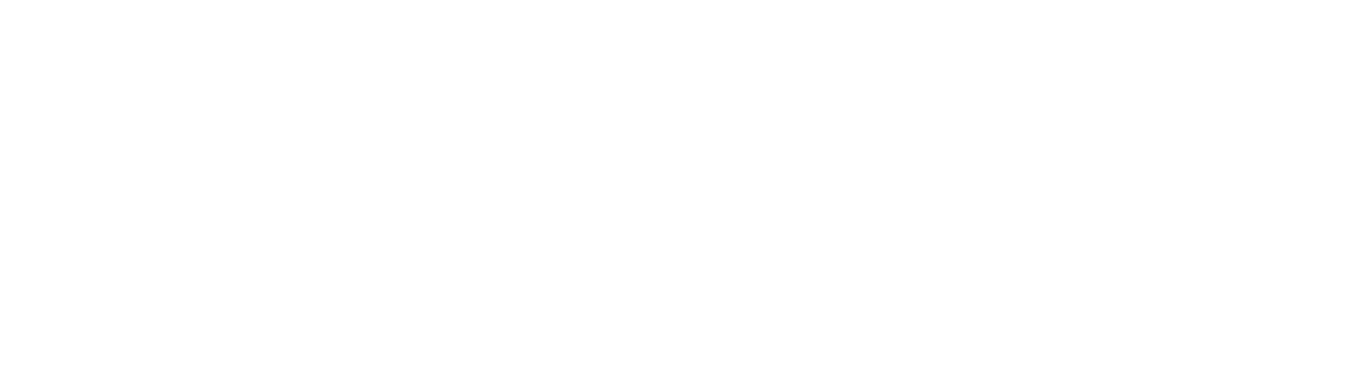
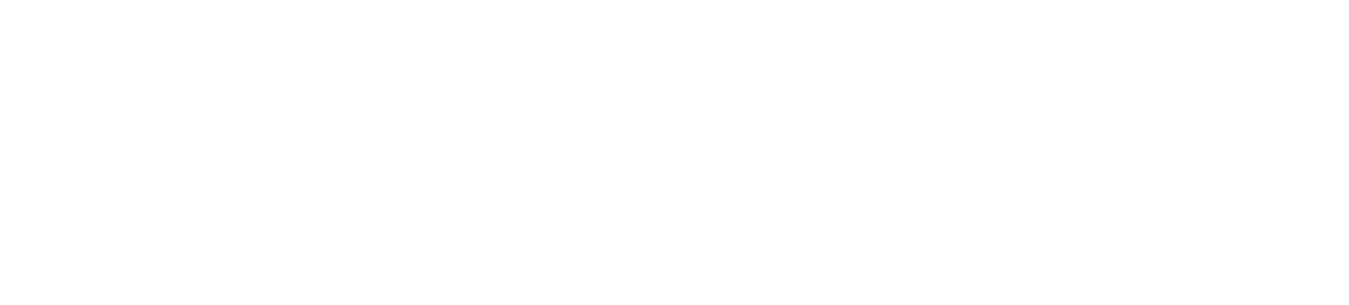
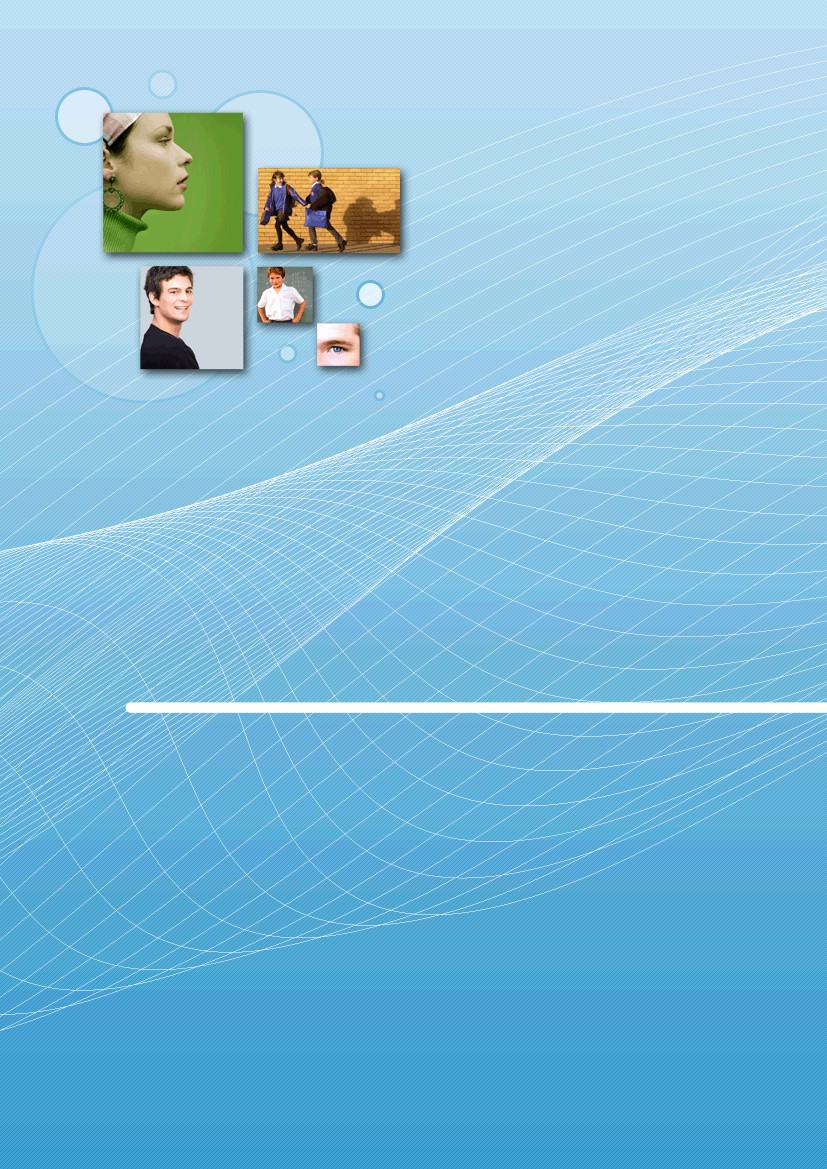
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**social research 1**



**Extended Service School Models**

Executive Summary Report

“It’s about changing a generation

…it’s breaking the cycle.”

**(Principal)**

**social research**



Western Australia was selected to be the lead jurisdiction for the Extended Service School Models project . The project, funded by the Australian Government, has been project managed by the Department of Education. A national Steering Group was established that comprised representatives from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Victoria, South Australia, Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory and Queensland, the Catholic and Independent school sectors and the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations. Those jurisdictions not actively represented in the Steering Group have been provided ongoing correspondence throughout the project. Drawing on the emerging themes of the research the Steering Group has provided recommendations to support effective and sustained implementation of models and practice and a process to move these forwards at a national level.

This Final Summation Report, supported by the recommendations through the national Steering Group and the Stage 1 Literature Review, will be presented to the Standing Council for Education and Early Childhood Development (previously the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood and Youth Affairs) and will enable the identification and documentation of promising innovative models, and take a national approach to their evaluation, with a view to understanding what works, where and under what circumstances.

Please note that the data contained in the report has been prepared for **the Department of Education, Western Australia** by **TNS Australia.** It may not be suitable for other applications. The use of this information for any other purpose should be discussed with the lead authors. TNS accepts no responsibility for unauthorised use of this information by a third party.

The lead authors of this report within the consulting research agency (TNS Australia) are:

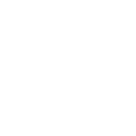
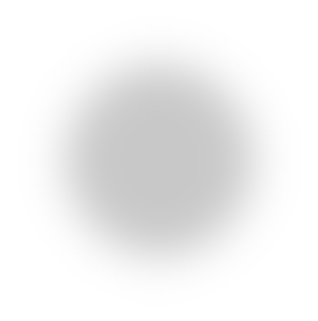
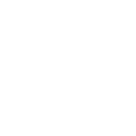
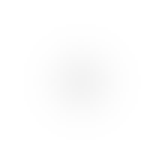
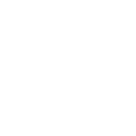
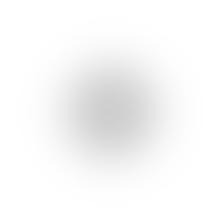
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# Executive Summary

In December 2008, all Australian State and Territory Governments entered into an agreement with the Australian Government for the three Smarter Schools National Partnerships: Literacy and Numeracy, Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) School Communities and Improving Teacher Quality. These National Partnership (NP) agreements are part of the school reform initiatives of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), and provide significant resources to selected schools with the aim of improving student achievement, particularly in schools serving low socio-economic status (SES) school communities.



The National Partnerships aim to drive an ambitious reform agenda to lift the quality of education and improve the educational outcomes for all students. In considering the reform strategies being developed by jurisdictions, opportunities were identified for significant national collaborations to support the implementation of the National Partnerships.

At its meeting in April 2009, the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) agreed to progress six Australian Government funded national collaboration projects with a State or Territory identified to lead each initiative:

 School Performance Improvement Frameworks

 Innovative Strategies for Small and/or Remote

Schools

 Parental Engagement in Schooling Low SES Communities

 Extended Service School Models

 National Literacy and Numeracy Diagnostic Tools

 School Leadership Development Strategies

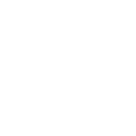
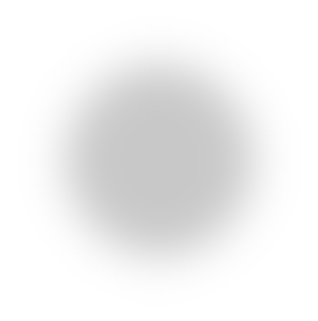
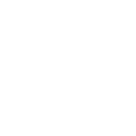
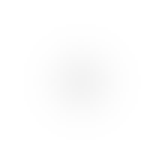
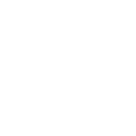
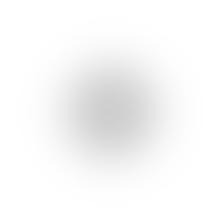
The Australian Government considers the Extended Service School Models Project a priority to support the educational needs and wellbeing of students in low SES communities. It aims to facilitate the targeted delivery of support services to young people who are most at risk of not engaging in education and making a successful transition to schooling, further education and training and participation in the wider community.

**Aim of the project**

The first stage of the Project was to undertake a comprehensive literature review to determine what is currently in place in Australia and overseas. The literature review, completed by the Foundation for Young Australians, provides a comprehensive overview of models, the services provided, why they are used, how they are implemented and how they may be applicable to the Australian context. The literature review provided the foundation upon which the second and final stage of work, undertaken by TNS Social Research, is based and is available at: [*http://smarterschools.gov.au/supplementary/Pages/*](http://smarterschools.gov.au/supplementary/Pages/) *NationalKeyReformProjects.aspx*.

The research in this stage of the project was designed to profile the current models of extended service schooling in Australia; to understand enablers and barriers to the sustainability and successes of the range of approaches; and to provide direction on good and best practice such that it can be effectively shared across jurisdictions.

Evidence was collected from a range of sources, including analysis from national and international literature (stage one of this project); comprehensive mapping of current models in Australia (via a quantitative Principals survey); stakeholder interviews; a quantitative survey of parents; and in- depth case study analyses (through case study immersions in 24 Australian schools). The discussion that follows summarises the common themes that emerged from this research.



What is the profile of extended service schooling in Australia?

The need for extended service schooling in Australia.

There is a complex range of issues impacting the education of Australian young people and the way schools operate. These issues often extend beyond those directly related to schools and reflect those evident among family units, and in the broader community.

Schools agree that in order to achieve optimum outcomes for students, the impact of these needs must first be recognised, and issues mitigated. Identification of, and a desire to address, these complex needs is the most common catalyst for adopting an extended service schooling approach. The „Principal survey‟ indicated that half (53%) of responding Australian schools are currently endeavouring to address these needs through the development of an extended service schooling approach. Furthermore, there is unanimous agreement (100% of those who responded) among schools not currently delivering extended services that there is, indeed, a need for such approaches.

The majority of schools (66% of those who responded to the „Principal survey‟) currently delivering extended service schooling anticipate their provision will expand in the next three years. Thus, the need to support schools in their delivery via an ongoing manner is important to acknowledge. This research provides guidance on the scope of potential models that will assist those undertaking an extended service schooling approach.

There is a ‟grass roots„ desire for extended service schooling among parents.

This research indicates that the desire among parents for extended service schooling is strong. The majority of parents participating in the „Parents survey‟ agree that “*schools should provide more than just education*” (77% agree) and that “*it takes an entire community to educate a child*” (75% agree). In addition, these parents agree that “*schools should be appropriately supported by Government so they can provide more than just education*” (85% agree).

Extended service schooling is broad in its reach, and has the potential to touch the lives of many Australians.

The educational attainment and wellbeing of children are central to the goals of extended service schooling in Australia. However, the objectives of extended service schooling extend considerably further in scope to include parents and care-givers, schools and school staff, communities and the system itself. Thus, effective extended service schooling approaches have the potential to touch the lives of many Australians.

Australian models are characterised by customised, place-driven approaches.

The approach to extended service schooling in Australia is not “one-size-fits-all”. Rather, it is characterised by place-driven approaches that are customised and tailored in their design and delivery to the needs and specificities of each school and its local community. Flexibility to achieve customisation is considered a necessity for successful extended service schooling, and most case study schools believe that current resourcing approaches facilitate this.

It is noted that while the overall approach is customised to the individual school, most Australian designs incorporate an element of school-based delivery in their modality, rather than only referring those in need to agencies outside the school.

External funding and partnerships are central to the way extended service schooling in Australia is resourced.

While National Partnership funding was highly valued by those schools receiving an allocation, there was concern that it is a finite source. Schools in this research acknowledged the need for ongoing support to ensure that successful approaches are sustainable in the longer term. This research noted a desire by schools for strategies at a national level that will support extended service schooling in an ongoing manner.

This research identified that schools use varied approaches to access resources and are highly dependent upon the commitment of school leadership teams and / or those employed under broader governance structures to manage funding and partnerships to achieve this (such as the Innovative Community Action Networks in South Australia, and the Northern Territory‟s „Strong Start, Bright Future‟ strategy).

Schools typically pursue funding from a variety of sources including grants, as well as through partnerships with community-based and not-for-profit organisations, business, industry, and further education providers. Nearly all schools in this research (94% of those who responded to the Principals survey) indicate they initiate partnerships as a component of their resourcing.

What does extended service schooling in Australia

achieve? Of the schools undertaking models of extended service schooling that participated in this research, the majority

(a range of 73% to 98% depending on their objectives)

considered their school successful in achieving the agreed goals. Case study schools cite many examples of success and the positive difference extended service schooling makes to the lives of children, parents, school staff and local communities.

An over-reliance on anecdotal evidence of success, rather than the application of thorough and established evaluation tools, was noted throughout this research. Consequently, many of these outcomes could be considered aspirational because of the lack of rigorous quantitative evidence.

This aside, the observed outcomes of extended service schooling in Australia are often significant, and are noted below.

Outcomes for children …

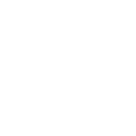
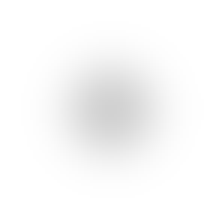
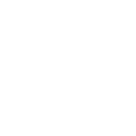
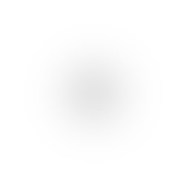
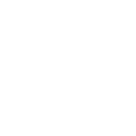
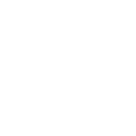
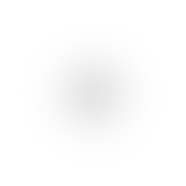
The three most consistently observed outcomes for children included:

 **Improved behaviour** – most notably inside the classroom, but also on school grounds, in their home and in their community.

 **Social skill development and school transition** – providing students with opportunities to socialise, learn social skills, build social networks and ease the transition for new students.

 **Improved educational attainment** – observations made included; more positive attitudes by students towards learning and classroom engagement; “at risk” children were supported and the “playing field” levelled; higher graduation completion levels and, in some cases, improved literacy and numeracy results.

**social research iii**



Some schools also noted:

 an increase in the confidence and self esteem of children;

 an increase in student attendance rates;

 emotional benefits such as delivering a sense of

“security” to children; and

 improvements in future prospects as a result of redressing inequities.

Outcomes for parents …

The most frequently observed outcome of extended service schooling for parents related to the **increased access of services by parents** due to physical proximity, and a reduction in the attitudinal barriers of accessing „external‟ services. This was often described as resulting in enhanced parenting skills, increased adult learning (for example, literacy skills, numeracy skills, cooking skills, computing skills etc), and improved personal and social confidence.

Some schools also mentioned:

 reduced social isolation of parents in their community;

 increased parental engagement in the school;

 reciprocity and a sense of parental responsibility;

and

 improvements in parent-teacher relationships.

Outcomes for communities…

Increased **community access to services** – providing greater access to “new” and “existing” services and programs, as well as bringing resources “back” into the community was often described during the case study research. It was also felt that extended service schooling assisted in the development of a sense of community by **enhancing community cohesion and pride, and building local capacity.**

Outcomes for schools …

It was noted in around half of the case study schools that there was a perceived **improvement in school reputation within their local community** as a result of their extended service schooling approach.

It was felt that this improved reputation supported:

 an increase in student enrolment numbers;

 an increase in teacher attraction – with a greater number of applicants, and perceived higher quality applications;

 an improvement in teacher retention;

 a reduction in school vandalism; and

 an increase in the number of parent and community advocates within the school.

Outcomes for school staff …

There were also perceived outcomes for school staff which related to **the facilitation of teaching - enabling teachers to focus on their “core business”** with a reduction in behavioural issues, better management of “at risk” students, and an increase in student engagement in the classroom and school.

In addition, some schools discussed:

 opportunities for professional development; and

 a sense of achievement, shared involvement and reward from observing the positive outcomes of their approach.

Economic Outcomes …

Some stakeholders also referred to effects they felt related to longer term, broader outcomes for the economy. These included:

 a cost-efficient approach to tackling longer term social issues;

 an improvement in career pathways for students that could reduce social inequality and break the cycle of welfare dependency;

 a better skilled workforce benefiting local businesses;

 an increase in parental employability;

 fostering greater connections between businesses and communities which could improve business performance; and

 the ability and potential for schools to generate income.

What are the enablers and barriers to success and sustainability?

There were many factors uncovered throughout this research that were considered both enablers and barriers to success and sustainability. While often system-level, they also related to community and parents, schools and school staff.

The six most consistently discussed enablers which emerged from this research include:

1. securing consistent **funding** from a variety of sources;

2. embedding the philosophy of the approach into the

**culture** of the school;

3. developing and maintaining an **understanding** of the needs of the local community so that the approach can be modified, as necessary, to align to these needs;

4. having the physical and human **resources** to support at least some school-based delivery of services;

5. a school-based capacity to develop strong **partnerships** with external agencies, particularly for schools in jurisdictions that do not have broader governance structures to manage this process;

6. provision of **system-level support** to assist schools in navigating their way from identification of need through to implementation and evaluation of their extended service schooling approach.

Some of the identified challenges that schools face in the development, implementation, and maintenance of their models of extended service schooling include:

1. navigating, and working within, **funding** systems at a school-level;

2. **building parent support** for the philosophy of the model so that they are keen to embrace and participate in the services provided;

3. mitigating any potential negative **stigma** associated with parents, their children, or members of the broader community, accessing services through the school;

4. addressing the impact of **staff turnover**;

5. maintaining an appropriate **balance** between a focus on educational outcomes and a focus on the wellbeing of students more broadly; and

6. ensuring a **shared understanding** of the model and its aims with a range of stakeholders.

What defines good practice?

As mentioned previously, and reiterated throughout the Final Summation Report, this research can not propose one single model of best practice in extended service schooling - the need for flexibility to meet diverse and changing needs of communities precludes such a notion. However, common attributes which were considered best practice by the case study schools include:

1. **Start “small”** and utilise existing services and programs.

2. **Continual evolution** is required to maintain relevance of the services and programs.

3. **Wide consultation** (internal and external) is critical from the outset, and should be conducted in an ongoing manner. It is essential to understand the school and its local community so that the model is tailored to its needs.

4. **Partnerships and objectives** need to be formalised and shared, but not at the expense of flexibility and the ability to develop the approach as needs change.

5. **A school leader** who is fully committed to the approach and willing to drive the process from identification to implementation needs to be identified from the outset. It was noted that this does not necessarily need to be the Principal.

6. **A supporting team of school drivers** will ensure the responsibility and workload is shared.

7. **Multiple funding sources** should be secured.

8. **System support** is required.

9. **A coordinator position** was noted as highly beneficial to the success and sustainability of many models of extended service schooling.

10. **Communication strategies** whereby “successes and wins” can be shared and celebrated among school staff, partners and communities should be implemented at a school-level.

11. **Evaluation mechanisms** should be included from the outset.

How would schools like to be supported? Six key themes emerged from this research – each of which schools consistently believed were central to successful implementation of sustainable and effective models of extended service schooling.

The themes, which also reflect the challenges and strategies articulated in the Stage 1 literature review, are provided in summary below:

**1. Support schools to access consistent funding**

Funding was consistently expressed as a key enabler (and barrier) to the sustainability and success of models. Many schools felt they would benefit from support in securing and maintaining funding.

Schools which were able to access National Partnership funding were very positive towards this support. However, as a finite resource, schools agree it cannot be relied upon in isolation. Moreover, only targeted schools have access to this resource. Ideally schools would like to see National Partnership funding, or an equivalent funding source, continue.

Schools noted that system level support to assist them in securing additional funding sources – including local, community based funding sources – would aid them in the process of establishing a model of extended service schooling and in the longer term, support its sustainability.

**2. Support school-level establishment of dedicated roles to help coordinate extended service schooling approaches**

Schools consistently described coordinator roles as an essential component to the sustainability and ongoing evolution of models of practice. The significant amount of time involved in developing and delivering extended service schooling was well documented within this research.

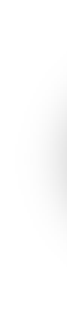
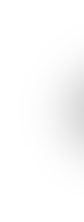
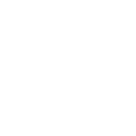
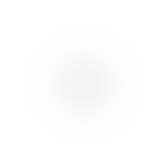
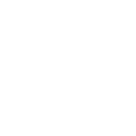
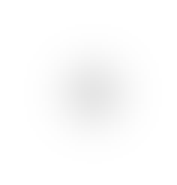
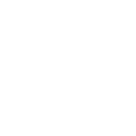
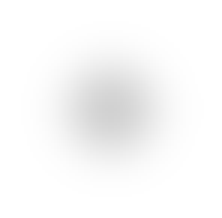
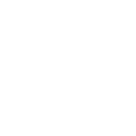
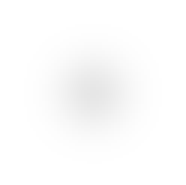
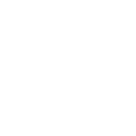
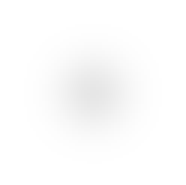
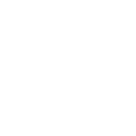
Some schools are not currently aware that National Partnerships funding can be used to fund this role. Sharing knowledge around the most effective use of this position, including assistance in accessing other sustainable funding opportunities, and forming partnerships, may need to be strengthened. This is of particular relevance in jurisdictions where individuals are not employed under broader governance structures to perform this role (as in South Australia‟s Innovative Community Action Networks, and Northern Territory‟s

„Strong Start, Bright Futures‟).

**3. Articulate a process for establishing effective interagency collaboration**

Extended service schooling approaches often involve multiple agencies. The extent to which successful interagency collaboration was achieved was considered a vital enabler – and, equally, an inhibitor if unsuccessful.

The development of a resource to support schools to successfully engage with external agencies was identified as beneficial to ongoing successes.



Guidelines or principles for collaboration would need to support flexibility so that schools are able to deliver place-driven approaches.

**4. Support flexibility and the ability to adapt to the changing needs of the school community**

Successful extended service schooling is not a “one- size-fits-all” approach. Policies and structures that provide flexibility for schools to be responsive to the needs of their local community are essential. Over- defining what, and how, services are offered will impede the natural evolution of extended service schooling and its ability to adapt to changing needs.

Maintaining flexibility at a system level is critical. Continued acknowledgement that flexibility is a core component of successful extended service schooling will be important.

**5. Provide targeted professional learning opportunities for school leaders, teachers and other staff**

Extended service schooling is relatively new to Australia. The limited shared understanding of extended service schooling may impede the likelihood that it will be immediately supported, implemented and maintained at the school level.

Schools indicate that they would benefit from access to professional learning opportunities which relate to the principles, and practices, of extended service schooling.

**6. Develop online resources to guide and support schools in extended service schooling**

In many schools, an extended service schooling approach will be new territory. Many processes will be developed by individual schools as part of the potentially steep learning curve that schools will experience as they design and implement the school- driven approach to meet their needs.

Schools in this research noted that they would benefit from access to a range of information and support resources. This includes information about processes, communication mechanisms, best practice guidelines and methods of evaluation.

This research indicated that such tools would need to be designed as a guide, rather than be prescriptive in nature. Flexibility remains key to successful implementation to ensure that models are driven by schools and reflect local needs that may alter over time.



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations