

**REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS BEFORE**

**PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 3 – EDUCATION**

**MEASUREMENT AND OUTCOME-BASED FUNDING IN NEW  
SOUTH WALES SCHOOLS**

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**At Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney on Friday, 29 November 2019**

**The Committee met at 11:00 am**

**PRESENT**

The Hon. Mark Latham (Chair)  
The Hon. Matthew Mason-Cox (Deputy Chair)  
The Hon. Antony D'Adam  
The Hon. Wes Fang  
The Hon. Scott Farlow  
The Hon. Rose Jackson



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**The CHAIR:** I welcome everyone to the third hearing of the inquiry into measurement and outcome-based funding in New South Wales schools for Portfolio Committee No. 3 - Education. The inquiry is examining the existing state of measurement in the New South Wales education system and consequences of introducing outcome-based budgeting for schools. Before I commence, it is the custom of this Parliament to acknowledge the traditional inhabitants of this land, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and I do that with all due respect, as well as acknowledging other important contributors to the history of this site: those who constructed the parliament house building, very often working in a dangerous industry, and the parliamentary staff over many decades who have supported members of Parliament and made our work and representative role possible. We acknowledge and thank them all.

Today's is the third hearing we plan to hold for this inquiry and it is shaping up to be our last hearing in the process we have been through. We will hear today from academics from two Sydney universities, two school principals and also representatives from the Department of Education. Before I commence I would like to make a few brief comments about the procedure for today's hearing. Today's hearing is open to the public and is being broadcast live via the Parliament's website. A transcript of today's hearing will be placed on the Committee's website when it becomes available. In accordance with the broadcasting guidelines, while members of the media may film or record Committee members and witnesses, people in the public gallery should not be the primary focus of any filming or photography. I also remind media representatives, if there are any here, that you must take responsibility for what you publish about the Committee's proceedings. We have no tolerance of fake news.

It is important to remember that parliamentary privilege does not apply to what witnesses may say outside of their evidence at the hearing. I also urge witnesses to be careful about any comments you may make to the media or to others after you complete your evidence as such comments would not be protected by parliamentary privilege if another person decided to take the dreadful action of defamation. The guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings are available from the secretariat. There may be some questions that a witness could only answer if more time was available to them or if they had certain documents to hand. I encourage witnesses in those circumstances to advise us that you will take the question on notice and an answer can be provided by Monday 13 January 2020—a longer period than normal because of the Christmas break.

I remind everyone here today that committee hearings are not intended to provide a forum for people to make adverse reflections about others under the protection of parliamentary privilege. I therefore request that witnesses focus on the issues raised by the inquiry terms of reference and avoid naming individuals unnecessarily. Witnesses are advised that any messages should be delivered to Committee members through the Committee staff. To aid the audibility of the hearing I remind both Committee members and witnesses to speak into the microphones. The room is fitted with induction loops compatible with hearing aid systems that have telecoil receivers. In addition several seats have been reserved near the loudspeakers for persons in the public gallery who have hearing difficulties. Finally could everyone please turn their mobile phones to silent for the duration of the hearing.

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**PROFESSOR KIM BESWICK**, Head of School, School of Education, University of New South Wales, sworn and examined

**PROFESSOR DEBRA HAYES**, Head of School, Sydney School of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney, sworn and examined

**PROFESSOR JIM TOGNOLINI**, Director, Centre for Educational Measurement and Assessment, University of Sydney, sworn and examined

**The CHAIR:** I welcome our witnesses who have joined us from their respective universities. Do you have anything to add about the capacity in which you appear?

**Professor BESWICK:** I am also Professor of Mathematics Education.

**Professor HAYES:** I am Professor of Equity and Education.

**The CHAIR:** By way of background, the inquiry is about the policy shift by the New South Wales Government to outcome-based budgeting in New South Wales schools. That will not affect every school in the coming period. The Government is starting with an aggregated assessment of how schools are performing and what outcomes are expected, and what budget items and amounts are linked to that, so we have established that so far in our inquiry. But it is also true to say the inquiry has taken time and interest to look at other aspects of education results in New South Wales, which generally have been disappointing, whether you are looking at NAPLAN or some of the international studies, particularly the Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA].

One of the things we are interested in is to answer the paradox of how everything in the education system has been measured, researched and assessed in every country over many decades—there are metadata studies you cannot jump over because they are so extensive. We know what works in the classroom; we know what does not work. As a committee—and also as Chair—we have visited a good number of what we regard as exemplar schools, schools that are getting results or doing certain things and have many characteristics in common that drive education results in the right direction. The paradox is, if we know what works and if we know these schools are getting results, why has it not become universal? Why are there not government policies and systems to scale up success so that every classroom and every school in New South Wales is a good place to learn with positive, value-added results?

We wanted to hear from university representatives about what teachers are taught before they teach students because we have had different feedback either in public studies or from principals themselves that if the system is to become more evidence based and rely on the things that work in the classroom, would it not make good sense for teachers in their university training to be schooled in the things that actually work in the classroom rather than the more random approach that seems to be reflected in what schools do across the board in New South Wales? Professor Tognolini, it is good to see you have particular expertise in measurement and assessment that we would like to hear about. From that perspective, I invite the three professors to make an opening statement, if you wish, to give us your perspective on the inquiry, the issues we are examining, questions of measurement and assessment, and the evidence base that drives the curriculum for the university teaching of teachers.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** Thank you. It is a pleasure to be here. As you said, my area is primarily measurement and assessment, so the issues more generally—those are the ones I focus on. I guess the key point about outcomes based funding is that it is not new. Lots of people have thought about it and tried it. We tried it in the university sector many years ago and thought about it. There are some significant problems associated with it, which I am happy to elaborate on later on, which I am sure you are aware of if you have looked in to this area as to why it does not work generally. Basically, my argument is that if you want to consider this then you have to look at certain things.

One is, basically, the unintended consequences that come from taking what is now certain testing and putting high stakes on it. There is an abundance of evidence that says as soon as you make it high stakes, the validity of the assessment device and measuring tools drops. We have got plenty of examples of that. The other unintended consequences that could come from this would be related to those schools that are not doing well on the measures: Is that really what we really value? Because if they are doing that, maybe they are not doing something else as well. I would like to talk a little bit about the whole equity and excellence agenda and the relation of how you measure things which are generally easy to measure and we leave the other things, and what effect that has on schools. They are the sorts of issues that I think I am happy to talk about, if you like.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Professor Beswick?

**Professor BESWICK:** It might be relevant for the Committee to know that I have spent most of my career in Tasmania, not New South Wales. I have been at the University of New South Wales since the end of

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January this year—so 19 years at the University of Tasmania and 13 years in secondary schools or in rural, low socio-economic status places before that, teaching mathematics. So I am very aware of the equity issues and lots of my research has been about teachers—usually maths teachers—and how their knowledge and also their attitudes and beliefs impact what they do in classrooms; and that, in turn, impacts students. So there is a lot I could say about that, and just difficulties of measuring those things.

I second what Professor Tognolini said about how we tend to measure the things that are easy to measure, which may not necessarily be the important things. So that is a problem as well. One of the issues that particularly applies to mathematics, but increasingly to science and even English and other areas, is the rise of out-of-field teaching, which is particularly prominent in rural schools but becoming an increasing issue in harder-to-staff urban schools as well across the country, which has a huge impact. I am doing some work at the moment on a project with principals, and the influence that school principals have on the culture of the school and the whole learning environment cannot be underestimated—or overestimated, either. All of that, I hope I can elaborate on.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Professor Hayes?

**Professor HAYES:** It is very good to hear you outline the paradox that we know a lot about what works, we have a pretty good understanding of that and we can see it working in some places, but we are not getting that uniform take-up of what works. It is very frustrating and I am sure, as members of our community who are charged with spending public money, wanting to spend it well and in ways that support young people to learn is really important. I want to unpack what outcomes are a little bit, just so we can flesh that out a bit more. In terms of looking at outcomes, one of my real interests is looking at outcomes in terms of what is going on here. So I spend a lot of time in classrooms, looking at outcomes in classrooms and asking just the fairly open-ended question from an ethnographer's perception of what is going on.

I think another way of looking at outcomes is in an investigative way—saying what are the effects of something. What are the effects of NAPLAN, for example? What are the effects of particular kinds of funding? I think a third approach to thinking about outcomes is a more interventionist approach that says what happens when: What happens when testing becomes high stakes? So the questions around outcomes, I think, are of those three different levels: descriptive ones, inquiry ones and quite deliberate ones when we try and actually manipulate outcomes in a particular way. I think that for us, as teacher educators, one of our real challenges is to prepare pre-service teachers to operate well in those environments and to be able to conduct their own investigations into what is going on here; what are the outcomes that are a result of a whole lot of things that they may have very little control over; what are the effects of certain things, particularly their own teaching; how do they understand their own effects in a particular setting; and what happens when.

In order to be able to answer those questions and to answer those questions well, we spend a lot of time preparing our students to engage with research and to learn about different approaches to teaching. So the idea of what works is not as straightforward as it may appear because what works in one situation may not work in another; and how a teacher, then, is able to read the efficacy of an approach in a particular context is very important. So the ability of our teachers not to implement something blindly—in fact, when they do that and feel forced to do that, the unintended outcomes are quite dire. But when they implement something that they have a good idea may work somewhere else, intelligently and based upon that ability to read and interpret their own setting and respond to young people, then we can get a different kind of outcome.

I did want to finish up my opening points by saying that a focus on outcomes also draws us away from inputs. It distracts us from thinking about what other things that are contributing. I have a present for you all. There is a book for each member. I notice that Mr David Shoebridge is not here; there is one for him as well. Page 195 of the book is marked for you. I thought it was interesting to look at. Jean Blackburn was one of the architects of the Disadvantaged Schools Program and one of Whitlam's appointments to the schools commission. There are three questions that she asks there that I think are very relevant when the focus is on inputs. I think they are incredibly relevant to us today, even though she wrote them back in the 1970s: things like "Should the least well provided for schools have first claim on increased resources?"

If outcome-based funding allows us to answer that question, then I think there may be some merit in it, but not if it distracts us from that question and just keeps us focused on outputs without taking into due consideration what is going on in terms of inputs. I think particularly the third question—"How can the resource needs of different schools be fairly compared?"—is a very important question because what we know is that one of the unintended consequences of school funding, particularly for schools within the systemic Catholic system and public system, still remains that many of them are underfunded compared to other schools. I will just finish up those comments there and I am happy, like my colleagues, to respond across any of those areas.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. What is the evidence base that universities use in trying to develop teacher expertise as the teachers graduate and go into schools?

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**Professor HAYES:** How long do we have?

**The CHAIR:** I will give one example. A few Mondays ago there was a very prominent *Four Corners* program about literacy and other matters in schools, where one of the practice teachers was saying, "Here at university they teach us a whole menu of ways in which students might potentially read. We won't know which is the method that works best in the classroom until we get to the classroom." Do we not already know the systems that produce the best reading results for students? Should universities not be teaching that instead of wasting time and effort on a whole menu of reading methods and literacy programs that are not based on the evidence of what works best?

**Professor HAYES:** It is a good question, and I can assure you that we do not waste our time. We are really constrained in the time available to work with students. Keep in mind that there is very heavy oversight of our work through the professional standards and the requirement that we align our programs to meet the graduate qualities. One way to maybe get at that question—can I call you Mark?

**The CHAIR:** Yes, my mother does, so it is very welcome for you too.

**Professor HAYES:** —to distinguish between a technical approach to, say, the teaching of reading and understanding reading as a social practice. So there is no doubt that we need our students to understand some of the technical things that need to happen in order for young people to learn. But really, reading is much broader than that and what we can find is that once some of those technical things are taken care of, if we keep making students do those things when they have moved on then we can actually undermine their interest and their capacity to read.

So again, coming back to my original point, we are really wanting our graduates to be able to make those decisions in situation, to be able to look at a young person, to be able to assess what they need to help them to read and to draw upon a range of strategies. Just like a musician would have a repertoire of pieces that they would play to achieve certain moods and for various audiences in a different context, we need our students to have that repertoire and to not think it is about applying something to fix something but how to fine-tune, adjust and apply a range of strategies in a timely way to address young people's learning. So it is a much more complex issue than just applying what we know works.

**The CHAIR:** At Sydney university how many different reading strategies would be taught to an undergraduate teacher going into a primary school? What is the extent of the menu?

**Professor HAYES:** It is a range of approaches to understanding reading. They would all have a good feel for various, if you like, technical approaches to reading, assisting young people to recognise letters, sounds and words, all of those kinds of things. But, most importantly, they would understand reading as a situated practice and how to enhance the ability of children to read by reading alongside them and so on. If I can give you an example: a highly trained teacher of young children, if you go into their classroom what you will find is a range of different reading activities that are tailored for young people at different ranges and reading abilities. So that teacher will have at hand a vast array of approaches to teaching reading and will literally assign the approach depending on how they assess that young person's needs at the time.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** The assumption behind what you are saying is that there is a teacher in a classroom with a high degree of autonomy to make judgements, and it strikes me—certainly I have had feedback that actually teacher autonomy is in decline, there is more of a push for explicit teaching, that those kind of strategic decisions about strategies are made at school leadership level. Do you have something to offer about that sort of tension that I think is emerging in the system where teacher autonomy is being eroded and that there is much more emphasis now on school leadership and that perhaps the emphasis of equipping pre-service teachers with a strong emphasis on a theoretical framework that they do not get to actually deploy in the classroom but actually those decisions are made by early career teachers, they are not made by classroom teachers now, they are increasingly being made by a school leadership—assistant principals, deputy principals—who are driving the strategic choices that are being made about what happens in the classroom?

**Professor HAYES:** It is a good point. It is not either/or, in a sense. I think in any school setting there is a kind of a tension between what the school leaders are needing to respond to in terms of external constraints and pressures, and what school teachers in their classrooms are recognising as important learning approaches to the children that they are working directly with. That can be a good tension; that is not necessarily a bad thing. But essentially when a teacher goes into their classroom it is their classroom. Their autonomy, I agree, I think that is an issue around teachers' autonomy because more and more we are telling them what to do rather than recognising their professional judgement and a capacity to make decisions in the classroom about what is needed. So we need to not undermine that. It is an incredibly important part. We may as well replace them by computers if it is simply that they are just doing an automatic response based on what works.

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I have seen that happen, I have seen teachers who are adopting a particular approach because they have been told to do it and I have observed them, and it is a very constrained classroom and it is not one that I would say is supportive of learning; it is more about implementing an approach that is supposed to work. But those approaches do not always work and they always need that professional at the point of contact with a young person who can make that decision about what to do. Doctors all say the same thing; they need to learn certain procedures and how to do it correctly, and particularly surgeons, but when they open someone up what they see is often completely different to what they have encountered before. The same thing: teachers can learn exactly how to do certain approaches but when they are facing a child in a classroom, what is needed is often something that they have not encountered before, no-one has told them what to do—and I do not need to tell you how complex children and young people can be. So that ability for a teacher to be able to continue to make professional judgements in the classroom at the point of delivery is critically important.

**The CHAIR:** Could I ask a point related to that? A lot of principals have made a professional judgement that when the school moves in the one direction in terms of pedagogy and classroom practice the results are much stronger. I suppose it is not hard to understand. I was at a school on Tuesday where they practised this where they talk about one seven-year experience at the school for the students rather than seven one-year experiences because it is very disruptive for a student to have one teaching method in kindy, a different one in year 1 and on it goes, trying to adjust and figure out what the teacher is wanting to do. So they have a common language and a common pedagogy right across the school, and it also allows the teachers to share professional development more readily because they are all on the one page. What are the universities doing in response to this move towards one school model, one seven-year experience—a lot of it is driven by John Haddy's research that gives these very high-effect measures that if the school has a single culture, moving in one direction is so much better for the students. You might be teaching classroom autonomy but principals are making a professional judgement that the one culture moving in one direction is a lot better for everyone.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** They are pushing in that direction.

**Professor BESWICK:** I do not know if I will be as eloquent as Professor Hayes, but I think, as she said, it is not a sort of an either/or thing. There is evidence, as you say, that having the culture being consistent and coherent across levels is very useful and advantageous to students, but that does not mean that every teacher will do exactly the same thing and it does not mean that they do not respond to individual students drawing from a repertoire of ways of teaching things. In mathematics, for example, I have worked with a number of schools where I have helped them work on establishing exactly that, a common language, a common overall philosophy about what we are about when we are teaching mathematics, what we mean by being proficient at mathematics, what mathematical reasoning is all about and so forth.

But still, when you are confronted with an individual child, the teacher needs to be able to look at the work the student has produced, talk to that child about how they were thinking and then make a judgement about "How do I actually shift this child's thinking in a way that is going to be helpful? I don't want to just tell them that 'No, you wrote the wrong number there. Cross that out and do it right'", you have got to change their thinking, and that is sort of almost a detective job on an individual child basis; but still in the culture of the school you will be using the same sorts of language—maybe making decisions not to dumb things down but to call the top of a fraction the numerator and those kinds of decisions so that that new vocabulary is not a surprise when they get to secondary school.

So you can have both coexisting, but it is that individual work that the teacher does with individual students. Tailoring their knowledge and pulling out the bits they need in the moment is the critical thing, and it is not just the child's thinking even; it is also their emotional and social needs at the time, particularly in mathematics. A lot of adults will say they are terrified of maths and a lot of children may be as well and they may be told by their parents, "I was never any good at maths so it doesn't matter." So the teacher is working with that as well. They want to correct the child, make sure they are on the right track, but without undermining their confidence, and different children will be at different places and different messages are appropriate. So there is a lot of individual judgement still within that whole school context.

**The CHAIR:** But how much value can the New South Wales education system get out of universities teaching the would-be teachers across such a wide scope of methods? The schools I am talking about—the one unified culture schools—seem to be placing a very heavy emphasis in their model on direct instruction as getting the best results. But you can look at things happening in other schools. I have my own informal list of alternative pedagogies—play-based learning, philosophy circles, teachers as facilitators, creative thinking, inquiry-based learning, co-teaching, collaborative classrooms, constructivist teaching. Isn't it just impossible at the end of the day to teach would-be teachers all of these different methods, especially those that are proven not to work? Aren't we better off getting value for the New South Wales education system with direct instruction, if that is where the exemplar schools want to head?

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**Professor BESWICK:** I think it is not a matter of this works or that works. So none of those things work or don't work. Some of those are not even teaching approaches.

**The CHAIR:** Well, they are in schools, so that is reassuring.

**PROFESSOR BESWICK:** The language is sometimes used in confusing ways. You can have lots of those things co-existing. Teachers need to understand more than theoretical approach, and the method you use depends on what you are teaching. If you are trying to teach a child to recall their times tables automatically—which is a good thing for them to learn to do and we do still teach them that they should do that; that is a great thing to do—you would do that in an explicit way, for example, six sevens are 42. You have to know that. Explicit is good for that. But if you are trying to teach a child about the concept of proof or the place value system or something a little bit more high order that is a little bit more complicated than just telling them, which does not do the job as effectively.

Things like place value, for example in the maths area, if kids get that then they can understand all the algorithms for adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. If the teacher can link it back to that big concept they can go on and learn about decimals and so forth in high school and have a sound understanding of a big concept, not just being explicitly told, "This is what you do"—carry the zero over, or the one or whatever it is. If they can actually think about the concept then that is far more powerful. The method you use that is most effective depends on what sort of knowledge you are trying to help that child acquire.

**PROFESSOR HAYES:** I think Professor Beswick makes a really valid point in pointing out the complexity of teaching, that we have to prepare teachers who can go into just about any environment and teach well. I think the reality is, yes, we do want them to be able to adopt those systems and to decide when it is useful. It is a really good thing for principals to set a clear, if you like, direction and to take their colleagues along with them. We have always known that that is a very good thing, to have principals who are strong leaders and who are able to mobilise the resources available to them to head in a particular direction. But I think you would be undermining the quality of initial teacher education programs if you said to us, "We want you all to teach, and the only thing we want you to teach your students is direct instruction." I think it would be like saying to the coach of the Australian cricket team, "We only want you to teach your players how to catch the ball within 20 metres of the wicket."

There is a lot more they have to do. It is great if they can do that, and they can do that well, but we really have to have a much more sophisticated understanding of the complexity of the role of teachers and, yes, be able to adopt those strategies. We do not need to teach them how to do everything because quite often leaders have made decisions in situations about what works well here and they will then assist incoming teachers, that is always the case. When you move into a new school you have to adopt what is working well there. You have to get familiar with it and there will be supports for you to do that—professional learning and development. What we need to produce are the students, the graduates, who have the capacity to do that, who are not so narrow in what they think works that they go to a place and think, "Even though they are telling me this is what works here, I am going to teach something else." That flexibility is really important.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Professor Beswick, you mentioned at the beginning that you were doing some research in terms of principals and principals aligning the schools, as the Chair mentioned earlier, in terms of these pedagogy approaches and whole-school approaches. Are you seeing any correlation with that in terms of school performance and the adoption of a single pedagogy across a school?

**PROFESSOR BESWICK:** We are not looking at school performance particularly, but what we are doing is developing professional development programs for principals to enhance their ability to lead STEM programs in their schools, and that might be separate maths, science and whatever, or it could be something integrated. We are being flexible about that. There is a lot of research around instructional leadership. We are coming from the place that if the principal is able to focus on teaching and learning, and the teaching and learning environment in their school as opposed to, perhaps, raising money or putting out fires with parents, or whatever else happens, if they can focus their energies on teaching and learning, and create the kind of school environment where teachers can focus on teaching and learning then that is really effective. That is the basis we are working on, and we are getting really positive responses from principals as well. We are collecting data at the moment from teachers and students as well. We have not got all of that in yet to analyse, but the feedback from principals is that they are really liking knowing enough about STEM education to be able to create the environment that the teachers need to thrive.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** With respect to that teaching and learning focus of principals—you mentioned things like dealing with parents, budgets and the like—are principals in that instance, where they are focusing on teaching and learning, having additional support with those other items? Is that what is happening?



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**PROFESSOR BESWICK:** I have not been a school principal. A teacher's job is complex and a principal's job is extraordinarily complex. Of course they do have to deal with parent things and budget things as well, but they say to us if they are able to get enough head space to step back and to think about the teaching and learning program in their schools and they can get that running really well, that will solve lots of the issues certainly around parents and behaviour of students and those kinds of things. And if they have good support, either centrally or in their school about budgetary things, then that is a whole body of things as well. I think that the difficulties usually arise with principals who are new to their jobs. They are often in small schools where there is not so much support, maybe rural schools where they are dealing with inexperienced teachers as well, so it is understandably very difficult in those circumstances.

**PROFESSOR TOGNOLINI:** Gonski addressed this in his recommendations and said that we should be changing the lenses through which principals work to put more emphasis on the teaching and learning, and less on the other. I think that has been accepted and there are changes in terms of principal standards that are being rewritten to accommodate those changes, et cetera. I think there is agreement that they need more space to do that, and the emphasis of the lens they should be looking through is a leader in teaching and learning.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Professor Tognolini, I was interested in some of your commentary earlier in terms of assessment and measurement. In some of the schools we have visited and those exemplar schools, it is that approach to looking at assessment as a continual item, checking where the children are up to in their learning rather than having one big test at the end and that sort of continual assessment. I was interested in your commentary around the things that are not measured and the things that are not easily measured, but might be most important. I was wondering what sort of things would you envisage like that.

**PROFESSOR TOGNOLINI:** I have just written a report for the catholic system *Equity and Excellence in Education* with a view to them saying, "What do we want to measure in our schools in New South Wales?" I did focus on this aspect of it.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Is that a public report?

**PROFESSOR TOGNOLINI:** It went to their board, so I don't know.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Ask the board.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** Ask the board. The area where I started was that if you are looking at the equity and excellence being mapped out in the Melbourne declaration, this is what we think should be reported to parents—what we should be reporting on. We are reviewing that now. It is being reviewed nationally now. But if you look at it, if you see what schools are judged on and what is being reported on, it is only the things that we have—these measures like examinations: HSC, NAPLAN. We cannot do PISA but you can probably have the NAP system and so on. They are the things. Then you look at that and say, "What proportion is that of what we are committed to report on?" It is less than 10 per cent. So there is a real challenge here. How do we start to report on some of these things. One of the challenges I threw at the system was let's take faith. If that really does characterise your system, how do you know you are having an impact? Where is your evidence? That was the argument I used. It is saying that there is a lot more here but we are just focusing on these narrow things. That was the point I made in my original thing. If we just keep focusing on those narrow things, what is going to suffer? I do not know.

**The CHAIR:** How would you broaden it?

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** I would broaden it by saying that if we really value these other things—and I think we are trying to tackle that now—like creativity, critical thinking et cetera, then we should be working out how we measure those so that we can get some hard evidence, and people can start to say, "Here's my evidence; I'm this far along." The University of Sydney at the moment is trying to measure, at a student level by 2021, the graduate quality. So we hope to report on our students on things like cultural competence, creativity, critical thinking, communication, digital literacy. These are graduate qualities which are more than just subject based examinations and scores. Does that—

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I guess the question we have is: how do you do it?

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** I can talk to you about that. I am quite happy to tell you.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I know you are getting to 2021.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** I can show you how to do that.

**The CHAIR:** One example is that Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation [CESE] has produced a report saying that you cannot measure and you cannot teach creative thinking.

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**Professor TOGNOLINI:** Let me start by saying that if something exists—if creativity exists—it exists in some amount. If it exists in some amount then we can measure it. So saying we cannot is not right. You just have to say, "What do you define as creativity? What are the things in that definition which say, 'I can look at these things and they will tell me about creativity'?" Then you build a scale for it. That is what we do. That is what we do in our curriculum. We say, "What do we want in a top student at the end? This is what we expect from them; how do we build our curriculum to enable us to get to that point?" So there is no difference. But, as I said, we are trying to do it. We are working through it. We have the university focused on it and by 2021 we want to be the only university in the world that is saying, "We have this evidence that this student has displayed these qualities in terms of cultural competence, and this is what we value as cultural competence and showing growth." We can do the same with creativity.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** Very interesting. I was interested in how you measure outcomes on your education processes, particularly, if you like, the end product of the teacher and how, if you like, skilled or ready that teacher is to go into a school and be able to teach competently, and what feedback loops you have from the education system here in New South Wales and how that informs your syllabus and your teaching methods and, indeed, any relationships you no doubt have with NESA and other bodies in the New South Wales system. Could you perhaps expand on that?

**Professor BESWICK:** Before teachers can graduate they have to pass a literacy and numeracy test. They have to also pass a teaching performance assessment [TPA] at the end of their degree before they can graduate. So NSW Education Standards [NESA] is administering that on behalf of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL]. They are quite rigorous assessments that require each of them to demonstrate that they have had an impact on students' learning. So they have to do pre-assessments of the students, show what they have done to intervene, and demonstrate that they have had an impact on the students' learning. So they all have to do that. I guess part of the other evidence we have is from the time they spend in schools. At the University of New South Wales, for example, the final practicum place that they have is nine weeks.

I just have the pleasure of visiting 15 of them a week and a half ago, and watching them teach for an hour, talking to their supervising teachers, talking to the principals about how they are going. That is terrific feedback. If there was any weaknesses spotted in our programs we listen really carefully to that. I think all the universities have mechanisms for that. At UNSW we send our academics out to the schools to do that and we discuss those teaching performance assessments, not only with the prospective teacher but also with their supervising teacher and with the people in the school who are overseeing that work as well, to make sure that we are all on the same page about the quality of that work and whether the evidence is sound and so forth. So it is very rigorous and holistic approach to deciding that the teachers are ready. Of the 15 teachers that I had the pleasure of visiting, five of them have been offered jobs already, so I think they were doing reasonably well. My view at the moment is that teachers have never been better qualified at any point in history, I think.

**The CHAIR:** What of the whistleblower at Sydney University last year, who said that teachers get in with an ATAR of less than 20? How does that make them better qualified?

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** Do you want to answer that?

**The CHAIR:** I think your statement about teachers being better qualified runs contrary to the evidence that ATAR levels to get a teaching degree have dropped—so much so that the New South Wales Government is now insisting on teachers coming out with a 70 per cent grade point average to be a teacher in this State.

**Professor BESWICK:** They all have to pass a literacy and numeracy test that is nationwide. It has been developed by the people at ACER so it is rigorous and valid and so forth. If they do not pass that they do not graduate. So, whatever their ATAR was—I find it very hard to believe it would be that low—they cannot possibly graduate unless they have demonstrated that basic literacy and numeracy, passed that teaching performance assessment, been deemed satisfactory by the teachers they are working with in the school, or two. So I do not know about that particular instance, obviously.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** I think the question about the ATAR again has to be considered a little bit. People say to me that we are taking these teaching in and that shows our teaching force has decreasing ability. I say, "Well give me the evidence that this person has actually: (a) passed, and (b) has a job." Just saying what the input figure is, is nothing. It would surprise me if it is 20 at the Sydney University. I know some universities that say, "We will take them in at this level but you have to judge us at output, which is whether these people have met these criteria." So have to have evidence, when people throw that at me, to show me that they have met the rigorous assessment procedures we have got in place and then, secondly, that they have a job. Otherwise, so what?

**The CHAIR:** Getting a job as a teacher is not necessarily making you a good teacher.

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**Professor TOGNOLINI:** That is true, but it does so that the people who get in have been judged by people that we think this person is going to be a good teacher when we have all this evidence. We have the performance on the assessment, we have their prac performances and so on. Now they have a TPA—

**The CHAIR:** Maybe there is a disconnect. I have had a principal say to me, "Quite frankly, the people who get out of the universities are not so great, have not been taught so great. In fact the less they know is a good thing. If they are an open book I can pour my model into them and train them here quickly with professional development so they fit in with our, school name, model so we get them moving consistently with our approach. That might be a culture shock for you to hear that but I can assure you that it is being said out there in the field. As legislators and policy makers we need to try to close this disconnect, don't we?"

**Professor BESWICK:** In the instances—these are not this year, not in New South Wales—where I have been in schools visiting students, if a teacher is telling me that they have some serious concerns about the student teacher's capacity, my role is always to encourage them to document that. "Write it in your reports. Let's talk about it. Get it down on paper." Ultimately, if they are really not up to the job, we do not want them to pass.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** What percentage fail prac?

**Professor BESWICK:** It is not a high percentage. We had two in the last round of ours.

**The CHAIR:** Two out of how many?

**Professor BESWICK:** It was out of 100-and-something.

**The CHAIR:** So it is less than 2 per cent.

**Professor BESWICK:** It is, but we go through a process of signing off on their readiness to teach before we even let them out into a school because we do not want ones who are not going to pass getting out there. We have other who we say to, "You are not quite ready yet. Perhaps wait a little," or whatever.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Is there a remediation process that happens for those people that—

**Professor BESWICK:** If they do not pass?

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Yes.

**Professor BESWICK:** Definitely. We talk to them about what they might need to do. Maybe they need to volunteer in a classroom for a little more. Maybe they need to do an extra course. Occasionally they decide themselves, "Teaching really is not for me", and they decide to do something else.

**Professor HAYES:** It is really important to identify what the problem is. I would be very concerned if you think there is a problem with initial teacher education graduates because I think we are producing some of the highest-quality graduates that we ever have. So let us be clear and careful about that. Coming back to the issue of a 20 ATAR, in no way do I want to defend letting anyone in but I do want you to consider this: One of the outcomes or effects of our schooling system is that not everyone does well in it and I think we need to have an approach to giving people opportunities, and sometimes multiple opportunities. So there are circumstances where we would consider letting someone in to an initial teacher education program who has shown the ability and merit to be able to achieve in a range of different skills but who has not had, for example, the benefit of an education that has delivered a particular outcome.

For example, many of our students—when I say "many" I am talking broadly about initial teacher education—we have had some excellent graduates come into initial teacher education who are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. They may have a very low ATAR or no ATAR but they demonstrate real leadership and capacity and have gone through that process of learning. I think what we should think of as initial teacher education—it is a learning process. We have an average of around 80 entry-level students for our program. It is highly unusual for someone to come in at that low level but I do not want you to think that that should never happen. Otherwise our teaching profession will be an incredibly narrow profession of people who have done well at school. We know that there are many groups in society who, through no fault of their own, simply do not do well at school.

And then we go back to: How do we ensure that schools support young people to do well? I think it is a question that you asked about, Mr Farlow: How do we do it? I think what we need to do is enable. I do not think you need to answer that question as a politician—how to do it? What you do need to do is answer the question: How do we fund schools adequately so that the people who have the knowledge, the skills and capacity can do what needs to be done? So the how-to-do-it question is always going to be answered locally. It is never going to be one size fits all. Even direct instruction has multiple points at which teachers have to make professional judgements about how to interpret student test results, the collaborative conversations that happen looking at how

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students are progressing. All of those things need judgement. They are not automatic technical issues or problems to be solved. It is unusual for a single pedagogy—and I think we need to be careful about the use of the word "pedagogy". Pedagogy generally means a very broad range of things that go on in a school that support learning. One aspect of it is a methodological thing like: What is the method? When you use the word "pedagogy" it can relate to the interaction between approaches to teaching and assessment, the curriculum. So pedagogy, centrally understood, is much broader than just limited to what goes on in the classroom in terms of, say, a particular approach.

**Professor BESWICK:** Can I just add to that ATAR thing quickly too? The vast majority of students getting into university into any course do not come in on the basis of ATAR anyway. Certainly in teaching those who do a Master of Teaching are admitted on the basis of having done another degree and nobody is interested in whatever their ATAR was or was not at that point if they have another university degree. So the ATAR is not the only thing anyway.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** I think the Chair has touched on this already, but we have a contradictory suggestion around there being an oversupply of graduates in teaching, and then we have had feedback from some people we have met with about there being a pending teacher supply crisis. Certainly we have a supply crisis with language teachers, science teachers and maths teachers. It seems there is a bit of a disconnect there in terms of those two competing propositions of oversupply and undersupply. One of the suppositions that I would like you to give me some feedback on is the notion that the universities are producing way too many graduates and that the business model of universities is that teaching is a relatively cheap degree to deliver and is a profit centre for the universities so they have an incentive to produce a lot of graduates and leave the quality control to the system where permanent positions are in short supply, and ill-equipped graduates go into it and get burnt out. There is a high degree of redundancy in the model. Do you want to offer some thoughts about those propositions?

**Professor HAYES:** It is certainly not, in terms of university programs, a cheap degree. The fact that we have placements actually makes it quite expensive. So that is one aspect of it. I think the supply and demand issue is always going to be one. There is a variation in areas, as you have pointed out. We have always had incredibly high demand in rural areas—not just for new graduates but for experienced teachers. I think that is a very important question in terms of the variability in terms of what is available in schools, and ensuring that young people are having qualified teachers to teach them. So as far as we are concerned, you also, Mr D'Adam, seem to be a little concerned about the quality of the teachers that we are producing.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** It is just that we have feedback from principals, in particular, saying that they cannot get quality teachers or that teachers come to them not equipped—particularly early-career teachers—particularly around behaviour management and class management.

**The CHAIR:** Learning engagement.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** The course provides a lot of theoretical input but the practical is not there. They get into the classroom, it is not what they expect, they do not have the tools to manage and they burn out. There is some evidence of burnout among early-career teachers. I think that must suggest that there is some problem with the pre-service teacher education—they are not being prepared, they are not being equipped to survive in the system.

**Professor HAYES:** There is a whole lot of assumptions in there. I think I could also line up a group of principals who could tell you how great our graduates are, how adaptive and flexible they are and how they are able to meet the demands of very complex communities and needs. So I just want to say that there are other views about the quality of our graduates as well, not just at the University of Sydney but across—it would be great if you were able, maybe, to broaden the scope of who you are talking to and getting information about. I am happy to suggest some principals.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** This is some of the feedback that we have received. I am putting it to you to respond so we get an alternative perspective.

**Professor HAYES:** I am saying that there are alternative perspectives to that, and I think there is great confidence in the quality of our teachers among many of our principal colleagues who we work very closely with and whose feedback we value.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** How do you measure that? That is what I ask you before: How do you measure the success of your system?

**Professor HAYES:** Of our system? How do we measure the success?

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**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** You are telling this Committee that you are producing the best possible graduates. Of course you are going to say that. How do you measure that longitudinally in the education system in New South Wales when those graduates appear in classrooms and beyond?

**Professor HAYES:** I think it is a really important question: How do we measure it? And I know that Professor Beswick wants to say something, so I will stop talking for a minute and hand over to her.

**Professor BESWICK:** Of course the university will say the graduates are fabulous. There are assessments that are beyond the control of the university, like the literacy and numeracy tests that all our graduates have to do.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** I am talking about beyond that.

**Professor BESWICK:** Okay, but there is that. There is the teaching performance assessment, which is in NESAs hands to administer, so they pass that as well. That involves their practical work in schools. Certainly in our programs we place a lot of importance on what teachers and principals tell us about our students when they are out there. We always send academics out to visit our students so we can have those conversations directly and get that feedback directly if there is a problem. Other universities have other ways of getting that feedback directly.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** Do you get reports from the education system in New South Wales about the effectiveness of your students who are in their schools?

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** Maybe I can add a little bit here.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** I am trying to understand. Is there any formal process?

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** I can tell you what is happening. I am on the expert advisory group that oversees the AITSL TPAs. People put up their teacher performance assessment, which is setting the level of entry that we have talked about now, which is a national level of being classroom ready. One of the criteria on which we judge these TPAs is what we call "construct validity". One of the things about construct validity is we want evidence about predictive validity. We are saying to these people who are developing these that we want to see some evidence—"What are you going to look at to show that the teachers that we are producing and saying are classroom ready within three to five years out are classroom ready?" We put forward research projects and we are helping these people identify the indicators of what evidence we can collect back and say, yes, the people who we are preparing here have been successful. I think your question is a very good one, but it is one we are addressing.

**The CHAIR:** What does the research show so far?

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** So far the research shows that people do not even know that is part of construct validity, so we are pushing it back to them and saying, "Give me a plan that shows within three to five years how you are going to come back with evidence to show this". In terms of what we are doing at the moment, it is setting it up. On the Sydney-Melbourne consortium, it is one of the factors we are looking for: What are the things that are going to tell us in three to five years that these students are being successful? The ones who we are saying will be very good as a result of our TPAs have actually been doing well in schools and, if they are not, then it says maybe the way we are assessing them here is not appropriate. I think you are perfectly right, but there has not been that work done yet.

**The CHAIR:** Why not? These issues have been around for decades.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** Because they are only just starting the TPAs, for a start. TPA is a teacher performance assessment, which all universities have to be able to do now for our final-year graduates. They have to be able to pass this, to do a test and pass the standard that has been set, which is linked to the graduate teacher standards. We are in that process now. I am happy to explain it further if you want. Your question is a very good one and it is being followed up, because we need evidence. For a lot of these things we need evidence, I think. Saying a couple of principals say this—they have got to have evidence, too, that what they are saying is right and how it is manifesting itself to them. Then we can actually say, "Yes, you are right. Well, we have got to do something". But just saying it is not working is not evidence; it is just an opinion.

**The CHAIR:** They are opinions that matter, because these are principals running schools. I have got to say, I have visited 20 schools and not one principal said, "Gee, these graduates are wonderful".

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** Which is fine, but an opinion is still—

**The CHAIR:** Maybe they are all wrong.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** —an opinion, without evidence. We can handle evidence—

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**The CHAIR:** They have the evidence of running a school. I do not think you can dismiss them as airheads who do not know what they are talking about. They are running schools—and these are successful schools.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** As Professor Hayes said, you can wheel in 20 principals who say the opposite, so who is right and what is the evidence that these ones are right and these ones are wrong? That is what I think we are asking, that is all.

**Professor HAYES:** Mr Matthew Mason-Cox, what I would suggest to you is the strongest evidence is the quality of our schools. I think we should have great confidence in the quality of our schools based on a very broad range of indicators. I think what is really important for you is to distinguish the noise about schools and the noise about issues around quality of teaching from the actual evidence. The evidence suggests that young people in Australia are doing very well and that schools are doing very well. My colleague Professor Beswick might want to elaborate on that. Particularly, if you consider what schools do in terms of taking young people from age five through to age 18 and managing that experience—just look at the Schools Spectacular that was on recently. Look at some of the really positive things about schools.

Our schools support a diverse community of young people. Generally within our schools there are harmonious environments and relationships between very different, diverse groups of young people and teachers—particularly within our public schools. We really need to focus on the positives, not just the negatives. Our teachers—our graduates—are contributing to the public system, the independent system and the Catholic system to make them very high-quality systems compared to what is going on in the world. Let's not forget that. Let's not run down teachers and schools, because we have got something really good and we need to not destroy it by false claims and lack of evidence about what is actually going on.

**Professor BESWICK:** Can I add to that that the kind of principal who is motivated to write a submission is possibly one who has had a bad experience, more than one who has had a good experience. We all tend to remember negative experiences rather than the many others that were positive. There has got to be that taken into account when you weigh that evidence. I do agree that principals' opinions are very valid and should be taken into account, absolutely, but we need to make sure that we have got a representative view of their opinions.

**The CHAIR:** They have not written submissions; these are on site visits. On the other side of the coin, it is true that the principals will say that the teachers have great potential, they want the best, they are trying the best and there are people at the school who are really dedicated to the profession and the wellbeing and future of the children. It is just that the principals certainly believe that what they are doing internally in professional development is getting the best kind of result for that school.

**Professor BESWICK:** Yes.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Do you dispute the assertion about early teacher burnout that it is a problem?

**Professor BESWICK:** I was just going to get to that, actually. I think one of the things to consider in that—first of all, teaching is a very demanding job. Going into a classroom and being a teacher is a shock to almost everybody who starts that job, whatever their preparation is. It is just a hard job. The other thing that I have observed over the years is the way teachers are inducted. There are different programs around about having slightly less load in the classroom and various supports and so forth, but they do not always happen the way that they are intended—because schools are busy places, they cannot get relief teachers or this or that happens. Sometimes the induction processes are not as well implemented and organised as they ought to be.

Teaching is perhaps unique among professions in expecting someone to come straight from university and operate just the same as a teacher who has been there for 10 years. We would not expect that of a doctor—they become a registrar for years; accountants have to do their professional year; lawyers have to do additional training and exams. In every other profession we expect them to come out as a graduate but working toward being a fully proficient teacher. The AITSL standards actually say that: They have graduate standards that universities are obliged to ensure their graduates meet, but the next standard is "proficient". That can and should take several years for a young teacher to get to. I think that school systems are beholden to ensure that there are induction and support processes that help them get there. Maybe because that is a relatively new thing there could be some principals who are not even aware of that different standard. The fact they are having to do work with these graduate teachers is perfectly as it should be.

**Professor HAYES:** As it should be.

**Professor BESWICK:** Yes.

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**The CHAIR:** Would you like to make closing comments? We did not have any questions taken on notice. However, Mr Tognolini, I was going to ask: In your opening remarks you mentioned research studies showing that so-called "high stakes" exams are not a valid measurement tool. Would you be able to send us some of the links to those—

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** What I said was that they decrease the validity. If you raise the stakes, it decreases the validity. It is not that they are not valid.

**The CHAIR:** Okay.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** Because the HSC is high stakes.

**The CHAIR:** They are less valid. Can we get some references on that, if you could send those through to the secretariat?

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** I can give you a reference to that, yes.

**The CHAIR:** That would be helpful.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** One of the things I would like to finish off with is—I think you said at the start that the PISA data, et cetera, is saying that we are not succeeding as a system and we have got to change. If you actually look at the State's data—the official data at, say, year 12—you see that our performance has actually improved. This is where it is on curriculum, it is assessed by our State-based examinations et cetera, which are validated everywhere. It shows that in 2001 we had around about 5 per cent or 6 per cent of the kids working at the top level of Advanced English; now it is up around about 15 per cent, 13 per cent. We have got more students performing at higher levels now than we have ever had. They are the data that support it. Then you say that NAPLAN says—NAPLAN actually shows that we have got a flattening out.

The reason why we have a flattening out is not that the kids flatten out. It is that because the way NAPLAN was designed, we only have had a few items at that top level that we chose that we can improve. It is like trying to measure growth with a meter ruler, rather than millimetres, where we can show growth. But it does not say that we are getting worse. In terms of PISA, everybody says you cannot teach to PISA. So why are we judging our system on something we cannot teach to? There is a whole motivation factor associated with PISA. I do a lot of work in China. I do a lot of work in Hong Kong—Hong Kong is China—and Singapore et cetera.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** Almost.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Not according to PISA.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** Almost. I am probably a few years ahead of myself, but you know what I mean. I have to go there on Wednesday so I do not want to say anything wrong.

**The CHAIR:** No, you do not.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** When they walk in, they walk in singing the national anthem. They are going to do it—represent their country. Our kids were, "Why are you picking on me to do this test? What do you mean it is not going—." That accounts for a huge number of marks. But we do not bother looking at it. Then if you say why is it going downwards within our own country, we can probably explain that too—I am sure we can. There is a whole demographic shift. The first year we did it we were motivated. What we have to do is look at the full range of data that are available before we start saying that our systems are failing. We want some other indicators. We do not notice because our systems are failing that people are not wanting to come to our universities. They think we are successful.

**The CHAIR:** On notice, can we get that data about year 12 because I am not too sure we have seen it as a Committee.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** I can give you that.

**The CHAIR:** Maybe our kids need to sing the national anthem as they go into class. It could be the answer.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** If that is what you want, what are the unintended consequences of that I do not know.

**The CHAIR:** Pride in your country, sorry.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** You see what I am saying. I am basically saying that we have to interrogate data a little bit more than what we do and we have to look at the full range of data.

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**The CHAIR:** It will be great to see that year 12 data because it has not come across our desk as yet as a Committee, so it will be very valuable.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** It can be pulled off the NSW Education Standards Authority data; that is NESA data.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** If you could also provide the information on, if you like, the evidence that you are collecting to assess the capability of teachers into the system, so to speak.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** Happy to, I guess. It is on the University of Sydney website.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** You said it was being developed.

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** We are developing it now. This is for the things like creativity, cultural competency—we are doing all that now.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** This is your assessment—

**Professor TOGNOLINI:** We are very happy to send what we have got.

**Professor HAYES:** Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you. I think one thing I would ask you to keep in mind is that you and teachers share something—that is, a lot of criticism of your profession.

**The CHAIR:** That is right. We are worse than used car salesmen. We know all about it.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** It is funny you say that. I had a teacher who always said that the worst thing about being a teacher was that every dinner party everyone had a view on teachers because they all had a good one and they all had a bad one.

**Professor HAYES:** I do think that something that we need to keep in mind is that the status of teachers and what we say about teachers and how we value the profession is incredibly important. I hope that this Committee can play a role in not undermining further the status of teachers. That would be a very important outcome.

**The CHAIR:** We have that in mind very much.

**Professor BESWICK:** My final plug would be about out-of-field teaching, which I did not say too much about.

**The CHAIR:** Out-of-field teaching? Yes, what is that?

**Professor BESWICK:** It affects more low socio-economic status schools, which are often also rural schools. That clearly disadvantages the kids in those schools. It is a huge problem. I think to date we have tried to redress it with just fairly small, short-term professional learning programs, whereas what I believe is really needed is large-scale sustained retraining of teachers. It is because those out-of-field teachers who are not trained to teach mathematics and whatever are doing the best they can but they do not have the background. It is a big job to give it to them, which we cannot overlook.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Another inquiry, perhaps.

**Professor BESWICK:** I do not know that we need an inquiry. I could tell you how to fix it, but I just need the money.

**The CHAIR:** Send that through, too. We will take that on notice. Thank you for your time today. It was very useful. And thank you for the book.

**(The witnesses withdrew.)**

**(Luncheon adjournment)**



CORRECTED

**MANISHA GAZULA**, Principal, Marsden Road Public School, sworn and examined

**PETER ROUSE**, Principal, Canley Vale High School, sworn and examined

**The CHAIR:** I declare the hearing reopened after lunch. I thank our guests—Manisha Gazula, Principal of Marsden Road Public School; and Peter Rouse from Canley Vale High—for coming in to talk to us. I had the opportunity and privilege to visit the two schools, mainly on the basis that I had been told that—and this is true—that they are schools servicing disadvantaged communities that have high-level NAPLAN results. That is almost unique in New South Wales. There are not many schools like your two. Congratulations on your very important work in providing opportunity and upward mobility for those communities and building a model of success in the education system. Our inquiry, as I would have explained when I was at the schools, is about outcome-based budgeting but also measurement of evidence-based data-informed approaches in education. I think it is really important for the Committee to put on the parliamentary record your account of what you have been doing. Ms Gazula, would you like to start with your outline of the success of the Marsden model?

**Mrs GAZULA:** My name is Manisha Gazula. I am the principal of Marsden Road Public School, which is situated in Liverpool. I have been the principal of the school since 2016. Marsden Road Public School's complexities stem from a number of variables: Ninety per cent of our students have a language background other than English representing 57 ethnicities, 65 per cent of whom have been speaking English for fewer than three years. Over 150 students have been through a refugee experience and, therefore, have a range of social, emotional, psychological and educational needs. The school population is highly transient. The number of students leaving or starting at Marsden Road Public School could be anywhere between 60 to 100 students in an academic year.

Given the complexity, the volatility and the vulnerability of the community, we have adopted an explicit teaching model to ensure that the basics of literacy and numeracy are taught explicitly and systematically. Our vision is to ensure that our students are literate and numerate, and have a life of choice and not chance. We aim to do this by establishing teachers with strong pedagogical understanding and content knowledge in every classroom. Professional learning for teachers is, therefore, fundamental. Additionally, the school has a strong emphasis on teaching civics and citizenship to ensure that our children develop a good work ethic, values and morals that will stand them in good stead throughout their schooling and beyond. Quality pedagogy based on research and evidence from longitudinal studies conducted by educationalists underpin our teaching and learning programs.

We utilise the literature from the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation and directorate of the department. At our school, explicit teaching is a core way of teaching students. Explicit teaching is where the teacher knows what needs to be taught, tells the students what they will learn, stands in front of the class and teaches it, and then checks that students have learnt. This model of teaching is beneficial to all and harmful to none. At Marsden Road Public School, students' assessment is integral to our success. We set a strict timetable for all submitted assessments based on national and international benchmarks. The data from these assessments informs next steps for learning for both the students and the teachers.

Professional learning at our school is ongoing; we see ourselves as professionals who always have something to learn. We learn from external experts, professional journal readings and from one another. Every teacher is required to keep a professional learning journal that documents his or her learning through the Australian professional teaching standards. Thus, the explicit teaching approach, the professional learning, the assessments and evaluation schedule, and the civics and citizenship program form the cornerstones of the Marsden way. The school also provides extracurricular activities that include music, dance, art, chess club, debating, public speaking, environmental studies and sports.

We also provide Korean language as a foreign language program. The school also has a "newly arrived" program as well as STARTTS counsellors, a community hub that is part of Community Hubs Australia, and an extended transition program for pre-kindergarten students, a speech therapist and an occupational therapist, all of which would not be achievable without needs-based funding, the agility and autonomy of decision-making with Local Schools, Local Decisions and the professional support that we receive from our colleagues across the system. Thank you.

**Mr ROUSE:** Good afternoon all, my name is Peter Rouse. I am the principal of Canley Vale High School, and have been principal there since 2013. Canley Vale High School has an enrolment of approximately 1,590 students—I say approximately because on a daily basis that changes, usually going in an upward trajectory—and a staff headcount of more than 170 serving the Canley Vale community in the Fairfield local government area in south-western Sydney. We have 96 per cent of students from non-English speaking backgrounds, represented by 47 language groups; 85 per cent have English as an additional language or dialect [EAL/D] literacy needs; 51 per cent of the students come from families within the lowest quartile of socioeconomic disadvantage.

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On average 90 per cent of the students seeking university entry achieve that after the Higher School Certificate; over 44 per cent of students achieve the top two bands in NAPLAN; and over 97 per cent of students are achieving above the minimal standard. For the past four years Canley Vale High School has been the highest value-adding school in New South Wales. You may have read in the statement, that is part of the contradiction of Canley Vale High School and why we have a lot of people come from interstate and from other schools and also from overseas to come and see us. There are a range of significant initiatives that support learning growth and achievement at Canley Vale High School.

I have a few dot points there. These are: first and foremost, the intensive literacy program, where all students in years 7, 8 and 9 are supported by an individualised program that addresses student literacy needs—this is run by a literacy faculty that we have built within the school and it is imbedded into the curriculum; secondly, a comprehensive wellbeing framework, including a breakfast club that feeds approximately 250 students daily, a health and wellbeing centre, the employment of occupational therapists and speech therapists, and as of this year we also hired a fulltime mental health nurse; a professional learning program that supports the induction and development of teachers and leaders. When you come to Canley Vale High School as a new teacher, either new to the system or new to the profession, you are involved in a 12-month induction process where essentially we focus on supporting you to learn the art and craft and science of teaching.

The leadership team within the school includes 40 individuals who have carriage across a range of programs and initiatives. We also are very proud of the transition team that supports the post-school aspirations of all students. This team has developed a comprehensive curriculum and close relationships with employers, external agencies and tertiary education institutions. The team ensures that all students have the knowledge, skills and opportunities to transition beyond high school. We are very focused at Canley Vale High School on year 13 of schooling. It is not just about delivering a Higher School Certificate to every child, but it is about what they do with that as they move out into the broader society. There are significant initiatives that would not be achievable without needs-based funding. That is just a statement of fact. The agility and autonomy of decision-making with local schools, local decisions, and the professional support that we receive from our colleagues across the system. I am happy to unpack any of those later.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. You mentioned the 12-month induction process for new teachers to learn the art and science of teaching. Why has that not happened before they have arrived at Canley Vale? What is the model you are trying to produce out of the induction process?

**Mr ROUSE:** There are several things that come into play there. One is that the system supports new teachers through beginning teaching support funding. The system actually recognises that as soon as you step out of university and come into a classroom that you may not be prepared for what you need to deliver in that context, or even you may not have a refined or mature ability to teach well. That is the first thing. In that program it recognises that new teachers require time to plan and reflect upon their practice, but also they need a mentor. It also funds an experienced teacher to mentor and guide that beginning teacher. It can be everything from the most simplest thing, such as how to pronounce different surnames that you may not be familiar with, how to understand the cultural backgrounds of the community that we serve. It can be simple things like right from day one it is usually, "Where are the photocopiers? Who do I have to seek permission to do things from?"

But the induction program that we run at Canley Vale is also for those people who are experienced teachers as well. That is more about—Mrs Gazula talks about the Marsden Road way—understanding the Canley Vale way and why we do things in a particular way. Why does it go for 12 months? Because they need a very extended process to be inducted into the school. People need to take the experiences that they are having on a weekly basis and then be able to reflect upon that and come back to a central point and share their learnings. When a teacher comes straight out of university there is no way that I as a principal can guarantee that they are ready to do the job that they need to do. So I feel the responsibility that we need to do something instead.

**The CHAIR:** Mrs Gazula, when I was at the school you mentioned the John Hattie research about the high level effect of the cultural efficacy of moving the school in one coordinated, concerted direction. I have heard this at other schools. I was at a very good school in Dubbo on Tuesday where the principal there spoke about one, seven-year experience, as opposed to seven, one-year experiences within a school in terms of teaching consistency in the classroom. What is it about this that gets the high level result at your school and elsewhere?

**Mrs GAZULA:** I think what you are probably referring to is collective efficacy.

**The CHAIR:** Yes.

**Mrs GAZULA:** Which is the collective understanding amongst the staff that we are all responsible together for making sure that every child reaches his or her potential. But in order to have the clarity of vision, it is important that teachers are also well equipped, not just with the moral purpose, but rather the strategy and the

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tools and the skills to achieve that moral purpose. Self efficacy just does not come with an idea, but it is what we do and what we have in place, which includes the professional learning of the teachers having a clear understanding of where we are as a school and where we want to take our students and where we want our school to be in three or five years time, the long-term vision, the short-term vision. It is just not one simple thing as having a collective understanding, but rather the professional ability, skills and knowledge that is required, the content knowledge that is required, plus having structures in place in the school to make sure that it can be implemented long term and can be sustained for a long time. It is not a very simple thing to put in place, but it is a very important and very essential part of schooling.

**The CHAIR:** Can you also give us an outline of the ideas you picked up from the Michaela model in London and the idea of the two weeks at the beginning of every school year about, I suppose you could call it boot camp, but behavioural norms and what you do there that is different to other schools that we know of?

**Mrs GAZULA:** Perhaps boot camp might sound like some military school. It is not. It is more or less to instil love and respect for learning and school. That is the idea. What I believe is that you cannot teach someone at 50 what they have not learned at five, and values and morals of respect have to be taught at an early age so that it becomes part of who you are, and not something that you do consciously later on. When you are at a young age you have to teach them, but as you grow older it becomes part of who you are, and that is what we believe. The Michaela model came in a discussion I was having with the civic citizenship team at the end of 2016, as to what do we do because we have, as I said, a range of students, different ethnicities.

A lot of the students come with very little to school and we wanted to build a positive experience for them and get them ready to learn. Instead of having that time wastage, we call it time spillage in the classroom, stopping every child, telling them how to sit, how to walk, transitioning from one activity to another activity. There is a lot of waste of time if the students have not been taught how to go about it. So we came up with the civics and citizenship program, which is called "The Marsden Way". It came from the Michaela school, which was mostly designed for high schools, but we adapted it to make sure that it fits in with our school models for the first two weeks of school. Because it is a transient school we do not know how many are coming back. We may expect 720 but we might have only 690 to start with, but by the end of the week we might have 740. It is because they have gone on holidays overseas.

We utilise the two weeks to just make sure that the students understand, know the school song, know the national anthem, know why it is important to come dressed in full school uniform every day, the importance of punctuality and attendance, how to greet a teacher. I think that is the moral capital that we are trying to build in our students and nothing to stop them from having those cultures and values. Basically we have lessons that are structured, kindergarten gets a lesson, year 1 teacher gets a lesson, year 6 teacher gets a lesson. So they actually structure lessons that we explicitly teach for two weeks. As a result of it we are actually seeing results of it in our school.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** Thank you both for coming in. It has been terrific to hear about what you do at your schools, particularly taking a day off to come and see us. We really do appreciate that. You both mentioned Local Schools, Local Decisions and how important that is in how you run your schools and fund some of these services like the occupational therapist [OT], the speech pathologist or other supports. Can you run through that for us and explain that a bit more?

**Mr ROUSE:** I think if you look before Local Schools, Local Decisions, as a school leader there was a lot of permission. You were seeking permission all the time, you were presenting cases about why you needed particular services and why you were making particular decisions. Local Schools, Local Decisions has been an evolving philosophy and practice and policy, but it is at a level of maturity now where you can actually make decisions and respond to the needs that are there at the moment. The examples that I gave around speech pathologists and occupational therapists, I would not have even thought of that before Local Schools, Local Decisions. Bringing in a full-time mental health nurse was not in the staffing codes.

A lot of the Local Schools, Local Decisions that you will see in schools across New South Wales are related to bringing in specialist staff to address the point of need that you have in that particular school. Prior to that you had a simple staffing formula. I often say that the more we grow in Canley Vale, the less we need of the same—we need difference. In my context Local Schools, Local Decisions gives me that, so I can have specialist staff working in areas of need and we can pull them out and put them back in as we need them. It is really around the agility and flexibility to make those decisions on the ground. Of course, Mrs Gazula and I have talked about this. What comes with that is accountability. When you are given autonomy and flexibility, you should have accountability with that as well.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Are those staff appointments permanent?

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**Mr ROUSE:** No. For example, the OTs and the speech therapists and the mental health nurses are contractors. A lot of staff come up through hire duties. They may come through a recruitment process from other schools. The flexibility there means I can really narrow down on something that I need. Sometimes I might need a generalist specialist from a primary school. Is there anyone in the area who is looking for that sort of work? What skills do you have that match what I need?

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Are you prevented by the funding system from appointing people to those roles on permanent places?

**Mr ROUSE:** Initially there were some issues with that, but now staffing has changed so that if I bring in a temporary employee and they work for me for longer than two years I do have the opportunity, if a position becomes available, to make it into a permanent position. That person has preference over others in the system because they have obviously been tested by us at the school, they fit our context and they fit our need. If I have a vacancy available, they have first option.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** But that is putting them into positions that are funded under the staffing formula, is that correct?

**Mr ROUSE:** Yes.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** These are bespoke positions that you are talking about.

**Mr ROUSE:** Yes. I will give you an example of that. For example, in my literacy faculty there are no literacy teachers who sit within the staffing codes of the NSW Department of Education per se for a secondary setting, so we brought in some young English, history and geography teachers. They developed as literacy teachers under us, so they learned how to teach literacy. They were subject experts, or they came out trained as subject experts, and we taught them how to teach literacy in-house. I then had vacancies for history or English teachers and they remained literacy teachers with me. I have used the staffing codes to employ them. Do they still teach history and English? Yes, they do. But they teach it with a literacy focus. That is that flexibility. You would not have that otherwise.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** I wanted to ask you another question. You mentioned the Canley Vale way, the Marsden way, so would you subscribe to the view—the answer is probably self-evident—that there is a list of ingredients or key factors that need to be present to drive success, if you like? I know you have identified some of them, but perhaps the top three that you think are the most important and why.

**Mrs GAZULA:** I personally think the clarity for the staff, so not having a clear understanding of how we are going about it. Not just having the numbers, like your school directions and your school's strategic direction but, rather, what are you trying to achieve. Having that clear understanding with the staff—if the staff do not know what you are doing, they are probably not buying into it. They are just then delivering something for the purpose of delivering it without really being invested in it. I think having that clarity of moral purpose is number one. Number two, I think the support system as a manager and leader of the school—to have effective structures and systems in place to support the teachers to reach those goals. That is certainly important.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** What sort of structures, what sort of supports?

**Mrs GAZULA:** As Mr Rouse said, we have a range of teachers. We have newly appointed teachers, some experienced teachers and some who may need support with something. So to have proficiency in teaching. I think part of that has come from Local Schools, Local Decisions. For example, in my school there was a gap for some of the teachers who probably missed—there was probably a time in Australia when they had missed the teaching of grammar. A lot of my teachers were coming to school with a lack of skills in grammar. Having to have someone from outside, engaging an expert, to teach my teachers grammar so that they become good in their language and then implement this in the classroom. Those kind of facilities, that is a structure, that is a professional learning structure to have in place. I cannot expect them to be good literacy teachers if their literacy skills are minimal. That was made possible.

And when I said those structures, if I talk about assessments I am not just talking about having the consistency in teacher judgement, having the consistency in helping to moderate our assessments, having those kind of support systems in place. The support system at the middle level—so having my assistant principals equipped with the skills required to lead a small group of teachers at a lower level of planning and implementing in the classroom, while having the middle level where my deputies have the potential and the capacity to work with me in formulating plans for the school. That is what I call supporting systems and structures in place. Having that clarity in those things as well.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** So, clarity and unity of purpose is number one. Number two is the necessary support systems for your teachers in the school. Number three?

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**Mrs GAZULA:** I am trying to think of number three. I thought I had said it.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** There may be three or four or whatever. I just picked out a number. You have been nodding a lot when each of you have been giving your presentations, but you were saying it in different ways as well. I just want to get you both together.

**Mr ROUSE:** Can I jump onto those points?

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** Yes.

**Mr ROUSE:** Clarity is an interesting one to unpack even further. I think one of the key things to do as a school leader is to work out where the point of need is through the data. That gives you the moral purpose. You know, why are we doing this? Because we see there is a need and that is the focus. That becomes your success measure. So your first question is: What are the three things you do to become successful? The first thing is to define what success is. That is really important, because it motivates and drives everybody else. The second thing I heard Mrs Gazula talk about really was around the type of levers that you use. Those levers are dependent on what the need is that you are trying to address. They could be around professional learning.

Actually, a lot of the levers you use as a lever is to clear all of the malarky out of the way, all of the distractions out of the way, and have a laser-like focus on what success is and what the need is that we are trying to address. There are lots of distractions in schools. The next one that I heard Mrs Gazula talk about was around professional learning and leadership. The quality of your leadership team is the thing that will drive your school. They are the ones who go out and leave your office and they need to be all walking the same talk and not be at odds or creating friction around the school. That is how you get a Marsden Road way and that is how you get a Canley Vale way, when everyone is beating the same drum and driven for that same purpose and those measures of success that you have set. I would like to add a third—

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Can I just ask about leadership, because that is a really critical question for us. In terms of the leadership teams that are in both of your schools, are they teams that you have had the capacity to put in place, or are they personnel that you have inherited when you have come to the school?

**Mr ROUSE:** In my case I have been very fortunate. In the time that I have been there 49 per cent of the total staff have been employed under my watch. Part of that is about having a growing school. As far as the leadership team goes—and I have two tiers of leadership—the first tier are the substantive executive staff. Over 50 per cent of those I have actually recruited myself through merit selection. So there is an acculturation that occurs there because I am looking for particular skill sets for the different jobs that are required and that has been a significant lever for change in the school. The second tier of leadership is a developing leader strand like second-in-commands of faculties and teams. Every single one of those have gone through an internal merit selection process designed to address specific needs within the school, whether they are staff needs or student needs, but all focused on what do we measure as success at Canley Vale High School. The third thing I think—

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Just one quick question before you get onto the third thing. So that leadership team—the two structures—I think you mentioned you had 40. How many in each cohort of the first tier and the second tier?

**Mr ROUSE:** In the first tier there is about 20, , there is about 20 in each. Then three deputies and myself.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I will let you get to the third—

**Mr ROUSE:** I have not counted them lately. The third thing I think is, that you will probably hear from both of us, around a culture. The thing about schools is that they are often the largest government agency in a neighbourhood. So whether the neighbourhood is out at Walgett or whether it is in the inner city or the outer western suburbs of Sydney, schools become places where people drop in for you to read government forms or to answer questions or if they get lost. We get all weird and wonderful things coming into schools. The key is not having the school defined by the community that surrounds it but rather affecting and changing the community that is around it. That is what I mean by culture.

So you might come to Canley Vale and drive around Canley Vale, eat great Vietnamese food and enjoy what is there in the community culture but it is very different when you come inside the school gates. Within the school gates, we perpetuate a different culture. One that is about collaboration, one that is about success and one that is future focused. I think that leads you back into that circle, to that moral purpose and those needs. Some of the simple things like uniform, like codes of behaviour and a focus on some of the basics around literacy and numeracy, attendance—those sorts of measures—are key to that. But underlying that are a whole lot of welfare strands as well and a lot of support mechanisms and developmental mechanisms. So they are very complex places and I often say that the test for me is that I have had success as a principal of Canley Vale High School, would

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those same principles apply to go to another school? I do not know the answer to that because I have not done that experiment yet.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I suppose that is the critical question from our point of view which is that it is wonderful the success that you have had but obviously we are interested in upscaling that statewide. One of the tensions that has been identified is the core principles which are probably generally applicable, the local flexibility which perhaps is not because by its very nature it is flexible to local circumstances. I would invite both of you to offer any reflections based on your experience, what the Government could or should be doing to ensure that more schools have the capacity to achieve the success that your schools have had. It is almost impossible for the Government to do that because, by its very nature, those are local and flexible circumstances. That is interesting as well but that is our key job, to ensure that every child has the opportunity to go to a great school. So your reflections on how we could affect that and how the Government could affect that would be useful.

**Mrs GAZULA:** I do not have a very simple answer for that.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** It is a difficult question.

**Mrs GAZULA:** You are pretty much asking me, what should the Government do to improve all schools across New South Wales or across Australia?

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** If you have any views we would welcome them.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** To be frank, that is what we are asking ourselves.

**The CHAIR:** To put the question a different way, why are there not more schools like yours?

**Mrs GAZULA:** I do believe that good practice does get emulated. I think that is a question that Georgina Harrison and Murat Dizdar might be better placed to answer as to how to make it applicable across New South Wales schools. That is where the collaborative purpose and the collaborative nature comes into play. At the moment I myself have initiated a project called Partners In Learning. I approached five different schools, two from the coast, one is in the Fairfield area and one is in our local area. I asked them to come to my school and choose an area they would like to work on and implement in their school which they feel would be effective. So we are now working with those five schools.

**The CHAIR:** Where are the first two from?

**Mrs GAZULA:** One is Stanwell Park Public School near Helensburgh and one is Unanderra Public School.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** So they are not in your close geographical catchment or anything else.

**Mrs GAZULA:** No. I chose them for a reason. They had initially come to my school to watch something else and then gone back. When you come one time and you see something and you leave, you are not really taking anything with you. We wanted to have this close partnerships with those schools, knowing that they were probably not quite as well-placed as they are small schools. So we approached them and now we are working with them. It has been one year and this will probably be long-term. The practice is spreading and it is being emulated. What we have done has taken us four years so I cannot expect them to take everything on so they have taken one little thing. Two schools want to do the Marsden Way and call it the Unanderra Public School Way. Some schools have taken the phonics approach, some have looked at the way we are doing maths. It is spreading but—

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** But that is an initiative that you have created. Are you aware of any formal structure that the department runs or offers to allow or encourage that collaboration to occur? I am sure that you are very busy. If you did not have the time to be quite so proactive, the department could potentially play a role in making some linkages.

**Mrs GAZULA:** I do believe that the department—through the directors for each area—does encourage this kind of collaboration. While they may not put structures in place at this point and I am not sure about that, I would refer you back to Local Schools, Local Decisions. Because of that I am able to use some of my funds to help those other schools. For example, at the end of this year we are having a staff development day where I have got an expert to come and talk about explicit instruction and we have invited those schools to join. It is that autonomy that has been given to me by the department. I see that as a support structure in itself. The fact that I am allowed to do that and have those relationships and partnerships with other schools. I do give accountability for that because I did run it past my director, saying this is my plan and this is what I am doing and this is how it is going to look in action. So it was not ad hoc. There was a plan sitting with my director.

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**The CHAIR:** Can you tell us more about the Partners in Learning? What does it mean in practice? What are the specific things that you have worked with at the other schools? How much time is involved? Do you go to their school? What happens?

**Mrs GAZULA:** Initially I asked the principals to come and meet me and they had to choose an area because they had already come to my school once to see what was happening. They chose an area. I will just go with two school examples because they are two different things. Unanderra decided to do the phonics and Stanwell Park decided to do maths the way we teach maths at our school. So initially we had their teachers come to my school to spend an entire day in the classrooms working with my teachers, observing what they are doing. They then discussed later on with myself and my instruction leaders any questions that they had. We then sent my instruction leader to their school to deliver the professional learning because it will not happen otherwise.

They went there twice each term to do the professional learning with the teachers. Then this term I myself have visited the school, to watch it in action. It is a slow process but it is something that is happening and we will come back again on December 19 to see what progress has been made, where have teachers found the difficulty and how do we move forward? So what has worked? What has not worked? What can be improved going forward? So those are two of the schools. There are three other schools. Bossley Park Public School probably want to do the morning routine that we do at our school so all of their teachers have visited my school. So approximately 50 or 60 teachers from those schools have come to our school and we have gone to their school. So it is not just sharing resources. It is more observing good practice, watching people in action and then trying to emulate that in their classrooms.

**Mr ROUSE:** From a school level we see the system more as an overlaying web of networks, more than anything else. For us the system actually does not have an address—it is everywhere. And that is how we operate. I suppose we can put our fingers on a couple of things. For example, the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation [CESE] regularly publishes documents that provide evidence around what is working in specific areas. It might be about literacy or numeracy or leadership or whatever it is. That sometimes gives some idea of who you can go to—which schools and which networks you actually go to. But if I think about the work that we do, we do a lot of work in the Fairfield network with our partner primary schools, of which there are five. I am also in partnership with 12 other secondary principals—called the "Fairfield 11" but there are 12 of us.

My director is also very strong in building the network, not only in our network of 20 schools but also with Liverpool network and Cowpasture network. So there are three networks of about 60 schools that are operating there. He has also engineered the sending of staff to Broken Hill and he is just starting to send staff to Griffith. So I suppose from where we sit in the whole 2,213 schools across New South Wales we see it not just as central and then we are distributed out; we see it as these connections and networks running all the way across. I suppose that is where we get these levels of expertise. Even coming here I have had lots of conversations with Mrs Gazula and we have been learning from each other as well. I suppose we have a different lens on it because we are sitting in a different position.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** To that point, what inspired you to go down this path and say that this is right for my school? What was the catalyst that said explicit instruction was what you were going to implement as the pedagogy?

**Mr ROUSE:** You always bring your life experiences to it but when I arrived at Canley Vale there were some very obvious things. The data sets that I mentioned right at the beginning made that very clear. When you are sitting with a population that is represented by a 96 per cent non-English speaking background, 85 per cent EAL/D then literacy is going to be your focus. The reason why is because at the end of the day I want my students to leave school, get jobs, raise families, get a mortgage and pay taxes like the rest of us. It is as simple as that. When you keep it simple then your moral purpose becomes very clear and the levers that you move—those decisions become very, very clear as well.

And then you only go outside your school to ask for specific things that serve that and you do not get distracted. That is what I was saying at the beginning: that the key to leadership is really about deciding what is important and then defining your success by it. Otherwise you are just relying on everybody else telling you whether you are going to be successful or not. There are too many voices out there and your staff get lost, your school gets lost, your kids do not feel connected and the community does not feel like you are serving them. And the number one thing we do is serve our local community.

**Mrs GAZULA:** My perspective is a little bit different because I am a primary school teacher. Five-year-old kids come to us and we are catering for five-year-olds to 12-year-olds. I go back to my opening statement where I said explicit teaching is taking big ideas, breaking them down into small ideas, explicitly standing there and modelling it, showing it—so it is, "I do, we do, you do." That is the model. As I said, it harms no-one but is beneficial to all. It is not an idea that I thought one day, "Oh, that's a great idea." It comes from the

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works of Mark Seidenberg, John Hattie, Willingham—they are all educators who have done longitudinal studies and I read a lot. It will tell you that it is an age-old thing that explicit instruction, if you want to learn something, we can take any skill—if you want to learn to play hockey you are not going to give a child a hockey stick and a ball and say, "Go and play."

You are going to tell them how to hold the stick, how to dribble the ball, how to push—every step is explicitly taught, practised and then you send them to play. That is what explicit teaching is. If you want children to read, reading is an artificial thing—they are not born to read—so it has to be taught explicitly. That is what I believe and that is the message I have given my staff. Because we are teaching five-year-olds to 12-year-olds, we do not want to fail our students literacy and numeracy from that block of all learning. We do not want to leave it to chance. So we want to teach it explicitly. The maths and the English have to be taught explicitly. I think I will go back to a statement where somebody asked me, "Would you have the same approach in any other school?"

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** That is what I was going to get to next.

**Mrs GAZULA:** My approach in teaching explicitly will not change because I will remain a primary school teacher. What I teach explicitly will change. If I go to a school where 70 per cent of the students know how to read their name, how to write, how to hold a pencil, I am not going to explicitly then teach the basics. I will teach whatever the next level is—I will teach that explicitly. For me as a principal and as an educator, I am very firm in my belief that the explicit instruction model is the way to teach five-year-olds to 12-year-olds.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** For instance, we just had previously a panel of academics—and I do not want to quote them out of turn—and they were talking about how you did not necessarily need to have just one model; you needed to have a whole range of models and leave it to the teachers to be able to apply what they might use. Do you agree with that as well?

**Mrs GAZULA:** We are talking about knowledge and skills over here. Mastery has to come before you start experimenting with anything. Yes, even though I might have a very high needs school there might be a couple of children in the classroom who may already know or have those skills. I am not going to sit there and bore those children to death with something that they already know. That is where you have to use your teacher judgement and your discretion as to whether I can give that child another activity that will increase their level of skills and understanding. One does not fit all—we know that.

The explicit model I am talking about is in general for how we pitch the lesson but then you will differentiate within your classroom and you might have some different activities for those really high achievers or really needs-based students who have very high needs. That will differentiate on either end of the spectrum. But when you are generalising a teaching practice as a school, I model explicit teaching as a practice. This is my opinion. There is a risk that if you tell teachers to start choosing from a buffet of strategies, how do you know what the teacher is choosing is right for the classroom? Whereas explicit teaching, science and evidence tells us that that works. I take it on that basis. It is not my opinion; it is what I read and therefore I am implementing that in my school.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I was speaking to a principal yesterday who was talking about teacher graduates. I would be interested in your perspectives on this as to whether it is what you find as well. He said that he is finding with graduates that they do not know much about explicit instruction. They know it as a theory but they are not necessarily trained in doing it. Is that what you are finding as well?

**Mr ROUSE:** Yes.

**Mrs GAZULA:** Yes.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I was just going to ask about the skills that we would want students to learn that are more difficult to teach explicitly. So even at the primary school level we want young children to learn about resilience, about self-esteem, about creativity, about critical thinking—problem solving. Yes, accepting the evidence in relation to basic literacy and numeracy but even at the primary school level I think that we can all understand that there are other skills that we would want even young children to learn. Do you teach those in an explicit model and how do you find that experience?

**Mrs GAZULA:** It is a very abstract concept, resilience. You build it; you do not teach it. You can give students the experiences and you can probably guide them. In our school we have social and emotional learning [SEL]. If you google my school you will have those lessons on YouTube. We do believe in teaching those as well. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind and there is no contradiction that those skills are important. We want children to be resilient. We want them to be confident. We want them to be thinkers. I have a clear distinction about two things. Creative thinking, presentation skills and collaborative skills are one thing. Being resilient and being confident are another. I do not want to mix them both. Because the first are skills that you need to work and



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to be successful and the second are skills you need to be good and strong and lead a stable life. They can be taught explicitly within a classroom as well but I do believe you have to have those literacy and numeracy skills to be able to collaborate on a project; you have to have those literacy and numeracy skills to be able to present something.

You have to be able to think within the box to be able to think outside of the box. That is what I think. Therefore high school might be a different setting because where those kids already have those basic skills then they can be creative. But we are sending kids to high school who are not able to read and write who cannot access curriculum. What becomes more important to me is to make sure that they can read and write. Success is the highest motivator. If a child can read and write and access curriculum, they will be resilient. They will want that success; they will want to achieve. That is what I believe.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** In terms of implementing, did you need an education consultant to come in and help you to implement this in your schools?

**Mrs GAZULA:** I did.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** What sort of support was there from the department or through Local Schools, Local Decisions to be able to engage that person?

**Mrs GAZULA:** For me it was very important because sometimes, as a principal, I can lead teaching and learning but I cannot sit and tell, because it becomes a directive. It has to come from someone else, because that is much more palatable for staff. It has to come from an expert who has the knowledge. Local Schools, Local Decisions, again, so I have engaged an external literacy consultant who has taught my teachers how to teach phonics, who has taught my teachers how to teach the 10 elements of writing, who has taught my teachers how to explicitly teach the five areas of reading, who has taught my teachers grammar. Those are the skills that I had to engage an external expert to come and deliver and I have been working with her for the past four years.

The way we structure professional learning is thought out: nothing it is ad hoc and nothing is without a purpose. It is ongoing and it is continuous. Other areas I will lead, such as leading the school's direction. How do we get that school culture? That, I will lead. I will lead the staff myself. With things that are negotiated and I understand—this is better coming from me, I will do it. But if I think it has to come from an expert or someone who is in a better place than I am to do it then I will engage them. Definitely.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Thank you for coming in today. We have spoken a lot about what programs you have implemented that have been successful, but my late father always used to say that you learn as much from your mistakes as you do from what you do to succeed. I am curious to know: Have implemented programs that you found were less than successful or not successful at all? What are you able to share about those learnings? If we can look at the things that are really working in your schools, then we want to know the things that you have tried that have not worked so that others will not be tempted to go down the same path and potentially make the same mistakes.

**Mr ROUSE:** Without going into detail of naming a program and then trying to explain it and then say what did not work—

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Just broadly.

**Mr ROUSE:** —it might be more helpful in taking the learnings, which I think is the point of the question.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Yes.

**Mr ROUSE:** When I think about programs that were less successful, the key there is to always cut them as short as possible so that you are not burning up resources and wasting people's time. There was ones that were too responsive—trying to address a need that we perceived was there; another that we had not triangulated the data enough on—so we were responding to one dataset; and cases where we did not do enough research into not only the nature of the need but also the type of response that we would give. In hindsight, they sound really obvious, but not when you are in the fray—there are people everywhere and you are trying to address a need and you have those kids in front of you right now and they need support. I think the other danger, which of links back to some of the previous questions, is if you think you are going to buy a single curriculum package that will answer the question for every child, that is not the case. Making sure that you are continually following through and rechecking whether there is impact—we have talked about this before where some of the measures of success are people being involved and the activity around it, not the impact that it might be having on students, positive or negative.

Once again it is about having that laser-like focus: These levers that I am going to move, are they addressing the real need that is here? How do I know it is a real need? What is the measure of success? That

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measure of success has to be about changing people's lives and opportunities. I suppose those are some of the learnings that I have taken away from some of the mistakes I have made. However, in saying that, I have always found that if you have—and we work with catchphrases because they motivate people—if I am talking about strategy to support kids in year 13 and that strategy falls apart, it does not mean that building a future for kids in year 13 was the wrong thing, it was just that we went about it in the wrong way. Sometimes the baby is thrown out with the bathwater because we say, "That did not work so obviously we built the wrong success criteria so that's no good." We see that quite often and you have to put people back on track and say, "No, the moral purpose was really strong and the need is still there. What are we doing about it? Let's just find another way."

If I go back to some of the points around teaching or learning, though, you have to be explicit. That is really what explicit teaching is about. You have to come from a strong knowledge base that is credible and you have to build skills in people. Funnily enough, that is what we focus on with kids as well. As we are moving forward I often say, particularly to my 40 leaders, "You are all here because you are very good teachers. You are good at what you do. Lead the staff with the same ideas, do not forget to be a great teacher when you are leading other teachers." Sometimes they forget that. Sometimes they think they have to be a corporate manager or something totally different. Schools are places of learning and everything we should do is about engineering that learning. It is as simple but as complex as that.

**Mrs GAZULA:** For me, I try to refrain from using the word "programs" because I believe that good teaching is just good teaching. You cannot take a program and deliver teaching and when you do that you tend to fall in—if you come to my school and say, "What programs do you do?" I will say, "I do not do programs. I teach them to read, I teach them to write, I teach them maths and I teach them civics." I know there are programs in our system and I tend not to use them. I tend not to use them because I am very conscious of the fact one year of bad teaching pushes a child back two years and with two years of bad teaching, the damage is irreversible. As a principal there is a lot of conscious effort—I am in my seventh year as a principal and I did not know this in my first and second year. It was only as I started doing more readings and becoming more experienced that I made myself a little bit more conscious, asking, "What decisions I make as a principal will impact on the 700 kids who come to my school every year?"

In terms of programs, I will not name it, but if you look back historically at what I have done at my school, there are certain programs that—when I first started at Marsden Road I only went there as a relieving principal. After three weeks there was a certain program that we had and I got rid of it. I did not care whether I was going to get the substantive position at the school or not. I said, "This is not going to work because there is no evidence backing this. Let's put good teaching in place." That is one of them but I do not have any programs. That does not mean to say that everything I am doing is working because I do not know which kids will walk into my door next year and I do not know what their needs will be. I am trying to establish good teaching practice. I want my teachers to have content knowledge and I want them to understand what really works and what is effective in the classroom. I have control over that. Every other factor, there are too many variables for me to say, "I will take this program and just do this."

**The CHAIR:** Just on that, is that not an obvious problem right there, that there are programs available to schools, where you need to go and sort out your own evidence base as to whether or not they are worthwhile and have positive effects? Shouldn't all these things available to schools come with rigorous analysis of what sort of outcomes could be expected—pros and cons, variabilities in what you are trying to achieve?

**Mrs GAZULA:** It is like the publishers. I believe schools come from a good place in the sense that they want—I am not able to think of the response for that actually, you have caught me a little bit off guard. I do not know. There is a plethora of resources out there, but in any profession you would have lots of resources. To be able to then choose one that is the best for your school, is where your skills and your leadership ability is. I think most schools would choose what best suit their context.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** I wanted to get your views. There seems to be a tension between the Local Schools, Local Decisions approach that has allowed you the autonomy to experiment and make changes. I suppose inherent in that is the risk that in other schools that is an opportunity for those schools to fail or for them to drift. I think in this Committee we are grappling with how you generalise, how you scale up. How do you do that without extinguishing the autonomy? Because if we take a model—say, the Canley Vale model or the Marsden Park model—and we impose it on everyone else, then that is the end of local schools and that is the end of experimentation and autonomy. Do you have some thoughts about that dilemma?

**Mr ROUSE:** I suppose the problem there is it is a dilemma because the way that you are thinking about it is very much a dichotomy. If you do not build in the autonomy, then you get mediocrity and you are not going to be happy with that either. The case that Mrs Gazula and I were presenting was that Local Schools, Local Decisions has taken us beyond the box and allowed us to move outside the box. I suppose some of what we carry

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with us is that weight of responsibility—that if we are going to move outside the box and we are going to operate in a particular way, then we will take the accountability for that. So, yes, it is a difficult one. I can only agree with you that it is a difficult one.

When you are talking about scaling up across a whole State and a diversity of contexts, when you look at New South Wales, with 2,213 schools we have close to 500 that have a teaching principal, so there might be a school about this big. How do you make that work, what supports can you put in place and what do those local decisions in that space look like? That is why, in my mind, I keep coming back to the idea of—I have to come down to the micro and hope that the sum of the parts equals the whole. But it is a hope, running on the principle that I just need to identify the needs that are in my school: the learning needs, the welfare needs and the developmental needs of the children in front of me. I have a small village of staff and students—significant population. If I focus on that, then I contribute to the whole.

The value that I get from the whole is that when I get stuck, there is somebody around the corner. There is somebody sitting in a central office. There is somebody sitting in educational services or there is Mrs Gazula in the next suburb, where I can say, "Hey, I'm having this issue. Have you had that before?" You know, pick up some of those shared experiences and make sure I do not trip over something that is problematic. I think what we have gotten in my career—I have been in public education now for 26 years. I would have to say that probably only in the last three to five years have we gotten much better at that type of sharing. The sharing allows you to calibrate what is working and what is not working. We are better at forming networks and we have more networks than we ever had before. That does not mean that we just go out to lunches a lot, but you can actually look across at a different context or look at who has a different problem and find out where the solutions may be.

I think things like CESE have been a great addition to my work in that it allows me to get a broad scope without actually having to dig through piles and piles of academic papers that I, frankly, fall asleep to at 11 o'clock at night after a hard day. It allows me to cut through and find what I am looking for and then to be able to test it in my school. I think things like—this is personal experience—having my line supervisor only looking after 20 schools instead of looking after almost double that amount has made a difference, because I have more opportunities to touch base with him and he can bring in those shared experiences as well. So I think there have been a few levers.

I would say that the important part of it is that it is still only early days. But those sorts of things have really made a big difference and hopefully they are addressing across the system that sharing of ideas. I know in my network, the Fairfield network—and we have been published in CESE—there are common strands running through all the schools around how we address welfare, how we address literacy and how we address numeracy. Seven of those schools in my network are sitting in the high value-add range, and that is not by accident; that is by design. That is about how we work together as a network, and we have other networks that come and visit us to learn what we have learnt. But as I say to you, 26 years—it is early days.

**The CHAIR:** One way of scaling up is to broaden the extent of your network—either the Fairfield network or the partners in learning that Mrs Gazula is running, which is sort of informal and has got to a level of five other schools without any extra resources. What sort of things could be done through extra resources, Mrs Gazula, if you had a Marsden way facilitator available to you, extra staff and extra money to broaden the extent of your network without diminishing the results that you are getting in your own school? How would that work in practice, do you think?

**Mrs GAZULA:** Currently, with what we have, I must say that I am very pleased to be able to support—I have extended the support knowing very well that it will not have any negative impact on my school and what I am doing. So that support has only been extended after I had put in thoughts as to if I send my instructional leader away four times a term, is that going to have an impact on my student learning; and it has not. Therefore, within what I have right now I am able to do it quite well and quite comfortably. So it is not necessarily about extra money, for me; it is more about being strategic with what I have.

I think I am quite happy doing what I am doing right now, and it is not having, really, any impact on my school because what we are doing is we are building capacity within our school. So if my instructional leader is away for that four days, I have got someone else who is able to do what he is doing because we have built capacity in the last four years within our school. So it is building capacity within your school and in other schools so that you are not depending on just funding all the time. The more you build capacity with what you have right now, you are then building that wealth of knowledge anyway within your school basis.

**The CHAIR:** But could you use extra resources for this purpose? It seems to me that teachers coming from another school are more likely to be impressed and encouraged by seeing success in a real school environment than reading CESE papers or John Hattie's books or some other thing. It is all very interesting, but teachers would be more animated by looking at practical examples of success. Would extra resources help you in

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that regard? You might not have thought about it, but it is something that I think, in taking an exemplar school and extending its influence in the system, surely must have a lot of potential.

**Mrs GAZULA:** As I said, we are already doing it. Maybe that is a question that I do not know whether we could—

**The CHAIR:** We want to clone you, but we have not got the science to do that. But how do we clone the success and get beyond five schools in an informal arrangement into something—

**Mrs GAZULA:** More formal.

**The CHAIR:** —that builds up into more potential? Mr Rouse, what is your network experience?

**Mr ROUSE:** I think mine is the same as Mrs Gazula's. We reach down into quite a number of schools around a range of projects, largely focused on the students that are coming into us. We have been able to do that in probably the most meaningful way that I have seen, to be quite modest. That is about addressing those student needs, but also we are building the capacity of teachers in other schools around us. I suppose the real trick to it is how far can you reach?

**The CHAIR:** Yes, that is what I am asking.

**Mr ROUSE:** I really do not have a magic wand on that one. I know there are jurisdictions around the world that have explored that and started to explore that—I could not tell you who they are but I am aware that there are some out there—where they will pick up teams like ours and place them into other schools. I do worry about if someone walked over and said, "Peter, I'd like you to take one of your deputies and two of your head teachers and go into another high school." The credibility, the relationship—there are lots of interpersonal hurdles to begin with: "Why would these people be coming into my school?" if somebody was doing that and dropping people in.

So the way that you reach is also as important as how do you reach out. Doing my neighbouring schools is easier because I already have a strong relationship with them. But we also have relationships with other networks that are not close to us, like Coffs Harbour. But the same as Mrs Gazula—they are networks that have come and knocked on our door first and the assessment that I have made is that we can give some level of support if we are not putting at risk the learning of the students that we have in our care. That is always the number one. I think it is a great question. It is a very complex solution.

**Mrs GAZULA:** It is not necessarily all this extra funding can solve it because you need the expertise within the department and the schools to be able to do that. I may have six experts at the moment in my school who I am comfortable saying that is good and do a demonstration or do a professional learning, but if I have 10 schools I may not have that expertise within my school yet.

**The CHAIR:** I mentioned that school in Dubbo on Tuesday. It is such a good school. There must be eight or nine other schools in Dubbo, government and non-government. I just thought to myself would it not be good if that success is known to all those other schools, they are working in a network. I can understand why you are saying your sort of organic model of networking you are comfortable with it, it sort of flowed out of your success, as they have approached you, you have helped them. Maybe you can take it on notice and come back to us later, if you have any thinking about what we can recommend to scale up the success of exemplar schools in a networking fashion, whether it is resourcing, staff, time-sharing, whatever it might be. I think it is very, very valuable in the system because obviously there is not enough of it happening when you look at our overall results.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** If I could just add there, we have the directors, educational leadership, if you like, that sort of have about 20 schools. Surely part of that role is to look at these sorts of opportunities to, if you like, filter these ideas into that network.

**Mr ROUSE:** Absolutely.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** That is what is happening in your experience.

**Mrs GAZULA:** I have had my director recommend some new principals to just partner them with some other principals. I have previously worked with Liverpool Hospital School because it is such a completely different setting, the hospital school. The principal does not know who is going to walk in through her door and it could be anybody from a five-year-old to an 18-year-old. So working with her, for that principal from that school, having a partnership with a school that is more mainstream has been important. That came from a director, so they do play that role. If they see there is a need in a certain school and another school is able to support them they do make those connections, definitely.

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**Mr ROUSE:** And the same, I have been called in to go and support other principals as well, and sometimes it is about having an extra set of eyes on the problems that may be at the school and they just need that point of reference, but sometimes it is also about the stage of development of that principal as well and clearing some of the little hurdles so that they can actually get to the big problems in that school. That definitely happens. The other support that the system has is a PSL—a principal school leadership. They have a similar role where they are experienced principals; they have left their school and they are attached to networks and they can come in and do side-by-side work with principals. Once again, it is a relatively new initiative and probably has not had the traction that it needs to have at this stage, and the same with the restructure of a directors, education leadership [DELS]. So, once again, I think we are heading in the right direction but the level of maturity is just very low at the moment because we are talking about initiatives that are about two years old, both of those.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you so much. It has been a fantastic session. I have had the opportunity to visit both your schools and I have learnt a lot more today. So the more we hear about your success it really helps our deliberations and the report we are working on.

**Mrs GAZULA:** Thank you very much. It has been a privilege.

**Mr ROUSE:** Thank you very much.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** Keep up the good work.

**(The witnesses withdrew.)**

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**MURAT DIZDAR**, Deputy Secretary, School Operations and Performance, NSW Department of Education, on former oath

**GEORGINA HARRISSON**, Deputy Secretary, Educational Services, NSW Department of Education, affirmed and examined

**The CHAIR:** Do either of you want to make an opening statement? As you know, with this Committee we have got many general questions and also things related to our inquiry purposes, but specifically Mr D'Adam had been asking for information about the Bump It Up strategy and program and also the Tell Them From Me survey. If you want to say something about that or anything else that is useful for us we would very much appreciate it before we get into Q and A.

**Ms HARRISSON:** If it is okay with the Committee I will give a few opening remarks in relation to the terms of reference that you are looking at, and then I am very happy to follow on with Tell Them From Me and the Bump It Up strategy. We really appreciate the opportunity to come back and provide you with further evidence in your inquiry today. I know that you have already heard from my Treasury colleagues and from some department colleagues on the approach being taken through outcome-based budgeting to support the delivery of improved outcomes for the citizens of New South Wales. I would not mind just taking a few moments to set out what outcome-based budgeting is and is not when it comes to how we think about performance of our public school system and to provide you with some further insight into how we in the Department of Education are seeking to improve outcomes of students in our public schools.

So what is outcome-based budgeting and what is it not? It is not our funding model for schools. The needs-based resource allocation model, which has been in place since 2013, will continue to determine funding for schools. Under this model, students living with disadvantage and with additional needs will continue to receive targeted equity funding to ensure schools can support effective learning to all students. Outcome-based budgeting is an approach to increase the department's capacity to ensure that all our policies, programs and the support we provide to schools is having the impact on student outcomes that we are seeking to achieve. It is through this approach that the department can be held to account for whether we make effective investment decisions within our budget to support student outcomes improving.

It is also worth noting that when we talk about student outcomes we are not just focused on a single, narrow measure. We are considering broad measures of learning, wellbeing, equity and independence. We are, of course, tracking whether all students have strong foundations in literacy and numeracy skills and that their grasp of the curriculum is growing year on year. But we are also asking if our students feel a sense of belonging, advocacy and connection at school. Is every child known, valued and cared for? We do this because we know that it has a direct impact on student outcomes, as you can see in the latest Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation [CESE] research paper that was published this week.

We are working with schools to also focus on how they can lift student outcomes across those set of measures. We are in the process of establishing targets at the school level to ensure that every school is clear on what they are aiming for. In addition, we are setting network-level targets to support the delivery of the Premier's Priority to increase the proportion of Aboriginal students achieving the HSC and increasing their cultural identity. These targets will provide the framework for our ongoing engagement with schools, on what they are focused on and whether it is having the impact. Ongoing discussions with principals and school leadership teams about how they are planning to achieve their targets will be central to the work of the Directors, Education Leadership.

As we lift the expectations of our schools we are continuing to increase the support we provide to them, tailored to their needs in their context directly based in evidence and focused on improving student outcomes. This support, like our professional learning, is based on the evidence of what works and takes this evidence and supports schools to take it into practice. We are using the evidence base we are creating and we are building the confidence and capacity of our workforce to implement that evidence in their classrooms. Thank you for giving me the chance to give some opening remarks and I am very happy to take questions.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Dizdar?

**Mr DIZDAR:** We will share the same opening remarks.

**The CHAIR:** It might be best to proceed by looking at the specific purpose, that was Bump It Up and the survey and then we can finally wrap it up with the third issue, which is the general question of outcome-based budgeting, which, after all, is the purpose of the inquiry, but we have curious minds and we have roamed around a bit and are hoping to do many useful things under that general coverage. Mr D'Adam?

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** I wanted to start with Mr Dizdar. We had evidence earlier from the department around the development of other measures, but I think there is sort of an absence of any detail about

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what they look like. I have looked at the School Excellence Framework and I am assuming that is one of the starting places for where the measures and metrics will be developed. I have looked at the strategic plan; there is clearly a goal around the issues that you were talking about around student belonging and centred advocacy and it seems that the Tell Them From Me survey seems to be the principal instrument but we do not actually have a lot of information about Tell Them From Me, how it is being used, how it feeds into the metrics and measures of the department, and I thought that was an obvious given, having looked at the material that you have provided, which I thought was very useful, the surveys for students, and I understand there are also two subsidiary survey instruments for parents and for teachers.

**Mr DIZDAR:** Correct.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** They were not in the package of material that got sent through, but I would appreciate some information about how those two elements are used. I suppose what I would like to get to is: How is this instrument being used and why is not the central metric for the department, rather than NAPLAN, which seems to be the other principle metric that is being used in general discourse around educational performance? Why is Tell Them From Me survey not more pronounced in the work of the department?

**Ms HARRISSON:** I will kick off with some background to the survey. It is operated out of the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation [CESE]. The Tell Them From Me survey has been running in schools for a number of years. Schools have opted in to use that survey as part of their own assessment of where they are at and the things they would like to focus on. You will find high schools opting in to the survey for particular cohorts of students at particular times to see how they are tracking. We are now looking to make that a mandatory survey across the system. We will be looking to start the implementation of that from next year. There are currently two survey windows each year, and it will probably be in the second half of the year that the survey becomes a mandatory requirement. That is happening for exactly the reasons that you have stated: that we think it is a really central measure and that we want to look at the sense of belonging that students have with their schools and their peer groups, because we know that there is a very strong correlation between that and learning outcomes.

We are very clear that we want to look at this because it improves educational outcomes, as well as the overall wellbeing of the whole child. That survey, as it becomes more embedded, will absolutely become the base of measures and performance throughout the system. We will expect people to be using Tell Them From Me as a part of the target setting process if they are looking at those wellbeing indicators. We are also looking at other indicators such as attendance within that context too and how that plays into that overall mix. We are very happy to provide you with a parent and teacher survey on notice.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Will the parent and teacher surveys be mandatory as well? Some schools opt in, some schools opt out, some schools just run the student survey and some schools just run the parent and teacher surveys. The whole range gives you the 360 degree picture and it seems to me that that would be a sensible thing to implement. Rather just having one element, mandating all three would be helpful. Do you have a view about that?

**Ms HARRISSON:** We are currently working through what the implementation of this will look like for next year. There are some challenges with language barriers and other things that we need to overcome for some communities. We are working on what the translation options are consistently across the State so we can make it available. We are also considering access to the survey online and making sure that that is accessible for as broad a group as possible. We have not yet taken a decision about which elements of the survey would be mandatory and on what frequency. You can imagine that for some parents they may not want to be asked the number of questions that we have every year—many would, but not all of them. We want to make sure that we maintain survey engagement so we get good results that are reliable and statistically significant on a regular and continuing basis. We are working through what that looks like with schools at the moment to see where we think that will go. But we have not made a final decision yet.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Earlier in our deliberations we discussed the issue around the confidentiality of the survey instrument. That leads me to ask questions around why you chose a propriety model in terms of the survey instrument and what limitations that might place on the sharing of the data with the survey respondents, which is best practice when you do surveys. The best practice is to share the results of the surveys with the people who have participated in providing the information. It is their information. Could you comment on what limitations the proprietary model might have on your capacity to share the results?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Murat might have something further to add, but we would expect schools locally to be talking through with their community about what they have asked, what they have found, what they have learnt and, therefore, what they are going to do. In any scenario where that happens we will make sure that we protect confidentiality, because surveys like this fall apart in terms of their trust levels if confidentiality feels like it is being compromised by anyone who is taking part. They are the kinds of things we are trying to make sure we

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balance off. We want to make sure that it is anonymous and that people know they can give us clear feedback and that in our system that is how it is set up. But we would expect schools to unpack with their school community what they have found, what they have heard and what they are going to do about it.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** There is a summary document available for each school, is there not?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Yes.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Is that provided to parents?

**Ms HARRISSON:** That would be a school's decision.

**Mr DIZDAR:** We would encourage all of the schools to—there is rich, valuable feedback for them in their planning and the directions they will take for their school—provide that back to students, parents and the community and to be transparent around what they are focusing on and what the data is revealing in terms of student engagement and wellbeing. Close to 1,800 schools value this instrument. It is a rich and powerful data source that says, "Our main clients are our students and what are they replaying back to us, alongside our parents and alongside our teachers, who are in front of them everyday?" That triangulation is really powerful. You can have a concerted effort around enhancing student wellbeing in your school context and you can have certain programs, positions and initiatives in place.

Engagement is the holy grail for educators in terms of connecting students to classrooms and learning experiences. You can think they are tracking well and then you can look at external data performance. That might be strong in that context. This is a powerful replay of student voice and agency in that path. I do know of many schools that do it well. We probably could be more supportive at a system level around giving guidance and advice about how to do that really well, with some supporting material around the distribution of the summary results to schools. It is probably an area we could do better in at the system level to give that guidance.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** On notice, could you please provide the specific number of schools that participate, how many are locked in and how many participate in one but not the other in terms of the elements of the survey? Is there a limitation in terms of the proprietary model? Does that place any limits on the way the data can be used? Who owns the data?

**Mr DIZDAR:** I think it is best if we take those questions on notice. Our folk who lead this in the CESE would have ensured that the system data is available for us to use at a system level, because we have been doing that for a fair while; and that the school would have the individual data. But we will take on notice the specifics for you. I would not want to get that wrong. With all of our engagements around surveys and action research pieces that are going to give us evidence and data at a system level, we are highly cognisant of the protection mechanisms around the privacy of that information, as well as being able to feed it back to the participants who have provided that information. We will take that on notice.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** It is a pretty critical measure of student engagement in particular. If we are looking for any measure in this Committee, student engagement is the one that is going to tell us a lot about what is happening in a school. If you look at the specific engagement questions in the survey instrument, having some transparency at a system-wide level seems to be very important.

**Mr DIZDAR:** There is such powerful information. Our students are telling us their views and perceptions around learning, time, perseverance, interest, motivation, advocacy, engagement, sense of belonging and the use of ICT for learning. There are so many domains that we are getting feedback on from our students that add to the rich tapestry of a school's ability to create success for students. We have come so far from my principalship. You met two of our principals earlier today. Previously at the school level it was left to schools to make up their own survey as their way of capturing student voice. We can also look at those results against the rich database—because it comes out of the Learning Bar in Canada—of what other young people are saying in their learning experiences. It gives us a great comparison point. We are finding that the schools that have adopted it are staying the journey because it is a rich and powerful data source for them.

**The CHAIR:** How reliable can it be? Isn't there a natural inclination for students, in particular, to tell the school the things that keeps the kids out of trouble—that the school would want to hear? I fail to believe there would be many kids out there that would be telling you stuff that might be problematic. For the parents participating, those of us involved in politics could attest to the unreliability of surveys and polls in recent times. There seems to be a growing scepticism that privacy is safe and that tactical answers can work their way in. It is hard to get representative samples of the community.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** But also, presumably, because it is a classification that is self-selecting. If someone has a problem they are more likely to participate to air that view, as opposed to, "It's all fine. I'm just going to delete the email because I'm busy."



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**Ms HARRISSON:** I think obviously there are number of things in that. We have to build the confidence and trust with how we look after the data and how we use it and apply it so that people feel confident that they can complete the survey and that they can do so honestly and without any repercussions in a school if they were trying to make sure they could get their voices heard.

**The CHAIR:** Even the people with problems. You can talk to a lot of parents—some from certain ethnic backgrounds—who are very reluctant to identify problems in the school, thinking that it will rebound on the kids. That is certainly a factor out there.

**Ms HARRISSON:** As we gather more data we will be able to see if those trends apply across different school types with different community make-ups, and be able to look for those sorts of patterns. I think it is important, though, to remember that having some data to support us in those decisions, and to understand, as far as we can, what is happening in a school context, and how our students are responding to their educational environment is a really important tool for us. We would want to make sure that we balance that. So, yes, have the right caveats on the data, ask the right questions about the data, about whether or not it gives you a true picture. But some information is better than no information when you are trying to get a sense of how our students are tracking.

**The CHAIR:** But you said you were going to use it as the base of measure performance in the system. Surely it is not at that level.

**Ms HARRISSON:** We are using it for the base of a wellbeing indicator, so we are not using it on its own. We are using a basket of measures overall. We are saying to schools this year, "Please set a target in literacy and numeracy and, at network level, the Aboriginal completion rate of the HSC. Please make sure that you comply." That is a kind of a requirement across the system. "Please look at these other measure and tell us which of those you think is the right thing for you to set a target for, for your school." In the first year it will not be mandatory. In the second year we will ask them to choose measures that go to wellbeing, attendance and equity. From those, Tell Them From Me will be one of the clear sources of data for those measures.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Will those targets be public?

**Mr DIZDAR:** We are just working with our schools at the moment. Targets are not new. Schools have always had targets. My principalship back in 2005 had targets in the school plan. The difference here is that we are actually doing the heavy lifting for our schools—all the analysis of the school's trajectory. A similar context. I explained this to the Committee last time. On advantage and disadvantage, the same score of advantage and disadvantage, who are the sites punching above where this school might be punching in terms of reading, numeracy or attendance, and who are the ones that might be struggling? So we are providing this information to the school principal and then working with the school principal to build that into their school plan.

**The CHAIR:** But you are not going to publish the targets because you are not going to publish the outcome school by school.

**Mr DIZDAR:** We are not going to publish the targets. We are publishing the school plan, which will have some of these improvement measures that feed into an annual report.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** If you do not publish the targets, basically the department is the only point of accountability. There is no other scrutiny on whether schools are achieving what they are aspiring to achieve.

**Mr DIZDAR:** As the community would appreciate, it is really important that we get the buy-in from the schools, as I just explained, in the process. Once having done that, the school plan is a public-facing document, always has been. It sits on the web site of the school. It will have the improvement measures, just like it has. So it will be available for anyone in that school community, or anyone who wants to look up that school, to see what those improvement measures look like. They actually sit in current school plans; it is just that we intend to be more systematic around that by not allowing schools just to pick and choose what those targets might be, not allowing them to maybe do all the guesswork as well as the analysis work around it, and do that at a systematic level across the board. So we are in those conversations at the moment, Mr D'Adam, and we have given ourselves, with the school principals and the directors educational leadership, until the end of term 1 to lock in targets across the five areas—the five areas being literacy; numeracy; attendance; wellbeing, which we have just been talking to with Tell Them From Me; and equity.

**The CHAIR:** But in 2020 it is just the Premier's priorities.

**Mr DIZDAR:** In 2020, Chair, it is the two Premier's priorities.

**The CHAIR:** What are they again, sorry?

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**Mr DIZDAR:** The top two NAPLAN bands—that we will increase the proportion of our students in the top two NAPLAN bands in reading and numeracy, separately not combined. So every public school will need a target by the end of term 1 on reading and numeracy top two bands that we have collegially locked in with them, and all of our secondaries will need a target locked into their school plan around our Aboriginal education priority—that we will increase the proportion of our Aboriginal students attaining an HSC by 50 per cent. So we are doing that school specific. Where we do not have enough Aboriginal students, as Georgina, my colleague, explained, we will be doing that across a network, so that the Director Educational Leadership can hold all of our schools to account in terms of a total student population. It is important that we also call out, in that priority, that we are also charged with enhancing the cultural identity and preserving the cultural identity of our Aboriginal students.

So, Chair, those two target areas will be locked in. The others we are building confidence in the system in our discussion. We are showing schools all of them, and I can report to the Committee today that we are up to just over 200 schools that have already locked in their targets. We have given them until the end of term 1 but they are already locked in, after their first meeting with the Director Educational Leadership, and close to 70 per cent of those schools have chosen to take on a non-optional target for 2020 that we have shown them. So they have chosen something to do with attendance or wellbeing or equity. They have bought in early. In 2021, every public school will need a measure in attendance, wellbeing and equity—a system measure that we are producing and working with.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** These are sector-wide, so will that be aggregated? Will those targets be aggregated and there will be some kind of sector-wide reporting?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Certainly with the Premier's priority we have sector-wide targets that are public.

**The CHAIR:** That first one, is that just primary schools—literacy and numeracy?

**Ms HARRISSON:** No, it is primary and secondary. It is NAPLAN at each of the stages—three, five, seven and nine. If I could go to your point around accountability, I think that one of the things that Murat has touched on, is that we want our schools to be accountable to the local communities. That is why the school plan is so important. We want there to be a sense that we have a clear sense of where a school is heading—that the school can set out the plan it has in place to the community through its school plan on how it is going to achieve those outcomes. The relationship, then, with the Director Educational Leadership is the heart of the accountability mechanism in the system, but that needs to be a supportive one. We want to be there tailoring our support and making sure that for our principals we are providing the input they need to embed the effective practices through their schools to lift the performance for their students in their context. So it is a support and challenge model. That is the way I would describe it, and we want to make sure that we are getting the balance between those two things right.

Obviously, then, through line management chains through the organisation individuals are held accountable across their responsibilities in those areas. I do want to make sure that we are clear that there are set of other things that come from the department that will support schools in achieving those outcomes. We have had the Early Action for Success program for the last few years, that has shown significant increases in results in some of our more complex settings, where we had a focused effort to bring students out of the bottom two bands of NAPLAN and above the national minimum standard. That has been incredibly successful. It is where we have tested the model of instructional leadership that you heard Manisha talk about earlier, that has been highly successful in our schools and has been adopted more widely and outside of those schools.

Some of those initiatives that come from the department that support the delivery of outcomes in schools are as much a part of the picture for how we deliver these outcomes. We do not want to make each of our schools an individual island and cast them off and say, "This is your job", with hard accountability lines where they do not feel they can access the support they need. We want to get that support-and-challenge balance right through the system to drive the performance outcomes we want to see and to embed the effective practice we think is necessary to achieve those outcomes.

**The CHAIR:** Should we now turn to Bump It Up? Are there questions about the survey? No? We turn to Bump It Up.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** I am curious about Bump It Up as well. This is the specific strategy to achieve the Premier's priority. That is what it seems from the paperwork that I have looked at. It looks like it is specifically directed to achieving that uplift from the middle two bands into the top two bands.

**Mr DIZDAR:** This was a strategy we used with 137 schools when we first had the first iteration of the Premier's priority. The Premier's priority back in 2016 was, again, to increase the proportion of students in the top two NAPLAN bands.

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**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** What was the measure? It was 8 per cent, was it not?

**Mr DIZDAR:** It was 8 per cent and now it is 15 per cent. At the time we did internal analysis that identified there were 137 schools in the system that had a lot of students in the middle bands—a large number of students in the middle bands in reading and numeracy. We went to those schools and said, "You have got significant uplift potential. Do you realise what your data looks like? You have got some students here who may not be hitting where they could hit. They might be cruising through school. They could be quiet and lost in the context. Can you put faces to the data for these students?" We actually set them an aspiration, a target, for 2019. It was from 2016 to 2019 for those 137 sites around reading and numeracy combined.

We are now using the learnings from Bump It Up from the 137 schools to go broader right across the system with the maintenance of the same Premier's priority. It goes back to what I said to the Chair and the Committee earlier. From 2020 we are providing literacy and numeracy measures—the top two bands—for every school in the system. I say this to the Committee: This was a bit of a cultural shift in 2016. In public education people take great pride in being able to close the gaps, pick up learners who might be behind the eight ball and close the gaps. Schools do a lot in lifting students who might be struggling, in my experience, and Ms Harrisson spoke about the Early Action for Success.

This shifted the dial to say, "Are you aware of students who could be cruising along here, who go through schooling and do not get to their maximum potential?" We really pushed our leaders to thinking about moving all kids and not missing those who have great potential to move into the upper bands. So, from our perspective, it is a really great outcome that we have stayed the course with that Premier's priority—that the Premier's priority repeats itself—because chopping and changing measures is very frustrating for school principals and teachers. So we welcome and our school communities, in terms of our leaders leading those communities, really welcome that. So we are taking that 2016-2019 approach to go right across the system now with the top two bands.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Was there an evaluation of the Bump It Up strategy for the 137 schools?

**Mr DIZDAR:** Of the 137 schools—please do not hold me to the numbers; I am happy to give the numbers back to the Committee—91 of them showed improvement in reading and numeracy compared to where they were in 2016.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Was a proper evaluation done?

**Mr DIZDAR:** I was just getting to the outcome results.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** You have got to let the man finish.

**Mr DIZDAR:** About a quarter of them actually met the target that had been set. So 91 moved forward. About a quarter there met the target. We have done a lot of field analysis with these sites on the journey to ascertain great information across educational services and school operations about what does work and did not work. One of the things that has come clear is the importance of providing tailored support to that area of need. So if, for a particular school, it is in reading expertise, how do we partner with that school in a sustained fashion to build staff capacity, confidence, skill set around reading pedagogy, for instance, and this is where our tailored support is now moving with my colleague Ms Harrisson.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Excuse me if my questions are a bit ignorant. I am new to this Committee. Is it your evidence that three quarters of the schools that participated in the initial program did not meet the targets that they had set and, yet, your assessment was that this was so successful that you would want to roll it out statewide?

**Mr DIZDAR:** I commit to coming back to the Committee with the numbers. It is a good call-out because that is part of the learning as well. How we laid down these targets with those schools—

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Was there a sense that the targets were too aspirational?

**Mr DIZDAR:** We have taken a lot of learnings from that process. How we went to those schools, in my view, could have been done a lot stronger and better. So we did go there and say, "Here is a number. We have done the lifting and here is a number. Are you aware of the data?" We did have some affronted school principals and school communities who, on raw results, looked quite strong but in band analysis could have done a lot better. So we have taken a lot of learnings ourselves as a system, and that is why the current data conversations we are having have been a lot more fruitful and productive. We are doing it in a lot more respectful manner about showing where that school is at, its trajectory, similar context, and we are not looking to lock away a single number. We are saying we are looking to create a zone—two numbers—and we are negotiating that with the principal. So it is

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quite top-down—Bump It Up with the 137—with support that could have been much stronger and better as well. So we have taken those learnings into this process.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Can I ask you about Progressive Achievement Tests [PAT]? From what I can gather that seems to be another standardised test that is built into the Bump It Up strategy. Can you explain what PAT is and how it works?

**Ms HARRISSON:** We made the PAT tests available to all schools that were taking part in the Bump It Up strategy as a way of monitoring student progress. PAT tests provide an opportunity to do pre and post testing around particular skills and learning sprints, and we were able to offer that as a school. There is a fee for using those tests and we made them available to those schools.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** They are proprietary as well, are they?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Yes, they are. It was an opportunity to provide an assessment tool that would be common across the schools so that the school could then look at where students were on an ongoing basis and target the support that they need to provide to individual students. It is one of the ways, since that time and since Bump It Up started, that we have been implementing learning progressions which were a way of teachers assessing where a student is at in a formative way through their learning experience, which, for us, gives us another opportunity for thinking about how we provide assessments to the system to support that ongoing monitoring of student progress.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** I think the Minister might have spoken about that in the House. These are the alternatives being looked at around getting richer data, rather than just reliance on NAPLAN. Is that correct?

**Ms HARRISSON:** We are very clear that in a classroom context many of our teachers are gathering data about their students all the time. In every piece of work that a child does in a classroom, a teacher is providing some feedback and marking that and giving a view of where that student is up to. What we are trying to do is facilitate that process more strongly. The learning progressions give a consistent framework for teachers to be able to compare individual students within their class and across classrooms. So if everyone is making the same assessment on the same set of skills, you can then start to see what that looks like across your school. As we look to now build assessments to support that so that schools will be able to use assessments provided by the department that map directly onto the learning progressions, they will be able to run concurrently within classes—but absolutely in a low-stakes way—assessments of where a student's learning is up to on specific elements of the progressions.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** That could be done across the system, could it?

**Ms HARRISSON:** That would be possible to do across the system, in time, yes.

**The CHAIR:** Can I ask about the practicalities of Bump It Up? It says these are schools implementing locally developed, targeted initiatives in literacy. So, in practice, this is just more money for those local initiatives?

**Ms HARRISSON:** The local initiatives would be ones within the school, yes.

**The CHAIR:** Yes, that is what I mean. In the end Bump It Up is simply some more money for the local initiatives already underway?

**Mr DIZDAR:** Bump It Up did not come with any financial resource, Chair.

**The CHAIR:** What is it, then?

**Mr DIZDAR:** It was a target-setting process around where the schools said with their—

**The CHAIR:** No money?

**Mr DIZDAR:** It had no funding. It had the Director, Educational Leadership's oversight and support and it had support, in some cases, that came from school services to sites that we could not partner.

**The CHAIR:** But if the schools are developing their own initiatives and there is no extra money, what is the trick here? What is the thing is getting the better results? Not that the results were fantastic: A quarter of the schools met the target. What really was going on here? What makes Bump It Up some worthwhile thing to do if it is just what the schools are already doing with no extra money? What is the trick?

**Mr DIZDAR:** In a lot of cases, what it does is it gives a good, concentrated look at the data. You are sitting down—

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**The CHAIR:** Yes, but you can look at the data any day you want. It does not have to be given a special name, "Bump It Up", or linked to Premier's Priorities.

**Mr DIZDAR:** It allowed us to grow that data confidence and capacity and understanding.

**The CHAIR:** You would not normally do that as part of your everyday job?

**Mr DIZDAR:** Yes, we would, and we have continued to invest in it since with Bump It Up.

**The CHAIR:** Well, what is the investment, sorry?

**Mr DIZDAR:** In terms of the—

**The CHAIR:** What is your interest in it?

**Mr DIZDAR:** In terms of our analysis, in terms of the work for each school in the background to take to them to show and grow their confidence and understanding of where they are at.

**The CHAIR:** Well, excuse me for being cynical—maybe it comes with advancing years and being around politics for too long—but if I was a smartie in the Premier's office I would say, "We are going to have these Premier's Priorities, which are at the top end of the scale. We will move people into the higher two bands and we will pick out 137 schools that have got a soft middle of potential" and then somehow say that that is the low-hanging fruit, that this is—isn't the big equity thing in New South Wales the kids right at the bottom, who cannot read and write getting into the middle years of high school? They are totally illiterate and innumerate. Their life is in serious danger of permanent underclass existence. Is that not a real priority for New South Wales, rather than this thing that looks like it is a bit managed and tailored to suit the fact that the Premier's got her name as part of the strategy?

**Mr DIZDAR:** I would say the priority for every school and for us as a system is to move every student forward, whether they are in the bottom bands, in the middle bands—

**The CHAIR:** But isn't the biggest priority kids who cannot read and write by the time they get into the middle years of high school? We have all got an interest in fixing up that problem, because in welfare payments, law and order, people breaking into your—the serious equity priority must be those who cannot read and write, not the low-hanging fruit in 137 schools picked out to meet a target at the top end, surely?

**Ms HARRISSON:** We have not just focused on one thing. We identified the 500 schools now that are Early Action for Success schools. They were schools that had the highest proportion of students in those bottom two bands, to make sure that we were increasing the educational outcomes for exactly the cohort you are referring to. Bump It Up was our first stab at saying, "Actually, everyone should be improving. We should not just be targeting there. There is lift that everyone should be getting". As we look to our strategic plan, where we have been very clear—we think every student, every teacher, every leader and every school should improve every year. That goes to the whole system, not just to one part of it.

The Bump It Up strategy enabled us to identify those schools that we felt had room to lift and had room to improve and that were not getting that extra additional investment that we were applying to the Early Action For Success schools that were dealing in closing those equity gaps, but that still had capacity—through more effective use of data, more targeting of their expertise, better use of evidence-based practice in their schools—to lift further. We would of course want to see that, too. This is not an either/or; this is a both.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Except one is the Premier's Priority and one is not. That is the problem, is it not?

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I will just pick up on this point. We went to Mimosa Road Public School. One of the comments from the principal there was effectively that it could be a "coasting" school—that it could, without any change of focus, still do alright. It did not have a community of interest that was jumping up and down demanding better results, but it decided to implement—and I do not know if it came out of Bump It Up—a different model using measurement in order to improve its results. Is that the kind of school you are looking for, effectively, and saying—and I know it has now spread across all schools but, in terms of your targets, were you looking at some of those schools that because of the socio-economic data sort of were coasting in the middle but you saw the potential for that school to do better?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Yes, that is exactly what we saw as one of the elements. I think the other thing I would like to comment on around the Premier's Priority is that we know high expectations really matter and are one of the evidence-based practices to lift student outcomes—having aspirational targets through the system that are about pulling up into the top two bands. If we only look at lifting people up out of the bottom two bands we will not get an ongoing lift in the overall results in education. We are not lifting the top two bands just on their

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own. The theory behind it is you will lift the whole school, because to achieve those top two bands you have to have quality teaching practices in place. That is what, in the end, will make the difference for those kids who are currently sitting underneath the minimum standard.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** One other quick point in terms of the 25 per cent: Looking at the press release that was issued with Bump It Up, it was 25 per cent in the first year, is that right? Was there a longer time frame that was envisaged as part of that trial for those 137 schools?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Those targets were set in 2016 to be realised by 2019 and 25 per cent did reach that target in the first year.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** So in the first year, from 2016 to 2017, 25 per cent reached that target?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Yes.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** So we are not talking about 25 per cent across the whole program; we are talking about 25 per cent achieving their three-year target within one year?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Yes. We will come back and confirm the actual numbers across each of the years, if that would be helpful for the Committee.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. You can take that on notice.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Bump It Up will be one of the targets in each school, is that correct?

**Mr DIZDAR:** Which is the Premier's Priority: The top two NAPLAN bands for reading and numeracy will be in every school as a target in 2020.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Rather than focusing on the bottom end that needs the most help, the target is going to be driven to this middle group?

**Mr DIZDAR:** With due respect, I think my colleague Ms Harrisson explained it really well. Focusing on moving the students to the top two bands means moving all your kids. Schools focus on moving every student from where they are at, whatever band they are sitting in. To lift into the top two bands, you do not just look at students in the middle; you are looking at lifting students right across the board.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Can I just quote from a document—it is a departmental document for the 2016-2019 project. It states:

The Director should also discuss with each Principal an implementation plan for improvement. The plan should be explicit and focused on targeting assistance to all students at their level of need. The implementation plan needs to include a standardised assessment of all students ... in participating schools, to be conducted twice each year ...

**The Hon. WES FANG:** I hope you are going to table that for Hansard.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** I am happy to table the document.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** Can I just ask a question in relation to not the program Bump It Up—or as I have often called it, "Bump It Off"—but what I think is a very good innovation, from what I can discern, the School Leadership Strategy. I understand it is probably in its infancy, in some respects, in that you probably have not really had fulsome or wholesome feedback loops, given it was only really initiated in 2017. However, perhaps you can expand on that. I am particularly interested in how you see this as a vehicle—particularly the position of directors of educational leadership and the principal's school leadership—in terms of identifying best practice. We have had a couple of principals here from Marsden Road and Canley Vale High School and we have been to a whole range of schools, and you have directed us to them, to see what they do well. I suppose it is the conundrum: How do we take those great practices and results and duplicate that, scale that up across the State? What role will this particular leadership initiative play in that regard?

**Ms HARRISSON:** I will let Mr Dizdar talk to the leadership work. Leadership sits within five executive priorities we have in the organisation: to improve school leadership, because we know that you do not have a high-performing school without a strong leader; to improve the quality of teaching, because we know that a quality teacher in front of every class will make the biggest difference we can have; and to improve the systems we put around schools, so that they can focus on teaching and learning. We want to reduce the friction through the system so that more of a school's time is spent on the things that matter. We want to make it a great place to work, so that our staff—including our teachers and principals in schools—come to work motivated and enthused with what they are going to be doing. I have forgotten the fifth one.

**Mr DIZDAR:** Improve systems.

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**Ms HARRISSON:** I mentioned "improve systems". It is student outcomes, which is our target—actually focusing on the students today and making sure we are lifting outcomes now is a real focus. In doing all of those things, we are using the data to drive our intervention and support for the system. We are looking at "Where does the data tell us our teachers need the most help in their practice?" We can look system-wide at the data that is being collected through PLAN2—many thousands of teachers are using that software—and look at where students are struggling and, therefore, where teachers might need more support in the approach that they are making. We can target our professional learning offering to our schools and our system to make sure that it is meeting their needs, it is of high quality and it impacts on results. We are looking across the whole system and how do we do that, how do we work out, what the data tells us and how we can translate that into more and more settings.

**Mr DIZDAR:** We have established the School Leadership Institute that we have not had before. That kicked off very early in 2018. The leadership strategy came out late 2017. This is our building block that we want to invest in in the long term to prepare and develop future school leaders to not leave it accidentally to the ground. When you met Ms Gazula and Mr Rouse, they are not real products of our efforts at developing them. They would have had good mentors and good leaders on the ground. They may have been to some professional learning with us as a system but they have not been through a concerted program of development because we have not had that in the past. With our leadership Institute, we have kicked off with aspiring leaders first with a rigorous selection criterion for those who might be ready—close to—becoming principals in the system. We have put them for a 12-month evidence-based developmental program.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** I understand all that but what I am getting to is how do you take those two excellent leaders who are principals at your schools now—they have not gone through anything else but are doing excellent work. How do you upscale what they are doing? There are only doing in themselves with some of their limited networks. How do you use your leadership initiatives, particularly the Directors, Educational Leadership, which naturally should be doing this sort of work? Are they focused on it? Who are they looking at and how are they driving this forward in a proactive manner?

**Mr DIZDAR:** That is a really good question. That is why the data is also important to know what schools are punching above their weight. We have made that all available to directors. The directors run network meetings with their principals. Part of the role statement is to unpack great case studies like the two that you have seen today on what works to work across networks, to foster in a very large system greater connection between sites that are doing great work in producing great outcomes. Mr Rouse may have spoken about Fairfield and some great work there that is being case-studied.

The big challenge here is that you can do it at a network meeting, unearth that expertise and unearth that connection, but to create space and time around connecting a high-performing school with a school that might be struggling in a meaningful way, in a sustained way—so the director certainly makes that known and may help with that connection but in my experience how to create that in an ongoing, productive way because not just that lead-a-leader level, you are going to need teacher exchange, key people exchange. It does not just come to "pick up documentation from this high performing site and bring it in"; it goes to implementation. It is sustained partnership. That takes time at both ends with schools.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** How do we fast-track that?

**Ms HARRISSON:** The first thing we are looking to do is how do we get those effective practices reaching into as many classrooms as possible. We are doing that in a number of ways. The first is that we have made sure that all of the professional development that we are providing to teachers from Educational Services is based on a quality assurance rubric, which is looking at adult learning principles and the evidence in best practice of teaching. We do not let it leave the building if it is not based in the evidence of what works. That means that we have had a shift over the past two years into providing effective reading instruction that has a phonics base in it that did not before—

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** That is excellent.

**Ms HARRISSON:** —because we need to build up the capability and confidence of our workforce in the areas that we know will make the most difference. It is very much that first instruction in those early years. So we are doing that. We are also then providing tailored support to individual schools, where we know what works. We know that we want to see collaborative teaching practice in all schools. We know we want to see good use of assessment and feedback. We know we want to see high expectations. We know we want to see explicit teaching. We are working through, based on the data, to identify schools and to work with them in a tailored way. We are saying to a school, "We think the area that you need to focus on is early years literacy instruction or it might be attendance or it might be behaviour. These are the kind of foundation blocks that you need to work on to create a positive learning environment in your school or to make that next step on your improvement journey."

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We are then sending in resources and staff to work in that school alongside the principal, with the principal, with their endorsement and with their staff to build the evidence-based practices in the school alongside our teachers and leaders. We are doing it through the tailored support that we are providing into schools. We are also supporting a number of different networks. Mr Dizdar has talked about the Directors, Educational Leadership and they will have a network of 20 principals. Many of them also run deputy networks, so they are building that leadership capacity at the next layer—an aspiring leader pathway program. We are looking at how we support curriculum networks, particularly between high school teachers, so that we can make sure that everyone has a line of sight to what really good looks like.

If you have been in a school that has not seen the top end of HSC in that subject for a while, we want to be sure that you are connected with a school that really has. We want to make sure we are supporting teachers to form appropriate networks for that. In the Early Action for Success model, we bring together our instructional leaders—500 of them every year—and make sure that they are receiving the most up-to-date information about the best instruction in literacy and numeracy so that then can go and gets embedded through that network of schools.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** There is a lot to do and some of that is quite organic. I suppose what I am trying to get at is how do we deliberately, proactively supercharge best practice in this State to drive outcomes to where we all aspire them to be?

**Ms HARRISSON:** I think our tailored support model is our vehicle for that at the moment. Where we are going to a school, we are brokering and we need to be welcome in the school where we provide support because that leadership sponsorship in any change management is really what we are talking about in changing the practice of professionals—we have people who feel very confident and are very skilled in what they do and the way to do it. If we are asking them to make a change to that, we need to accept that it requires a behavioural change and a level of understanding, sponsorship and buy-in. We have to have a change model that is effective in schools. That needs leadership buy-in and sponsorship. That is the first thing that makes this model work. When we get that, we know it can be really effective. What we are then able to do is bring in highly skilled practitioners who have been schooled in the most up-to-date evidence-based practices and they can then pass those on through the schools.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** In how many schools is that happening?

**Ms HARRISSON:** We have worked with 500 schools this year. We started in 2018. It was the first year and this is the second year. It was about 300 in the first year. For example, we have worked on a variety of issues. We want to hone that down into those that we know will have the most impact. We have worked with high schools that are trying to tackle behaviour in year 7 because the kind of transition into high school was not working well and it was not setting them up for learning. We have worked with a high school to reduce the suspension rates in that first term. We have seen a 60 per cent reduction in suspensions in the start of year 7 from one year to the next as a result of putting in evidence-based behaviour management approaches in the school. We have seen literacy and numeracy results in a P-2 school lift significantly by having people go in and work with them on how to use their data effectively. We are looking at what is the right thing at that time for that school.

For some schools, it will be a series of things over a period of time. We know that in a school context it is a bit like anywhere else: If you try to do too many things at once, you actually do nothing well. What we want to help our schools to do is identify the foundational elements for them or the progressing elements. The things that you will do in a school that is trying to put a foundational best practice in place is different from what you would want to provide support for a school, like Ms Gazula's, who was here today, to then go and push the boundaries of what the next evidence base might show us. We have to tailor that support to where a school is and help to push it along and support it along its improvement journey. The more schools we are getting to that, I think the better.

**The CHAIR:** The 500 school that you mentioned, what is the depth of contact, extra resources and staff that would be the typical intervention and tailored support?

**Ms HARRISSON:** It would involve a series of professional learning for whole staff around the particular issue that they are working on. It would involve support for the leadership team. We set out in a plan with the school. We are very clear this is what we are going to work on and this is what the results that we are looking for are. You would see additional capacity going into the school throughout a term on an ongoing basis. What we are trying to get away from is professional development for individual teachers—"Come out to one course. Come and have one course and go back and magically turn that into change in your classroom without the support around you." What we want to do—and we know from the evidence that the best professional learning happens in a school context with your students, with live samples, in a sense, where you are building and have an



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active learning base. That is the way this model works. We go and work alongside teachers, with teachers, in their setting to improve their practice.

**The CHAIR:** You have done that in 500 schools?

**Ms HARRISSON:** We have done that in 500 schools on around 80 different issues at the moment and we are trying to narrow down that set of issues. We have created the capacity to provide support in evidence-based practices such as formative assessment that we did not have before that we know is a really key part of how you can give good feedback that students can action upon. There are around 80 to 90 schools that are focused on an element of literacy and numeracy and we are providing support into those. There are a number of schools that are working on some of those wellbeing areas.

**The CHAIR:** The "we" is educational services, your section of the department does that?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Yes. We do it in partnership with the Director of Educational Leadership. It is a joint model. We make sure that the Director of Educational Leadership can identify the areas with a school that they should work on. They provide the sponsorship into the school with the principal. We want to make sure the leadership is on board and then we go in as a team working together on that.

**The CHAIR:** How many would be involved in a team that goes in?

**Ms HARRISSON:** It can be anything from one individual specialist teacher to a team of three to four people working across the school.

**The CHAIR:** How many staff have you got doing these interventions?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Around 600, but they are not just doing that work. I have 600 staff in the teams that support that work. They also run individual student support for some students with disability for some behaviour case management locally. They provide a variety of other functions locally as well, but this is this kind of ongoing improvement function that we have been building.

**The CHAIR:** That is what it is known as, the ongoing improvement function?

**Ms HARRISSON:** It is known as tailored support within the organisation.

**The CHAIR:** It is known as tailored support and you have got 600 staff who are involved?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Who are part of it but many of them have multiple roles, including complex case management, would be an example of the other work they do. So, for individual students.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Is there a work schedule or work plan for that work?

**Ms HARRISSON:** We have individual agreements with schools around the work that we are doing in each school.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Is there a document that you could provide to us that would detail the work that is being done?

**Ms HARRISSON:** I could provide you with some examples of that, yes, absolutely. And this work came out of the educational services review that we undertook in 2017 where we went and asked our schools, "What is the support you need?" We have been relentlessly going through and making sure that is the support we are providing. They asked for support in curriculum, we provided far more support in syllabus areas than we have for a while in ways that more teachers can access, bite-sized opportunities and new syllabus available at any time for a teacher to—

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Who pays for the support? Does the school pay for it out of its allocation?

**Ms HARRISSON:** They do not pay for our support, no. It is provided from the department.

**The CHAIR:** Are there any other questions on this issue, tailored support program and scaling up success?

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** School excellence framework and what the status of that is. It has six areas of focus but I think you said earlier there were five areas where you were seeking to establish measures and there does not seem to be some alignment between how the school excellence framework works and the accountability performance metrics proposal that you are rolling out at the moment.

**Mr DIZDAR:** It fits in neatly with the school excellence framework. The school excellence framework is 14 elements across three domains; teaching, learning and leading. The targets are across five areas across the

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whole child. We have been quite deliberate in saying we need to view the whole child across the board, that literacy and numeracy are the foundations and backbones for schooling success, academic success, that attendance, every day counts. We are looking at attendance measure. A child who attends 90 per cent of the time every year for 13 years of schooling misses just over a year of schooling. Ninety per cent sounds great for an attendance for a child, but across 13 years there is a one-year loss in schooling. We are looking at attendance. Wellbeing; we spoke about engagement, connection, sense of advocacy. Without those a child is not going to feel schooling success. Then the equity cuts of low socioeconomic status, of Aboriginal students, so they fit in very neatly with the school excellence framework. The school excellence framework when you look at those elements speak about internal and external data sources demonstrating school improvement.

You referenced the PAT test earlier, that would be an example of an internal assessment instrument that a school might use so that they are not waiting for an annual NAPLAN to track growth and progress across students. We would see that it fits nice and neat into those areas. The discussions that we are having this term with schools and principals, why it is going so well is because they can see that we are interested in across the whole child, that it is not specific to literacy and numeracy, that attendance and equity and wellbeing are really important and getting those areas right for every child is the primacy of why educators come and try to make a difference.

**The CHAIR:** On notice is it possible to get a breakdown of where the tailored support has been directed on behavioural issues, attendance, literacy, numeracy?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Yes, I can provide that. We are also currently looking at how we in a sense narrow but deepen our offer around tailored support into those things that we know will have the most impact.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** What do you think of the Victorian initiative where they have a small group or they are incentivising, not fly-in fly-out, but highly skilled principals and senior teachers to move into problem schools, schools that are not performing, and try to fast-track some change?

**Ms HARRISSON:** I think, as you heard from the last witnesses, and I caught the end of it, the biggest challenge in that is the people part. You have to have the authorising environment when you arrive in a school to make the changes. We know that the best schools have a really strong collaborative practice and they have a good and strong school culture. You just have to balance the way you would do that. The way we do tailored support is we do fly the people from wherever they are who have the expertise that the school is asking for into that school. We took a numeracy team from Sydney out to Broken Hill this year because they wanted to work on numeracy in a very particular way, and the best person to do that was in the department numeracy team and we flew them there to carry out that work. Not just with that one school, because once they are there we make sure that we are going to work with that whole network of schools.

The changes that we made in the department 2½ years ago now to bring together our educational services, support our school services on the ground and work closely with schools into one unit, means that we can now look across the whole State and say, if you are dealing with this issue, then we have the best people who can come and assist you with that, and we can bring them to you. It means I am making sure I have the best expertise, not the nearest expertise that is available to schools. That is what we are trying to make sure we can do.

**The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX:** What about the situation where the school is not requesting the support but clearly the statistical information, the data, shows they need some support. What do you do in that circumstance in terms of an intervention?

**Ms HARRISSON:** That starts with the relationship a principal has with their director of educational leadership. We would start and be working through the director of educational leadership to make the principal aware of what those issues might be. They would be aware of them already. They might have their own plans that they are trying to put in place first. We would have in some cases confidence that they were the right things, especially if you have a new leader who is coming to build the trust and confidence of their staff. We may well give that a period of time. We would hope that the director of educational leadership can then negotiate the access where it is clear that help is needed and support is needed.

That would then be part of what we would be seeking to do. We would continue to seek to negotiate that access. At the minute it is not mandatory for a principal to take part in tailored support. I think that is one of the successes of the model because we have had situations where when we have come to the negotiation to look at what a school wanted to work on, it did not feel like the right fit for a particular reason and they have been able to say, not right now because I actually want to go and do this. It has left the agency with the school and it leaves the accountability with the principal for whether or not they improve. I think it is important to get that balance right.

**The CHAIR:** I am sure you are doing very important work in this area. It sounds very encouraging. Are there any case studies of early success that we could look at, on notice?

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**Ms HARRISSON:** Very happy to share some with you. We have a number of case studies. Those case studies are starting to show us which types of support are having the most impact, which is why we want to narrow and deepen the offer that we are providing.

**The CHAIR:** That would be very useful as well.

**Ms HARRISSON:** Very happy to share that with you.

**The CHAIR:** Can I finish with two questions about measurement. We visited one very good school in central western Sydney and looking at some of the material on the CESE website and YouTube about another very good school on the central coast, they can present value-added graphs where they used to be, where they are now. It looks like a fantastic transformation, which we all support. Are they pure value-added indicators, or is that part of the CESE system where they have developed value-added measures that adjusted for factors, supposedly outside the control of the school, such as socioeconomic status?

**Ms HARRISSON:** Most schools looking at their value-add measure would take that from the Scout system, which would be the CESE consistent measure of value-add across the system.

**The CHAIR:** Does not value-add, which is obviously the fairest way of assessing the progress of the school, need to be a pure measure without factoring in socio-economics? Even if you are in the most disadvantaged areas, starting right at the bottom, the measure is the value that is added as opposed to, say, James Ruse, what value they might add at the other end of the scale? Why do we adjust for socio-economic status?

**Ms HARRISSON:** In part what we are adjusting for is to see the value the school has added to the student. What we are trying to do is take out other variables so that it can be a clear measure for the school to see the value they are adding to that student group.

**The CHAIR:** But it is a value in their results, is it not? Why do we adjust it for socio-economic status?

**Ms HARRISSON:** So that we can make sure it is comparable and we are taking out the variable factors that a school has no control of changing. We can provide further detail on that on notice. Our schools really value it and it does show us insights into those schools. So, for example, if you have a disadvantaged context, in part you are looking for value-add that is more than a year's growth in a year in order for those students to have a chance of closing equity gaps. I think the issue you are trying to get at is, does that help us know if we are closing the equity gaps or not? It does, because they need to be above the line for value-add, they need to be pushing above one year's growth in a year.

**The CHAIR:** If you could take on notice an explanation on it. I just do not see it. I would have thought your value-add, regardless of the socio-economic status, is the best way of assessing a school's progress. It is not just another excuse, is it, that we started at 10 per cent of the school, we only got to 15 per cent results, but because we are a poor area we get a discount?

**Ms HARRISSON:** The value-add measure looks at growth, so it is looking at the student's growth. In a sense, as I said before, we are looking to see that students have had more than a year's worth of growth in those contexts because that is what those students need. That is what we are looking for, success, from our perspective in the department. But I am very happy to get you the detail on that.

**The CHAIR:** But you are factoring in socio-economics status. So if the growth in a poor area can be less than the growth in a richer area, but the value-added measure can look bigger. Is that what you are saying?

**Ms HARRISSON:** I will need to take that on notice.

**The CHAIR:** That is what I am reading.

**Ms HARRISSON:** It is Friday afternoon. For that kind of mathematics on the spot—

**The CHAIR:** That is what I am reading into it, which, I have to say, seems very peculiar to me. We will take that on notice and see what comes out of it. The final matter again is measurement and understanding how these systems work. I just want to check this because for me it is quite startling. Is it true that the low-level adjustment for disability equity loading in the RAM is actually not a physical or intellectual disability that is measured in any student anywhere in the system. It is actually a loading of funding to do with the school's NAPLAN results?

**Ms HARRISSON:** It does have a connection to NAPLAN results. I can get you the specifics on how the loading is calculated. We have a number of factors that go into that, including the nationally consistent collection of data, which also is a weighted factor. So it is based on a number of weighted factors that go into that. It is because that loading goes to students with learning needs as well as disability. It is a full range, so there are a variety of reasons why that is—

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**The CHAIR:** I get the integrated funding support, that is a measure of serious matters of disability, autism, mental health disorder, physical disability and so forth. But this other one, this system is being geared up to say that if the school is not going so well in NAPLAN you get a low-level adjustment for disability where no student is being assessed as disabled. There might be absolutely hopeless arrangements and teaching inside the school, but there is extra funding support that comes for going poorly at NAPLAN and it is described as disability funding.

**Ms HARRISSON:** I do not think that is the correct articulation of how the loading works.

**The CHAIR:** That is what I have in front of me here. It is supplementary question number 10 from the last hearing. If you can take that on notice and get back to me.

**Ms HARRISSON:** I am very happy to get some further information on notice. Apologies for any confusion.

**The CHAIR:** I just cannot possibly understand how that would work. "Through this loading, schools are able to support students with a disability and additional learning needs without the requirement of a diagnosis or confirmation of disability." It is there in writing for me, so if there is some clarification of what that means I would appreciate it.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Can I request on notice the contract term and the contract value for the Tell Them From Me survey?

**Mr DIZDAR:** We will take that on notice.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you for your time today. It has been an extensive process of talking to officials from the Department of Education. We appreciate all of the information that has been provided. We will develop a report and recommendations that will be useful in your very important work around the State. We appreciate the work and the general direction in which things are headed. We hope to assist as much as we can with our final report. Thank you.

**Mr DIZDAR:** Thank you.

**Ms HARRISSON:** Thank you.

**(The witnesses withdrew.)**

**(The Committee adjourned at 15:20.)**