

Parents' Voice in Government School Education

August 2, 2023

**SUBMISSION TO THE REVIEW TO INFORM A BETTER AND FAIRER EDUCATION SYSTEM
CONSULTATION**

Dear Panel,

Parents Victoria (PV) is a state wide democratic organisation representing parents of students in Victorian government schools. For further information about us: <https://www.parents victoria.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Parents-Victoria-Brochure-download.pdf>

PV strives for improvements in school education including school facilities and resources, teacher education and curriculum so that students are able to achieve their potential in a safe and supportive learning environment.

Fairer

We want the Panel to hear loud and clear in regards to transparency and accountability – it must be public first with the public purse due to the greater number of students who suffer disadvantage being enrolled in government schools.

Fairer

In relation to data collection, PV is very conscious of the fact that a number of children who are not attending school are not being captured. For example – students with complex behaviour are often restricted in their hours of attendance – how are these students accounted for. Is this data transparent?

If we were to identify another priority cohort, we would say children in out-of-home care. PV is very mindful of the number of students who are disengaged and not able to attend school (e.g. bullying) – how are these students accounted for?

Better

PV has always advocated for stronger relationships between schools and families and believes that every school must have a strong connection with their local allied health network and primary health practitioners.

There currently appears to be no coordinated system model – leaving that responsibility to the school. This needs to change as health and education need to work hand in hand.

Work with State and Territory governments to remove policy and practice barriers that inhibit health practitioners and therapists to support students on site.

Better

The success of the reforms will be contingent on improving parental and community engagement.

Family/Community Engagement:

- If you do it well and take families on board, wellbeing will come with it.
- **Instal a parent or family engagement division within each State and Territory Department of Education.**
- Family Engagement / Community Liaison officers in all schools.
- Family engagement embedded into the culture of school classrooms every day will assist not only with student outcomes, but with teacher satisfaction which translates to retention of workforce.
- Funding support for State and Territory Parent organisations.

Additional comments

PV believes that having quality relationships is the key to quality education for all children.

Solution: Relationship based Education - refer https://www.parentsvictoria.asn.au/issues_category/relationship-based-education/

Many parents, especially those from other cultures, claim to us they do not understand how our education school system works and sometime misinterpret or misunderstand what the school is trying to teach their child and why.

Effective communication is key on all fronts and communicating the “why” decisions are taken by Federal or State governments on any school reform is imperative. If this could be addressed it would go a long way to restore and lift public confidence in our education system.

Gail

Gail McHardy
Chief Executive Officer



