



The following is our considered response to the questions of the Schools Workforce:
Productivity Commission Issues Paper, June 2011

Workforce issues

Q What other features of the current schools workforce and its changing context are important from a policy perspective?

There is a continually changing view in political and educational circles of 'what to teach' and 'how to teach' as we consider 'what are we preparing children for?' These ever-changing knowledge requirements are moving much more quickly due to advances in technology and access to knowledge in society. For some teachers, due to lack of clarity or what appears to be an 'ebb and flow' of change they often fall back to replicating their own school experience or practicum as the answers to these questions are so unknown, uncertain or change so often.

➤ Implications

- are the qualifications of those that are not currently employed adequate for employment into the future
- how are current employees supported to maintain their knowledge of the world and what it requires of tomorrow's employees and citizens
- policy decisions must take into account the change that is required to implement them and therefore set progress as well as end game targets
- policy should be longer term to add value – 3 year cycles of change are not likely to lead to long term gains

Length of time that graduates are staying is shorter

➤ Implications

- Are the generational stereotypes needing to be considered in relation to our expectations of employees and the conditions that are offered eg Baby Boomers – job for life; loyalty to employer VS Gen Y – what is in it for me; how am I being valued; what's next

Change in the psychological contract of employer and employee - changing conditions and expectations are destabilising the equilibrium of teachers

➤ Implications

- What our ageing population signed up for when first employed is not what is now being offered by the employer or what society expects and this has led to some being disenfranchised from what they believe are their rights as teacher – this has implications for meeting the objectives of policy as set by government
- Being a non-homogenous group of professionals some teachers have modified their behaviour to meet expectations and others have not – therefore policy is not seen in practice in all classrooms, schools or systems – leads to question ‘what happens if policy is not followed or implemented?’

Yr 7 to secondary

➤ Implications

- Policy must take into account the supply and demand of employers and match this with the quotas of Universities as the following may occur:
 - Current oversupply of primary teachers could increase
 - Current undersupply of secondary teachers in some areas could increase
 - Attrition rates may increase for a period of time and then balance out
 - Those that have been out of employment may return and require additional support to update knowledge and pedagogical skill

Increase in flexible work arrangements has been seen as another indication that we have geared the teaching role for females

➤ Implications

- Policy must stay in touch with the conditions expected of a 21st century employer and balance these with business drivers for creating and implementing policy
- Policy implementation should be focussed on marketing conditions for all and how both genders can benefit

Lowering of required tertiary entrance to enter the profession

➤ Implications

- In the public perception, there is a mismatch between the promotion of teaching as a profession and the entrance level for those studying to become a teacher - if we are to get the best teachers we must have policy that

determines a minimum entry level that cannot be changed to meet University quotas

Queensland's Review of Teacher Education and Induction

➤ Implications

- Policy decisions at the federal level must take account of the current progress of policy that is being created at a state level

Scope of expectation of students for schooling and the mismatch with the reasons that teachers chose to become teachers; mismatches between teachers reasons for being teachers in the same school

➤ Implications

- Policy should consider the 'how' teachers are able to enter a pre-service course and the potential for an additional screening process that is an adjunct to an OP eg a face to face interview that will aid in determining the reasons for choosing a teaching degree; this could reduce oversupply and clarify for prospective pre-service teachers the changed and ever-changing expectations of the community on teachers

Federal and state policy and responsibilities are changing as interactions are increasing

➤ Implications

- Mismatches between policy at a state and federal level and how this is to be resolved needs to be shared with teachers to allay misunderstandings and the fear that comes with uncertainty
- Clarity of the governance arrangements that will be maintained and those that are to be changes need to be clarified to enable quality conversations about policy creation that is future focussed and builds on what has been achieved so far

Q What does the available evidence indicate about Australia's education outcomes? How policy relevant are comparisons of literacy and numeracy over time and across countries?

Policy relevance

- Economically this data is very important as globalisation becomes more of a reality – perceptions of our education system are built on this type of data because it is seen as authoritative and reliable

- International comparisons within our own country are important at a macro level as they provide longitudinal data, benchmarks and sampling of the attainment levels of Australian students
- Problems occur when this is the only data set that is considered when considering policy development or review
- There is a need to probe into the Australian data with our own societal lens and tell the story behind the data – that is that we have a particular educational and pedagogical philosophy that may be a factor in increasing or decreasing the ‘test-readiness’ and ‘testability’ of our students knowledge and skills with the ‘tests’ that are devised for international use
- Shallow and non-authentic data analysis – any data analysis needs professional educational insights to make informed policy decision
- Politicising of education has led to data analysis that is to reinforce what politicians own beliefs are about what needs to be in policy

Q Which avenues for reform are most promising for reducing educational disadvantage and improving education outcomes more generally? How important are workforce related changes relative to other initiatives directed at enhancing children’s learning potential?

National Partnership funding is promising as it is providing targeted programs.

However, due to the short term nature of the funding stream the following characteristics are common and therefore will not lead to a long term reduction of educational disadvantage or improved educational outcomes OR provide sustainable workforce-related changes that enhance learning potential:

- additional workforce is being employed and deployed to deliver on the planned targets and outcomes – due to the short term nature of funding in many instances the focus is on quick wins with identified students; this includes increases in the employment hours of existing employees; short term contracts of employment to back fill whilst existing employees take on the delivery of these programs; or a short term increase the numbers of employees to enable delivery of these programs
- ownership of these programs is often restricted to those directly involved and this impacts on sustainability as the capability of other employees is not grown/developed to ensure these student’s learning trajectory is continued or that the learnings from the programs in terms of improved pedagogy or management of intervention programs becomes a part of practice in the broader school community
- school leaders lead in time to plan a program/strategy that addresses the root cause of educational disadvantage and increases education outcomes is often non-existent therefore a bandaid treatment of ‘more of the same’ is applied or a ‘teaching to the test or target’ program is implemented.

- It is thought that more literacy and numeracy teaching is required when in fact if a holistic view was taken it may be found that other interventions are required eg health, well being to enable the students to be ready for learning
- professional development for teachers in how to improve educational outcomes in line with education philosophy and societally accepted data measures is not included in the program
- change management and evaluation that is evidence based are not characteristics of the program nor are they funded
- loose accountability for facilitation and reward payments that does not require comparable data but rather relies on systems to determine quality of targets and data collected can therefore not be used to inform policy development – as a result each program either at a school or system level is seen as discrete rather than informing policy direction for the future or being aligned to our vision for education
- point in time assessment is considered more relevant than value add measures to show the growth from point of entry to point of exit from intervention programs
- current programs are focussed only on the end game of ‘education’ outcomes and not providing for a partnership between all agencies eg health, community safety, housing that are involved with a child who is in a disadvantaged situation to ensure that interventions are collectively adding value and are focussed in the right areas to make a difference

Whilst we commend partnership and case management approaches to intervention, we must ensure that any workforce related changes in a school context do not compromise the reason for schools ie providing an education; support in providing holistic care for students should enable the work of schools and help to improve educational outcomes; teachers should not be called upon to provide interventions that are not Australian Curriculum based.

Q What are the strengths and weaknesses of current workforce arrangements? What are the priority areas for policy attention?

Weaknesses

- Job sharing – employers lack of confidence that policy will enable them to say ‘no’ to such arrangements for sound business and educational reasons and be able to stand firm on this decision leads to a bias toward the value of this workforce arrangement for employees thus compromising quality educational provision for students
- Policy for the length of leave arrangements should be created so that it is able to be responsive to business and employees changing needs

- Policy development and the rationale for making something a policy has created in many employer and employees minds a perception that ‘it is about us giving them conditions’ rather than it is about creating conditions that balance education provision and support for our employees.
- Accountability for performance of employees is not balanced with accountability for employers in providing specific workforce conditions
- Performance management and performance measures are only in the early stages of conception
- School improvement processes are unclear and not sustained over time
- Post graduate qualifications are not the best measure of the quality of a teacher’s practice; we need to consider more appropriate recruitment processes that are a demonstration of a person’s readiness to take up post ie demonstrated teaching skills
- A coordinated Federal approach to attracting teachers to our western communities and schools
- Policies for University funding create a circumstance that does not allow a supply and demand model between preservice education institutions and employers – Universities are lowering OPs to meet their quotas and and targets to receive funding
- Models of schooling are still based on an industrial revolution model – we need to consider and create policy that encourages educators to ask ‘what else is possible other than one teacher per class or a teacher as sole provider of formal education’

Strengths

- Policy is focussed on employees rights and creating safe and healthy workplaces

Q Are major changes required to address shortcomings, or would gains be better achieved through fine tuning of existing policy settings?

It is too early to make comment on this as we are still to see how new Federal and State policy is to be implemented.

Recent policy developments

Q Do the reforms, in train or in prospect, address the right issues?

- Current focus is on those in the lowest performing percentile whereas research shows there is a greater impact on attainment when the focus is on those in the middle percentile – when will policy and funding provide this focus?
- The purpose of the National Partnerships is to address inequity therefore a stronger focus should be made of the ‘how to make the gains’ – if schools do not

have capacity (time or staff) or capability (knowledge and skills) to use funds effectively then the injection of money is not going to value add;

- Two to three years to make long term improvements is not long enough as has been evidenced in many change research reports
- Pilot programs often don't move past 'pilot' and become a siloed initiative within a section of a school or with a small number of schools
- The culture of our schools do not currently include professional dialogue and the reflective practices required to discuss policy and reform and therefore provide the input needed to ensure we are addressing the right issues. Therefore the focus on teacher professionalism is one of the right issues to be addressing.
- We need to consider a 38 hour week for teachers as part of pay and conditions given the current 'hours of work' do not reflect practice nor do they give opportunities for professional learning and conversations that do not encroach of face to face teaching time.
- Most funding is to do more of the same - lessons learnt are not shared and do not inform future policy – the need for a more cohesive and robust governance of education reform is required
- Contemporary developments such as the coal seam gas and resource boom need to be considered and informed and timely adjustments to policy must be possible and invoked as required
- Year 7 to Secondary in the Queensland context should impact on Primary and Secondary curriculum, pedagogy and assessment and therefore will require a refocus on how reforms are implemented and how we monitor their longer term impact
- The differing psychological contract of generations cohabiting the workforce and the equality rather than equity policy environment requires consideration.

Q What reform areas should be afforded the highest priorities?

- Performance management and ongoing professional development of current employees
- Leadership capability development in educational leadership
- Workforce reforms that enable schools to enhance Administration Teams so that Principals are focussed on Educational Leadership and 'administrative tasks' are undertaken by a qualified and appropriately remunerated employee who does not necessarily have an Education degree
- Improving the capacity of school leaders in project management including planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation for funded reforms

Q Are there any significant gaps in the reform agenda, or reforms that are unlikely to be particularly beneficial?

Gap

- Alternative school organisational models (workforce and class arrangements) ie models that have been created for educational reasons rather than due to numbers of students or funding that have led to improved educational outcomes

Unlikely to be particularly beneficial

- Replication of services between AITSL and the Queensland Education Leadership Institute (QELI)
- Some replication of AITSL and Queensland College of Teacher functions re: Professional Standards

Q Are the implementation/evaluation/review arrangements likely to be effective?

Only if:

- comparable data is being collected across jurisdictions and sectors
- Case studies that demonstrate 'improvements' are shared
- Longer term monitoring to determine value add and sustainability is undertaken ie longer than funding period

Q In the context of the current reform initiatives outlined above, where can the Commission's study into the schools workforce best add value?

Identification of:

- Schools/systems in which reforms are making the most difference due to the effective deployment of workforce in the short and longer term
- Policy that is an enabler to flexible, educationally based decision making for creating staffing schedules in schools/across systems (not a numbers of students model)
- Policy that recognises and enables schools to create a workforce model that includes those with and without Educational qualifications to lead and manage a school

Balancing supply and demand

Q What are the key factors, whether across the board or specific to particular areas, that may contribute to current or future workforce shortages? Are all of these factors amenable to policy action?

Amenable to policy action

- Equity employment policy that focuses on generational difference

- Do we want to continue the long term employment of teachers that met the psychological contracting of employment of the Baby Boomers given the characteristics of Gen X career hoppers and Gen Y '3 to 5 year then leave' pattern; We need to understand what motivates Gen Y and use this in our employment contract...be real about longevity of these employees and how mutual benefit can be gained in the 3-5 years they are in teaching.
- Equity employment policy that focuses on gender
 - How can we ensure that we attract males to the teaching profession? Our current workforce data and the culture of schools require us to examine the enablers and barriers to males' choice of this profession.

Q What is contributing to the ongoing surplus of workers (who have teaching qualifications) in some disciplines and locations? Are such surpluses a cause for concern?

- Not willing to move for jobs
- Overseas qualifications are not equivalent in terms of culture and practices of pedagogy and schools
- Some do not have basic English or communication skills required
- Overabundance of Primary teachers due to Universities quota systems
- Growth in the percentage of mature age undergraduates who on graduation are unwilling to move location due to spouse and family responsibilities

The media and word of mouth promotion of the difficulty in getting a job is skewing perceptions. As a profession and as employers we must promote that we employ the best and that the qualities of a great teacher include a willingness to locate yourself where your gifts can be used – it is a vocation not a job.

Q Are there weaknesses in specific recruitment and/or retention strategies that could be exacerbating imbalances in supply and demand? Are there any underlying problems in workforce planning strategies?

- Recruitment – gender bias (there is a perception that men can get a job over women; promotion comes to men at an earlier age); generic processes for recruiting teachers – consider contextual requirements rather than creation of a pool; if you have a degree you should be able to get a job attitude
- Retention – currently once employed you have a job for life; performance management is non-existent and/or the model that is used is based on the rationale for it in a business context and this is not compatible within the educational context; career development should be planned and discussed with real pathways articulated; lack of skills in our Principals and in authorities in relation to retention strategies as retention has never been a real issue in education; creation and marketing of workplace of choice;

- Workforce planning – needs policy at macro and micro levels to inform preservice education numbers, recruitment processes and retention strategies; flexibility in how workforce is constructed requires attention as we are still working in a ‘number of students’ paradigm rather than a ‘how do we improve educational outcomes’ paradigm

Q What lessons, if any, can be learned from other sectors of the economy in dealing with the staffing challenges in the schools sector?

- Nil response

Job design and innovation

Q Are the roles of and relationships between different school workers appropriate to meet current and emerging needs? In what ways might changes in job design be useful?

- A study into the types of activities that teachers and school leaders undertake that are not aligned to their level of remuneration or qualifications should be examined – a similar process was undertaken in England which led to workforce reforms
- Recognition of prior learning for teacher aides in schools could lead to a paraprofession similar to that in nursing with differing strands of specialism eg Special Needs Teacher Aide with particular and recognised capabilities
- Changes in job design will refocus school leaders on education leadership and teachers on student outcomes to inform their teaching programs

Q Are there regulatory, institutional or cultural impediments to beneficial adjustments in job design and staffing mixes? To what extent do the national accreditation and registration requirements recognise changing professional demands for school workers?

- The focus of the National accreditation and registration requirements is teachers and school leaders. Whilst these roles are key to school success, so too are the roles of the other school workers. If we are to change the current culture and move to job redesign, all roles must be mapped and capability frameworks for each developed. Only then can performance management be used to enhance the operations of a school through deployment of workforce to appropriate activity and focus.
- Centralised registration already exists in each state therefore the move from one authority to another will not be seen as significant by many in the profession.
- The rigour of the accreditation and registration requirements and the ways in which the ‘stories’ of those accredited are shared are some of the ways that current and well embedded cultures may be questioned and this then may lead to reform

Q Does the current design of teaching roles give sufficient recognition to issues such as extracurricular activities, interaction with parents and the community, or to assisting students with the transition to further education or employment?

- in schools where performance management includes the use of job descriptions and standards frameworks the design of the teaching role is cognisant of the activities described in the question
- many schools and jurisdictions do not have 'role descriptions' for general teachers and therefore expectations grow out of the school context, the capability of the individual teacher and the teacher's and administration's choices in relation to 'discretionary' activities
- pre-service preparation for such activities needs to be investigated - this links to the need for stronger university and employer partnerships so that if these are the 'requirements' of teachers then graduates arrive knowing this is the case and have knowledge and experience gained during pre-service courses (this is a recommendation in the Queensland Review of Teacher Education and School Induction)
- specific secondary teacher inservice should be provided on a regular basis to those whose role includes supporting transitions from learning to earning; changes in the types of roles that are available in industry, etc require teachers to be supported if they are to provide contemporary advice

Q Would further decreases in student-teacher ratios significantly improve student outcomes? How should empirical research on the cost effectiveness of class size reductions as a means to improve student outcomes be interpreted?

- there are more factors than student to teacher ratios that must be considered to improve student outcomes; student to teacher ratios are just one of the factors
- empirical research should use teacher assessment, national testing and observations of teaching practices measured using Teaching Standards Frameworks to triangulate data to see improvements in student outcomes; the cost effectiveness factor is a judgement call in terms of the value of education and improvements in student outcomes ie what percentage improvement is considered 'cost effective'?

Q Is there appropriate sharing of Australian and international experiences regarding changes to the role and mix of teachers, leaders, paraprofessionals, and other school workers?

- At present this is done through various employers, professional associations and unions
- therefore, what is shared is contextual to the employer, professional association and/or union

- having a single source of this information would be useful however, the contextual nature of the sharing will as always require critical literacy by the user
- we expect that this will be one of the roles of AITSL and in Queensland of QELI

Training and professional development

Q What are the advantages and disadvantages of the traditional Diploma and Bachelor of Education entry pathways? Do postgraduate studies in education contribute significantly to teacher quality?

- Advantages
 - pure education qualifications
- Disadvantages
 - in current format these are cheap courses for Universities to run
 - large numbers in each intake
 - not all students have chosen the course because of their desire to become educators
 - variability of OP entry year on year
 - courses available online and therefore can be completed without any face to face contact with the University

Q How effectively do preservice training courses (and the national accreditation standards for such courses) meet the current and prospective needs of the education system and teachers? Do courses place sufficient emphasis on practicum?

- many of the recommendations in the Queensland Review of Teacher Education and School Induction indicate that there is a mismatch between the content of current courses and the requirements of employers; the Teacher Implementation Taskforce is engaging with employers and universities to investigate required changes
- earlier engagement in practicum would enable pre-service students to make an informed choice in relation to their study choice - this could alleviate the 'too far into the course to change now' experiences of some students when they reach their fourth year and enter longer practicum

Q To what extent are employment based pathways a complement to standard teaching courses? Are such pathways likely to be of a niche nature, or might they have wider applicability in the future?

- alternative pathways will require a cultural shift in that the traditional university pathway is so well established and has been the single pathway for so long

- given the glut of primary trained teachers without employment the question of 'why' would need to be answered and promoted
- for those in rural and remote settings, this may be a viable option for experienced teacher aides with a post graduate qualification in another discipline to become a teacher; mutual benefit to employer and employee
- internship type training gives emphasis to the craft of teaching that is an experiential profession rather than a purely theoretical application
- the notion of Teach Australia is fraught with difficulties as an 8 week intensive training course cannot adequately prepare any graduate for independent carriage of the many facets of responsibility that are an expectation of a teacher

Q Is sufficient attention paid to professional development — not only for classroom teachers, but also principals and other school workers? What specific changes, beyond those already in prospect, would be appropriate?

- whilst funding is provided, education workers do not give sufficient time and attention to identifying appropriate professional development options
- traditional 'courses' that are off site and time bound are still the most prevalent
- value add and return on investment measures are not common in evaluation of professional development investment
- sharing of differing models of professional development to heighten awareness of the range of types of PD is required
- performance management in which capability growth through matched professional development is the focus will go a long way to increasing the value add of PD expenditure and the application of learning in day to day work activities

Q Are adequate resources available to mentor new teachers? Is there a need for formalised system wide mentoring structures, or should the processes for inducting new teachers be left to each school?

- due to variability of mentoring that is offered to beginning teachers clear expectations should be established
- the current 'one teacher to one class' model in the primary school needs to be challenged so that mentoring does not become an 'add on' that they fit in during break times, non-contact time and out of hours
- models of execution should be school based decisions however, having stated and reportable expectations could ensure a uniform minimum standard for mentoring beginning teachers

Q What role do preservice training providers play in directing aspiring teachers into areas of teacher shortage?

- by building partnerships between employers and pre-service providers data that informs this 'directing' could be undertaken for mutual benefit to students, employers and pre-service providers

Q At what point (or points) in time should the quality of aspiring teachers be assessed: before preservice training, before practicum, before entering the workforce as new teachers, or elsewhere in the training and development cycle? What scope is there to increase standards for entering courses, placements or the profession without exacerbating current or future shortages?

- before preservice training - more consistent OPs for entry; literacy and numeracy levels checked pre-course not at end of course pre-employment; entry interviews to determine alignment of understandings of demands of the profession and student expectations of such
- before practicum - micro teaching with peers and supervisors should be used as an assessment piece in determining the quality of aspiring teachers; use of the National Teaching Standards to provide feedback will offer a level of consistency
- before entering the workforce as new teachers - a planned approach to practicum from point of entry to pre-service course to final practicum to ensure a range and balance of experiences will provide both students and their supervisors with evidence of their readiness for the teaching profession; once again using the National Teaching Standards to describe strengths and areas for further development
- supervisors of students should be having performance conversations with them throughout their training, in the same way that this should be expected during employment; this then directs students to what they need to improve upon in order to be ready for employment
- if we continue to employ substandard graduates we will continue to have gluts and shortages as those that may be quality teachers choose other professions as they are disillusioned by the 'state of the profession'

Remuneration and performance evaluation

Q How important are the level and structure of remuneration for recruitment and retention of teachers? What impact does the level of remuneration have on the capabilities of those entering the teaching profession? Should differentiated remuneration be used more widely to address imbalances in supply and demand?

- for those that have selected teaching for vocational reasons remuneration is only one part of their consideration
- for those that have selected teaching for lifestyle reasons other conditions of employment are considered desirable alongside remuneration

- is there any research that has been conducted with those that may have chosen teaching if remuneration was higher?
- differentiated remuneration could be used if further career pathways become a part of the teaching profession that differentiate roles and responsibilities of those that are 'teachers' ie the current hierarchical structure based on leadership roles that move people away from the classroom are enhanced with classroom based pedagogical development roles; research roles; modelling teaching roles; etc; this could appeal to those that wish to work in more of the 'hard to attract' areas as well as freeing up 'base level teaching positions'

Q Are there non remuneration conditions of employment that, if changed, would enhance teacher quality and student outcomes? Is there sufficient recognition of the work associated with the delivery of extracurricular programs?

- flexible work arrangements are currently seen as an employee benefit and very much a 'right' for women; in creating differing career pathways such flexibilities could be used to provide and see in practice a higher uptake and permissions for the likes of : sabbatical leave; study leave; industry placements; time off in lieu; all of which would enhance teacher knowledge and skill that has a corollary with student outcomes
- if remuneration was the culturally normed recognition for extracurricular programs we believe that the numbers of these programs would decrease over time

Q What makes a quality teacher? How should teacher performance be measured? To what extent can computable performance metrics indicate the 'value added' by a teacher?

- having evidence based behavioural standards will enable professional conversations to take place to share what is quality teaching
- quality teaching is related to the development of the whole student and therefore computable performance metrics that are currently used do not provide the full value add but rather only describe the academic value add of education

Q If a well designed performance based pay scheme could be implemented, would it significantly enhance teacher quality and student outcomes? What risks and costs are associated with performance based pay?

- the first question cannot be definitively answered due the subjective nature of what a 'well designed performance based pay scheme' is; we would need to know what criteria performance is to be measured upon to know if it will lead to improved teacher quality and student outcomes
- the risk associated with performance based pay as currently proposed is that the 'bucket of money' is not endless and therefore, the notion of all teachers receiving an enhancement due to improved teacher quality and student outcomes is not possible

- motivation to improve is not always linked to remuneration
- as in all walks of life and all professions there is a differentiation in performance; given the large numbers of teachers required to maintain the current model of schooling this differentiation in quality is evident
- minimum standards of quality need to be established that are at a high benchmark if we are to see the required improvements in teacher quality and student outcomes
- the 'job for life' reality of the profession also needs to be challenged through the application of these benchmarks with consequences that demonstrate a commitment to improving teacher quality and student outcomes

Q Separate from whether financial rewards should be attached, are there ways to enhance performance appraisal processes for school workers?

- with the *National Performance Management* processes that are being developed, if we require performance appraisal processes for all school workers and monitor and evaluate these processes we will have a basis for collecting and analysing information to inform what could be considered in reward programs
- link the reward to what motivates the individual rather than a one size fits all approach - not all are motivated by remuneration
- use performance appraisals as the basis for recruitment and selection and career opportunities
- upskill people in how to have performance conversations during preservice courses and throughout their careers

School leadership

Q Has sufficient policy attention been paid to school leadership and its contribution to education outcomes?

- other than remuneration for school leadership and many attempts to create leadership capability frameworks this is an area that has adhoc attention

Q What motivates teachers to become school leaders? Is enough being done to identify current and future leaders?

- there are many and varied reasons that teachers are motivated to become school leaders: some are values based ie make a difference; some status based ie perception of position in own mind, families' mind, societies' mind; some lifestyle based ie perception of less work than the classroom; some are accidental leaders and have come to the position through circumstance rather than through a plan - various studies of the reasons for teachers becoming leaders exist and should be used to answer this question more fully

- succession and workforce planning is not consistently used or applied; talent management is poor and often considered inappropriate in the teaching profession
- due to a perceived surplus of teaching staff the need for succession planning, workforce planning and talent management has not been evident
- human resource management has been centralised thus disempowering school leaders
- policies that have been created to ensure equality of recruitment practices and their application do not lend themselves to flexible talent management

Q What skills do school leaders require beyond those acquired as teachers? Is enough being done to facilitate leaders' acquisition and development of ancillary skills? Do principals necessarily require a teaching background?

- key skills that are required to be a school leader and that are different to that of a teacher include:
 - strategic thinking and visioning
 - ability to move from adult to child to adult to adult dynamic
 - general business administration and educational administration
 - human resource management
- anecdotally school leaders focus in the areas of general business administration and educational administration as this is the 'new' responsibility area - this can then overtake their focus in other areas as they are learning these new skills and thus establishes a set of practices that prioritise administration over educational and people leadership
- schools will always require an educational leader

Q In an environment of greater autonomy for schools, how is the role of the principal likely to change? To what extent do changes in job design for school leaders have feed-through effects to other members of the schools workforce?

- with greater financial and human resource accountability being given to schools the need for 'good advice and support' for Principals from other school workers who have these skills and can therefore have delegated responsibility for these will be an imperative
- if school Principals' roles are to have a stronger emphasis on student outcomes and the ways in which they demonstrate the value for teaching and learning with educational leadership at the heart of their work; clearer role descriptions and models of delegation will need to be provided to break the cultural norms of 'administration' that exist in many school leadership teams

School autonomy

Q What are the advantages and disadvantages of increasing school autonomy? To what extent can currently centralised responsibilities be sensibly devolved to the school level? What lessons can be learned from approaches in Victoria and other countries, as well as from experiences in independent schools?

- Advantages
 - localised responses to needs
 - quicker responses to needs
 - more ownership of input and outcomes
- Disadvantages
 - requires intensive professional development to ensure skills that are needed are built
 - compliance activities that come with autonomy can:
 - get in the way of creative use of funding
 - decrease the time school leaders have for educational leadership if devolution to other school workers is not evident
 - current support services will need to be downsized and redeployed
- If others' experiences are to be used as a learning tool, each has created tight processes and standards to ensure a level foundation and then freed up some of the constraints to enable growth of creativity. What this has done has ensured that the 'tail' improves, however those with exemplary contextual practices are forced to change and in some cases this has led to frustration, disillusionment and decreased quality in teaching and learning outcomes; therefore the processes that are established must enable those that are already achieving to continue to do so without an expectation to conform so that a minimum standard is achieved across the board; this will require careful consideration and a determination of what is quality.

Q What specific governance and regulatory arrangements are needed to support greater school autonomy?

- Gonski review will provide guidance here from a financial perspective
- ACARA and standards authorities should be the gatekeepers for the governance and regulatory arrangements at the National level to enable comparability and to share success stories, create proactive and reactive professional development and processes, and to ensure that differentiated support is provided as required

Q What other checks and balances are required to ensure individual schools do not advance their interests at the expense of outcomes across the whole system?

Specifically, could schools serving disadvantaged communities be left worse off by the competition for resources that might result from decentralisation? To what extent could such outcomes be ameliorated by concomitant increases in the flexibility of remuneration arrangements?

- the model for staffing schools such as those from disadvantaged communities could be a factor that ameliorates such an occurrence; using demographics additional staffing to support the administrative requirements to access and maintain funding could be considered

Q Is a 'one size fits all' approach to school autonomy appropriate, or should the degree of autonomy enjoyed by schools vary according to their performance?

- because the performance measures that are to be used will be a determinant to the approach to school autonomy that is created it necessitates that the data that is collected and analysed take into account the value add that being a member of the school community gives to students not only in academic terms but also in all other areas valued by society
- the 'value add' has so many additional factors that must be ameliorated if a level playing field is to be made possible when determining whether to give additional or remove aspects of school autonomy based on performance, eg comparing where students enter school already able to count to ten and write their name and conversely in a school where students mostly arrive without these skills are we still to use the same National Test as the base for measuring performance of the school when the value add could be greater in the school where students come without the skills.

Meeting the needs of particular student populations

Q How effective is the current suite of workforce related initiatives to address educational disadvantage? Should the goal of such policies be greater equality in education outcomes or greater equality of opportunity for all students to realise their educational potential? Does the choice between these two alternatives have implications for the nature of the schools workforce policies that should be employed to address educational disadvantage?

- If **improvements in student outcomes for all** is the goal then policy should be focused on 'equal' provision of opportunity knowing that this will not lead to students achieving age appropriate benchmarks
- If **improvements in student outcomes to increase the numbers of students reaching determined age appropriate benchmarks** is the goal then the focus of policy should be on 'equitable' opportunity that targets specific students and provides tailored support as required
- Current workforce related initiatives seem to be focussed on the foundations of growing understandings of: behavioural expectations of teachers and school leaders; curriculum expectations; and attainment standards for students. The corollary of this is the focus on increasing autonomy for school leaders. Once these

policy initiatives are established, models of schooling that include workforce reform can grow. What will be required though are good examples of what workforce reforms have worked alongside the provision of professional development and change management support – these actions to support policy will be required as workforce reform activities have not been commonplace in the school environment.

Q Are all student groups that are experiencing significant educational disadvantage being given suitable recognition in the current workforce policy framework? Are current measures of socioeconomic status adequate?

- Where mixed demographics are present in a school population socioeconomic anomalies are ‘levelled out’ using current methodologies
- Is the belief that educational disadvantage is only caused by low socioeconomic status?

Q Are school workers sufficiently trained to deal with special needs students, students from cultural and language backgrounds other than English, and students with any other specific educational requirements?

- With changes in policy occurring concurrently both in relation to administration and teaching and learning, ensuring school workers have the necessary contemporary knowledge and understanding that is required in the areas of differentiation that are described is not encumbered by quality training options but rather it is hampered by the allocation and availability of time within the current working week.
- If conditions of employment in relation to number of hours and number of weeks of work were similar to that of other professions this time factor may be lesser of an issue.
- Workforce reforms will therefore need to focus on modifying the cultural norms of the school workforce in relation to school holidays and hours of work to facilitate changes in the number of hours that are available for training of school workers
- In some instances, only teachers are included in training associated with differentiation for these groups. Policy should look to address this cultural norm.

Q Are there particular qualities that are especially important in teaching Indigenous students? Do existing teaching courses place sufficient emphasis on the development of these qualities? How might the number of Indigenous Australians training to enter the schools workforce be increased?

- Indigenous children need good teaching by teachers with the same qualities and abilities that are needed to educate all other children – therefore it is about ensuring that our quality graduates and experienced teachers see teaching in Indigenous Communities through the lens of mutual benefit to them and the community
- Preservice training that provides:

- the context and history of indigenous families
- ways of working with parents eg how to develop links with local communities

Q Are there workforce changes that would assist disadvantaged students to make a successful transition from school to work or further education?

- Nil response

Q What are the main factors that influence the choice of teachers and other professionals to work in areas of educational disadvantage or with students with specific educational needs?

- formal qualifications that include specialisation in areas of special needs
- previous successful experience working in schools and with students that have these characteristics
- individuals that demonstrate in words and actions their personal commitment to working in schools and with students that have these characteristics

The surrounding institutional framework

Q How responsive is the overall institutional regime to changing circumstances? Is the established culture and practice within education departments and related regulatory agencies, as well as in government and non government schools, an impediment to workforce reform?

- established policy, accountability and hierarchical organisational structures would require change as these are an impediment to workforce reform
- due to the centralisation of decision making, devolution will need to be supported; the issue will be if this devolution is to be supported by those that have had the responsibility for holding it centrally

Q Are industrial relations arrangements in the schools sector sufficiently flexible? Are there particular regulatory or institutional factors that may impede the recruitment and retention of high quality school workers? How can these be addressed?

- high level unionisation of the teaching workforce in the state sector influences the inclusions in the EB for Catholic School Teachers; EBs are the platform from which all other 'innovations' in recruitment and retention must be referenced to ensure they do not breach agreed conditions
- the Queensland Public Service Commission recently reviewed its recruitment and selection directive to provide scope for innovations in these practices; this has led to changes in the way in which teacher and school leader recruitment and selection processes are carried out with the creation of 'talent pools'
- currently to be *in charge of a class* you must have an education qualification and be a registered teacher; in England, workforce reforms have challenged this notion and increased the numbers of Higher Level Teaching Assistants who can supervise a class

as they undertake learning activities planned and to be assessed by a teacher. Further to this, sporting coaches, actors, nutritionists, to name a few, are taking classes. This modification to the 'who is a teacher' and 'what is the role of the person with an education degree' has required both regulatory reform and institutional change ie perceptions of teachers, students, parents and community. We should investigate this and other countries examples to determine what we should explore.

- challenging the current custom and practice for recruitment and retention and having skilled HR practitioners with an understanding of the educational workforce is what is required if school leaders and systems are to make informed choices based on any further flexibility that regulatory changes may provide

Q Does the policy interface between the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments pose challenges for effective schools workforce reform? What effect will initiatives such as national accreditation and registration requirements, and the introduction of a national curriculum, have on the schools workforce and its capacity to meet the needs of students, parents and the community?

- AITSL and ACARA at the National level; QELI and a new education standards authority at the Queensland level: at present there is a lack of clarity in relation to the governance responsibilities of each of these bodies; further to this is the lack of clarity in relation to the accountabilities schools and systems will have to each of these bodies; until this is clear the policy interface does pose challenges for workforce reform as we all wait for the clarity we need
- if the national accreditation and registration requirements are not dissimilar to those that we already have in Queensland they will have little impact on our schools and system

Q Is there sufficient engagement between the government and non government school sectors on workforce related issues?

- Nil response

Q How effective is the interaction with parents and the community on matters relating to student progress and school policy? How engaged are parents in school governance processes, in classroom support, and in other aspects of school activity?

- structures exist to engage parents in the aspects described above
- the level of engagement is variable across our schools
- we are undertaking a project to explore 'the voice of the parent in the 21st century school'

Q Is there sufficient interaction and co ordination between the schools, ECD and VET sectors?

- Nil response

Q Is there an adequate focus on the evaluation of programs (including the dissemination of evaluation results), and a readiness to adjust programs if evidence indicates that improvements can be achieved?

- due to the link between our political processes and funding, many programs have not been adequately evaluated when a change in government occurs, this has led over time to replication of activity and adhoc monitoring and evaluation of return on investment
- upfront expectations of evaluation are not often included in applications and agreements
- many programs are not lead and managed centrally by personnel with skills in education and/or evaluation therefore leading to gaps in monitoring, reporting and evaluation
- school and system leadership influences the rigor of evaluation

Q Are there particular information and data gaps, either in collection or dissemination, that impede good decision making in education policy? Are the current institutional arrangements for undertaking research on schools workforce policy, and on education policy more generally, adequate? If not, how might they be improved?

- training of school leaders so that they have a balance of business administration and educational leadership would grow capacity and capability to collect and use data more effectively in making education policy at a local, system, state and national level
- much of our current workforce policy is based on a formula that is about student to adult ratios; this industrial model is then amended to take account of educational needs; however it is reliant on data provided by school leaders (see dot point above) and bound by funding constraints and legislative requirements in relation to who can teach a class
- through providing a comprehensive program that focusses on: building knowledge and understanding of what flexibilities are possible in school workforces; providing more flexibility in staffing formulas; providing coaching support for decision making; setting, monitoring and evaluating performance targets that will measure impacts of school workforce reforms and disseminating this information locally and nationally, we could see innovations in school models that are thoroughly planned, implemented and evaluated and that drive improvements in student outcomes