

## Communiqué

The Education Council convened in Adelaide today, with ministers discussing a range of national issues across the early childhood and school education portfolios.

### **National School Reform Agreement**

Education Council discussed the draft National School Reform Agreement. The draft has been developed through collaboration between the Australian Government, states and territories, and is informed by the findings and recommendations of the *Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools (2018)*, the *Independent Review of Regional, Rural and Remote Education (2018)* and the *Optimising STEM Industry-School Partnerships: Inspiring Australia's Next Generation (2018)* reports.

Ministers agreed to a nationally consistent approach to national policy reform initiatives in the Agreement, enabling each State and Territory to adopt and adapt the reforms in bilateral agreements to suit their jurisdictional implementation context, while maintaining fidelity with the nationally agreed objectives, outcomes, targets and measures in the National School Reform Agreement.

Council supported in-principle the progress of the draft Agreement, subject to: further work and clarification on the costs, scope, milestones, and governance of each of the national policy initiatives and the principles underpinning the sharing of costs; progress towards bilateral agreements; and further work on national measures including outcomes and sub-outcomes.

Education Council will reconsider the Agreement by its September 2018 meeting ahead of it being progressed to COAG for consideration in October.

### **NAPLAN Online**

Ministers received an update on the recent NAPLAN Online program held in May. This year, a number of students in schools in the ACT, NSW, Qld, SA, Vic and WA completed NAPLAN assessments online for the first time. In participating schools, Years 5, 7 and 9 students completed online assessments in reading, writing, language conventions and numeracy, while Year 3 students completed assessments in reading, language conventions and numeracy. Year 3 writing was undertaken as a paper-based assessment.

NAPLAN online testing was a success with students participating in 668,529 NAPLAN Online assessments during the nine-day testing program, with 99.9 per cent of students able to complete the assessment online. Local internet connectivity and device issues saw a very small number of tests diverted to complete on paper. Schools in all states and territories will continue to transition from paper-based to online assessments over the coming years.

### **Review of NAPLAN data presentation**

Education Council agreed to a review of NAPLAN data presentation, the Terms of Reference of which are attached to this Communiqué. A number of state and territory ministers advocated support for a broader review of NAPLAN and Council noted the review of NAPLAN currently underway in Queensland.

## **Bullying and Cyberbullying**

Education Council received a presentation from Ms Julie Inman Grant, eSafety Commissioner. The Commissioner emphasised her Office's commitment to working with Education Ministers in order to make the significant cultural and behavioural changes needed to combat cyberbullying and other negative online behaviours, and discussed existing and proposed eSafety resources to assist the education sector in achieving these outcomes.

## **Early Childhood Education Reform**

Ministers received an update on developing advice on early learning reform principles and directions. These design principles were informed by the recommendations of *Lifting Our Game*.

Ministers acknowledged that reform and investment in early learning, which complements and builds on the strengths of the existing system, has the potential to deliver significant economic and social benefits. Work will continue on these principles ahead of a further update to Education Council in September 2018.

## **Family Day Care**

Education Council received an update on the implementation of the Improving Quality in Family Day Care (FDC) program of work. Ministers discussed the six projects currently underway to improve quality in the FDC sector, including roles and responsibilities in the light of recent Commonwealth funding changes.

## **National Review of Teacher Registration**

Ministers received an update on the National Review of Teacher Registration currently being progressed by AITSL. The update focused on the themes that emerged from national consultation with key education stakeholders.

Ministers noted the operation of the current national registration framework, including implementation, consistency, best practice, challenges, and barriers. Ministers agreed that the review should consider successful strategies already implemented by states and territories before making its recommendations. Education Council will receive a further progress update in September 2018.

## **Initial Teacher Education reform**

Education Council received an update on progress in implementing the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) reforms to initial teacher education. Ministers discussed the federated approach to accreditation and nationally consistent high standards that underpin the proposed reforms and agreed to the recommendations attached to this Communique.