

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)?

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?

Philosophy for Children.

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

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?

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?

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?

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

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?

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

Philosophy for Children is a programme that has shown promise in improving relationships and social functioning.

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

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?

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

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

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?

Build more social institutions outside of school. Hire more social workers to work in schools.

Q56.

Chapter 4: Our current and future teachers

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

If people knew that you could have a good life-work balance, a competitive salary, and opportunities for growth in the teaching profession (including designing your own subjects, making changes to your school, and clear pathways to working in other sectors, like universities—consider Singapore's teacher secondment programme), they would be more likely to consider this career. Presently teaching is about being fitted into boxes as opposed to being about people's talents and strengths.

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

In 2022 Grattan Institute reported that 90% of teachers lack time to prepare for classes. Per AITSL's Teacher Workforce Data in 2021-2 classroom-teachers worked 40% more hrs than they were paid to work. This is not only unethical, but it is the illegal premise on which the school system functions. Teachers need more time to do good work and to have a healthy work-life balance. Face-to-face teaching is the part of a teachers' load spent in a classroom, as opposed to planning, professional development, or other activities. In 2018-21 lower secondary full-time teachers in Aus had to teach an average of 839 hours—over 67 hours above the OECD average. Throughout the school year Aussie secondary school teachers are in a classroom 119 hrs longer than Dutch teachers, 149 longer than Danish teachers, 230 longer than Japanese teachers, and 243 longer than Finnish teachers—countries where teaching is a well-respected and desired career. Time outside of classroom teaching is essential for teachers to: research and plan their programmes; participate in collaborative projects; and improve their knowledge and skills. Lower the face-to-face teaching hours for Aussie teachers to retain them.

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

Work-life balance guarantees, funding of their further education, and being hired as consultants, coaches, or support without classroom responsibilities.

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

Look to the community outside of the schools in need. Don't treat those schools in isolation from the other institutions and infrastructure in the area. The geographical areas in general need heavy investments to make them attractive to teachers. Teachers, like any humans, would like to have a good lifestyle. The Salary is only one factor in that equation.

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?

Everything I wrote in the other sections applies to this one. Allow schools the freedom and resources to create their own curricular offerings based on the talents of the teachers and the needs of the community. If you want diversity, then you cannot make the school system about fitting people into pre-determined molds.

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

What I wrote for question 19 applies here. Focus on the strengths and talents of people you want to work in schools and not on ticking boxes.

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

Australia needs more teachers in every school to balance out the workload.

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?

You need a more imaginative approach. Career pathways should involve institutional and community partnerships. It is not about moving up ladders, but about recognising and nurturing the unique educational talents of teachers, and allowing them to create new things. Such things could be: new classes/subjects, research projects, outdoor and adventure education programmes, secondments to university, etc.

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

Teachers cannot work from scripts. Teachers are creative agents and what they need is resources and time to do their best pedagogical work. It is not about "streamlining," it is about reducing the face-to-face teaching hours in line with what teachers enjoy in places like Japan, Finland, and the Netherlands.

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?

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

Less red tape for moving across states. This would force states to respect and recognise teacher education programmes that might be structured slightly differently in other states.

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?

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?

Yes, you need data on teacher innovation, teacher-led pedagogical and research projects.

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?

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?

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?

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?

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?

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

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

Q58.

Chapter 6: Funding transparency and accountability

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

You need to decouple funding from land rates. This practice is unethical.

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

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

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

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

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.

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