

Question 1.

Is that [the performance based funding model proposed for universities in Australia from 2020] measured purely on student outcomes or is it measured on a number of factors? For example, student experience and the depth with which a teacher may go into topics that cannot necessarily be measured by testing?

Response:

Page xi of the report “Performance-based funding for the Commonwealth Grant Scheme”, prepared by the Expert Panel headed by Professor Wellings states:

The Panel proposed four measures for the scheme based on the following considerations:

Student success: *As widely supported by the sector, adjusted attrition rates are a contemporaneous measure (lagging by a year). The first-year attrition rates are a very good proxy for long-term failure to complete (9-year non-completion rates). A potential dimension should include students transitioning from higher education to the vocational education and training (VET) sector.*

Equity group participation: *Widely supported at the consultations, with little to no opposition from submissions, participation by Indigenous, low socio-economic status, and regional and remote students has also been a focus of recent government equity policy. The Panel supports a measure with equal weightings given to participation of these student groups to recognise their vital importance.*

Graduate outcomes: *‘Overall employment rate’ is a relevant measure to capture the complexity of employment in terms of the changing nature of professions and varied job seeking patterns, despite the limitation of this short-term measure in reflecting a contemporary view of graduate outcomes. This is also in line with the sector support for a broader definition of employment rates based on a similar notion.*

Student experience: *A large proportion of stakeholders were in favour of this measure. It is also the only student-centric measure currently under consideration that directly links to student experience. The Panel proposes the measure of student satisfaction with teaching quality due to its relevance to the purpose of this scheme.*

The full report can be accessed at: https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/ed19-0134_-_he-performance-based_funding_review_acc.pdf

Question 2.

There is some work done by—I will have to take on notice the specifics—but a researcher that did find a concern about having insufficient reward or insufficient opportunities to be rewarded as a key motivator for teachers leaving the profession Can you take those studies on notice and provide information, either directly the studies or a summary of them, to the Committee? The three that you have mentioned there?

Response:

The submission of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into the Schools Workforce (sub no 39, accessible at: <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/education-workforce-schools/submissions/sub039.pdf>) states the following on p. 8:

Current pay systems do not encourage the best teachers to remain in the classroom and many excellent practitioners move to leadership positions or leave the profession to increase their earnings.

Professor Dinham commented in a Melbourne University Graduate School of Education Dean's Lecture, entitled "Let's get serious about teacher quality: The need for a new career architecture for Australia's teachers", on "a hidden resignation spike associated with the top of salary scales". This is because he finds that over three-quarters of teachers are at or approaching the top of the remuneration scales. Moreover, the top of the scale is very flat by international standards, contributing to the unusually high rates of attrition between eight and ten years of service.

(accessible:

<http://web.education.unimelb.edu.au/news/lectures/pdf/S%20Dinham%20PowerPoint%2027.9.11.pdf>).

The Australian 'Staff in Australia's Schools' Survey (SiAS) was commissioned by the then Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). It was conducted in 2007, 2010, and 2013. Among the questions asked of respondents is "Which factors were most important in your decision to leave teaching prior to retirement?"

The second most commonly reported reason reported by teachers with intentions of leaving the profession in the 2013 survey was: "insufficient recognition and reward for teachers". 51% of secondary teachers and 45% of primary teachers intending to leave the profession indicated this as a reason.

Further details on the survey can be accessed at: <https://www.acer.org/au/sias>

The report with results from the 2013 survey quoted above can be found in Table 10.6 with an accessible version at:

https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/sias_2013_main_report.pdf

Question 3.

Could you take on notice whether or not that is [the evidence presented and cited before the Committee] consistent with the US education department's own review, which is their evaluation of the Teacher Incentive Fund that they did in December 2017?

Response:

The final report of the evaluation of the Teacher Incentive Fund states that (p xxi):

Within the ten evaluation districts, pay-for-performance led to slightly higher student achievement in reading and math by the second year of implementation.

This is consistent with the findings reported in the CIS submission and the statements made during the Committee's hearings.

In particular, under US standardised tests, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, Washington D.C. has recorded among the fastest growth in achievement in the country since the introduction of reforms to teachers' performance management in 2009. For instance, the District of Columbia Public Schools website states that:

DC Public Schools continues to be the fastest improving urban school district in the country, according to data released today from the 2015 Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA). DC Public Schools (DCPS) students grew by eight points in 4th grade reading over the 2013 test, representing the biggest increase of any school district and the largest increase in the history of the 4th-grade reading test.

The full details can be accessed on this website at:

<https://dcps.dc.gov/release/dc-public-schools-continues-momentum-fastest-improving-urban-school-district-country>

It is important to note, in relation to MLC Shoebridge's concern for clarification, that the reform referenced in Washington D.C. called IMPACT (in force from 2009) is not the same as the federally-implemented reform, the 'Teacher Incentive Fund' (in force from 2007).

Further details of IMPACT can be found at the District of Columbia's Public Schools website, specifically accessible at: <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/impact-dcps-evaluation-and-feedback-system-school-based-personnel>. The specific design of the reform, the guidance material provided to teachers and school leaders, and the accountability procedures are all publicly accessible at this website.

The referenced study in the CIS submission is entitled "Incentives, Selection, and Teacher Performance: Evidence from IMPACT" — published in the Journal of Policy Analysis and Management (2015, vol 34, no 2, pp 267-297). This study found an increase in the teaching quality of the teaching workforce, and an increase in student achievement, which could be attributed to the policy reform.

A working paper that is an early version of this study is accessible without a subscription at:

<https://cepa.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/w19529.pdf>

Other studies have validated the findings of the referenced study of Professors Dee (Stanford University) and Wyckoff (University of Virginia). A number of these are referenced here in order to alleviate MLC Shoebridge's concern during hearings that the CIS' proposal provided to the Committee appears to have relied upon only one study.

For instance, the report by the Aspen Institute found that the reform made D.C. “a forerunner in redefining teaching standards and evaluation” and urged other school systems in the country to implement similar reforms.

This report is accessible at:

<http://www.aspendrl.org/portal/browse/DocumentDetail?documentId=1509&download>.

In addition to this, Mathematica Policy Research found that there has been a very high retention of high-performing teachers under IMPACT. This report is accessible at:

https://cipre.mathematica-mpr.com/~media/publications/pdfs/education/teachereffectiveness_dcps.pdf

The American Enterprise Institute’s research found that IMPACT did not result in sharp reductions in overall retention of teachers. This can be attributed to the increased retention in high-performing teachers compensating for the increased attrition of low-performing teachers (as observed by Dee and Wyckoff’s study). The main finding of the American Enterprise Institute study was that “IMPACT has meaningfully improved chances for many of the district’s lowest-performing students and values high-performing teachers” (p. 8).

This report can be accessed at:

<https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Teacher-Dismissal-in-the-District-of-Columbia.pdf>

Georgetown University’s Future Ed institute also found that IMPACT has improved the status of the teaching profession in the District of Columbia.

This report can be accessed at:

https://www.future-ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/TeacherEval_170105_v2.pdf

For further commentary on the reform’s effectiveness in media that the Committee may wish to consider:

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/teacher-evaluations_b_853934

<https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/michelle-rhee-washington-school-reforms-improved-teacher-student-outcomes/>

<https://www.aei.org/education/k-12-schooling/impact-doesnt-boot-good-teachers-it-boosts-students/>

<https://www.educationnext.org/a-lasting-impact-high-stakes-teacher-evaluations-student-success-washington-dc/>

<https://www.usnews.com/opinion/knowledge-bank/articles/2017-04-20/michelle-rhee-set-national-example-of-education-reform-in-washington-dc>