2023 Annual Report

Garah Public School

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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2023 is provided to the community of Garah Public School as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the Strategic Improvement Plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

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School vision

At Garah Public School we are committed to providing students with high quality learning experiences and opportunities that encourage them to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active, informed members of society. We actively encourage and promote a school culture underpinned by the beliefs of respect, responsibility and personal best.

School context

Garah Public School is a small rural school located 50 km north-west of Moree in the Barwon Network.   It is a school that provides education for students of the town and local farming community.

 The school takes pride in offering a safe, enjoyable, engaging and challenging learning environment for students from Kindergarten to Year 6. It fosters a culture of high expectations and quality curriculum delivery for all students. Our learning programs focus on differentiated teaching within a team-teaching classroom environment. Students have a high level of access to current technology and strong social inter-school networks.

Our core values of 'Respect, Responsibility and Personal Best' underpins and supports student development in all stages and subject areas. Learning in all KLAs is supported through the strategic access to technology, thus linking students to real world learning opportunities.

Garah Public school enjoys positive and productive partnerships and committment from the whole school community. Students are given opportunities to participate in significant extra-curricular opportunities, often in partnership with Boomi Public School.

Current staffing includes: Teaching Principal, Part-time Classroom teacher, Part-time School Administration Manager (SAM), Part-time General Assistant and a Part-time Student Learning Support Officer (SLSO). All teaching and non-teaching staff work collaboratively to support all key stakeholders. The school has a family atmosphere where all of the students interact and learn from each other in a supportive and caring environment.

We have a current enrolment of 13. Our school Family Occupation and Education Index (FOEI) is currently 139.

This Plan 2021-2024 is based on rigorous self-assessment leading to three strategic directions: student growth and attainment, building future focused quality educators and strong partnerships and connections.

Self-assessment and school achievement

This section of the annual report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework and participated in an external validation. The Framework is a statement of what is valued as excellence for NSW public schools, both now and into the future. The Framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

Each year, we assess our practice against the Framework to inform our Strategic Improvement Plan and annual report. Every four years, our school undergoes an external validation process.

During the external validation process, an independent panel consisting of a Principal, School Leadership and a peer principal considered our evidence and assessment of our school's progress against the School Excellence Framework.

Our self-assessment and the external validation process will assist the school to refine our Strategic Improvement Plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework: https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/school-excellence

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2023 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Curriculum	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Assessment	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Reporting	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Delivering
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Professional standards	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Learning and development	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Educational leadership	Delivering
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: School resources	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Sustaining and Growing

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

To engage students in innovative, quality experiences which focus on learning and improvement in Reading and Numeracy.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Reading
- Numeracy
- Attendance

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

AP Curriculum & Instruction

Summary of progress

Reading

All teachers took part in professional learning to deepen their understanding of evidence-based strategies to effectively teach elements of reading, including the focus areas of reading fluency and connecting ideas. Teachers embedded this professional learning into teaching programs, introducing a fluency program using School Magazine and Reading Progress application in Microsoft TEAMS. Teachers also utilised Universal Hub resources to strengthen student understanding in the focus area of connecting ideas throughout their English units. Reading fluency, particularly among the 3-6 cohort, has improved when assessed using the fluency assessment tool. Students demonstrated growth in the area of connecting ideas as measured by NAPLAN and internal assessments. A shortage of staff did not allow adequate time to analyse data and regularly update PLAN2.

Numeracy:

All teachers took part in professional learning to deepen their understanding of evidence-based strategies to effectively teach fractions and proportional reasoning. Teachers embedded this professional learning into teaching programs, along with Universal Hub resources. Students were assessed using the IFrS Proportional Thinking using sections 1 and 2 as appropriate. As result, student achievement in NAPLAN and Term 4 check-in demonstrated improved understanding in this focus area. A shortage of staff did not allow time adequate to analyse data and regularly update PLAN2.

Attendance:

Attendance was consistently monitored and parents notified verbally, and in writing, when attendance concerns arose. Resources from the Attendance Matters website were also utilised on school media including Facebook and in newsletters. As a result, the number of students attending school more than 90% of the time increased.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
Increase the percentage of students attending school >90% of the time to be at or above the lower bound system-negotiated target of 70%	The number of students attending school 90% of the time or more has increased.
All students can demonstrate Numeracy growth and achievement using annual data captures in Check In Assessment as demonstrated in improved scores from 2022 to 2023.	Individual student tracking indicates growth in numeracy Check In Assessment data and numeracy progressions. Cohort size does not allow the publication of percentages however individual student progress is reported directly to parents and carers throughout the year.

All students can demonstrate reading growth and achievement using annual data captures in Check In Assessment as demonstrated in improved scores from 2022 to 2023.	Individual student tracking indicates growth in reading Check In Assessment data and literacy progressions. Cohort size does not allow the publication of percentages however individual student progress is reported directly to parents and carers throughout the year.

Strategic Direction 2: Building Future Focused Quality Educators

Purpose

All teaching staff will ensure the highest priority is given to evidence-based teaching strategies.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Evidence-based effective teaching

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Professional learning
QTSS release
Socio-economic background
Aboriginal background
Low level adjustment for disability
Per capita
Location

Summary of progress

Curriculum Reform:

Teachers completed professional learning through the Curriculum Reform Communities to gain a deeper understanding of the curriculum reforms and the evidence-base that underpins the new curriculum. English and mathematics teaching in our K-2 classroom is based on the multistage K-2 units produced by the DOE with lessons differentiated for individual students or groups of students where necessary. A firm understanding of the 3-6 multi-stage units has been established through professional learning and these units will be used in 2024. The development of a new K-6 scope and sequence for English and mathematics has not been established due to the late release of curriculum support materials by the DoE.

Explicit teaching practices and feedback:

Teachers completed Semester 1 and Semester 2 Strategic Delivery Curriculum Implementation professional learning. As part of this learning, teachers developed evaluative inquiry cycles using learning intentions and success criteria, and descriptive feedback. As a result of this learning, evidence of these strategies were incorporated into their teaching and learning programs. Students have demonstrated a greater capacity to self-assess using success criteria and growth in student learning in the focus areas of writing and mathematics was apparent for all students. Support from Curriculum Advisors was useful at a school level to implement changes within the classroom. Teachers will continue to pursue professional learning in this area in 2024.

Collaborative Practices:

Garah Public School is an active member of the Barwon Community of Schools. Teachers have undertaken collaborative professional learning and planning as part of this network initiative this year. This has ensured the positive approach to curriculum reforms and the successful implementation of NSW DoE English and mathematics units in our K-2 classroom. Due to lack of staffing proposed Quality Teaching Rounds in conjunction with other schools in the Barwon COS did not take place. Students have undertaken learning with Boomi Public School and Mungindi Central School on numerous occasions throughout the year. We also had the opportunity to be involved in the Amplify music day with Croppa Creek and North Start Public Schools. Students thoroughly enjoy the socialisation and differing learning opportunities these visits offered.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement

• teaching and learning programs provide evidence of curriculum knowledge and evidence based teaching strategies • expert use of feedback and formative assessment are observable in all contexts, as evidenced through classroom observation and teacher self-reflection data. • all students have a clear understanding of their progress and how to improve. This is evidenced by student feedback and engagement data. • wellbeing	Teaching and learning programs were based on syllabus documents and demonstrated a strong curriculum knowledge of our teachers. Teachers used evidence-based teaching strategies garnered from the Universal Resource Hub and professional learning to ensure teaching strategies meet the needs of individual students. Teachers undertook professional learning to develop their skills and knowledge when providing descriptive feedback to students based on learning intentions and success criteria (LISC). This is an area on which teachers further need to build their kills and confidence to ensure that students using self-assessment strategies to monitor their own progress. Teachers undertook professional learning and implemented inquiry cycles to introduce the visible learning strategies of LISC. Students have deepened their understanding of the use of learning intentions and success criteria to ensure their understanding of what they are learning and how they are progressing in their learning. The Grow Your Mind program was implemented in both the K-2 classroom and the 3-6 classroom. This program provided students with the social and emotional strategies to understand their reactions to situations and ways to lessen their anxiety and heighten their resilience. Students demonstrated strong involvement in the program and are continuing to implement strategies they have learnt when faced with challenges. Wellbeing will continue to be a focus for our students.
Student assessment data is regularly used school-wide to identify student achievements and progress, in order to reflect on teaching effectiveness and inform future school directions.	Student assessment data is gathered through internal and system generated assessments and tracked using the national literacy and numeracy progressions on PLAN2. Due to limited availability of casual staff to provide classroom teachers with adequate time, difficulties have been experienced entering data on a regular cyclical basis. The leadership team regularly discussed data and collaboratively identified areas of student need both within cohorts and for individual students. This allowed the leadership team to analyse the efficacy of teaching and learning programs.

Funding sources	Impact achieved this year
Socio-economic background $21,424.22	Socio-economic background equity loading is used to meet the additional learning needs of students at Garah Public School who may be experiencing educational disadvantage as a result of their socio-economic background. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:** • Evidence-based effective teaching • Other funded activities **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:** • Reading • Numeracy **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Through the engagement of additional School Learning Support Officer (SLSO) employment, student learning was personalised, at point of need, with lesson delivery support provided by SLSO. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** Continued engagement of SLSO to support teachers to embed differentiated personalised learning to support all students.
Aboriginal background $5,142.06	Aboriginal background equity loading is used to meet the specific learning needs of Aboriginal students at Garah Public School. Funds under this equity loading have been targeted to ensure that the performance of Aboriginal students in NSW public schools, across a broad range of key educational measures, improves to match or better those of the broader student population, while maintaining cultural identity. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:** • Evidence-based effective teaching • Other funded activities **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:** • employment of additional staff to support literacy and numeracy programs **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Through the employment of additional staff, Aboriginal student learning was differentiated at point of need, with lesson delivery support provided by SLSO. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** Continued employment of SLSO to support Aboriginal student learning.
Low level adjustment for disability $18,022.52	Low level adjustment for disability equity loading provides support for students at Garah Public School in mainstream classes who have a disability or additional learning and support needs requiring an adjustment to their learning. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:** • Evidence-based effective teaching • Other funded activities **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:** • providing support for targeted students within the classroom through the employment of School Learning and Support Officers

Low level adjustment for disability $18,022.52	**The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Student learning was personalised, at point of need, with lesson delivery support provided by SLSO. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** Continued employment of additional support staff to support students' individual learning needs.
Location $13,525.77	The location funding allocation is provided to Garah Public School to address school needs associated with remoteness and/or isolation. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:** • Evidence-based effective teaching • Other funded activities **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this operational funding include:** • student assistance to support excursions **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Financial assistance allowed students to have learning experiences outside of the immediate school environment, including day excursions, overnight excursions, swimming program and visits to other schools to take part in programs and socialise with other students. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** Continue to support students to have learning experiences outside of the immediate school environment.
Professional learning $6,715.52	Professional learning funding is provided to enable all staff to engage in a cycle of continuous professional learning aligned with the requirement of the Professional Learning for Teachers and School Staff Policy at Garah Public School. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:** • Evidence-based effective teaching • Other funded activities **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:** • teacher relief for staff engaging in professional learning **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Teachers have gained valuable knowledge of curriculum reforms and evidence-based teaching strategies. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** Continue to seek professional learning opportunities for teachers to deepen their knowledge of evidence-based teaching strategies.
QTSS release $2,604.10	The quality teaching, successful students (QTSS) allocation is provided to improve teacher quality and enhance professional practice at Garah Public School. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:** • Evidence-based effective teaching • Other funded activities **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:** • additional staffing to support staff collaboration in the implementation of

QTSS release $2,604.10	high-quality curriculum
	The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: Improved staff confidence and teaching practice. Teachers have implemented strategies from high impact professional learning (HIPL) as part of inquiry cycles.
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: Teachers will continue to undertake HIPL and be support to implement learnt strategies into their teaching and learning programs.
COVID ILSP $11,927.00	The purpose of the COVID intensive learning support program is to deliver intensive small group tuition for students who have been disadvantaged by the move to remote and/or flexible learning and were identified by their school as most likely to benefit from additional support in 2023.
	Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • Other funded activities
	Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include: • Student participation in the online Covid Intensive Learning Support Program (CILSP).
	The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: The CILSP Online has allowed equity for our students. As a remote school we have difficulty attracting staff, particularly for part time positions. Students received targeted support and learning opportunities which has been invaluable.
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: Participation in the small group online tuition in 2024 for identified students with targeted learning needs.

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Boys	7	8	7	8
Girls	6	6	6	6

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2020	2021	2022	2023
K	81.2	83.1	95.6	94.3
1	77.8	97.7	86.3	97.8
2	90.6	79.5	90.1	95.9
3	74.4	87.9		94.3
4	81.8	97.2	95.6	
5	83.7	58.8	92.3	94.4
6	95.7	70.5	72.5	94.4
All Years	82.7	81.3	88.6	94.9
State DoE				
Year	2020	2021	2022	2023
K	92.4	92.8	87.9	91.1
1	91.7	92.7	87.4	90.5
2	92.0	92.6	87.8	90.8
3	92.1	92.7		90.9
4	92.0	92.5	87.4	
5	92.0	92.1	87.2	90.3
6	91.8	91.5	86.3	89.8
All Years	92.0	92.4	87.3	90.6

Attendance

NSW student attendance data in 2020 is not comparable to other years due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSW Government encouraged students to learn from home, where possible, for a seven week period from 24 March to 22 May 2020. During this period, schools monitored engagement with learning to determine whether students were marked present. This changed the attendance measure. There was also some evidence of varied marking practices as schools adjusted to the learning from home period, with some schools recording higher attendance rates while others recording markedly lower rates.

Attendance figures from 2021 were calculated differently to align with the third edition of ACARA's National Standards for Student Attendance Data and Reporting. Changes include treating partial absences over 120 minutes as a half day absence (instead of their actual value, calculated as a proportion of a nominal 6-hour day) and covers all weeks during Semester 1. Prior to 2021, the final week of Term 2 was excluded.

Furthermore, the department implemented an automated attendance feed (AAF) system in Semester 1 2021. AAF transfers data automatically from third-party attendance management systems to the department's centralised data warehouse every night. The AAF significantly improved data quality in 2021, which has affected data comparability with previous years.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2021, COVID-19 continued to affect student attendance. Analysis of attendance codes showed a change in the structure of absence reasons in 2021.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2022, student attendance was impacted by a range of factors:

* Families evacuating and relocating due to NSW floods

* Sick students staying at home until a negative COVID-19 test was returned

* Household members testing positive to COVID-19

* The easing of COVID-19 border controls at the beginning of 2022 which allowed families to travel inter-state and overseas.

While there were no lockdowns or learning from home periods in Semester 1 2023, there was still a high prevalence of sick attendance codes as students were encouraged to stay home if they were even slightly unwell. Advice for families were still in place, recommending students and staff to stay home when sick and only returning to school when they were symptom free. (See https://education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/covid-19/advice-for-families for advice).

Management of non-attendance

Attendance at school has a big impact on longer term outcomes for children and young people. When a child is not at school they miss important opportunities to learn, build friendships and develop their skills through play. Regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between schools and parents. By working together we can have a positive effect on supporting our children and young people to regularly attend school.

Our teachers promote and monitor regular attendance at school and all our schools have effective measures in place to record attendance and follow up student absences promptly. They are guided by the School Attendance policy which details the management of non-attendance.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	0.2
Classroom Teacher(s)	0.61
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.1
Teacher Librarian	0.08
School Administration and Support Staff	0.8

*Full Time Equivalent

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce composition

The department actively supports the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees through the use of identified positions, and scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2023, 2.5% of the department's overall workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school workforce composition

Staff type	Benchmark[1]	2023 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation[2]
School Support	3.00%	3.60%
Teachers	3.00%	3.40%

Note 1: The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019-2025 takes a career pathway approach in that it sets an ambitious target of 3% Aboriginal employment at each non-executive grade of the public sector by 2025.

Note 2: Representation of diversity groups are calculated as the estimated number of staff in each group divided by the total number of staff. These statistics have been weighted to estimate the representation of diversity groups in the workforce, where diversity survey response rates were less than 100 per cent. The total number of staff is based on a headcount of permanent and temporary employees.

Teacher qualifications

All casual, temporary and permanent teachers in NSW public schools must hold a NSW Department of Education approval to teach. Teachers with approval to teach must be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority, and hold a recognised teaching degree. All NSW teachers must hold a valid NSW Working With Children Check clearance.

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning is core to enabling staff to improve their practice. Professional learning includes five student-free School Development Days and induction programs for staff new to our school and/or system. These days are used to improve the capacity of teaching and non-teaching staff in line with school and departmental priorities.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with department policy requirements.

	2023 **Actual** ($)
Opening Balance	116,371.69
Revenue	558,965.25
Appropriation	541,801.75
Sale of Goods and Services	821.81
Grants and contributions	11,935.21
Investment income	4,406.48
Expenses	-513,230.40
Employee related	-437,512.45
Operating expenses	-75,717.95
Surplus / deficit for the year	45,734.85
Closing Balance	162,106.54

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

Financial summary - Equity loadings

The equity loading data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' line item of the financial summary above.

	2023 **SBAR Adjustments** ($)
Targeted Total	0
Equity Total	44,589
Equity - Aboriginal	5,142
Equity - Socio-economic	21,424
Equity - Language	0
Equity - Disability	18,023
Base Total	394,091
Base - Per Capita	3,383
Base - Location	13,526
Base - Other	377,182
Other Total	56,618
Grand Total	495,298

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

School performance - NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Go to myschool.edu.au to access the school data.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Informal anonymous surveys of students and parents indicated that students agreed that teachers provide a supportive and encouraging environment where they believe they are challenged in their learning, and that they can approach teachers to discuss things with them. Parents believe that students have a sense of belonging in the school, that teachers get to know students individually and that the school has a welcoming and inclusive culture.

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Policy requirements

Aboriginal Education Policy

The responsibility for enacting the Aboriginal Education Policy rests with all departmental staff. The policy should underpin and inform planning, teaching practice and approaches to educational leadership in all educational settings.

Evidence of effective implementation of the policy included:

- Establishing, building and strengthening relationships with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal people and communities.
- Providing, in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities, education which promotes quality teaching, is engaging, and is culturally appropriate and relevant.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will match or better the outcomes of the broader student population.
- Implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways for all Aboriginal students in a school culture of high expectations.

Anti-Racism Policy

All teachers are responsible for addressing incidents of racism and supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact these may have on individuals and the broader community. The Principal is responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy. The school has an Anti-Racism Contact Officer who is trained to respond to concerns in relation to racism.

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers are responsible for addressing the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that school policies, programs and practices respond to the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the school community, and provide opportunities that enable all students to achieve equitable education and social outcomes.