

Communiqué

The Education Council convened in Adelaide today, with ministers discussing a range of national issues across the early childhood and school education portfolios.

National School Reform Agreement

Education Council discussed the draft National School Reform Agreement. The draft has been developed through collaboration between the Australian Government, states and territories, and is informed by the findings and recommendations of the *Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools (2018)*, the *Independent Review of Regional, Rural and Remote Education (2018)* and the *Optimising STEM Industry-School Partnerships: Inspiring Australia's Next Generation (2018)* reports.

Ministers agreed to a nationally consistent approach to national policy reform initiatives in the Agreement, enabling each State and Territory to adopt and adapt the reforms in bilateral agreements to suit their jurisdictional implementation context, while maintaining fidelity with the nationally agreed objectives, outcomes, targets and measures in the National School Reform Agreement.

Council supported in-principle the progress of the draft Agreement, subject to: further work and clarification on the costs, scope, milestones, and governance of each of the national policy initiatives and the principles underpinning the sharing of costs; progress towards bilateral agreements; and further work on national measures including outcomes and sub-outcomes.

Education Council will reconsider the Agreement by its September 2018 meeting ahead of it being progressed to COAG for consideration in October.

NAPLAN Online

Ministers received an update on the recent NAPLAN Online program held in May. This year, a number of students in schools in the ACT, NSW, Qld, SA, Vic and WA completed NAPLAN assessments online for the first time. In participating schools, Years 5, 7 and 9 students completed online assessments in reading, writing, language conventions and numeracy, while Year 3 students completed assessments in reading, language conventions and numeracy. Year 3 writing was undertaken as a paper-based assessment.

NAPLAN online testing was a success with students participating in 668,529 NAPLAN Online assessments during the nine-day testing program, with 99.9 per cent of students able to complete the assessment online. Local internet connectivity and device issues saw a very small number of tests diverted to complete on paper. Schools in all states and territories will continue to transition from paper-based to online assessments over the coming years.

Review of NAPLAN data presentation

Education Council agreed to a review of NAPLAN data presentation, the Terms of Reference of which are attached to this Communiqué. A number of state and territory ministers advocated support for a broader review of NAPLAN and Council noted the review of NAPLAN currently underway in Queensland.

Bullying and Cyberbullying

Education Council received a presentation from Ms Julie Inman Grant, eSafety Commissioner. The Commissioner emphasised her Office's commitment to working with Education Ministers in order to make the significant cultural and behavioural changes needed to combat cyberbullying and other negative online behaviours, and discussed existing and proposed eSafety resources to assist the education sector in achieving these outcomes.

Early Childhood Education Reform

Ministers received an update on developing advice on early learning reform principles and directions. These design principles were informed by the recommendations of *Lifting Our Game*.

Ministers acknowledged that reform and investment in early learning, which complements and builds on the strengths of the existing system, has the potential to deliver significant economic and social benefits. Work will continue on these principles ahead of a further update to Education Council in September 2018.

Family Day Care

Education Council received an update on the implementation of the Improving Quality in Family Day Care (FDC) program of work. Ministers discussed the six projects currently underway to improve quality in the FDC sector, including roles and responsibilities in the light of recent Commonwealth funding changes.

National Review of Teacher Registration

Ministers received an update on the National Review of Teacher Registration currently being progressed by AITSL. The update focused on the themes that emerged from national consultation with key education stakeholders.

Ministers noted the operation of the current national registration framework, including implementation, consistency, best practice, challenges, and barriers. Ministers agreed that the review should consider successful strategies already implemented by states and territories before making its recommendations. Education Council will receive a further progress update in September 2018.

Initial Teacher Education reform

Education Council received an update on progress in implementing the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) reforms to initial teacher education. Ministers discussed the federated approach to accreditation and nationally consistent high standards that underpin the proposed reforms and agreed to the recommendations attached to this Communique.

Attachment 1

Terms of Reference – Review of NAPLAN data presentation

Education Council reiterates its commitment to a valid, reliable, standardised and transparent national approach to measuring student performance and NAPLAN reporting currently plays an important role in this context.

The Education Council of COAG notes that the *Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools* recommends for the creation of an online, on-demand formative assessment tool based on the Australian Curriculum.

Education Council has requested a review of the current approach to presentation of National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data, including information published on the My School website.

Education Council remains committed to the provision of clear information about the progress of students against basic and essential literacy and numeracy benchmarks.

Scope of the Review

The review will inform the Education Council about:

- current presentation on My School of school, system, sector and jurisdiction performance data, in the context of the initial (2009) principles and protocols for reporting on schooling:
 - Principle 1: Reporting should be in the broad public interest.
 - Principle 2: Reporting on the outcomes of schooling should use data that is valid, reliable and contextualised.
 - Principle 3: Reporting should be sufficiently comprehensive to enable proper interpretation and understanding of the information.
 - Principle 4: Reporting should involve balancing the community's right to know with the need to avoid the misinterpretation or misuse of the information.
- The extent to which current presentation of data to schools and their communities supports their understanding of student progress and achievement.
- perceptions of NAPLAN reporting and My School data and the extent to which they meet reasonable public accountability and transparency expectations and requirements, including considering any misinterpretation and misuse of information and subsequent consequences.
- how teachers and school leaders use NAPLAN and its results and My School data to inform teaching practice.
- how teachers and school leaders communicate NAPLAN results and My School data to students and parents.
- international best practice for teacher, school and system level transparency and accountability.

The review will be conducted by an independent reviewer, overseen by AESOC, with support from the Schools Policy Group.

The reviewer will consult with parents, teachers, students, school leaders, peak bodies and independent experts as appropriate, as well as government and non-government education authorities.

The review will report to Council on progress by December 2018.

Attachment 2

Initial Teacher Education – Further Reforms

Education Council agreed that the *Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* be amended to require:

- a. all jurisdictions to contribute to and participate in a standard setting process, led by AITSL, to establish sound national agreement on what it means to meet the accreditation standards.
 - b. all jurisdictions to collaborate with AITSL in ongoing national quality assurance activities to strengthen consistency and rigour of the national accreditation system and identify priorities for enhancing judgements.
 - c. AITSL's expert advisory group to provide advice to all teacher regulatory authorities (Authorities) on whether all teaching performance assessments used by ITE providers align with the requirements of Program Standard 1.2.
 - d. AITSL to lead benchmarking in cooperation with all jurisdictional authorities of the passing standard between different teaching performance assessments to confirm these assessments are assessing pre-service teachers' competence against the Graduate Teacher Standards consistently.
 - e. all jurisdictions to provide the data and information collected on the impact of ITE programs (as per Program Standard 6.3 and 6.4) to AITSL for national analysis.
 - f. all jurisdictions to publish a summary of each accreditation decision.
 - g. AITSL to report to Education Council on the outcomes of recommendations a) to f), including the national level of consistency and areas where further work is needed to ensure consistency.
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