

**INQUIRY INTO
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND
TRAINING IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Hearing on 22 September 2015

Answers to questions on notice-

Submission by NSW Teachers Federation

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE DURING HEARING
INQUIRY INTO VET NSW

Page 49 Transcript:

Question: If you could take it on notice to provide us with a list of research that has been undertaken about the correlation between student outcome and teacher quality.

Response:

Title: Teachers are the key: strategies for instructional improvement.

Author: Virgona, Lynette

Source: In 'Research Conference 2012 - School improvement: what does research tell us about effective strategies?' edited by Carolyn Glascodine and Kerry-Anne Hoad, pages 99-104. Melbourne : Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), 2012

Abstract: Recent research is unequivocal on the importance of effective teachers in improving outcomes for schools and the critical role that high quality professional learning plays in increasing teacher effectiveness. One powerful way to do this is in real classrooms in the form of expert or peer coaching. This revelation often overlooks the fact that it comes in the context of a profession that is largely unfamiliar with receiving direct feedback, is generally uncomfortable being observed, and can be wary of being evaluated unfairly. This seems especially true with more experienced teachers. Despite this, it is known that teachers want effective feedback, to have their work valued and to improve their teaching - and, the author adds, if it can be done in a respectful and professional way. This paper seeks to add to the body of knowledge on effective professional learning through in-class coaching for teachers and its place in school improvement by sharing the research findings and the experiences of the Classroom Management Strategies (CMS) professional learning program from the Department of Education, Western Australia. [Author abstract]

Title: Continual improvement through aligned effort.

Author: Masters, Geoff N.

Source: In 'Research Conference 2012 - School improvement: what does research tell us about effective strategies?' edited by Carolyn Glascodine and Kerry-Anne Hoad, pages 3-7. Melbourne : Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), 2012

Abstract: Effective classroom teaching and distributed instructional leadership are keys to improving student outcomes. Almost all school systems understand this, but not all systems take the logical next step of making the improvement of day-to-day teaching and the development of effective instructional leadership the primary focus of their reform efforts. Instead, priority is given to secondary considerations such as redesigning school curricula, measuring performance levels, increasing local autonomy and holding schools publicly accountable. Improvements in student outcomes depend on an alignment of effort - by students, teachers, school leaders, systems and governments - to enhance the quality and effectiveness of day-to-day teaching and learning. For all these groups, improvement depends on a commitment and belief that performance can be further improved; a clear understanding of what improvement would look like; a way of establishing current levels of performance as starting

points for action; a familiarity with evidence-based, differentiated improvement strategies; and ongoing processes for monitoring progress and evaluating improvement efforts. [Author abstract]

Title: **Powerful learning in the classroom needs effective pedagogy.**

Author: Munro, John

Source: In 'Powerful learning: a strategy for systemic educational improvement' edited by David Hopkins, John Munro and Wayne Craig, pages 109-124. Melbourne : ACER Press, 2011

Abstract: Powerful student learning needs effective pedagogy. This chapter examines what this 'looks like'. It does this from the perspective of what students know at any time. The pedagogic approach described here is being gradually embedded in classrooms in the Northern Metropolitan Region of DEECD. This chapter, then, describes a vision of pedagogy rather than an approach that has been fully implemented. [Author abstract]

Title: **Teaching quality in public high schools : report of the Auditor-General, no.13 of 2013-14.**

Author: Tasmanian Audit Office

Publisher: Hobart: Tasmanian Audit Office, June 2014.

Abstract: This performance audit set out to assess the quality of teaching in Tasmanian public high schools. The audit conclusions are based on the following research questions: Are performance measures indicative of quality teaching? Has the Tasmanian Department of Education effectively and demonstrably implemented the Australian and Tasmanian curricula? Were teachers relevantly qualified and trained? Were the Education Department and schools strategically managing high school teaching? Was the Teachers' Registration Board contributing to teaching quality? Recommendations are included.

Link: <http://www.audit.tas.gov.au/media/Teaching-Quality-Report.pdf>

Title: **Classroom teacher effectiveness research: a conceptual critique.**

Authors: Skourdoumbis, Andrew; Gale, Trevor

Author Affiliation: RMIT University ; Deakin University

Source: British Educational Research Journal; v.39 n.5 p.892-906; October 2013

Abstract: Teacher effectiveness research now informs the rationale of much Australian education policy aimed at redressing student under-achievement. The approach draws a 'straight line' between teacher practice and student outcomes, 'controlling' for and ultimately dismissive of other possible influences. The paper calls into question this conception of teaching-learning relations, particularly the extent to which teaching practice can be reasonably quantified and improvements in students' academic achievement can be solely attributed to and/or sole responsibility placed on the pedagogic strategies employed by teachers. Drawing on the theoretical resources of Foucault and Bourdieu, the paper argues further that teacher effectiveness research is flawed in both means and ends. It concludes that in its ranking of student and teacher performance, such research actually works against the purposes of education; specifically, authentic teaching and learning. [Author abstract]

The following four references are all from the proceedings of a conference, *School improvement: what does research tell us about effective strategies?* organised by Australian Council for Educational Research (Sydney: 2012)

http://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1131&context=research_conference

***Title:* Walking the walk: the need for school leaders to embrace teaching as a clinical practice profession.**

***Author:* Dinham, Stephen**

Source: In 'Research Conference 2012 - School improvement: what does research tell us about effective strategies?' edited by Carolyn Glascode and Kerry-Anne Hoad, pages 34-39. Melbourne : Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), 2012

Abstract: There have been longstanding concerns with teacher pre-service education. The model of university coursework plus practicum has been criticized. Despite attempts to rectify this situation, only a minority of beginning teachers in Australia rate themselves as being well prepared or very well prepared when they begin teaching. This paper examines such concerns before offering an alternative. There are two aspects to this new model. Firstly, a clinical approach to teacher pre-service education coupled with new roles, practices and structures designed to overcome the so-called theory practice gap and enable implementation of evidence-based interventionist practice. One such approach is highlighted. Secondly, the adoption of a clinical approach to teacher education and teaching practice requires understanding, knowledge, commitment and support from education leaders. Educational leaders require a thorough grounding in instructional leadership for clinical teaching if real change towards evidence-based teaching practice for improved student achievement is to occur in schools. Approaches to addressing these needs are outlined. [Author abstract]

***Title:* A personal and collective commitment to a focus on school improvement.**

***Authors:* Campling, Mark; Savvakis, Stephen; Sedgman, Jane**

Source: In 'Research Conference 2012 - School improvement: what does research tell us about effective strategies?' edited by Carolyn Glascode and Kerry-Anne Hoad, pages 72-76. Melbourne : Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), 2012

Abstract: To support schools in their journey towards improvement, Education Queensland has introduced a raft of innovative strategies to make a difference to student learning outcomes across a large and diverse state. One of these strategies is the Teaching and Learning Audit. This audit allows schools to look beyond student performance and explore their strategies, programs and practices against world-class standards in curriculum, assessment teaching and learning. The instrument was developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research in consultation with education personnel and a wide range of stakeholders. The audit is conducted in schools by high-performing, highly trained and independent Queensland principals who gather data from a range of areas. These data are collected using several techniques to review school planning documents, school and classroom practices and individual student work. Judgments are made about school practices against defined criteria that are categorised as eight dimensions. Schools are given a detailed report that clearly outlines commendations, recommendations and affirmations, which are used to inform their planning processes. The results are also used by Education Queensland to inform whole-of-state strategic planning processes. Already schools have shown significant improvement in teaching and learning processes with the vast majority showing positive change from one year to the next. Principals are reporting high levels of satisfaction with this intensive process of collaborative self-reflection, with satisfaction ratings consistently exceeding 90 per cent. This paper describes the audit instrument, outlines the process and reflection tools, and details progress in two Queensland state schools. [Author abstract]

Title: **The hard work of improvement.**

Author: Masters, Geoff N.

Source: Teacher [Indian edition]; v.6 n.1 p.12-15; January-March 2012

Abstract: A common strategy for promoting improved employee or organisational performance is to place a strong focus on organisational results. The perceived advantage of focusing on results is that it clarifies and concentrates effort on the main game: the key purpose of the organisation's work. It also provides a basis for evaluating employee performance. As part of their drive for improvement, organisations also sometimes attach incentives to results, either in the form of rewards or sanctions. There is growing evidence, however, that focusing on results alone is an ineffective improvement strategy in many contexts and often leads to unintended behaviours. There are obvious lessons in this experience for current efforts to improve educational outcomes. Many education systems are now attempting to drive improved performance by focusing strongly on results such as student test scores, participation levels and school completion rates. But the hard work of school improvement requires more than a focus on results and more than compliance with standards and minimal expectations; it requires deep engagement with the quality of practice. Sustained long-term improvements in educational outcomes depend on studying, understanding, describing and promoting best practice throughout the teaching profession. It extends to the detail of highly effective teachers' pedagogical practices and highly effective leaders' day-to-day leadership work. It involves understanding the expert knowledge and skills that underlie best practice, and it probably involves the eventual development of 'standards of practice': agreed best ways of professionally intervening and agreed best ways of addressing particular kinds of educational problems and challenges. Studies of education systems that have achieved significant gains in student performance over time are providing insights into the nature of system improvement. These studies suggest that education systems become more effective by aligning effort at all levels round the core goal: improving student learning. [Author abstract, ed]

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE DURING HEARING
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P 52 Transcript:

Question: Comments about “startups”: Ways in which “startups” could be addressed.

Response: Investigations need to be undertaken in regard to many of the “startup” RTOs currently advertising online. Appropriate legislation is needed to enable authorities to terminate the operation of many of these businesses.

Examples of “startup” RTOs currently advertising courses on line:

1. Qualify Me.

They market themselves as an educational facilitator and their services include:

- Corporate and government training
- RPL Specialist
- International student agency
- Apprenticeships and traineeships.

On line they say they run nationally accredited courses for government departments and employment agencies. They also say on line that they have become a one stop shop for international students with an in-house immigration solicitor and immigration agents registered with MARA.

Comments printed on their website include; “no-one in my class failed”!

2. HBA Learning Centres.

Advertise as a leading provider of Vocational Education Training nationally. They say their differentiation lies in providing the most relevant and industry aligned training that is highly effective and efficient to individuals and organisations. Maintaining a fine balance between flexibility and consistency in delivery HBA Learning Centres have been developed to be accessible and engaging to thousands of everyday Australians looking for a new career or to upgrade their knowledge.

Comments printed on their website include: “I found the course rather repetitive and confusing at times.”

3. Certify You.

They advertise as offering a range of courses in trades such as building, construction, carpentry and decorating; areas of business such as management, accounting and administration; and childcare.

One comment : “Helped me gain my Cert III qualification in less than 2 weeks.”

On website advertise a “\$500” giveaway competition.

4. **Get Qualified Australia.**

Offers a range of vocational education and training services for individuals and businesses to help obtain Australian qualifications fast. They advertise as issuing Nationally Recognised Qualifications. They also state “there is no need for class based study, examinations or wasting time repeating subjects you already understand clearly”.

One review posted on 13th Oct 2015 states “I have received no service from this business. Do not sign up with them. I paid in full and for 2 weeks no one has contacted me to start.”