# Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND .................................................................................. 3
2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES ..................................................................................................... 5
3. PROJECT METHODOLOGY ............................................................................................... 5
4. EMERGING FINDINGS ....................................................................................................... 7
5. DISTILLATION OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICES .................................................................... 29
6. NEXT STEPS .................................................................................................................... 34
7. REQUIRED DELIVERABLES FOR PHASE 2B .................................................................. 36
STRATEGIC REVIEW OF THE OUTCOMES OF EVALUATIONS OF LITERACY AND NUMERACY PROGRAMS
NSW Smarter Schools National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy
Progress Report Phase 2

1. Introduction and Background

The Bilateral Agreement between NSW and the Commonwealth Government required an evaluation of the reforms undertaken through each of the Smarter Schools National Partnerships. Evaluations are designed to guide future education policy and funding decisions, to support management and monitoring efforts at school, system and sector levels, and to inform the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on the impact and success of the reforms and how best to sustain them.

New South Wales’ evaluation strategy has two components:

- Major strategic evaluations, contracted on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education, and managed through the Secretariat to the Centre for Education and Statistics (CESE) Advisory Council
- Specific program level evaluations, commissioned by the NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) and managed through the DEC Student Engagement and Program Evaluation Bureau (SEPEB).

Erebus International have already been contracted on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education to undertake a major strategic evaluation of the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership (NPLN) – Evaluation of the takeup and sustainability of new literacy and numeracy practices in NSW schools (DETSSNP 1027).

The major focus of the current project (referred to as Phase 2 of the main NPLN evaluation in this document) is analysis of the outcomes of the eight program level evaluations, which examined literacy and numeracy programs implemented in the government and Catholic school sectors, through the NPLN. Four of these evaluations were conducted by Urbis Pty Ltd, while the remainder were evaluated by SEPEB, as follows:

**Evaluated by Urbis Pty Ltd:**
- Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN)
- Multilit
- Mindful Learning Mindful Teaching
- Focus on Reading 3-6

**Evaluated by SEPEB:**
- Accelerated Literacy
- Individual Learning Plans
The relationship between the various phases of the NPLN are shown in figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: Outline of NPLN Evaluation stages**

Analysis of the outcomes of the program level evaluations in Phase 2a includes:

- A comparative overview of the findings of the program level evaluations in order to inform decisions about literacy and numeracy programs and practices at both local school and system/sector level
- Identification of local and system/sector-level contexts in which each program works best for students
- Identification of factors such as effective support mechanisms for planning and implementation which facilitate enhanced student outcomes for each program
- Examination of the cost-effectiveness of the programs.

It is intended that the findings of this project are of use to individual schools, beyond the NPLN in informing their selection and implementation of the most relevant and effective programs for their particular circumstances, as well as informing systemic decision making/policy.

The deliverables of this project include the development of an online resource to effectively share information and advice with schools across the government, Catholic and independent sectors.

It should be noted that in analysing the eight program evaluations that it has been recognised that the NPLN was of a relatively short duration (i.e., 18 months), and consequently the impact on student learning outcomes may not have been as strong as other outcomes, e.g. in teacher competence and confidence. It is also acknowledged that the original NSW requirements for the NPLN included schools selecting both a whole school (Yrs 3-6) approach which was complemented by an intervention for the students most at risk. The whole school programs were designed to be preventative whereas the intervention program was to support the students who were at risk.
analysis therefore focuses on the factors that contributed to the level of success observed rather than on the impacts observed on the level of student outcomes measured in the evaluations.

2. Project Objectives

This project is designed to:

- undertake a comparative analysis (Phase Two (a) of this project) of the findings of recently completed program level evaluations as well as
- develop an online resource for schools (Phase Two (b) of this project) to facilitate sharing of the major findings of this overall comparative analysis.

Phase 2a

Phase 2a will result in a report that has, as its primary purpose, informing and advising on key policy implications from the collective results of recent evaluations of literacy and numeracy programs implemented in NSW schools.

It is noted that the implications of the analysis of the above will be relevant cross-sectorally (even though the program evaluations themselves only occurred in the government and Catholic sectors). (It should be noted that Independent schools did participate in the Erebus Phase 1 survey of schools and school case studies, and will participate in the development of materials for Phase 2b of this project).

The Phase 2a Progress Report of June 2012 (this report) provides documented progress in relation to each of the deliverables highlighted above.

Phase 2b

The findings from Phase 2a will make a direct contribution to the major activity in Phase 2b, namely, the development of a user-friendly online resource to effectively share information and advice drawn from the Strategic Review of outcomes of evaluations of literacy and numeracy programs with schools across the government, Catholic and independent sectors (Phase 1).

The resource will be tailored to take into account local and system/sector-level contexts in which each program works best for students. It will identify effective practices that facilitate enhanced student outcomes in literacy and numeracy.

3. Project Methodology

Erebus has undertaken the following methodology to address the aims of the project:

1. Desk Analysis

Initially, the desk analysis was driven by each of the key research questions outlined below:
I. Which factors or contexts have enabled the most significant improvements for student outcomes for each program? Which programs appear to be best suited to a range of different circumstances?

II. What factors have hindered significant improvement in student outcomes, and to what extent have they been/could they be addressed?

III. To what extent has each program resulted in significant ongoing improvements in teacher confidence and capacity to teach core literacy and core numeracy skills?

IV. Have schools developed or changed their practice in identifying, monitoring and tracking students who are selected for these literacy and numeracy programs?

V. What is the relative cost effectiveness of the programs and what are the ongoing cost implications of sustaining these programs in schools?

VI. Are there any conclusions to be drawn about the relative effectiveness of withdrawal programs?

One-to-one interventions vs whole class programs?

The desk analysis has involved the Erebus team in undertaking a comprehensive content analysis of each of the eight Program Evaluation reports. In light of the above evaluation questions, the content analysis was undertaken to identify:

- Common trends in evaluation findings relating to factors leading to success in numeracy/literacy (e.g. leadership actions, school culture, classroom pedagogy)
- Gaps in knowledge arising from an analysis of findings from the eight evaluations
- Approaches towards the use and implementation of the funded programs that contribute to enhanced outcomes for students
- The relationship between teacher support and student success with the funded programs.

In drawing conclusions from the desk analysis, consideration was also given to findings from the broader evaluation of the implementation of the NPLN and the Cross-sectoral Impact Survey.

2. Interviews with System Representatives

The results of the desk analysis enabled more in-depth inquiry into the key evaluation questions. In the first instance, individual interviews were undertaken with identified representatives from each of the government, independent and Catholic school sectors. These interviews had a dual purpose:

- To validate the findings emerging from the meta-analysis of the eight program evaluation reports,
- To identify related initiatives within each sector that contribute to the achievement of enhanced student outcomes in literacy and/or numeracy,
- To identify examples of good practice in National Partnership schools, employing one or more of the funded programs under consideration.
It should be noted that the materials developed for these interviews could not be developed until the desk analysis described above had been concluded. The interviews took the form of a workshop over an approximately two hour period in which system/sector representatives worked with Erebus International to identify any gaps (particularly in relation to system/sector implications), and any known examples of good practice in relation to the specified programs. This also added to the bank of materials to be considered for the online resource.

**The Findings to this stage of the Methodology are represented in this First Progress Report**

3. **School Case Studies**

The data from the above two steps will provide a basis for more comprehensive validation of findings through school case studies, accompanied by examples of good practice in relation to the use and implementation of the funded programs. More specifically, visits to schools will also be employed to begin to assemble practical examples relating to the identified success factors, that can be used in the interactive online resource. Using the key evaluation questions as a guide, schools invited to participate in case studies will be asked to involve relevant members of the school community in sharing examples of good practice.

For these reasons, the ten schools invited for case studies will not be randomly selected but identified through consultation with relevant system stakeholders as schools “with a story to tell” in relation to how they have enhanced student outcomes in literacy/numeracy. Importantly, the focus in these schools will be on the range of initiatives they have taken in their school improvement journeys, using the funded programs and related effective practices as a vehicle of change.

Based on each of these data gathering strategies, the evaluation team will have developed a bank of findings and examples of effective practice that can be employed to develop an interactive online resource, designed to assist school leaders and classroom teachers to make informed choices (in light of their own school contextual characteristics) about enhancing student learning outcomes in numeracy/literacy in their own school settings.

4. **Preparation of Final Report for Phase 2**

A final report for Phase 2 will be produced by the end of December 2012, which includes the following:

- An overview and comparative analysis of the findings of all eight program level evaluations
- Examples of effective practices occurring in selected National Partnership schools that can be employed in the development of the online resource
- Identification of the next steps in the development of the online resource, including outline of content to be included.

4. **Emerging Findings**

1. **Findings from Program Evaluations**
The findings outlined below represent the journey undertaken to this stage in the identification of effective practices from the eight intervention programs as well as related data from the other major evaluations undertaken concurrently.

As a result of the analysis of the findings of the eight program evaluations, the following matrices were developed representing key findings around each of the key research questions. Findings have been organised in the following way:

Table 1: Organisation of Presentation of Program Evaluation Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table number</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Program Evaluations included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Multilit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accelerated Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading to Learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on Reading 3 to 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>Quicksmart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other tools and approaches</td>
<td>Mindful Learning Mindful Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Learning Plans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that it is not intended to directly compare the results from the various programs, which represent a variety of different approaches. For example, Multilit and Quicksmart are designed as individual intervention programs rather than whole class literacy or numeracy programs. Mindful Learning Mindful Teaching is a whole school approach to pedagogy, while Individual Learning Plans are a tool for assisting identification of student needs and monitoring progress. What is possible to note from this diverse collection of resources is the factors which appeared to have contributed to the level of outcomes observed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Multilit</th>
<th>Accelerated Literacy (AL)</th>
<th>Focus on Reading 3-6</th>
<th>Reading to Learn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Which factors or contexts have enabled the most significant improvements for student outcomes for each program?** | Intervention is structured to work effectively with “low progress” readers. In the current study, “low progress readers” have been identified based on students’ most recent NAPLAN scores. The program leverages off best practice and current research in reading, and addresses each of the five areas of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary. MULTILIT would appear to work best when:  
- Provision can be made for intensive one on one instruction  
- The approach is clear, explicit and prescriptive (despite the extensive variations in the current | Caveat: Only the Reading component of AL was examined.  
School choice to select the program rather than “Regional imposition” of the program enhanced teacher enthusiasm.  
Requires for maximum effect, a whole school approach to teaching literacy. Therefore suits those contexts best where there is active support from the Principal, and teachers seek to improve reading literacy levels at a whole class level, rather than through withdrawal.  
Relies strongly on scaffolded learning from year to year through a teaching sequence focused on in-depth analysis of ‘literate’ | Focus on Reading 3-6 is an intensive professional learning program for teachers to support the explicit teaching of the key aspects of reading in the middle and upper primary years; namely comprehension, vocabulary and reading text fluency. The program draws from a sound research base that justifies the need for these key aspects to be at the forefront of literacy teaching and learning in the middle years. The program requires ongoing support and school leadership drive, and highlights the importance and use of:  
- rich texts, particularly subject-based texts, multi-modal texts and the types of texts that interest and motivate | Similar in intent to Accelerated Literacy, this program is designed to enable students from all backgrounds to read texts in all areas of their school curriculum, with full comprehension. Reading to Learn promotes a cross curricula and cross year approach to learning to read and write, through engaging with fiction and non-fiction texts.  
The intention is to involve all students in common activities, creating a class environment in which all students are continually engaged in reading for pleasure and in successful completion of literacy tasks. The schools involved in this sample also employed other reading interventions concurrently with Reading |
Students are effectively engaged. The MULTILIT tutor has been well trained to understand the philosophy of MULTILIT. There is a close link between the classroom literacy program and individualised interventions. The reading program integrates with such areas as spelling, comprehension and writing. There is an ongoing budget for teacher professional learning and casual relief to Learn so it is difficult to make clear judgements about the overall efficacy of the intervention. However, it is reported to have had the following improvements:

- Improved students’ confidence in reading
- Increased student capacity to use a variety of strategies to develop comprehension
- Enabled student transfer of literacy skills and strategies into other key learning areas
- Extended the diversity of texts that students were engaged in reading both in and out of school.
In particular, the program has helped schools in the following ways:

- greater clarity about the school's goals and expectations re reading outcomes;
- greater transparency and consistency in the way literacy is taught in the school;
- more explicit and focussed teaching of reading;
- most teachers in the schools are now using the teaching strategies in their everyday teaching across the KLAs.

| Which programs appear to be best suited to a range of different circumstances? | The evaluation demonstrates that the preferred approach to MULTILIT is highly structured, explicit and systematic. Despite “variations on the theme”, many students not only demonstrated reading gains but also increases in confidence, reading | The advantage of this program is that it has been developed to operate in a whole class context and does not require withdrawal. | The program is most suitable in any circumstance where there is a whole school commitment towards:
- Ensuring that the reading ability of students in the school must be enhanced
- All members of staff being prepared to engage in extensive professional development |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The evaluation clearly demonstrated that this program would work most effectively when two key ingredients are present:
- A whole school approach that ensures all staff members are familiar with the program and its style of implementation
- Strong leadership and commitment from the school administration |
enjoyment, and attitudes to reading and schoolwork.

development and collaborative planning to enhance pedagogy relating to teaching reading, including the preparation of tailored resources to assist students with their reading

planning to ensure the approach is adopted with fidelity and by the whole school staff

The program can be adapted to a range of different learning contexts however the overall purpose remains the same: reading and writing challenging at students’ own year level

The strong emphasis on “scaffolding learning” provides a sound platform, according to the evaluation data, for teachers to transfer this skill to the teaching and learning of other KLAs. Many teachers identified this transition.

| What factors (could) have hindered significant improvement in student outcomes, and to what extent have they been/could they be addressed? | The evaluation worked best when an explicit approach was adopted. Despite this, the evaluation revealed considerable variability in length of sessions (often too short), number of sessions (often too few), and the content and strategies | Very few factors cited in light of enhanced reading skills by almost all students as reported by participating teachers. Improvements generally endorsed by both students and parents. | A lack of teachers’ commitment towards professional learning could have a detrimental impact on students’ reading due to the absence of appropriate pedagogy for teaching reading skills. This can be readily addressed where | Difficult to make judgements due to the reported mismatch of perceived student outcomes between external test measures and internal assessments by various members of the local school community. While NAPLAN
employed (eg in 10% of schools MULTILIT Reinforced Reading was rarely or never used).

These issues could have been addressed through closer executive supervision as all Tutors were thoroughly trained and understood requirements.

**Outcomes for Aboriginal students**

| Results for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students were similar. The results were seen to have been a consequence of the one on one model and highly structured approach. | Both NPLN and NAPLAN data reveal higher gain scores for Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal students, in terms of both general literacy skills and reading and comprehension skills. Improved attendance rates also noted for many Aboriginal students. Relevant texts also were | Only a relatively small percentage of the students were Aboriginal, but teachers of these students indicated that tests indicated no major difference in outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. | Evidence based on teachers’ sample reports ranged from identifying improvement in reading and comprehension skills for most or all Aboriginal students (half of the sample) to reports that there had been improvement in reading skills by some Aboriginal students. Clear impact of the program is not definitive for Aboriginal students. |

professional commitment to learning targeted reading strategies for students is a priority.

results highlighted minimal student improvement, internal assessments from Principals, teachers etc were much more positive.

Despite these limitations student engagement with reading and writing were widely accepted benefits of the program. Data clearly demonstrated that the overall impact of the program was directly related to the school leadership commitment and the accompanying whole school planning, or lack of it.
| To what extent has each program resulted in significant ongoing improvements in teacher confidence and capacity to teach core literacy and core numeracy skills? | Variable impact on staff due to the interruptions to class routines. Despite this, some teachers report enhanced knowledge, awareness, confidence and skills in teaching reading, particularly in relation to use of student data and targeted approaches to reading. | Principals report the following teacher impacts:
- Increased commitment and enthusiasm to the teaching of reading
- Increased leadership capacity throughout the school
- Increased staff collaboration and collegial trust |
|---|---|---|
| | The program is reported to have enhanced teachers’ pedagogy in the following ways:
- A deepened understanding of comprehension strategies and the links to comprehension, vocabulary knowledge and text reading
- A deepened understanding of effective teaching of reading
- Increased belief in teachers’ ability to improve literacy outcomes of all students
- Increased belief in teachers’ ability to improve the literacy outcomes of low achieving/disadvantaged students
- Deepened understanding of the nature and needs of literacy learners in Years 3-6 |
| | Given that the program required large amounts of teacher time in the establishment and development of new teaching sequences, commitment and confidence levels were high because of the perceived impact on students’ reading skills. |
| | More specifically, teachers reported the following professional benefits of their participation:
- Being more reflective about their own practice, across all their teaching
- Being more discriminating in selecting topics and resources to address student interest and needs
- Increased ability to develop well-structured lessons, using more explicit teaching strategies
- Feeling better prepared to assist students. |

| Have schools developed or changed their practice in identifying, monitoring and tracking students who are selected for these literacy and numeracy programs? | Use of student data for monitoring student performance is now more common in some schools and is cited as a key learning for some teachers. In some other schools, teachers’ learning has been inhibited by the disruptions to routines and heavy expectations of following a prescriptive approach. | Principals report that teachers have developed an increased understanding of SMART data and the use of quality assessments to make judgements about students’ tracking and progress, resulting in more accurate assessments and diagnoses of students’ reading needs. | Identifying, monitoring and tracking students re reading is not seen to be one of the key planks of the program although it is part of the overall training and teachers do receive some assistance in this area. | Where whole school implementation was the focus, the cohesion of staff and the commitment to a whole school approach was readily evident. In contrast, for some schools in the sample it created divisions and antipathy among staff. Three major factors appears to have contributed to the differences in impact:  
- the variation in quality of initial teacher professional learning experiences  
- ongoing support that either contributed to negative perceptions, or alleviated their effect  
- the length of time over which training took place, influencing how soon a |
### What is the relative cost effectiveness of the programs and what are the ongoing cost implications of sustaining these programs in schools?

Consistently reported that this program requires an ongoing budget for intensive staff training and updating of Tutors, casual relief and the ongoing purchase of physical resources.

These practical realities have reduced the level of acceptance of the intervention in some schools.

Schools generally chose to train all members of staff in a six day training program (3 sessions of 2 days); significant costs for training and provision of causal relief unless undertaken on weekends or school holidays, which is unlikely in most schools.

Costs for training minimised in some cases by the use of DEC Regional trainers. After-hours time employed by many schools to engage in resource development and programming.

Despite this, considerable costs were deployed on resources, ITC and consumables to implement the program. These are recurring costs.

This program requires an extensive budget due to the fact the training program requires 16 days over 2 semesters. It also involves considerable disruption to class routines due to the ongoing absence of classroom teachers.

In addition a budget is required for the employment of casual relief during the extensive training periods.

The data indicates that staff training (including part-time and temporary staff) for this program is not only necessary but also should be undertaken concurrently because of the range of relevant conversations that it promotes. The costs for relief should therefore be carefully considered, in light of the advantages.

In addition, teachers stressed the importance of “a whole school buy” if the program were to have the desired traction of addressing student reading skills were to be achieved.

### Are there any conclusions to be drawn about:

| Highly recommended that the program be implemented on a one to one withdrawal basis | Program is designed as a whole class approach, while assisting Aboriginal specifically within the | Not applicable to this program | While the program is not founded on a withdrawal strategy but a whole school approach, some small |

|
| The relative effectiveness of withdrawal programs? | Classroom to enhance reading capability. | Schools reported difficulties in using the program in composite classes including: the need to address a broad range of student needs arising from age and relative ability, the need to plan continuously over a two or three year cycle, and the demands of doing extra preparation. |
| Are there any conclusions to be drawn about: | While later follow up can occur on a whole school basis, interventions occur exclusively in a one to one context. | Not applicable to this program. |
| One-to-one interventions vs whole class programs? | While some schools used a one on one approach within the classroom, most commonly a whole class approach was employed among the 28 schools in the evaluation. | The program is designed to take a whole class perspective and therefore works most successfully in this learning context. Training for teachers relating to this program also emphasised a whole classroom/whole school approach, even though the program may be adapted for one to one interventions within the classroom setting. |
Table 3: Program Evaluations: Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which factors or contexts have enabled the most significant improvements for student outcomes for each program?</th>
<th>Quicksmart</th>
<th>TOWN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| As a ‘second chance’ program for students, this initiative is designed to particularly assist those students performing in the bottom 30% of the state in numeracy. Over a 30 week period the program focusses on quick recall of number facts and performance of basic computation skills. It commences at an appropriate level for the students’ current level of ability to ensure that they don’t lose face, and then works intensively in a withdrawal one-to-one format to enhance numeracy skills. Peer modelling is seen to be a key aspect for learning growth amongst students who would be suited to learning style characterised by systematic lockstep approaches. The program teaches the key values of persistence, risk taking and the social skills of empathy among students and therefore has transfer ability as a new pedagogy across a range of key learning areas. | The major focus of this initiative is to enhance the skills of teachers in relation to identification of students’ numeracy needs and the development of specific teaching programs to address those needs. Some evidence of enhanced student progress in numeracy also but particularly in those settings where schools are prepared to adopt a whole school approach, actively engage in professional development and develop lesson plans and related resources. In order to enhance student outcomes from the initiatives, the following suggestions were made:  
• Further pre-planning, preparation and testing of the program prior to launching in schools  
• Providing an easy online system to allow schools to share resources they have developed (and any tips about how to use them), and to publicise these to other schools  
• Providing funding to cover the off-class time for the TOWN Coordinator, including at least half-time at critical periods of the program’s implementation  
• Investigating further strategies to allow for more face-to-face and hands on support to |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which programs appear to be best suited to a range of different circumstances?</td>
<td>The program can be used with any group of students from kindergarten to adult because it commences at the students' current level and then engages them intensively during the instruction period. The program works most effectively when it includes all six of the key components of the integrated package.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What factors have hindered significant improvement in student outcomes, and to what extent have they been/could they be addressed?</td>
<td>A key determinant for the success of the program is the principal's ongoing leadership support and commitment. Without this hands on and active leadership the program is potentially threatened. During its implementation it also requires close oversight by a member of the school executive to ensure that quality pedagogy is delivered to ensure enhanced student learning outcomes. Without the focus on deliberate practice, the impact of the program would be limited.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**schools to implement the program**
- Considering reducing the cost of participation in the program to a level which will be seen as providing 'value for money' by schools
- Considering other mechanisms to encourage greater information-sharing and support between schools at a regional level

**The program is specifically suited for students whose performance is below average, particularly in key concept of place value.**

**The program can be employed both in a whole class setting and on an individual case management basis. The individual case management component of TOWN involved teachers recording interactions between teachers and individual students, uploading these to the TOWN website, and receiving emailed advice from one of a team of TOWN case managers.**

**The evaluation clearly demonstrates that TOWN has had a positive impact on schools and delivered numeracy outcomes for teachers and, in some cases, students. Overall, the evidence indicates that the whole school component of TOWN has been an effective program which has delivered outcomes for teachers (in terms of improved understanding and ability to teach numeracy) and the NSW schools in which it was implemented. The evidence regarding the impact on student outcomes is more mixed and**
Each of these factors that are potential inhibitors is addressed during the intensive training program for those delivering the initiative. equivocal, however, depending on the data source(s).

There was a strong view about TOWN by a number of school staff that there ‘wasn’t enough to it’, that it was too thin and high level, and did not provide enough ‘value for money’. This may have contributed to less than desirable outcomes for some students. Because it relates to the overall nature and structure of the program, it could be difficult to remedy this situation.

The evaluation indicates that the individual case management component was the least successful aspect of the TOWN program. It was not used very much at all (only 136 instances over the entire program), and it did not work very effectively as a source of support to schools. This was for a range of reasons including technical difficulties relating to making and uploading the video recordings of students, and the perception that the advice provided by the case managers was not seen as useful (in terms of providing very specific, practical guidance about how to work with the particular student) or as timely as it could have been.

| Impact on Aboriginal student learning outcomes | Outcomes exactly the same for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, with both groups showing improvement although NL NP data demonstrated greater improvement than NAPLAN. | The evaluation does not indicate differential impacts of TOWN on Aboriginal students. Teachers are mainly of the view that TOWN works equally well with both Aboriginal and |
The analysis of the NAPLAN and NPLN data by Aboriginality did not provide any evidence to counter this view. For the NAPLAN data, the gain scores for Aboriginal students were slightly higher than for non-Aboriginal students, but the reverse was true for the NPLN data.

To what extent has each program resulted in significant ongoing improvements in teacher confidence and capacity to teach core literacy and core numeracy skills?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Whole school component of TOWN had a positive impact on teachers’ pedagogy for teaching numeracy. Greatest impacts related to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>increased belief in teachers’ ability to improve numeracy outcomes for all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>increased understanding of the importance of place value as a key numeracy concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>increased willingness to participate in shared reflection and discussion of numeracy teaching with other staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The program has also had a positive impact on a number of key elements of teaching practice, including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>increased use of and capacity to differentiate students and identify students in need of targeted intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>greater collaboration and ability to reflect on teaching practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>use of more and additional numeracy teaching resources and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>greater knowledge about and confidence in teaching numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

 Program has had a positive impact on both teachers and teachers’ aides who have been trained and involved in the implementation of the program.

The program taught teachers a new approach to pedagogy that focused on initial diagnosis of student needs, preparation and use of student learning plans and the ongoing use of student data to track progress. Each of these factors has also been able to be transferred to other key learning areas enhancing the capacity of teachers not only in numeracy at other subjects as well.
| Have schools developed or changed their practice in identifying, monitoring and tracking students who are selected for these literacy and numeracy programs? | In those schools where a whole school approach has been adopted, a culture of using student data for monitoring and tracking students is developing. | The quantitative and qualitative consultations indicated that in most schools there have been major changes in school practices around numeracy teaching, including being more explicit and focused, having greater clarity around outcomes, and greater consistency and transparency. Such positive changes however do not necessarily lead to changed practices in identifying, monitoring and tracking students who are selected for these literacy and numeracy programs. |

| What is the relative cost effectiveness of the programs and what are the ongoing cost implications of sustaining these programs in schools? | A number of elements have been identified as contributing to the success of the program which are not necessarily cost-based. These include:  
- selecting and retaining the right tutors  
- building strong relationships between the school and the tutors, between teachers and tutors and between tutors and their students  
- regular monitoring of student progress using school-based assessments, Quicksmart assessments and to a lesser extent, SMART data  
- quality training, promoting teacher and tutor confidence in implementing the program  
- establishing a program coordinator to provide dedicated program support to tutors, students, | Each program is resource intensive. For the purposes of this initiative, implementation of TOWN included an initial two-day training workshop in Sydney, the TOWN website, the TOWN materials (including assessment tools), NSW DEC TOWN staff and regional maths consultants, and Regional Facilitators. While 75% of survey respondents felt there was a clear pathway for this, in the qualitative consultations staff expressed more mixed views about whether this would happen in practice, in the absence of dedicated funding. This may reflect the fact that schools have found that effective implementation of TOWN requires a quite resource-intensive approach, driven by a |
class teachers and parents
While some of the above are expensive to implement, training also appeared to be relatively expensive: for example, trainees attend three two day sessions, and a one-day workshop is also expected for principals. As existing staff leave, there would be an expectation that new staff would have to be trained. While it appears this approach has been adopted to minimise costs, the amount of $2000 per student has been proposed by the developers of the program.

skilled Coordinator with a fair amount of time off-class.
The evaluation suggests that success factors which will make it more likely that the TOWN approach to teaching numeracy will be sustained in schools include:
- the degree to which the TOWN approach has been embedded into numeracy teaching at the school
- whether schools have developed an effective set of teaching resources associated with the program
- having a training strategy for new and existing staff
- the availability of resourcing through other channels
Each of these has a cost implication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are there any conclusions to be drawn about the relative effectiveness of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Withdrawal programs?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As this program is a second chance program aiming to change neural pathways, it will be most effectively delivered in a withdrawal one-to-one situation. It has been explained that it is very difficult to reach the appropriate depth in a whole school classroom to change neural pathways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>One-to-one interventions vs whole class programs?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As above, the program is not suited to a whole class approach but rather a one-to-one intervention focusing on students performing in the bottom 30%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The initiative can be implemented at both whole class and individual levels. Yet the evaluation found that the “individual case management” approach was the least successful in terms of both use and support to schools due essentially to the need for uploading the video recordings of students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Program Evaluations: Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which factors or contexts have enabled the most significant improvements for student outcomes for each program?</th>
<th>Mindful Learning</th>
<th>Mindful Teaching</th>
<th>Individual Learning Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Because MLMT was not a program per se, schools identified that a major advantage was the flexibility to adapt the teaching and learning to a variety of factors, including student need and learning context, to facilitate students’ reading comprehension.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This has resulted in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Greater enthusiasm for and confidence in reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enhanced understanding of reading comprehension strategies and how to use these to enhance skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Greater willingness to discuss what has been read</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In both data sets (NAPLAN and NPLN assessments), slightly higher reading score gains were achieved than for students across most other NPLN literacy focus schools.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improvements were noted in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• enjoyment in reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• reading fluency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• improved social skills and behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• transfer of skills learnt to other Key Learning Areas (KLA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• enhanced attitudes to homework.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variability of outcomes influenced by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• model for providing targeted activities for identified students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• selection, qualification and management of tutors or personnel working with individual students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• provision of training to tutors and others involved in the implementation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These have occurred for the following reasons:

- teachers being more active participants in the learning process
- better use of data and accountability
- greater professional dialogue among staff
- greater consistency with teaching strategies for the individual students across the school
- greater involvement by parents and the community in educational outcomes and school planning

### Which programs appear to be best suited to a range of different circumstances?

The strength of this program is that it closely aligns student learning need with teacher strategy, irrespective of school circumstance. More specifically, it is underpinned by:

- Use of student data as the foundation for teacher planning
- Explicit teaching of students’ reading comprehension strategies
- The acquisition only of texts that actively engage students

Each of the seven schools implemented a literacy program as their whole-class intervention, and as a consequence the Individual Learning Plans were literacy-based. See Table in exec summary

### What factors *could* have hindered significant improvement in student outcomes, and to what extent have they been/could they be

Key inhibiting factors would appear to be:

- Poor leadership

The following factors were identified as potential inhibitors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What factors <em>could</em> have hindered significant improvement in student outcomes, and to what extent have they been/could they be</th>
<th>The following factors were identified as potential inhibitors:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lack of funding for the purchase of appropriate texts and training of teachers in the approaches required to deliver the MLMT model  
- Fragmented rather than whole school focus to drive the change  
- Resistance by teachers to try new ideas  
- Lack of teacher collegiality and cooperation resulting in isolation of staff  
- Inability to use data to meet the needs of all students in the class.

- Poor quality tutors and uninformed support staff  
- Poor school leadership  
- Lack of a whole school commitment to the change and its process  
- Inadequate funding  
- Lack of on task time for students

| Outcomes for Aboriginal students | Only around 6 students in all MLMT schools identified as Aboriginal. Given this is such a small sample, it is not possible to draw any conclusions from this evaluation on the impact of MLMT on the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students. During school visits, staff generally said that MLMT was as effective for Aboriginal students as it was for non-Aboriginal students because MLMT looked at the individual needs of students and responded to those needs. | Improvements identified in general literacy outcomes and in reading and comprehension skills. NAPLAN data indicates that gain scores for Aboriginal students involved in ILPs were slightly higher than those for non-Aboriginal students. NPLN assessment data indicates that the gain scores for Aboriginal students were similar to those for non-Aboriginal students. |
| To what extent has each program resulted in significant ongoing improvements in teacher confidence and capacity to teach core literacy and core numeracy skills? | MLMT is reported to have specifically enhanced teachers’ knowledge, skills and attitudes about teaching reading comprehension. Teachers also report that, due to this development, they are more targeted in their classroom pedagogy with students whom they identify as having difficulties with reading comprehension. | Evidence of changed practice:  
- goals and activities chosen for ILPs are related specifically to students’ background and learning needs  
- assessments used with ILPs provided evidence of where support is needed |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have schools developed or changed their practice in identifying, monitoring and tracking students who are selected for these literacy and numeracy programs?</th>
<th>The following teacher actions are reported to be occurring more frequently:</th>
<th>Key changes in teacher practice included that they:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - tracking and monitoring individual students allowed teachers to intervene when needed  
- evidence for intervention and improvement in skills now based on quality data rather than on incidental observation only. | - Explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies  
- Encouraging students to demonstrate deep understanding of texts  
- Strategic selection of texts  
- Participating in a cycle of teacher observation, including feedback and reflection | - have become more reflective on their teaching practice  
- feel more confident in the use of data to identify student learning needs and inform planning  
- focus more on specific literacy skill sets based on identified student need. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the relative cost effectiveness of the programs and what are the ongoing cost implications of sustaining these programs in schools?</td>
<td>While the program has in-built flexibility, its strong focus on teacher professional learning through e.g. teacher observation, will require funds for teacher release. Without access to school funds for ongoing teacher release, the ongoing impact of the program would be minimised. ILP’s considered to be a very resource intensive strategy, especially when delivered on a one to one basis. Funding to allow for teacher relief to develop ILPs, for purchase of resources and for employment of the extra staff required, was seen as the major impediment to sustainability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any conclusions to be drawn about the relative effectiveness of withdrawal programs?</td>
<td>MLMT does not rely specifically on withdrawal but a whole school approach to reading comprehension, which occurs, in situ, in teachers’ classrooms. A common strategy when employing ILP’s but resource intensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-to-one interventions vs whole class programs?</td>
<td>Strong preference for a whole school/whole class approach, but where appropriate using ILPs as a key teaching/learning tool. One to one is very beneficial when using ILP’s but very costly to maintain in the longer term due to additional staffing requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Distillation of effective practices

While the analysis of the eight program evaluations revealed a wide range of effective practices, these were initially organised around responses to each of the key evaluation questions for this project (see Tables 2, 3, 4 above).

In seeking to further validate these findings, the effective practices were then examined in light of the information gleaned from the recently completed Erebus project entitled “Evaluation of the take-up and sustainability of new literacy and numeracy practices in NSW schools” (April 2012). This resulted in an extensive list of effective practices that appeared to have related to the implementation of literacy and numeracy across National Partnership schools in all three sectors.

An initial examination of these practices revealed that they occurred at many different levels of educational operation, from system/sectoral initiatives to one on one settings with individual students.

Consequently the following typology was developed according to effective practices occurring at the following four levels:

- System/sector
- Whole school
- Classroom/teacher
- Individual student

Each of these categories was established for two reasons. In the first instance the groupings enabled a more meaningful understanding of the effective practices. Secondly, it became evident in discussions with Regional and sector representatives, that effective practices were most commonly successful when a range of practices was implemented simultaneously from various categories.

Consultation with representatives from sectors (as well as System) resulted in animated discussions and ultimately deletions, additions and refinements to the wording and terminology of each of the principles of effective practice.

Importantly, participants in each of these sessions represented educators from every level, from policy makers, through school executives and Regional consultants to part time teachers. As a result of these discussions, the effective practices were presented in the categories outlined below. This process has now resulted in a version which is ready to be shared with schools that may participate in the next stage of the project.

It is clearly acknowledged through these discussions, that while principles are presented in discrete cells within a matrix, the reality is somewhat different. In many schools it has been a simultaneous combination of effective practices from different levels of operations that have facilitated implementation. In other cases there is overlap in practices from different cells. Both messages highlight that there is no easy prescription for success in all contexts. Indeed, it is important for schools to clearly understand the nature of their own context and then select the range of practices
that will most suitably address the learning needs of the students under their care. Rarely will this be similar in even neighbouring schools.

Table 5 below therefore reflects the latest version of the practices which will be shared in the next phase of the project as a preliminary step in seeking school cooperation for case study demonstrations of these practices.
Table 5: Effective Practices Matrix, grouped by level of implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System/Sector factors</th>
<th>Whole school factors</th>
<th>Classroom /teacher factors</th>
<th>Individual student factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Targeted professional support, organised at the system and sector level, for both school leaders and classroom practitioners is a significant contributor to the building of confidence and capacity of school personnel implementing literacy and numeracy initiatives.</td>
<td>Effective school leadership takes an inclusive and collaborative approach to decision-making with teachers about issues that impact directly on student learning.</td>
<td>The teaching learning cycle begins with an identification of each student’s learning needs, informed by all available data.</td>
<td>Student engagement with learning is fundamental to confidence and enhanced achievement in literacy and numeracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems/sectors have a key responsibility in establishing and maintaining high expectations of performance founded on clear accountabilities for stakeholders.</td>
<td>If sustainable change in students’ literacy and numeracy outcomes is to be achieved, it must be driven by a whole school approach that ensures commitment and shared responsibility from all members of the school community, including parents.</td>
<td>Students’ identified learning needs are addressed by explicit teaching and learning strategies, which may include specific intervention programs or tailored resources.</td>
<td>Extended uninterrupted blocks of time “quarantined” for teachers and students to engage in literacy and numeracy activities are pre-requisites for student achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies reflect the need for a consistent approach and high expectations for teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy.</td>
<td>A whole school systematic approach to collecting, analysing, interpreting and tracking data focuses on student literacy and numeracy learning.</td>
<td>Specific intervention programs and tailored resources are one of the tools for enhancing student learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Learning in literacy and numeracy is enhanced when students are empowered to take greater responsibility for their own learning, including monitoring of progress against agreed learning goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When systems/sectors communicate good practice through sharing of information, e.g. conferences, websites, Principal briefings, the potential for</td>
<td>Opportunities for student improvement are enhanced when there is whole school commitment to interventions based on student needs.</td>
<td>Teacher acceptance of intervention programs is enhanced when such programs are underpinned by a sound.</td>
<td>The effective use of ILP’s is a powerful tool in assisting teachers to plan, implement and monitor students’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System/Sector factors</th>
<th>Whole school factors</th>
<th>Classroom /teacher factors</th>
<th>Individual student factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>building school and teacher capacity is enhanced</td>
<td>research base and evidence of student improvement</td>
<td>individually tailored learning experiences, especially when parents are engaged in the process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A key role for systems/sectors is to establish and inform continuous improvement mechanisms for schools</td>
<td>Student learning of literacy and numeracy is most effective when there is collaborative planning, exchange of teaching and learning ideas and monitoring of student achievement data by teachers across stage levels</td>
<td>Ongoing teacher professional learning reflects contemporary pedagogy to support teaching and learning, including intervention programs</td>
<td>Individual student learning is enhanced when teachers make connections through all aspects of student learning, i.e. across all KLA’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems/sectors have a key role to play in formally supporting schools to establish and maintain mutually supportive and collaborative networks for sharing practice</td>
<td>A school culture characterised by collaborative planning and programming impacts positively on teacher pedagogy and student learning</td>
<td>In responding to students’ diverse learning needs, teachers must be flexible and adaptable in their use of programs and strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System/sector resources are required to ensure fidelity of implementation in relation to specific programs, e.g. use of Regional/Diocesan facilitators to provide professional learning</td>
<td>A school culture that supports the implementation of intervention programs and innovative teaching strategies is best when accompanied by tailored forms of professional support for teachers e.g., targeted professional learning, deep pedagogical knowledge, class release time for observation, reflection and collaborative planning.</td>
<td>Teachers report improvement in student learning when they combine the tailored implementation of intervention programs with whole class explicit teaching strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems and sectors have a key role to play in allocating resources to schools to support literacy and learning</td>
<td>Active instructional leadership impacts positively on student achievement in literacy and numeracy when accompanied by clear expectations for staff and students</td>
<td>The primary consideration for individual learning determines the choice of program or teaching/learning strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System/Sector factors</th>
<th>Whole school factors</th>
<th>Classroom /teacher factors</th>
<th>Individual student factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systems and sectors have a key role to play in developing tools and frameworks that support school implementation of literacy and numeracy</td>
<td>A school culture with accompanying resources focussed specifically on what students need to learn contributes directly to student achievement in literacy and numeracy</td>
<td>Teacher tracking and follow-up of student progress through constant teacher monitoring of student data enhances learning outcomes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System policies provide a reform framework and context as necessary which give preference and priority to the way that schools and teachers spend their time with students in schools</td>
<td>Schools value the access to systematic, evidence-based approaches that target what students need to learn to improve</td>
<td>Teachers are well equipped to focus on student improvement when teaching and learning decisions are based on contemporary evidence based research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student learning of literacy and numeracy is enhanced when the school adopts a whole school approach of common language by all members of the school community, including parents</td>
<td>The implementation of literacy and numeracy intervention programs in classrooms is enhanced when driven by teachers rather than classroom support personnel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective pedagogy begins with the student not the program</td>
<td>Effective teachers make informed decisions and utilise class time to focus on specific student learning needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborative planning by teachers often results in the use of an agreed common language and the sharing of teaching and learning ideas and the range of texts being used for teaching literacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Next Steps

1. Finalising Phase 2a

The next step in finalising Phase 2a is to conduct a series of school visits, the primary purpose of which is to gather examples of effective practice that illustrate each of the principles identified in the Tables above. It is intended to visit a minimum of ten schools, known to have shown such practices during the NPLN, as identified during the evaluation process and in consultation with system and sector personnel involved in the NPLN.

An initial sample of around 20 schools will be identified, from which the final selection will be made and approved by relevant jurisdiction personnel. Note that schools may exhibit effective practices in more than one domain, and conversely more than one school may contribute examples of effective practice within a single domain.

The Final report for Phase 2a will present a synthesis of the effective practices drawn from the eight program evaluations and related data (in text form rather than Tables as above). To facilitate the development of the online resource, the effective practices will be categorised within a Framework, that will enable the interpretation of the practices within key broad themes. This framework will be informed both by the nature of the Findings arising from analysis of the NLNP (including the eight program evaluations) as well as emerging national reform agendas and recent past research on effective schooling in general.

It should be noted that in finalising Phase 2a of Variation 2, there will be some overlap with the work described for Phase 2b below. That is school visits will serve a dual purpose, firstly to ratify and collect relevant examples of good practice but secondly to identify the most appropriate methodologies for disseminating the effective practices more broadly to schools in New South Wales.

2. Methodology for Phase 2b

The strategic review of the eight evaluations of literacy and numeracy programs conducted during Phase 2a (of variation 2) and the broader evaluation of the National Partnership for Literacy and Numeracy will provide the broad content for the proposed interactive resource. The focus of the present project will be adapting this content into a format that effectively conveys this information to broader audiences.

Determining the most appropriate format of the resource and the platform for delivery to enable greatest use of the findings will be the first step in this phase of the project.

The proposed methodology for this phase of the project has four key steps (see Timeline below):

a) Conduct consultations with relevant educational personnel to determine what modes of communication will be of most use to school leaders and classroom teachers

It is proposed to conduct 3 consultations early in this phase of the project, involving:
• 10 principals of NPLN primary schools drawn from the 3 sectors (as part of the school visits described above),
• 4-5 School Education Directors and/or regional and Diocesan literacy/numeracy consultants, and
• staff from the DEC’s Corporate Communications Directorate.

The consultations will help to determine not only the types of resources that might be useful (which might include short summary documents, powerpoint presentations, case studies, video clips and so on), but on the locations or portals preferred for accessing information of this kind (e.g. systemic intranet site; Australian Government e-learning initiatives; Teach-Learn Share, etc). It is the project’s intention not to duplicate existing online resources but to complement or supplement materials produced elsewhere.

b) Design of interactive material

The Erebus team will adapt the content information into the formats indicated in step (a) above. This will include development of trial materials, e.g. web page in draft final form. (This step forms the bulk of this phase of the project). This step may involve returning to some cooperative NLP NP schools to obtain additional materials if necessary.

c) Testing and refinement of the “package”

We propose to test the usability of the resource developed with around 10-12 schools from a variety of contexts (e.g. metropolitan, rural, large, small), including those schools that had participated in the original consultations. Based on their feedback, the proposed materials may be modified, extended or deleted.

d) Development of a suggested dissemination/support strategy

Based on the advice of the schools involved in the testing phase, the final step in this project will be to develop advice as to how the resource can be released to obtain maximum impact.

The work described above is planned to commence in August 2012 in order for the online resource to be made available in final working form during Term One 2013.

Table 6: Proposed Timeline for Phase 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Phase 2b commencement</td>
<td>Late July/August 2012 (following endorsement of draft findings from the strategic review on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultations</td>
<td>Late July/August 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of design brief based on above focus group feedback</td>
<td>September 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product development</td>
<td>September-December 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of Final report</td>
<td>December 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product testing and refinement</td>
<td>Term 1, 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. **Required deliverables for Phase 2b**

The following deliverables will be developed during Phase 2b of the project:

1. **Project Plan for Phase Two (b) (August 2012)**

   Following acceptance of the Progress Report for Phase Two (a), Erebus will submit a project plan for Phase Two (b) – detailing the proposed steps to be undertaken to design, develop, test, refine and deliver the online resource by the end of Term One, 2013.

2. **Detailed design specifications for Phase Two (b) (September 2012)**

   In consultation with the Project Reference Group (and other relevant stakeholders), Erebus will submit detailed design specifications for the online resource. The design specifications must provide details of the proposed delivery platform as well as proposed specific formats for presenting the findings of Phase Two (a).

3. **Final Report (December 2012)**

   The Final Report will:
   
   - provide an overview and comparative analysis of the findings of all eight program evaluations and related information
   - provide an update on work towards the production of the online resource (and its method of delivery to users).

4. **Functioning online resource (end Term One, 2013) - major deliverable for Phase Two (b)**

   Phase Two (b) will result in the development of a tested, fully functioning and user-friendly online resource to effectively share information and advice with schools across the government, Catholic and independent school sectors.