their schools and students.
17. The Parties acknowledge the significant ongoing reform, investment and effort already underway or occurring outside the 2025 Agreement, both at a national level and in individual states and territories and systems. This includes substantial work being undertaken by all governments and schooling sectors through the response to *Strong Beginnings: Report of the Teacher Education Expert Panel* and the *National Teacher Workforce Action Plan*.
18. This 2025 Agreement and all schedules to the 2025 Agreement are not intended to limit the operation of the Act and the Australian Education Regulations 2023 (the Regulations), including decisions made under that legislation.

19. This 2025 Agreement, together with the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025-2034*, replaces the *National School Reform Agreement 2019-2024*.
20. Reflecting the long-standing practice of collaboration between all Australian governments to deliver school education reform, the Education Ministers Meeting is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this 2025 Agreement.
21. The Parties recognise the important role of the non-government school sector in school education, including non-government approved authorities, approved system authorities and non-government representative bodies, and commit to working with the non-government school sector to implement this 2025 Agreement.

## PART 1 – PARTIES, OPERATION, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Parties

22. The Parties to this 2025 Agreement (the Parties) are:
- a. the Commonwealth of Australia (the Commonwealth)
  - b. the states and territories, being:
    - i. the State of New South Wales
    - ii. the State of Victoria
    - iii. the State of Queensland
    - iv. the State of South Australia

### Term

23. The 2025 Agreement and any schedules (except Schedule D) will commence on 1 January 2025 and expire on 31 December 2025.
24. The Bilateral Agreements between the Commonwealth and a state or territory (which will be included at Schedule D) will commence on 1 January 2025 and expire on 31 December 2025, unless otherwise agreed.

### Variations

25. In accordance with the Council on Federal Financial Relations' processes for oversight of federal financial arrangements, this 2025 Agreement may be varied or extended at any time with the agreement in writing of the Education Ministers of all the Parties, or by First Ministers where appropriate, subject to clause 26.
26. Clause 22 may be varied at any time to add a Party to the 2025 Agreement, with the agreement of the Education Ministers of the Commonwealth and the added Party. Clause 22 may also be varied at any time to remove a Party who withdraws from, or is taken to have terminated its participation in the 2025 Agreement in accordance with clauses 30 or 31.
27. Unless otherwise specified, the schedules to this 2025 Agreement (except Schedule D) may be varied or revoked, and new schedules may be added, at any time with the agreement of the Education Ministers of all Parties. Any new schedules will be developed and included with the agreement of the Education Ministers of all Parties.
28. Bilateral Agreements between the Commonwealth and a state or territory (included at Schedule D) may be varied, or added to Schedule D, with the written agreement of the Education Ministers of the Commonwealth and the state or territory to which the Bilateral Agreement relates. A Bilateral Agreement may be removed from Schedule D with the agreement of the Education Ministers of the Commonwealth and the withdrawing Party.
29. Where variations materially impact the non-government school sector, the relevant Parties agree to consult with relevant non-government representative bodies on proposed variations on a national or state level, as appropriate.

## Withdrawal of Parties

30. Subject to clause 31, a Party to this 2025 Agreement may terminate its participation in the 2025 Agreement at any time by notifying all the other Parties in writing. If a Party intends to withdraw, it should provide as much notice as possible before withdrawing and a minimum of 3 months.
31. A state or territory that becomes a party to the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025-2034* is taken to have terminated its participation in this 2025 Agreement as of the date that it became a party to the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025-2034*. The state or territory must notify all the other Parties to this 2025 Agreement in writing that it has become party to the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025-2034* within 2 weeks of it becoming a party.

## Dispute resolution

32. Any Party may give notice to the other Parties of a dispute under this 2025 Agreement or any schedule to this 2025 Agreement, except Schedule D.
33. Officials of relevant Parties will attempt to resolve any dispute under this Agreement in the first instance. If a dispute cannot be resolved by officials, it may be escalated to the relevant Education Ministers and, if necessary, to the Education Ministers Meeting. If a dispute cannot be resolved by the relevant Education Ministers, it may be referred to the relevant First Ministers and, if necessary, to the Council on Federal Financial Relations or National Cabinet for consideration.
34. In the case of a dispute related to a Bilateral Agreement between the Commonwealth and a state or territory, officials of relevant Parties will attempt to resolve any dispute relating to the Bilateral Agreement in the first instance. If a dispute cannot be resolved by officials, it may be escalated to the relevant Education Ministers and, if necessary, to relevant First Ministers or the relevant Council on Federal Financial Relations Ministers.
35. A dispute does not, of itself, constitute failure to implement this 2025 Agreement.

## Shared responsibilities of the Commonwealth and the states and territories

36. The Commonwealth and the states and territories commit to:
  - a. continue to work together through the Education Ministers Meeting, recognising their complementary roles in the federation
  - b. commission the national education agencies and bodies to support the delivery of work consistent with the Objectives and Outcomes articulated in this 2025 Agreement and the priority of Education Ministers, noting that states and territories will not be held accountable for a failure of a national agency to deliver agreed actions
  - c. establish and maintain formal partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities, consistent with the Parties' Closing the Gap Agreement Implementation Plans

- d. work collaboratively with education stakeholders in the continued development and implementation of existing national reforms, including in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative organisations, consistent with the intent of the Closing the Gap Agreement and with the non-government sector
- e. continue to work together to improve the quality and timeliness of the data that supports the achievement of the Outcomes and Objectives of this 2025 Agreement
- f. share best practice and school improvement strategies, including evaluations of programs where appropriate, to support school and school system improvement
- g. provide public leadership by promoting the excellent work of teachers and school leaders, the value of their contribution to society and the critical role they play in realising the national school reform agenda and improving outcomes for Australia's children and young people.

## Responsibilities of the Commonwealth

37. The Commonwealth will:

- a. maintain and administer the Act and associated legislative instruments
- b. consult, collaborate and seek agreement from the Education Ministers Meeting, as the key body for making decisions and in recognition of the significant impact of changed Commonwealth funding arrangements on state and territory investment, about:
  - i. amendments to the Act, Regulations and policy guidelines that underpin the operation of the Regulations and Act
  - ii. terms of reference for reviews by the National School Resourcing Board (the Board) established under section 128 of the Act
  - iii. any changes that impact the operation and calculation methodology of the SRS
- c. provide assistance as required to support the operation of the Board
- d. provide timely access to Commonwealth funding and SRS data to assist states and territories to meet the requirements of section 22A of the Act, and consider what arrangements might provide for greater certainty for states and territories to support jurisdictional budget management including consideration of the timing of SRS indexation rates
- e. develop a First Nations education policy in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education stakeholders and state and territory governments
- f. work with states and territories to facilitate the non-government school sector to implement relevant aspects of this 2025 Agreement (see clause 51)



- g. monitor the non-government school sector's compliance with the Act and the Regulations and support the achievement of the outcomes and objectives of the 2025 Agreement
  - h. facilitate Australia's international engagement on educational matters, including the international assessment programs of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
  - i. lead and meet milestones of the National Enabling Initiatives for which the Commonwealth has primary responsibility, in collaboration with states and territories
  - j. implement significant national initiatives, including those announced in the 2024-25 Budget such as the Commonwealth Prac Payment for teachers undertaking supervised mandatory placements and the establishment of a National Teacher Resource Hub.
38. Where the Commonwealth proposes to take a compliance response in relation to a state or territory under the Act, the Commonwealth will ensure that the terms of that proposed response are provided to the state or territory concerned and the views of that state or territory are sought and taken into consideration prior to any final decision.
39. In the event of a change to any of the following components of the SRS arising as a direct result of amendments to the Act or the Regulations that commence from 1 January 2024 until 31 December 2025, the Commonwealth will ensure a state or territory contribution amount as set out as a share of the SRS under section 22A of the Act, or in this 2025 Agreement or a Bilateral Agreement at Schedule D, will not be impacted by the following, unless otherwise agreed by the Education Minister of that state or territory:
- a. the SRS indexation factor (see section 11A of the Act)
  - b. the SRS base and funding amounts (see section 33 and 34 of the Act)
  - c. the Commonwealth's and states and territories' annual shares (see section 35A and 22A of the Act)
  - d. the student with disability loading (see section 36 of the Act)
  - e. the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander loading (see section 37 of the Act)
  - f. the socio-educational disadvantage loading (see section 38 of the Act)
  - g. the low English proficiency loading (see section 39 of the Act)
  - h. the location loading (see sections 40 and 41 of the Act)
  - i. the size loading (see sections 42 to 51 of the Act)
  - j. the methodology for calculation of SES scores and capacity to contribute settings (see section 23 of the Regulation and section 54 of the Act).

40. Parties note that in the operation of clause 39, the amended contribution share should be consistent with the expected value of the original contribution share agreed under the SRS settings as set out under section 22A of the Act, or in this 2025 Agreement or a Bilateral Agreement at Schedule D, that were in operation at the time that shares at Schedule D were agreed, unless otherwise agreed.
41. The Board provides independent oversight over Commonwealth school funding, including undertaking independent reviews under section 128 of the Act. Given the significance to all jurisdictions of the advice provided by the Board, the Board will consult with Education Ministers, in addition to requirements for consultation with the states and territories in undertaking each review.

## **Responsibilities of the states and territories**

42. States and territories are responsible for schooling in their state or territory, including the regulatory framework for all schools. States and territories are responsible for developing policy, delivering services, monitoring and reporting on performance, and employment of school staff in the government school sector.
43. In this context, states and territories will:
  - a. continue state-specific reforms against the National Reform Directions and report as set out in their respective Bilateral Agreement
  - b. work with the Commonwealth to facilitate the non-government school sector's implementation of relevant aspects of this 2025 Agreement (see clause 51)
  - c. engage with the non-government school sector to facilitate their implementation of relevant aspects of this 2025 Agreement (consistent with subsection 77(2A) of the Act), noting that states and territories will not be held accountable in the event that an approved authority does not meet its obligations under subsection 77(2A) of the Act
  - d. continue to provide financial and student data where appropriate from government systems to the relevant national education body as agreed by the Education Ministers Meeting
  - e. distribute Commonwealth funding to schools according to state and territory needs-based funding arrangements as provided for under subsection 78(5) of the Act
  - f. work together with the Commonwealth in the continued development and implementation of the National Enabling Initiatives.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples**

44. Through the Closing the Gap Agreement, all Australian Governments and the Coalition of Peaks have agreed a fundamentally new way of developing and implementing policies and programs that impact the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
45. This 2025 Agreement acknowledges the rich histories and continuing cultures of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and commits the Parties to work in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities.

46. The Parties commit to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education stakeholders including NATSIEC and relevant state and territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative bodies, consistent with the partnership agreement to be agreed by Education Ministers.
47. The Parties also acknowledge the importance of data sovereignty and undertake that reporting of data under this 2025 Agreement should be shared with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities where appropriate, and align with the targets agreed under the Closing the Gap Agreement.
48. Consistent with the Parties shared commitment under the Closing the Gap Agreement to increased transparency of funding allocations, approved system authorities and approved authorities will continue to prioritise funding towards supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through the operation and publication of needs-based funding arrangements consistent with the Act.
49. Consistent with the Priority Reforms under the Closing the Gap Agreement, the Parties also undertake to support and develop the Community Controlled Sector to deliver culturally safe and appropriate services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the education workforce.

### **Responsibilities of the non-government school sector**

50. The Act establishes ongoing requirements for all approved authorities. These include requirements to implement the Australian Curriculum, ensure schools participate in the National Assessment Program, and provide information in accordance with the Regulations (under subsection 77(2) of the Act).
51. Under subsection 77(2A) of the Act, non-government approved authorities are required to cooperate with their local state or territory government in the implementation of this 2025 Agreement, including the National Enabling Initiatives, the National Reform Directions and the relevant Bilateral Agreements.
52. Reporting for the non-government school sector is outlined in Part 5 of this 2025 Agreement.

### **Enforceability**

53. The Parties do not intend any of the provisions of this 2025 Agreement to be legally enforceable; however, this does not lessen the Parties' commitment to the 2025 Agreement.

## PART 2 – PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

### Purpose

54. The Parties commit to actions that will encourage and support every student to be the very best they can be, no matter where they live or what kind of learning challenges they face.
55. To guide implementation and evaluation of the 2025 Agreement, the Parties agree to a set of Objectives and Outcomes against each of the 3 priority areas identified at clause 56. The Objectives articulate the broader goal for the education system and the Outcomes summarise the expected benefits that will be realised through the successful implementation of the reform agenda. Future work will be subject to negotiations on the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement 2025-2034*.
56. Education Ministers have agreed that the following 3 national priority areas form the basis for the 2025 Agreement, which are consistent with the goals of the Mparntwe Education Declaration:
  - a. equity and excellence
  - b. wellbeing for learning and engagement
  - c. a strong and sustainable workforce.
57. The Objectives and Outcomes of this 2025 Agreement are a shared responsibility of the Commonwealth, states and territories and the non-government school sector. In conjunction with the goals and visions of the Mparntwe Education Declaration, they articulate a shared aspiration for Australia's education system.
58. All Parties are responsible for working together to achieve the Objectives and Outcomes of this 2025 Agreement. While the Parties are collectively committed to this, Commonwealth funding to states and territories under the Act is not conditional on the achievement of these Objectives and Outcomes.

### Objectives

59. The Parties commit that, in pursuing the National Reforms at Part 4, they seek to progress the following Objectives:
  - a. Equity and excellence – schools and education systems are equipped to provide all students with highly effective evidence-based teaching and equitable learning opportunities and support them to maximise their learning.
  - b. Wellbeing for learning and engagement – schools take a structured approach to wellbeing for learning in a way which reflects their school and learning environment, and students have a sense of belonging, safety and engagement with their learning.
  - c. A strong and sustainable workforce – the workforce is respected and continues to grow, and teachers and non-teaching school staff are supported to innovate and be at their best to ensure young Australians thrive in their education. A sustainable workforce means that the Australian community recognises the value teachers and school leaders bring to students, communities and the economy.

## Outcomes

60. The Parties agree that the 2025 Agreement will contribute to the following Outcomes:

- a. Equity and excellence – all students are provided access to high-quality evidence-based teaching that is inclusive, where young Australians of all backgrounds and levels of need are supported to achieve their full educational potential.
- b. Wellbeing for learning and engagement – students are provided with appropriate support, experiences, teaching and resources to positively and confidently engage in learning.
- c. A strong and sustainable workforce – all staff are supported to innovate, consistent with evidence-based teaching, and be at their best to ensure young Australians thrive in their education. Teaching is valued and more Australians consider a career in education, and there is a high teacher retention rate.

## PART 3 – FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

61. Parties recognise that states and territories provide the majority of public funding for school education in the government sector and the Commonwealth provides the majority of public funding for school education in the non-government school sector.
62. The Commonwealth will contribute 20 per cent of the SRS for government schools to the state and territory Parties to the 2025 Agreement.
63. The Commonwealth will continue to provide at least 80 per cent of the SRS for all non-government schools. For most non-government schools, the base per student SRS amount is reduced by the anticipated capacity of their school community to financially contribute towards the school's operating costs.
64. Details of state and territory funding contributions are outlined in their relevant Bilateral Agreements at Schedule D.

## PART 4 – NATIONAL REFORMS

65. Parties acknowledge the significant existing national, state, territory, and sectoral effort and investment in Australia’s education system. All governments and schooling sectors are committed to improvement and to building on the significant strengths of Australia’s education system and the progress already made.

66. In considering national reform activities in the context of this 2025 Agreement, the following taxonomy is applied:

Activity	Explanation
<b>National Reform Directions</b>	<p>National Reform Directions capture activities committed to by Parties to the 2025 Agreement which will contribute to the Objectives and Outcomes in Part 2.</p> <p>National Reform Directions are commitments to areas of action by all Parties, with flexibility in delivery provided to reflect existing state and territory reform agendas, local needs, and the diverse context in which schooling is delivered across Australia.</p> <p>Details of activities against the National Reform Directions will be outlined in Bilateral Agreements for each state and territory.</p>
<b>National Enabling Initiatives</b>	<p>National Enabling Initiatives are specific activities that require collaboration between all Parties to be achieved.</p> <p>National Enabling Initiatives will enable Parties to effectively implement future reform efforts and system-level improvements. Implementation milestones for National Enabling Initiatives are outlined in Schedule B.</p>

### National Reform Directions

67. Parties commit to continue (and/or build on if specified) existing efforts in the areas of equity and excellence, wellbeing for learning and engagement, and a strong and sustainable workforce for all students and particularly those in priority equity cohorts through:

- a. Equity and excellence
  - i. Initiatives that identify student learning needs early and provide tiered and targeted, intensive supports, in line with evidence-based teaching and a ‘multi-tiered systems of support’ approach
- b. Wellbeing for learning and engagement
  - i. Initiatives which support student engagement in learning, for example through greater student participation, attendance, inclusion and/or enhanced school-family engagement

c. A strong and sustainable workforce

- i. Implementing initiatives which support the attraction and retention of the teacher workforce, for example, actions under the *National Teacher Workforce Action Plan* and/or recommendations of *Strong Beginnings: Report of the Teacher Education Expert Panel*

68. Parties acknowledge that states and territories will continue existing reform activities aligned to the National Reform Direction to reflect their individual contexts and existing efforts, and the funding arrangements in Part 3. The detail regarding any specific activities to be undertaken in respect of the National Reform Directions will be outlined in the Bilateral Agreements at Schedule D.
69. Parties will co-operate with the non-government school sector in the implementation of National Reform Directions where appropriate, reflecting that the non-government school sector will have flexibility in delivery of each National Reform Direction to reflect their individual contexts and existing efforts, and noting that states and territories will not be responsible should a non-government approved authority not meet its obligations under the Act.
70. The implementation of Bilateral Agreements is a condition of Commonwealth funding to states and territories under subsection 22(2) of the Act. States and territories will not be held accountable for non-government approved authorities not meeting its obligations under the Act. Nor will the non-government school sector be held accountable for a state or territory not meeting its obligations under this 2025 Agreement.

## National Enabling Initiatives

71. The Parties agree to the National Enabling Initiatives set out at Schedule B.
72. Each National Enabling Initiative project will have a Project Plan, endorsed by Education Ministers, which will appropriately scope the project, set out the Parties' joint commitment to coordination of effort, specific actions to be taken by Parties, and a timeline for implementation (see the milestones outlined in Schedule B).
73. Consistent with Action 20 of the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan, a Teacher Workload Impact Assessment will be prepared, in consultation with states and territories, the non-government school sector and unions, as part of the development of the Project Plan which is presented to Education Ministers Meeting on each National Enabling Initiative. Ministers will have regard to this assessment when considering each Project Plan.
74. The implementation of the National Enabling Initiatives as outlined in Schedule B is a condition of Commonwealth funding to states and territories under subsection 22 of the Act. Education Ministers Meeting may vary Schedule B over time.
75. The cost of National Enabling Initiatives will be met by Parties according to the cost sharing principles outlined in Schedule C, or as otherwise agreed by Education Ministers Meeting, including alternate cost sharing arrangements for specific National Enabling Initiatives where agreed.
76. Parties will co-operate with the non-government school sector in the implementation of National Enabling Initiatives, noting that states and territories will not be responsible for the non-government school sector or a non-government approved authority not implementing National Enabling Initiatives.



77. If the Education Ministers Meeting agrees in future to any new National Enabling Initiatives as related to sections 22(1)(a) and 77(2A) of the Act, these will be separately progressed through Education Ministers Meeting processes.
78. The Commonwealth, in consultation with states and territories and through the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee, will annually report to the Education Ministers Meeting, on the progress of action on the National Enabling Initiatives.

## PART 5 – REPORTING

79. Reporting and public transparency are key mechanisms to give the community confidence that outcomes are being achieved and that reforms to improve the quality and equity of school education in Australia are being implemented by all Parties.
80. Parties acknowledge that states and territories have an existing level of accountability through their respective Parliaments for delivery of education in government schools.
81. Parties agree that, as far as practical, reporting requirements under this 2025 Agreement will leverage existing reporting processes and data sources. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, reporting under the 2025 Agreement will not impose any additional burden on schools. Requests to provide data and information to support public reporting will provide reasonable timeframes to respond and ensure the accuracy and integrity of data provided.
82. Parties agree this 2025 Agreement and its schedules, including Bilateral Agreements at Schedule D, will be made publicly available.
83. Parties reiterate their commitment to funding transparency and to building public understanding of how funding is distributed to schools for the benefit of students, especially students from priority equity cohorts. All approved system authorities will ensure full and accessible information on their needs-based funding arrangements are publicly available. In line with the intent of subsection 78(5) of the Act, this could include but is not limited to:
  - a. providing a clear rationale and explanation of the methodology and the calculation of funding, including the period of coverage, base amount, eligibility and centralised costs and levies. This includes providing a clear explanation for how the local loadings are calculated
  - b. providing meaningful and understandable information on how the needs-based funding arrangements support schools and students, particularly how funding for students with greater educational needs flows to schools
  - c. publishing this information in a timely and accessible manner.

### National and state and territory reporting

84. Parties agree the following reporting and transparency arrangements are critical to community confidence in the schooling system, and to provide clarity about the use of Commonwealth funds, noting that these arrangements will leverage existing data sources:
  - a. an Annual Implementation Report from states and territories, as the approved system authorities for government schools, on progress on existing reform activities against the National Reform Directions, as outlined in the Bilateral Agreements and as part of assessing compliance with paragraph 22(2)(c) of the Act
  - b. an annual report from the Commonwealth to the Education Ministers Meeting regarding the implementation of National Enabling Initiatives (per clause 78)

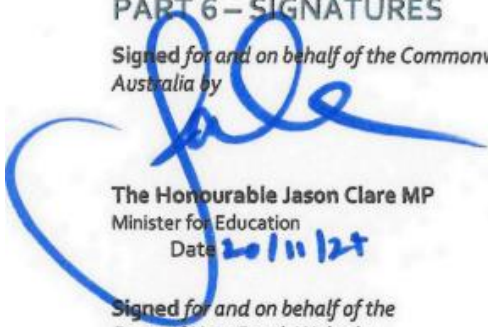
- c. public reporting on progress against this 2025 Agreement (where relevant) through an education reporting dashboard, with the Commonwealth to seek agreement on the format and content of the dashboard from state and territory Education Ministers
- d. an annual report from the Commonwealth to the Australian Parliament on Commonwealth funding for government and non-government approved authorities, as required under section 127 of the Act
- e. annual funding reporting from states and territories to the Commonwealth on state and territory funding for government and non-government schools for the purposes of assessing compliance with section 22A of the Act, as set out in the Bilateral Agreements.

### **Non-government school sector reporting**

- 85. Parties recognise that the participation of the non-government school sector will be important in achieving progress against the reform directions outlined in this 2025 Agreement.
- 86. Non-government representative bodies are approved by the Commonwealth Education Minister as the bodies that represent non-government schools under subsection 91(1) of the Act.
- 87. Non-government representative bodies will provide an Annual Implementation Report to the Commonwealth each calendar year.
- 88. A template for completing the Annual Implementation Report for non-government representative bodies is provided at Schedule E. The Annual Implementation Report should include activity against the National Reform Directions.
- 89. Education Ministers may, from time to time, ask non-government representative bodies to provide information on other matters relevant to the Objectives and Outcomes of this 2025 Agreement, where appropriate.

**PART 6 – SIGNATURES**

*Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by*



**The Honourable Jason Clare MP**  
Minister for Education  
Date 20/11/24

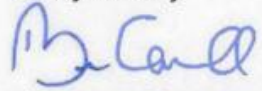
*Signed for and on behalf of the State of New South Wales by*

**The Honourable Prudence Car MP**  
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning  
Date

*Signed for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by*

**The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP**  
Minister for Education and the Arts  
Date

*Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by*



**The Honourable Ben Carroll MP**  
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education  
Date 14/11/24

*Signed for and on behalf of the State of South Australia by*

**The Honourable Peter Malinauskas MP**  
Premier of South Australia  
Date

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

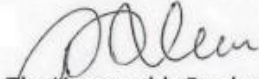


**The Honourable Jason Clare MP**

Minister for Education

Date 20/11/24

Signed for and on behalf of the State of New South Wales by



**The Honourable Prudence Car MP**

Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning

Date 15 November 2024

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by

**The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP**

Minister for Education and the Arts

Date

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by

**The Honourable Ben Carroll MP**

Deputy Premier, Minister for Education

Date

Signed for and on behalf of the State of South Australia by

**The Honourable Peter Malinauskas MP**

Premier of South Australia

Date

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



**The Honourable Jason Clare MP**

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**The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP**

Minister for Education and the Arts

Date

**The Honourable Peter Malinauskas MP**

Premier of South Australia

Date

18/11/24

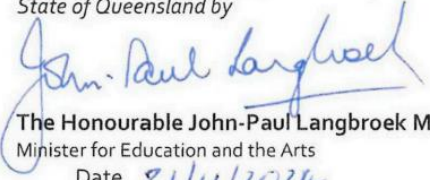
Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

  
The Honourable Jason Clare MP  
Minister for Education  
Date 27/10/24

Signed for and on behalf of the State of New South Wales by

The Honourable Prudence Car MP  
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning  
Date

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by

  
The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP  
Minister for Education and the Arts  
Date 21/11/2024

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by

The Honourable Ben Carroll MP  
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education  
Date

Signed for and on behalf of the State of South Australia by

The Honourable Peter Malinauskas MP  
Premier of South Australia  
Date

## **PART 7 – SCHEDULES**

Schedule A – Definitions

Schedule B – National Enabling Initiatives

Schedule C – Cost sharing principles

Schedule D – Bilateral Agreements

Schedule E – Annual Implementation Report for non-government representative bodies



# Schedule A: Definitions



<b>Approved authority</b>	An approved authority is a legal entity that the Commonwealth has approved to receive and administer Commonwealth funding for one or more schools. The approved authority for a government school is its relevant state or territory government. The approved authority for a non-government school is the body corporate for that school, as approved by the Commonwealth Minister.
<b>Approved system authority</b>	An approved authority for more than one school that distributes Commonwealth recurrent funding to its member schools using its own needs-based funding arrangement.
<b>Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)</b>	ACARA is the independent authority responsible for the development of a national curriculum (Kindergarten to Year 12), and a national assessment program, including managing the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). ACARA also manages the <i>My School</i> website ( <a href="http://www.myschool.edu.au">www.myschool.edu.au</a> ).
<b>Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO)</b>	AERO is a ministerial-owned company governed by a board and jointly funded by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments. AERO conducts research and shares knowledge to promote better educational outcomes for Australian children and young people.
<b>Coalition of Peaks</b>	Coalition of Peaks consists of national, state and territory non-government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies and independent statutory authorities that have

	responsibility for policies, programs and services related to Closing the Gap.
<b>Council on Federal Financial Relations</b>	Comprises the Commonwealth Treasurer and all state and territory treasurers and is responsible for overseeing the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments.
<b>Education Ministers</b>	Australian Government and state and territory government ministers responsible for school education.
<b>Education Ministers Meeting (EMM)</b>	The Education Ministers Meeting is a forum for collaboration and decision-making on early childhood education and care, school education, higher education and international education. Australian Government and state and territory government ministers responsible for education attend the meeting. The Commonwealth Minister for Education is the Chair of the Education Ministers Meeting.
<b>First Ministers</b>	The Prime Minister, the Premiers of each Australian state, and the Chief Ministers of the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.
<b>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC)</b>	NATSIEC is the community-controlled education peak body. NATSIEC will provide national collective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education engagement, cultural and pedagogical expertise and strategic advice in order to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' educational aspirations are heard, acted upon and reviewed.
<b>National Cabinet</b>	National Cabinet is a forum for the Prime Minister, Premiers and Chief Ministers to meet and work collaboratively. National Cabinet was established on 13 March 2020 and is chaired by the Prime Minister. The Commonwealth and state and territory governments individually have flexibility to determine the best way to achieve any agreed outcomes made by National Cabinet in their jurisdiction. A representative of Local Government is invited to meet with National Cabinet once each year.
<b>National Enabling Initiative</b>	A matter set out in the <i>Interim School Funding Agreement 2025</i> (2025 Agreement) for which the Education Ministers Meeting agrees an approach and timetable for national implementation and is overseeing its implementation. Implementation of National Enabling Initiatives in the 2025 Agreement is a condition of funding under subsections 22(2) and 77(2A) of the <i>Australian Education Act 2013</i> (the Act).

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**National School  
Resourcing Board**

The National School Resourcing Board (the Board) provides independent oversight of different parts of the Commonwealth recurrent public funding model. The Board reviews different parts of the funding model under the Act and the Australian Education Regulations 2023.

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**Non-government  
representative body**

A non-government representative body is a body that represents approved authorities for non-government schools, as approved according to section 91 of the Act.

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# Schedule B:

# National Enabling Initiatives

Under clause 71 of the *Interim School Funding Agreement 2025*, Parties commit to undertaking the activities set out in Schedule B. These National Enabling Initiatives complement the extensive local and national reform efforts underway across states and territories. Project Plans will be developed to guide implementation, under clause 72.

The National Enabling Initiatives will be scoped in collaboration with government and non-government school sectors and broader education stakeholders. A number of National Enabling Initiatives involve a review of existing arrangements. For the avoidance of doubt, agreement to undertake a review does not constitute agreement to any subsequent recommendations of the review. Implementation of the activities in this schedule does not constitute agreement by Parties to undertake further activities with respect to each National Enabling Initiative beyond the term of the 2025 Agreement.

Parties note that, under clause 27 of the 2025 Agreement, schedules to the 2025 Agreement may be varied or revoked, and new schedules may be added, at any time with the agreement of the Education Ministers of all Parties. Variations to Schedule B will include the addition or amendment of milestones as National Enabling Initiatives are further developed and considered and decisions are made through Education Ministers Meeting.

## Implementation milestones

Implementation and timing of milestones is subject to Education Ministers Meeting considering and agreeing the cost and cost sharing arrangements, scope and governance of each National Enabling Initiative, acknowledging the different local contexts and starting points of each jurisdiction.

National Enabling Initiative	Milestone	Timing
Implementation of the Unique Student Identifier for school students.	a) Parties provide an implementation plan for their jurisdiction to inform a national Project Plan, setting out actions and deliverables in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. legislation and regulation</li> <li>ii. information privacy</li> <li>iii. data management</li> <li>iv. communication and stakeholder engagement</li> <li>v. technical and business readiness.</li> </ul>	Mid 2025
	b) EMM agree a national Project Plan for implementation of the Unique Student Identifier, reflecting implementation plans in each jurisdiction.	Mid 2025
Review of the Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia to ensure it remains a relevant tool, including by considering the range of student level outcome data captured, appropriate disaggregation of data, and possible new and updated measures. This Review will include consideration of the costs and benefits (with primacy given to any impact on teacher workload) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. a new measure of student engagement</li> <li>ii. a new equity in learning gain measure, to enable</li> </ul>	a) EMM agree a national Project Plan and commission a review of the Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia (MFSA). The review should consider the range of student level outcome data captured, appropriate disaggregation of data, and the costs and benefits of possible new and updated measures.	Early 2025

National Enabling Initiative	Milestone	Timing
<p>measurement of student learning growth</p> <p>iii. national measures of access, participation and outcomes for students with disability to establish a better understanding of the education experiences and outcomes of students with disability</p>		
<p>Development of an early years of schooling numeracy check to support teachers to assess their students' numeracy skills and identify and respond to students who need tailored support.</p>	<p>a) EMM agree a national Project Plan for the development of an early years of schooling numeracy check, including consideration of existing checks, timelines and estimated costs.</p>	<p>Mid 2025</p>

# Schedule C:

## Cost sharing principles

1. The Parties recognise that the agreed National Enabling Initiatives will likely require investment by the Parties to meet our reform ambitions. Parties will consider the fully costed initiatives when finalised, along with anticipated benefits, before implementation.
2. The Parties also recognise that existing investments in national infrastructure will be utilised wherever possible to most efficiently implement the initiatives.
3. The Parties acknowledge that final costs incurred by Parties will include ongoing funding for implementation and possible future work arising from the National Enabling Initiatives, which cannot yet be determined.
4. The cost of the National Enabling Initiatives borne by the state or territory count towards the state or territory contribution to school funding, for the purpose of section 22A of the *Australian Education Act 2013*.
5. The cost sharing arrangements for each of the National Enabling Initiatives will be considered and agreed by the Education Ministers Meeting as part of the initial milestone for each initiative. Parties will consider the final cost sharing arrangements before implementation.
6. Cost sharing arrangements will consider previous precedents for investment in national initiatives, including the existing Education Ministers Meeting cost sharing formulae.
7. The Parties recognise that costs for implementation and ongoing costs will differ significantly between jurisdictions (for example costs of some reforms could be higher in rural and regional areas).

# Schedule D: Bilateral Agreements



## APPENDICES

The following bilateral agreements have been agreed:

Appendix 1 – Victoria agreed 14 November 2024

Appendix 2 – New South Wales agreed 15 November 2024

Appendix 3 – South Australia agreed 15 November 2024

Appendix 4 – Queensland agreed 27 November 2024



# Schedule E: Annual Implementation Report for non-government representative bodies



## Purpose of this reporting template

This reporting template, the Annual Implementation Report for non-government representative bodies, contributes to achieving the transparency and accountability commitments under the *Interim School Funding Agreement 2025*, as outlined in Part 5. Non-government representative bodies are required to fill in the Annual Implementation Report for non-government representative bodies annually and report it to the Australian Government Department of Education.

Non-government representative bodies will report for each calendar year, and the report will be due by 30 November following the end of the calendar year, or a later date as agreed by the Commonwealth and the relevant non-government representative body.

## National Reform Directions

Non-government representative bodies are required to fill in the below table outlining their implementation of the National Reform Directions.

National Reform Direction	Description of local implementation	Outline the focus on priority equity cohorts and schools needing additional support (where applicable)	Details of qualitative or quantitative impact
[National Reform Direction]			
<p>[For example]</p> <p>Structured initiatives that support wellbeing for learning and engagement, for example in-school wellbeing coordinators or access to School Counsellors, psychologists, mental health workers and/or youth health nurses.</p>			<p>For example - Ratio of wellbeing functions to students, where applicable.</p>