

Q44.

Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System

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Q54.

Chapter 2: Improving student outcomes – including for students most at risk of falling behind

Q1. 1. What are the most important student outcomes for Australian school students that should be measured in the next NSRA? Should these go beyond academic performance (for example, attendance and engagement)?

There needs to be a shift in which data is considered a signifier of positive student outcomes. Academic outcomes have been measured and exist as a point of reference in a number of performance based outcomes. However, ATOSS data and students wellbeing and safety data is not being measured and reported on to the extent that academic data is. This is data that may reflect serious underlying issues within schooling systems that will negatively impact students academic outcomes.

Q2. 2. What are the evidence-based practices that teachers, schools, systems and sectors can put in place to improve student outcomes, particularly for those most at risk of falling behind? Are different approaches required for different at-risk cohorts?

Of course different approaches are required. The most significant and yet difficult alongside heavy loads, is planned differentiation. Especially those differentiation techniques and practices that fall under the Universal Design for Learning principles. These are techniques for differentiation that will positive effect the opportunities for learning for all students and not just those with significant needs. However, as mentioned above, other students needs extend beyond differentiation. Specific needs range from literacy and numeracy programs, to fully funded wellbeing coordinators and on site practitioners to consistent ES staff who's pay reflects their demands.

Q3. 3. How can all students at risk of falling behind be identified early on to enable swift learning interventions?

Having fully funded counselling staff that are responsible for coordinating and facilitating preventative measures would significantly improve student outcomes. These counselling staff members would be responsible for following up with students who have been flagged by teachers through formative and summative assessment data. Additionally, fully funded wellbeing staff would also positively impact students outcomes. Ensuring students enter the school knowing they have dedicated support for any wellbeing challenges that extend beyond the classroom teachers professional capabilities.

Q4. 4. Should the next NSRA add additional priority equity cohorts? For example, should it add children and young people living in out-of-home care and students who speak English as an additional language or dialect? What are the risks and benefits of identifying additional cohorts?

In addition to including these cohorts the more significant step that needs to be taken is addressing how these young people will be supported. Schools should have funded that reflects an ability to hire and retain staff for consistent wellbeing, mental health and literacy support.

Q5. 5. What should the specific targets in the next NSRA be? Should the targets be different for primary and secondary schools? If so, how? What changes are required to current measurement frameworks, and what new measures might be required?

Many of the significant targets should go across the Primary and Secondary. Writing from the perspective of a High School, there are a number of specific health and wellbeing needs that enter the school in addition to those in primary school. However, the broader targets of having fully staffed school which includes wellbeing, ES, literacy staff as well as practitioners on site is a necessity for academic achieved to be prioritised.

Q6. 6. How can the targets in the next NSRA be structured to ensure evidence-based approaches underpin a nationally coherent reform agenda while allowing jurisdictions and schools the flexibility to respond to individual student circumstances and needs?

Provide schools with staff who have been taught how to gather this evidence using the right tools and training. Do not ask teacher to provide an additional responsibility of leading this evidence collection. Instead have a dedicated staff member who communicates with teachers to collect the evidence.

Q7. 7. How should progress towards any new targets in the next NSRA be reported on?

Clear goals and commitments enshrined from the start which are held accountable throughout the implementation of this NSRA. These goals and commitments should be accessible and transparent with minimal econobabble. Consistent and transparent publications of national data including funding allocations, school data collected and reported on by dedicated staff members.

Q55.

Chapter 3: Improving student mental health and wellbeing

Q8. 8. What does it look like when a school is supporting student mental health and wellbeing effectively? What is needed from school, systems, government and the community to deliver this?

Schools need to have full time on site wellbeing staff who are trained and supported by the department. All schools should have a mental health practitioner on site and even a regular on site GP. Schools should have extremely clear policy on school safety regarding behaviour. Clear policy on student safety regarding the protection of vulnerable students to specific and generalised targeting and discriminatory behaviours and actions. This should be paired with an increased level of school agency to remove students from learning spaces who have acted consistently against student safety and wellbeing.

Q9. 9. What evidence-based wellbeing approaches currently being implemented by schools and communities should be considered as part of a national reform agenda?

The implementation of the Gonski review.

Q10. 10. Should a wellbeing target be included in the next NSRA? Could this use existing data collections, or is additional data required?

This should be included in the next NSRA. There are two main considerations that should be made. 1. The inconsiderate structure of ATOSS data that only includes Male/Female entries and does not consider gender diversity that is reflected in many communities around Australia. 2. The inclusion of specific questions surrounding the experience of discrimination within the school and learning spaces.

Q11. 11. Would there be benefit in surveying students to help understand student perceptions of safety and belonging at school, subjective state of wellbeing, school climate and classroom disruption? Would there be value in incorporating this into existing National Assessment Program surveys such as NAPLAN?

It is highly recommended that the NSRA take actions towards including the collection and reporting on these issues, especially from students themselves. However, it is not recommended to be affiliated with NAPLAN data. This is data with an academic focus that actually contributes to the continuation of neoliberal agendas within schooling that concentrates inequality in public schools. Therefore, NAPLAN should be a consideration of criticism when gathering students survey data, not the reporter of this data.

Q12. 12. To what extent do school leaders and teachers have the skills and training to support students struggling with mental health?

Teachers and school leaders are not, and should not be expected to be, the main point of call regarding student mental health and wellbeing outside of their current responsibilities. Teachers and leaders have a duty of care to report on any serious concerns regarding student health and wellbeing. But there needs to be dedicated wellbeing staff who are present full time on site to provide specific support to students.

13. 13. What can be done to establish stronger partnerships between schools, Local Health Networks and Primary Health Networks?

More funding into public schools so that schools can hire and retain a fulltime wellbeing coordinator who is responsible for establishing these partnerships.

Q19. 14. What can be done to ensure schools can easily refer students to services outside the school gate that they need to support their wellbeing? How can this be done without adding to teacher and leader workload?

Again, this cannot be emphasised enough. Increase public school funding, so that the public schools which are supporting the highest concentration of disadvantaged students, can afford to hire fulltime wellbeing staff to set up these systems locally. This will also lighten the load for teachers and leaders.

Q56.

Chapter 4: Our current and future teachers

Q20. 15. What change(s) would attract more students into the teaching profession?

An increase to pay that reflects the demands that currently exist in teaching. Prioritising supporting students to actually pursue these careers. This is not as simple as removing the fees for teaching courses, but must include paid placements to ensure students can sustain their training. Addressing teacher burnout specifically teachers that recently joined. This requires the additional funding and processes to be implemented so that teacher wellbeing is increased as a priority.

Q32. 16. What change(s) would support teachers to remain in the profession?

Reward experienced classroom teachers with increased pay and not a role that then requires them to leave the classroom (otherwise it contributes to diminishing in class teacher numbers). Teacher wellbeing put into focus and well funded. Workload reductions and recognition of enshrined and specified planning and assessment time.

Q31. 17. What change(s) would support qualified teachers to return to the profession?

Competitive pay that reflects the demands of the job. Reduced workloads.

Q30. 18. What additional reforms are needed to ensure that the schools most in need can support and retain highly effective teachers?

Stop the funding of schools that take money from enrolments privately. Make sure public schools are well funded and can do all they need to support new and experienced teachers regarding workload and wellbeing.

Q29. 19. What can be done to attract a diverse group of people into the teaching profession to ensure it looks like the broader community?

Have the schooling system go under a range of reforms with more than just consultation and considerations made. But instead, there needs to be an inclusion of these diverse groups of people in the planning and implementation of education in Australia.

Q28. 20. What can be done to attract more First Nations teachers? What can be done to improve the retention of First Nations teachers?

Decolonise the curriculum. Truth telling. Consistent and strong advocacy from the education department and school communities towards justice for First Nations communities.

Q26. 21. What reforms could enable the existing teacher workforce to be deployed more effectively?

More funding to public schools. Centralise education and remove funding for private schools. Additionally, a full implementation of the Gonski review without compromising further into funding non-public schools due to lobbying pressure from high socioeconomic communities.

Q25. 22. How can teacher career pathways, such as master teachers and instructional specialists, be improved to attract and retain teachers? How should this interact with the Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher (HALT) certification and the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers?

Having in school coaches for teaching staff who are fully funded.

Q24. 23. Are there examples of resources, such as curriculum materials, being used to improve teacher workload or streamline their administrative tasks?

Yes. The Australian curriculum (ACARA) and VCAA's curriculum. In [REDACTED] Highschool curriculum is developed, but individual lesson plans are not provided.

Q23. 24. How should digital technology be used to support education delivery, reduce teacher workload and improve teacher effectiveness? What examples are you aware of?

A centralised lesson planning document that is collaborated upon and accessible to all relevant teaching staff.

Q22. 25. Are there benefits for the teaching profession in moving to a national registration system? If so, what are they?

No comment.

Q57.

Chapter 5: Collecting data to inform decision-making and boost student outcomes

Q27. 26. What data are of most value to you and how accessible are these for you?

ATOSS, wellbeing and mental health data. Without these connections to the school and a sense of safety and wellbeing, students cannot effectively learn.

Q35. 27. Is there any data that are not currently collected and reported on that is vital to understanding education in Australia? Why is this data important?

NA

Q34. 28. Should data measurement and reporting on outcomes of students with disability be a priority under the next NSRA? If so, how can this data be most efficiently collected?

This process (both data/evidence collection and reporting) should come from students, parents/guardians, ES staff and community members and services.

Q33. 29. Is there a need to establish a report which tracks progress on the targets and reforms in the next NSRA? Should it report at a jurisdictional and a national level? What should be included in the report?

It is a necessity for these targets and reforms to be successful. These reports should be transparent, accessible and open to the public entirely. There needs to be reporting and people responsible for analysing that reporting to hold the Government accountable to follow through with targets and reforms.

Q32. 30. Is there data collected by schools, systems, sectors or jurisdictions that could be made more available to inform policy design and implementation? What systems would be necessary to enable these data are made available safely and efficiently?

If data is collected by any of these groups, but cannot be accurately interpreted, this data should be handed to experts in the fields to interpret and report on.

Q31. 31. The Productivity Commission and Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) have identified the need for longitudinal data to identify the actual students at risk of falling behind based on their performance (and not on equity groups alone) and to monitor these students' progress over time. Should this be the key data reform for the next NSRA?

Both should be a priority.

Q30. 32. Should an independent body be responsible for collecting and holding data? What rules should be in place to govern the sharing of data through this body?

Any body currently in existence should be held accountable to the inappropriate sharing of this information to benefit a select few for-profit entities. As of creating a new body. This is not necessary and should not be consider viable as this should be contained within the Government.

Q29. 33. Is there data being collected that is no longer required?

A review of the necessity and usefulness of NAPLAN data is highly recommended.

Q28. 34. How could the national Unique Student Identifier (USI) support improved outcomes for students?

It could be tied in with access to wellbeing and mental health service outside of school.

Q58.
Chapter 6: Funding transparency and accountability

Q36. 35. Are there other objectives for funding accountability and transparency we have missed?

Schools that make money off of investment properties should not receive any federal funding. If this is not negotiated then the amount and distribution of funding to these schools should be transparent. Funding goals needs to be extremely clear and accessible to the public (no econobabble). There needs to be clear consequences for failing to deliver on agreements should be enshrined before reform is implemented.

Q39. 36. How can governments make better use of the information already collected and/or published to achieve the objectives?

Reform in ways that address issues that directly rare causing further challenges to growing inequality in education. Specifically by publicly and regularly announcing, reporting and informing the public on how much public funding is provided to private schools.

Q38. 37. What other funding accountability and transparency information regarding schools (both your school and the education system more generally) would be useful?

Full and open transparency of federal, state and local funding.

Q37. 38. What are the priority gaps in the current funding transparency and accountability arrangements from your perspective?

The fact that many private schools are receiving more public funding than public schools themselves. If this information was available and accessible to the public than people would have the opportunity to be better informed.

Q59. Do you have any additional comments? (2,000 characters)

Stop funding private schools. Reduce teacher workloads and increase pay to reflect demands. Follow through with the Gonski review. Focus on student and teacher wellbeing because without these foundations, students and teachers will continue to feel unsupported. Fund public schools to better equip them with the staffing needs (specifically wellbeing staff).

Q52. If you have more information you would like to share with the Expert Panel, please send a written response as a .docx or RTF format to NSRA.submissions@education.gov.au. An additional PDF version may also be submitted. Please make sure to note that your email is to be considered alongside your current submission.

If you have any questions about your submission or the submissions process more broadly, please contact NSRA.submissions@education.gov.au