

14 December 2018

Communiqué

Review of the National Quality Framework

Education Council endorsed Terms of Reference for a review of the National Quality Framework (NQF). The NQF provides a national approach to quality improvement, regulation and assessment for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services across Australia. Regular review is required to ensure the NQF is current, fit for purpose and implemented through best practice regulation. The last review of the NQF occurred in 2014 and resulted in a number of key regulatory reforms to improve outcomes for children and to promote the effectiveness of early childhood education and care throughout Australia.

The 2019 Review will consider a number of issues impacting the early childhood education and care sector including recommendations arising from the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* as they relate to the NQF and services regulated under the NQF and recommendations arising from Education Council's Family Day Care program of work.

The NQF Review will commence immediately, with national consultation to begin early in 2019. Ministers will be regularly updated by officials at each stage of the review.

ACECQA Board Appointments

Education Council made a number of appointments to the Board of the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). Ministers were pleased to reappoint Ms Judy Hebblethwaite for her second term as Chair of the Board. Also reappointed to the Board were Dr Sandra Cheeseman and Professor Ann Farrell. Ms Amanda Price-McGregor was appointed to the ACECQA Board for her first term.

Professor Farrell and Ms Price-McGregor's appointments are effective from 1 January 2019, while Ms Hebblethwaite and Dr Cheeseman's appointments take effect from 11 March 2019.

Implementation of National School Reform Agreement

While noting that Victoria is not currently a party to the National School Reform Agreement, Education Council agreed on a program of work to support the implementation of the eight national policy initiatives. Each of the initiatives will be jointly developed by all Australian governments with reporting to Council throughout 2019.

Ministers discussed the central role of teachers and school leaders in implementation of the reforms, and that there will be early and close consultation and collaboration particularly to inform the design and development of classroom resources that are teacher-led, easy to use and will support student learning.

NAPLAN data reporting

Ministers noted the Review of NAPLAN Data Presentation Interim Report and requested further advice from ACARA for consideration of reporting 2018 NAPLAN data on My School, at Education Council's next meeting in February 2019.

Review of the *Melbourne Declaration*

Ministers agreed to undertake a review of the national declaration of education goals for young Australians, otherwise known as the *Melbourne Declaration*. Agreed by Ministers from the Australian Government, states and territories in 2008, the Melbourne Declaration articulates nationally consistent future directions and aspirations for Australian schooling.

Ministers agreed that the review consider the scope of the declaration encompassing lifelong education and agreed to hold a forum in February 2019 to commence the consultation process in collaboration with key stakeholder groups.

Responding to education-related recommendations arising from the Child Abuse Royal Commission

Education Council received an update on progress implementing the education-related recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*, which require national leadership and coordinated action. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to addressing these recommendations and asked for further update by mid-2019.

STEM Education

Ministers received an update on actions being delivered under the *National Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics School Education Strategy* (the STEM Strategy), endorsed by Education Council in late 2015. Ministers were informed of the status of five national collaborative actions that had been prioritised for 2018, including:

- Revising the scope and extend the reach of national science and ICT assessments for Years 6 and 10;
- Establishing a STEM professional learning exchange in partnership with universities and industry, to support schools and school systems by sharing best practice and identifying areas to help boost teacher confidence and capacity;
- Collecting and developing online exemplar teaching modules in partnership with industry and universities, to assist in the delivery of best practice STEM teaching;
- Developing online formative assessment tools that help teachers collect and use data about individual student learning needs, building on learning continuums; and
- Sharing and synthesising research and evaluation findings to identify successful STEM interventions and inform school practice.

Presentation by Special Envoy for Indigenous Affairs

The Australian Government's Special Envoy for Indigenous Affairs, the Hon Tony Abbott MP, addressed Education Council on the challenges and opportunities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. The Special Envoy outlined his views on a range of reforms and initiatives to promote greater school attendance and improve student outcomes.