



Public submission made to the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools

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Submitting as a: Other (Both a parent as well as extensive experience working within an educational environment)
State: Qld

Summary

- Not only should you be discussing learning opportunities and what that will look like with teachers at the grass roots level you should also be talking to employers about what their needs are for future employees. The past should not shape the future on its own but provide support to the visions of the future. Dare to be different and believe in our future students and their ability to adapt, explore and grow.
- A great deal of damage can be done to individuals and the scholastic system if rigid measuring methods are adopted. Flexibility to meet individual needs and abilities is needed together with accounting for situations and circumstances from a practical, geographic and economic viewpoint.
- Why can't school facilities be built adaptively so they can be used by tertiary or other training institutions outside of normal school hours? Start or finish times could be modified to suite all those involved ensuring maximum value for Commonwealth and State educational based funding.

Main submission

What should educational success for Australian students and schools look like?

" What capabilities, skills and knowledge should students learn at school to prepare them for the future?

Too often the academic agenda of our primary and secondary schools is driven by university academics, who more often than not, have never set foot in a classroom in a teaching capacity. Head knowledge without grass roots reality is not practical in today's classroom environments. A great example of this is one of our public hospital buildings that required the installation of a separate lift on the outside of the building and edges shaved off corners due to the fact nobody bothered to check with

the users of the facility about what their needs were (Hospital trolleys would not fit in the installed lift nor would they go around the narrow corners).

My point in raising this is that not only should you be discussing this with teachers at the grass roots level you should also be talking to employers about what their needs are for future employees (Refer to the example of High Tech High in the USA). The past should not shape the future on its own but provide support to the visions of the future. Dare to be different and believe in our future students and their ability to adapt, explore and grow.

None of us can accurately predict what the future of education will look like but we can build adaptability into the education system, so it's not curtailed by antiquated ideas and can adapt seamlessly to new ideas, innovations and industry demands.

" How should school quality and educational success be measured?

By the health and wellbeing of our students and teachers. I don't know if you've noticed or not but both students and teachers are under tremendous pressure and stress, half of which is pushed on them to achieve government mandated goals and standards. We shouldn't throw out the baby and the bathwater but give learning opportunities to students that both challenge and inspire them. Don't just dictate that $1+1=2$ but explain why this is so and how it relates to real life. Too often our university graduates come out of university with plenty of head knowledge but zero experience. We need to teach students how to adapt and think outside the square. Give them problems and challenge them to solve them remembering that problems can be solved in many different ways. Our way is not always the right way nor do our ways neatly fit every individual, school or locality. Long gone are the production lines of old replaced by the necessity to think on your feet and problem solve both as an individual and within groups.

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What can we do to improve and how can we support ongoing improvement over time?

" How could schools funding be used more effectively and efficiently (at the classroom, school or system level) to have a significant impact on learning outcomes for all students including disadvantaged and vulnerable students and academically advanced students?

- What actions can be taken to improve practice and outcomes? What evidence is there to support taking these actions?
- What works best for whom and in what circumstances?

What opportunities exist for higher educational institutions to integrate more closely with primary and secondary institutions? Building facilities that can be used by both groups with the aim of working together to offer effective use of resources and efficient on the job training? We place many millions of dollars into school facilities that operate 9am to 3pm and then lay vacant. Why can't purpose built facilities be used by tertiary or other training institutions outside of these hours? Start or finish times could be modified to suite all those involved ensuring maximum value for Commonwealth and State funding.

Submitted by William Custance FIPA, FIFA, GradCertPubAcc, DipBus Acc, CertCommAcc, ExecCertPubAcc, DipB&ChrMin(Hon), CertIV OH&S, JP