Support services

Targeted strategies: that enable frontline services to focus on delivering outcomes

Delivering resources to support year 7 to high school

Extra teacher aide support for Prep students

More convenient way for parents to interact with their school

Collaborative approach to planning for schools over next 20 years

High staff satisfaction and engagement

Less red tape for schools, staff, parents and community

Reducing red tape

We’re well on track to meet out target – already more than a third of the way there
Less red tape for schools, staff, parents and community means greater focus on improving outcomes for students
Our achievements

**Target strategies**

Strengthen learning outcomes through:

- collaborative policy development, which is future focused and improves outcomes
- investment, which is planned and targeted to maximise value and drive efficiency
- fit-for-purpose and future-focused infrastructure
- contemporary, cost efficient ICT
- reducing red tape

Successful learners

Progressive infrastructure and modern equipment form the basic foundation for the delivery of world-class education services. The department's infrastructure program funds new facilities to deliver additional services and upgrades to existing facilities essential to keep pace with technological change and new teaching and training practices. The department's current infrastructure across the state includes:

- 1234 state schools
- 26 environmental and outdoor education centres
- one sports education centre
- 153 early childhood facilities.

Major investment in education infrastructure during 2014–15 included:

- $111.9 million to complete the implementation of Year 7 as the first year of secondary schooling from 2015, as part of the Flying Start reform, including $24 million to continue the long term Year 7 component of the Brisbane State High School redevelopment, to be completed for start of school 2016
- $33.4 million to commence the redevelopment of Brisbane State High School, including $24 million delivered under the Flying Start program
- $10.2 million of the $28.8 million total infrastructure component to complete the implementation of the Building our Future Schools Fund to invest $115 million over four years to provide improved infrastructure and planning for government and non-government schools
- $21.1 million to complete the new secondary school at Highfields
- $8.7 million to continue Stage 2 at new Mackay Northern Beaches State High School
- $12.2 million to complete Stage 2 at Pimpama State Secondary College
- $45.4 million to replace and enhance facilities at existing schools
- $4 million of Australian Government funding to commence the upgrade and build 13 new training facilities for schools under the Trade Skills Centres Program in Queensland
- $5.1 million to continue the redevelopment of the Southport Campus at Gold Coast Institute of TAFE
- contribution of $49 million from the Capital Works Program to the South East Queensland (SEQ) Schools Public Private Partnership Project, with a new primary school in Pimpama and a new secondary school in Burpengary open for start of school in 2015.

In 2014–15 the department introduced a statewide prioritisation framework to enable an equitable and transparent process for prioritising capital works projects to ensure that any funding the department receives is directed to the areas of greatest need. An *Infrastructure Governance Framework* was developed which established financial risk management by preventing adhoc changes to works outside of formal approval processes, as well as transparency and probity that manages funding pressures. The *Infrastructure Governance Framework* consists of an Infrastructure Investment Prioritisation Committee (to prioritise the many projects competing for funding) and an Infrastructure Investment Board (to endorse the proposed program of prioritised works).
Statewide planning for Queensland schools

The Queensland Schools Planning Commission's aim is to help streamline and coordinate the processes for the planning, establishment and expansion of government and non-government schools across Queensland.

The department continued to work with the Queensland Schools Planning Commission in 2014–15 to strategically plan for school infrastructure throughout Queensland. The Commission has analysed projections for school-aged populations and released findings for where future schools could be needed across Queensland over the next two decades. The findings are presented via demand maps which are available at www.education.qld.gov.au/schools/schools-planning-commission/.

The cross-sectoral, consultative demand mapping activities initiated by the Queensland Schools Planning Commission will continue in 2015–16, to ensure the findings remain up to date with changes in demographics and population projections.

Queensland Schools Public Private Partnership Project

The department entered into a contract with the Plenary School Consortium, to design, construct, commission, partly finance, maintain and provide facilities management services for 10 new schools (eight primary and two secondary schools) in rapidly developing areas of South East Queensland (i.e. Brisbane, Gold Coast, Ipswich and the Moreton local government areas) until 2043.

The 10 new schools will cater for 10,800 students during peak periods of enrolment and employ up to 540 teachers and 130 non-teaching staff. The project is also expected to generate 1700 jobs a year during the five-year construction phase.

Construction of Stage 1 of the first two schools: a high school at Burpengary (Years 7-12) and a primary school at Pimpama (P-6) commenced in February 2014 and was completed for the start of the 2015 academic year.

Construction of Stage 1 of the next four schools (P-6) is underway at Caboolture West, Griffin, Pallara and Ripley Valley, and they are expected to be completed for the start of school in 2016.

South East Queensland Schools Public Private Partnership Project

New schools are being built through the South East Queensland (SEQ) Schools Public Private Partnership Project, to meet the needs of an increasing SEQ population. In April 2009, the department entered into a contract with the Aspire Schools Consortium to design, build and maintain seven new schools in the high-growth areas of the Sunshine Coast, Western Corridor, Gold Coast and Redlands. As at 30 June 2015:

- core construction for each of the seven schools has been completed
- planning is underway for Stage 3 at Peregian Springs State School, a 10-classroom block, which is expected to be completed in time for start of school 2016.

Asset maintenance

Well maintained facilities support student learning outcomes and the quality of the education and training experience offered in schools. Refurbishing and maintaining departmental assets is critical to ensure that those assets support contemporary service delivery. The department delivers both general and special maintenance programs to ensure that early childhood, school and housing facilities are repaired and maintained to meet the requirements of the asset base.

The Advancing our School Maintenance (AoSM) initiative invested an additional $200 million ($100 million each for the 2012–13 and 2013–14 financial years) to reduce the pre-existing maintenance liability of approximately $300 million in Queensland state schools. The Fixing our Schools Fund continued the momentum of addressing outstanding maintenance items by injecting a further $100 million into school maintenance in 2014–15.

As a part of the AoSM initiative, schools are now provided the choice to engage contractors directly to deliver planned and routine breakdown maintenance works, allowing for greater savings to be achieved to complete further maintenance in schools. Building and Asset Services continues to deliver high-risk maintenance
services including service maintenance, asbestos removal, management of asbestos incidents and emergency and disaster response maintenance, to all schools.

DET began pilots to improve program delivery, achieve value for money and provide better outcomes for schools. These include: developing a facilities management approach to delivering urgent repair and planned maintenance across a cluster of schools in the Roma area; developing a three-year renewal program of work for Roma State College focused on improving learning spaces at the school; and delivering better learning spaces at Cairns West State School by combining previously discrete programs of work into one overall package.

**Early childhood education centres and school facilities**

During 2014–15, the department's total net expenditure for early childhood education centre and school maintenance was $202 million. This comprised:

- $2 million for early childhood education centres
- $86.4 million for the School Annual Maintenance Program
- $80.8 million for the Fixing Our Schools initiative
- $16 million for the innovation fund
- $7 million to address fire hydrant compliance
- $9.8 million for targeted maintenance.

**Staff accommodation**

The department maintains 626 owned-facilities and leases 1718 facilities for accommodation at a cost of $29.1 million in leasing costs. Of the owned and leased facilities, 252 are located in remote indigenous communities. These facilities provide a total of 2344 units of accommodation. The provision of suitable and safe employee accommodation is a very high priority for the department.

In 2014–15 the department allocated:

- $2 million for the construction of a new duplex on Mornington Island
- $3.7 million for general accommodation upgrades on owned housing stock
- $4.2 million for employee housing planned- and unplanned-maintenance on DET-owned housing stock.

On 1 July 2014, the management of Government Employee Housing for the whole of government was transferred to and managed by the Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW).

The decision included the transfer of ownership of all employee housing assets of all departments to DHPW, with the exception of operational housing. Operational housing was defined as ‘dwellings that are located on or attached to an operational facility of a nature that would restrict the ability of the accommodation to be readily used by a wider group of government agencies’.

In accordance with this decision, the department transferred 1333 units of accommodation to DHPW on 1 July 2014, and retained ownership of 626 units of accommodation.

**Our information technology**

**Digital strategy 2014–17**

The digital strategy focuses on supporting business solutions and better educational outcomes through improved delivery of high quality, cost effective, contemporary ICT.

This technology-enabled business transformation facilitates a strong focus on the learning needs of Queenslanders, and positions the organisation to meet the following goals:

- delivering digital services through effective and efficient ‘as a service’ partnerships
- streamlining business processes to reduce administrative overheads and provide services through the customer’s channel of choice
• bridging the digital divide through improved access to teaching and learning resources, regardless of location, and improving information management skills and support for staff
• providing safe and secure ICT environments that support a personalised and collaborative digital experience
• empowering local decision-making through access to timely, well-defined and accurate information with enhanced capability to share information between other government agencies and our partners.

Bring your own device technical solutions

During 2015, the department has developed a technical solution to assist schools who have chosen to run a bring your own (BYO) program. The technical solution:

• checks BYO devices for appropriate anti-virus software
• allows BYO devices to automatically connect to school networks
• gives schools the ability to manage BYO devices so they can be isolated to prevent file-sharing
• secures school wireless networks and restricts unauthorised access
• offers simple yet secure sign-on for web browsing and web-based apps through transparent proxy authentication.

Computers for teachers

All permanent teachers in Queensland state schools who work two or more days a week are allocated a computer to support their teaching. In 2014–15, the department maintained a fleet of 40,474 laptops and provided 9743 additional and replacement laptops to school teachers.

This year the program expanded choice for schools. Schools can now choose between a standard laptop, ultra-thin laptop, MacBook Air, MacBook Pro or a Microsoft Surface. All devices are supported by the service centre with a dedicated help line for busy principals.

Messaging and collaboration program – Office 365

All Queensland state schools now benefit from using a new email and calendaring system, Office 365. Online communication in schools is enhanced with the modern, flexible and efficient messaging and calendaring features.

The migration of schools to Office 365 commenced in October 2014 and was completed by the end of May 2015, with more than 25 million items — such as emails, contacts and calendar events — moved into the new system.

Online learning systems

The department added mobile application support to the online learning management system in the form of Blackboard mobile learn. Mobile learn allows staff and students to access the department's online course content through mobile devices such as iPhones, iPads and android devices. Staff and students can access features as tasks, course content, grades, media, blogs and discussions.

Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C)

C2C units have continued to be produced and enhanced to support the delivery of the Australian Curriculum in Queensland schools. A modified version of the materials is available for the non-government school sectors through the National Online Learning System – Scootle.

OneSchool

OneSchool is the department's school management system. OneSchool supports schools in student management, curriculum and learning management, finance and asset management, resource management, and performance, reporting and analysis.
During 2015, the department:

- developed a student dashboard that provides teachers with all the information for each student in their class. Teachers are able to access individual subject results for the last two years, NAPLAN results, behaviour and attendance records
- enhanced reporting capabilities in OneSchool including integrating students with disabilities reporting into OneSchool
- integrated Individual Curriculum Plans (ICPs) to enable teachers to easily tailor a student’s requirements based on their learning needs
- delivered training across 41 OneSchool topics via face-to-face workshops.

Service centre

The number of service requests managed by the service centre has continued to increase.

By June 2015, an average of up to 232 jobs were submitted each day, peaking at 572 jobs in one day via Service Centre Online and processed by ICT Support. The ability for staff to lodge a job online has improved efficiencies and reduced response times.

Wireless upgrade project

The increasingly sophisticated use of laptops by students and eLearning materials in schools has driven the requirement for network access that could not be met by traditional cabling infrastructure.

The wireless upgrade project is a co-contribution scheme between schools and corporate services that provides for wireless access points, licensing and ensuring school infrastructure is fit for requirements. To date, over 90 per cent of all Queensland schools have opted to participate in this program. Twenty-five schools have had an upgrade performed in 2015, and it is expected that 350 schools will be upgraded in 2016.

NBN services

National Broadband Network (NBN) services have been implemented in a further 17 schools across Queensland, making the current total 34 schools. This service provides faster Internet connectivity and improved user experience of core systems, such as OneSchool and the Learning Place. NBN services are faster in most situations than existing technologies and present a cost saving to schools. The department will continue to work with NBN to ensure schools are migrated to these new services with minimum impact.

Online safety

During 2014–15, the department’s cyber-safety team has continued to provide schools with advice and support in investigating and managing school and staff reputation management issues, online safety concerns and incidents involving inappropriate online behaviours. The team responded to 339 incidents in 2014–15. Requests from schools for support and assistance in the use and misuse of social media have broadened from predominately involving students to issues affecting the online reputations of schools and individual staff.

Approximately 95 per cent of the assistance provided to schools related to the misuse of social media such as Facebook and Instagram. The department has developed cyber-safety resources to assist schools in involving their school communities in promoting the safe and responsible use of online technologies. These resources can be found online at www.qld.gov.au/education/schools/health/cybersafety.

During 2014–15, the team has provided significant support to schools through the delivery of online and face-to-face sessions on online safety awareness and maintaining a positive digital footprint, and has delivered a total of 149 sessions to an audience of 14,383 students, staff and parents.
Operational security

Throughout September 2014, an IT security campaign was run to boost staff and students’ understanding of IT security and its potential issues.

The department-wide campaign highlighted the many important elements of IT security by:

- sending 16,000 IT security posters to all state schools, regional and corporate offices across Queensland
- distributing 6000 Secure September-branded ‘viruses are not just on your hands’ hand sanitisers to staff
- presenting an IT security-themed web conference program to more than 400 registrants — most of whom registered on behalf of a classroom full of students
- pushing a favourites link to the iSecurity website to 340,000 department-owned workstations
- using various communications messaging and marketing strategies to generate 21,275 page views on the iSecurity website.

The operational security team was heavily involved in the preparation for the G20 summit, for which the department was recognised as best prepared agency by Queensland Government Chief Information Officer. Preparation included reducing the department’s exposure to external hacking and cyber-attacks by decommissioning all department Joomla websites, which do not enjoy the same security benefits as other platforms used by the department.

Online services to schools

The department has entered into a number of standing offer arrangements to supply online tools to support schools and business units. These include: online booking systems, library solutions, instructional software and survey systems. This enables schools to purchase these online tools at a discounted rate with the knowledge that these systems have undergone comprehensive departmental testing to ensure suitability for school use.

Red Tape Reduction Strategy

The department’s Red Tape Reduction Strategy:

- focuses on making it easier for our customers to deal with us and improving our customer focus through streamlined internal processes
- provides consistency of approach and avoids duplication
- outlines red tape reduction principles, responsibilities and projects.

Target strategies

Promote a high performance culture to attract, retain and develop a quality, agile, skilled and professional workforce

Empower leaders to be customer focused, high performing, innovative and accountable

Great people

The department has one of the largest workforces in the state government. As at 30 June 2015, DET had 83,984 employees, constituting approximately 65,706 full time equivalent (FTE).
Around 95 per cent of DET’s workforce is based in a school.

There are 1758 FTEs providing corporate services to the department, representing 2.7 per cent of the total workforce.

Main occupational groups in ECEC are:

- public servants 89.6 per cent
- senior officers 8.3 per cent
- SES officers 2.1 per cent.

Main occupational groups in DET education (which includes corporate services staff who also provide services to DET training) are:

- school teachers 64.8 per cent
- teacher aides 14.8 per cent
- public servants 12.1 per cent
- senior officers 0.2 per cent
- SES officers 0.1 per cent.

Main occupational groups in DET training and skills are:

- public servants 88.5 per cent
- senior officers 8.6 per cent
- SES officers 2.9 per cent.

DET’s workforce consists of:

- 70.3 per cent permanent
- 20.5 per cent temporary
- 9.2 per cent casual staff or on contract.

The department’s staff numbers are based on Quarter 2 Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI) point-in-time data.

The average age of departmental employees is 45 years, compared to 44 years across the Queensland Public Sector (see Figure 38). Queensland’s average state school teaching age is 43 years.
The staff retention rate for 2014–15 was 94.6 per cent, and the annual separation rate was 5.4 per cent.

In the 2014 School Opinion Survey, 95.4 per cent of school staff, including principals, agreed that their school was a good school.

The Working for Queensland Employee Opinion Survey conducted in April–May 2015 showed a high score of 85 per cent for job satisfaction and engagement across all employees of the department.


Strategic workforce planning

The One HR Plan 2015–18 establishes a clear focus for the department. It is designed to promote a high performance culture through strengthening our workplace practices, while empowering our leaders to be high performing, innovative and accountable. Fostering a culture of collaborative empowerment, our teams are focused on working together as a connected system to put customers first and deliver what matters. This One HR Plan 2015–18 is available at http://deta.qld.gov.au/publications/strategic/other/workforce09-11.html.

Attracting new employees

The department acknowledges the need to attract and retain a high-quality workforce in schools and the corporate sector to deliver world-class education and training services for Queensland. In 2014–15, the department employed more than 1707 graduates to permanent teaching positions, and created an additional 1080 teachers and teacher aide positions to meet enrolment growth in Queensland state schools and support students with disabilities.

Strategies were implemented during 2014–15 to attract and retain frontline staff, build capability, and value people in the early childhood, education and training workforce, including:

- continuing five Teacher Education Centres of Excellence to better prepare high-calibre preservice teachers
- continuing the expanded Remote Area Teacher Education Program, the community-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teacher education program, which supports Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people in remote communities in gaining professional qualifications
• continuing the Beyond the Range Professional Experience Grants initiative, providing preservice teachers with support to undertake professional experience in rural and remote schools
• implementing the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Teaching Scholarship program for final year undergraduate teachers to assist regions in meeting workforce demand for specialist teachers in high-demand curriculum areas and locations across Queensland
• continuing the Step into Teaching scholarship, supporting talented professionals to undertake postgraduate teaching studies complementing their existing undergraduate degree in high-demand areas, such as mathematics, physics and chemistry
• continuing grant programs to assist high-achieving Year 12 school leavers to undertake an approved initial teacher education program at a Queensland Higher Education Institute
• continuing the Pearl Duncan teaching scholarships to assist aspiring teachers who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander to complete an initial teacher education program
• continuing support of scholarship programs that support and increase the presence of qualified and registered teachers in the ECEC sector
• continuing to provide targeted incentives to teachers to work in rural and remote school locations through the Remote Area Incentive Scheme
• continuing an incentive scheme to attract and retain early childhood teachers in hard-to-staff services offering an approved Kindergarten program
• redeveloping the ‘Make a Difference. Teach’ marketing campaign, promoting teaching as a career of choice and employment opportunities across the state and across all sectors
• launching the ‘Teach. Rural’ and Teaching in Junior Secondary marketing and communication campaigns
• launching a dedicated ‘Make a Difference. Teach’ social media presence with Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter
• progressing the implementation of the Fresh Start strategy which focuses on:
  o attracting the highest quality applicants into the teaching profession
  o ensuring that they have the essential skills, knowledge and experience
  o supporting their transition from preservice to beginning teacher.

During 2014–15, the department further supported service delivery in state schools by:

• providing the equivalent of an additional 13.5 FTEs for teachers to provide relief across one-teacher schools from the start of the 2014 school year
• allocating 1080 teachers and teacher aides to meet enrolment growth and to support students with special needs in Queensland state schools. An additional 6527 teacher aide hours per week were also provided to primary schools to increase teacher aide support in their Prep classes.

Employee induction

Induction is an essential element of professional development, assisting employees to develop their performance and provide high-quality service. The DET Induction Strategy outlines our model for best-practice employee induction, which is provided locally and supported by regional offices and online resources including:

• DET induction website
• online mandatory induction program
• induction guidelines for Queensland state schools, central and regional offices
• induction planners for a wide range of employee groups
• principals’ induction website and resources.

Additional online resources to support the induction of beginning teachers are under development.

During 2014–15 the department developed a Principal Induction Program, a two-day central office face-to-face induction which aims to assist newly appointed first time principals to build their awareness, knowledge and capability in key leadership and management areas within the organisational context.

By engaging all new employees in consistent, contextualised induction programs, the department ensures they receive the information needed to develop their performance and provide high-quality service.
Flying Start HR Project

During 2014–15, the department successfully completed the movement of Year 7 into high school from the beginning of the 2015 school year under the Flying Start for Queensland children reforms. The Flying Start HR Project delivered key projects and initiatives related to the workforce under the Flying Start reforms, including the:

- launch of the Junior Secondary Connect Program to support permanent primary teachers transitioning to a secondary school in 2015
- establishment of a candidate pool of more than 7000 teachers for Junior Secondary settings in 2015, through a targeted marketing and communication campaign.

Improving teacher quality

Great teachers = Great results was a five-year action plan introduced by the former Queensland Government for Queensland schools which aimed to build on the strength of Queensland’s existing school funding model and focus on the most important piece of the education system – our teachers. The plan focused on two areas:

- professional excellence in teaching – elevating teaching standards across the board, rewarding high performance and positioning the highest-performing teachers where they are needed most
- boosting school autonomy – empowering and enabling school leaders and teachers to drive outcomes for students, including stronger discipline.

A modified program remains active under the current government to support the development and capability of our teachers and school leaders.

For more information on Great Teachers = Great Results and achievements during 2014–15, please refer to Great teachers = Great results in the School Education section of this annual report.

A Fresh Start: improving the quality and preparation of teachers for contemporary Queensland schools strategy is the Queensland Government’s response to the Teacher Education Taskforce Report and demonstrates a renewed commitment to addressing issues with teacher supply, initial teacher education and effective supervision, mentoring and induction. During 2014–15, the department achieved the following through the Fresh Start strategy:

- established formal agreements between schooling sectors and Queensland’s nine higher education institutes offering initial teacher education programs in order to strengthen professional experiences for preservice teachers
- developed a common Professional Experience Reporting Framework to assist in identifying high potential graduates for recruitment purposes, and to assist supervising teachers and mentors to provide feedback to preservice teachers about their performance
- developed the Statement of Graduate Expectations to ensure preservice teachers are aware of the skills, knowledge and attributes required for a high performing beginning teacher
- worked with the Queensland College of Teachers to strengthen governance processes to support implementation of the Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: standards and procedures within Queensland.

Prep teacher-aide initiative

The Prep teacher-aide four-year initiative gives Queensland’s Prep children the best start to their education and supports frontline teachers in doing what they do best. The program commenced in 2013 and targets Prep classes in areas of greatest need, including low socio-economic and rural and remote communities.

In 2013 and 2014, 176 schools with 538 preparatory classes were preselected to benefit from 4500 additional teacher-aide hours every week. In 2015, the third year of this initiative, a further 127 schools with 471 preparatory classes were preselected to benefit from the third allocation of 2250 additional teacher-aide hours every week. The schools allocated additional Prep teacher-aide hours in 2015 are listed on the department’s website at www.education.qld.gov.au/staff/development/employee/teacheraide/prep-teacher-aide.html.
Restart Teaching

Restart Teaching is a QCT accredited 30-hour professional development program. The program is designed for teachers who do not meet recency of practice (have completed less than 100 days of teaching in the five-year period of registration). Restart Teaching helps returning teachers to understand the current curriculum frameworks, teaching and learning practices, and legislative and legal responsibilities that are central to their work with students in contemporary school settings. In 2014–15, the Restart Teaching program was completed by 81 participants.

Performance and development frameworks

During 2014–15 the department continued to support the personal and professional growth of all employees through the provision of performance and development frameworks for staff at all levels of the organisation.

Teaching workforce

Teachers engage in the Annual Performance Review process, which is underpinned by the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework. This is the mechanism for teachers, through which performance and development conversations and planning occur to ensure continual improvement in teaching. The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers support the process.

The Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework and Australian Professional Standards for Teachers are available online at www.aitsl.edu.au/.

Non-teaching workforce

The department’s Developing Performance Framework provides a process for non-teaching, non-executive employees (including principals) to clarify what is expected of them in their role, identify their performance and development goals and career aspirations, and access support and relevant professional development. The framework is supported by:

- Public Service Commission’s Capability and Leadership Framework
- Principals’ Capability and Leadership Framework
- Deputy Principals’ Capability and Leadership Framework
- Head of Programs’ Capability and Leadership Framework
- mentoring and coaching initiatives.

Executive workforce

Executives engage in the Executive Performance and Development process, which is informed by the Public Service Commission’s Executive Performance and Development Framework.

Developing our leaders

The department continued to coordinate, support and strengthen the continuing professional and leadership development of all DET employees during 2014–15. Current and aspiring leaders developed their leadership capability through various programs and initiatives that fostered executive, school and public sector leadership including:

- nine executives engaging in the Executive Capability and Development Initiative
- 36 executives attending Public Service Commission Executive leadership development offerings
- delivering an Executive Coaching Program to 25 DET executives
- participating in the Leadership Capability and Development (LCAD) Initiative coordinated by the Public Service Commission
- continuing the Take the Lead Program to strengthen school leadership across Queensland, including structured professional learning opportunities that aim to raise participant awareness of the expectations of the role, and to develop skills and capabilities to perform highly in the role.
- delivering the Leading Change Program, to enhance change management capability within secondary school leadership teams in preparation for the transition of Year 7 into high school
- announcing the *Principals’ Leadership Agenda 2015*, outlining self-directed and targeted learning opportunities and development offerings, to ensure every principal continues to grow and learn
- supporting implementation of capability and leadership frameworks through the Developing Performance process
- developing performance team leader capability through online courses and practical performance conversations workshops
- delivering the Inspiring Leadership Program for AO6 to AO8 employees
- delivering the Working SMARTer Program for AO2 to AO5 employees
- maintaining a Workplace Coaches Register, comprising 23 trained internal workplace coaches.

**Improving attendance**

The department continues to monitor and implement strategies to improve the rate of employees’ attendance. The department’s overall attendance rate for 2014–15 was 95.8 per cent which exhibits a minimal decrease from 96.0 per cent recorded in the previous (2013–14) year.

*Figure 39: Attendance rate for Queensland state school teachers – by age group, 2014–15*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>98.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>97.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>96.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>96.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>94.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>93.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Education and Training

*Note:* The rate is based on total absent hours divided by available working hours using MOHRI methodology to allow for comparison to the QPS absenteeism rate.

**Early retirement, redundancy, retrenchment and voluntary separation**

During the period, 26 employees received voluntary early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment packages at a cost of $1,452,784.17, excluding accrued leave payments. Employees who did not accept an offer of a redundancy were offered case management for a set period of time, where reasonable attempts were made to find alternative employment placements.

**Target strategies**

- Promote innovative communication and engagement strategies to improve connections with customers, partners and stakeholders
- Foster collaborative partnerships across community, industry, providers, and government to lift learning outcomes

Engagement across our service sectors, with the community, industry and all levels of government is at the core of our success. As we already provide services using a range of mixed models, we will continue to work
with our partners to ensure corporate services alignment across the state to strengthen quality, facilitate better coordination, consistency and effectiveness.

Long term schooling strategies

In September 2014, 400 delegates, including parents, teachers, principals, education stakeholders and Members of Parliament, attended the Queensland Education Accord Summit to map out a 30-year education vision. A draft accord was released for public consultation on 2 December 2014. Views and feedback provided as part of the education accord process will inform the development of future long-term schooling strategies.

QParents

QParents is a web and mobile app that gives state school students’ parents secure online access anywhere, anytime, to a clear snapshot of their child’s schooling information. QParents was successfully trialled by 96 state schools in 2014–15, enabling those parents to:

- view attendance details, behaviour records, report cards, timetables, invoices and a history of payments online
- submit explanations for past absences and notify the school of upcoming absences online
- pay school invoices online
- update student details online, including residential and postal address, as well as medical conditions.

Websites for Schools

The Websites for Schools initiative offers state schools a solution for creating and managing a public website. During 2014–15, the Websites for Schools initiative launched approximately 60 websites, bringing the current total to more than 1340 sites.

The QSchools smartphone application integrates with Websites for Schools and has been downloaded more than 44,700 times over the year. QSchools provides an additional tool for schools to keep the school community engaged through the promotion of news, events and newsletters. The QSchools app has been enhanced with central and school-based push notification services. The app and school website were pivotal in supporting the communication between schools and their communities during the north and central Queensland weather events in early 2015.

One-stop Shop

The department supports the whole-of-government One-stop Shop through delivery of public-facing services and engagement points through online (qld.gov.au), phone (13QGov) and in person (counter service). Information relating to 135 departmental services is now being published online and through related phone scripts. A further 134 departmental transactional services were also identified and researched, with plans to deliver them through One-stop Shop in the coming financial year.

Target strategies

Drive improved performance through a focus on business improvement and innovation

Strengthen evidence-informed decision-making using performance data, research, review and evaluation

Promote accountability through good governance and ethical decision-making

Provide safe, healthy and inclusive work environments
Research and evaluation

The department works with universities and subject-matter specialists to undertake independent research in key areas of policy priority and client service delivery, and to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of major programs and initiatives.

The department’s Evaluation Strategy 2012–16 demonstrates the department’s commitment to accountability and performance improvement to strengthen service delivery. The department undertakes evaluations through a phased process with formal governance throughout to provide assurance on the quality and credibility of the evaluation. Findings of evaluations are available online at www.det.qld.gov.au/publications/strategic/evaluation/.

Code of Conduct and public sector ethics

The department maintains a positive ethical culture, demonstrating strong ethical leadership and ensuring employees are aware of their ethics-related rights and obligations. All employees are required to comply with the ethical principles, values and standards set out in the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994, (the Ethics Act) the requirements of the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service and the department’s Standard of Practice.

The ethics principles and values contained in the Ethics Act, the Code of Conduct and the Standard of Practice are reflected in the department’s human resource and other management practices, administrative procedures, policy instruments and plans, with which employees are also required to comply. The department’s planning is aligned to the ethics principles set out in the Ethics Act, with a clear line of sight from the department’s strategic plan to operational planning and individual performance planning.

During the reporting period, the department provided all employees with access to appropriate Code of Conduct, public sector ethics and ethical decision-making education and training via online and face-to-face modalities, regional training was facilitated locally, utilising resources developed by the department’s Ethical Standards Unit. Newly appointed employees take this training at induction, and others at regular intervals of no more than twelve months post-induction.

Better workplace relations

The department has continued to openly communicate and consult with staff, stakeholders and the unions that represent its workforce. The department is committed to resolving issues locally to ensure ongoing successful delivery of services across Queensland. The department participates in the State Government Departments Certified Agreement 2009, and is currently responsible for the following enterprise bargaining agreements:

- Department of Education, Training and Employment State School Teachers’ Certified Agreement 2012
- Department of Education and Training Teacher Aides’ Certified Agreement 2011
- Department of Education and Training (Education) Cleaners’ Certified Agreement 2011

Workforce diversity

Diversity and equity principles and practices are in place across our workforce. Programs are also implemented to recruit potential staff from the equal employment opportunity groups, and develop the careers of current departmental staff from diverse backgrounds. The department’s Diversity Online Training Program boosts understanding about anti-discrimination, disability awareness, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness, multicultural awareness and gender equity. The department also promotes diversity in the workplace by encouraging participation in celebrations of national and international events such as National Reconciliation Week and International Women’s Day, and by advertising the Queensland Multicultural Awards among employees.
Organisational safety and wellbeing

Creating a culture that supports and fosters safe and healthy working and learning environments is a priority. During 2014–15, the department:

- initiated a review of the department’s health, safety and wellbeing management system to ensure compliance with specified legislative and department policy requirements
- developed and delivered workplace health, safety and wellbeing strategies to manage key risk areas
- supported state schools with the Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment OneSchool module upgrade
- delivered training for industrial technology and design (ITD) teachers through two-day workshops incorporating theory and practical components. Courses were delivered in Cairns, Townsville, Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba and Metropolitan locations
- released five department specific ITD online courses and resources to support staff skills and knowledge. These provide nationally recognised units of competency for staff
- conducted more than 1000 audiometric assessments in line with the department’s hearing conservation program, including service delivery to schools in Metropolitan, Far North and Darling Downs South West regions, and delivered individual healthy hearing education and strategies for risk management
- undertook occupational noise monitoring for staff working in schools officer roles
- implemented program and training enhancements to the MyHR Workplace Health and Safety online incident recording system, and online curriculum risk management training, so as to enhance usage and usability by school and other staff
- established a contract for all department employees to have access to external employee assistance counselling, manager assistance and on site trauma support services. In addition, external assistance counselling is also available to immediate family members of department staff
- enhanced the existing employee seasonal influenza flu vaccination program by establishing arrangements with three providers
- reviewed the existing processes for responding to and supporting employees with psychological injury claims
- partnered with the University of Queensland to facilitate staff participation in a research project assessing the effect of workplace-based exercise in reducing neck pain in the workers
- facilitated workplace rehabilitation, return-to-work and early intervention programs for injured/ill employees.

The department’s WorkCover claims during 2014–15 totalled 3337 claims.

Since 2012, the department has achieved a 21 per cent reduction in the average days taken for employees returning to work. This has been achieved through effective partnerships with WorkCover Qld and treating doctors, as well as through engagement and early intervention. This illustrates the success of the department’s return to work strategies, which are modelled on research supporting the principle of recovery at work.
Complaints management system

The department has a robust and contemporary complaints management system (Resolve) for managing the employee misconduct, student harm complaints, employee complaints and some complaints that are categorised as ‘customer complaints’ under s.219(A) of the Public Service Act 2008 (the PSA). This system provides for timely, efficient and detailed case management of matters received and links internal and external reporting and monitoring agencies. The system also allows for the detailed analysis of complaints data that in turn further supports DET’s positive ethical culture, assists in reducing instances of employee wrong-doing in the workplace, and improves service delivery to clients.

Through this system, misconduct-related complaints which, if proven, could result in disciplinary action are registered, assessed, investigated and/or managed locally whilst being monitored centrally.

Alongside Resolve, an electronic complaints referral platform, iRefer is the department’s preferred lodgement tool for misconduct-related complaints. An enhanced version of iRefer was released in late 2014, making complaints lodgement easier, faster and more efficient.

Both the Resolve and iRefer systems will be further enhanced during 2015–16, with a focus on meeting customer needs and streamlining transactions, to achieve greater efficiencies, enhanced capabilities and an improved user interface.

The department’s ‘customer complaints’ under s219A of the PSA can be obtained from the open data website www.data.qld.gov.au.

Stakeholder satisfaction with ICT resources

Results from the 2014 School Opinion Survey showed that 94.1 per cent of students agreed that they used computers and other technologies at their school for learning, while 95.7 per cent agreed that they can access computers and other technologies at their school for learning. Additionally, 91.5 per cent of students agreed that they were encouraged to use computers and other technologies at their school for learning, and 93.9 per cent agreed that they enjoyed using computers and other technologies at their school for learning.

Of the school staff who responded to the survey, 92.6 per cent agreed that they can access necessary information and communication technologies to do their job at their school and 90.8 per cent agreed that information and communication equipment is well maintained in their school. Additionally, 95.8 per cent of
teaching staff agreed that they have the required skills to use the necessary information and communication technologies to do their job in their school.

Corporate Procurement Plan 2014–18

The department’s Corporate Procurement Plan 2014–18 supports the principles of the Queensland Procurement Policy. The plan outlines a number of key initiatives aimed at strengthening governance arrangements, building the procurement function, and implementing business systems to improve process efficiency and enhance procurement analysis and reporting capabilities. The department’s procurement plan is available online at www.det.qld.gov.au/procurement/.

Internal Audit

Internal Audit assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of departmental financial and operational systems and activities, as well as provision of assistance and identification of deficiencies in risk management. The Head of Internal Audit reports to the Director-General, and also to the Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC) which meets quarterly, and operates with due regard to Queensland Treasury’s Audit Committee Guidelines. Internal Audit operates in accordance with its charter, which was developed to comply with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing and the Financial Accountability Act 2009.

Internal Audit delivers an annual plan approved by the Director-General. During 2014–15, Internal Audit completed:

- 474 school audits including independent public schools
- 28 general audits
- eight information systems audits.

Internal Audit also audited several financial acquittals, and provided adhoc advice on a wide range of issues, including information systems.

An external quality assessment review of Internal Audit is carried out in accordance with the above international standards.

Achievements of Internal Audit during 2014–15 included:

- completion of a comprehensive risk-based Annual Audit Plan providing professional and timely advice to management and clients, including assurances over projects
- enhancing internal audit reporting and collaboration with management, to address department risks using pragmatic solutions
- supporting departmental reform through completion of a program of regional audits focussed on governance and service delivery processes
- enhancements to data analytics to broaden the scope of computer assisted audit techniques to identify and report exceptions to management in an efficient manner
- participation in the department’s Fraud and Corruption Control Committee to enhance governance and accountability frameworks to mitigate the risk of fraud, and proactively detect fraud through targeted data analytical procedures
- participation in key department working groups to contribute to risk identification and mitigation perspectives
- consistent receipt of positive feedback on the audit and advisory services from client satisfaction surveys
- following up Queensland Audit Office (QAO) audit recommendations to assess progress and completion.

External scrutiny

The Auditor-General is responsible for the annual audits of public sector clients, including DET. The Auditor-General provides Parliament with independent assessment of activities in the public sector. Information about Auditor-General, and other significant external audits and reviews of the department during the 2014–15 financial year, is available in Appendix 4.
Public interest disclosure

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 (PID Act) aims to promote the public interest by facilitating the disclosure of wrongdoing or danger in the public sector. The department recognises the important role disclosers play in contributing to an ethical workplace culture and is committed to encouraging a positive reporting environment by ensuring PIDs are dealt with in a thorough and timely way and by offering support and protection to anyone who makes a disclosure in accordance with the PID Act.

The department publishes all policies and procedures relating to PIDs on its website. In addition, a range of fact sheets to assist individuals to make a PID under the PID Act have also been developed. The factsheets, along with the relevant policies and procedures, are available on the department’s Policy and Procedure Register at www.ppr.det.qld.gov.au/corp/hr/management/Pages/Making-and-Managing-a-Public-Interest-Disclosure-under-the-Public-Interest-Disclosure-Act-2010-(Qld).aspx.

The Queensland Ombudsman is the oversight agency responsible for monitoring the management of PIDs. The department is required, under the Public Interest Disclosure Standard No 1, to provide Queensland Ombudsman with information, in electronic form, about the receipt, management and outcome of all PIDs received.

Managing asbestos-containing material in DET facilities

The department’s Asbestos Management Plan provides the operational context for and provides clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities in the management of asbestos and any incidents that may arise. The department also continued asbestos management and awareness training to all staff responsible for the management of sites where facilities have assumed or confirmed asbestos-containing materials. The training covers the department’s policy for the management of asbestos in the department’s facilities, asbestos management procedures and information about the Built Environment Materials Information Register. This training will be ongoing and delivered through regional institute inductions. Further information about asbestos management can be found online at www.education.qld.gov.au/asbestos.

Risk management and business continuity


Business continuity planning aligns with the Standard for Business Continuity – Managing Disruption-Related Risk (AS/NZS 5050:2010) and ensures the department is well prepared to maintain critical services following adverse disruptive events. The department’s Business Continuity Management Framework is available at www.det.qld.gov.au/corporate/business-continuity.html.

Response to Tropical Cyclone Marcia

In February 2015, Tropical Cyclone Marcia hit the Queensland coast line as a Category 5 system. This event affected a number of schools across a large geographical area and required the support of school, regional and central office staff, school communities and community organisations, stakeholders and partner agencies to support our students, staff, schools and communities to recover.

The department’s response and recovery to this event included:

- implementation of the department Incident Control Centre to provide operational management of the event
- partnering with Building and Asset Services to open five evacuation centres – Mt Murchinson State School, Jambin State School, Murgon State School, Yeppoon State High School Cyclone Shelter, Emu Park State School
- deploying two disaster recovery trailers and technicians within 48 hours of the cyclone to provide ICT for 13 schools
- increased information on the employee assistance program and leave entitlement to affected regions
- placing additional infrastructure services staff to the affected areas.
The department reviewed its response to Tropical Cyclone Marcia in 2015 to improve and refine our processes so that we can strengthen our systems for the future. A senior working party has been formed to oversee the implementation of the recommendations. The department has commenced implementing the recommendations and is reviewing the CEO's Directive regarding *Temporary Closure of State Instructional Institutions in Emergency Situations* and the existing emergency management materials. This work will continue in 2015–16.

**Information systems and recordkeeping**

All DET records are 'public records' as defined under the *Public Records Act 2002*. Physical and electronic records are necessary for business operations, accountability requirements, and to meet community expectations. The department applies whole-of-government information policies and standards to departmental records, and continues to progressively implement the requirements of *Information Standard 40: Recordkeeping*. Effective document and records management provides:

- reliable access to information assets
- informed decision-making
- cost-effective use of information resources
- business continuity
- compliance with legislation
- compliance with departmental policies and procedures.

The department uses an electronic Document and Records Management System (eDRMS) to manage its documents and records. The eDRMS assists departmental officers in corporate areas to effectively manage all types of corporate records. To promote effective recordkeeping and use of the DET eDRMS, staff have access to content available on the department's intranet including comprehensive recordkeeping training tips and fact sheets. Recordkeeping awareness is also promoted through the compulsory Keys to Managing Information courses, available to all staff.

In 2014–15, the department:

- reviewed its recordkeeping policies
- in collaboration with Queensland State Archives, reviewed the Retention and Disposal Schedules for early childhood education and care, education, and VET records
- commenced implementing the General Retention and Disposal Schedule for Administrative records version 7, released by Queensland State Archives in March 2014.