

Evaluating educational outcomes for disadvantaged children and young people at scale and over time: Lessons for practice and policy

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ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Our vision

A better future for young Australians in need.

Our mission

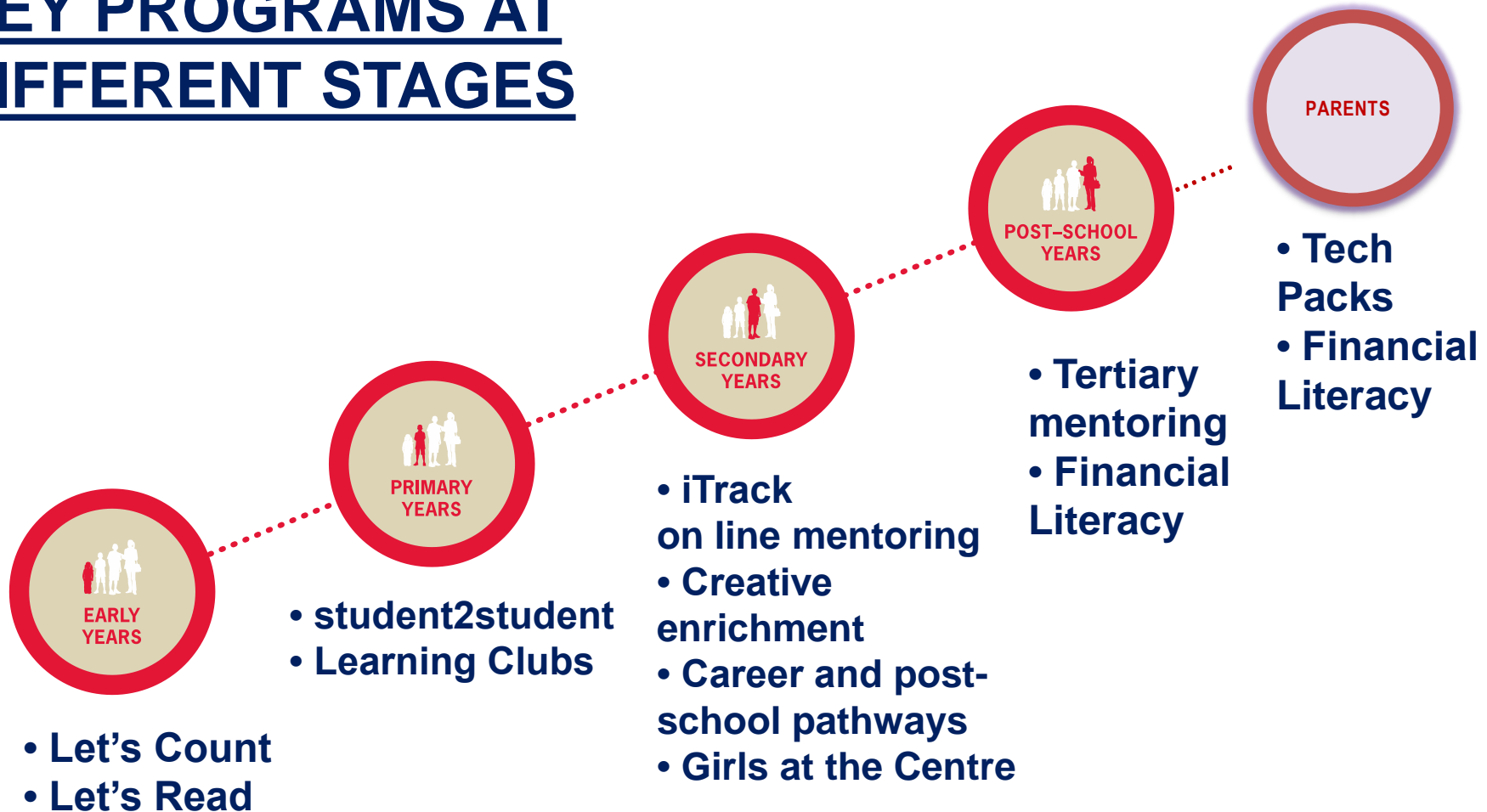
Create opportunities for young Australians in need by providing long-term support for their participation in education.

- National NGO est 1922
- Ecological approach – child, family, peers, institutions, community
- 96 low SES communities
- Support 112,000 children, young people, parents/carers pa
- 34,000 children/young people on long term *Learning for Life* scholarship inc 5,000+ who identify as Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



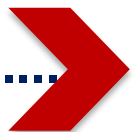
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KEY PROGRAMS AT DIFFERENT STAGES



LEARNING FOR LIFE SCHOLARSHIP

Parental and community engagement.....



LEARNING FOR LIFE SCHOLARSHIP



Three components – financial, relationship, programs

LONGER TERM OUTCOMES



- Young people are in education, training and/or work
- Young people complete Year 12 or equivalent
- Young people stay engaged with learning

- ... **ENGAGEMENT**
- ... **ADVANCEMENT**
- ... **ATTENDANCE**

SHORT TERM OUTCOMES MEASURED USING OBA FRAMEWORK

- How much?
- How well?
- Anyone better off?



- Improved literacy and numeracy
- Improved confidence (self/efficacy)
- Improved motivation and aspiration
- Enhanced networks and relationships
- Improved knowledge/ understanding
- Improved or sustained school attendance
- Increased access to and use of community resources
- Increased parent engagement in school activities
- Improved service collaboration and integration
- Enhanced cross-sectoral partnerships

PROGRAMS

Programs build skills and knowledge and influence attitudes and behaviours

INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY

Learning for Life, student2student, iTrack, Learning Clubs, SmARTS, Careers/Post school options workshops, Let's Count, Let's Read, Tertiary Mentoring, Tech Packs, Financial Literacy

SCHOOL

Extended School Hubs

COMMUNITY

Communities for Children, Child & Parent Centres, Partnership Brokers

Our outcomes map - programs contribute to short & longer term outcomes



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OUR LFL FAMILIES...

- 18,000+ families, 34,000+ children
- Low income - Health Care Card or pension
- Over half are single parent
- 16% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- A third are NESB*
- A third have $6 \geq$ people in family
- Over half of our secondary students on the program 5+ yrs



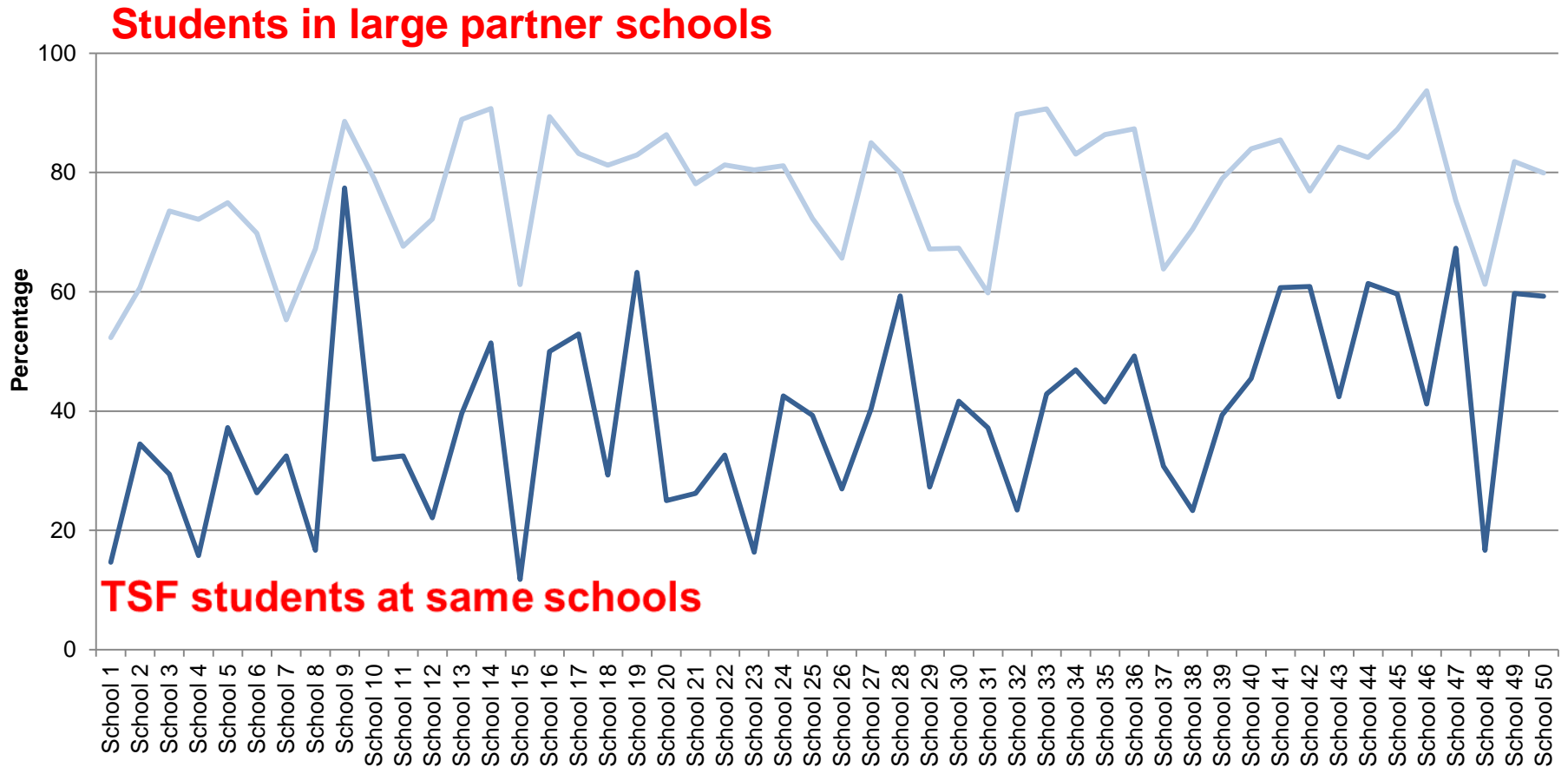
Unique national dataset to inform practice & policy – size, low SES, over time

WHO IS TSF SUPPORTING?

COMPARISON OF STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS, NSW LOW SES SCHOOLS

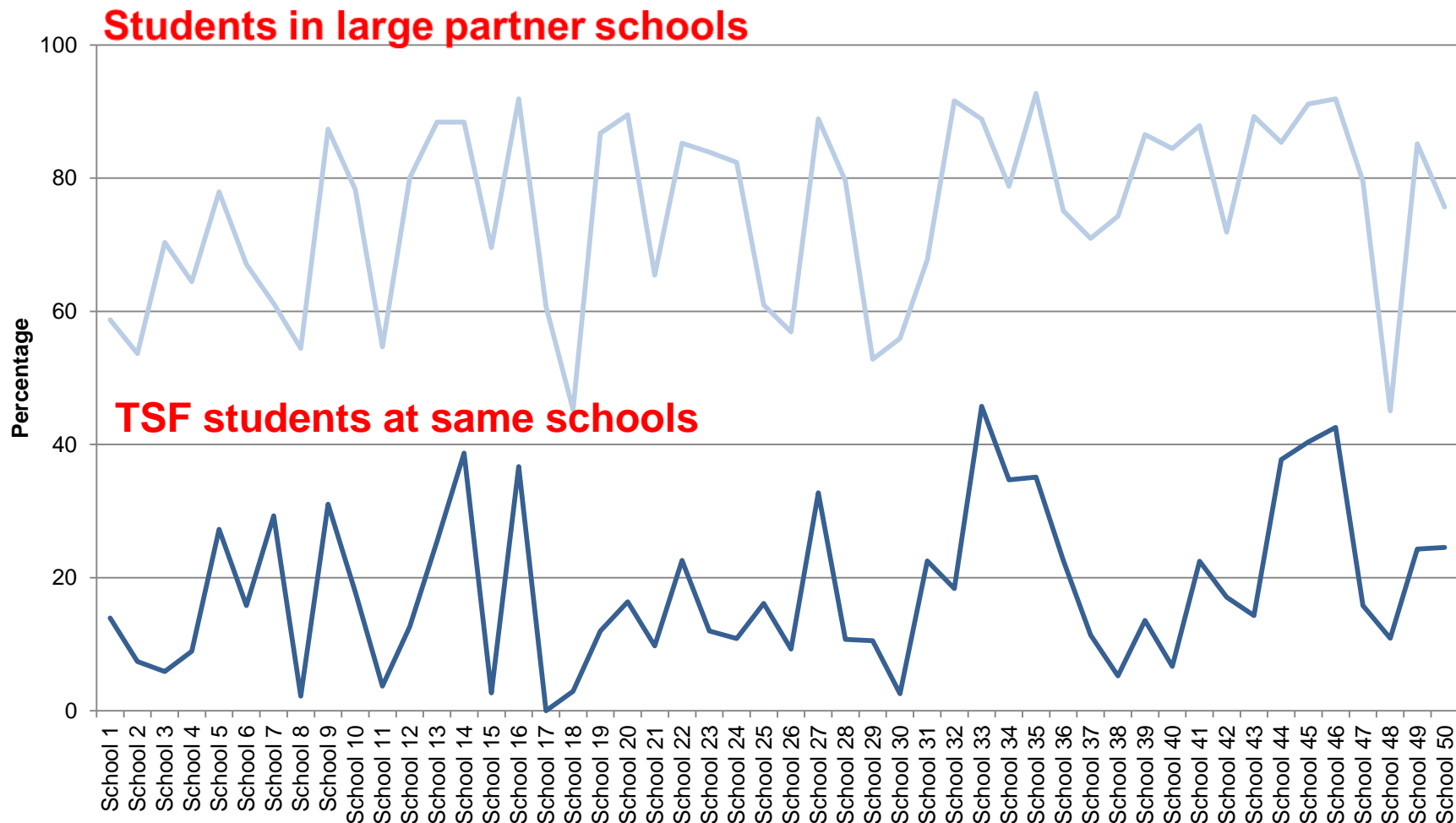
	Students in large partner schools (n=31,478)		TSF students in large partner schools (n=2,591)	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background	14.3	4,483	24.7	636
Parent/Carer NESB	16.4	5,151	24.5	330
Parent/Carer Year 12 completion or Post-school education	80.3	21,108	39.4	951
Parent/Carer University education	12.5	3,695	3.4	83
Parent/Carer Employed	79.0	20,964	18.4	435

STUDENTS IN NSW WITH A PARENT/CARER WHO HAVE COMPLETED YEAR 12 OR POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION



All low SES schools

STUDENTS IN NSW WITH A PARENT/CARER WHO IS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED



YOUNG PEOPLE'S LONGER TERM OUTCOMES

COAG

- ⬆️ Proportion of young people attending school
- ⬆️ Proportion of young people who attain Yr 12 or equivalent
- ⬆️ Proportion of young people who make successful transition from school to work and further study
- ⬇️ Halve the gap in Yr 12 completion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

THE SMITH FAMILY'S 5 YR STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2017

- ⬆️ School attendance rates of LfL students over time to 90% (Attendance Rate)
- ⬆️ Proportion of Yr 10 LfL students who advance to Yr 12 on scholarship (Advancement Rate)
- ⬆️ Proportion of Yrs 10 to 12 LfL students engaged in work or study 12 months after they leave the program (Engagement Rate)

**Outcomes aligned to research and policy,
embedded in strategic plan**

MEASURING LFL STUDENTS' ATTENDANCE OVER TIME

- Students in 4,000 schools - all states and territories
- No nationally consistent way of reporting attendance
- Attendance Rate methodology developed by TSF in 2012
- 2011 attendance data: 33% missing
- Major focus to ↗ quantity & quality of data – only 7% missing 2012
- Individual yr on yr comparisons to track student progress
- Analysis by student yr, Aboriginality, language background, parental education, employment

1. Attendance Rate

MEASURING LFL STUDENTS' ADVANCEMENT TO YR 12 OR EQUIVALENT OVER TIME

- A longitudinal measure tracking individual students
- More accurate than other national measures derived using Census or population estimates (point-in-time)
- Analysis by Aboriginality, language background, gender, family type and year on year comparison
- 2010-12 data showed significant numbers left prior to Yr 12
 - ➔ increased focus on supporting young people in Yrs 10 - 12
- Advancement rates for 2011-13 3% higher than 2010-12

2. Advancement Rate

MEASURING LFL STUDENTS' POST SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT OVER TIME

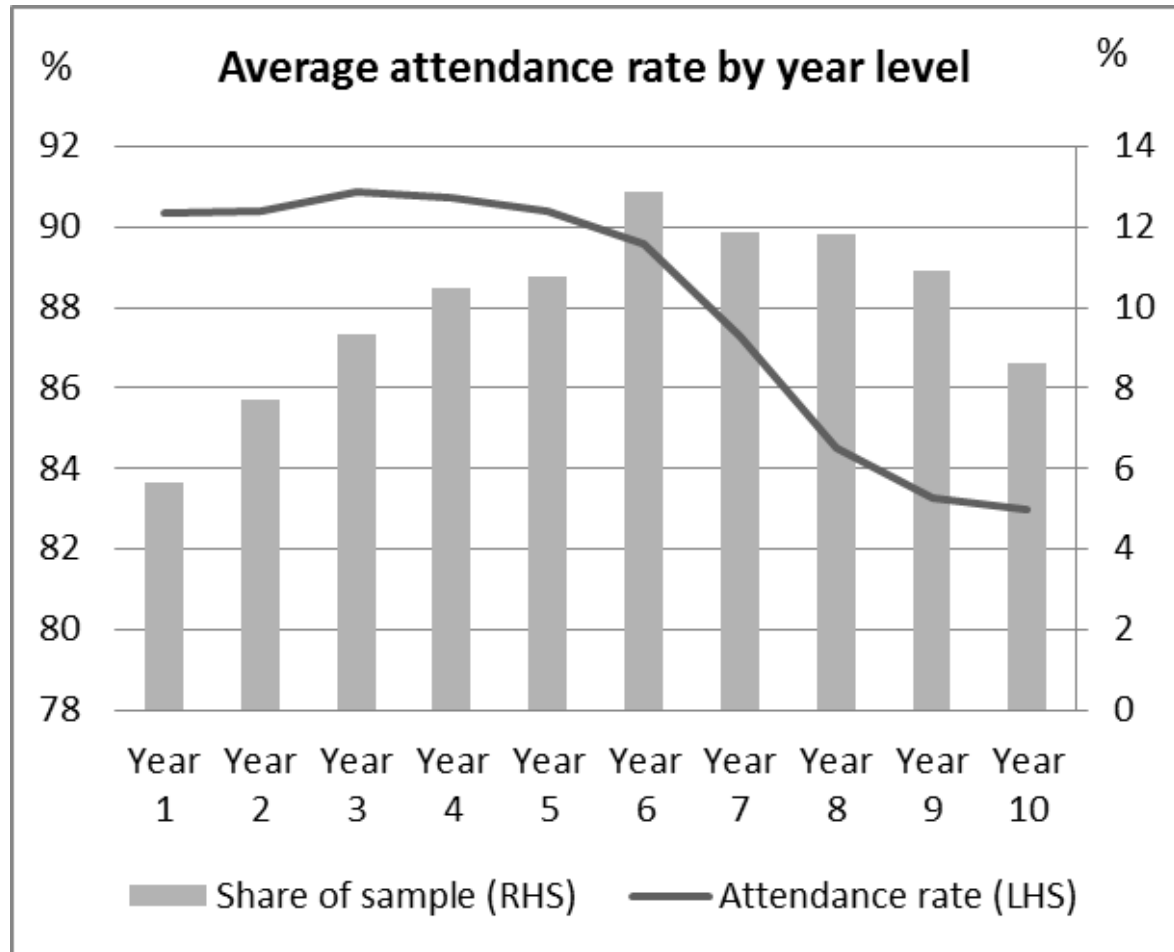
- Biennial telephone survey developed by TSF
- First conducted in 2013
- 676 young people interviewed, response rate of 66%
- Engagement in study, employment or combination, plus school leaving and quality of life data
- Analysis by yr of leaving school, gender, Aboriginality, language, parental education & employment, family type

3. Engagement Rate

SOME OF WHAT WE'VE LEARNT SO FAR: ATTENDANCE

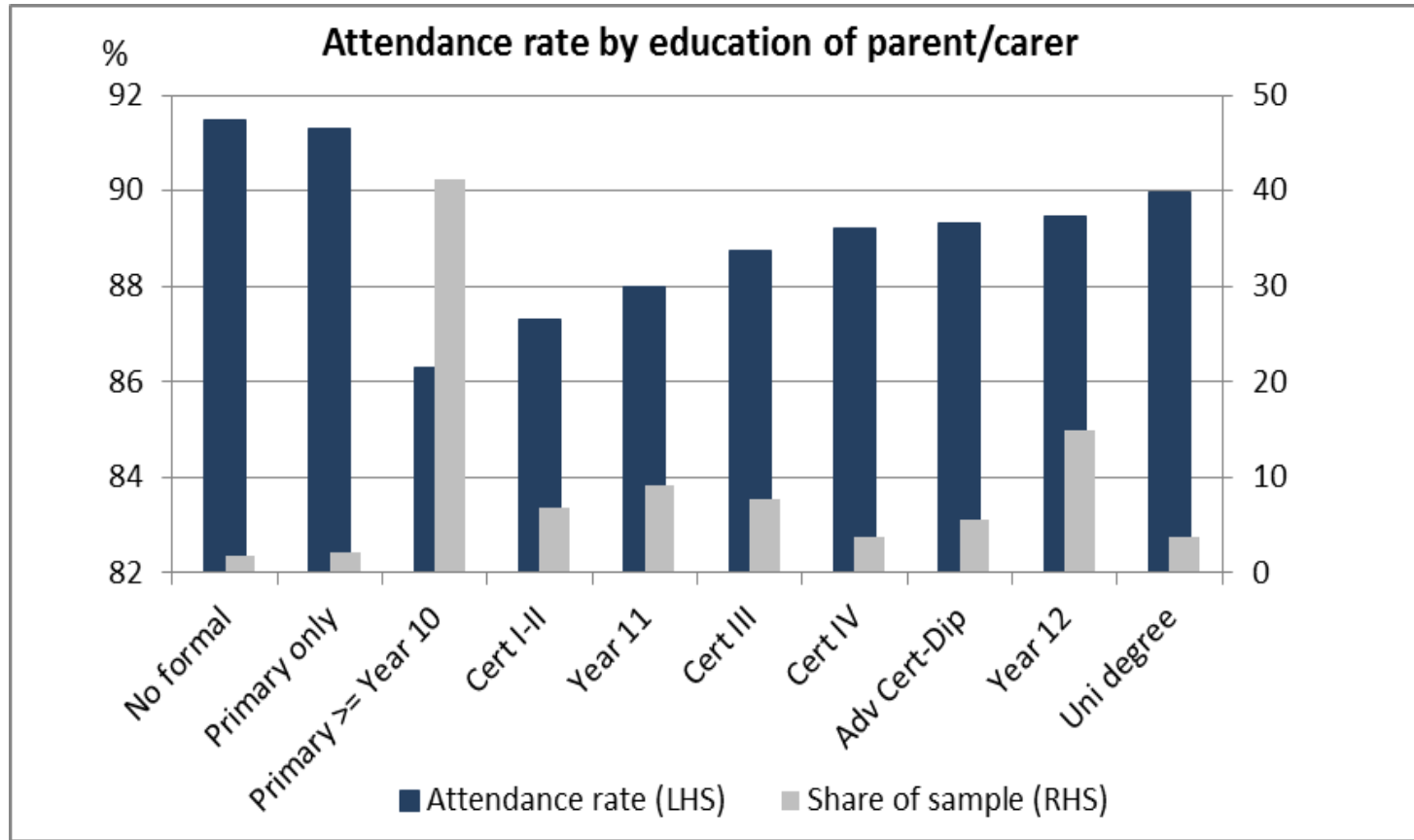
Attendance varies considerably by year level.

Strategies needed to support strong attendance through the transition to high school period and beyond.



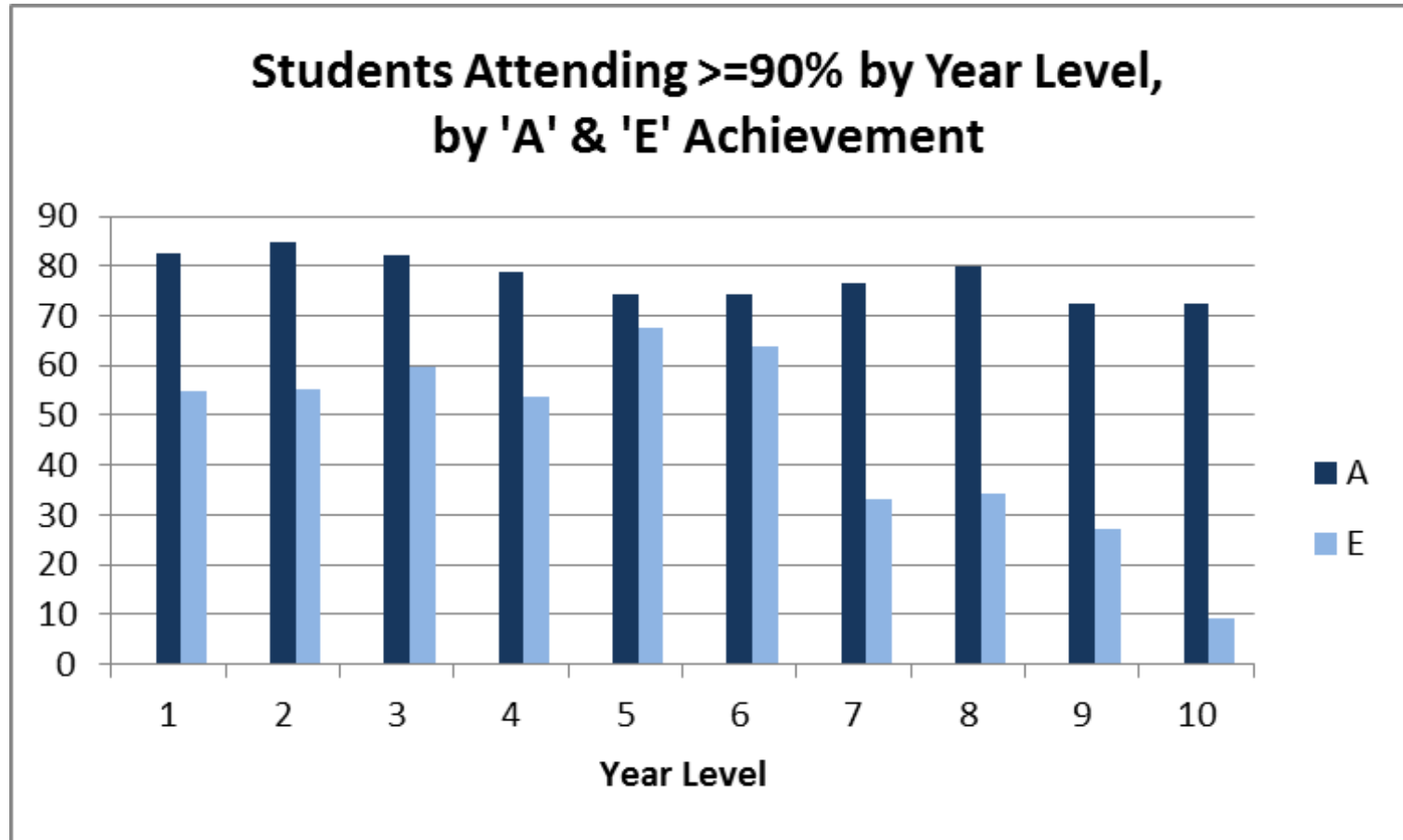
SOME OF WHAT WE'VE LEARNT SO FAR: ATTENDANCE

Students whose parents had no formal or only primary school education had the highest average attendance.



SOME OF WHAT WE'VE LEARNT SO FAR: ATTENDANCE & ACHIEVEMENT

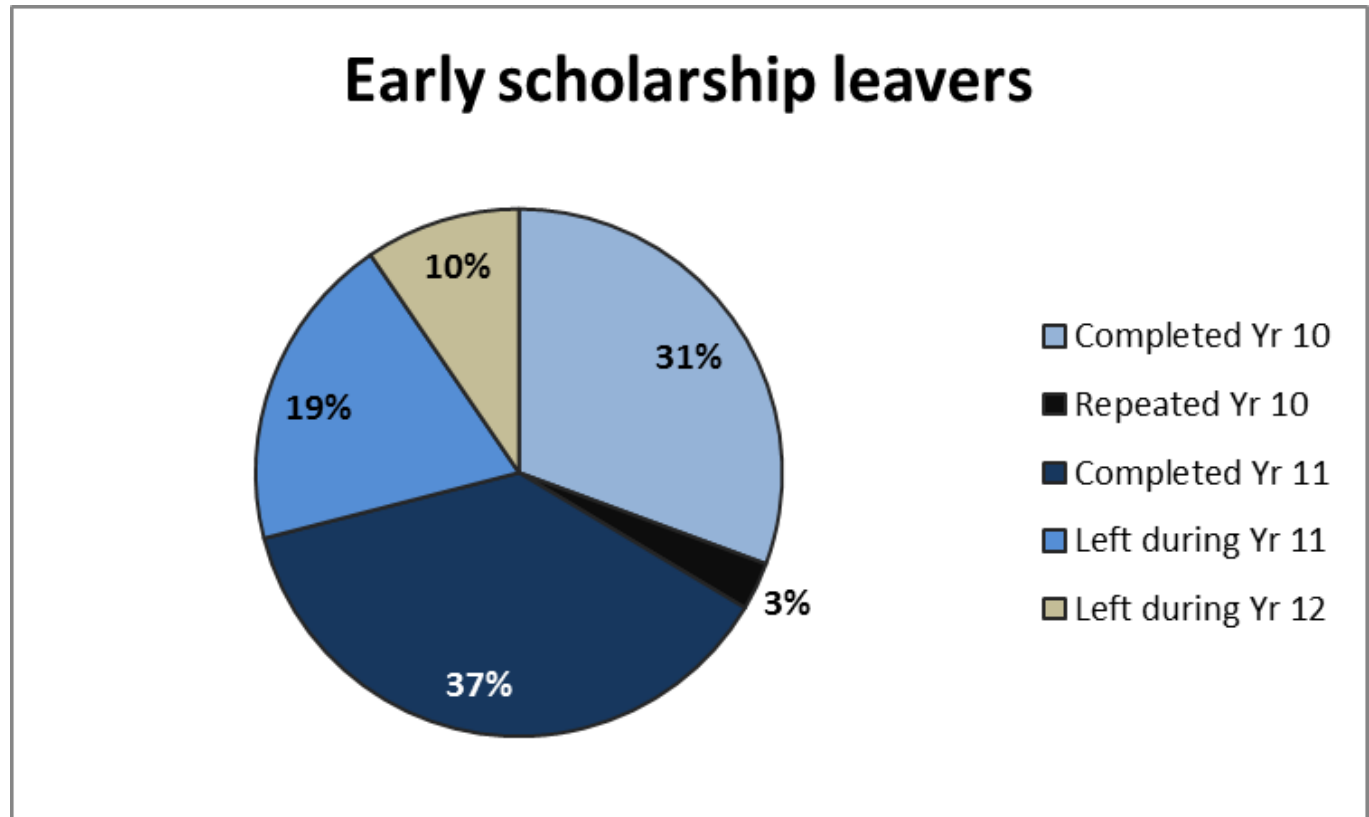
Strong relationship between attendance & achievement in reading/English especially for secondary students. Interesting results for Yrs 5 & 6.



SOME OF WHAT WE'VE LEARNT SO FAR: ADVANCEMENT RATE:

For those not completing Yr 12, some started or completed Yr 11 & some started Yr 12.

Strategies needed to support more of these young people to complete Yr 12.



Advancement rate improved 3% from 2012 to 2013.

SOME OF WHAT WE'VE LEARNT SO FAR

ENGAGEMENT RATE

Category	Percentage
Fully engaged (Still in school)	62 (18)
Partially engaged	18
Not engaged	20

- 12% of those interviewed were on a disability pension, were full-time carers, parents or a combination
- Those 'still in school' were no longer on LfL but likely to struggle to complete Yr 12 → strategies to reduce likelihood of them leaving program early

3. Engagement Rate

SOME OF WHAT WE'VE LEARNT SO FAR:

ENGAGEMENT RATE (excludes those still at school)

Year completed at school	Fully engaged %	Partially engaged %	Not engaged %
Yr 12	60	23	17
Yr 11	42	22	36
Yr 10	54	20	26

Young people who left school in Yr 11 had the poorest engagement rates. Strategies needed to help them either complete Yr 12 or have a clearer and actionable post-school plan.

SOME OF WHAT WE'VE LEARNT SO FAR: ENGAGEMENT RATE

- Major reasons for early school leaving were:
 - Wanted to earn own money
 - Wanted to get a job, apprenticeship
 - Didn't like school
 - Missed a lot of school/were absent from school a lot
 - Weren't doing well at school
 - Had problems with teachers
 - Had problems with students
 - Didn't need Yr 12 for the study, training or job they wanted
- Opportunity to identify some of these young people early and work with them to stay at school

3. Engagement Rate



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SOME OF WHAT WE'VE LEARNT SO FAR

ENGAGEMENT RATE

- 44% of those who left school in Yr 10 were 'unhappy' or 'very unhappy' about having left school before Yr 12.
 - For those who left in Yr 11 the figure was 30%.
- One in three students who left school during Yr 10 were highly satisfied with their life & 41% were dissatisfied.
 - For those who completed Yr 12 the figures were around half and 24% respectively.
- Reinforces importance of supporting more young people to complete Yr 12.

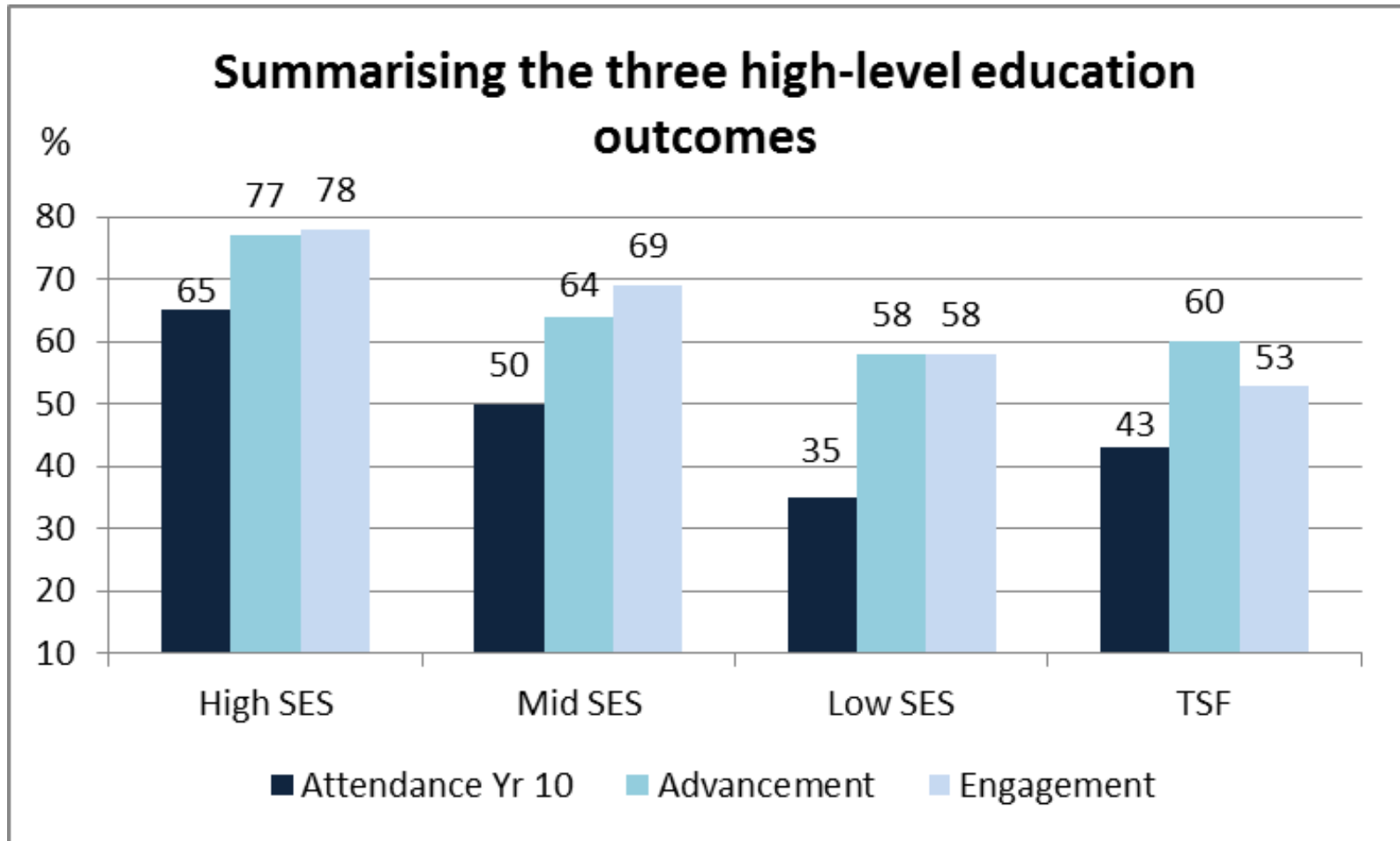
3. Engagement Rate

SOME OF WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT SO FAR

Characteristic	Risk factors	Protective factors
Student background	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background	
Family type	Single parent mother-headed households*	
Carer's highest education level	Yr 7 to 10 high school Cert I or II	University degree Cert IV Yr 12 Certificate
Carer's employment status	Unemployed	Employed

Across the three rates...

YR 1: COMPARISON LFL & NATIONAL OUTCOMES



- **Attendance:** % of Yr 10 who attended at 90% or above
- **Advancement:** TSF is for 15 to 23 yr olds cf national Completion Rate
- **Engagement:** TSF is for 15 – 21 yr olds (excludes those still at school) cf national rate for 17 to 24 yr olds

CHALLENGES

- **Developing meaningful and useful outcomes measures that can be tracked over time**
- **The joys of Federation**
- **Lack of nationally comparable data sets**
- **Quantity & quality of available data**
- **Resources – for infrastructure & collecting, cleaning & analysing data in a not-for-profit organisation**
- **Supporting staff to collect data, reflect on & change practice**
- **Using administrative data for both research & practice**

OPPORTUNITIES

- Embedding small number of key longer term outcomes in 5 yr strategic plan gives whole of organisation focus, clarity, internal & external accountability & credibility
- Staff want to make a difference in the lives of the young people – they get data back & this is informing & changing practice in a range of ways
 - ↻ focus on school attendance inc at key points across the primary school transition and into high school
 - ↻ focus on students in Yrs 10 – 12
- Cross organisational engagement has been critical
- Capacity to inform public policy given scale & long-term nature of this work is clear

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

- **Current Linkage Grant with ISSR UQ, SPRC UNSW & SCU**
 - More detailed analysis of admin & outcomes data over time inc for different groups, length of time on LfL, mix of shorter programs, family mobility
 - Survey of 10,000 students and parent/carers in Oct
 - Range of interviews with students and carers in 2015
- **Continue to collect, analyse & utilise Attendance, Advancement and Engagement Rates over time at individual, cohort & aggregate levels**
- **Continue to refine practice using data**
- **Use data in our public policy & advocacy work**

CONTACT DETAILS

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