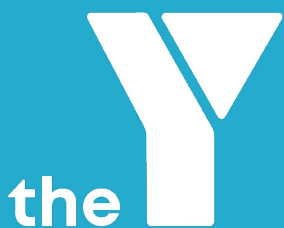


2024

STUDENTS MAKE STEADY PROGRESS

OUTCOMES REPORT



Schools
QUEENSLAND

Contents

Introduction 01

Demographics 01

Wellbeing 02

Factors Influencing Wellbeing Scores 07

Sense of Belonging and Social Connection 08

Safeguarding 08

Student Voice 09

Pathways: VET 10

Employment 10

Job Search Skills, Goals and Aspirations,
and Career Confidence 11

Certificates 12

Queensland Certificate of Education 12

Factors Influencing Pathways Scores in 2024 12

Student Voice 13

Academic: PAT 14

Reading 14

Maths 15

Factors Influencing Academic Achievement 16

Conclusion 18

Introduction

Y Schools Queensland is committed to maximising student outcomes, and has an established Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (MEL) to track this. Each year, students' complete surveys that provide the school leadership team with insights into student outcomes and the factors influencing them.

A total of 534 students across all Y Schools participated in the School's three-time point data collection, which provides an assessment of the year's outcomes on wellbeing, pathways, and academic achievement. They represented 60% of the school population for the year.

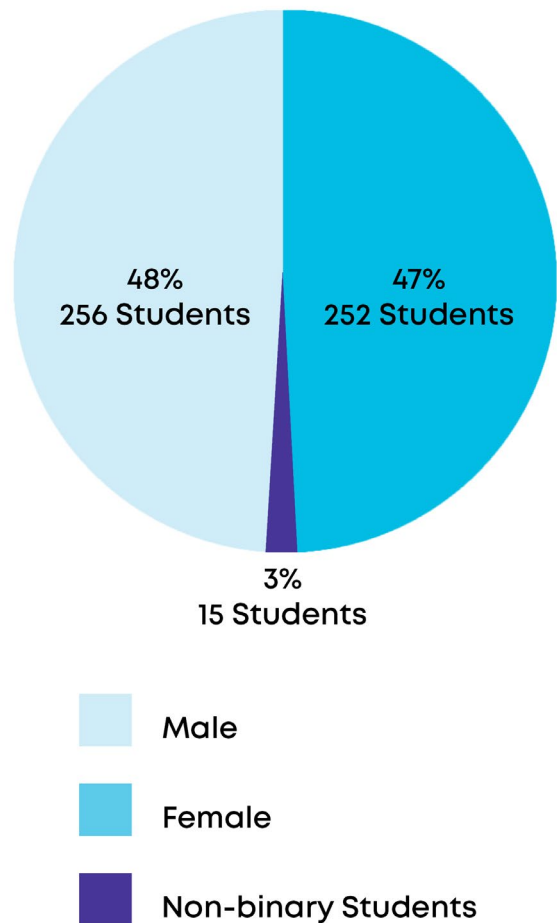


Most students (59%) had at least one recorded social-emotional, cognitive, physical, or sensory disability.



The average attendance for Semester 1 was 69%, 62% in Semester 2, and 67% annually, which signifies a medium level of attendance (60-80%).

Figure 1: Gender composition of the student population in 2024.



Demographics



Year 10 students provided the largest number of paired data (23%), followed by Year 11 (22%), Year 12 (21%), Year 9 (19%), Year 8 (10%), and Year 7 (6%).



69% of students were continuing from 2023, while 31% were new to the Y Schools in 2024.

120 students identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, which made up 23% of the surveyed students.



There were 23 students who were culturally and/or linguistically diverse (CALD). This means that 4% of surveyed students were either born in another country, speak a language other than English at home, or belong to a nationality other than Australian.

Wellbeing

The EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Wellbeing follows the EPOCH definition of wellbeing as a combination of five measures: engagement, perseverance, optimism, connectedness, and happiness. This measure is used for student wellbeing across Y Schools. The averages calculated for each of the five measures range from 1-5.

The Research and Evaluation team consider an average score of two or lower on at least three measures to indicate “low wellbeing”. Students present with “low wellbeing” for a diverse array of reasons. The most commonly reported include external issues with friends and family, feeling overwhelmed with school and workload, low attendance, requiring more counselling support for mental health struggles, new students adjusting to the school environment, and not understanding the purpose of the survey (i.e. ticking random answers). The number of students flagged throughout 2024 suggests that the circumstances contributing to “low wellbeing” are sustained for some Y Schools students.

In October 2024, 136 students had low wellbeing across all 11 campuses (20% of surveyed students). This proportion of students was slightly lower than in June (21%) but higher than in February (18%).

The Head of School (HOS) and Head of Campus (HOC) are provided with a spreadsheet that includes flagged students, their scores and campus averages. Students with scores below two are provided with support by caseworkers and counsellors on site.

Table 1 shows that 9% (n=93) of students were flagged more than once throughout the surveys in 2024.

Table 1: Students flagged as having “low wellbeing” using the EPOCH scale in 2024.

Y Schools	Total of students flagged more than once
Brisbane South Junior	6
Brisbane South Senior	10
Ipswich Junior	12
Ipswich Senior	7
Logan Junior	11
Logan Senior	8
Moreton Bay Junior	3
Moreton Bay Senior	16
Redlands Junior	6
Redlands Senior	5
Bundaberg	9
TOTAL	93

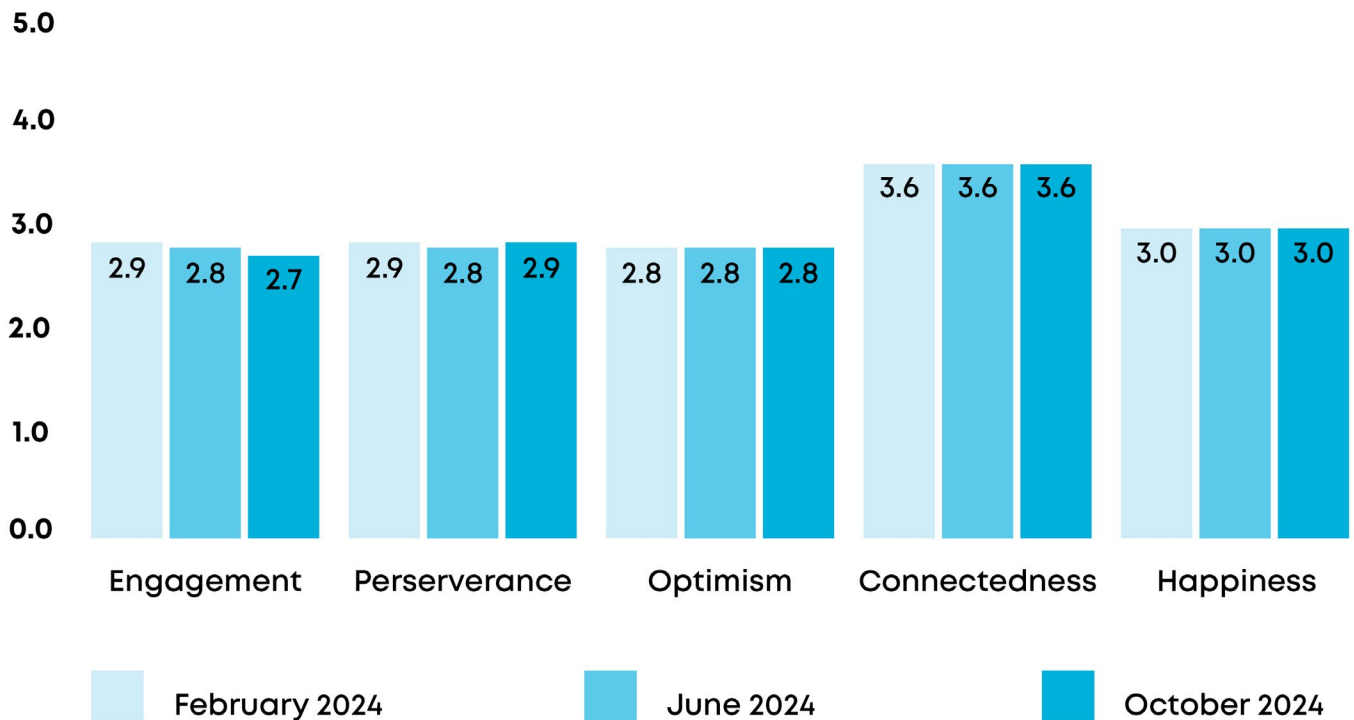
Wellbeing

Engagement was the only measure from the EPOCH scale that had a statistically significant change over 2024. Engagement scores decreased by 2% from February to October, the decrease from June to October was also by 2%.

As shown in Figure 2, scores for Optimism, Connectedness, and Happiness stayed the same over the three time points. Perseverance decreased from 2.9 in February to 2.8 in June (non-significant), however, the average then returned to 2.9 in October.

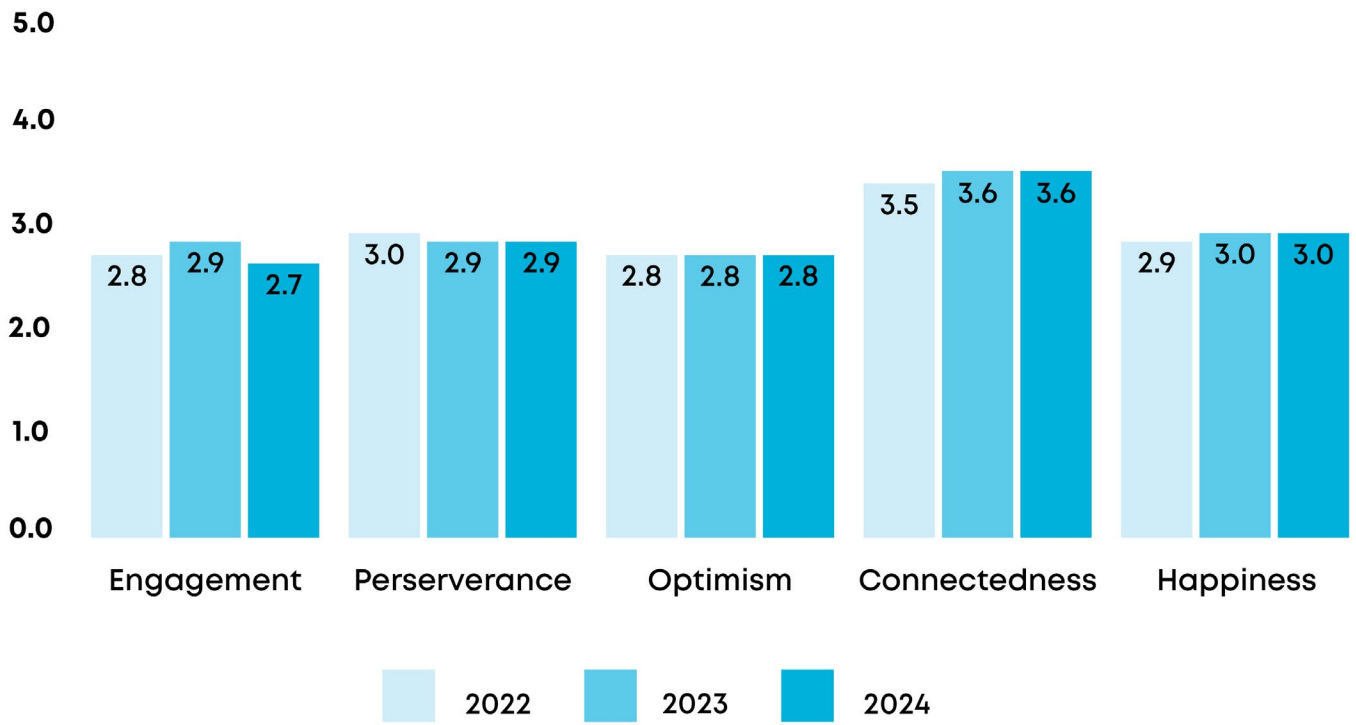
The EPOCH average scores typically stay consistent across the year, with 2021 to 2024 averages fluctuating by a maximum of ± 0.2 (see Figure 3). Given that the EPOCH scale has a maximum score of 5, these averages are positioned above the midpoint of 2.5, suggesting that while scores have not shown substantial increases, they still reflect a positive trend. From 2021 to 2024, only one EPOCH measure has significantly changed over each year, Connectedness decreased by 5% in 2021, Optimism increased by 3% in 2022, and Happiness decreased by 2% in 2023.

Figure 2: Whole School EPOCH averages at each of the three time points in 2024.



Wellbeing

Figure 3: End of year paired averages for 2022- 2024.



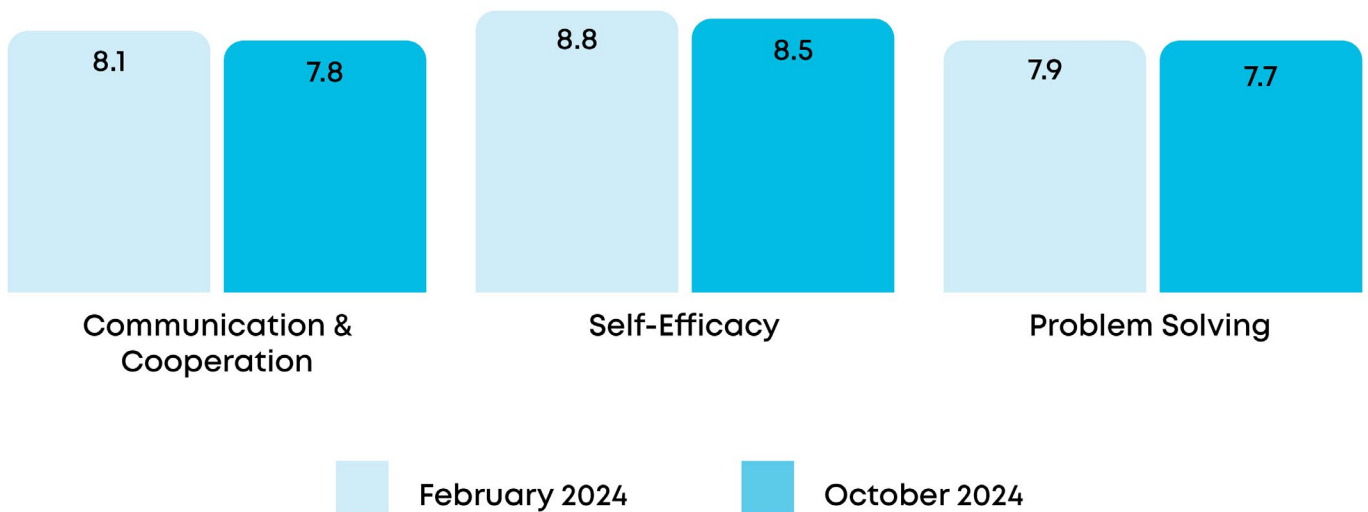
Wellbeing

The **California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)** was another measure used to track wellbeing. The CHKS aims to measure young people’s socio-emotional competencies, using three sub-scales: Communication and Cooperation, Self-Efficacy, and Problem Solving. Students receive an average score out of 12 for each measure.

Each of the three CHKS sub-scales had a statistically significant decrease from February to October (see Figure 4). In comparison to 2023, only scores for Communication and Cooperation significantly changed over the school year, decreasing by 3%.

Although all CHKS averages declined significantly in 2024, the scores remained higher than those in 2022.

Figure 4: Whole School CHKS averages at the two time points in 2024.



This shift may reflect the inadequate opportunities offered to students to apply their communication, cooperation, self-efficacy, and problem-solving skills towards the end of the year, when they are likely feeling overwhelmed by their workload and have decreased confidence about their capacity to cope. Students tend to feel more confident in these skills immediately after engaging in activities that challenge

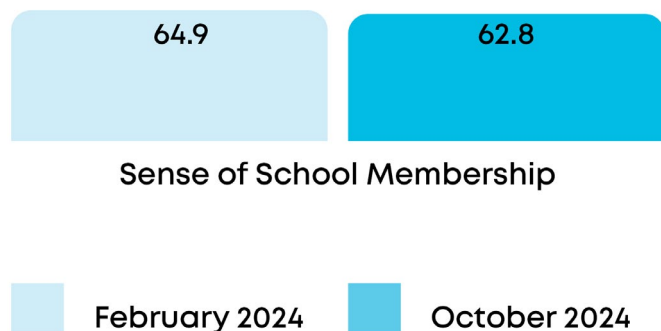
and strengthen them, such as camps or team projects. As they near the end of the year students may lose sight of their accomplishments and the challenges they have successfully overcome, leading to diminished confidence and lower scores in these areas.

Wellbeing

The Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale (PSSM) is the final measure used to track wellbeing. The measure refers to the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment. Scores for this measure range between 18 to 90.

Sense of School Membership scores decreased by 2% from February to October (see Figure 5). This result was unexpected, as it is hypothesised that the more time students are at the Y Schools, the greater their sense of belonging to the school. Additionally, this measure has demonstrated significant fluctuations, notably in 2023, when PSSM increased by 8%, compared to a modest 0.2% increase in 2022. The variability in average PSSM scores may be influenced by the impact of COVID-19, as disruptions to regular schooling in 2022 likely affected students' sense of connection. With the return to normal routines in 2023, feelings of connectedness rebounded, followed by a stabilisation and slight decrease in 2024.

Figure 5: Whole School PSSM average at the two time points in 2024.



Wellbeing

Factors Influencing Wellbeing Scores

Analyses of the interactions between demographic and behavioural variables with scores revealed the following;

Gender: Male students, demonstrated greater wellbeing than all other students. When compared with female students, male students scored:

- 7% higher on Engagement
- 4% higher on Perseverance
- 6% higher on Optimism
- 6% higher on Happiness
- 3% higher on Communication & Cooperation
- 4% higher on Self-Efficacy

When compared with students who preferred not to disclose gender, male students scored:

- 17% higher on Optimism,
- 13% higher on Happiness.

Female students scored 11% higher on Optimism than students who preferred not to disclose gender.

Year Level and Age: Senior students achieved better wellbeing scores, potentially likely due to having been at the Y Schools longer, as supported by the student status results further below.

Year 11 students scored higher than Year 8 students on Perseverance (7%) and sense of School Membership (5%).

Year 12 students scored 8% higher on Problem Solving than Year 9 students. Year

12 students scored 8% higher on Sense of School Membership than Year 7 students, 8% higher than Year 8 students, 6% higher than Year 9 students, and 6% higher than Year 10 students.

Age had a weak positive correlation with scores on Perseverance, Optimism, School Membership, Communication and cooperation, Self-Efficacy, and Problem-Solving.

Attendance: Students with high (80%+) Semester 2 attendance scored 5% higher on Perseverance than students with low (<60%) Semester 2 attendance.

These findings support the key assumption of the Y Schools framework, which theorizes that if students are engaged in their learning and attend school, their well-being will increase. In future years, a focus on increasing attendance will hopefully extend this result to more wellbeing measures.

Student, Indigenous, and Disability Status: Returning students from 2023, in contrast with new students, exhibited higher scores that were statistically significant in multiple areas:

- 3% higher on Perseverance
- 5% higher on Optimism
- 3% higher on Connectedness
- 3% higher on Happiness
- 3% higher on Sense of School Membership
- 3% higher on Communication & Cooperation
- 5% higher on Self-Efficacy
- 4% higher on Problem Solving

Wellbeing

The notable number of wellbeing measures that continuing students scored higher on, in combination with the year-level and age findings, highlight the Y School's effectiveness in enhancing the well-being of students as their time at the school increases.

First Nations students scored 3% lower on Connectedness than students who don't identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Students with a recorded disability scored 3% higher on Engagement than students with no disability.

This outcome indicates that the Y Schools have implemented recommended interventions from previous years to provide additional support that enhances the well-being of students with disabilities. However, further support is evidently needed to build stronger connections with Indigenous students.

Sense of Belonging and Social Connection

At the end of 2024, 60% of students responded to the sense of belonging question that, as a result of attending the Y Schools, they feel more accepted for who they are. This percentage dropped by 11% from June (when 71% of students agreed to the statement).

In October 2024, 89% of students responded that they had made at least one new friend at the Y Schools.

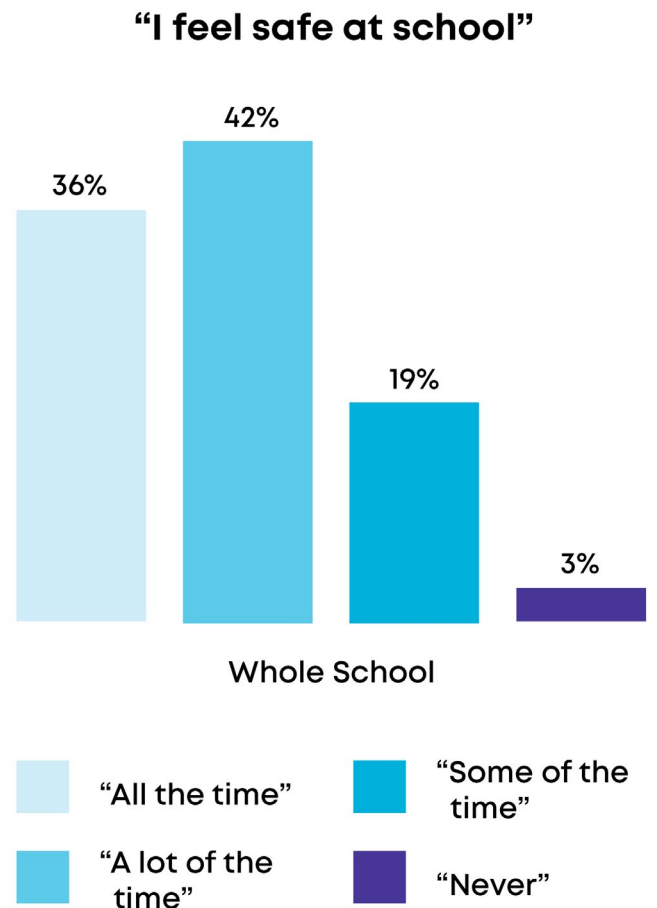
Similarly, 86% of students answered that they had made at least one good connection with an educator or youth worker at the Y Schools in October 2024.



Safeguarding

The majority of students (42%) responded that they feel safe "a lot of the time", this was closely followed by 36% of students responding "all the time."

Figure 6: Whole School responses to safeguarding question.



Wellbeing

While this means 78% of students feel some level of safety, we have a duty to understand why 18 students (3%) responded “never”, and how the Y Schools can improve their experience. Students made recommendations for how safety could be enhanced across the School:

- Improve physical safety measures (i.e. controlling access to the school for non-student personnel)
- Provide more emotional support (i.e. more check-ins, and one-on-one conversations with students)
- Discipline against bullying (i.e. enforcing consequences for inappropriate behaviour promptly)
- Be more inclusive (i.e. using correct pronouns, respect for diverse students, avoid favouritism)
- Give more autonomy to students (i.e. respecting personal boundaries, allow more student independence)
- Provide more resources for LGBTQIA+ students (i.e. non-binary bathrooms, safe spaces)

The 18 students who responded that they “never” feel safe at the Y Schools suggested listening more to the students, controlling disruptive behaviour, and reducing bullying.

Student Voice

At the end October survey, students were prompted to share what was their favourite thing about school this year, and how the Y Schools staff can improve their experience in 2025. Many students provided warm and enthusiastic responses, highlighting

the positive impact of peers and staff, in addition to the sense of community that has been fostered by the school. The key themes from their favourite thing about school were meeting new people, spending time with friends, building connections with staff, engaging in learning, and VET experiences.

“This school accepts me for who I am and doesn’t treat me like I’m just another number in the system. This school really appreciates me and I feel like I belong.”

While most students responded that they are content with how the Y Schools currently functions, some prominent suggestions for improvements next year were consistent staff and notifying students of staff changes, broader range of VET tasters, and more advanced/challenging curriculum options. A commonly submitted answer said to “bring back” certain staff members who have left the school, highlighting how influential and important these people had been in student’s lives.



Pathways: VET

The Vocational, Education, and Training (VET) pillar, now known as the Pathways pillar, focuses on preparing Y Schools students for their journey to employment. The key outcomes tracked are employment, Career Confidence, Job Search Skills, Goals and Aspirations, and qualifications obtained.

Employment

In the paired analysis, the percentage of students who are employed increased from 16% in February to 24% in October. Likewise, in 2023, employment increased from 21% in February to 26% in November.

The percentage of employed Year 12 students increased in 2024 by 5% from February (28%) to October (33%).

The analysis found that employed students scored higher than unemployed students on Junior Career Confidence (7%), Senior Career Confidence (6%), Job Search Skills (14%), and Goals and Aspirations (7%).

The increase in employment rates over the school year suggests that the Y Schools is effectively providing sufficient training and VET opportunities that assist students in finding jobs and will result in greater aspirations for their future. The most common jobs that students had were in the following industries:

- Fast food (33%)
- Hospitality (20%)
- Grocery stores (8%)
- Trades (8%)
- Retail (7%)
- Childcare (4%)

- Mowing/landscaping (3%)
- Pharmacy assistant (2%)
- Cleaning (1.5%)
- Family business (1.5%)
- Salon assistant (1.5%)
- Sports refereeing (1.5%)

Other areas of employment included babysitting, butcher, dog groomer, children’s play centre, musician, nursing home, and trainee at speech pathology department (all $n=1$).



Pathways: VET

Job Search Skills, Goals and Aspirations, and Career Confidence

Job readiness outcomes are measured with two validated scales; a goals and aspirations scale and job search skills (see Figure 7). In 2024, Job Search Skills significantly increased by 2% from February to October. This increase was slightly larger in 2023 where this measure increased by 4%. Goals and Aspirations decreased by 2% from February to October. Conversely, in 2023 these scores increased slightly but this result was non-significant.

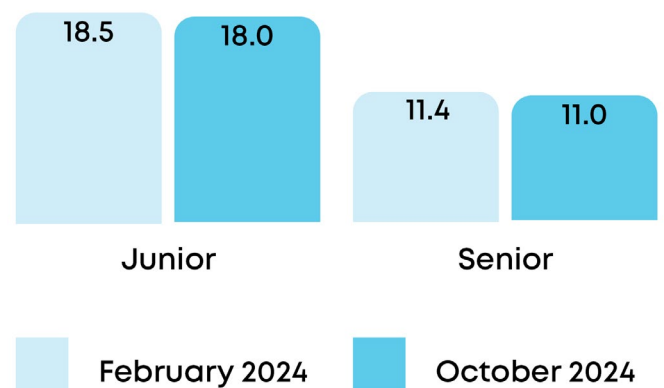
Figure 7: Whole School Job Search Skills and Goals and Aspirations averages at two time points in 2024.



Career Confidence is a YMCA-designed set of self-efficacy questions that essentially measure confidence and optimism towards succeeding in future careers, and having sufficient skills to achieve these goals. As shown in Figure 8, this measure is separated

by junior and senior averages as the junior students answer two extra questions. In 2024, Career Confidence for senior students decreased by 3% from February to October. For both junior and senior students, Career Confidence scores did not fluctuate in 2023.

Figure 8: Junior and Senior Career Confidence averages at two time points in 2024.



Ultimately, these findings indicate that there is a need for more Pathways support to improve student's feeling of optimism and confidence towards their future employment prospects. By increasing the self-efficacy of students, the number of employed students should ideally increase too.



Pathways: VET

Certificates

In 2024, access to VET in Schools (VETiS) (Government) funding increased, leading to a significant increase in the completion of Certificate I, II, and III qualifications through taster programs, school-based traineeships and apprenticeships, as well as other external courses. Overall, 228 certificates were completed by students in 2024.

The Y Schools aims to provide Year 12 students with sufficient vocational training to support a journey to employment or further training post-school. In 2024, 112 (71%) Year 12 students completed certificates across our campuses, which means they are leaving the Y Schools with a qualification that will increase their opportunities and success in meaningful work.

Queensland Certificate of Education

The number of Year 12 students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) increased by 2.7% from 2023 to 2024. In 2024, 21 Year 12 students (13.5%) were awarded their QCE, this increased from 13 students (10.7%) in 2023, and 3 students (3.1%) in 2022. This number reflects all students identified as eligible to be awarded a QCE by the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA). The increase in the number of students eligible and awarded a QCE highlights the Y Schools' commitment to breaking down barriers for students who have the potential to achieve their QCE but were previously held back by mainstream schooling.



Factors Influencing Pathways Scores in 2024

As we do with wellbeing, we explored the effects of demographic variables on pathway outcomes. Statistically significant results were noted on the following:

Gender: Female students scored 5% higher on Goals and Aspirations than male students.

Year level: For year level, Year 12 students scored 5% higher on Career Confidence than Year 10 students.

Attendance: For attendance, it was found that students with medium (60-80%) Semester 2 attendance scored 5% higher on Goals & Aspirations than students with low (<60%) Semester 2 attendance.

Students with medium (60-80%) annual attendance also scored 5% higher on Job Search Skills than students with low (<60%) annual attendance.

Student status: Continuing students from 2023 scored 6% higher on Job Search Skills and 5% higher on Goals & Aspirations than new students.

This result indicates that the more a student attends the Y Schools, the greater their ability to seek employment and be optimistic about their future career goals. Additional support is required for Indigenous students, particularly those in Year 7 to 9 as Junior Career Confidence scores were significantly lower for First Nations students compared to students who don't identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Pathways: VET

Student Voice

Students were asked whether participating in VET assisted them to find or maintain employment this year, and what VET experience or activity had a big impact on them. The impact of the Pathways program was found to connect students to work experience opportunities, traineeships, and apprenticeships, while developing student’s key skills in resume building and job application processes. Furthermore, students stated that the program mainly assisted with boosting their confidence in finding and applying for jobs, in addition to helping them understand the expectations of the workforce.

The Pathways program was able to clarify career options and areas of interest in a supportive environment fostered by VET staff. The most common experiences and activities that students believed were particularly influential are included below:

1. **Automotive/Mechanics:** Many students highlighted automotive-related experiences as impactful, mentioning skill-building, and an increased interest in pursuing a career in mechanics.
2. **Barista Training:** Frequently mentioned for teaching practical coffee-making skills and being fun, with students noting its importance for jobs in cafes.
3. **Hospitality:** This was often cited for learning customer service and communication skills, particularly in real-life settings like taking orders.

4. **Construction:** Many students found construction activities valuable for learning practical skills and preparing for future careers in the trade.
5. **Certificates:** Obtaining certificates (e.g., Cert III in Business, Childcare, Food Safety, RSA) was a common accomplishment, seen as boosting career readiness.
6. **Hairdressing/Beauty:** Several students mentioned these activities for allowing creative expression and building confidence in potential career paths.
7. **Excursions:** Visits to places like SeaWorld, TAFE campuses, and career expos were frequently noted for providing exposure to industries and career options.



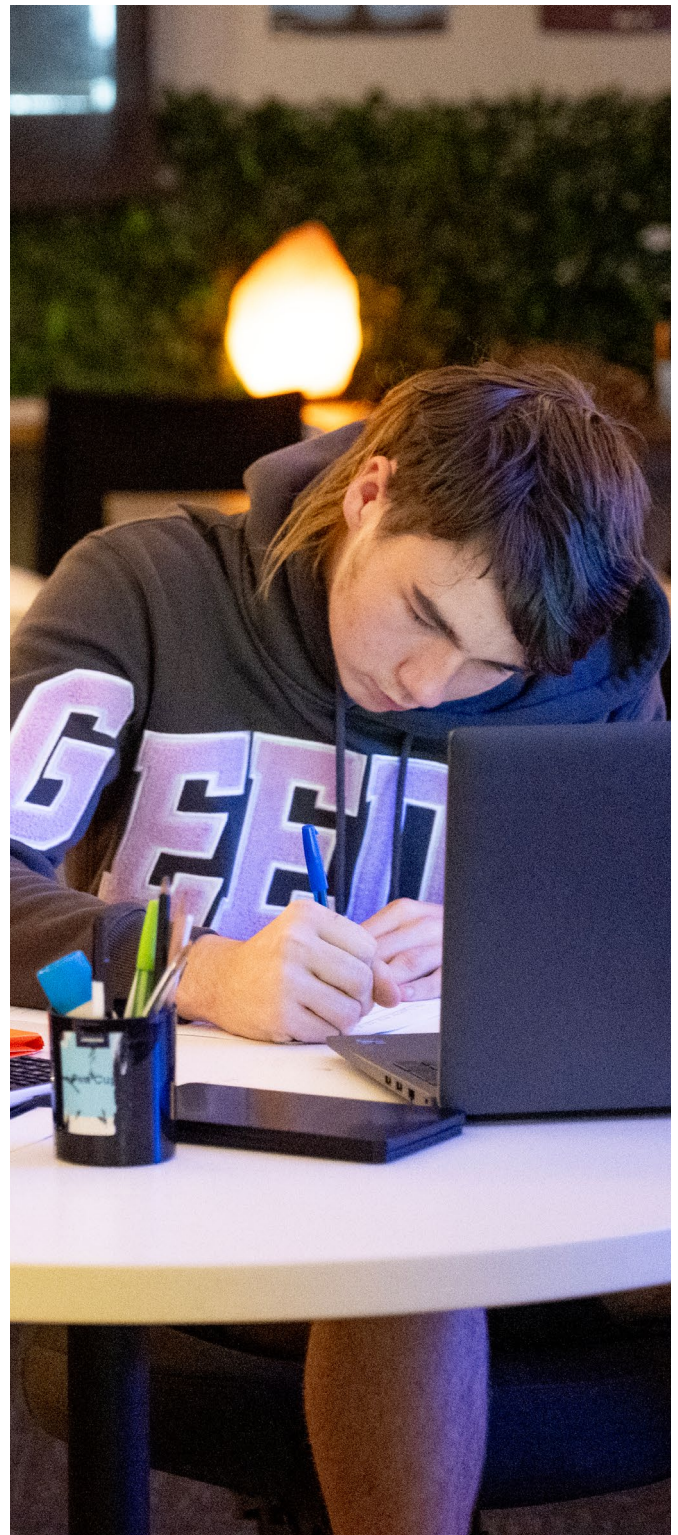
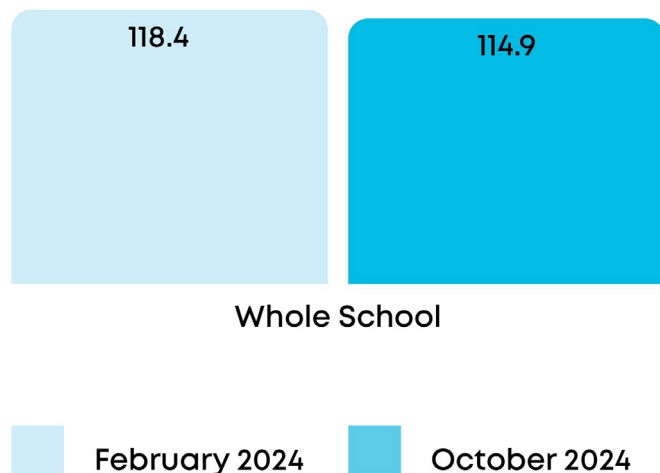
Academic: PAT

The Y Schools uses the personalised, adaptive PAT test to track student literacy and numeracy progress. The scale scores in February were collected as baseline data for comparison in October when the second round of assessments occurred. PAT scale scores range between 40 and 160.

Reading

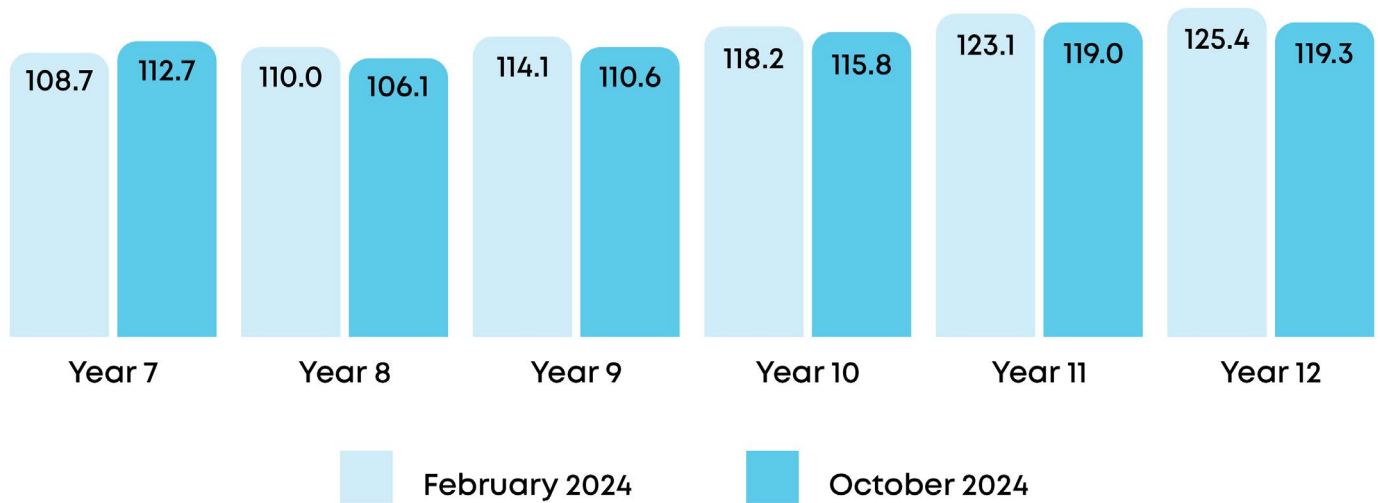
The whole school Reading scale scores decreased statistically by 2% from February to October (see Figure 9). Year 7 students were the only cohort that experienced an increase in Reading scores in 2024; however, this was non-significant.

Figure 9: Whole School PAT Reading scale scores over 2024.



Academic: PAT

Figure 10: PAT Reading scale scores by year level over 2024.

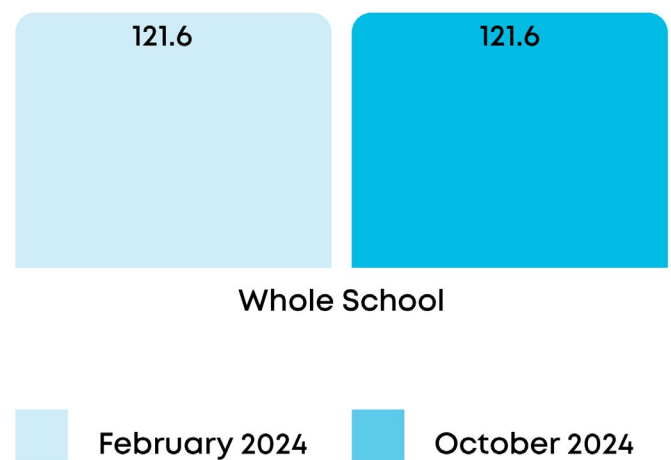


Maths

In 2024, the whole school Maths scale scores stayed consistent with an average of 121.6 for both February and October (see Figure 11).

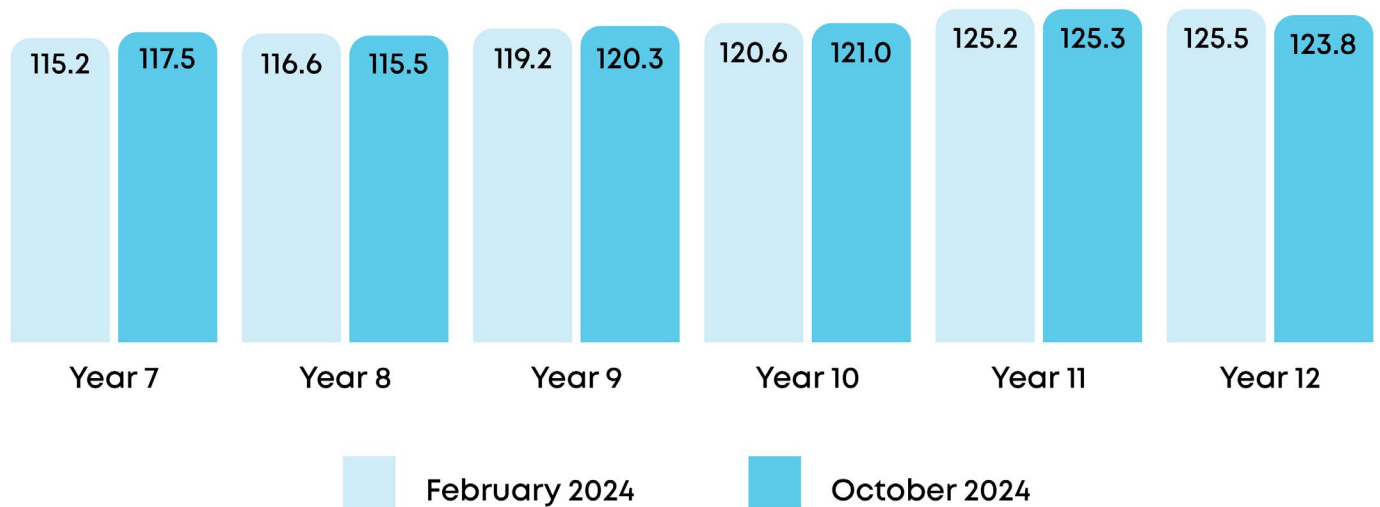
Math scores increased for Year 7, Year 9, Year 10, and Year 11 students. However, none of these findings were statistically significant. These increases were neutralised at a whole school level by the decrease in scores for Year 8 and 12 students. Ultimately, this result highlights the need for additional support amongst the Y Schools Year 8 and 12 cohorts, particularly so our school leavers have a sufficient level of numeracy skills that will assist them in their post-school journey.

Figure 11: Whole School PAT Maths scale scores over 2024.



Academic: PAT

Figure 12: PAT Maths scale scores by year level over 2024.



Factors Influencing Academic Achievement

When investigating the independent variables, the following factors influenced scores:

Gender: Female students scored 5% higher for PAT Reading than male students. Students who preferred not to disclose gender scored 12% higher for PAT Reading than male students.

Attendance: Students with medium (60-80%) Semester 2 attendance scored 2% higher for PAT Maths than students with low (<60%) Semester 2 attendance.

Student, Indigenous, and Disability Status:

- First Nations students scored 3% lower for Reading than students who don't identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Students who are culturally and/or linguistically diverse scored 3% lower for PAT Maths, and 5% lower for PAT Reading than students without a CALD background.
- Students with a recorded disability scored 1% higher for PAT Maths, 2% higher for PAT Reading than students with no disability.

Age had a weak positive correlation with scores for PAT Maths, and a very weak positive correlation with scores for PAT Reading.

Academic: PAT

These findings indicate that additional support may be required for male students and First Nations students to see positive growth in their Reading skills. Furthermore, improved support for Maths and Reading would benefit students with a CALD background, particularly if their first language is not English—female students and students with a disability achieved above expectations.

Further analyses found that students who responded that they had made at least one good connection with an educator or youth worker at the Y Schools scored 7% higher on PAT Reading than students who said that they had not.

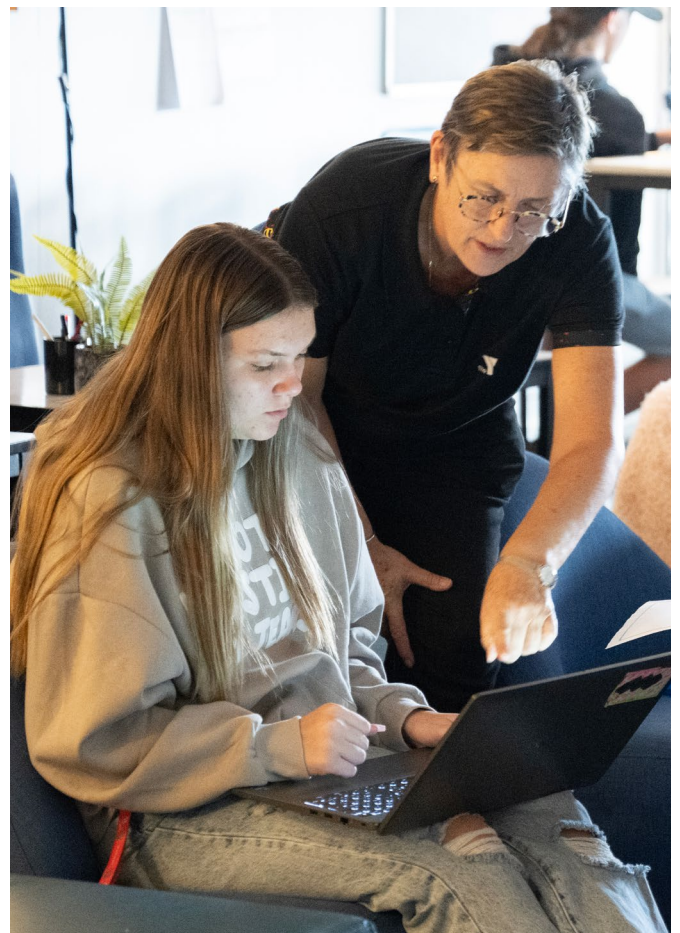
A significant relationship was found between the Sense of Belonging and Social and Job Search Skills and Goals and Aspirations scores. Students who “strongly agreed” that as a result of attending the Y School they felt more accepted for who they are, scored 14% higher on Job Search Skills and 22% higher on Goals and Aspirations than students who “disagreed”.

Students who responded that they have made at least one new friend at the Y Schools scored 10% higher on Goals and Aspirations than students who responded “not sure”.

Students who responded that they have made at least one good connection with an educator or youth worker at the Y Schools scored 13% higher on Goals

and Aspirations than students who responded “no”, and 11% higher than students who responded “not sure”.

These findings highlight the influence of positive wellbeing on all aspects of student life, and more specifically the importance of fostering positive connections between staff, students, and their peers at the Y Schools. In 2025, the Y Schools will focus on building these relationships to support flourishing wellbeing, pathways experience, and academic achievements of all students.



Conclusion

The School Pillars Snapshot Report for 2024 provided a comprehensive analysis of student wellbeing, pathways to employment, and academic performance at Y Schools. Key findings highlight the importance of fostering student engagement, connection, and support systems across various dimensions. The report illustrated that while progress has been made in some areas, such as increased employment rates, and Pathways measures, there remain areas that require greater attention in 2025, such as engagement, attendance, reading performance, and connectedness.



In the Wellbeing domain, significant efforts have been made to improve student outcomes through measures like the EPOCH scale, CHKS, and PSSM. Despite these efforts, trends such as the steady decline in engagement scores and minimal improvement in connectedness underscore the need for targeted interventions, especially for female, non-binary, and Indigenous students. Encouragingly, returning students and senior students reported stronger feelings of belonging and perseverance, highlighting the positive impact of sustained involvement in the Y Schools system.

The Pathways pillar demonstrated notable successes, particularly in equipping students with vocational qualifications and increasing employment rates by 8% from February to October. Students reported that programs such as VET tasters, apprenticeships, and hands-on training significantly improved their job readiness and confidence. However, declines in Career Confidence among senior students suggest the need for further support in preparing students for their transitions beyond school, especially for Indigenous and CALD students.

The Academic pillar revealed both strengths and areas for growth. While Year 7 students showed improvements in reading scores, the overall decline across reading performance and the stagnant math scores highlight the

Conclusion

need for enhanced academic support, particularly for male students, CALD students, and those in Year 8 and Year 12. Correlations between academic outcomes and social-emotional factors, such as engagement and connectedness, emphasised the interdependence of these domains and the necessity of a holistic approach.

Additionally, the report highlights the critical role of attendance in influencing outcomes across all pillars. Students with higher attendance consistently scored better in wellbeing measures, pathways metrics, and academic assessments. These findings affirm the importance of strategies that encourage consistent school attendance and address barriers faced by students with low attendance rates.

Looking ahead, the Y Schools can build upon these findings by prioritising strategies that foster inclusive environments, enhance social and emotional support, and strengthen academic and career pathways for all students. Interventions tailored to the needs of underrepresented groups, such as Indigenous, CALD, and non-binary students, will be crucial. Furthermore, by enhancing staff-student relationships and creating more opportunities for positive peer interactions, Y Schools can bolster the sense of belonging and connection essential for holistic student development. Through sustained efforts and a commitment to continuous improvement, Y Schools can empower

students to thrive academically, socially, and professionally, paving the way for their future success.



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