



Lifting literacy
Lifting Tasmania

Final Consultation Report for the Development of Tasmania's Community-wide Framework

February 2023

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Co-chair foreword

“In all countries, illiteracy is connected to patterns of poverty, social exclusion and inequalities. The literacy challenge, therefore, cannot be addressed in isolation. It requires an integrated approach that places literacy in context and draws on contributions from all actors – government at every level, civil society, the private sector, community groups, professional educators and, last but not least, family, friends and colleagues of those seeking to develop their literacy skills.”¹

Kofi Annan, Former Secretary General of the United Nations

Literacy affects how we are in the world: how we form bonds with our family, how we learn and work, how we interact with our community, and how we think of ourselves. However, it’s not just about the individual. Evidence shows that higher literacy rates improve social and economic outcomes for the wider community.

Since the Literacy Advisory Panel (the Panel) was established, it has been clear in its focus and desire to ensure the Community-wide Framework (the Framework) and its recommendations are relevant, impactful, and purposeful for the Tasmanian community. This means hearing from as many people and community groups as possible.

With the release of **Paper One**, the Panel sought to understand from the community the full breadth of activities and opportunities to lift literacy in Tasmania and we thank the community for its engagement, comments, perspectives, aspirations, and ideas.

The principles and key themes put forward in this Final Consultation Paper (the Paper) are underpinned by an aspirational and inclusive vision: to lift literacy in Tasmania so that, no matter your age, background, post code, or circumstances, you can grasp any or all the opportunities to develop or improve your literacy skills.

The Panel is inviting community input and comment on the Final Consultation Paper. While this document is out for comment, the Panel will continue to develop and refine the Framework. Your views and input will be considered. We look forward to reading your feedback as we collectively work in pursuit of 100 per cent literacy in Tasmania.

Thank you

The Panel appreciates the input of all who participated in the consultation processes to date. Participants have willingly provided their time, thoughts, experiences, and expertise to assist us in lifting literacy. This input has been invaluable. The Panel especially thanks the people with lived experience who have provided their voice of experience. We appreciate your insight.

We, as co-chairs, also give our significant appreciation to all the Literacy Advisory Panel members. You have provided your time free of charge and have provided us with insights based on your significant research, knowledge and rich experience.

Natalie Brown
Co-chair

Jenny Gale
Co-chair

¹ Annan, K. (2003, September 5). *Literacy prerequisite for reaching global anti-poverty goals says Secretary-General in literacy day message* [Press release]. United Nations. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2003/sgsm8849.doc.htm>



Acknowledgement of Country

In recognition of the deep history and culture of Tasmania, the Literacy Advisory Panel acknowledges and pays respect to all Tasmanian Aboriginal people; the past and present custodians of this island. We further acknowledge and pay respect to Tasmanian Aboriginal Elders, past and present. We respect and celebrate Tasmanian Aboriginal language and recognise its significance to Aboriginal identity, connections to Country, its vital role in learning and education and the passing on of unique cultural experiences and knowledge over many thousands of years.

Introduction

The former Premier, Hon Peter Gutwein MP, appointed the Literacy Advisory Panel in September 2021 and tasked it with developing a Community-wide Framework (the Framework) to achieve a literate Tasmania.

In developing the Framework, the Panel has been asked to:

- review current literacy policies, approaches and supports in place in Tasmania in the early years, schools, and adult learning environments,
- map existing effort and consider the effectiveness of existing literacy measures and targets,
- consider the effectiveness of existing literacy measures and targets, and
- make targeted recommendations to build upon existing literacy approaches and supports in the early years, schools, adult learning environments.

This Paper has been developed based on the review of current Tasmanian policy and practice, mapping of existing services and consideration of the effectiveness of existing literacy measures and targets.

All that remains for the Panel to complete its work is to finalise the Framework and make recommendations to the Premier about achieving a literate Tasmania. In this Final Consultation Paper, the Panel presents the key themes of what it has learnt to date. The Panel will use your feedback on this Paper to help finalise the Framework to present to the Premier, along with recommendations for implementation through action plans.

More information on the Panel and its work, can be found at www.dpac.tas.gov.au/literacy.

What is literacy?

“Literacy involves listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing, creating texts, and using language for different purposes in a range of contexts. Literacy encompasses the knowledge and skills needed to access, understand, analyse, and evaluate information, make meaning, express thoughts and emotions, present ideas, opinions and interact with others. It involves a continuum of learning to enable individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.”

The Literacy Advisory Panel’s definition of literacy combines definitions from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).²

When the word ‘literacy’ is used in this paper, it refers to the full breadth of literacy encompassed in this definition, not just reading and writing.³

2 Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACAR). *Literacy (Version 8.4)*, Australian Curriculum. <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/pac5xvi5twadxmb/AABkgWVrwqOW5e9OBEEu4huLa?dl=0>

3 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *What you need to know about literacy*, UNESCO. <https://www.unesco.org/en/literacy/need-know#:~:text=Literacy%20is%20a%20continuum%20of,well%20as%20job%2Dspecific%20skills>



"I find it hard to express myself because I can't think of the right words."

Lived experience contributor

Our approach to reporting to Government

The Panel has been tasked with providing a Community-wide Framework and a final report, including specific and targeted recommendations, to the Premier.

To do this, the Panel is developing a broad Framework that can last over a period of years (nominally ten years). The intent is that anyone in any education system or sector (primary, secondary, tertiary, public and independent schools), community organisations, and individuals can align their work to the Framework.

This enables all of the community to be moving in the same direction toward achieving a literate Tasmania.

The Panel's Report to the Premier will make a set of specific and targeted recommendations that align with the Framework. These recommendations will be developed from what we have heard from our community consultation processes and other research and presentations available to the Panel.

The scope of that information is covered in the section on [Approach to Consultation](#).

This final consultation paper provides:

- summaries (key themes) of what we have heard through consultations and presentations to the Panel, and
- a summary of "What this tells us" which will form the basis of recommendations to the Premier.

Your feedback on this consultation paper will assist in finalising the Framework and help shape our final recommendations to the Premier.

You will see throughout this Paper headings called "What this tells us". These sections will be used by the Panel to develop targeted recommendations.

Your feedback on these sections will be particularly useful for the Panel.

How to make a submission

All submissions must be received by close of business,
Monday 20 March 2023.

Submissions can be made in the following formats:

- written (typed or handwritten)
- audio
- video, and
- online survey found at www.dpac.tas.gov.au/literacy/home/community_consultation.

Submissions can be emailed to policy@dpac.tas.gov.au, or sent in the mail to:

Literacy Advisory Panel's Community Consultation

Attention: Literacy Advisory Panel – GPO Box 123, Hobart TAS 7001

The Panel is partnering with organisations to seek feedback in other ways, particularly to ensure those with literacy challenges can participate and contribute their views.

Other than indicated below, submissions will be treated as public information and will be published on our website. Please see the [Public Submissions Policy](#) page for more information.

No personal information other than an individual's name or the organisation making a submission will be published.

For further information please contact policy@dpac.tas.gov.au.

Important information to note:

Your name (or the name of the organisation) will be published unless you request otherwise.

In the absence of a clear indication that a submission is intended to be treated as confidential (or parts of the submission), the Panel will treat the submission as public.

If you would like your submission treated as confidential, whether in whole or in part, please indicate this in writing at the time of making your submission. Clearly identify the parts of your submission you want to remain confidential and reasons why. In this case your submission will not be published to the extent of that request.

Copyright in submissions remains with the author(s).

The Panel will not publish, in whole or in part, submissions containing defamatory or offensive material. If your submission includes information that could enable the identification of other individuals, then either all or parts of the submission will not be published.

Accessibility of submissions

The Panel wants to ensure information is accessible and easily understood by people with diverse communication needs.

Where possible, please consider writing your submission in plain English and providing it in a format such as Microsoft word or equivalent.

Individuals who required assistance to respond to community consultation were advised to contact 26TEN on 1300 00 2610 or visit: 26ten.tas.gov.au/Pages/Get-Help.aspx.

If you need assistance from a Department of Premier and Cabinet staff member to make a submission please call 03 6232 7550 or email policy@dpac.tas.gov.au

Approach to consultation

We have made it a priority to consult with Tasmanians, and all who have suggestions for how to lift literacy in Tasmania. We sought input, through meetings and the community consultation process, to inform the development of the draft Framework.

The Panel heard from 30 experts to inform its early thinking and to guide the development of the community consultation process.

The Panel ran two rounds of community consultation. One broad round of community consultation in response to Paper One: *Setting the Scene*, and a second targeted consultation round. The Panel received a collective total of 559 responses to its community consultation rounds with 49 from organisations, 510 from individuals. Of the 559 responses, 352 were received from Paper One: *Setting the Scene*, and 207 responded to the targeted consultation.

During the first round of consultation, the Panel reached out to the community in a variety of ways:

- 180,500 individuals saw ads through social media,
- 3,321 individuals visited the website,
- 21 advertisements were run in newspapers across Tasmania (community and daily papers),
- 179 stakeholders received direct emails, and
- 6 community consultation partners spread the word about the consultation.

Assisted Submissions

Our consultation partners, Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania, Early Childhood Australia Tasmania Branch, Child and Family Learning Centres (CFLCs), Libraries Tasmania, and 26TEN supported the consultation by providing assistance to individuals who needed support to submit their responses. We engaged these partners because of their established relationships with Tasmanians, including those who may find it difficult to engage in a written form of community consultation process due to literacy challenges. There were 22 individuals who responded through partners.

Targeted Consultation

A second round of community consultation was undertaken in October and November 2022. In this round, 207 individual responses were collected. Through targeted consultation, the Panel heard from individuals identifying themselves as:

- Youth (up to 26 years-old),
- Tasmanian Aboriginal people,
- Tasmanians with lived experience of literacy challenges,
- Migrant or refugee Tasmanians,
- LGBTQIA+,
- People with disability, and
- Incarcerated Tasmanians.

While the Panel heard from members of the above groups there was a gap in specific feedback relating to members of Tasmanian Aboriginal Communities and the LGBTQIA+ community. In the implementation of the Framework, ongoing consultation with these communities will be undertaken to ensure the unique needs of these communities are identified and met.

Literature

The panel has had access to 78 articles covering Early Years (21 articles), School Years (43 articles), Adult Learning Environments (12 articles) and Community-wide settings (2 articles). These readings have provided panel members the opportunity to consider a diverse range of perspectives and inform their thinking, discussions, and decisions.

What we heard from our consultation processes will shape our recommendations

This paper provides an overview of some of the key messages, insights and research from our consultation process and independent research.

The following sections are structured to reflect key themes and to assist in responding to the Panel's Terms of Reference.

Ecological Model of Literacy

Key themes

- We know the State Government, through its Keeping Children Safer priority, has a particular focus on vulnerable children. We also know of the wellbeing work being advanced through the Tasmanian Government's **Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy** and **Wellbeing Survey**, which was undertaken through the public school system and is now being adopted outside that system.
- In a recent report by the *Productivity Commission – Review of the National School Reform Agreement* (NSRA, 2023) it was revealed that 'major reform is required' and notes the current agreement lacks targeted reforms to improve outcomes for students from poor backgrounds, from the regions, Indigenous students and students who do not meet the minimum standards for literacy and numeracy.⁴
- The Commission found that many children and young people struggle with poor wellbeing because of experiences in and outside their schools. Teachers need more support to help students to manage these issues and achieve their potential.⁵
- The report recommends that a new outcome on student wellbeing should be added to the NSRA as wellbeing is both a desired outcome of schooling, and a means of improving learning outcomes.⁶
- Additionally, the Panel heard about the association between disadvantage and lower learning outcomes and that in the ABS Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (2016) 18.7% of Tasmanian Statistical Local Area (SA1s)⁷ were in the bottom decile. Approximately double that for the whole of Australia (9.7%).
- The Panel was provided with information, from the Department for Education, Children and Young People, showing the correlation between parents' highest level of education and attendance rates of students. This clearly showed that while attendance rates of children dropped in the later years of schooling (Years 9 through 12), the lower the level of parental education, the higher the drop in school attendance.
- The Department for Education, Children and Young People also provided the Panel with information suggesting that higher attendance rates were correlated with higher levels of academic achievement.

4 The Hon Jason Clare MP. (2023, January 20). *Productivity Commission – review of the National School Reform Agreement* [Media release]. Ministers of the Education Portfolio. <https://ministers.education.gov.au/clare/productivity-commission-review-national-school-reform-agreement>

5 The Productivity Commission. (2023). *Review of the National School Reform Agreement: Study report*. Australian Government. <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/school-agreement/report>

6 Ibid

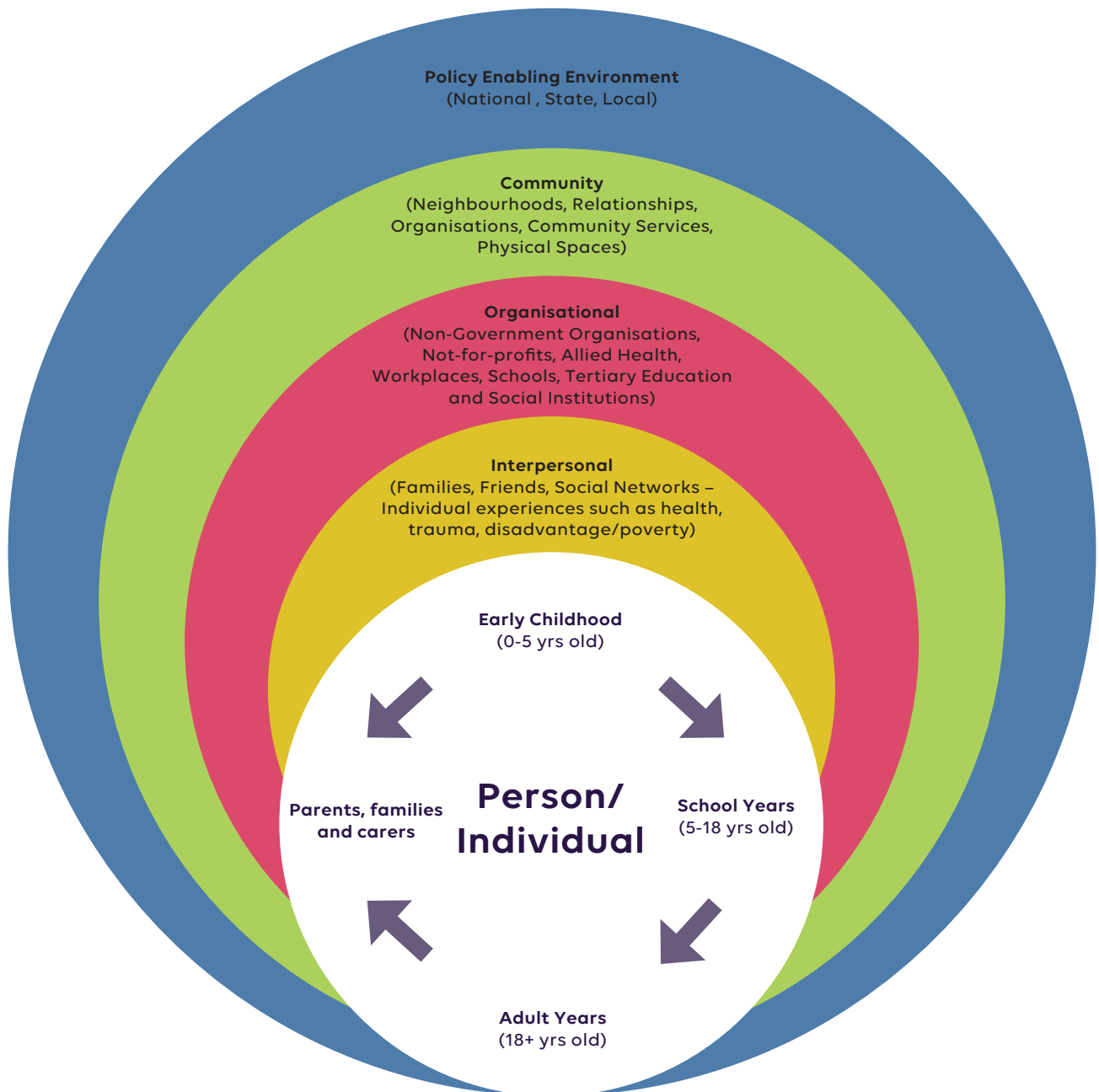
7 SA1 is a Statistical Local Area used by the ABS. Level 1 (SA1s) are designed to maximise the spatial detail available for Census data. Most SA1s have a population of between 200 to 800 persons with an average population of approximately 400 persons



"I had very little schooling ... mum was on drugs so missed a lot of schooling, didn't have lunch, played up, went part-time then never worked back up to full-time."

Focus group participant

The Panel discussed the concept of the various element/factors/people that impact learning and has depicted this as an ecological model of learning.



What this tells us

- The Government's focus on wellbeing in Government schools should be continued.
- Wellbeing should be a focus for all schools.
- The Tasmanian Education System (all sectors) should take a coordinated approach to understanding and overcoming barriers to school attendance. This may include co-funded research.

Principles

Key themes

- There were a number of key themes repeated numerous times throughout consultations. They were also repeated when discussing most concepts of literacy with the Panel. This has led to the development of four main principles that underpin our approach to language and literacy development:

Equity

All Tasmanians have access to the support they need to develop literacy skills.

Consistency

There is structured, systematic and explicit literacy teaching from early years to adulthood.

The learner is at the centre

Educators understand how the circumstances of those they teach may impact learning.

Underpinned by evidence-based research

The brain needs to develop its capacity to learn to read and educators need to use the most recent evidence of the brain and teaching practices to help shape that experience in the early years.



"Something that should take 5 mins takes me 20 mins ... It's debilitating, I hate it. It's embarrassing I don't really want to ask for help as it is embarrassing."

Lived Experience Participant

Foundations for success

The Panel heard of the importance of groups or factors that are vital to invest in as foundations of success.

Parents, Families and Carers

Key themes

- The important role that parents, families and carers play in their children’s literacy development cannot be understated.
- Immersion in spoken language - speaking and listening, as well as reading activities at home, have significant positive influences not only on reading achievement, language comprehension and expressive language skills,⁸ but also on students’ interest in reading, attitudes towards reading and attentiveness in the classroom.⁹
- Parental involvement in a child’s reading has been found to be the most important determinant of language and emergent literacy.¹⁰ Furthermore, parents who introduce their babies to books give them a head start in school and an advantage over their peers throughout primary school.¹¹
- Research shows that the involvement of parents, families and carers in the literacy development of children is linked to improved literacy outcomes and can lead to higher academic achievement, better school attendance, and greater cognitive competence.¹²
- Although parental involvement has the greatest effect in the early years, its importance to educational and literacy outcomes continues into the teenage and even adult years.¹³
- The Panel acknowledges the work that is already underway in Tasmania to support parents, families and carers in their important role as a child’s first and continuing teacher.

8 Gest, F., Freeman, N., Domitrovich, C., Welsh, J. (2004). Shared book reading and children’s language comprehension skills: the moderating role of parental discipline practices. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 19(2), 319-336

9 Rowe, K. (1991). The Influence of Reading Activity at Home on Students’ Attitudes Towards Reading, Classroom Attentiveness and Reading Achievement: An Application of Structural Equation Modelling. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 61(1) pp.19-35

10 Also see: Ntim, S. (2015). Early parental support as a predictor of early literacy skills: A study from four administrative districts in Ghana. *International Journal of Education*, 7(3). <https://doi.org/10.5296/ije.v7i3.7040>; Iroegbu, V., Igweike, I., & Okiotor, M. (2020). Effect of parental involvement on the reading skills of students in lower primary school in Ondo State, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Social Policy*, 7(4). <https://doi.org/10.30845/jesp.v7n4p10>; Bus, A., van Ijzendoorn, M., & Pellegrini, A. (1995). Joint Book Reading Makes for Success in Learning to Read: A Meta-Analysis on Intergenerational Transmission of Literacy. *Review of Educational Research*, 65 pp.1-21

11 Clark, C. R. (2007). *Why is it important to involve parents in their children’s literacy development – a brief research summary by Christina Clark*. National Literacy Trust. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED496346.pdf>; Wade, B. & Moore, M. (2000). A sure start with books. *Early Years*, 20. Pp.39-46

12 Clark, C. (2007). Why it is important to involve parents in their children’s literacy development. National Literacy Trust; Rowe, K. (1991). The influence of reading activity at home on students’ attitudes towards reading, classroom attentiveness and reading achievement: An application of structural equation modelling. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 61, pp.19-35

13 Desforges, C. & Abouchar, A. (2003). The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievement and adjustment: a literature review. *London: Department for Education and Skills*

What this tells us

- Efforts to support parents, families, and carers to understand and fulfill the foundational and ongoing influence on their child's language and literacy development should be prioritised and expanded.
- We need more ways of identifying children who are at risk of not meeting developmental literacy milestones.
- Parents, families and carers need access to supports and quality resources to support their children and access to more intensive support where necessary.
- Not-for-profit literacy tutor programs could be extended for vulnerable students, including those in Out of Home Care.

Workforce

Key themes

- A supported and expert workforce is integral to literacy development. Highly capable educators are required to teach literacy in the early years.
- As of 2021 there were 24,060 education and trained professionals employed¹⁴ in Tasmania, supporting learners in the Tasmanian education system from the early years to adulthood. In a literacy context, learners are also supported by a range of allied health professionals, community support services and more.
- Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) is used in early childhood services and settings across Australia to provide quality teaching and learning to all children. In Tasmania, the EYLF informs the work of all educators working with children from birth to year 2.
- We know that high quality, evidence-based teaching and support, that is regularly evaluated for impact, delivers positive results for learners. The Panel heard through community consultation that a lot of good work is happening, but more must be done to support our literacy workforce (including teachers, educators, tutors etc.).
- School educators are charged with delivering the Australian Curriculum across Prep to Year 10. Teachers bring different levels of skill, experience and knowledge to the classroom and highly skilled and adaptive teachers are best placed to provide support to those starting out in their careers.
- Community consultation indicated there appears to be a shortage of professionals available for a range of services. This includes (to name a few): adult assessment, adult literacy services, allied health (all ages), early education and care sector, and child and family learning centres.

¹⁴ State Growth Tasmania (n.d). *Tasmania – Industry sector of employment*. <https://profile.id.com.au/tasmania/industries#:~:text=An%20analysis%20of%20the%20jobs,24%2C060%20people%20or%209.4%25>

For example, as specialist experts in supporting children with communication difficulties, speech pathologists provide advice to parents and teachers, work as part of an effective literacy team to support groups of students and provide intensive one-on-one support where needed. Speech pathologists can:

- Assess speech and language skills to determine if there are any difficulties and provide intervention strategies to support oral language development.
 - Support oral language development in areas that are relevant to literacy, in preschools and schools.
 - Work with preschools, schools and families for example, providing strategies in order to support children's oral language development.
 - Use their specialist knowledge of the sound system of English to help children who are having difficulty with letter sound relationships.
 - Help children to use strategies for understanding what they need.¹⁵
- The Panel acknowledges, respects, and values the past and current work of the education sectors to provide ongoing differentiated literacy support and professional learning to build the capacity and capabilities of all staff working with learners across contexts.
 - Suggestions from the consultation included:
 - provision of more staff specialising in language and literacy,
 - more support staff and volunteers in all learning environments,
 - provision of evidence-based guidance and other supports for teachers, including ensuring sufficient time to prepare for classroom teaching and measuring confidence and wellbeing,
 - a need to provide resources and supports that enable teachers to maximise their time to teach,
 - greater provision of greater provision of experts that support literacy development in schools,, e.g., Speech and Language Pathologists, Psychologists, Occupational Therapists,
 - develop teacher expertise in assessing the literacy competencies of all learners. Schools are supported to provide support tailored to their own school communities, and
 - a need for continuous, quality assured, evidence-based professional development in literacy for teachers and support staff across all years of education including early years, school years and adult learning environments.

15 Speech Pathology Australia (n.d). *What is a speech pathologist?* https://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/SPAweb/Resources_for_the_Public/What_is_a_Speech_Pathologist/SPAweb/Resources_for_the_Public/What_is_a_Speech_Pathologist/What_is_a_Speech_Pathologist.aspx

What this tells us

- The Workforce should be supported to ensure teaching aligns with the contemporary peer-reviewed research evidence, including cognitive research, and that educators have a “toolbox” of resources and skills to teach language and literacy skills to learners.
- A Literacy Capability Framework should be developed with clear guidance across the early years, school years and adult years, regarding the knowledge, skills and attributes needed across the literacy workforce to support language and literacy development for all learners in Tasmania.
- A program of systematic professional learning to support the literacy capability framework should be developed at system level and every teacher in every school should engage in professional development in literacy every year.
- Educators should have professional learning on structured literacy and other strategies which will assist them to make adjustments for learners. Structured literacy approaches emphasize highly explicit and systematic teaching of all important components of literacy. These components include both foundational skills (e.g., decoding, spelling) and higher-level literacy skills (e.g., reading comprehension, written expression).¹⁶
- A quality assured list of service providers who deliver evidence informed professional learning aligned to the Literacy Capability Framework should be developed and periodically reviewed at a system level, for use by schools.
- A Workforce Development Strategy for new and existing educators should be developed to implement the Literacy Capability Framework.
- Scopes and sequences should be written for Tasmanian schools across all aspects of literacy.
- The Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) should be engaged to quality assure the scopes and sequences as they are being developed and to evaluate their use when implemented.
- The University of Tasmania and TasTAFE should ensure graduate educator readiness to deliver quality literacy instruction through scopes and sequences and as described by the Australian Curriculum and the Early Years Framework for Australia.
- Placements, workshops, or partnerships with high performing schools and educators should be used to prepare graduate educators.
- Educators with high achievement and evidence of improvement in outcomes for students over time in literacy should be actively supported to mentor, model and support the growth of others.
- Research is needed to understand unmet need and workforce gaps to inform a ‘Workforce Attraction and Retention strategy’.
- Research is needed on the barriers to accessing professionals in the early years, school years and adult years.

¹⁶ International Dyslexia Association, <https://dyslexiaida.org/heres-why-schools-should-use-structured-literacy/#:~:text=What%20is%20Structured%20Literacy%3F,reading%20comprehension%2C%20written%20expression>

Libraries

Key themes

- Whether in school or out of school, young people thrive when they have opportunities to explore and discover their interests in a variety of spaces, including at home, in the community, and in public libraries.¹⁷
- Research suggests that both the presence of school libraries and qualified school librarians can have a positive influence on children's literacy attainment.¹⁸
- The Panel heard that there is a severe shortage of teacher librarians. There is currently only one Teacher Librarian course available in Australia, the Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship) course offered online through Charles Sturt University. Currently only 2% of Tasmanian schools have qualified teacher librarians.¹⁹
- In Tasmania, libraries run a free state-wide service, offering one-to-one and small groups tutoring, to help adults improve their reading, writing and math skills and speaking English.
- Literacy Coordinators work in libraries around the state to provide literacy support for adults in the community. Literacy Coordinators support trained volunteer literacy tutors to work with learners one-to-one or in small groups. It helps with:
 - teaching adults and children to read,
 - building study skills,
 - improving literacy skills for work,
 - applying for a job,
 - taking a course,
 - getting a driver's licence, and
 - using a computer.
- Libraries Tasmania offers early learning programs for very young children and their families, including Rock & Rhyme for birth to 3 years old and Storytime 3 to 5 years old. These programs support literacy and numeracy skill development.²⁰

17 Public Library Association. (2016). *Family engagement*. American Library Association. <https://www.ala.org/pla/initiatives/familyengagement>

18 Merga, M. K. (2020). School libraries fostering children's literacy and literature learning: Mitigating the barriers. *Literacy*, 54(1), 70-78. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lit.12189>; Barret, L. (2010). Effective School Libraries: Evidence of Impact of Student Achievement. *The School Librarian*, 58(3), 136-139; Highes, H., Bozorgian, H., Allan, C. (2014). School Libraries, Teacher-Librarians and Student Outcomes: Presenting and Using the Evidence. *School Libraries Worldwide*, 20(1) pp.29-50; Lance, K., Kachel, D. (2018). Why school librarians matter: what years of research tell us. *Kappan*; Todd, R., Kuhlthau, C. (2005). Student Learning Through Ohio School Libraries, Part 1: How Effective School Libraries Help Students. *School Libraries Worldwide*, 11(1) pp. 63-88

19 Submission to the Panel from Libraries Tasmania

20 Libraries Tasmania. (n.d.). *Early learning programs*. <https://libraries.tas.gov.au/public-libraries/for-children-and-youth/early-learning-programs/>

What this tells us

- Libraries are pivotal community centres for supporting literacy development for Tasmanians of all ages.
- Partnerships should be developed between Libraries Tasmania and all schools without adequate school libraries, or qualified librarians, to provide professional development, resources and just in time support.
- Innovative mobile library support could be utilised for schools that cannot support a quality collection or communities that struggle to maintain adequate library stock due to location, funding, or size.
- Parents, families and carers of young children not yet at school need services to support early literacy development.

Partnerships/Systems

Key themes

- Research suggests there is the need for early childhood professionals from a range of backgrounds to work together (collaborate) to achieve the best outcomes for children and families.²¹
- Professionals themselves also benefit from working in partnership. Collaboration provides opportunities for professional development through formal and informal learning from peers with diverse experience and expertise.²²
- The Panel heard from community consultation (Paper One) that there are a range of activities underway but there was strong sentiment and support for the Framework to improve coordination of effort.
- Partnerships are fundamental to this Framework and come in many forms: community, government, interprofessional relationships, allied health partnerships, schools and community and cross-sectoral partnerships.

What this tells us

- Trusted partnerships between educators, parents, families, carers, the community and across boundaries are critical for sustained approaches to high quality literacy teaching and supports.

21 Lumsden, E. (2005). Joined up thinking in practice: An exploration of professional collaboration. In T. Waller (Ed.), *An Introduction to Early Childhood: A multidisciplinary*, pp.39-54. London: Paul Chapman Publishing; Bruder, M. (2010). Early Childhood Intervention: A Promise to Children and Families for Their Future. *Council for Exceptional Children*, 76(3), 339-355

22 Flottman, R., McKernan, A., & Tayler, R. (2011). *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework: Evidence paper*. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/edcare/pracpartner.pdf>; Kelley, T., M. (1996). A critique of social bonding and control theory of delinquency using the principles of psychology of mind. *Adolescence*, 31(122), 321-337.; Wesley, P., Buysse, V. (2001). Communities of practice: Expanding professional roles to promote reflection and shared inquiry. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 22(2), pp.114-123; Rush, D. Shelden, M., Hanft, B. (2003) Coaching families and colleagues: A process for collaboration in natural settings. *Infants and Young Children*, 16(1), pp.33-47; Green, B., Everhart, M., Gordon, L., Gettman, M. (2006). Characteristics of effective mental health consultation in early childhood settings: Multilevel analysis of a national survey. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 26(3), pp.142-152; McWayne, C., Broomfield, M., Sidoti, J., Camacho, N. (2008). Facilitators of and challenges to interagency collaboration: An early childhood perspective. *NHSA Dialog: A Research-to-Practice Journal for the Early Intervention Field*, 11(2), 90-109

Investment

Key themes

- The Panel heard on a number of occasions about the need for more investment in many forms:
 - additional supports for teachers or in classrooms,
 - more one-to-one support,
 - need for outreach services,
 - more child and family learning centres,
 - more funding to run pilot projects,
 - more professional development,
 - sharing of data and warm referrals between services, and
 - where there is investment made, initiatives and programs should be evaluated to ensure that targets and evidence-based outcomes are being met.
- There will always be a contest for scarce resources, how they should be allocated and the desire for universal services.
- In recognition of this, the Panel also heard of the need for resourcing and delivery of services at a scale and intensity proportionate to the degree of need.

What this tells us

- Long term investment in evidence based approaches is required to lift literacy, based on delivering services at a scale and intensity, proportionate to the degree of need.
- Where there is investment made, initiatives and programs should be formally evaluated to ensure intended outcomes are met.



"When in school it felt like ... teaching kids to write in a large classroom ... made it feel like I was stupid in comparison to my classmates. When being taught one on one I learned much faster."

Focus group participant

Information to support development of recommendations for the early years, school years, adult years and whole of community

The following sections outline the key themes for the Panel's consultation processes and includes sections headed "what this tells us". These sections will be used by the Panel to inform the set of recommendations to the Premier.

The potential set of recommendations is extensive and will take some time to see real change. Acknowledging this, the Panel will recommend to the Premier that the Government consider this body of work over approximately a 10-year period with a three-year action plan which is regularly reviewed and updated.

Early Years

Key themes

The developing brain and literacy

- A baby is born with a brain that is ready to process oral language. Human brains are therefore wired to speak but are not wired to read and write. This is a skill that must be explicitly taught.
- Research on the brain has been undertaken by neuroscientists which reveals the parts of the brain that are activated when a person is reading or learns to read. This brain research suggests that reading begins with the visual recognition of letters, continues with phonological processing and then comprehension/interpretation.²³
- Hard wiring of these processes involves neural connections. In a child these neural connections are only beginning to form. Repetition is a necessary building block, and application and practice, in authentic and purposeful ways, allows the connections in the brain to strengthen and assists learning.²⁴

23 Bookheimer, S. (2002). Functional MRI of Language: New Approaches to Understanding the Cortical Organization of Semantic Processing. *Annual Review Neuroscience*. 25, 151-188; Szaflarski, J., Schmithorst, V., Altabe, M., Byars, A., Ret, J., Plante, E., Holland, S. (2006). A longitudinal fMRI study of language development in children age 5-11. *Ann Neurol*, 59(5), 796-807

24 Dehane, S. (October 26, 2013). *How the Brain Learns to Read*. YouTube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=25GI3-kiLdo>

The First 1,000 Days

The first 1,000 days is from pregnancy to 2 years.

- Literacy development in the early years is interconnected with children's relationships with their family, community, environment, and the systems and support available. The early years, especially the first 1,000 days, are a critical period of language and literacy development where the foundations are built for future literacy learning and development. When these foundations are not strong or built later, literacy development suffers.
- During the first 1,000 days of life, an adequate supply of the micronutrient iodine is key to the healthy growth and development of the brain and nervous system. Iodine is an important building block for supporting learning and educational outcomes in children.^{25 26} The effects of iodine deficiency have been known for at least the past 70 years in Tasmania. Research shows that pregnant and breastfeeding women are not getting enough iodine, and this leaves infants vulnerable to the adverse effects of iodine deficiency.²⁷

Child Health and Parenting Service

- The Child Health and Parenting Service (CHaPS) provides free child health and development assessments for all children aged 0-5 years. Support from the family and child health nurses includes information on a range of topics on baby/child health and development.
- CHaPS receives a referral for every birth in Tasmania and offers a face-to-face visit with parents. Checks are also offered at 2 weeks, 4 weeks, 8 weeks, 6 months, 12 months, 2 years, and 4-5 years (Healthy Kids Check). CHaPS see 97% of newborns at 2 weeks, approximately 60% at 12 months, 50% at 2 years of age and about 45% at 4 years of age.
- Given the importance of the first 1,000 days, continuing connection to CHaPS has significant benefits in early detection of any health or developmental challenges that may affect a child and this may initiate a need for early intervention. The observed drop in engagement with CHaPS may disadvantage some children. Currently it is not clear what the main drivers are for this drop; or whether it differentially affects particular families or communities. Information heard by the Panel indicates the drop may be due to families feeling supported without the CHaPS service, transport constraints, competing demands for parents, families and carers' time, or a lack of understanding of the value of continuing with the CHaPS service.
- Parents are provided with a blue book at the first visit that contains a guide to a child's development at various age milestones. The CHaPS website also provides this information and includes tips on how to encourage speech and language development.²⁸
- CHaPS has been funded through the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy to expand the Sustained Nurse Home Visiting Program. The goal of the Program is to help parents who need more support in the first 1,000 days. The sustained, more intensive level of care provided by the program may involve home visiting over a period, in line with a tailored plan based on the specific needs of the family. The length of time will be dependent on what a family needs, but can be up to two years, and plans will involve frequent parent skill-development opportunities.

25 Seal, J. A., Doyle, D., Burgess, J. R., Taylor, R., & Cameron, A. R. (2007). Iodine status of Tasmanians following voluntary fortification of bread with iodine. *The Medical Journal of Australia*, 186(2), 69-71. <https://doi.org/10.5694/j.1326-5377.2007.tb00803.x>

26 Hynes, K. L., Seal, J. A., Otahal, P., Reardon, M. A., & Burgess, J. R. (2018). Iodine adequacy in Tasmania sustained after 7 years of mandatory bread fortification. *The Medical Journal of Australia*, 208(3), 126. <https://doi.org/10.5694/mja17.00603>

27 Nolan, M., Gorsuch, C., Graham, A., Hynes, K., & Reardon, M. (2022). *Barriers and enablers to maternal iodine supplement use in Tasmania: Report*. Department of Education. <http://ecite.utas.edu.au/150298/2/150298%20-%20Barriers%20and%20enablers%20to%20maternal%20iodine%20supplement%20use%20in%20Tasmania.pdf>

28 Department of Health. (2022). *Child Health and Parenting Service (CHaPS)*. Tasmanian Government. <https://www.health.tas.gov.au/health-topics/child-and-youth-health/child-health-and-parenting-service-chaps#support-we-provide>

- Nurse visits may initially be more frequent as complexities and priorities shift and improve for the parents, families and carers, and their child/ren. The level of support is agreed in partnership with the family and based upon family need, with goals and targeted outcomes identified from the outset of working together. Goals and supports are then reviewed in partnership with parents, families and carers through regular case conference discussions. Over the past twelve months CHaPS has completed the planning stages for the new Nursing Home-Visit Program. The Program will start working with families during the second year of the strategy.

B4 Early Years Coalition

- B4 Coalition works to drive social change through connecting, engaging, and supporting organisations and individuals from across diverse sectors to work together to act in the early years. It provides a range of valuable resources to support parents, families and carers, and the community in the early years, including resources specific to literacy development.
- The B4 Coalition discussed a number of themes with the Panel:
 - Work by Dr Brinkman and colleagues in 2013, using the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) and NAPLAN measures showed; “A child’s skills, development and attributes at school entry predict their latter literacy and numeracy skills throughout primary school.”²⁹
 - The importance of attending a quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) service regularly and of parent, family or carers’ engagement with that service.
 - The importance of having books in the home.
 - The opportunity to develop a family literacy support program/course.
 - Despite a comprehensive suite of early years supports and services, Tasmania has ongoing services gaps due to location, staffing shortages, and a range of other impacts. Additionally, often the children and families who would benefit from early years services, for many reasons, are not reached by services and supports.
 - Disadvantage continues to impact language and literacy development. We heard from a range of sources the importance of systematic literacy instruction to teach children the foundational skills necessary to become competent readers and writers.³⁰

Early Years Workforce

- The Panel heard that Early Childhood Education and Care staff experience barriers to accessing professional development opportunities. These barriers are primarily caused by time and staffing constraints. Early years practitioners often attend professional development sessions outside of paid work hours.

29 Brinkman, S., Gregory, T., Harris, J., Blackmore, S., & Janus, M. (2013). Associations between the early development instrument at age 5, and reading and numeracy skills at ages 8, 10 and 12: A prospective linked data study. *Child Indicators Research*, 6, 695-708. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-013-9189-3>

30 Presentation by the B4 Coalition to the Literacy Advisory Panel on 19 January 2023

What this tells us about the early years

- Programs that parents, families and carers access in the early years, should include information about the important role parents, families and carers play in language and literacy development and practical resources should be available to assist them in that role.
- CHaPS should be supported to continue their important work in the early years, including an evaluation of its expanded home visiting program to vulnerable families.
- Research could be undertaken to understand why parents don't participate in the first developmental check, particularly to ensure these are not the most vulnerable Tasmanians. This research could also include why some parents, families and carers do not continue to access the services over time (e.g., barriers or whether other services are filling the gap).
- CHaPS should be trained to identify and monitor pre-literacy developmental progress and provide warm referrals to allied professionals.
- All children identified as vulnerable in pre-literacy development progress should have access to two full years of literacy learning before Prep.
- We need ways to ensure age-appropriate books and resources are available for young vulnerable Tasmanians, including children in out of home care.
- B4 Coalition should be supported to expand and strengthen its role in language and literacy development and to provide resources in language and literacy development.
- There is an opportunity for the B4 Coalition to work in collaboration with 26TEN and community partners to develop a dedicated place-based Family Literacy Support Program focusing initially on the first 1,000 days and which could later extend to older age groups.
- There are a range of organisations providing services in the early years and there is a need to understand the points of interconnection for parents, families and carers with those services which impact on the development of literacy, and to make recommendations related to improving the availability and coordination of resources across the State. This should also include identifying opportunities to work in partnership across those services including the early childhood education and care sector, playgroups, B4 Coalition, the Department for Education, Children and Young People, Child and Family Learning Centres (CFLCs) and CHaPS.
- A guide to services that are available in all regions of Tasmania to support early literacy is produced and the Government works in partnership with services to maximise access for all families.
- Work should continue to progress the recommendations of the report "Barriers and enablers to maternal iodine supplement use in Tasmania."³¹
- Barriers to early years practitioners' participation in professional development opportunities that build on their skills to deliver literacy instruction should be explored and addressed.

31 Nolan, M., Corsuch, C., Graham, A., Hynes, K., Reardon, M. (2022). Barriers and enablers to maternal iodine supplement use in Tasmania. *Tasman Government*, pp.1-19

Schooling

Key themes

- Irrespective of the sector of schooling, literacy achievement for all students must be a priority.
- Good literacy skills lead to improved social and economic outcomes for individual Tasmanians, including health, life expectancy, happiness, and productivity. Literate Tasmanians are also important for the State's wellbeing. – socially and economically.
- Improving literacy levels is the responsibility of education systems, schools, teachers and professional support staff, in partnership with parents, families and carers.
- An effective or high performing system has clarity of purpose, effective leadership, evidence-based policy, quality teaching, collaborative networks and partnerships, and targeted use of resources.³²
- To improve literacy levels, we need a systemic approach, which cascades to whole of school approaches, led by principals, and which use common language, explicit strategies informed by data, and are supported by a literacy team that supports all teachers.³³
- The Panel heard that if children are not provided with the same literacy instruction, aligned to the Australian Curriculum, across school systems, it presents difficulty when children move to different schools or when receiving specialised support (speech and language pathologists) back into the school learning environment.
- Consistent system-wide literacy instruction also provides workload benefits for teachers, moving from school to school or between systems.
- High quality teaching is critical to a whole school approach when teachers use their professional expertise to translate prescribed evidence-based research into practice to fit the particular needs of individual children in their classroom, so they can all reach their potential. Teachers' evidence-based and research informed practice must be supported by the appropriate professional learning, resources and supports.
- The Panel discussed the variation in literacy outcomes across schools, which is evidenced in NAPLAN results and other standardised assessments. While other factors might also be at play, it is crucial that all schools and all classrooms have consistent, quality literacy teaching, including the teaching of reading.
- The Australian Education Research Organisation³⁴ suggests that 'the science of reading provides the strongest evidence about how young children learn to read. Understanding the cognitive science behind how students learn to read and the research on effective instruction makes it easier for educators to align policy and classroom teaching with evidence.'
- The six keys to reading, also known as the Big Six apply to both primary and secondary students: oral language, phonemic awareness, synthetic phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. It is logical that as a student moves through schooling, and acquires increasingly sophisticated literacy skills, they will require differential support across the Big Six.

32 Australian Council for Educational Research (2012). *National School Improvement Tool*. Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

33 Te Riele, K., & Stewart, K. (2020). *Whole school approaches to literacy* [Fact sheet 3/2020]. Peter Underwood Centre. <https://doi.org/10.25959/100.00035385>

34 The Australian Research Organisation (AERO) is a national education evidence organisation. In 2019 all Australian governments agreed to create AERO as an institute to position Australia's educators at the forefront of education research to improve learning outcomes for all children and young people. For further information see <https://www.edresearch.edu.au/about-us>

- A high achieving literacy system would ideally see the majority of its secondary students needing very little support in phonemic awareness and phonics and most students needing explicit teaching to to further progress their fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, especially in the subjects being studied.
- The Gradual Release of Responsibility model³⁵ is equally applicable to both the primary and secondary school years. The model is based on the understanding that, as we learn new content, the responsibility shifts from primarily sitting with the teacher as the model or expert, to the responsibility sitting with the student as they acquire the taught skills and take on independence in their application.

Primary School

Key themes

Methods of teaching literacy

- Reading has been referred to as an issue of social justice that tops the list of 10 fundamental human rights.³⁶ The right to read means giving each student the capability to access information that can allow them to reach their fullest potential.
- Children with poor vocabulary skills at age five are four times more likely to have reading difficulties in adulthood, three times as likely to have mental health problems, and twice as likely to be unemployed when they reached adulthood, when controlling for other factors.³⁷
- 'Word-reading and spelling are a foundation for being able to read and write and successfully interact with different forms of communication.'³⁸

Core components of literacy

- As above, research has shown that there are six key components of reading.³⁹ Because of the importance of these components, they have become known as the 'Big Six'. The components are oral language, phonological awareness, synthetic phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. In the early years of schooling and beyond, literacy lessons will incorporate the Big Six.
- The Panel agrees that reading and writing are reciprocal and should be taught in tandem. Notably the Ontario Human Rights Commission's *Public inquiry into human rights issues affecting students with reading disabilities* stated that, word-reading and spelling are a foundation for being able to read and write and successfully interact with different forms of communication.⁴⁰

35 Frey, N. (2013). *Gradual Release of Responsibility Instructional Framework*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. https://pdo.ascd.org/lmscourses/pd13oc005/media/formativeassessmentandccswithelaliteracymod_3-reading3.pdf

36 Staff, N. (2020). Reading is a right: Step-by-step guidance to promote literacy as a matter of social justice. *National Association of Elementary School Principals*, 100(4). <https://www.naesp.org/resource/reading-is-a-right/>

37 Law, J., Charlton, J., & Asmussen, K. (2017). *Child language as a wellbeing indicator: Report*. Early Intervention Foundation. <http://www.eif.org.uk/publication/language-as-a-child-wellbeing-indicator/>

38 Ibid

39 Konza, D. (2014). Teaching reading: Why the "Fab Five" should be the "Big Six". *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 39(12), 153-169. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2014v39n12.10>

40 Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2022). *Right to Read: public inquiry into human rights issues affecting students with reading disabilities*. Page 4

Cognitive research and the Science of Reading

- Teaching letter-sound correspondence is essential and is the fastest way to acquire reading and comprehension.⁴¹
- The Panel heard from many presenters who provided a significant body of research about the Science of Reading⁴² and the importance of a phonics-based approach to reading in the early years as the foundation of teaching for all children, including those with dyslexia. The Panel was provided with information about how this approach had been implemented in a systematic way in South Australia and was showing good results in improving student reading levels.
- The information presented to the Panel was that current practices, such as balanced literacy approaches and the three cueing systems do not work effectively for all students.
- Explicit teaching of alphabetic decoding skills is helpful for all children, harmful for none, and crucial for some.
- Scopes and sequences help better understand how cognitive research is translated into practice.⁴³
- There was some opposition expressed to only adopting Science of Reading in Tasmania, suggesting that there should be options for other teaching methods,⁴⁴ however the majority of the Panel agreed with the body of evidence supporting the Science of Reading approach.

The Role of Teachers and Schools

- Teachers play a pivotal role by using their professional expertise to translate prescribed evidence-based research into practice to fit the particular needs of children in their classroom so they can reach their potential. Teachers use evidence-based, research informed practice for bringing reading/writing to life.
- It is well recognised that there are benefits to having a systemic approach which cascades to whole of school approaches, led by principals and which use common language, explicit strategies informed by data, and are supported by a literacy team to inform all teachers.
- A useful definition of effective or high performing systems is found in the National School Improvement Tool and includes: 'clarity of purpose, effective leadership, evidence-based policy, quality teaching, collaborative networks and partnerships and targeted use of resources.'⁴⁵

41 Foorman, B., Francis, D., Fletcher, J., Schatschneider, C., Mehta, P. (1998). The role of instruction in learning to read: Preventing reading failure in at-risk children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 90(1), pp.37-55

42 This report uses terms like the "science of reading," "evidence-based," to refer to the vast body of scientific research that has studied how reading skills develop and how to ensure the highest degree of success in teaching all children to read. The science of reading includes results from thousands of peer-reviewed studies and meta-analyses that use rigorous scientific methods. The science of reading is based on expertise from many fields including education, special education, developmental psychology, educational psychology, cognitive science and more. Adapted from Ontario Human Rights Commission, Right to Read, Executive Summary, Page 3

43 See for instance: Winter, C. (n.d.). A Science of Reading-aligned phonics scope and sequence for k-2. *Mrs Winter's Bliss*. <https://mrs winters bliss.com/a-science-of-reading-aligned-phonics-scope-and-sequence-for-k-2/>

44 See for instance: Thomas, P. (2022). The Science of Reading Movement: The Never-Ending Debate and the Need for a Different Approach to Reading Instruction. *National Education Policy Centre*; Aukerman, M. (2022). The Science of Reading and the Media: Is Reporting Biased? Literacy Research Association

45 Australian Council for Educational Research, National School Improvement Tool, available at https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1019&context=tll_misc

Tiered approach and structured literacy

- In relation to quality teaching for literacy, presenters suggested the need for explicit, systematic instruction, which provides that everyone receives the same content of for the agreed scopes and sequences and acknowledges that some children will require more time to reach competency of that content while others may need small group, or one to one support to reach competency. This has been referred to as waves or tiers of teaching.
- Reasonable adjustments must be made for educating students with disability, in line with obligations under the Disability Standards for Education (2005). A trauma-informed approach should be used to support children who have experienced complex trauma to engage and learn.⁴⁶ Currently there are 66 Government schools who have received targeted funding to increase capacity in trauma-informed practice.
- Consistent system-wide literacy instruction also provides workload benefits for teachers, moving from school to school or between systems.
- Research indicates that three waves of instruction (also referred to as tiers) should assist all students to achieve the required learning, albeit over different timeframes.⁴⁷ Wave 2 and subsequently Wave 3 instruction are in addition to Wave 1, not instead of, and are delivered in smaller groups or individually, where learners can be provided with more frequent and intensive opportunities.⁴⁸
- These waves or tiers of instruction are a crucial part of delivering structured literacy instruction. Structured literacy includes reading instruction that is explicit and addresses the Big Six. The approach has a focus on teacher-student interaction which includes teacher modeling of literacy skills as well as targeted feedback. Teachers work in a purposeful sequence with requisite skills being acquired before the student moves on to new skills. This approach works to ensure all students are acquiring the necessary decoding skills needed to become a skilled reader.⁴⁹
- A structured literacy approach does not mean that all children must be taught the same content/ strategies at the same time. There are some children who may not be able to or are not ready to engage in a learning environment at particular times due to issues such as trauma or absenteeism. Additional social supports need to be provided to these children and when a child is able to and ready to engage and ready to learn. They should be taught the same fundamental skills that were taught to the remainder of their cohort no matter what year of education they are in. This may require additional classroom supports.

46 Center on Multi-Tiered System of Supports. (n.d.). *Trauma-sensitive schools*. American Institutes for Research. <https://mtss4success.org/special-topics/trauma-informed-care>

47 See for instance: Dempster, N. (n.d.). *Intervention tiers, levels or waves*. Principals as Literacy Leaders. <https://www.pall.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/1-Intervention-Tiers-Levels-or-Waves.pdf>; and Prior, L. (2016). *3-Wave Model to challenge and support all learners*. What Works Best. http://whatworksbest.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/a_3_wave_model_to_challenge_and_support_all_learners.pdf

48 For more complete information see the American Institutes for Research, Centre on Multi-tiered systems of supports, Essential Components of MTSS, <https://mtss4success.org/essential-components#:~:text=A%20multi%2Dtiered%20system%20of,from%20a%20strengths%2Dbased%20perspective>

49 Spear-Swerling, L. (2019). Structured Literacy. *Perspectives on Language and Literacy*, 45(3) .7-9

The role of books and decodable readers

- The Panel heard of the value of using children’s literature in teaching, which adds to the enjoyment of reading, enabling children to extend their vocabulary and develop strong spoken language skills and practice inferential comprehension.
- Decodable books⁵⁰ also play an important and specific role in phonics instruction and building confidence in young readers. The Australian Curriculum 9.0 supports the use of Decodable Readers from Prep – Year 2. Decodable books are designed for students to practise their decoding skills. The books are made up of words for students to decode, along with a small number of high-frequency, irregular words.
- In this way, decodable books and age-appropriate rich texts both help to support literacy learning.
- The Panel discussed the variation in literacy outcomes across schools, which is evidenced in NAPLAN results and other standardised assessments. While other factors might also be at play, it is crucial that, as a minimum guarantee, all schools in all classrooms have consistent, quality literacy teaching based on the fundamental principles underlying the body of research known as the Science of Reading. This should be integral to a rich literacy classroom where children are extended, particularly as they acquire the taught skills and become independent in their application. The science of reading will build teacher expertise and should be combined with explicit sharing of the successful practices already undertaken in schools, with high growth in literacy results.

What this tells us about the Primary School setting

- Learning to read is foundational to all other literacy learning.
- The importance of the Big Six: Oral Language; Vocabulary; Phonological Awareness; Letter sound knowledge (phonics); Comprehension; Fluency as included in the Australian Curriculum.
- There is the need for a systemic approach which cascades to whole of school approaches, led by principals and which use common language, explicit strategies informed by data, and are supported by a literacy team to inform all teachers.
- There should be consistency in screening and assessing across services and sectors to determine which children and young people require adjustments to reach their potential, as well as consistent interventions.
- Explicit, systematic and cumulative teaching of literacy knowledge, understanding and skills is the best approach. Teachers’ professional expertise is critical to translating evidence-based research into informed practice to meet the particular needs of their students and for bringing reading and writing to life.
- An explicit, systematic and structured approach to teaching literacy is required for all students and critical for those requiring additional support, for example those with dyslexia.
- A structured approach to teaching literacy ensures all students being taught the same concepts and recognises that some will require more time on the content/strategies to acquire the necessary skill. Continuous monitoring and assessment (screening) leading to further instruction and intervention are therefore necessary components to assist all children to achieve.
- Reading and writing are complementary skills that have a reciprocal relationship. Students who struggle in one area will often struggle in both. Teachers can teach strategically to boost both sets of skills by utilising the common ground in cognitive processes behind them.⁵¹
- Standardised and common assessments/screenings are preferable to enable a whole school and/or whole system approach, noting mobility of students and teachers across schools.

50 Derson, N., & Briggs, C. (2011). Reciprocity between reading and writing: Strategic processing as common ground. *The Reading Teacher*, 64(7), 546-549. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RT.64.7.11>

51 Anderson, N., & Briggs, C. (2011). Reciprocity between reading and writing: Strategic processing as common ground. *The Reading Teacher*, 64(7), 546-549. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RT.64.7.11>

- There are some students who require targeted intervention and support to acquire the necessary skills. This can be referred to as 'tiers' or 'waves' of learning.
- A multi-tiered approach, using either waves or tiers of instruction guarantees that all students, without exception, receive high-quality and evidence-based teaching instruction in the classroom, while some students, who require additional support, benefit from receiving additional and carefully targeted instruction or intervention.
- Every school should have access to decodable books aligned to a scope and sequence as per the guidelines of the Australian Curriculum and age-appropriate rich texts.
- It is important to recognise the value of children's literature in teaching which adds to the enjoyment of reading, enabling children to extend their vocabulary and develop strong spoken language skills. A structured approach to teaching literacy and in particular reading, does not exclude great books!
- All schools should be able to demonstrate they are implementing the elements of evidence-based literacy.
- An independent monitoring system should be developed and implemented to ensure this is being undertaken and to quality assure practices.
- AERO should be engaged to quality assure the scopes and sequences as they are being developed and to evaluate their use when implemented.
- The University of Tasmania and TasTAFE should ensure graduate educator readiness to deliver quality literacy instruction through Tasmanian scopes and sequences as evaluated by AERO.

Secondary School

Key themes

- Explicit teaching of literacy in the secondary years, provided by skilled teachers, has shown results in both Tasmanian Certification of Education (TCE) attainment and gaining VET certificates at school.
- NAPLAN results for Reading and Writing show a drop in achievement as students move through secondary school. Tasmanian NAPLAN results for writing in Year 9 show that 78.2% of students achieved above the National Minimum Standard (NMS). Of the same cohort, 86.9% achieved above the NMS in Year 7 and 89.6% in Year 5. Similar patterns are observable in reading results. Analysis by the NSW government's Centre for Statistics and Evaluation found that results of Year 9 NAPLAN are the best predictor of HSC results. Previous research by NSW and Victoria also found that year 9 NAPLAN tests across all domains are strong predictors of HSC and Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) performance.⁵²
- All secondary teachers are teachers of literacy relevant to their subject area and they may need support to teach fundamental literacy as students may not have mastered basic skills in earlier years, or have explicit referral pathways available to support the student.⁵³ The Panel heard that all teachers should understand and be skilled to undertake their role as literacy teachers, no matter the subject they teach.
- The Panel heard that all teachers should understand and be skilled to undertake their role as literacy teachers, no matter the subject matter they teach.
- Secondary teachers should explicitly teach learners how to be literate for each subject area. To do this, secondary teachers need to be trained in delivering explicit disciplinary (subject area) literacy instruction.⁵⁴
- While literacy teaching for most secondary school students will focus on vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension in particular subject areas; for a range of reasons there will be students who will require explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics.
- Systems and schools also need to ensure appropriately qualified and skilled teachers to undertake this work and think carefully about school structures, such as literacy blocks to enable appropriate grouping of students, which might best support this 'second-chance learning.'
- The Panel heard evidence that school attendance consistently declines from Year 6 onwards with a marked decline from Years 9 to 12. Lower educational attainment of parents is associated with lower attendance for children. Several initiatives are underway to address Year 12 completion and attainment, including the extension of government high schools to Year 12, the 9-12 review and the requirement that came into force in 2020 for Tasmanian students to remain in education or training until completion of Year 12, and attainment of a Certificate III or they turn 18.
- Alternative education pathways are shown to have positive impacts for some students on attendance, as well as more holistic benefits to some students.⁵⁵ Being literate must be prioritised in all education settings.

52 Baker, J. (2021, May 30). Year 9 NAPLAN writing results the best predictor of HSC success: Study. *Sydney Morning Herald*. <https://www.smh.com.au/education/year-9-naplan-writing-results-the-best-predictor-of-hsc-success-study-20210528-p57w6w.html>

53 Grattan Institute Submission to Paper One: Setting the Scene

54 Reference: Shanahan, T., & Shanahan, C.. (2012). What is disciplinary literacy and why does it matter? *Topics in language disorders*, 32(1), 7-18

55 [1] Savelsberg, H., Pignata, S., Weckert, P. (2017). Second chance education: Barriers, supports and engagement strategies. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 57(1), 36-57. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1140791.pdf>

What this tells us about the Secondary School setting

- Students in secondary school must be literate to remain engaged and to reach their full potential.
- An explicit, systematic and structured approach to teaching literacy is required for all students in secondary school to ensure the development of subject-specific literacy.
- In addition, secondary schools need to have resources and structures in place to support students who are not yet literate to become so.
- The teaching of the Big Six: aligned with the Australian Curriculum, is still applicable to those students in secondary education.
- Students should receive quality, evidence-based instruction in literacy in all subject areas, and have increased opportunities to practice their literacy skills in each classroom.
- Standardised and common assessments / screenings that are reliable and valid are preferable to enable a whole school and/or whole system approach, noting mobility of students and teachers across schools.
- Continuous monitoring and assessment (screening) for every student, leading to further instruction and intervention enables the identification of each student's strengths and areas where they may need further consolidation or specific intervention.
- A multi-tiered approach, using either waves or tiers of instruction guarantees that all students, without exception, receive high-quality and evidence-based teaching instruction in the classroom, while some students, who require additional support, benefit from receiving additional and carefully targeted instruction or intervention.
- Schools need to be organised to enable explicit literacy instruction to meet the needs of all students in the school, for example literacy teaching blocks.
- Whole of school strategies should incorporate the concept of the Gradual Release of Responsibility, to improve literacy attainment.
- All secondary teachers must have regular and ongoing evidence-based training and professional development to enable them to teach the literacy skills necessary for students to engage, and achieve, in the literacy requirements of their subject area.
- All education systems should ensure that every school is able to provide their teachers with access to the necessary resources, including scopes and sequences as per the guidelines of the Australian Curriculum, texts and assistive technologies to support high quality literacy teaching.
- Whole of system and whole of school strategies need to be developed to address barriers to engagement for secondary students. This could include considering alternative pathways within schools to support transition to further training or employment.
- AERO should be engaged to quality assure the scopes and sequences as they are being developed and to evaluate their use when implemented.
- The University of Tasmania and TasTAFE should ensure graduate educator readiness to deliver quality literacy instruction through Tasmanian scopes and sequences as evaluated by AERO.

Adults

Key themes

Volunteer Literacy Tutors

- Key themes in considering adult literacy highlight that adult learners face a range of challenges, including overcoming competing priorities of work, childcare, and managing the myriad complexities of modern life. Their reasons for wanting to improve their literacy are also varied – for some it is driven by a desire to competently achieve at work, to progress professionally, and for others by a desire to read to their children and/or grandchildren. For some, it is needed so that they can navigate social services and supports (licensing, Centrelink forms, and so on). It is important to have a workforce that is understanding of these various needs and trained in delivering evidence-based instruction.
- Adult learners value face to face support but suggest there may be opportunities to increase the diversity of volunteer tutors. The Panel's gap analysis suggested this may also extend to geographical diversity.
- The adult literacy workforce is comprised mostly of volunteers. Tasmanians with low literacy have access to volunteers with professional training. Libraries Tasmania offer free training for volunteers, with professional development sessions delivered in-house.

26TEN

- The Panel has consistently heard about the vital role 26TEN plays in supporting adults to develop their literacy skills. Through community consultation, presentations, and research, 26TEN was raised as a best-practice adult literacy program in Australia.
- Literacy Coordinators at 26TEN are required to undertake an in-house training program within the Adult Literacy Service. This program is evidence-based and has a dual focus on working with adult learners and mentoring volunteers. 26TEN and the Tasmania Council for Adult Literacy (TCAL) also provide professional learning opportunities for literacy practitioners. and webinars are also available from other organisations such as Australian Council for Adult Literacy (ACAL) and Adult Learning Australia (ALA). Literacy practitioners are encouraged to engage in these development opportunities.
- 26TEN is a network of organisations and individuals working together to improve adult literacy and numeracy in Tasmania. Better literacy and numeracy mean a better Tasmania for all. 26TEN has been operating in Tasmania since 2012. During this time, it has administered 117 employer grants and 55 community grants to progress adult literacy and numeracy initiatives where people live and work. 26TEN has run free workshops on plain English, which has supported more than 3300 people to communicate more clearly.
- Following the success of 26TEN's initial model of working with businesses, it has expanded its role to include place-based approaches such as the 26TEN Communities program.

Diagnostic Services for Adults

- Through community consultation, the Panel heard from people with lived experience the challenges that come from living with un-diagnosed speech and language disorders. Some reported that when they received a diagnosis, it was empowering and helped them feel more positive about themselves. Their diagnosis enabled access to accommodations in workplaces or educational institutions. Some adults reflected that they felt this diagnosis explained many of the difficulties they experienced, going back to school years.
- The recent Commonwealth inquiry into Adult Literacy (Don't take it as read)⁵⁶ found the following:
- Many individuals with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs) struggle throughout their lives with literacy and numeracy and this presents a significant challenge for parents, families and carers, educators, and the community.
- Individuals with SLDs are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, self-harm, suicide and feelings of shame, disengage from school, and interact with the juvenile justice system than other Australians.
- The Dear Dyslexic Foundation suggested that general practitioners, health centres and community nurses could be educated in the signs and symptoms of SLDs.
- Cost is a factor prohibiting individuals and families seeking assessments for learning disabilities and support. The Community Adult Literacy Foundation reported that 'a standard assessment for dyslexia costs approximately \$1,800 which is out of reach for too many.'
- There are limited diagnostic services for adults.

Workforce Readiness

- Through community consultation, the Panel heard that adults are often starting work and training without the literacy skills needed to succeed. TasTAFE currently offer supports to students who struggle with literacy, including for students for whom English is an additional language. 26TEN offers grants for employers or peak bodies to run projects to improve the literacy of Tasmanian workers.⁵⁷

56 March 2022, *Don't take it as read – Inquiry into adult literacy and its importance*. https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Employment_Education_and_Training/Adultliteracy/Report

57 26TEN. (2022). *Grants*. Tasmanian Government. <https://26ten.tas.gov.au/build-your-business/Pages/Grants%20OLD.aspx#:~:text=These%20grants%20support%20employers%20and,can%20do%20their%20jobs%20better>

Inquiry into Adult Literacy

- The Panel was made aware of an Inquiry into Adult literacy undertaken by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training. The Inquiry examined the importance of developing strong language, literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy (LLND) skills, overcoming barriers to learning, and the ability of existing adult education programs and providers to meet demand.
- The Tasmanian Government made a submission to the Inquiry highlighting Tasmania's strong position in its approach to improving functional levels of literacy and numeracy in our adult population. The Tasmanian Government encouraged support from the Australian Government to raise adult literacy skills and awareness, as this would in turn enhance Tasmania's efforts.
- The Tasmanian Government recommended the Committee consider adopting elements of Tasmania's approach nationally, including:
 - widely available, easily accessible and free access to quality literacy and numeracy support that can be adapted to the busy and complex lives of an adult learner, with an emphasis on phonemic awareness and phonics instruction,
 - a framework that enables government, businesses, community groups and individuals to contribute in targeted ways to achieving the common goal of increased literacy,
 - a strong communication campaign to break down stigma,
 - access to quality data and research to shape programs effectively,
 - appropriate training and recruitment strategies for adult literacy practitioners, and
 - a recognition that literacy and numeracy are crucial for everyday life and engagement in family and community, as well as in employment.
- In its submission, the Tasmanian Government recommended more substantial and sustained support to communities to build trusting, local environments, where literacy and numeracy skills are valued, and individuals are supported to improve them.
- The final report was released in March 2022 (Don't take it as read: Inquiry into adult literacy and its importance) The Committee made 15 recommendations presented in the report to address key areas of reform and to improve adult LLND skills. Key recommendations included:
 - support for whole of community and family LLND education programs for socially and economically marginalised Australians,
 - greater support for Australians with specific learning disabilities (SLDs) such as dyslexia,
 - campaigns to raise awareness of SLDs, the challenges people with low LLND skills face, and where people can access support,
 - recognition that English as an Additional Language or Dialect learners require the support of qualified Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) educators,
 - an increase in the number of specialist adult literacy teachers and TESOL educators,
 - support for measures that raise English LLND skills in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that are consistent with the National xi Agreement on Closing the Gap, such as the Literacy for Life Foundation's delivery of Yes, I Can! adult literacy campaigns,
 - a range of measures to ensure Australians with low LLND skills can access vital services, and
 - improved data collection to drive evidence-based policy and outcomes.
- In particular, Recommendation 13 suggested the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to develop and implement a national strategy to renew the adult language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy (LLND) education workforce.
- To date, there is no Australian Government response to this report.

What this tells us about Adult Learning settings

- Any adult wanting to improve their literacy skills should have access to an adult literacy trainer who provides literacy education that is evidence-based, learner focused, purposeful, authentic, and considerate of the barriers adults face.
- The adult volunteer literacy workforce needs incentives to participate in professional learning or training. The Government works with the University of Tasmania and TasTAFE to provide this professional learning.
- An accessible diagnostic service for learning disabilities in adults would identify the cause of individual challenges with literacy and subsequently inform literacy support.
- We need to work in partnership to better understand the barriers to literacy across the Tasmanian workforce.
- The Tasmanian Government should seek advice on the Federal Government's intentions to progress the recommendations from the Inquiry Into Adult Literacy and in particular recommendation 13.

Whole of Community

Evaluation

Key themes

- There are many services and programs providing literacy support in the community, however, the Panel was unable to determine the efficacy of many of these as evaluation had not been embedded into them.

What this tells us

- Any new policies, programs or initiatives that are sponsored by the Government under the Community-wide Framework should include evaluation. This includes measurement indicators of success, outcomes, evaluation against standards of evidence/best practice for literacy development. For comparison of success across a range of programs it may be necessary to develop freely available resources for evaluation of literacy outcomes. This could be developed in consultation with community partners.

Literacy Resources

Key themes

- The school day and school years represent only a small portion of a person's life. Children and adults alike take in information and use literacy skills when they are going about their day. Placing literacy resources in strategic locations for people of all ages creates another opportunity to both raise awareness of the importance of literacy and provide opportunities to engage in literacy education.
- Literacy rich environments provide opportunities for incidental literacy learning for children. Access to literacy rich environments is an opportunity to better support the literacy development of all children but particularly those at-risk of not reaching age-appropriate literacy milestones. Parents, families and carers can use opportunities throughout their day to promote literacy skills with their children or learn more about the importance of literacy themselves. Whether they're at home, visiting a health professional, buying the groceries, riding bikes at the local park, going for a walk on the beach or visiting a waterfall, there are opportunities to develop literacy skills.
- Resources can be placed in key locations that parents, families and carers attend, such as waiting rooms, libraries, ECEC services, Neighbourhood Houses, bakeries, retail outlets, organisations, community signage and events. These resources could include picture books, prompts for conversations with children (spoken language), information on activities that support literacy for children and/or their families and QR code links for online resources (e.g., a one-stop-shop).

- Literacy rich environments have been noted by many studies⁵⁸ to improve literacy, particularly for those at risk of not reaching age-appropriate literacy milestones. These studies have found that literacy rich environments in the early years improve letter recognition, sight word knowledge, oral reading skills, reading comprehension, and writing skills. A large body of research attests to the importance of play-based learning in promoting literacy, including through play in outdoor environments such as playgrounds.⁵⁹
- Community consultation highlighted the importance of parents, families and carers understanding the importance of literacy for their children. These community resources would promote the importance of literacy for children and provide opportunities for parents, families and carers to engage in literacy with their children.
- Hadanl and Vey's⁶⁰ study into 'Scaling playful learning: How cities can reimagine public spaces to support children and families', found the following:
 - partnerships with community are integral to successful playful learning development in public spaces, and
 - under ordinary circumstances, children spend 80 percent of their waking time outside the classroom.

What this tells us

- There is the need for the development of a variety of literacy resources to be available to the community.
- These resources should be distributed through a range of locations such as bookshops, playground boxes, waiting rooms (e.g., GP offices, dentists), bakeries, retail outlets, writing organizations and festivals, and any other strategic locations or opportunities.
- Resources outlining best practice in public play spaces should be made easily available and organisations planning public play spaces should be encouraged to work in partnership with their community.

58 Barber, M. D., Carmichael, M. A., & Reynen, S. J. (1999). *Providing a Literacy-Rich Environment for At-Risk Students* [Master's theses, Saint Xavier University]. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED435093>; Stone, J. P., Rivera, C. J., & Weiss, S., L. (2018). Literacy-rich environments for young students with significant developmental disabilities. *Young Exceptional Children*, 21(4), 191–203. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096250616674330>; and Jocson, K. M., & Thorne-Wallington, E. (2013). Mapping literacy-rich environments: Geospatial perspectives on literacy and education. *Teachers College Record*, 115(6). <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811311500604>

59 Giles, R., & Wellhousen, K. (2011). Reading, writing and running: Literacy learning on the playground. *The Reading Teacher*, 59(3), 283–285. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RT.59.3.9>; Mielonen, A. M., & Paterson, W. (2009). Developing literacy through play. *Journal of Inquiry and Action in Education*, 3(1), 15–46. <https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/jiae/vol3/iss1/2>; Williams, M., & Rask, H. (2003). Literacy through play: How families with able children support their literacy development. *Early Child Development and Care*, 173(5), 527–573. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0300443032000088276>; and Edwards, S. (2017). Play-based learning and intentional teaching: Forever different?. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 42(2). <https://doi.org/10.23965/AJEC.42.2.01>

60 Hadanl, H., & Vey, J., S. (2020, September 4). Scaling playful learning: How cities can reimagine public spaces to support children and families. *Brookings*. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/scaling-playful-learning-how-cities-can-reimagine-public-spaces-to-support-children-and-families/>

Assistive Technology

Key themes

- Assistive technology (AT) contributes to the equitable teaching and learning of literacy skills throughout a person's life. It allows learners to demonstrate their skills and knowledge independently. Learners with language or learning difficulties who would benefit from the provision of assistive technology should be able to access and use these alongside appropriate support and intervention to improve their skills. Community consultation revealed individuals who had difficulties wanted to use AT but there is a gap in the broader community in knowing what technologies are available and how/when to use them. This included schools and workplaces.

Some examples of AT options are:

- providing multimedia and electronic information to assist learners with low literacy,
- computer programs such as word processors to assist learners with difficulties in editing text and writing,
- devices to take photos of content to accommodate writing difficulties when copying information,
- recording devices to record oral information, and
- e-readers.

What this tells us

- We need to increase awareness, understanding and professional skills in using digital and assistive technologies to support the literacy development for diverse learners alongside mainstream literacy teaching approaches.
- We should further investigate access to Assistive Technologies.

Addressing stigma

Key themes

- Stigma prevents people from engaging in community, work, and life.
- Stigma relating to low literacy is significant and impactful for many Tasmanians. The Panel conducted targeted consultation with people with lived experience of low literacy to hear their stories. In the process of conducting this consultation, there were opportunities for participation in focus groups and one on one interviews (among other approaches). Recruitment for these interviews and focus groups was significantly impacted by the stigma associated with identifying as a person with low literacy. The Panel heard that people were reluctant to come forward, be recorded (even if anonymously) or share their experiences in a group due to the profound negative feelings associated with having low literacy.
- The people the Panel heard from reported many negative feelings and experiences relating to their literacy level. They reported experiences of bullying, workplace discrimination, not feeling able to ask for help and that they were not able to access opportunities. This stigma had impacts on their social lives, relationships, employment, education and overall wellbeing. Many participants used negative words to describe themselves and their abilities.

What this tells us

- Stigma must be addressed in any campaign to lift literacy in Tasmania. Campaigns should address ways to:
 - lift aspirations, increase community engagement and awareness of language and literacy development (and that it occurs across an entire life),
 - shift broader community perceptions, perspectives, and attitudes towards education in Tasmania, and
 - recognise and address barriers to participation and seeking support (e.g., culture, stigma and shame).

Access to and knowledge of existing resources

Key themes

- There is a considerable amount of work and effort happening in Tasmania to support and address literacy rates. There is also a lack of consistency and joined up approaches. Community consultation revealed that navigating the many organisations, resources and supports available is confusing and difficult. It is unclear who to go to, for what, and when.

What this tells us

- A single portal should be developed which brings together relevant information and advice about literacy, including literacy resources and supports, assessment tools and other supports.
- This resource would become a portal for all stakeholders engaging with people and promoting literacy at all stages aligned to life events.

Specific Groups

Targeted consultation identified some specific additional themes relevant to specific groups.

Migrants/refugees

Key themes

- Targeted community consultation revealed gaps in information for adult literacy education available in languages other than English. This may also include migrant and refugee parents, families and carers not being able to access information about the Tasmanian education system. Information that relates to school supports, expectations and requirements of schools, who to ask for help and key dates for schooling would help migrant and refugee parents, families and carers prepare themselves and their children for schooling in Tasmania.
- Assisting migrant and refugee families to understand the supports available in the early childhood education and care sector, Tasmanian education system and literacy supports available for adults will assist with literacy development. This information would need to be available in many different languages.
- The Department for Education, Children and Young People has a website available through a drop-down box in multiple languages, and this may need to be promoted more widely.⁶¹

What this tells us

- Organisations should be supported to provide timely and targeted information to migrant and refugee families and carers about the literacy supports available to them and their families. This includes relevant, accurate and translated information appropriate to life events, for the literacy supports they or their family may require. This could be part of Service Tasmania's 'life events' initiative.

⁶¹ Department for Education Children and Young People. *Translations*. <https://www.decyp.tas.gov.au/about-us/translations/>

Adult Prisoners

Key themes

- Targeted community consultation revealed that prisoners had positive experiences attending the Risdon Prison Library service. The barriers they faced to learning before accessing the service included having incomplete schooling, negative feelings and stigma associated with low literacy and having a lack of time and motivation to prioritise literacy. Prisoners spoke positively about the one-on-one teaching style of the library service as well as the focus on functional, learner-led approaches. As a gap, prisoners raised that outside of the prison library service they did not know where to access literacy help. A suggestion for improving the link between the prison library service and community literacy services (like 26TEN) was to allow prisoners an opportunity to be shown where their nearest appropriate service was located as part of their release or prior to release.

What this tells us

- The Tasmanian Prison Service should build on the foundational literacy activities to date and ensure any approaches or strategies that provide coordinated literacy support for prisoners from entry into the justice system are aligned with best practice and evidence-based teaching as described in this paper. This could include:
 - establishing referral pathways for further literacy support post incarceration,
 - screening for literacy levels upon entry to prison and prior to release,
 - each person (if identified during screening) has a literacy transition plan for release that includes literacy supports,
 - capacity for one-on-one literacy support,
 - access to speech pathology and other allied health services,
 - services to diagnose and treat speech and language disorders, and specific learning differences (SLD) in prisons, and
 - investigating models to foster relationships between parents and carers in the justice system and their child's school/s.

Youth Justice

Key themes

- Low levels of literacy skills are one of a number of factors which, if addressed, can reduce offending behaviour.⁶² Research also suggests speech and language disorders are found disproportionately amongst young offenders.^{63 64 65}
- The Tasmanian Government is currently developing the Youth Justice Blueprint which outlines the strategic direction for Tasmania's youth justice system for the next ten years, implementing a therapeutic approach to youth justice.

What this tells us about youth justice settings

- Appropriate literacy supports and services for young people in the youth justice system need to be considered through the implementation of the Youth Justice Blueprint.

62 Langford, L., & Norwood, M. (2020). *What are criminogenic needs?*. Study.com. <https://study.com/academy/lesson/criminogenic-needs-definition-risk-factors.html>

63 Whitehouse, A. J. O., Line, E. A., Watt, H. J., & Bishop, D. V. M. (2009). Qualitative aspects of developmental language impairment relate to language and literacy outcome in adulthood. *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*, 44(4), 489-510. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13682820802708080>

64 Tomblin, B. J., Zhang, X., Buckwalter, P., & Catts, H. (2008). The association of reading disability, behavioral disorders and language impairment among second-grade children. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 41(4), 473 - 482. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-7610.00632>

65 Snow, P., and M. Powell, (2012), 'Youth (in)justice: Oral language competence in early life and risk for engagement in antisocial behaviour in adolescence', *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, 435

People with disability

Key themes

- People with disability experience general accessibility and social barriers to learning and participation in schooling along with challenges with literacy. Accessibility barriers may include physical impediments to mobility, such as spaces where it is not possible to take a wheelchair or the lack of appropriate assistive technology and support. Social barriers may include bullying, stigma or low expectations of students with disability.
- The Panel heard that the changes in funding brought about by the NDIS has posed a significant barrier to access to support for people with disability, including personal support, diagnostic and professional support. This has impacted students' ability to participate and learn in classroom settings. Some speech and language disorders (such as dyslexia) are not recognised by the NDIS which leaves families without access to funding for support staff.
- There is currently a review underway into the NDIS that is examining:
 - the design, operations, and sustainability of the NDIS, and
 - ways to build a more responsive, supportive, and sustainable market and workforce.
- The review will cover participant experience of engaging with the NDIS and opportunities to improve key aspects of the Scheme's design.⁶⁶
- The final report from the Independent Review Panel is due to the Disability Reform Ministers by October 2023.
- The 2022 Ontario Human Rights Commission Right to Read inquiry examined issues affecting students with reading disabilities and concluded that research over recent decades confirms that these students require 'explicit, systematic and direct instruction in foundational word reading skills'.⁶⁷ The Inquiry Report found further that 'If classroom instruction is based on an evidence-based core curriculum, most students (80–90%) will learn to read words accurately and efficiently, and few students will need more intensive instruction or intervention.

What this tells us

- The Tasmanian Government should provide information to the Independent Review Panel about the unintended consequences of access to support services created by the NDIS.
- Tasmanian schools should implement explicit, systematic and direct instruction in foundational word reading skills to lift literacy rates for students with reading disabilities (and for all students).

⁶⁶ NDIS Review. 'Terms of Reference: Building a strong, effective NDIS.' Australian Government. <https://www.ndisreview.gov.au/about/terms-of-reference>

⁶⁷ Ontario Human Rights Commission (2022) Right to Read, Public Inquiry into human rights issues affecting students with reading disabilities, <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/right-to-read-inquiry-report-p20-22>

The use of data to inform teaching

The Panel received information on the importance of data to inform teaching practices.

Key themes

- Access to assessments that are aligned to National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions and the Australian Curriculum, supports teachers to make better judgements about student learning and to tailor teaching so that students make more progress in their learning. Assessments supported by a suite of resources enable educators to implement interventions to support progress.

Kindergarten Development Check (KDC)

- KDC is a Tasmanian assessment tool that has been provided to, and is required in, all schools. Students are assessed twice in their Kindergarten year with results reported to schools. There is no central data collection for Tasmanian schools data and therefore there is no state level data publicly reported.
- Data collected by schools assists teachers in the early identification of students who are potentially at risk of not achieving expected developmental outcomes and who may require additional support or program intervention.

Year 1 Phonics Check

- The Australian Government's Year 1 Phonics Check enables teachers to understand the phonics knowledge of their students. The Check looks at how well children can 'decode' written words, including nonsense words, and enables assessment of expected progress in decoding. Teachers and schools can then use this information to inform their teaching program.
- In 2022, Tasmanian schools conducted a phonics screen check (either the Australian Government Screen or another 'approved' check) with their Year 1 students. From 2023, the Year 1 Phonics Check will be mandated for all year 1 students in government schools. There would be benefit in making aggregated data publicly available for the purposes of transparency and to inform policy settings.
- Students' progress, after participating in an initial phonics screen, was measured in follow-up screens 1 and 4 years after the initial screen. The results of this study revealed that students who failed the first screen and then passed the second screen performed better at the 4-year mark than those who failed both screens.
- The results indicate that early intervention and monitoring of progress following a phonics screen can have significant and positive impacts on phonological awareness.⁶⁸
- Tasmania should publicly report aggregated statewide results for the Phonics Check annually to inform policy decisions. A similar system and platform to that used to aggregate NAPLAN data across sectors should be developed.

68 Gardner H., Froud K., McClelland A., van der Lely HK (2010). Development of the Grammar and Phonology Screening (GAPS) test to assess key markers of specific language and literacy difficulties in young children. *International Journal of Language Communication Disorders*. 41(5), 513-40. doi: 1

Progressive Achievement Test

- The Progressive Achievement Test (PAT), developed by ACER, is a testing method available across all school years to Year 10 which provides an understanding of where students are in their learning. The assessments are supported by an online Teaching Resources Centre with access to teaching activities and annotated questions to assist with differentiated teaching in the classroom.
- The PAT suite of products aims to inform teaching and learning through:
 - setting personal stretch targets,
 - development of teachers' capabilities, and
 - the use of learning resources.
- When supported by appropriate resources the use of PAT enables interventions to be targeted to student needs.
- There is a suite of PAT Assessments in the following areas including: Reading, Early Years Reading, PAT spelling skills, Spelling, Vocabulary Skills, Vocabulary; and Grammar and Punctuation.
- PAT Reading is available to all Tasmanian Public Schools.

Grammar and Phonology Screen

- The Grammar and Phonology Screen (GAPS) was designed to provide a quick screening test to assess whether pre- and early school entry children have the necessary grammar and pre-reading phonological skills needed for education and social development.⁶⁹ This screen can be used by professionals in education, health, and social care, and is designed to be administered by professionals and non-professionals alike.
- Phonological awareness (PA) is an important foundational and emergent literacy skill required for children to learn how to read. PA skills include the ability to hear, identify, make and work with the sounds and patterns of spoken language. It is a vital part of language development. Phonological Awareness is a strong predictor for later reading, spelling, and writing success.

⁶⁹ Gardner H., Froud K., McClelland A., & van der Lely H., K. (2010). Development of the Grammar and Phonology Screening (GAPS) test to assess key markers of specific language and literacy difficulties in young children. *International Journal of Language Communication Disorders*, 41(5), 513-40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13682820500442644>

NAPLAN

- The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is undertaken by students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia. The online assessments test the skills in literacy and numeracy that students develop over time, through the school curriculum. There are four assessment domains, Reading, Writing, Language Conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and Numeracy.
- Tasmanian school communities are supported centrally in administering NAPLAN by the Department for Education, Children and Young People. All participating students receive an Individual Student Report indicating how they performed against their national counterparts. Further to the student reports, Tasmanian Schools are also provided with a suite of reports, developed by DECYP, that allow for in-depth analysis of their student and school performance.

What this tells us

- A Phonics Check should be mandated across all school systems in Tasmania, without exception.
- Ongoing monitoring, screening and assessments are important to assist teachers in understanding student progress, informing teaching and, when students are not making expected progress, implementing intervention strategies.
- There would be benefit in statewide application and reporting of accredited assessment tools, including GAPS, KDC and PAT.
- Resources should be available to enable teachers to implement appropriate interventions when students are not making expected progress.
- Publicly available aggregated data may assist in determining if policy interventions are needed more generally.⁷⁰

70 Online Formative Assessment Initiative (n.d). *Frequently asked questions* <https://ofai.edu.au/faqs/>

5. The carrots are in front of the peas.

6. The carrots are next to the beans.



"I can't read the paper so I don't know what's going on in the world... trying to find out things is hard, trying to make friends is hard after they find out you can't read or write a lot of people look down on you."

Lived Experience Participant

The Community-wide Framework

The Panel has been charged with providing a Community-wide Literacy Framework as well as targeted recommendations. The Framework should be a document that any person or group in the community can use to align their work so that there is a combined and unified direction to lift literacy. It will therefore be longer term (10 years or so) and will not contain specific actions but high-level principles and areas of focus.

Implementation of the Community-wide Framework will help all Tasmanians to develop the literacy skills they need to increase their life choices and opportunities, and those of others. It will help guide decision-making and funding, and when implemented well, should help all Tasmanians to improve their literacy skills.

The panel will use feedback from this consultation paper to inform the design of the Community-wide Framework.



"I think being aware of my learning difficulties when I wasn't before has made me go about things differently. I don't get as frustrated not being able to read and comprehend."

Focus group participant

Measures and Targets

The Panel has been asked to provide advice on existing or potential short and medium-term measurable targets across the life span (aligned with the long-term goal of 100% functional literacy in Tasmania) and associated data collection processes and reporting methods against these targets.

Literacy data is collected in different ways across many cohorts. There is no single data set collected that would report with a whole of Tasmania view from early years through to adult literacy. There are key data sets at differing stages of development that will be used to measure the adult years targets. A clear set of measurable targets will set the foundation for a strong evaluation of the impact of the Framework on the literacy proficiency of Tasmanians.

The Panel heard of the following data collections, however, it should be noted that most assessment data collected is for internal school use only and not publicly available.

Early Years

Early Years learning is generally considered to be from birth to 8 years of age, which encompasses early childhood education and care (before the commencement of formal schooling), Kindergarten (15hrs a week), Prep to year 2 (full time school hours).

Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy

The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy has begun to develop a data snapshot as the first step in sharing and using data differently so children and families and the services that support them can understand how wellbeing is changing over time. This includes information on parents' involvement in formal learning.⁷¹

In 2017 around 97% of Tasmanian children aged 0-2 had parents who participated in informal learning with them in the previous week. 85% of children had a parent or guardian read to them, and for most of these children (62%), they were reading every day.

90% of children had parents, carers or guardians sing, dance, and undertake other musical activities and 73% of children had parents and guardians support them in physically active play.

The level of parental engagement in informal education in Tasmania is the second highest in the nation just after Australian Capital Territory.

71 Wellbeing in Tasmania (2022). *Data Snapshot*. <https://wellbeing.tas.gov.au/data-snapshot>

Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)

The AEDC has been conducted nationally every three years since 2009 and monitors the progress of early childhood development of Australian children.

The census reports on five key developmental domains:

- Physical Health,
- Social Competence,
- Emotional Maturity,
- Language and Cognitive Skills, and
- Communication.

It also identifies the percentage of 'developmentally vulnerable', 'at risk' and 'on track' children across Australian communities. The assessment instrument is completed by teachers for each child in their first year of full-time school.

Proposed Baseline:

Developmentally on track in:

- Communication Domain 2021 - TAS 79.3% (AUS 77.1%)
- Language and Cognitive Skills Domain 2021 – TAS 77.4% (AUS 82.6%)

Proposed Target:

By 2033, the proportion of Tasmanian children developmentally on track in the communication and language domains of the AEDC are equal to/ exceed the Australian average.

School Years (Prep-12)

Every child from 5-18 years of age must be enrolled in an approved education program and in most cases, this is delivered by schools. Children can also attend Kindergarten from 4 years of age. The Tasmanian Education Act (2016) requires all Tasmanians to be provided with the opportunity to receive an education and it is expected that they remain studying until they finish year 12, or receive a Certificate III, or turn 18 years of age.

The Department for Education, Children and Young People release to their website a key data report each year that includes a broad range of data from various divisions across the department. The report includes school data such as, attendance, suspension, class sizes and funding allocations. There is also data on workforce, staff and student wellbeing.

There are many assessment opportunities conducted throughout a student's education. Of these assessments, only a few have the potential to be collected across sectors and used as state level data to inform policy.

Year 1 Phonics Check

This is an Australian Government initiative that has been rolled out to Tasmanian schools, however not all schools are using the tool as they have existing tools in place already. From 2023, all year 1 students in DECYP schools will undertake the same Check. The Phonics Check is designed to assist teachers identify students who may need targeted learning in relation to reading. It is supported with a free online portal for teachers, school leaders and families.

There is no national reporting requirement for the Year 1 Phonics Check and currently data is not collected at a system level.

Baseline: Data not published, suggest publishing from 2024.

Proposed Target: To be set after first year of reporting – no current target.*

NAPLAN

National Assessment Program is conducted online annually for years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Literacy related domains are Reading, Writing and Conventions of Language (spelling, grammar, and punctuation)

Publicly available data is reported on the NAP website (www.nap.edu.au). In-depth student level data is provided to the Tasmanian Test Administration Authority (managed by DECYP on behalf of all sectors) which is responsible for reporting to all Tasmanian schools. All participating students receive an Individual Student Report supplied by ACARA that shows their performance, the national average and the range of achievement for the middle 60% of students in their year level.

NAPLAN reporting is moving away from national minimum standards to 'proficiency standards' in 2023. The new proficiency standards have four levels of achievement for each year level, the numerical bands and the national minimum standard will be replaced, with the following four achievement standards:

- exceeding,
- strong,
- developing, and
- needs additional support.

Proficiency standards will support higher expectations for student achievement and are set at a challenging but reasonable level. A baseline benchmark will be included in the new proficiency standards to identify students who need additional support.

Once the proficiency standards are released, the Panel will consider a new target of 'by 2032, all Year 3, 5, 7, and 9 students will meet the national proficiency reading and writing standards.'

Current data: 2023 National reporting will mark the start of a new time series.

Proposed Target: The Panel will consider a new target based on proficiency standards for years 3, 5, 7 & 9 students once baseline data is provided in the 2023 NAPLAN reporting cycle.

It is likely that, the Panel will consider a new target such as 'by 2032, all Year 3, 5, 7, and 9 students will meet the national proficiency reading and writing standards.'

Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT)

The suite of assessments was developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and are an integrated approach to improving learning. All Tasmanian government schools are provided access to PAT Reading (and other assessments) by DECYP.

Data is made available to schools on the completion of the online assessments through the OARS platform. Further to this, DECYP provides schools with a suite of reports to support in the monitoring of student performance and in the measuring of school improvement.

All Tasmanian schools should use the PAT tests for monitoring and screening literacy development. The Government should consider providing the same tools to all schools as provided to DECYP schools on a cost recovery basis.

Baseline: Data is for school use and is not currently published.

Proposed Target: No current targets (DECYP has developed internal year level targets for years Prep-10 based on PAT scale scores) Should aggregated data across the sectors be reported annually, a benchmark will need to be set following the first report.

Tasmanian Assessment Standards & Certification (TASC)

TASC is responsible for the assessment and certification of student achievement in senior secondary schooling in Tasmania. Data is released each year on school attainment profiles, course data and state level TCE attainment. The annual report also identifies the reasons for non-attainment including the number of students not achieving TCE everyday adult standards in Reading, Writing and Communication.

Measure: % of students who have attained the Everyday Adult Standard for Reading, Writing and Communication (in English).

Current data: Data for 2021 to be sourced from TASC.

Proposed data: TASC could collect and publish data broken down by achievement of each Everyday Adult Standard.

Proposed Target: By 2035, all Year 12 students attain at least the the Everyday Adult Standard for Reading, Writing and Communication (in English).

Report On Government Services (RoGS)

RoGS is released annually and provides information on the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of government services in Australia. Data is provided on the performance of early childhood education and care, school education and vocational education and training.

Measure:	Percentage of students with an attendance rate of 90% or higher (Year 1-6 and Year 7-10).
Baseline:	In 2021 91.2 percent of students in Year 1-6 and 86.7 per cent of students in Year 7-10 had an attendance rate of 90 percent or higher.
Target:	No Current Target – Tasmania should develop a target.

Adult Years

Data on adult literacy rates has been historically collected through the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) under the Survey of Adult Skills. This was the only comprehensive, population level adult literacy measure and was measured against OECD reading levels. This data was last collected in 2011 and in 2022 any future collection has been discontinued by the national government.

In the 2022-23 Commonwealth Budget committed the \$2.6m for a National Study on Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Skills, with further details yet to be released. The first National Study to be undertaken should form the baseline for Tasmania, and at such time a target should be set.

Closing the Gap

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap has 19 national socio-economic targets which impact life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.⁷² Monitoring of progress against the targets is conducted by the Productivity Commission.

Outcome 3:	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years.
State data:	Reported in progress reports.
Target:	By 2025, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in Year Before Full Time Schooling (YBFS) early childhood education to 95 per cent.
Outcome 4:	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years. In 2021, just over 38% of Tasmanian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were developmentally on track across all 5 domains of the AEDC. Tasmania tracks higher than the national rate of 34.4%.
Data:	No baseline for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children – Monitor progress reports.
Target:	By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) to 55 per cent.

⁷² Closing the Gap. (n.d). *Closing the Gap Targets and Outcomes*. <https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement/targets>

Literacy Target:	Tasmanian Government should develop a language and communication domain specific target in consultation with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Communities.
Outcome 5:	Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students aged 20-24 who have attained a TCE. This includes meeting the Everyday Adult Standard for Reading, Writing and Communication (in English) (Not currently published by TASC – Monitor progress reports).
State data:	No baseline provided – Monitor progress reports.
Proposed Target:	By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (age 20-24) attaining year 12 or equivalent qualification to 96 per cent.
Literacy Target:	Tasmanian Government should develop a Reading, Writing and Communication (in English) specific target in consultation with Tasmanian Aboriginal Communities.

Qualitative Data Collection

The Panel recognises the value of story and how capturing an individual’s lived experiences, across all ages in literacy development, can be a valuable way to measure the success of a program or initiative. In collecting and preserving the voice/perspectives of individuals, their stories can be used to improve and evaluate programs and initiatives.

There is no current collection.

What this tells us about measures and targets

- There is a lack of a comprehensive data set to understand progress to achieving literacy.
- Data complexities include relying on externally collected data sets which are collected at varying levels of frequency.
- A new target for Year 7 literacy will need to be set because NAPLAN will commence reporting against proficiency standards from 2023.
- Setting aspirational targets that support engagement with the Community-wide Framework, while recognising that measures of success must reflect the complex and long-term nature of any efforts to raise literacy.
- As well as quantitative data there is also the opportunity to capture the stories of Tasmanians with lived experience to test, and to add to, our understanding of what the data shows.
- Qualitative data telling the stories of improved community resilience, better connectedness and overall improvement in prosperity and happiness would give a fuller picture of impact of a community-wide approach.
- Work needs to be undertaken to investigate new indicators to measure adult literacy, including using the National Study on Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Skills, if that provides data which can be validly and reliably reported at the State level.

Other possible targets and measures to consider

Potential Target(s):

- By 2025, all teachers will participate in evidence-based literacy specific professional learning annually. (Continuous professional development).
- By 2023, all Tasmanian schools will use the Australian Government phonics check.

Potential support measures and indicators:

- E.g., PAT Reading, Phonics Check, NAPLAN, ACARA Literacy Progressions, Professional Development Calendar, Literacy Capability Framework Proficiency?

Potential Target(s):

- All new policies and activities across the sectors sponsored by the Government through the Framework have an in-built evaluative Framework.
- Ratios – Patient to professionals? # allied health hours available in schools per student?
- Intervention data? Waitlists? Number of referrals and time taken to attend an appointment?

Potential support measures and indicators:

- E.g., Individual programs are regularly evaluated to measure the success of their outcomes, Program Evaluation Frameworks, Number of businesses, organisations and individual supporters engaged with 26TEN. Digital analytics – Website, communications metrics, etc., TASC, AEDC.

Potential Target(s):

- By 2025, all Tasmanian children will receive a Grammar and Phonology Screening (GAPS) check.
- Percentage of 15- to 19-year-old, and 20- to 24-year-old, school leavers fully engaged in education, training and / or employment (Productivity Commission).

Potential support measures and indicators:

- E.g., OEDC - 15 Year old's reporting less than four educational possessions, GAPS, Allied Health Professional Ratios, PIAAC, Productivity Commission.

Potential Target(s):

- By year 7 all eligible young people will meet an expected reading standard that is above the national minimum by no later than 2030.

Potential support measures and indicators:

- E.g., National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (NECECC) data, PISA. Everyday Adult Standard of reading, writing, and communicating (in English) (part of TCE) PIACC, NAPLAN?
- PAT, number of students meeting the PAT standard in every year level.

Governance and Next Steps

This Paper is the outcome from a significant body of research, analysis and consultation responses. Following feedback from this final consultation process, it will result in a significant number of recommendations to Government as part of a Community-wide Framework, called Lifting Literacy.

As noted earlier, the Panel will recommend to the Government that it develop an initial three-year action plan to be reviewed and updated over a ten-year period, to implement the work under Lifting Literacy. This will enable the phased implementation of priority work.

This Paper has also identified a possible set of measures and targets as the basis of a final set of indicators against which we can assess the success of this work.

This work will need to be supported by a governance structure, which will be considered and recommended by the Panel.

It has also identified the need to ensure our educators are supported to improve the literacy skills of students through high quality structured literacy teaching. It is important that we ensure that we are providing the best teaching possible and supporting our valued teaching staff with data, resources and professional learning through an external process of quality assurance. This will enable the identification of best practice, based on results and also identify areas for focused improvement.

A process of external quality assurance, monitoring and reporting will be a recommendation of the Panel.

Next Steps

The Panel will provide its final report to the Premier by the end of April 2023. Your responses to the following consultation questions will be used by the Panel to inform its final report and recommendations.

Consultation Questions

The sections in the Paper which are headed “What this tells us” will be the basis for the Panel’s recommendations.

Are there any key themes we have not identified to improve literacy across:

- The Early Years (0-4 years-old)
- The School Years (5-17 years-old)
- The Adult Years (18+ years-old)

What are the three main things we should prioritise doing in:

- The Early Years (0-4 years-old)
- The School Years (5-17 years-old)
- The Adult Years (18+ years-old)

Are there any data sets not considered in this paper that should be used to monitor literacy achievement in:

- The Early Years (0-4 years-old)
- The School Years (5-17 years-old)
- The Adult Years (18+ years-old)

If you are a provider of a service, what kinds of guidance would you hope to see in the Community-wide Framework?

Are there any other comments you'd like to make?

