



Australian Alliance of Associations in Education (AAAE)

Submission to the Productivity Commission's interim report on the National School Reform Agreement


October 2022


The [Australian Alliance of Associations in Education](http://www.aaae.edu.au) (AAAE) is a network of professional teacher associations that aims to represent the individual educators from our member associations. AAAE is a constituted body with the purpose of representing and speaking on behalf of Australian national professional teacher associations. It was established in 2013. AAAE members are national professional teacher associations that are largely funded by membership fees, the production of teaching resources and the provision of professional learning for teachers.

AAAE welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the *Review of the National School Reform Agreement – Interim Report* (the Interim Report). As the peak national teacher association, AAAE works collaboratively with a wide network of teachers and other key stakeholders. With a network that extends to every state and territory, and reaches teachers in urban, regional and remote areas; whose membership includes teachers of every cohort of students, AAAE is in a key position to provide informed comment on the Interim Report.


AAAE commends the Productivity Commission on a succinct and clear Overview. AAAE believes it is an appropriate contextualisation for the Recommendations and Findings. That being said, AAAE believes some of the proposals require further consideration. The most important consideration that AAAE identifies relates to the underrepresentation of teacher-voice; teacher-generated data and teacher-generated responses within the Interim Report. Thus, AAAE provides commentary as set out below.

Chapter 1: About this review

	Draft finding 1.1 Student achievement has stagnated, while attainment has improved and engagement has declined
<p>Over the past decade, the performance of Australian school students in national and international assessments of literacy and numeracy has stagnated.</p> <p>Although the proportion of students completing school has increased since 2015, the proportion attending school regularly has declined, with much of this decline predating COVID-19.</p>	

	Draft finding 1.2 Persistent gaps in education outcomes for some student cohorts point to systemic problems
<p>Australia has long aspired to provide a high quality and equitable education for all students. Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students in outer regional and remote areas, and students with parents with low educational attainment are consistently below the outcomes of the broader student population.</p>	

Chapter 2: High-level assessment of the National Policy Initiatives

	Information request 2.1 Realising the full potential of evidence-based research through the Australian Education Research Organisation
<p>What steps could governments take to realise the full potential of evidence-based research through the Australian Education Research Organisation?</p>	
<p>AAAE Response:</p> <p>AAAE is concerned about the narrow approach taken by the Australian Education Research Organization (AERO). Government should be taking advantage of all research in Education, from schools, systems, universities, non-government organizations, and government organizations. Privileging one organization (AERO) over all other educational researchers is problematic and will have unintended consequences for the rich ecology of educational research that occurs in Australia. Mechanisms must be built into AERO's constitution that ensures a collaborative approach to research.</p>	



Draft finding 2.1

To date, the National Policy Initiatives have had little impact on Australian students' outcomes, with some initiatives stalled or incomplete

Some National Policy Initiatives have only recently delivered outputs, while others have stalled or fallen short.

- The design of the unique student identifier and the online formative assessment tool still need to be settled.
- The National Review Projects have not yet been followed by substantial national reforms.
 - There is no clear plan on how jurisdictions will implement the National Workforce Strategy to plan for future workforce needs.
 - It is equally unclear how aspects of the Senior Secondary Pathways Review will be progressed.
- National data projects have met with delays.
- The Australian Education Research Organisation is just beginning its work and will need to develop effective relationships and systems to realise its potential.

AAAE Response:

AAAE notes the Draft finding in relation to AERO. AAAE reiterates its concern about the high potential for a narrow, reductive and possibly exclusionary approach to educational research that AERO may implement if appropriate mechanisms are not included as mandatory aspects of their operation.



Draft recommendation 2.1

Parties to the National School Reform Agreement should fulfil their commitments to deliver key National Policy Initiatives

Recommended actions include:

- agreeing the design and privacy protections of a Unique Student Identifier (USI). If parties cannot deliver a national USI, they should, at a minimum, explain why they have been unable to do so
- developing the national online formative assessment tool in a way that enables jurisdictions to adapt the tool to their needs and preferences (including using content and features from their own formative assessment tools)
- developing a national model of the teacher workforce to support workforce planning.

AAAE Response:

AAAE supports the use of the national online formative assessment but are concerned that jurisdictions may change the tool's intended purpose This would limit its formative approach to



Draft recommendation 2.1

Parties to the National School Reform Agreement should fulfil their commitments to deliver key National Policy Initiatives

assessment of students. Further, AAAE is concerned at the narrow scope of the OLFAI. The original remit included more than literacy and numeracy (in English and Mathematics contexts). Again, there is a privileging of learning of English and Mathematics. More needs to be explored in terms of the contribution of other learning areas to the development of literacy and numeracy skills by all students.


AAAE supports the development of a national model of the teacher workforce to support workforce planning. AAAE believes data about support to all career stages and the sources of that support, data about out-of-field teaching (including availability of content and pedagogical supports) much form part of the model.




Draft finding 2.2


The National School Reform Agreement has weaknesses that undermine its effectiveness in facilitating collective, national efforts to lift student outcomes


- Relying too much on NPIs that are a single solution to common issues has delayed reform outcomes.
- A lack of transparent, systematic, independent and meaningful reporting means there is little effective accountability.
- Outcomes do not adequately capture non-academic domains such as wellbeing.
- Insufficient prominence has been given to lifting outcomes for students from priority equity cohorts or a core of students who do not meet minimum standards.
- There is a poor connection between policy making and implementation in the classroom.


	<p>Information request 2.2</p> <p>Options for enhancing accountability in the next agreement</p>
<p>The Commission is seeking stakeholder views on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the benefits, costs and risks of proposed enhancements to accountability mechanisms for the next intergovernmental agreement, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. jurisdictions specifying the outcomes that they expect to achieve (and related indicators) over the life of the agreement in public ‘implementation plans’ and reporting on progress annually. This would be in addition to identifying what measures they pursue in each priority reform area (as per current practice for bilateral agreements) b. aligning the design of outcomes and indicators across jurisdictions to allow comparability 2. ways of ensuring groups representing school systems (Independent, Catholic), teachers, principals and students have effective input into policy formation (such as requiring jurisdictions to receive and publish input from affected parties as part of preparing implementation plans). 	
<p>AAAE Response:</p> <p>AAAE agrees with the Commission’s recommendation that groups representing school systems, teachers, principals, and students have effective input into policy formation (such as requiring jurisdictions to receive and publish input from affected parties as part of preparing implementation plans). This must include input from professional teacher associations as clear representation of teachers.</p>	

Chapter 3: Lifting outcomes for all students

	<p>Draft finding 3.1</p> <p>Many students have additional needs that do not directly relate to culture, disability or remoteness</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant number of students do not meet minimum standards — often year after year. Around one third of students who do not meet national minimum literacy and numeracy standards in their early years of schooling do not meet national minimum standards in later school years. • Most underperforming students do not belong to the priority cohorts named by the National School Reform Agreement. Around 85 per cent of these students do not belong to any of the priority equity cohorts identified in the National School Reform Agreement. Low educational performance needs a different approach. 	

	<p>Information request 3.1</p> <p>Intensive, targeted support for students who have fallen behind</p>
<p>Would programs that provide intensive, targeted support to students who have fallen behind lend themselves to being a national policy initiative under the next intergovernmental agreement on schools?</p>	
<p>AAAE Response:</p> <p>A ‘one size fits all’ approach often does not work when it comes to supporting the individual learning needs of students who have ‘fallen behind’. More resources are needed in schools to support students who are not achieving at a sound standard. This includes a marked increased investment in professional learning programs for teachers, trained support staff (including teacher aids/school officers), and increased ratios of Inclusive Practice educators within schools. At times ‘intensive, targeted support’ programs for students have taken the form of commercial programs that are reductive in nature. Greater support is required for educators to meet the individual learning needs of students, which means that teachers need more time to appropriately plan interventions.</p>	

<p>Draft finding 3.2</p>	
	<p>Governments are yet to achieve outcomes for students who have specific educational needs related to their culture, their disability or remoteness, as set out in the National School Reform Agreement</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps in learning outcomes for priority equity cohorts identified in the National School Reform Agreement have not closed. • There can be multiple factors that increase the challenges of providing high quality education for some students. Where these factors intersect, the effects can be compounding. 	

<p>Draft finding 3.3</p>	
	<p>Governments have failed to adequately demonstrate how reforms under the National School Reform Agreement are addressing specific educational needs related to students’ culture, disability or remoteness</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is significant diversity in students’ learning needs and educational aspirations, both across and within cohorts, reflecting differences in their life experiences, the education outcomes they value, their learning and wellbeing outcomes, and the nature of adjustments and supports they may require. • The National School Reform Agreement does not adequately include reform actions relating to students from the priority equity cohorts it names. 	

**Draft finding 3.3**

Governments have failed to adequately demonstrate how reforms under the National School Reform Agreement are addressing specific educational needs related to students' culture, disability or remoteness

- Under the National School Reform Agreement, equity issues are to be addressed through the bilateral agreements between the Australian Government and each jurisdiction. However, these agreements often do not identify measures to lift outcomes for students from all priority equity cohorts or, if they do, provide little detail on how measures will lift outcomes, or report any progress being achieved.

**Draft finding 3.4**

The priority equity cohorts in the National School Reform Agreement do not capture all cohorts of students experiencing educational disadvantage

- There are some student cohorts not identified as a priority equity cohort in the National School Reform Agreement that face significant educational barriers.
- Children and young people living in out-of-home care face significant disruptions to their schooling and are considerably less likely than their peers to attend school and engage with education. By year 9, children in out-of-home care were four times more likely to be below the national minimum standard in reading, and six times more likely to be below the national minimum standard in numeracy, relative to the general population.
- Students who speak English as an additional language or dialect often require specific support to strengthen English language skills to access the general curriculum.

**Information request 3.2**

Priority equity cohorts for the next agreement

Are there student cohorts, not identified as a priority equity cohort in the current National School Reform Agreement, such as children in out-of-home care, that should be a priority in the next agreement? If so, which cohorts and why?

**Draft finding 3.5**

There are a range of educational barriers experienced by students from priority equity cohorts

- Compounding problems arise from equating Indigeneity with educational disadvantage.
- Cultural recognition by schools, and the value placed on Indigenous knowledges by them, are key in responding to the distinct educational needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander



Draft finding 3.5

There are a range of educational barriers experienced by students from priority equity cohorts

students. Culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogies increase inclusion and engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and enrich the learning of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students too.

- Indigenous knowledges, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and how to include and empower students may be poorly understood by teachers and school leadership.
- There is now a mandate for consultation and shared decision-making in relation to the design of educational outcomes and sub-outcomes (and how they shape reform) under the Key Priority Reforms of the 2020 Closing the Gap Agreement.
- Children and young people with disability experience unique barriers to engagement and inclusion at school that affect wellbeing, engagement and school success.
- Initial Teacher Education may not sufficiently empower teachers to recognise and respond adequately to disability.
- Families in regional, rural and remote areas can have limited choice in where and how they educate their children.



Draft recommendation 3.1

Implementation plans, developed in consultation with affected groups, should be used to improve the transparency of reform actions and to hold parties to account for the outcomes they commit to achieve


In the next intergovernmental agreement, Australian, State and Territory Governments should ensure:

- there are reforms directly addressing the unique barriers and ambitions of students from priority equity cohorts
- bilateral agreements, developed in consultation with stakeholders, identify how jurisdictions will lift outcomes for students in each of the priority equity cohorts identified in the agreement, recognising their specific learning needs
- progress reporting contains sufficient information (and has sufficient oversight) to provide the public with confidence that measures to lift outcomes for students in priority equity cohorts are being implemented and achieving their intended outcomes.


?	<p>Information request 3.3</p> <p>Implementation plans</p>
<p>1. What would be the costs, benefits, and implementation issues associated with the Commission’s proposed enhanced accountability mechanisms (draft recommendation 3.1) for bilateral agreements and associated reporting arrangements (in general and as they relate to students in priority equity cohorts)? What would be the costs and benefits of having people with lived experience involved in shared decision making in relation to reporting arrangements?</p> <p>2. Are there ways parties could reduce the costs (for example, reporting burdens) and increase the benefits of implementation plans by integrating, aligning or linking them with existing government reporting processes (for example, reporting under Closing the Gap and Australia’s Disability Strategy)?</p>	


?	<p>Information request 3.4</p> <p>Transparency of funding for students from priority equity cohorts</p>
<p>What would be the benefits, costs and risks of greater national reporting of schools funding and expenditure data to support transparency around state and territory efforts to lift outcomes for students from priority equity cohorts? If there is a case for providing such information, how could it be collected cost-effectively?</p>	


?	<p>Information request 3.5</p> <p>Embedding the perspectives of priority equity cohorts in national education policy and institutions</p>
<p>1. What specifically could be done to embed the views of priority equity cohorts in national education policies and institutions, including outcomes, targets and policy initiatives in the next intergovernmental agreement on school education?</p> <p>2. What are the merits of establishing a national Indigenous consultative body on education? How might such a body be structured? If pursued, would this best occur through a successor national school reform agreement or some other avenue?</p> <p>3. Does the current education and research evidence base capture a representative range of cultural and community perspectives, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, teachers and researchers? If not, what actions could be taken to support this?</p>	
<p>AAAE Response:</p> <p>AAAE believes that the merits of establishing a national First Nations consultative body on education is worth consideration. Appropriate First Nations organisations are central to responding to the foundational question and to questions of structure and process.</p>	

	<p>Information request 3.5</p> <p>Embedding the perspectives of priority equity cohorts in national education policy and institutions</p>
<p>AAAE believes that there is an insufficient evidence base for supporting linguistically and culturally diverse communities' perspectives and input into education. As a teacher-focussed organisation, AAAE believes support for increasing the numbers of linguistically and culturally diverse teachers (First Nations people and overseas-born), who are well-equipped to teach in diverse Australian contexts needs to be specifically considered.</p>	


Chapter 4: Student wellbeing


	<p>Draft finding 4.1</p> <p>Many students experience poor wellbeing, but some do not receive effective support</p>
<p>A significant proportion of children and young people experience poor social and emotional wellbeing. Poor wellbeing directly affects students' capacity to learn. Poor wellbeing can be particularly acute for students who experience challenges to engagement and inclusion at school, for example, children and young people in out-of-home care, those with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.</p> <p>While wellbeing is often influenced by factors outside the school gate, poor wellbeing can be exacerbated by responses from schools.</p> <p>Australian, State and Territory Governments have implemented initiatives to support student wellbeing with varying degrees of success.</p> <p>Successful support of student wellbeing relies on teacher education and the culture of school leadership.</p>	
<p><u>AAAE Response:</u></p> <p>A stronger focus on improving student wellbeing should be addressed and included in national policy initiatives. This should include additional professional learning for practicing teachers to continue to support teacher and school leaders to improve student wellbeing.</p>	


	<p>Draft recommendation 4.1</p> <p>Governments should incorporate wellbeing in the next intergovernmental agreement</p>
<p>In the next intergovernmental school reform agreement, the Australian, State and Territory Governments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • add improved student wellbeing as an outcome • include local actions that would improve student wellbeing and indicators of progress in bilateral agreements or implementation plans • collect data on student wellbeing from all schools to enable annual reporting on a national measure of student wellbeing. 	


	<p>Information request 4.1</p> <p>Should there be National Policy Initiatives to improve student wellbeing?</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there common steps that the Australian, State and Territory Governments could take in the next intergovernmental agreement to improve student wellbeing, or programs that could be implemented nationally? 2. Is knowledge in recognising and responding to poor wellbeing and trauma sufficiently covered in Initial Teacher Education and Teacher Performance Assessments? If not, how might this be improved? 	

Chapter 5: Supporting teachers

	<p>Draft finding 5.1</p> <p>Improving teacher effectiveness is associated with large lifetime economic benefits for students</p>
<p>Improving the effectiveness of teaching would generate sizable lifetime benefits for students. Commission analysis suggests a one standard deviation increase in teacher effectiveness would raise average classroom lifetime earnings by several hundreds of thousands of dollars each year.</p>	


	<p>Information request 5.1</p> <p>Teaching Performance Assessment</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) process ensure pre-service teachers are sufficiently classroom ready? 2. Should TPAs meet a national minimum standard? If so, how might this be achieved? 3. Do TPAs ensure that pre-service teachers are well placed to respond to the needs of students from priority equity cohorts? If not, how might this be improved, and what trade-offs might this involve? 	


	<p>Information request 5.1</p> <p>Teaching Performance Assessment</p>
<p><u>AAAE Response:</u></p> <p>The Teacher Performance Assessment is an enormous task for pre-service teachers to complete and does not enhance their learning or effectiveness as teachers. The important aspects of the TPA are addressed within courses in Initial Teacher Education. The TPA implemented in universities is already highly regulated and evidence has been provided from universities of meeting the minimum standard as defined by the TPA External Advisory Group. The Graduate Teacher Standards demonstrated as being achieved in a TPA and through the accreditation process of all initial teacher education programs include responding to the needs of students from priority equity cohorts.</p> <p>Initial Teacher Education is only the beginning of lifelong professional learning and growth for teachers. Following graduation, teachers need to continue to be provided with meaningful professional learning, including in how to support priority equity cohorts.</p>	


	<p>Information request 5.2</p> <p>Induction and mentoring programs</p>
<p>Would measures for improving early career teachers’ access to induction and mentoring programs lend themselves to being a national policy initiative under the next intergovernmental agreement on schools?</p>	
<p><u>AAAE Response:</u></p> <p>Yes, measures for improving early career teachers’ access to induction and mentoring programs within individual schools, and across networks of schools could be included in a national policy initiative. However, targeted funding to support schools and systems to implement induction and mentoring programs is imperative, as well as supporting a reduced teaching load for graduate teachers. AAAE notes the information in this report (p.10) that suggests more than one-third of early career teachers receive no induction training or mentoring. Data into reasons for exclusion or absence from induction and mentoring needs to be established (eg many early career teachers are employed on short, fixed term contracts or on a part time basis and are therefore ineligible for some programs where the school/system only facilitates access by full time and continuing teachers). Specific mechanisms that facilitate access to support early career teachers that is high quality and independent of employment status should be developed.</p>	


?	Information request 5.2 Induction and mentoring programs
<p>National professional teacher associations could play a role in the mentoring of early career teachers through the provision of professional programs of support that include collaborative engagement with peers, discipline-specific support, and support for working with diverse learners.</p>	

?	Information request 5.3 The prevalence of teacher attrition
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is teacher attrition more or less of a problem than in other professions? 2. Are the drivers of attrition amenable to government policy? How could government policy address high teacher attrition? 3. Do the drivers of attrition vary across the course of a teacher's career? 	
<p><u>AAAE Response:</u></p> <p>AAAE has no view about whether the attrition rate is more or less of a problem than other professions, we believe our focus should be on the attrition rate for this profession. Research has suggested that between 30% and 50% of Australian teachers are leaving the profession within the first five years. We draw on data from this report (p.12) and add that there are three critical issues impacting teacher attrition:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher workload – Workload has intensified, however, teacher release from face-to-face teaching has not changed in most Australian jurisdictions in decades. Government policy should aim to increase teacher release from face-to-face teaching and increase time to plan for teaching and learning. We believe teacher workload intensification and time limits are the more significant reason teachers are leaving the profession. 2. Teacher Pay – Teacher pay does not reflect the intensity and value of the work being performed. We argue that performance pay is not the answer. In order for Governments to reduce teacher attrition, teacher remuneration needs to be competitive with other industries. If the Government wants the teaching profession to be as respected and attractive as medicine and law, then teachers will need to be remunerated at a competitive level. 3. Lack of support and professional growth – Many initiatives are done <i>to</i> teachers, not <i>with</i> teachers. Teachers need to continue to grow through professional development and engagement. A stronger emphasis needs to be placed on teachers' continual professional learning, so that they continue to develop their skills and are challenged and rewarded throughout their careers. Teachers need more support throughout their careers, as research and practice change, to implement best practices across education to improve student academic outcomes and well-being outcomes. 	

	<p>Information request 5.3</p> <p>The prevalence of teacher attrition</p>
<p>Teacher attrition changes over the course of a career, however, addressing the above mentioned three priority areas would make a significant impact in keeping teachers in the profession, and re-attracting those teachers who have left the profession to re-enter schools.</p>	

	<p>Draft finding 5.2</p> <p>There are local shortages of teachers and shortages of trained teachers in key subjects</p>
<p>There are teacher shortages in regional, rural and remote areas, and in subjects such as mathematics, science, English and design and technology. There is also a lack of teachers from diverse backgrounds. Factors such as changes in initial teacher education enrolment trends, an ageing workforce and growing student enrolments may contribute to teacher shortages in the future.</p> <p>Improving labour demand and supply data collection and developing a national model of the teacher workforce, would help Governments better manage local shortages and out-of-field teaching.</p>	

	<p>Draft recommendation 5.1</p> <p>Governments should improve teacher workforce demand and supply data</p>
<p>The Australian, State and Territory Governments should commit to continued development of the Australian Teacher Workforce Data initiative, with a priority placed on achieving full participation by all States and Territories. Governments should also improve workforce demand data. This data could be used to underpin the national model of the teacher workforce (draft recommendation 2.1).</p>	

	<p>Draft finding 5.3</p> <p>Teachers work long hours and their workload is increasing</p>
<p>Australian teacher workload is greater than the OECD average. Australian teachers spend more time on non-teaching tasks, and less time on teaching tasks, than their international counterparts.</p> <p>Teacher workload has increased over time. Many teachers cite heavy workload as a reason for wanting to leave the profession.</p> <p>At the same time that teacher workload has been increasing, the number of teaching assistants and other support staff has grown.</p>	
<p>AAAE Response:</p> <p>Workload intensification for teachers is an issue however providing them with a bank of teaching plans will not improve the learning outcomes of our most vulnerable students. Differentiation of learning is not possible with a one-size-fits all approach to delivery of education. Teachers need time to plan and design learning that improves the learning outcomes for all students. Collegial and collaborative</p>	



Draft finding 5.3

Teachers work long hours and their workload is increasing

planning is one mechanism that assist in maximising teacher knowledge on planning for maximum learning. Teacher professional associations provide one vehicle that facilitate access to collegial, collaborative planning.



Draft recommendation 5.2


Reducing teacher workload should be a focus of the next agreement


In the next agreement, the Australian, State and Territory Governments — in consultation with teachers and school leaders — should develop a new National Policy Initiative that commits all jurisdictions to undertake an assessment of teacher and principal time use. This could involve a four-step process, whereby Australian, State and Territory Governments:

- commit to an assessment of teacher and principal time use across school sectors, with a focus on identifying how teachers and principals spend their time, and what tasks they rate as low or high value
- specify how they will remove low-value tasks, duplicate tasks and regulatory inefficiencies
- specify how teaching assistants can be best deployed, including to reduce teacher workload
- monitor the compliance and administration burden on teachers and principals over time.

AAAE Response:

AAAE strongly supports the initiative. The process appears sound. AAAE advises that a clear starting point for the classification of tasks and the rating value must be collaboratively determined. It may need to be an iterative process to allow for maximum flexibility (acknowledging that a task that may be high value in one context and low value in another), yet appropriately consistent. Further, the process that specifies how to remove low-value tasks must be flexible in application. A process may be consistent across contexts, but whether it needs to be applied in all contexts needs consideration. The specification of how teaching assistants can be best used needs to commence with a shared understanding of the work that TAs do.

	<p>Information request 5.4</p> <p>Teaching assistants and support staff</p>
<p>How are teaching assistants and support staff being deployed in schools and classrooms?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the primary functions of teaching assistants and support staff in Australia? • Could deployment and use of teaching assistants and support staff be improved to help reduce teacher workload? If so, should this be pursued through national collaboration? 	
<p>AAAE Response:</p> <p>Teaching assistants and support staff are used in schools and classrooms for a range of tasks. In many cases, teaching assistants/school officers/teacher aids are employed to support students with higher levels of individual learning needs. However, additional training is required to support teaching assistants to work to their potential in supporting learners and teachers.</p>	

	<p>Draft recommendation 5.3</p> <p>Encouraging highly effective teachers and maximising their value</p>
<p>In the next agreement, the Australian, State and Territory Governments should work together, in consultation with teachers and school leaders, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and support localised communities of practice across schools, regions and sectors. These should encompass accessible options for time-constrained teachers as well as subject specific options to support those teaching out-of-field • ensure that Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers are trained, and deployed as intended, to lift the quality of teaching across schools and sectors • streamline processes for becoming a Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher, including by recognising prior competencies. 	
<p>AAAE Response:</p> <p>AAAE advises that professional teaching associations support out-of-field teachers, and provide valuable professional learning, mentorship, and resources. However, these organisations and their contributions are often not acknowledged or supported by schools/systems. This is both in terms of the availability of support to teachers and the impact on the teachers who support professional teacher associations in executive and management functions.</p> <p>Teachers need more time to be able to support colleagues, particularly those who are teaching out-of-field or are early career. Quality and impactful mentorship takes time.</p> <p>There is a need for a streamlined process for becoming Highly Accomplished and Leader Teachers, including a reduction in the financial cost of the application. This differs from state to state.</p>	



Draft recommendation 5.3

Encouraging highly effective teachers and maximising their value

AAAE believes that direct Government support to professional teacher associations can support the growth of communities of practice for teachers.



Information request 5.5

Streamlining pathways into teaching

How can pathways into teaching for mid-career entrants, especially those with skills in critical areas, be streamlined?

- What are the costs and benefits of re-introducing one year graduate diplomas?
- What employment-based pathways could be explored?

AAAE Response:

This is a complex area. A one-year graduate diploma is worth considering; however, equity needs to be given to all areas of education, not just those in critical shortages. A one-year graduate diploma has benefits; however, all graduate teachers need much more support as they transition into classroom work. Reduced teaching loads, opportunities to team-teach with colleagues, and other initiatives are critical in supporting graduates as they continue to learn and grow as educators. Consideration needs to be given to the variety of models of work (full-time / part-time / casual / fixed term / continuing) of early career teachers.

Employment-based pathways require further consideration and consultation to ensure those entering the teaching profession are “job ready” and have the critical skills, knowledge and experience to work as teachers.



Information request 5.6

Understanding what happens in the classroom

What (if any) systems do jurisdictions already have in place to understand what is being taught in classrooms, and how it is being taught? What are the options for obtaining more and better data on classroom practice in a way that minimises costs and administrative impost?

AAAE Response:

AAAE believes that while there may be processes in place to understand what is being taught in classrooms, there is an impediment with sharing across jurisdictions. AAAE believes that in some locations, the collaborative sharing of research and information is impeded by a view that expenditure of funds must be within the sector (eg sharing from Catholic to government to independent) is not capitalised upon. Professional teacher associations often transcend jurisdictional borders.



Information request 5.6

Understanding what happens in the classroom

We also argue for data to be made available about how the intended curriculum is being enacted in Australian schools. Research in this area is needed.

Chapter 6: School leadership



Draft finding 6.1

Improving school leadership can have large impacts on students' learning

School leaders are second only to teachers in fostering a positive learning environment. Improving the effectiveness of leaders, especially principals, would generate sizable benefits.




Draft finding 6.2

More planning is needed to ensure a sustainable supply of school leaders


Long lead times for teachers to move into leadership roles, and the emergent pressures on the current cohort of school leaders, underscore the importance of effective leadership planning to ensure a sustainable pipeline of future school leaders.


AAAE Response:

Teachers need to be offered pathways to develop their skills as leaders within schools. Provision for mid-career teachers interested in developing leadership skills and experiences is often limited in schools. Professional learning programs may be beneficial in identifying those educators interested in being future school leaders and supporting them through professional learning and mentorship. However, a large number of teachers have also undertaken post-graduate study in educational leadership, yet often the skills and knowledge that these people obtain are not being used within schools. Education systems do not reward further studies with any recognition such as pay increases.

	<p>Information request 6.1</p> <p>Fostering school leaders</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do principals have the resources, support and professional development opportunities required for their demanding roles? 2. Are policy efforts to identify and prepare potential leaders effective? 3. Are there alternative sources of school leaders, including from outside the teaching profession? 4. What are the relative merits of a nationally coordinated approach to supporting a pipeline of future school leaders? 	
<p>AAAE Response:</p> <p>AAAE does not represent principals, so we will not make comment about questions one, two, and four. However, we wish to address question three.</p> <p>Alternative sources of school leaders, including from outside the teaching profession is totally inappropriate and devalues the profession. Principals MUST be from the teaching profession.</p>	

Chapter 7: The National Measurement Framework

	<p>Draft finding 7.1</p> <p>The Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia is not appropriate for measuring progress on National School Reform Agreement outcomes</p>
<p>While reliable, and largely relevant, the Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia is not a complete means of reporting progress on National School Reform Agreement outcomes. The visibility of Governments' progress against agreement outcomes is further diminished by the absence of a standalone report and the reliance on the broader <i>National Report on Schooling in Australia</i> and ACARA dashboard for performance reporting.</p>	

	<p>Information request 7.1</p> <p>Standalone reporting against the National School Reform Agreement</p>
<p>Would a standalone report on progress against the National School Reform Agreement outcomes and sub-outcomes (separate to the <i>National Report on Schooling in Australia</i>) improve the accountability of Governments to the community?</p>	
<p>AAAE Response:</p> <p>AAAE believes that should a standalone report be instituted, then only the items specifically included in the report will receive attention. Thus, the report has the potential to become an enormous document. AAAE believes the principle of 'what gets reported on, get valued.' How will well-being or teacher satisfaction with their job be measured?</p>	



Draft recommendation 7.1

The performance reporting framework of the next agreement

In the next intergovernmental school reform agreement, Australian, State and Territory Governments should:

- commit to public reporting on each outcome by jurisdiction for students with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students in regional, rural and remote areas
- add new sub-outcome measures for learning gain, post-school outcomes and the measure of student wellbeing proposed in draft recommendation 4.1
- update the NAPLAN sub-outcome measure to use proficiency standards rather than learning bands.



Information request 7.2

Proposed sub-outcomes under the future agreement

Do the identified outcomes, and proposed additional and modified sub-outcomes, reflect the aspirations of all Australian students, including those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, students with a disability, and students from other priority equity cohorts (including students from equity cohorts not explicitly identified in the current agreement, such as those in out-of-home care, or who speak English as an Additional Language or Dialect)?



Draft recommendation 7.2

Review of the Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia

ACARA's next review of the Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia should:

- create a performance indicator framework aligned to National School Reform Agreement outcomes and sub-outcomes to which Key Performance Measures are mapped
- consider the inclusion of system performance Key Performance Measures relating to the teaching workforce
- consider the inclusion of additional contextual information relating to influences on learning based on Australian Early Development Census data and information on English language proficiency
- deliver improved reporting on outcomes for students from priority equity cohorts
- be undertaken in consultation with students, teachers and communities
- document remaining gaps.

The *National Report on Schooling in Australia* should be tabled annually in Parliament.

ACARA should work towards filling reporting gaps by exploring the use of State and Territory Government data that are comparable over time, even if it is not nationally complete or comparable across jurisdictions. Well established State and Territory Government surveys of students, parents and carers, and teachers should be given due consideration.

