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Transformative turns in the profession of teaching *P10*

the professional voice of the Independent Education Union of Australia



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Deb James
John Quessy
Terry Burke

Managing Editor

Bronwyn Ridgway

Editorial Committee

Cathy Hickey
Gloria Taylor
Sara El Sayed
Sue Osborne

Journalists

Sara El Sayed
Sue Osborne
Bronwyn Ridgway
Alex Menyhart

Design

Chris Ruddle

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Chris Ruddle
(02) 8202 8900

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Nothing about us, without us

This edition of IE continues to highlight the professional voice and expertise of educators.

IEUA Federal Secretary Chris Watt calls on federal and state governments to cease undermining the professional voice of teachers and disregarding their professional expertise (p9).

Many professional teacher regulatory and advisory bodies have continued to appoint very few teachers to their boards and in some cases, are even reducing the numbers of teachers.

In a previous editorial, I referred to one of the fastest growing pressures on teachers and schools, that of data driven performance improvement measures.

This edition takes a closer look at this issue by exploring whether one of the newest 'tools' in the data toolbox, data walls, are effective in informing teachers' decisions and actions to improve learning (p18).

While this method of visualising data isn't new – first developed in 1990 in the United States as a tool for teachers – it is now being taken up in Australia in highly diverse ways. As with most tools, there is potential for positively motivating teacher inquiry, but also negatively impacting students and teachers.

IE examines the research on the effectiveness to date and finds there is at present only limited evidence to show the impact data walls of differing types have on student learning and their ability to help teachers engage in better decision making about next teaching strategies and goal setting.

Data is also the focus of Dr Misty Adoniou's article (p28), which examines what happened when teachers' voices are silenced, and we let others 'read' the data. She highlights that what is missing from the big data puzzle is the expertise of the teacher.

It's time to change that!

Deb James
iemagazine@ieu.asn.au

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AUSWIDE

New South Wales

Union calls for caution on learning progressions trial

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch has written to its 11 Catholic dioceses seeking discussions in relation to the current learning progressions trial underway in some 99 Catholic systemic schools.

The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch resolved that the additional workload involved in tracking students via data collection was of considerable concern.

In the Catholic sector the trial is known as the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan K-2. A software package – Plan 2 – is used for reporting. At present the only learning progressions developed are for two of the general capabilities; literacy and numeracy.

Member responses in trial schools are overwhelmingly negative. Teachers feel stressed, and under pressure and duress to complete the checklists.

Members also questioned the purpose behind the learning progressions. They were asking for whom they were collecting this data?

The general feeling from the members is all schools will be required to implement the learning progressions from the beginning of 2019 and there would be no extra time or support for teachers.

In meetings with the various dioceses, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch will be seeking details of the assistance provided to classroom teachers and propose an audit of the actual time taken to generate and enter data. A scaling back of expectations will be sought.

South Australia

Review of Certificate of Education

The Government has appointed state high school principal Wendy Johnston to conduct a review of the South Australian Certification of Education (SACE), including an assessment of the controversial Research Project subject and Year 12 subject numbers.

This fulfils an election promise to conduct a review of the SACE in light of declining language enrolments and also focusing on the required number of Stage 2 subjects and the role of Vocational Education and Training (VET).

The review follows an update to the SACE curriculum at the end of 2010, which cut minimum study requirements for Stage 2 from five subjects to four, with the fifth choice subject replaced by the compulsory Research Project.

Some educators have criticised the change, citing a restriction on students' subject choices and a decline in enrolments in subjects including secondary languages.

IEUA SA is currently surveying its members who teach SACE subjects to provide input into the review. To date there has been a solid response from members. Concerns are being expressed about the impact on student subject choices because the Research Project is compulsory, as well as the impact of having only four stage two subject for an ATAR to gain entry to tertiary institutions outside of South Australia.

Another strong theme is equity, particularly for students from non English speaking backgrounds, those with learning disabilities which qualify them for modified SACE assessment and access to support in the context of social disadvantage. The review is due to be completed by the end of the year.

Northern Territory

Working women tackle issues facing the profession

IEUA-QNT members as well as their colleagues in the Australian Education Union (NT) held the Northern Territory's first Women's Rights at Work (WRAW) Chat earlier this year.

WRAW Chat is an initiative by Union Women, created as an opportunity to gather and discuss what is not working for women at work.

The chat involved women sharing their experiences of work and the challenges faced during employment.

The exercise seeks to clarify ways in which all union members can participate in meaningful action to address issues affecting their work and the profession, such as work/life balance, hours of duty and school-based violence.

Participants identified actions such as speaking with colleagues about how our union can address these issues, mentoring new women in the workplace and addressing violence using Workplace Health and Safety laws.

Members in the Northern Territory are continuing their WRAW chats, with a future meeting to focus on addressing issues specific to the LGBTI community.

To host a WRAW chat at your workplace, visit www.unionwomen.org.au/wrawchat and download a WRAW Chat kit.

Queensland

Members feeling the effects of out-of-field

Out of field teaching – where teachers are directed to teach subjects outside of their areas of expertise – has a strong and significant impact on teacher wellbeing, and on the quality of teaching and learning experiences offered to students.

Research conducted through the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) in 2016 indicated that up to 40% of teachers are teaching in subject or year levels outside their field of qualification.

Our Union believes employers have an obligation to provide out of field teachers with the support and resources required to undertake these roles.

This may include: access to professional development; facilitation of ongoing consultation with colleagues experienced in teaching the subject, and the appropriate curriculum leader/manager for the purposes of professional guidance and reflection, and joint planning; additional release time; and adjustments to processes and procedures of performance appraisal that acknowledge the teacher's out of field status.

To assist members with addressing this issue, the IEUA-QNT Branch has developed a factsheet, which can be accessed at www.qjeu.asn.au/factsheets

Western Australia

McGowan Government 'taking action' on violence

Education Minister Sue Ellery has announced an action plan is to be developed to reduce intentional violence in schools against students and staff.

The Violence in Schools Action Plan is to come into effect from 2019 and will include updated policies regarding appropriate penalties for violent behaviour and how students can earn privileges back by demonstrating positive behaviour.

Ellery met with stakeholders across the education sector, including the IEUA WA Branch, and has secured their commitment to being involved in the review process.

The non government school sector will be included in the consultation process and all schools will be encouraged to sign up.

The Minister recognises that the support of the community is necessary if change is to take place.

IEUA WA Branch General Secretary, Angela Briant met with the Minister and emphasised the need for this plan to also include strategies for protecting staff in schools.

Briant raised the increasing incidents of violence against teachers and the need to make sure that they are protected, along with students.

Briant said the priority was to members and all staff and this was an occupational safety and health issue which was part of union core business.

Victoria

Joint union and employer workload review

As part of the late 2017 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the IEU VicTas and the Victorian Catholic Education Commission, a review of the workloads of principals, deputy principals and teachers was commissioned and undertaken by the Nous Group.

As part of the terms of reference of the review, a quantitative element was an online survey sent to the relevant employee groups in all Victorian Catholic schools. Supplementing this were forums held across Victoria, individual case studies and interviews with stakeholders. The results of the review will inform negotiations for the agreement and it is hoped there will be some practical measures agreed to by the parties to address workload intensification. The review has now concluded and the IEUA VicTas will be reporting on the findings in due course.

Tasmania

Review of external marking complete

Further to the report in *IE #2 2018*, the external marking process review has now concluded and all recommendations have been accepted by the Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification (TASC). The review examined and made recommendations for improvement on the following areas of concern:

- recruitment process for markers
- the determination of what constitutes a marking load
- operational logistics (catering, venue), and
- timely communications.

First Aboriginal woman to be elected into Australian House of Representatives – Barton (ALP) 2016 to present.

First Aboriginal person to be elected a Member of the NSW Legislative Assembly – Canterbury (ALP) 2003 to 2016.

Linda Burney was born in 1957 in the small town of Whitton in the Riverina. Separated from her mother as a baby, she was raised by her loving non Indigenous great aunt and uncle. Burney has said if it wasn't for these caring relatives, she would have been placed in institutional care.

Her life story is compelling; her extraordinary fighting spirit led her, as a young adult, to discover her Aboriginal identity and rich heritage. A proud Wiradjuri woman, she has become inextricably linked with the Aboriginal movement across Australia.

In her first speech in the House of Representatives in 2016, Burney said "I was born at a time when a white woman having an Aboriginal baby was shocking – and doubly so if that woman was not married. I was born at a time when the Australian government knew how many sheep there were but not how many Aboriginal people. I was 10 years old before the '67 referendum fixed that."

Holding a kangaroo cloak, Burney proudly said: "This cloak tells my story. It charts my life. On it is my totem, the goanna, and my personal totem, the white cockatoo – a message bird and very noisy. I intend to bring the fighting Wiradjuri to this place".

Burney's life experiences, threaded with great personal loss and tragedy, have led her to advocate for education, health services and social justice. They have spurred her on to champion the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and fight for her people's representation in discussions and decision-making processes.

Kaleidoscope

Linda Burney





Wiradjuri woman, mother, teacher, activist, politician

Linda Burney speaks to journalist Bronwyn Ridgway of her education and teachers, as well as her life's pathway to teaching, then unexpectedly, to state and federal politics.

"I turned five years old in kindergarten at Whitton Primary School then went on to secondary school at Leeton High School. For the two final years of secondary school, I attended Penrith High School.

"I was quite a bright student, something my teachers didn't expect of me. I loved school so much, that as a young child, I would play 'schools' in the holidays with my cousins at home on the front verandah. I had many positive experiences which made school very enjoyable for me.

"Remembering my teachers is easy. There are a number of instances where teachers influenced the direction of my life. For example, I was going to leave school in Year 9 and the principal at the time, Tim Evans, called me into his office and actually roared at me about my plan to leave. I recognised it was his way of saying I was bright and should complete school. He made me promise not to leave, a promise I obviously kept. The career guidance councillor also said I had the capacity to be a barrister, at the time I had no idea what she meant. In that tiny little town of Whitton, we had no lawyer let alone a barrister, but I recognised it was an encouraging statement.

"But it was in Year 7 that I had the horrific experience of learning in class about 'the Aborigines'. The way it was taught and what people actually thought of Aboriginal people, their history and way of life, made me embarrassed and so ashamed. The teaching of the subject reflected how Aboriginal people were regarded at that time – 'related to Stone Age man, no culture, a nation that wandered aimlessly around.'

"Later it made me recognise that the education system was not what it should be and led me to be a teacher and work in education for many years changing the curriculum and what was being taught in schools.

"Another person who influenced me in my late school years was in fact my then boyfriend's mother, Mary Frawley, who was the principal at the school. She was a role model, she cared and took time to talk with me. She had a great influence on my pursuing a career in teaching.

"I had some great school teachers though, who encouraged a love of learning. I particularly enjoyed geography, English and the humanities. What was so impressive to me was that they were quite young and radical, engaged well and were very close to us country kids.

"One of the wonderful things for me was that I'd learnt to read really early, encouraged by my great aunt and uncle. They put a lot of thought into my reading and the books that I had available. I read all the classic children's books and read every night – I still do. In those days you went to bed early, not to waste electricity, so I read by candle or torch light for hours and hours. I had good literacy skills at such a young age and I appreciate the encouragement my great aunt and uncle gave me as it has shaped the rest of my life.

"In relation to what makes a great teacher, I think it's really important that teachers can show or communicate that they really care about the students. Further that teachers are real people who command respect.

"There were a number of lecturers who took a personal interest in me, and had a great influence on me in terms of informing my ideas about politics and the world, and the influence that teaching can have on a child's life. Charles Sturt University did demonstrate that they were particularly proud of me and conferred an Honorary Doctorate on me in 2008. I was the first openly identifying Aboriginal person to graduate from that university.



**“
Education is
not a silver
bullet but it
is the closest
thing we have
for dealing
with our social
ills. But our
parliament
must commit to
more specific
goals, too,
with things
like lifting the
birth weight of
Aboriginal and
Torres Strait
Island children.
”**

Linda Burney
31 August 2016

“As for my political career, there was no way of knowing that this was to become a pathway for me. Coming from a tiny country town I didn't really know what 'politics' was and would never have envisaged such a pathway to have opened up. What did trigger my political involvement was that I took up a role as president of the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG), it opened up a world of self-determination and connection with Aboriginal people. Once a month we'd meet with the Minister and discuss our findings. During this process I recognised that politicians were just regular people who took up a particular role. One day during one of these consultation meetings, I thought 'I could do this!'”

“My great uncle was a drover and his politics influenced me. I joined the ALP and found people who thought as I did. Then followed a remarkable set of circumstances that used my experiences, compassion, empathy and communication skills plus a large dollop of pragmatism. There are too many mentors and people along that political pathway to mention, but people showed that they cared and I was encouraged by many, each part of the way. Part of Aboriginal culture is 'reciprocity', where we rest on each others' shoulders, many shoulders – it's the way we live and go forwards. I reflect on this everyday.”

“Teachers probably never truly know or realise the positive influence they have or have had on their students. Teachers' power and influence I believe is immeasurable. I think everyone would have a story about a great teacher in their life, who positively helped or influenced them. Teachers may never know the goodness they have done or to what degree.”

“What is so important is that, wherever teachers and support staff are, those places of learning are welcoming, respectful places where people care about learning, the students and their communities. There needs to be an excitement about learning too.”

“There has been so much that has changed in relation to Aboriginal communities and schools. The curriculum has radically changed, schools celebrate NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week. Assemblies and school events are opened with an Acknowledgement of Country and students are involved in this process and celebration.”

“I was at a preschool centre yesterday and there was an Acknowledgement of Country – it was wonderful, heart warming, remarkable. This all has a huge influence on whether the Aboriginal community feels welcome at school and that influences attendance and participation. But there is still such a long, long way to go. Universities have a lot to do in preparing young teachers for their role and teaching them to be inclusive, warm and welcoming to all people. So much has changed – but there's so much more to do.”

Honours

Department of School Education (NSW)
Director General's Award for Outstanding
Service to Public Schools, 1993

Honorary Doctorate, Charles Sturt University,
2002

Centenary Medal, 2003

Meritorious Service to 'Public Education and
Training' Award, 2010

NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award, 2014.

Why teachers

MUST BE

on the AITSL board

**Nihil de nobis,
sine nobis*.
This is a message
repeatedly ignored
by successive
governments, and
as a consequence,
Australian teachers
are in the absurd
situation where
the national body
responsible for
'maintaining'
teacher standards
and oversight of
teacher education
program standards,
has no teachers
selected by or
endorsed by the
profession itself
on its board, IEUA
Federal Secretary
Chris Watt writes.**

Unlike almost all other jurisdictions internationally, Australian governments have actively disenfranchised the teaching profession ever since the futile attempts in the early 1990s to establish a national teacher standards authority.

Today, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) has one and only one practising teacher on its board of 10 persons; and that person was chosen and appointed by the single 'shareholder' of the institute, the federal education minister.

AITSL's stated mission is: "promoting excellence so that teachers and leaders have the maximum impact on learning in all Australian schools and early childhood settings".

Apparently, this can be achieved by 'doing things to teachers' rather than 'doing things with teachers'.

One would struggle to find any other professional standards authority in any other industry where the profession was not only represented but formed the majority (or even totality) of the board of governance.

In the early 2000s, through various iterations, including Teaching Australia and NIQTSL (predecessor to AITSL), teachers and their unions were represented.

But when the current AITSL was established in 2010, non government teachers and their union were specifically excluded. In the latest iteration, the government teachers' union was excluded.

Rectifying the AITSL structure does not require a single teacher representative or even a couple. AITSL requires a board composed by a majority of practising teachers and their unions.

Such a board could access expertise, including education researchers and teacher education providers, to provide input and knowledge to board deliberations. These people, who have had a privileged position on the AITSL board to date, do not require this privilege as much as teachers do.

It is only when teachers represent teachers that a body such as AITSL will have the confidence of the profession, will be able to better relate and communicate with the profession and recognise the work intensification and other day to day ramifications of the work undertaken by the board.

It is clear from consultation papers developed by AITSL over the last eight years that there continues to be a systemic failure to recognise or understand the work that goes on in schools, the time poor situation teachers and principals continually experience, the work intensification and burgeoning red tape expectations and lack of intersection with day to day priorities of the classroom teacher and the determinations of the board.

To exacerbate the lack of teacher and union representation on the AITSL board, we have also seen legislative changes by state/territory jurisdictions to reduce the number of teachers, often to less than the majority, on teacher registration authorities around the country.

There has been an international trend, a disease, that has infected education policies globally, where the expertise of the teaching profession and the respect for professional judgement has been undermined and policy settings determined without due and proper consultation with the teaching profession.

The appointment of teachers and their unions is critical to ensure that the voice of the profession is heard in every conversation in the work of AITSL. Anything less will mean that its work will remain disconnected, discounted and viewed with suspicion. Anything less will mean that quality outcomes from its deliberations will be diminished. Anything less will continue to signal the government's lack of respect for the profession and the professional judgement of teachers.

*Nothing about us without us.

**“Unlike almost
all other
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profession.”**

Transformative turns in the profession of teaching

As Australians, we are currently living in new times where traditional values concerning families, work and leisure have been reconstituted to reflect postmodern times, Dean, Education Policy and Strategy, Australian Catholic University Tania Aspland writes.

Learners are becoming disconnected from traditional school based practices and teachers struggle to elicit support from parents and guardians. With fruitful economic reform in Australia, students should be in an education system that promises plentiful employment opportunities. The world ahead offers diverse career pathways. However, employers claim that schools and universities are failing to prepare students for a productive future.

Are teachers facilitating learning pathways that complement the future challenges of employment?

The OECD's The Future of Education and Skills 2030 project has raised two key questions:

- What knowledge, skills, attitudes and values will today's students need to thrive and shape their world?
- How can instructional systems develop these knowledge, skills, attitudes and values effectively?

These are significant questions for teachers as our society demands a different type of graduate. The national school curriculum and the current schooling structures, including the role of teachers, may not be aligned with the demands implicit in this international report and the changing nature of education.

Globalisation has reshaped dominant cultural practices and as such, a local curriculum can become somewhat misplaced as students engage with world issues, disasters, terrorism, and an uncertain future.

Teachers interact with multiple student identities and the problems they live out each day as they juggle these conflicting identities. Students and teachers are challenged by far ranging agendas that intersect with curriculum content, pedagogy and assessment.

The cultural constructs in which they are living – youth culture, hybrid families, transient employment, fractured relationships and economic diversity – are often at odds with the vision and mission of the school curriculum.

All too often students are leading what Dorothy Smith (1990) refers to as 'bifurcated lives' where they experience what is required of them by parents, teachers and employers and what they perceive to be realistic and meaningful learning interactions. This is particularly the case for those students who are in search of the 'wow' factor in school.

Double lives

This bifurcation can be lived out in many ways. Some students may comply and live out the expectations of the teaching profession and their school administrators albeit

incongruent with their own ideals. Others live out the incongruencies through disruptions, non compliance, disrespectful engagement and disconnection. The professional education landscape is fraught with tensions, uncertainty and incongruencies that are leaving many stakeholders – teachers, students and parents – feeling disengaged.

The teaching profession must recognise and reconstitute the nature of teachers' work. The profession must consider a move away from the traditional conceptions of teachers' work to a more differentiated model of learning engagement that defines teachers as knowledge workers.

Within the paradigm of normativity, the constructs of knowledge are envisaged as finite – bodies of knowledge that are fixed and predetermined, like that which is conveyed as 'text book' knowledge.

Underpinning this view of knowledge is a belief that student learning is primarily about the acquisition of finite and factual material delivered by experts through dictation and demonstration that leads to the understanding of pre-specified content. Aligned to this way of thinking, the conception of the teacher is of one unit per one space and essentially teaching is shaped around one curriculum document that is largely reproductive of the status quo of the privileged.

The purpose of schooling in this conception of education is reductionist in nature, designed primarily to prepare students for existing (not future) work or vocational engagement and, to largely sustain the constructs, structures and functions of the existing society.

I suggest this model of schooling or education is no longer viable for students of the new generation who are characterised differently as learners and the leaders of the future.

As I have noted some time ago (Aspland 2011), a traditional model of schooling advocates certainty in uncertain times. It is based on an ontological world view that is at odds with the explosion of knowledge that accompanies global connectivity. It presumes an unproblematic view of knowledge acquisition despite contexts where contestation, dilemmas and ambiguity prevail; a conception that is no longer desirable in the changing world of schooling.

Alternative teaching

The profession needs to embrace an alternative conception of teachers as knowledge workers for new times.

It is an educational necessity that schools and universities take up the challenge of managing global knowledge as the core of learning. Knowledge is multiplying quickly



“
In a time when students are feeling alienated and teachers demoralised due to the changing nature of education and the increasing regulation of our industry, we must counter the many attempts to deskill our profession.”

across the globe and it is accessible to all, in uncensored forms at all hours of the day and night. Students need no longer restrict learning to institutional contexts but have access to learning indefinitely. In this sense students do not rely on schools or teachers for learning.

Teachers need to reinvent the ways they work with knowledge and manage teaching and learning experiences differently for a new generation of learners.

Students want learning to be no longer restricted by traditional schooling structures of time, space and rules of engagement. In these complex times, the conceptions of learning must reflect a paradigm that values collaboration, collegiality, connectivity and the ongoing cycle of knowledge construction, deconstruction and reconstruction as central to higher level thinking.

This of course implies the urgent need for a new national curriculum framework, new roles for teachers and a relocation of the facilitation of learning into more open spaces (both virtual and material).

The challenge for our profession is to work collaboratively as an educational community of teachers, unions, governments and universities to create new ways of managing knowledge; to reconfigure schools to become learning communities not institutions of regulated learning.

In these new settings, the teacher is one of a diverse professional team. Teachers as knowledge managers are called upon to facilitate learning through social networks of expert teams and new patterns of collaboration as multidisciplinary partners leading learning.

They are called upon to replace the singular classroom and its inherent power relations with new communities of learners who engage both locally and globally through personal and technological forms of communication, interaction, debate and discussion in the place of didactic instruction. The monological classroom discourse is replaced by spirited debate as students strive to build a better future. This analysis and call for reform is not rocket science. There are plentiful cases of innovation across Australia, but they are largely a result of individual efforts that lack support from governments and as such, are difficult to sustain.

Profession in crisis

The IEUA National Conference this year provided evidence of such innovation and

yet also highlighted the challenges outlined above. Some might say the profession is in crisis and that we are losing our professional autonomy.

If we fail as a profession to address what is problematic we may be under threat of extinction. In a time when students are feeling alienated and teachers demoralised due to the changing nature of education and the increasing regulation of our industry, we must counter the many attempts to deskill our profession. We must reclaim our profession and take control of our work as teachers and at the same time embrace the future challenges of curriculum, pedagogy and learning.

I uphold the belief that a profession such as ours represents “a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to ethical standards and who hold themselves out as and are accepted by the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised body of learning derived from research, education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to apply this knowledge and exercise these skills in the interest of others”. (<http://www.psc.gov.au/what-is-a-profession>.)

While the profile of teachers and teaching as a profession experience constant review and critique in the media, we continue to enhance the lives of our students in conditions that are challenging. Our moral obligation to our community is upheld due to our commitment to the profession despite the challenges outlined above.

However, it is timely to consider how we position ourselves as professionals in the future. It is time for change and the reconstitution of our work as teachers, but we must determine who we are to become as a profession and we need to do so professionally, collectively and with confidence.

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A review of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse report

Andrew Knott of Holding Redlich examines the impact of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse and its report - providing a ready user guide to the essence of its recommendations.

Of brevity the bard did wisely speak, but never did a patron charge he seek of volumes legal, seventeen, and dense in just fifteen hundred words to make good sense.

A modest objective

Notwithstanding the above, there is value in such reflections, even though they can only be an indication (or 'consciousness raiser') to school staff (especially school leaders) of the critical issues requiring fuller consideration, and a guide to the critical pages which even the busiest should make time to read. This article focuses (necessarily) on material directly relevant to schools (and so does not deal with the question of redress).

A massive investment

Billions of dollars, and enormous organisational energy and personal emotion, have been invested. As the Commission notes at page 8 of the Executive Summary of the report:

"We conducted our inquiry through three 'pillars': personal accounts (provided in a private session or in writing); public hearings; and our research and policy work. By the time our work is completed we expect to

have heard from more than 16,000 people within our Terms of Reference. We expect to have spoken with over 8,000 people in private sessions and received 1,000 written accounts. We have held 57 public hearings and have published 59 research reports. We also conducted 35 policy roundtables. We have reviewed allegations of sexual abuse in more than 4000 institutions. This Final Report has 17 volumes. Each volume has been prepared so that it can be read as a self-contained report on the topic or institution to which it relates – as a consequence, there is some repetition between volumes. When considering recommendations designed to improve the safety of children in institutions we utilised a number of approaches. In addition to defining 10 Child Safe Standards that every institution should adopt, we considered the role that institutional management, education, community awareness, civil litigation and criminal justice each can play. No single recommendation or group of recommendations can be expected to achieve the required objective. They must all be considered and, depending on the institution, the relevant recommendations must be taken up to bring

an improvement in the safety of children. During the course of the Royal Commission we have already provided government with three final reports — Working With Children Checks, Redress and Civil Litigation and Criminal justice. We also provided 45 case study reports."

A massive impact

In addition to the formal recommendations on matters such as changing law or practice, Royal Commissions usually, as here, impact on knowledge, culture and attitudes, from the announcement onwards. It has been clear from that moment that, in the interest of protecting students, the expectations of school staff and systemic administrators, have been rising, and significantly. This relates, for example, both to systemic school staff responsibilities in relation to planning and reporting, and to their own conduct (such as maintaining appropriate professional boundaries). That continues, and will increasingly raise standards expected. As in all professions, teachers and school administrators must adapt to change.

A massive resource

The final Report is 17 volumes, each of hundreds of pages. It can be found in full at www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au The Table of Contents preceding the Preface and Executive Summary, is a helpful overview. In addition, however, there are 59 reports and 57 public hearings. For teachers and school administrators, recommended Research Reports (easily found from the home page) are:

- the role of organisational culture in child sexual abuse in institutional contexts
- creating child safe institutions
- grooming and child sexual abuse in institutional contexts
- audit of primary school-based sexual abuse prevention policy and curriculum, and
- hear no evil, see no evil: understanding failure to identify and report child sexual abuse in institutional contexts.

School recommendations

The school recommendations are found in Volume 13. This is 315 pages in length. Recommended minimal reading is the Summary at pages 9 – 27, and the formal recommendations at pages 28 – 29, which are set out below, and recommendations in earlier reports of relevance to schools, set out in Appendix A at pages 268 – 291, and Appendix B at pages 292-315. There are eight school recommendations, categorised under five topics:

1. Child Safe Standards

All schools should implement the Child Safe Standards identified by the Royal Commission on page 219 of Volume 13.

State and territory independent oversight authorities responsible for implementing the

Child Safe Standards (see Recommendation 6.10) should delegate to school registration authorities the responsibility for monitoring and enforcing the Child Safe Standards in government and nongovernment schools.

School registration authorities should place particular emphasis on monitoring government and non-government boarding schools to ensure they meet the Child Safe Standards. Policy guidance and practical support should be provided to all boarding schools to meet these standards, including advice on complaint handling.

2. Supporting boarding schools

The Australian government and state and territory governments should ensure that needs-based funding arrangements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander boarding students are sufficient for schools and hostels to create child safe environments.

Boarding hostels for children and young people should implement the Child Safe Standards identified by the Royal Commission. State and territory independent oversight authorities should monitor and enforce the Child Safe Standards in these institutions.

3. Children with harmful sexual behaviours

Consistent with the Child Safe Standards, compliant handling policies for schools (see Recommendation 7.7) should include effective policies and procedures for managing complaints about children with harmful sexual behaviours.

4. Guidance for teachers and principals

State and territory governments should provide nationally consistent and easily accessible guidance to teachers and principals on preventing and responding to child sexual abuse in all government and non government schools.

5. Teacher registration

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) should consider strengthening teacher registration requirements to better protect children from sexual abuse in schools. In particular, COAG should review minimum national requirements for assessing the suitability of teachers and conducting disciplinary investigations.

Legal implications: criminal liability

Pages (268-291) of Volume 13 Appendix A – Recommendations relevant to schools from other volumes and reports are also important, in relation to culture, rising expectations, and possible new legal implications.

Topics include prevention, making institutions safer, improving child safety approaches, online abuse in institutions, responding, reporting and complaint handling including oversight, record keeping and information sharing, and recommended

new 'failure to report' offences. On this last topic, pages 280-291 are a window into the new world of potential criminal liability staff may enter. To take two examples:

Recommendation 32

Any person associated with an institution who knows or suspects that a child is being or has been sexually abused in an institutional context should report the abuse to police (and, if relevant, in accordance with any guidelines the institution adopts in relation to blind reporting under Recommendation 16).

Recommendation 36

State and territory governments should introduce legislation to create a criminal offence of failure to protect a child within a relevant institution from a substantial risk of sexual abuse by an adult associated with the institution as follows:

(a) The offence should apply where:

- i. an adult person knows that there is a substantial risk that another adult person associated with the institution will commit a sexual offence against:
 - a child under 16, and
 - a child of 16 or 17 years of age, if the person associated with the institution is in a position of authority in relation to the child.

ii. the person has the power of responsibility to reduce or remove the risk.

iii. the person negligently fails to reduce or remove the risk.

(b) The offence should not be able to be committed by individual foster carers or kinship carers.

(c) Relevant institutions should be defined to include institutions that operate

facilities or provide services to children in circumstances where the children are in the care, supervision or control of the institution. Foster care and kinship care services should be included, but individual foster carers and kinship carers should not be included. Facilities and services provided by religious institutions, and any service of functions performed by persons in religious ministry should be included.

(d) State and territory governments should consider the Victorian offence in section 49C of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) as a useful precedent, with an extension to include children of 16 or 17 years of age, if the person associated with the institution is in a position of authority in relation to the child.

Recommended reading

It is recommended that all those working in schools should read the Preface, Executive Summary, and pages 9-27, 28-29, 268-291 and 292-315 of Volume 13 of the report; and that those with leadership responsibilities should read further, for example, Research Reports, in accordance with their particular circumstances and responsibilities. Keep in mind: 'culture, culture, culture, be 'across the detail and if in doubt, promptly seek informed, formal advice; and note your responsibilities are personal to you, and you are personally accountable. The final report can be found at www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au

This article was originally published by the Independent Education Union – Queensland and Northern Territory Branch in Issue 3 (Volume 7) 2018 of Independent Voice.

“
**Your responsibilities
are personal to
you, and you
are personally
accountable.**
”



The bottom line in Indigenous education:

Why we're not seeing the progress we need

The success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is heavily dependent on resourcing, and in a lot of cases Australia is just not getting it right, journalist Sara El Sayed writes.

As all school staff will know, while Indigenous education resources are key, scarcity – whether it comes from a genuine lack of money or skewed priorities – is real.

While the issue is complex, solutions continue to be identified from within our community.

The boarding school effect

A large number of Indigenous students, particularly in regional areas, attend boarding schools.

This is due to the under resourcing, or plain absence, of secondary schools in remote communities.

There are benefits to boarding schools, as outlined in the recent study A 'Better' Education: An examination of the utility of boarding schools for Indigenous secondary students in Western Australia, including improved employability, access to positive networks and improved agency.

However, as the study also highlights, there are a number of challenges that come a long with the current boarding school process.

Co-author of the study Dr Mary-anne Macdonald from Edith Cowan University's

(ECU's) Kurongkurl Kattitjin, Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research said in a media release that Indigenous boarders face unique challenges including homesickness, language barriers, racism, discrimination, culture shock and post school transitions.

"Having a remote home can mean that students are very conflicted about what they're going to do post Year 12. Do they pay the social cost of staying in the city far removed from community, language, culture and experience, or do they go home?"

Macdonald also noted the linguistic differences that students may need to overcome.

"Students in a mainstream school who may be coming from a remote community where English is not the first language might be a couple of years behind academically and some can believe that their Aboriginality is the reason they're not achieving at school, rather than their set of unique experiences," she said.

"Some schools deal with these obstacles well and provide the right support, and some schools don't seem to be very aware of what makes boarding school challenging."

Do we know what works?

A systematic review of over 10,000 Australian studies, the Aboriginal Voices Project, showed that in some cases we know what works in supporting Indigenous students, but in many cases we don't.

Dr Cathie Burgess, Senior Lecturer specialising in Aboriginal Studies and Indigenous Education at the University of Sydney, and one of the 13 academics who took part in the systematic review – said there were a number of successful studies but they were usually small scale.

"Larger scale studies tended to have Indigenous students as a subset of a bigger group, so any findings often weren't specific to Aboriginal people, it was more about low socio-economic status or under-achievement," Burgess said.

"We did find approaches that work but they tended to be very contextual – an approach might work in one particular community, but won't work in another community.

"To some extent that is the nature of Indigenous education – it reflects the diversity of Aboriginal people and cultures across the country.

"There are some basic concepts that are relevant across the whole gamut, but they still need to be tailored to specific communities.

"One of most successful programs is Connecting to Country run by the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

"It is a three day cultural immersion program for teachers, run by local Aboriginal community members.

"Community members decide on the cultural knowledge, history and information that teachers need to know.

"Teachers are given the opportunity to visit sites, talk to local organisations to see what they do within the community. Elders, parents and students talk to them about what they feel education should look like.

"By the end of the three days, the teachers and the community had developed connections.

"The teachers could then go back to school and tell the students about whom they had met and what they had learnt – and this shows the students their teacher has an interest in their culture.

"It's about building those relationships.

"That has to happen before you even start to think about educational outcomes.

"Unfortunately, what tends to happen in a lot of cases is once a program gets up and running and starts to have an impact, the money runs out – personnel support or financial support – it is always finite.

"Teachers are left scrambling to implement new programs, but once there is a change of government there is a change of approach, so there is a lot of frustration in schools."

Asking too much

Burgess said the cornerstone of any program in schools is engaging with parents and community members, to have their input in to how things can work – but schools



cannot always ask Indigenous people to do it for free.

"A lot of people volunteer their time, but a lot of Indigenous people work – they are doing this on top of their job – so if schools want that engagement they need to pay for it.

"There is a problematic idea that Indigenous people will do this for free because they want the change to be made – which is fairly patronising in many ways.

"If an organisation were to get a consultant from the private sector to consult on any organisational issue they would be paying big dollars, and in most cases would not hesitate.

"But as soon as it comes to Indigenous expertise it often has to be on a volunteer basis. There is no respect there."

"Additionally, Indigenous staff in schools are always caught in a bind because they by and large want to make a difference for the students and improve outcomes, but they get left with all the work.

"It is usually on top of their core role.

"A history teacher, for example, shouldn't be expected to take on all these extra roles just because they are Indigenous."

IEUA-QNT member and Indigenous Education Adviser for Townsville Catholic Education Tammi Webber described the importance of employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in schools in dedicated roles.

"The overwhelming majority of our 30 Catholic schools in the Townsville region employ Indigenous Education Workers.

"They are school officers who are crucial in ensuring there is a cultural connection



“At the core of it, what unions stand for is really what Indigenous education is all about – trying to alleviate inequalities experienced by anybody in our society.”

between community, families, our students and our schools.

“In our office we have a large Indigenous education unit.

“There are seven of us who work in that department – but we oversee and manage a lot of large scale initiatives and programs which then filter down into our schools, which the Indigenous Education Workers help implement and initiate.

“All of our schools are also asked to have Indigenous Education Advisory Groups. This could be the Indigenous Education Workers as well as parents, Indigenous teachers, community members and traditional owners – so they assist our schools with any new initiatives and any cultural understandings that the schools may need for their context.”

Action is needed

Being an active ally for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples is integral, and as a collective we know this.

Webber said unions play a crucial role in supporting and advocating for the most disadvantaged in our society.

“At the core of it, what unions stand for is really what Indigenous education is all about – trying to alleviate inequalities experienced by anybody in our society.

“It doesn't matter your race or culture, we're all equal in all capacities.”

Non Indigenous staff play a vital role in supporting their students, but also standing in solidarity with their Indigenous colleagues.

Taking the time to listen, but also the importance of taking action.

If your school or site does not currently have a Reconciliation Action Plan, take the first step in establishing one. Visit www.narragunnawali.org.au to start this process.

If you feel your school lacks adequate professional learning, discuss this with your colleagues and make this known to your school leadership.

One of the most well known statements by the Queensland Aboriginal activists group describes the importance of solidarity:

“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

This quote is often credited to activist Lilla Watson, who has insisted the statement was the result of a collective process by the entirety of the Queensland Aboriginal activists group.

Solidarity creates change – and the collective underpins this.

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DATA WALLS:

The state of the evidence

What is the evidence that shows the effectiveness of data walls in schools? Under what conditions might data walls be most effective in informing teachers' decisions and actions to improve learning? This article explores these questions, providing guidance to school leaders and teachers who may be considering implementing data walls or reviewing their own current practices.

Lois Harris, Claire Wyatt-Smith and Lenore Adie write about their research.

Data walls are public or semi public physical artefacts that visually represent student achievement data in a range of graphic and linguistic formats (eg student grades in letter, numeric score or alphabet forms; standardised test scores, reading levels, school based assessment results displayed in tables or graphs of a range of types).

First developed in the 1990s in the United States as a way for teachers to engage with student achievement data and track progress over time, data walls are one of a growing number of practices designed to help teachers in the 'visualisation of data' (Hardy & Lewis, 2018). According to Sharratt and Fullan (2012), "Data walls create visuals of all students' progress and provide a forum for rich conversation among teachers" (p78). While originally data walls were designed as a tool for teachers, they are now being used with students (Jimerson, Cho, & Wayman, 2016; Harris, 2018; Spina, 2017).

Key variables

A recently completed systematic review of research on data walls identified 49 relevant academic sources (ie books, journal articles, book chapters, doctoral theses, published reports). Twenty two of these met the strict criteria for inclusion in our review (for more methodological details). This corpus of research made it clear that data walls are implemented in highly diverse ways, subject to the intended users, the location of the data walls and their purposes. Identified users included teachers, students, parents, and members of the public.

The research shows that there is a range of practices associated with implementing data walls. Typically, these give an emphasis to teacher talk and interaction around data

as teachers meet to infer meaning from the data, with discussions exploring how to interpret and use it. These social practices can also serve to motivate teacher inquiry, encourage student review and goal setting, serve to demonstrate school accountability, and identify pedagogical solutions to problems. The corollary of this is that the research shows the potential of data walls to negatively impact students and teachers. The clear message is that the walls themselves do not determine how teachers make sense of the displayed data, nor do they prescribe how teachers, students and others interact around the data.

The use of data walls is also linked to privacy: where the data wall is located (is it in a public space or teacher only space?); how data is then identified, and the decision to de-identify (are student names, ID numbers, and/or photos attached to the data?). In studies we reviewed, while some placed data walls in staff only areas and kept the student identifying information on the back of tiles, out of public view (Singh & Glasswell, 2013), in other implementations, data walls were in public classroom spaces. Consequently, in these walls, student's identified achievement data were made visible to peers, parents, and school staff.

What we know about data walls

Our review of literature has led us to conclude that, at present, there is only limited evidence to show the impact data walls of different types have on student learning or their ability to help teachers engage in better decision making about next teaching strategies and goal setting. When examining impact on student achievement, one notable study (Singh, Märtsin, & Glasswell,

2015) included achievement measures (TORCH and NAPLAN test results). While learning growth was found, as data walls were just one component of a complex intervention undertaken in this study, the authors could not attribute growth specifically to the use of data walls.

Most reviewed studies were small scale and qualitative in nature, making it difficult to generalise findings beyond the context of the study. Teachers in these studies reported both benefits and limitations from data wall use. In multiple studies, teachers claimed that using data walls helped stimulate productive professional conversations among teachers, where problems were diagnosed and pedagogical knowledge was shared (Goss et al., 2015; Renshaw et al., 2013). Some reported that the prominence of data, when displayed on data walls, forced teachers to act to improve results as poor results could not be ignored (Singh & Glasswell, 2013). Multiple studies reported that colour coding was a helpful feature (Cristoph, 2014; Goss et al., 2015; Renshaw et al., 2013), which assisted teachers to group students for instructional purposes and identify those in need of intervention.

However, studies also identified unresolved challenges in relation to how data walls were implemented within their schools. Concerns were raised regarding the staff time needed to create and update data walls and attend meetings (Parkinson and Stooke, 2012; Spina, 2017). Further, the categorisation of students often led to a focus on supporting some groups of students over others (Carter, 2014; Kiro et al., 2016). Some teachers articulated concerns that there was undue emphasis placed on results related to the subject domains and/or particular tests which were displayed on the wall, with concerns this may encourage teachers and students to set goals around scores rather than standards (Hardy, 2014). One study highlighted the difficulty school leaders may experience when trying to keep data wall discussions focused on pedagogical solutions to achievement problems, rather than potential external causes of these (Earl, 2009).

There were also concerns raised in relation to how some forms of data wall implementations might compromise student privacy, as well as student and/or teacher psychological safety (Carter, 2014; Marsh et al., 2016). Multiple studies reported data wall implementations where identified student data were shared with the entire school community (Abrams et al., 2016; Carter, 2014) or class (Jimerson et al., 2016; Spina, 2017). These types of implementation clearly raise questions about who owns individual student data and the extent to which students and their families/carers should be allowed input into the sharing of their private results. Studies also identified challenges around mediating negative teacher and student reactions to data and associated social practices (Singh, Märtsin, & Glasswell, 2015; Singh, 2018),

particularly those which invited comparison (Renshaw et al., 2013). These concerns led some teachers in Spina's (2017) study to choose not to implement classroom data walls, despite a school wide expectation to do so.

When data walls have been used with students, additional concerns are reported. For example, there are difficulties associated with teaching students to understand and use the data to establish and monitor their own learning goals (Marsh et al., 2016). Additionally, it was acknowledged that a frequent focus on student comparison and competition may inadvertently encourage students to adopt a performance orientation towards learning (Jimerson et al., 2016; Marsh et al., 2016; Thrupp & White, 2013). This is especially the case where the data gives priority to norm referenced data where the direct inter student comparison is the basis for judgement.

Implications

Currently, there is insufficient evidence at scale to show the benefits and limitations of using data walls. This observation holds for all phases of schooling. There are some studies however that indicate the desirable conditions under which data walls may have positive impact. One of these is the need for a school climate which features strong collegial relationships and an atmosphere of trust (Singh, Märtsin, & Glasswell, 2015). It appears important that there is systemic as well as school administrative support (Potenziano, 2014); however, as Koyama's (2013) study highlights, top down implementations are unlikely to be effective. Additionally, it must be recognised that data walls are one tool among a range of possible tools. There is no consensus about the optimum ways to develop teachers' data expertise, yet social practices around data walls are clearly an important mediating factor (nature of staff and/or student interactions, discussions, rituals, and uses of these data). However, we are only beginning to understand these practices.

Due to the current state of the evidence, data walls should be viewed as an emerging, but as yet largely unverified, strategy. This is particularly the case in relation to implementations where students are encouraged to view and use data walls. Schools should carefully consider how they implement data walls within their own site, taking into account student privacy, staff workload, and how data walls align with the school's goals and existing data interpretation and use strategies. It is vital that the efficacy of data wall usage is also monitored. What benefits are being seen within the school as a result of this practice? How are staff and student privacy and psychological safety being considered? What social practices are developing around data wall use? Are the data wall constructions and associated social practices

This corpus of research made it clear that data walls are implemented in highly diverse ways.

fit for purpose and what is the impact on staff time?

In addition to monitoring effectiveness within their own schools, we strongly encourage school leaders and teachers to become involved in formally researching data walls in their schools. Contact Dr Elizabeth Heck, Administrative Officer for the Schools Data Network Project (SDN) in the Institute for Learning Sciences and Teacher Education (Elizabeth.heck@acu.edu.au) if you are interested in joining our network.

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Lois Harris, Claire Wyatt-Smith, Lenore Adie
Institute for Learning Sciences and Teacher Education, Australian Catholic University



Not so long ago, Aboriginal students received corporeal punishment in schools for speaking their own language. Of the approximately 250 languages spoken before European invasion, all except 13 are considered critically endangered or extinct. Now the government and local Aboriginal communities are attempting to reverse this legacy of cultural suppression.

Journalist Alex Menyhart looks at strategies to revitalise Aboriginal languages through the school system, including the NSW Department of Education's Connected Communities Strategy.

Australia released its first ever school curriculum for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in 2015. But translating this curriculum for local contexts proves difficult.

Many Aboriginal communities have their own methods of passing on language. Government initiatives risk compromising this process.

In a government survey of Aboriginal communities, while 96% of respondents said that Aboriginal language should be taught in schools, 94% also said that this should be based on 'flexible and locally driven designs'.

This is necessary to allow for differences between individual communities in terms of culture, teaching methods, strength of languages, availability of language teachers and the principles of decision makers in the community.

Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests is an initiative under the OCHRE (Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment) policy framework and is based on the successful Kohanga reo in New Zealand, which began in the 1980s as part of a Maori language revitalisation program.

This program culminated in a much deeper respect and proliferation of Maori language and culture in New Zealand than has been witnessed in Australia. Kohanga reo is where the concept of 'language nests' originated. This is an 'immersion-based approach' to language learning and has been imitated in Hawaii and Canada for First Language tuition.

Learning and speaking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages should be promoted for their own sake, but studies show that it has manifold other benefits for students in their school and post school life. Aboriginal students who study their local language are more likely to pursue tertiary education,

have greater employment outcomes and better mental health. The Northern Territory government's 2014 - 2016 Suicide Prevention Plan listed "disconnection from culture" as a major factor in increased suicide risk.

In the Connected Communities Strategy implemented in NSW, the teaching of Aboriginal languages and culture aims to foster 'community healing processes' and the 'brokering and strengthening of employment opportunities'. The program is currently run in 15 schools in NSW.

Teachers who apply to become Aboriginal language teachers participate in professional learning and actively engage with the local Aboriginal community. The emphasis is on 'co-decision making' with the community. Public schools can initiate their own Aboriginal language program in communication with the local Aboriginal community.

Other organisations, like Eora TAFE run independent language programs. TAFE NSW has developed Certificate I, II and III in Aboriginal Language/s and has played a large role in language revitalisation in NSW. These courses are free to enrol and are available in several Aboriginal languages including Wiradjuri, Bunjalung and Gamilaraay.

Is your school, college or centre running an Aboriginal language program? Get in touch at ieu@ieu.asn.au

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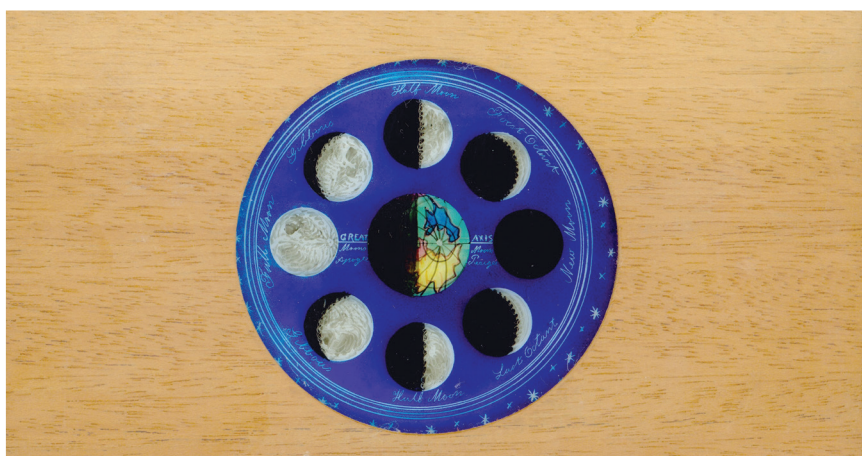
History is part of our brand



8 & 9. Mercury; Venus



1. Figure of the Earth



Demand for archivists is growing as many schools, even quite young ones, realise the benefits employing a person with this skill set brings, Journalist Sue Osborne writes.

Many people's idea of an archivist is someone who spends all their time filing dusty old records. While there's an element of truth in that, the job is much more diverse and current.

In government schools there is a system in place for archiving materials, but independent schools must come up with their own plan for dealing with archiving.

Newington College archivist David Roberts (pictured above) loves that he deals with 19th century documents but also needs to be at the forefront of digital technology.

Roberts, who has worked at the college since 2009, was the first professional archivist employed there.

"Most school archivists are former teachers or librarians, but there's a growing trend for schools to employ professional archivists," Roberts said.

Roberts had a long career as a federal and state government archivist before joining the college.

"I became director of the State Records Authority of NSW at 42 and after 10 years I had had enough. I missed working with real records rather than supervising or dealing with bureaucracy.

"I wanted to roll my sleeves up again and that's what attracted me to this position."

Prior to his appointment, archiving at the college had been on an ad hoc basis. Rev Dr Peter Swain OAM RFD, college chaplain

between 1970-1996 had done a great job saving the collection. Staff members and a band of volunteers had done their best in the interim.

It was the volunteers themselves, and headmaster, Dr David Mulford, who was keen on the school's history and the impending school sesquicentenary in 2013 that inspired Roberts' appointment.

Raw records

Roberts said the records (which date back to the school's inception in 1863 in a colonial mansion which is now part of Silverwater Jail) were in a 'raw' state when he started working with them, which archivists love.

But Roberts' role is not just about these historic archives, he plays a crucial role in making sure the college's current records are preserved for decades to come.

Following the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse, schools are obliged to make sure their records comply with legal, governance and compliance requirements.

"We need records that can be accessed and used as evidence for years to come. Records are now all created in a digital space, and technology is constantly changing, so they have to be managed effectively."

Digitising school records has also provided a resource which is proving invaluable to the



“ I wanted to roll my sleeves up again and that’s what attracted me to this position. ”



school's alumni and fundraising team, and old boys' families.

Using the skills of the volunteers, 125,000 pieces of information on old boys have been collecting onto a database, linking things like who was the captain of the first 15 rugby side in 1953, or who was prefect in 1961.

The families of old boys trying to piece together a family tree or write a eulogy find this information invaluable.

Continued value

Roberts said the college's fundraising and alumni team draws heavily on the college's history and uses its care for the archives to demonstrate how it continues to value its old boys.

Alumni events and reunions use the resources from the archives to provide slide shows and other publication material for these events.

Roberts also loves that he can become involved in the college's teaching and learning. His first experience of this was through the visual arts department, who among other uses have used the archives to source photos of old boys which they then turned into portraits. Visiting artists have also accessed the archives for inspiration.

Although he is not a curator of objects, Roberts has set up a small museum on the college grounds which currently displays memorabilia from teachers and students that served in World War I. History classes come to see the caps and jackets worn by those who served in the war, bringing history to life.

Roberts' favourite discovery since joining the school has been a set of 19th century lantern slides used to teach astronomy at Tupou College in Tonga. The slides were made in London for use in a Phantasmagoria Lantern, powered by paraffin (pictured p22).

Tupou College is Newington's brother school, set up by Rev James Egan Moulton in 1866. Rev Moulton took the slides to Tonga and they were discovered in his belongings, as he became president of the college between 1893 and 1900.

The slides depict the sun, moon, planets and comets.

"They are gorgeous things and the colours are as bright and new now as they ever were."

As most school archivists work individually, networking is important for their personal growth and development. The school archivists' network (the School Archives Special Interest Group of the Australian Society of Archivists) meets three times a year and Roberts said it is a crucial part of his professional life.

He said the presence of an archivist enriches the lives of not only the school staff and students, but the past and present families associated with the school.

"History is part of our brand and we use it everywhere. A lot of our external communication emphasises the school's history and it is highlighted to the boys as a part of their education.

"This was a decision made by the head. You can't do any of that without good archives."

Speaking back to the numbers: It's time for teachers to reclaim teacher professionalism

Professor Howard Stevenson of the University of Nottingham writes on the increasing pressures facing the profession, and how to take back control as a collective.

When it is stated in the media, or in everyday conversations, that pressures on schools are increasing what is really meant is that the pressures on teachers are increasing, because it isn't 'schools' that do the work – it is the teachers who work in schools who do the work.

Teachers experience these pressures as constantly rising workloads, but also as increasing external control over what they teach and how they teach. Teachers' space to exercise professional autonomy and judgement is being progressively closed down. I want to argue that only by acting collectively, and organising through their union, can teachers reclaim that professional autonomy – and reclaim their professionalism.

Datafication of teaching

The pressures on teachers come from two interdependent sources, each of which feeds the other. First is that governments increasingly see education as the means for individual nations to compete in the world economy. Education becomes part of the global race for economic 'competitiveness' and international league tables of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scores become the measure of success. Policy is driven by data as 'numbers', and league table positions, become the only way that education 'quality' is judged. Meanwhile the obsession with numbers in education seeps into the education system at every level as individual schools are sucked inexorably into the 'tests and targets' culture.

At the same time, parents are encouraged to see education in similar terms. Parents are required to act as 'consumers', in which the relationship between parents and teachers isn't based on trust but is reduced to a market exchange. Whatever parents may feel about the wider purposes of education, and what they want for their children, they too are driven to chase the target because their child is part of the race and success in the race is increasingly reduced to a number.

These processes are sometimes called the 'datafication of teaching'. It is a clumsy term but one that conveys rather well the way in which complex educational processes, that seek to develop individuals in myriad ways,

are more and more being reduced to a score – because only numbers can be compared, ordered, ranked and benchmarked. And who can argue with numbers? Numbers are 'objective' and 'truth'.

Teachers have been experiencing the slow creep of datafication for many years. These developments, now accelerating, have resulted in a simultaneous process of work intensification and de-professionalisation which often reduces the highly complex craft of teaching to the equivalent of labouring on a production line. The drive to constantly improve test scores means that good is never good enough and more is always required. Teachers can never work hard enough, and should anyone show any signs of letting up, the data is invoked to compare and condemn. It is what educationalist Stephen Ball once brilliantly described as the 'terrors of performativity'.

Chronic problems of excessive workload are now a global epidemic in teaching as teachers all over the world face the same pressures to compete in the global race that has no finishing line. The consequence is immoral levels of teacher burnout and 'attrition' (the rather emotionless term used to describe what is often the dashing of a teachers' career and hopes).

However, workload isn't the only symptom of these trends. Such is the drive to ratchet up test scores that teachers find they are less and less able to determine for themselves what is the most appropriate pedagogical approach for the children they have in their classroom. Assessment structures always have a powerful impact on pedagogy (for good or ill) and as the tests and targets culture has intensified, so too has the pressure on teachers to teach to the test. From growing managerialism to the creeping influence of 'what works', research teachers find themselves progressively de-skilled as what they teach and how they teach is increasingly determined by others.

Teachers experience these twin pressures of work intensification and deskilling as a loss of control over work. Decisions about the pace and content of work are being taken away from classroom teachers in a process of 'deprofessionalisation'.



Collective voice can take back control

Teachers need to take back control of their work if teaching is to be the fulfilling work and lifelong career that it can be and should be. Teachers acting individually can perform heroics in the face of these pressures, but they are unlikely to be effective in bringing about change. Moreover, the personal cost will almost certainly be high. Rather teachers must act collectively if they are to speak back to the numbers and take back control of their work and their profession. There are many ways that teachers can work together, in professional networks of myriad kinds, and all these are important. However, there can be no substitute for organising collectively through union organisation as unions are the only bodies that have the broad representation and the organisational independence to confront the challenges described.

However, if teacher unions, including the IEU, are to provide this powerful collective voice for the profession, it is vital that the union is seen as the voice of teachers across all the issues that affect them. Too often teacher unionism can focus narrowly on traditional 'industrial' issues (pay and working conditions), while neglecting the so-called 'professional' issues that have a huge impact on teachers' quality of working life. The way teachers experience work is not compartmentalised by a neat industrial/professional divide. Relentless standardised testing both drives up workload and undermines professional autonomy – the industrial and professional dimensions are two sides of the same coin. The only way to defeat these developments is to organise collectively to tackle the workload issues and simultaneously challenge the arguments that

distort our education systems and undermine teachers' professional judgement.

The pressures on teachers are considerable. They are rising inexorably and unsustainably. Teachers must take back control of their work if the education system itself is to be saved from collapsing under the pressure of hopelessly unrealistic expectations. This requires teachers to organise together across all the issues that represent the totality of their work – industrial and professional. Put simply, it requires the power of union organisation. Teachers cannot be the teacher they want to be, working in the type of environment they want to work in, without the collective power of their union. However, this cannot be a collective power that is separate from teachers and acts on behalf of teachers. Rather the power is realised when teachers actively participate in their union and work through their union to make their voice heard. Only when teachers act collectively in this way does real change become possible.

Professor Howard Stevenson is the Director of Research and Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Nottingham, UK.

Professor Stevenson's research interests focus on both the school and higher education sectors. These include understanding the formation and development of education policy processes, privatisation in education, educational management and teacher leadership, school and high education sector labour relations/teacher unions and the investigation of teachers' work/academic labour through labour process analysis.

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Stopping gendered violence at work – a safety issue

When we talk about occupational health and safety at work we usually think of hard hats and manual handling, but there are other kinds of workplace hazards. Gendered violence is a serious hazard that injures workers every day, IEUA VICTAS Branch Organisers Marit Clayton and Therese O'Loughlin write.

Why are we talking about gendered violence in workplaces?

In 2016 The Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC) began consulting with Victorian working women about their experience of work. This conversation became known as WRAW (Women's Rights at Work) chat. A common theme arising was the extent to which cultures of sexism and gender inequality were impacting on women's safety and health at work. It became clear that in many instances the treatment women were experiencing was a form of violence and that employers and WorkSafe (the Victorian workplace health and safety regulator) did not see the issue in this way. VTHC resolved to raise awareness of the issue and promote action to eliminate the violence Victorian women are experiencing at work.

What is gendered violence?

Gendered violence (GV) is any action or behaviour that makes a person feel uncomfortable, unsafe, ashamed, inferior, excluded, embarrassed or humiliated for being a woman or having a different sexuality or identity. Sexism and discrimination is the root cause of GV.

GV can be anything from a 'blonde' or 'gay' joke in the lunch room or classroom; to not being valued or respected because you are a woman or identify as gay, lesbian, transgender or queer; right through to sexual harassment and assault.

GV experienced by people working in schools can take many forms:

- stalking
- intimidation/bullying
- threats
- verbal abuse
- ostracism or exclusion
- rude gestures
- offensive language and imagery
- being undermined in your role
- put downs, innuendo/insinuations
- sexual suggestions or unwanted advances, and
- sexual assault.

Gendered violence injures workers

The reason we are calling this behaviour GV is because it causes physical and psychological injuries to workers. GV doesn't just 'happen' and is not 'part of the job'. WorkSafe in Victoria has recognised GV as a serious workplace hazard and is publishing guidance material and educating employers in how to eliminate this hazard. WorkSafe has recognised the expertise of the VTHC team in this issue and they will deliver training for employers and safety reps.

GV injures workers by causing or contributing to:

- physical and psychological injury and illness
- feelings of isolation and exclusion
- withdrawal and loss of confidence
- economic hardship due to leaving the workplace to escape gendered violence
- relationship breakdown and family disruption
- post traumatic stress disorder, fear and anxiety, and
- suicide.

What can we do to eliminate gendered violence in the workplace?

In Victorian workplaces, 64% of women have experienced bullying, harassment or violence in their workplace. This shocking statistic from the 2016 VTHC research, means that the current rules which are intended to protect workers who experience workplace sexual harassment, are clearly broken. The approach which has focused on individual claims and settlement processes has failed and the rules need to change to allow for systemic action against gendered violence.

In Australia and in a world first, Kate Jenkins the Sex Discrimination Commissioner, has launched a national inquiry into sexual harassment in Australian workplaces. She said the 12 month inquiry, like the #MeToo movement, would shine a light on the prevalence of women being sexually harassed and assaulted.

On 15 October, 2017, American actress Alyssa Milano posted a tweet urging women to speak up and out about their experiences with sexual assault or harassment using the phrase 'me too'. Overnight, social media erupted as #MeToo took hold in every corner of the world; the hashtag brought attention to the violence and harassment women face in daily life and there were demands for change. The question now is how to translate an awareness of a problem into action and lasting change.

The Human Rights Commission estimates that one in three Australian women have experienced sexual harassment and assault which correlates with VTHC data. Kate Jenkins is expecting to uncover abuse across a range of industries. Currently only about 20% of women who have been sexually harassed will make a complaint. The solution to reducing sexual harassment should not rely on the bravery of the victim to speak out. The Commissioner will hand down a series of recommendations which will provide guidance for employers on how they can eliminate harassment.

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Stop GV campaign in Victoria

The VTHC 'We are Union Women' team continues to lead the way in Victoria. As part of the Stop GV Campaign there have been two conference raising awareness and educating representatives from most unions. The most recent conference will shape the next set of actions to eliminate GV.

The VTHC also provides a range of training packages to unions including: what is GV and why it is union business, understanding the drivers of GV, why it is a health and safety issue and what it looks like for individual unions. The campaign kit, also produced by the VTHC, contains a risk assessment tool and a model GV enterprise bargaining clause.

The IEUA VIC TAS Branch knows that GV is an issue for some of our members. We have started to engage members in WRAW chats to understand more fully the experiences of our women members and we are working with schools to create and implement plans for change. While unions are well supported by the VTHC, it is incumbent on each union to produce materials and resources that will best support our membership. Under the auspices of Occupational Health and Safety, we have developed an IEU Stop

Gendered Violence @ Work Webinar. This is an introductory seminar which assists in understanding why GV is a health and safety issue and includes a step by step action plan for workplaces to use.

References

VTHC Stop Gendered Violence at Work Report (2016)

VTHC Stop Gendered Violence at Work Campaign Kit (2017)

Contact Victorian Trades Hall Council www.unionwomen.org.au/genderedviolenceatwork

If you or someone you work with is experiencing gendered violence at work you can contact:

The IEU branch in your state

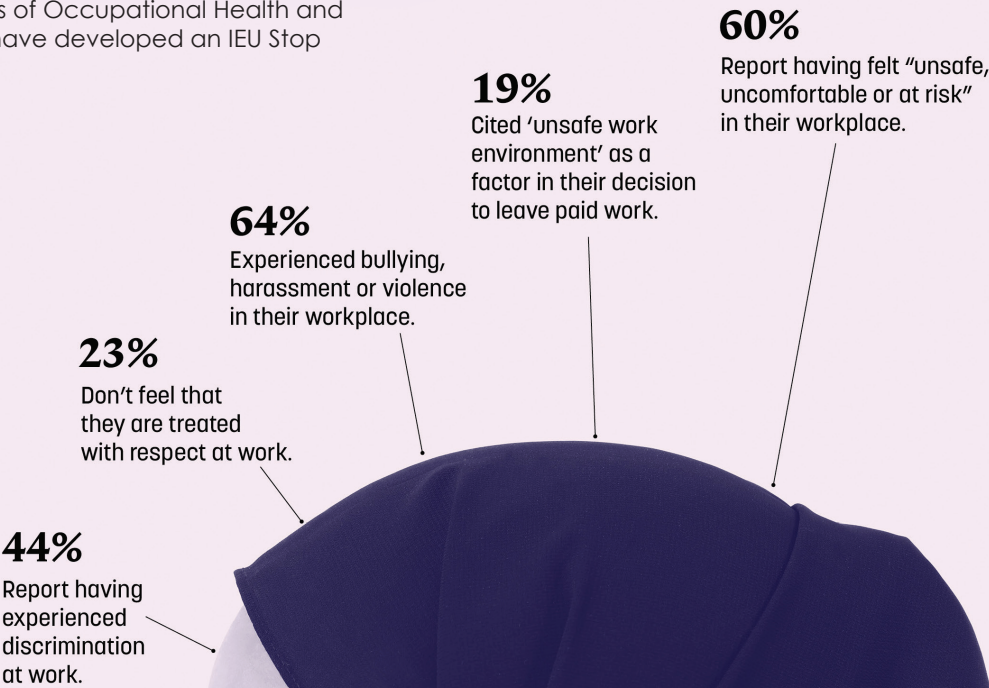
1800 RESPECT

1800 737 732

The Human Rights Commission in your state.

WRAW CHAT FINDINGS

Our research indicates that the problem of gendered violence is endemic in our workplaces.



[5] Results from respondents to VTHC study Women’s Rights at Work -WRAW-Chats 2016.

What happens when teachers' voices are silenced, and we let others 'read' the data?

A cautionary tale and a call to action

The education world is awash with data, Misty Adoniou writes. In Australia, federal education policy takes its direction from the results of international testing regimes such as PISA, PIRLS and TIMMS. A to E reporting, the Australian Curriculum, the national teacher standards and the MySchool website can each trace their origins back to government panic that Australia was losing the international education race, a race refereed by these international tests.

At state and territory level, governments are driven by our own home grown education race between the states and territories, as measured by NAPLAN.

The pressure to win the NAPLAN race, or at least improve on last year's placings, is directly passed onto schools. To ensure they pull their weight, their results are made public each year on the MySchool website.

More and more data collecting tools are passed on to schools to measure performance, with the hope more data will improve NAPLAN scores and help their state win the NAPLAN race. Data walls proliferate in staffrooms, and excel sheets swamp teachers' computers.

We are told the data collecting isn't about comparing schools, systems or states, it's about accountability – which makes it hard to argue with. Of course teachers should be accountable, they have a hugely important job – the education of Australia's future. However, it is unfair to be held accountable to a regime you have had little to no say in. And for the last decade all the talk has been about testing, and nobody has been talking about teaching.

Skim the surface

Politicians and bureaucrats skim the surface of the international and national test data, and make an interpretation of the numbers that is divorced from any understanding of the tests themselves and what they measure, and therefore what kind of teaching they presuppose.

It would be surprising to hear that any education minister or their advisers had even seen the PISA test papers, or read the Year 5 NAPLAN Reading Magazine, for example. Nonetheless, they set policy direction based on the spreadsheet numbers that the tests generate. It's like pronouncing the failure of an experiment, without even knowing what the experiment was.

Strip away all the spin, and a press conference would sound something like this:

Minister: "We're going with a brand new approach."

Reporter: "What will it be replacing?"

Minister: "I don't know."

Reporter: "What was wrong with old approach?"

Minister: "I don't know, but whatever it was the numbers looked bad."

Reporter: "So, what will this new approach be?"

Minister: "I thought we'd try something I remember from when I was in infants school."

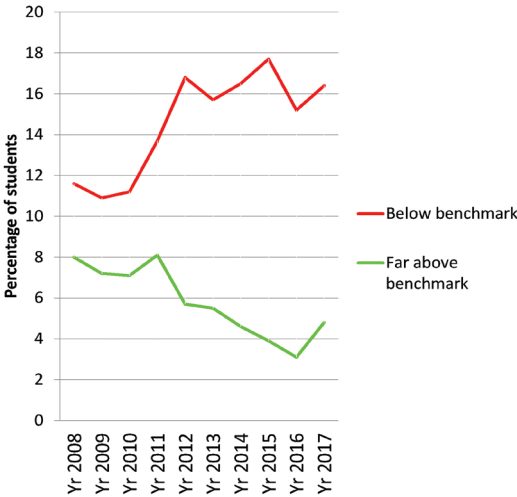
What is missing from the big data puzzle is the expertise of the teacher. The teacher, a scientist with a four year degree and daily field experience, whose training is not only in data collection and interpretation but who also knows what it is we are testing, and what we should be teaching.

(Mis) reading the data

Political interpretation and teacher interpretation of data can lead to very different conclusions, with significant consequences.

In the case of NAPLAN, for example, two divergent conclusions can be drawn from the Writing data.

The NAPLAN data baldly presented on a spreadsheet indicates very clearly that there have been no improvements in writing scores over the 10 years of the testing regime. Indeed, there has been a significant decline in the Year 9 results. See Table 1.



Australian Year 9 NAPLAN Writing.
Source: ACARA

It is of note that this decline began in earnest when NAPLAN data began to be publicly reported on the MySchool website in 2011.

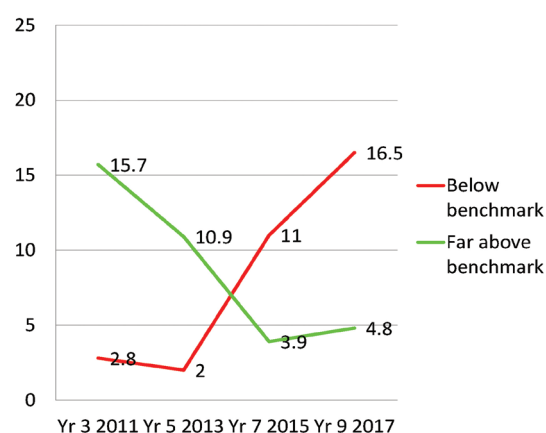
The Federal Government's reading of this data has been to conclude these Year 9 students have failed to grasp the basics of literacy. This has translated to a 'back to basics' policy direction, and the federal government has put pressure on states and territories to adopt yet another data collection measure in the shape of a mandatory test of made-up words for Year 1 students, the Phonics Screening Check. This is pressure the new South Australian Liberal Government has willingly succumbed to, and the Victorian Liberal Party has promised to do the same should they win the Victorian state election this year.

A teacher's reading of that same Year 9 NAPLAN writing data is different, not least because a teacher knows what the NAPLAN writing tests are, what they test and what the marking criteria are. They know that all year levels are marked against the same marking criteria. Thus, a failure in Year 9 is not the consequence of a lack of basic literacy skills, it is indicative of a lack of complex literacy skills. The NAPLAN data only confirms for teachers what they already observe in their classrooms. This teacher interpretation is

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If teachers are
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are emboldened,
when they sing as
a choir.”



supported by an examination of the NAPLAN data on high achieving and low achieving students across the country. See Table 2.



Australian NAPLAN Writing Same cohort over time Source: ACARA

The high percentage of Year 3 students who were far above benchmark (Level 6, which is the equivalent of benchmark for Year 9), and the relatively low percentage of Year 3 students below benchmark indicates that we are successful at giving students the literacy basics. In fact, in Victoria the percentage of students below benchmark in Year 3 is less than 1%, so the opposition Victorian Liberal Party's enthusiasm for inflicting another test on the state's 5 and 6 year olds must be borne of political partisanship rather than any consideration of the data itself.

However there is a dramatic drop in the number of students who can continue to achieve far above benchmark in Years 5 and 7, as well as a growth in the number of students who cannot reach the more challenging minimum benchmarks of Years 5, 7 and 9.

It is very clear to a teacher, that these are students who have the basics but cannot manage the more complex writing required as they move through school.

The difference in the political and the educational interpretation is not trivial. The political interpretation drives policy – and when the interpretation is wrong then the policy is wrong. When the policy is wrong, then the consequences are dire for our students.

The policy direction should be a focus on the middle years of schooling, and on ambitious high challenge teaching that tackles the complexities of writing across the disciplines and communicating abstract ideas in writing.

The policy action should be professional learning for middle school and secondary discipline teachers – not testing five and six year olds to see if they can read made-up words.

Where is the teacher's voice?

The absence of teacher voice and teacher expertise in policy debate and decision making is at the heart of all that is wrong with education in Australia today. The recent reviews into education in Australia have been headed by business executives and CEOs. Subsequent policy decisions are made by politicians and career bureaucrats. Everyone

has a story of the teacher who made them feel or think differently about themselves, and the consequences that shift had in their life journey. Yet, the voices of teachers are curiously absent as informants in educational policy and practice.

It is a sad paradox that systems, bureaucracies, administrators, politicians, and very often the media, place so little faith in teachers' voices, skills, experiences and knowledge as informants in education policy and practice. The voice of an individual teacher is so important in individual lives, yet the collective wisdom of all teachers appears to be an unrecognised and under utilised resource.

How can we shift this? How do teachers get their expert voices heard?

The role of the unions and associations in amplifying teacher voices

Teacher unions and professional associations must be the way forward. Unions, traditionally concerned with working conditions and pay, must also demand that teacher educational expertise be given, a place at the policy table. And teachers associations, traditionally concerned not to appear to be 'political', must speak out loudly when policy is detrimental to student learning.

However, the strength of the unions and the professional associations is wholly dependent upon the strength of their numbers. If teachers are frustrated and disheartened by the ways in which their expertise is ignored or belittled, then they must use their voices and teachers' voices are amplified, and individuals are emboldened, when they sing as a choir. Unions and teachers' associations are the ideal vehicle for amplifying choirs of teacher voices. They also build self efficacy among teachers, through the provision of professional learning in both pedagogy and advocacy.

Teacher professionalism and commitment to staying abreast of developments in the field is as important as feeling confident to speak up and speak out and unions and teachers associations have an important role to play in curating and disseminating new knowledge. They also provide a space for teachers to speak with one another, to share their experiences and their expertise. This not only builds collegiality, but importantly it builds a common message, synchronising voices so that we can speak clearly to politicians, policy makers and the public we serve, as we say:

This is who we are and this is what we know, this is what we do and this is how we make a difference.

Dr Misty Adoniou is a Principal Fellow in the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne and an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Canberra. After many years as a classroom teacher, she moved into teacher education and is currently working with teachers associations, systems, schools and teachers in South Australia, Queensland, Victoria and the ACT to improve literacy outcomes. Adoniou can be contacted by email: Misty.adoniou@canberra.edu.au

The challenges of STEM learning in Australian schools



A recently released report by the Australia Council for Educational Research (ACER) has examined the challenges for improving the outcomes of Australian students in STEM learning and recommended a number of key initiatives, IEUA Victoria Tasmania Branch Assistant Secretary Cathy Hickey writes.

STEM education has come into much sharper focus over the last few years and the report *The Challenges of STEM Learning in Australia Schools* looks at the economic drivers, the progress to date, and the key challenges and possible ways forward in respect to strategies to increase participation and learning outcomes in STEM education in schools.

STEM contains four discipline areas. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics are the most common disciplines linked to the STEM acronym within the school sector. As well as working scientifically, STEM involves students working mathematically, working digitally or technically, and working like an engineer. STEM has come to mean the integration of these disciplines, either in any dyad, triad or ideally all four discipline, the goal being to see students working in an integrative way.

The imperative

The report outlines the imperatives for STEM education. Two arguments are commonly put forward – one is that STEM is a predominant social imperative, necessary to solve real world challenges, and we need people with strong STEM literacy in order to address the complex challenges facing the world. The other is that STEM literacy is a pressing economic need. The report highlights the status of STEM in respect to ‘jobs of the future’. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2014) reported growth in STEM related jobs to be 1.5 times the growth of other jobs between 2006 and 2011.

Key challenges

The report identifies three key areas in which the school sector has its best chance in making a difference to student participation and outcomes: broadening access to and monitoring STEM learning in schools,

rethinking the STEM curriculum, and building the STEM teaching workforce. The report places emphasis on investing in solutions.

The challenges of each area are explored in the report, as well as key areas for policy and strategy adoption (and dare we say resourcing!) are recommended.

Building the STEM teacher workforce

Over the last few years there have been some piecemeal approaches to tackling this issue in Australia, and the report recommends more data to understand where we might best target such incentives, as well as data over time to gauge to what extent incentives or policies are working.

Some options include targeting school leavers with strong STEM results to undertake a STEM degree and then a teaching qualification; STEM degree graduates to undertake a teaching qualification; mature age potential career changers from STEM to undertake a teaching qualification; experienced teachers from overseas to teach in Australia (regional and low SES). Other options are broader in focus – lowering the rate of students dropping out of STEM subjects at senior secondary level; lowering the rate of initial teacher education students dropping out of teaching degrees; and lowering the attrition rate of early career teachers.

These strategies are complex and need well thought out and consultative implementation, as well as adequately resource support. In particular some go to issues of teacher registration, quality training opportunities, incentive payment and support schemes; others to the broader issues involved in successfully reducing attrition rates, be they in respect to our early career teachers, ITE course students or school students.



What research can best guide teaching?

One current dominant answer to this question is that we need to 'scientise' educational research to find out what is guaranteed to work anywhere, Professor of Science Interdisciplinary Educational Research at Deakin University Vaughan Prain writes.

According to this agenda, we need our own and others' expertise in big data analysis of past studies to identify effective teaching strategies and advise teachers on how to optimise learning. Educational systems and technology companies now seem to agree that this is the only way forward. While this drive for evidence based advice is laudable, I want to raise some concerns about this agenda, its assumptions and methods, and propose a more modest approach.

More than 10 years ago, Gert Biesta (2007) identified many compelling arguments against this scientised evidence based search for 'what works'. Here I briefly cover four of his points:

Education is not 'an intervention or treatment' and cannot be separated from questions of what is ultimately desirable individually and collectively for participants. Education is about values rather than technocratic solutions to predetermined goals.

Educational research tells us what worked somewhere in the past, but not what will work everywhere in future. Curricular content and methods keep changing, making past insights (the rear vision mirror of big data analyses) only part of the evidence needed.

Education is about teachers making judgments about desirable outcomes in particular situations.

Therefore education research can inform and enrich educational practice and policy,

but not dictate what should happen.

To pick up on the second point, picture the following lesson sequence undertaken by a Year 8 class in Sydney last year. In a STEM project, students were invited to work on a project about setting up a colony on Mars, where they worked with their technology teacher on rocket design, their science teacher on nose cone materials, and their mathematics teacher on inventing a calendar system for use on Mars. One student designed an interplanetary communication strategy based on the travel time of light between Mars and Earth at different points in their orbit. As this example suggests, a modern curriculum is a moving target, and therefore not easily amenable to 'fixed' past solutions and prescriptions for methods for success.

Another problem is the issue of what is hard or easy to scientise in educational research, and therefore what gets foregrounded or neglected in this agenda. Andrews and colleagues (2014), noted that current standardised tests measure a narrow range of learning goals, ignoring other educational objectives, such as physical, moral, civic and artistic development, and the need to prepare students to participate in democratic self government, moral action and a life of personal development, growth and wellbeing.

The upshot is that in casting teaching as mainly a technical capability that can be neatly prescribed from past studies,

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curricula
worldwide.”



the scientised big data research agenda has tended to narrow the curriculum, disempower teacher initiative, and ignore the reality that effective teaching is built on positive relationships with students as individuals and as a class, and that there is a crucial role for teacher responsiveness and creativity in successful teaching.

Persuasive concerns have also been raised about the methods used to support 'scientised' claims for effective teaching strategies derived from big data analyses. Critics have noted the flawed statistics underpinning claims about which teaching strategies produce the biggest effect sizes on learning (see Prain & Tytler, 2017). Behind the scientific precision of the figures are studies that vary markedly in scale, context, design, processes and outcomes.

Where to from here?

While lessons can be learnt on what to do (and what not to do) from past educational research, there is now a compelling need for researchers and teachers to work together on researching conditions for success with a future oriented curriculum. While some curricular areas still view learning as mastery of pre-packaged teacher content, there is growing recognition that teachers also need to promote student creativity, critical thinking and problem solving of new problems, enabling students to be future job creators as well as job seekers. These capabilities are seen as crucial in many national curricula for promoting individual, group and national productivity and wellbeing. This is the real challenge for effective learning this century (<http://www.educationcouncil.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/National%20STEM%20School%20Education%20Strategy.pdf>).

Researchers and teachers need to work together to identify conditions when and where particular teaching and learning strategies (and learning sequences) address this agenda

effectively. Did the STEM project described above promote learning for all learners across each curricular area? What refinements could be tried in a re-run with another group of students if the teachers viewed the learning outcomes as broadly successful?

Educational research needs to acknowledge complexities and the key role of context. At a recent Science of Learning conference (<https://events.slrc.org.au/2017-international-science-learning-conference/>) involving neuroscientists, cognitive psychologists, and educators, participants focused on gendered stereotypes, productive struggle by learners, and how 'effect sizes' depend on context. Problem based learning may work if students have sufficient background knowledge, and teacher use of predesigned programs may be effective in teaching basic skills, but less so for advanced creative problem solving.

Advice to teachers on teaching should draw on rich, persuasive, justifiable and current evidence. This advice should also acknowledge that there are many desirable learning outcomes prescribed in national curricula worldwide. Research partnerships between teachers and researchers should lead to practical support in engaging with future-oriented curricula.

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IEU wins top national award for campaign

The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch has been awarded the 2018 ACTU Congress Campaign of the Year Award for its battle for fairness in Catholic schools, Journalist Sue Osborne writes.

Teachers and support staff in Catholic schools showed great determination, keeping up an 18 month resistance to Catholic employers across NSW and the ACT who were determined to take away their right to arbitration by the Fair Work Commission.

"This award is a tribute to the bravery and strength of character of our membership and staff, who were determined to fix broken industrial rules for the benefit of current and future employees" John Quessy, Secretary IEUA NSW/ACT Branch said.

The campaign was complex, involving 11 different dioceses, postal ballots and other roadblocks thrown up by the employer, highlighting weaknesses in the Fair Work Act.

In recommending the IEU for the award, Unions NSW Secretary Mark Morey said: "the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch showed outstanding imagination and tenacity during its campaign, which also made a significant contribution to the Change the Rules campaign. The IEU grew the resolve of existing members while recruiting thousands of new members during their campaign".

The Union employed novel techniques such as live video streaming and social media to great effect, as well as traditional media and on the ground footwork by its officers and reps.

Despite already winning a modest pay rise part way through the campaign, teachers and support staff participated enthusiastically in two stop work actions; rallies small and large were held in every corner of the state and territory.

When the Catholic employers tried to push through a non union agreement 14 months into the campaign and just prior to the Christmas break, IEU members voted it down. Teachers and support staff rejected the employer enterprise agreement (EA) – voting a resounding 88% 'no' even with employer inducements of backpay before Christmas.

When the Union had successfully negotiated significant wins for all teachers and support staff, the Union endorsed EA was

put to the vote, resulting in a 98.4% vote by members in favour of the finalised enterprise agreement.

This EA enshrined the right to arbitration and provided pay rises and improved conditions for all.

The Work Practices Agreements put in places meant teachers and support staff were able to do what they wanted which is spend more time with their students. In most dioceses, meeting times are capped to 10 hours per term and there is a commitment to limit unnecessary data processing and programing that is not directly related to teaching. Staff are not required to respond to emails outside of normal school hours.

The new work practices agreements also allow for more mentoring and release from face to face teaching for new teachers to address the exodus from the profession in the early years.

There was a significant membership spike (3427 more members) off the back of the campaign, which is in fact ongoing. The profile of the Union in schools was overwhelmingly increased and the importance of Union membership was highlighted to all with member density increases in Catholic systemic schools as well as throughout non government education in NSW and ACT.

"This campaign showed that worker power can win through and proved that if unions can muster the strength of their membership, they can bring about effective change and ensure better fairness and justice for all workers, now and in the future," Quessy said.

In presenting the award, ACTU judges noted the campaign was flexible and responsive to the needs of members and engaged them at all levels.

The award was presented before an audience of 1200 by newly elected ACTU President Michelle O'Neill and Secretary Sally McManus at the Brisbane Convention Centre on 17 July.



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