Review to **Achieve Educational Excellence** in Australian Schools

Issues paper

Expert Panel

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Review purpose

The Panel for the *Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools* (the Review)*,* led by Mr David Gonski AC, has been commissioned to examine evidence and make recommendations on how school funding should be used to improve school performance and student outcomes.

The final report and recommendations will be provided to Government by March 2018.

Review scope

The Review will not reconsider school funding calculations and distribution, early childhood education, or tertiary education. It will focus on practical measures that work, from Australia and around the world, to improve results for Australia's school students.

In line with the Terms of Reference, the Review will focus on the effective and efficient use of funding for primary and secondary schools, to:

- improve student outcomes and Australia's national performance, as measured by national and international assessments of student achievement

- improve the preparedness of school leavers to succeed in employment, further training or higher education

- improve outcomes across all cohorts of students, including disadvantaged and vulnerable students and academically-advanced students ('gifted' students).

To support these recommendations, the Review will also:

- provide advice on related institutional or governance arrangements to ensure the ongoing identification and implementation of evidence based actions to grow and sustain improved student outcomes over time

- propose related transparency and accountability measures that support the effective monitoring, reporting and application of investment.

Review themes

In response to the Terms of Reference, the Review Panel has identified a range of themes for consideration as part of the Review.

What students learn and how they learn
To help ensure students have the skills they need for future employment, further training or higher education, the Review will necessarily consider what students should be learning during their time at school, taking into consideration the impact of continuing globalisation and a digitally enabled workforce. But it is not only what students learn. Understanding how students learn is important to providing an engaging learning environment. This is why the Review will be considering a variety of factors to determine what will have the biggest impact on every individual learner's progress and growth.

Teachers and school leadership

It is well known that teachers and school leaders have a significant impact on student learning. The Review provides an opportunity to consider how best to support great teaching and school leadership. The Review will also look at how school leaders can most effectively and efficiently drive a whole of school continuous improvement agenda and create positive learning cultures for all students in all schools.

Parent and community engagement

Learning doesn't just happen at school. The Review will consider effective ways for schools to encourage and facilitate increased parent and carer engagement. In addition it will consider how schools, communities, businesses, industry and non-government organisations can successfully come together to build better community engagement with schools to improve outcomes for all students.

Defining and measuring success in education

Activity within schools and school systems is geared toward achieving goals; for communities, for individuals and for the nation. During this period of rapid change it is important to consider the appropriateness of the goals we set for schooling and the measures we use to judge our success. In this context the Review will also consider how success can be defined for Australian students and schooling and how this success should be measured.

Identifying, sharing and driving good practice and continuous improvement

There is a lot of good practice in Australian schools, with many implementing transformative strategies which deliver real improvements to student engagement, progress and success. The Review will look for ways of identifying and sharing sustainable good practice to help promote collaboration and innovation in Australian schools and to implement practices which are shown through robust evidence to be successful in improving student outcomes.

The Review will also consider how system level enablers such as standards, qualifications and accreditation, regulation and registration, quality assurance measures and transparency and accountability provisions can help drive educational success.

Submissions

The Review Panel is now calling for submissions on how to improve outcomes and educational performance for *all* students, including disadvantaged and vulnerable students and academically advanced students, and the preparedness of school leavers to succeed in employment, further training or higher education.

The submission process is open to all interested parties. The Review Panel invites you to put forward your ideas and provide the evidence and insights that underpin them.

The submission form includes a number of questions which have been framed to gather evidence on how success in schooling should be defined and measured, what can be done to improve and how any barriers to improvement can be overcome.

While the Review Panel is considering the themes listed above, it acknowledges that they are not exhaustive so invites submissions on these and other evidence-based approaches to improve student outcomes.

Submission questions

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?

- How should school quality and educational success be measured?

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 institutional or governance arrangements could be put in place to ensure ongoing identification, sharing and implementation of evidence-based good practice to grow and sustain improved student outcomes over time?

- How can system enablers such as targets and standards, qualifications and accreditation, regulation and registration, quality assurance measures and transparency and accountably provisions be improved to help drive educational achievement and success and support effective monitoring, reporting and application of investment?

- Are there any new or emerging areas for action which could lead to large gains in student improvement that need further development or testing?

    - What are they and how could they be further developed?

Are there barriers to implementing these improvements?

- If yes, what are they and how could these be overcome?

Making a submission

Submissions are to be made through an online form. Each submission is limited to 3300 words. This word limit is inclusive of a summary, up to 300 words, of the key points of your submission. To find out how to lodge your submission, and for more information on the Review and the Panel, please visit the website: www.education.gov.au/educationalexcellencereview.

Submissions will close at 5:00 pm (AEDST) Thursday, 2 November 2017.