

Q44.

# Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System

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## **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)?

Yes, although academic metrics are important, other factors such as community service and happiness levels are equally important. Perhaps a greater focus on these aspects should be integrated within university applications instead of just for applying for scholarships such as the Fogarty scholarship. Additionally measuring the network of support students have via surveys and supplementing this network with free and high quality therapy due to the fact that a large proportion of students do not seek help due to its inaccessibility. Additionally attendance and engagement are also important factors to consider. In most schools, attendance is impacted as students feel bored in class which can be mitigated by breaking the school day into activities such as sport and meditation which can make school more interesting while positively affecting student health and wellbeing and subsequently increasing attendance. Engaging the students must be conducted both during and outside of school hours. Personally, although school is fairly fun for me on a day to day basis, I find the times where I am outside of school but still on the school campus with my friends more enjoyable. During these times

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?

Teaching them how to learn more efficiently and reliably for all their subjects. I recommend consulting Dr Justin Sung who is based in Monash in Melbourne about his advice in this area as he is highly experienced and I personally believe that if even a few of his practices were implemented in the education of children, all student outcomes can be significantly improved. Regardless of how at risk students are, these learning practices will assist all students if taught and applied according to how Dr Sung has taught other students.

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

Academically, students who consistently (around 3 assessments in a row) perform poorly (ie are one or two standard deviations below other students), can be easily identified through normal testing and reporting. Students who are socially and emotionally challenged can be identified through how much and the way they interact with their peers or other members of the school community. Psychiatrists who are more adept at identifying these types of students could also be employed at schools to assist them. In my school surveys are conducted to gauge student wellbeing however results are not published which I believe is quite harmful as students view these initiatives as non transparent causing them to lose confidence in the school system. This is why I believe a self reflexive process in which teachers identify and take action based on each individual's situation is necessary. Although this may create a feeling of alienation in the student, I believe that if this feeling is destigmatised (ie everyone experiences it) then we can successfully address students who fall behind and improve overall learning outcomes.

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?

The most obvious risk is the alterity of those singled out, however even though a comprehensive approach towards education is necessary I believe that raising the standards of students who are performing below the national averages in areas such as literacy and numeracy (as assessed in NAPLAN) should be prioritised. The group that is most at risk is Indigenous Australians as their educational as well as social outcomes seem to be disproportionately high compared to the average Australian. Therefore additional support systems, specifically education related in early childhood (year 1-6), should be created to help them at least perform above average in lower school so that they have the confidence and motivation to continue succeeding in high school.

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?

Another important target in my opinion is the ease of accessibility of these objectives for students. Creating another government website with all the information on it will not help students engage in these objectives and thus once again distance policy makers from the people who are affected by the policies. I propose simplifying the dissemination of this information through an eye-catching infographic to let students know that there are people working towards helping them. Additionally, incorporating a public forum for students like they have on social media to engage with these policies and contribute ideas would also be beneficial

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?

Consistent evidence collection over a planned period of time and consistent + timely correction of mistakes is essential to improve student circumstances. For example, set a target that can be measured once every school term, collect data from that term and implement an action (at least one per term) that students can work towards achieving for the next term. Repeat this process and by the end of the next NSRA, there should be an improvement in student outcomes. Regarding jurisdiction of schools, full transparency between schools, the NSRA and the wider community are necessary to ensure coherence as the NSRA can act on feedback from schools and pool suggestions from the community on how to help.

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

As well as the traditional format of a report on the website, perhaps a post on facebook or instagram in an interesting way (like what the ABS posts) would be incredibly useful for engaging students as well as their parents and would spark greater conversation and subsequent feedback for the NSRA which can directly contribute to an improvement in student outcomes.

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## 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?

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?

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## **Chapter 4: Our current and future teachers**

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

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

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

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

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?

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

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

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?

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

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?

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## **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?

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?

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

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](mailto: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](mailto:NSRA.submissions@education.gov.au)