

## **STATEMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS**

**The 'Quality Education for All' Challenge  
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## **Disciplined Innovation for Equity and Excellence in Education**

Meeting the '*Quality Education for All*' challenge, will require education to move beyond its historical function of sorting.<sup>1</sup> Trustworthy evidence about *what makes a bigger difference, why, and how*, becomes a crucial resource in this endeavour.

Effect sizes are a very useful tool for evaluating practices or interventions. Not only do they reveal whether an intervention has had a positive or negative impact, or more or less impact than business-as-usual; they provide an index for judging excellence *and* equity.<sup>2</sup>

Cycles of high impact collaborative research and development (R & D) in which each cycle informs ongoing implementation (the *how* as well as the *what* of improvement) are a key to disciplined innovation that can be scaled to transform teaching and leadership. Such R & D generates knowledge and smart tools to be used by others responsively in their own contexts, given conditions that support the learning of all involved, both adults and children.

International studies show that 'number of books in home' is highly indicative of achievement<sup>3</sup>; the digital divide will only amplify this effect. Parents who try to help their children with reading can inadvertently have reverse influence with persisting negative effects<sup>4</sup>, yet one R & D intervention supports schools, parents and community libraries to engage so effectively together that in five hours the impact on achievement is greater than a year's teaching. Families report that what was 'always an angry time for us' is now a positive experience, and productive school-parent partnerships have been established, including with parents whose own schooling was characterised by failure.<sup>5</sup>

Evidence about the equity and achievement costs of grade retention, socio-economic segregation, streaming, ability grouping and labelling has accumulated over decades.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, clear evidence has emerged about highly effective, albeit challenging to implement, approaches to working with heterogeneous groups in which everyone benefits.<sup>7</sup> R & D informed collaborative group work can accelerate achievement gains and build the social values and skills needed for a better world.<sup>8</sup>

Internationally there is a growing body of evidence forged from the expertise of indigenous and minoritised leadership about transformative approaches to schooling.<sup>9</sup> Such approaches strengthen relationships for learning, leverage community funds of knowledge, address cultural capital challenges, and accelerate achievement gains where disparities have prevailed. New Zealand indigenous leadership developed through five phases of R & D, an approach that resulted in gains for Māori that were three times those of a comparison group.<sup>10</sup>

At the heart of these examples of accelerated improvement are *complex pedagogies* that translate the 'science' of what works in education into transformative change through a collaborative process that depends for its success upon building relational trust with all involved. Yet, as the foundational paper for this seminar highlights, the 'pedagogical core' that is at the heart of education 'features surprisingly little in many reform agendas seeking to improve quality and equity around the world'. If reform is to serve the equity goals that are fundamental to the well-being of our societies we need to build and use evidence about effective pedagogies and

change processes.

<sup>1</sup> Alton-Lee, A. (2012). *The use of evidence to improve education and serve the public good*. Paper prepared for the New Zealand Ministry of Education and the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Vancouver, Canada. [http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/109039/The-Use-of-Evidence-to-Improve-Education-and-Serve-the-Public-Good.pdf](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/109039/The-Use-of-Evidence-to-Improve-Education-and-Serve-the-Public-Good.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. London: Routledge. See Chapter 2, p. 8. Note that the formula for calculating an effect size requires division by the standard deviation. This means the index of effect is not just a mean or mode. Rather an effect size takes into account the variability across the student group.

<sup>3</sup> Mullis, I.V.S., Martin, M.O., Foy, P., & Drucker, K.T. (2012). *PIRLS 2011 International Results in Reading*. Chestnut Hill, MA: TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, Boston College.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 7. *Creating educationally powerful connections with family, whānau, and communities*. In Robinson, V., Hohepa, M., & Lloyd C. (2009). *School Leadership and Student Outcomes: Identifying What Works and Why: Best evidence synthesis (BES) iteration*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education. <http://educationcounts.govt.nz/goto/BES>

<sup>5</sup> See Reading Together® referenced in Chapter 7 of the BES referenced above. For more information see:

<http://www.readingtogether.net.nz/ReadingTogether.aspx> and  
<http://www.edgazette.govt.nz/Articles/Article.aspx?ArticleId=8645>

Tuck, B., Horgan, L., Franich, C., & Wards, M. (2007, Dec). *“School leadership in a school-home partnership: Reading Together” at St Joseph’s Primary School*. Wellington: Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme.

[http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/122507/Tuck-School-Leadership-Reading-Together.pdf](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/122507/Tuck-School-Leadership-Reading-Together.pdf)

Alton-Lee, A. (2004). *Improving education policy and practice through an Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme*. Invited address to OECD-US Seminar, Evidenced-Based Policy Research, Washington DC, 19-20, April. <http://educationcounts.edcentre.govt.nz/goto/BES>. Also at [www.excelgov.org/usermedia/images/uploads/PDFs/OECD-Alton.pdf](http://www.excelgov.org/usermedia/images/uploads/PDFs/OECD-Alton.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> For example, Schleicher, A. (2014). *Equity, excellence and inclusiveness in education: Policy lessons from around the world*. Paris: OECD. See Hattie (2009) op. cit. See Appendix B. *The meta-analyses by rank order*. ‘Self-report on grades’ highest effect size of 138 influences on educational outcomes.

<sup>7</sup> Galton, M., & Hargreaves, L. (2009). (Eds). Group work: still a neglected art? *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 39(1) 1

Hattie’s (2009) synthesis (op. cit.) of over 800 meta-analyses shows an effect size of 0.54 for cooperative learning (vs competitive learning) and an effect size of 0.59 for cooperative (vs individualistic learning) across the curriculum.

Stanne, M.B., Johnson, D.W. and Johnson, R.T. (1999). *Does competition enhance or inhibit motor performance? A meta-analysis*. *Psychological Bulletin* 125: 133 – 54. Stanne et al. (1999) found in their meta-analysis of 64 studies that cooperation promotes higher motor skills performance than individualistic efforts or competition (effect sizes of 0.53 for cooperation; 0.36 for competitive or individualistic efforts).

Slavin, R. (2010). *Co-operative learning: what makes group-work work?*. In H. Dumont, D. Instance & F. Benavides (Eds.). *The nature of learning: Using research to inspire practice*. Paris: OECD.

Cohen & R. Lotan (Eds.). (1997). *Working for equity in heterogeneous classrooms: Sociological theory in practice*. New York & London: Teachers College Press.

<sup>8</sup> See work showing extraordinary effects led by Dr Roberta Hunter, reported in Alton-Lee, A., Hunter, R., Sinnema, C., & Pulegatoa-Diggins, C. (2012). *BES Exemplar 1: Developing communities of mathematical inquiry*. Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme. Wellington: Ministry of Education. <http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/BES/bes-exemplars>. Note the explicit *Communication and Participation Framework* embedded in mathematics education.

<sup>9</sup> For example: Lipka, J., & Adams, B. (2004). *Culturally based math education as a way to improve Alaska Native student' math performance* (Working Paper No. 20). Ohio University, Athens, OH: Appalachian Collaborative Center for Learning, Assessment and Instruction in Mathematics Research Initiative. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED346082).

<sup>10</sup> Alton-Lee, A. (2014, forthcoming). *Ka Hikitia – A Demonstration report: Effectiveness of Te Kotahitanga Phase 5 2010–12*. Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme / Hei Kete Raukura. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

See extensive source publications <http://tekotahitanga.tki.org.nz/Publications> and Bishop, R., Berryman, M., & Wearmouth, J. (2014). *Te Kotahitanga: Towards effective education reform for indigenous and other minoritised students*. Wellington: NZCER Press.

See also award winning <http://www.3news.co.nz/tvshows/campbelllive/kerikeri-high-school-transforms-learning-for-maori-pupils-2014062517> and <http://www.wise-qatar.org/te-kotahitanga-new-zealand>

See also Sleeter, C. (2014). Toward teacher education research that informs policy. *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 43 No. 3, pp. 146–153 DOI: 10.3102/0013189X14528752

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Although this paper necessarily has to be in haiku form I can't resist starting with a quote from the NUT's first Education Statement for which I was responsible a decade ago:

*Education is a fundamental human right. All children and young people have a right to high quality education. Education is central to the personal development and health of young people. It encourages them to think and acquire knowledge. Education enables young people to make sense of and contribute to society. At the heart of education are teachers. Teachers inspire young people and unlock their potential. Teachers enrich their countries and societies. (NUT 2004)*

### **Equity and Quality**

Only publically provided education can enable young people to have equality of access to high quality education. Privately provided education is dependent on private means and is necessarily fragmented.

Central to the successful growth and development of education systems are teacher policies agreed with teaching professions through their organisations.

Devolution of governance to schools, of itself, is not a magic bullet for improving quality and equality. Ironically, where schools are responsible for the vast majority of their functions a coherent systemic approach to equity, funding, student admissions and teacher policy becomes even more important than in partially devolved systems.

Two examples. Low achieving groups of children and fragile, and dysfunctional schools are particularly vulnerable in highly devolved systems. In partnership with teaching professions, governments need to be able to organise systemic interventions to provide support.

There is much to be learnt globally about achieving equity and quality. Teachers and their school communities are enthusiastic about learning from educational challenges and successes across the world. Global organisations such as the UN, OECD and UNESCO should come together to debate key features of what should define quality and equity in education. An equal partner in this debate should be the teaching profession, represented through EI and its affiliates, as it is at the International Teaching Summits. (Education International 2014)

### **Pedagogy and Professionalism**

Schools are moral, optimistic communities. Teachers have an enormous responsibility to encourage children to be optimistic about the future, and in particular to be optimistic about their future learning, creativity and self-efficacy. Teachers' own self-efficacy is therefore vital as is their job satisfaction.

Central to systemic teacher policies must be a check on whether they enhance teachers' self-efficacy, job satisfaction and professional learning and development.

Effective pedagogy and professionalism are synonymous. Teachers need to be able to lead in the sharing, moderation and promotion of their practice as well as influencing policies within schools and within the system. Teacher unions are key to encouraging teacher self-efficacy, voice and leadership. (Bangs and Frost 2012)

### **Evaluation and Measurement**

Evaluation and measurement has to support learning if it is to be effective. This applies to both children's and teachers' learning. The OECD's 'Synergies for Better Learning' (OECD 2013) represents a possible policy consensus. Teachers and school communities need to be able trust and own evaluation before it can enhance learning. Genuine self-evaluation, which should be at the heart of student, teacher and institutional evaluation, recognises this.

Country rankings in global education evaluations obscure valuable policy messages and encourage crude judgements about education systems. The reporting of evidence in such evaluations needs a new approach.

Bangs, J. and Frost, D. (2012) *Teacher self-efficacy, voice and leadership: towards a Policy Framework for Education International* Brussels: Education International.

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National Union of Teachers. (2004) *Bringing Down the Barriers*. London: National Union of Teachers.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2013) *Synergies for Better Learning: An International Perspective on Evaluation and Assessment*, Paris: OECD Publishing.

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Teachers around the world occupy a pivotal position of influence over the future shape of our societies.

Over the next fifty years the world will navigate a set of transitions with huge impacts: for the environment; our level of security, for the structure of the global economy; and the sharing of wealth and resources between and within societies.

Education will shape these transitions. Teachers play a formative role, as they support the development of children and influence their trajectories into adult life. In turn, these trajectories combine to produce the patterns that shape our world.

Yet each individual teacher can only directly influence a small slice of humanity. Each teacher works within an institution, a system and a socio-economic context that limits their impact in one way or another, and channels their work into the production of a wider socio-economic pattern.

So the possibilities for imagining their collective future - and impact - depend on how their individual work is combined, bringing together *knowledge* and *action* in different *contexts*, to bring about cumulative and systemic change.

Equity should be defined not as a minimum entitlement to some standard form of schooling or formalised attainment, Rather, it must be understood as the stretching and development of each student's achievement to the outer bounds of their potential, with effort and resources proportionately invested in those who approach the experience with the greatest need.

If teachers can only direct their efforts within the institutional structure of schools, then equity for students will never be achieved. As the global economy changes, market demand for skills and knowledge will combine with the limitations of our current systems to produce a vicious cycle. Inequity will worsen as inequality widens.

These challenges should lead us to priorities for teachers and teaching which seek to combine knowledge, context and action in specific ways to achieve large scale outcomes.

1. Deepening teacher *knowledge* of how students learn, so that professional judgement becomes more widely respected and is supported by multiple streams of feedback and data. Teacher and knowledge must be validated by new ways of organising research and evidence that enable teachers to relate their decisions systematically to learning outcomes.
2. Redesigning the *context* for learning, so that a wider range of settings and environments used to achieve learning, including schools and community facilities, and a much stronger connection between schooling and family learning.
3. Taking collective *action* to achieve equitable learning outcomes, even in the face of hostile, indifferent or impoverished circumstances. This means working collaboratively with teachers,

with other professions, with families and other partners in the community, including tertiary education institutions, to create supports for successful learning pathways into adulthood.

Teachers' power to change the world rests on deepening their distinctive knowledge while further internalising an ethos which creates simultaneously a personal responsibility to make the best of one's professional judgement and a shared responsibility to challenge the educational status quo.



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### **Education in a Different World**

Contemporary education systems are very much shaped in an economic discourse: for DGP and “global competitiveness” at the systems or national level, and “employability” at the individual level. The economic discourse is facing fundamental challenges given changes in the economic structures, production modes, personal career paths, turbulent societies as well as global crises. Our students deserve much more than just job-oriented education. They deserve learning, quality learning in order to be part of a much stronger human generation.

This should be the basic purpose of any reform in education. Improvements, meaning doing more and better of what we have been doing, are doing injustice to our students. As such, reforms are meaningful only if they take on *learning* as the core business of education. Around us, successful education reforms often start with an overhaul of the curriculum. Revolving around curriculum reform are reforms in assessment, pedagogy, teacher development, school leadership and systemic changes, and in often in that order.

There has to be a *learning* discourse, which may imply:

- The curriculum should be a matter of learning experiences (such as “learning to learn” in Hong Kong), rather than a matter of knowledge contents.
- Placing learning as more important than teaching (such as “teach less, learn more” in Singapore).
- Assessments should be *for* learning, rather than measurement of learning outcomes, recognizing that not all learning outcomes are measurable, let alone immediately and directly measurable.
- Learning resources and environments should be the prime concern of the system, rather than financing and accounting.
- Student learning should be facilitated by learning professionals (teachers) and professionally-informed parents, rather than teachers treated as employees in a “teaching force”.
- School leadership should have learning as the core concern, rather than being bogged down by administrative protocols.
- Teachers and schools should be held accountable not only to the administration and the “consumers”, but also, mainly, to the profession.
- Technology should be developed in order to liberate students as autonomous learners, rather than used to replace teachers.

In sum, students should be released, as much as possible, and as quickly as possible, from the confines of formal schooling, so that they could develop their capacities to the fullest.

However, in order to move away from an economic discourse, students' learning experiences should be broadened to include learning in the affective (or non-cognitive) domains. They are going to face unprecedented social challenges. They have to learn to live social as well as economic lives, to be familiar with local as well as foreign cultures, and to tolerate diverse ideologies.

Above all, student should live an equitable life. Equity, rather than hierarchy and selection, should be the main culture in schools.

It will take a long journey for education, as an institution, to move away from the mindset of the production line in an industrial society. However, we have to start moving in that direction. In doing so, we have to move away from a "deficit model", so that educators an society at large aspire to a new plane of student learning, rather than just "fixing problems" in schools.

Quality education is a term that is often used to connote the ideal standard of education that every society desires for its members. There is no doubt that quality education unlocks every child's full potential, thereby contributing to an individual's personal and social development and enabling him or her to function as a productive citizen of his or her community. The slogan "quality education for all" is a compressed statement that calls for action to realise quality education for all children irrespective of status.

Governments often pledge to provide quality education to their citizens. Such commitments are usually enshrined in national constitutions and reaffirmed in education policies. Furthermore, most countries have signed international declarations that committed their governments to provide "quality education for all" irrespective of status. However, research has often revealed the disparity between policy and practice in the delivery of education services. I share the view that policy intentions of providing "quality education for all" must be translated into action at school and classroom levels.

Against this background, Governments are obliged to provide quality education to all learners irrespective of status. Governments and concerned stakeholders need to take lead in removing obstacles that hinder the realisation of goals of the call for "quality education for all". It is, therefore, critical that national education curriculum frameworks should be underpinned by the principle of equity. This would ensure that all stages of curriculum development and implementation are accommodative of all learners irrespective of disability or otherwise. More importantly, Governments need to invest in resourcing an inclusive curriculum implementation. While it is important that government should adopt inclusive education policies through **Acts** and national policies, it is not sufficient. It is imperative that such inclusive education policies are domesticated at school and classroom levels. A number of studies suggest that teachers are not aware of policies that they are expected to actualise in supporting the goal of quality education for all. To ensure that key decisions and practices adopted are responsive to needs of all learners, it is imperative that research efforts in these areas are supported and intensified.

The quality of teaching is critical towards the achievement of "quality education for all". Pedagogical practices need not treat learners as a homogenous population for doing so would disadvantage some learners. Teachers need continuous professional development to enable them to effectively deliver an inclusive education curriculum. Therefore, existing pre-service and in-service training programmes need to be interrogated. While Special Needs Education courses have been introduced in most teacher education programmes, a number of short falls are apparent. Such courses are largely theoretical in nature and deficient in practice. It is therefore recommended that existing courses should be reviewed and strengthened in terms of theory and practicum.

There is also need to strengthen teacher collaboration. Schools could benefit from collaborative and networking among schools and interest stakeholders. Such collaboration and networking is critical in sharing experiences and best practices that contribute to establishing inclusive learning spaces.

**1. EQUITY AND QUALITY – how to offer access to high quality learning to all?**

In England economic circumstances are highly correlated to the likelihood of achieving good education outcomes. However, huge levels of variation within and between schools demonstrate that high quality learning and teaching can make a significant difference. In 1:7 secondary schools the children eligible from free school meals (an indicator of poverty) outperform the national average for all children in the end of school assessment measures. We have schools, and systems who know how to teach disadvantaged children effectively the challenge is moving the knowledge around and bringing high quality learning to all. We have pockets or 'mini' systems demonstrating success but going beyond single schools or small education authorities to build reliable and consistent systems is the challenge.

**2. PEDAGOGY AND PROFESSIONALISM – approaches, which underpin high quality education for all?**

Teaching is not a self-improving process. Evidence indicates that veteran teachers are not through experience alone likely to be more effective than novices. All too often teachers are required to evolve to meet the requirements of the school operating model rather than develop through disciplined innovation and the application of evidence-based practice. Professionalism is captured through compliance to approved approaches and surface level systems focused on behaviour, summative assessment, curriculum planning and the organisation of the learning environment. Management and accountability frameworks are not designed to measure the impact of teaching on deep learning, pupil engagement or the ability to tackle misconceptions.

**3. EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT – how best to chart achievement and progress in schools and systems?**

Measuring progress and learning is fundamental to effective education. The challenge is striking the right balance between school level accountability and the use of data to support the progress of individual pupils. While it's important that schools are accountable to parents and the wider community high stakes school level accountability can encourage perverse and damaging behaviours as institutions 'game' the process. Evidence tells us that feedback informing learning conversations between pupils and the teacher is a powerful interaction to drive and sustain new learning. Enormous emphasis has been placed on summative evaluation and after the event feedback. More needs to be done to shift the focus to formative 'on the run' assessment, making better use of evaluation and

**What do we understand by ‘pedagogy’? What forms of pedagogical relationships should be encouraged in moving towards high quality education for all?**

When pedagogy is understood as the activities of teachers designed to create experiences for students that enable them to learn and achieve, it implies a dynamic and two way relationship between teachers and learners. This emphasis on interaction rather than transmission without regard to how what has been transmitted is received is particularly important for equity and inclusion because, for example, for the least advantaged students the content and process of a formal school curriculum is less likely to be familiar/ accessible. Engagement with unfamiliar activities and content by disadvantaged students depends upon teachers recognising and using students’ own, alternative skills, experiences and understandings including their misconceptions. Less sophisticated pedagogies may work for more advantaged students, able to draw on knowledge and resources from beyond school. But the needs of disadvantaged students are often complex and layered; more dependent upon sophisticated, personalised pedagogical approaches and positive and respectful relationship with teachers.

**Can pedagogy be meaningfully discussed in a global context or can it only be understood in its own national, community and institutional culture?**

Since effective pedagogy always involves contextualising content and approaches for individuals and groups of learners, for local, regional and national communities the same is likely to be true internationally. But international education research over the last two decades has also started to reveal some elements of pedagogy that are consistently associated with effectiveness. For example Hattie’s work on visible learning (Hattie 2009) paints a compelling portrait of high impact approaches with an emphasis on the importance of: reciprocal teaching, teacher student relationships, providing feedback, teaching self verbalisation and meta-cognition.

It is also important to note that however much local cultural and institutional variations shape values, relationships and the content of learning, fundamental skills (Literacy, numeracy, social) need to be developed so students can access the curricula of any stripe. The specific pedagogic strategies that are central to securing access to the curriculum are, in this sense, global.

*How well are teachers equipped to address the pedagogical challenges of high quality education for all, and what is the nature of the profession that can best take this forward in the future?*

*What is the relationship between the nature of pedagogy and the policies that frame teaching and learning? How can they be brought closer together without micro-managing classrooms or stifling quality?*

The demands made upon teachers by this model of pedagogy for equity are, of course substantial. The tissue that connects policies about teaching and learning and student success is the quality of teaching and, in turn, the quality of the initial and, even more importantly, the continuing professional learning they experience. Teaching like riding a bicycle; becomes unstable

if we stop learning/peddalling. Policies about teaching and learning that do not attend to the professional learning that pedagogy depends upon usually founder. Those that prescribe detail without attending to CPD or leaving space for interpretation invite teachers to talk the talk without walking the walk. Policies that require school leaders to model professional learning and invest in the professional learning of colleagues as part of implementing improvement and reform are those most likely to succeed and to enhance pedagogy. Fortunately the international evidence about effectiveness in CPD is mature and coherent.

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### **Equity and Quality**

My position on equity and quality in education is based largely on two important social justice principles, 'parity of participation' (Fraser, 2007) and 'capability to function' (Sen, 1992). The first, 'parity of participation', when applied to economic, cultural and political justice seeks to ensure that all people participate as peers in social life. The second principle pursues social justice through the concept of 'capability to function' in particular social settings (Sen, 1992). From this basis, the two seemingly unrelated concepts, *equity* and *quality* come together for me when principals and teachers ensure that they concentrate on improving the lives of children and young people through learning, no matter their circumstances, that they do so with a concentration on each child's progress but without losing sight of the need for every student to achieve benchmark functionality in the high priority areas of literacy and numeracy so essential for full and open participation in the places they live. Of course, literacy and numeracy capability should be complemented by access to a rich culturally empowering curriculum covering a breadth of human experience (The Melbourne Declaration, 2008).

### **Pedagogy and Professionalism**

Recently I received a series of case study reports from New Zealand on attempts there to better link the work of school leaders with student learning. Funded by the Kiwi Ministry of Education, the Rangiātea project consists of case studies from five secondary schools with significant proportions of Maori students. The case studies describe strategies used by school leadership teams to improve student learning and achievement. In developing their leadership actions, leadership teams did so, well aware of the outcomes of the *Best Evidence Synthesis* produced by Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd in 2009. This New Zealand study underscored the importance of eight dimensions leaders should ensure are actively pursued in their schools. Similar work here in Australia with research evidence to back the connections, has been underway in the *Principals as Literacy Leaders* Program initiated by the Australian Primary Principals' Association in partnership with state and territory jurisdictions. The findings from a series of studies accompanying this program reinforce the benefits of school leaders having a leadership for learning framework to enable them to attend systematically to the dimensions that maximise the impact of everyday efforts to link their work with student learning. The framework employed in the APPA program (2012) starts with a commitment to improve the lives of students through learning (the moral purpose of education). Decisions about how to do this for all students are shaped by disciplined professional dialogue informed by a strong evidence base about students' learning and achievement and what they need to do next. Around this core there are five other dimensions in which active engagement is required: pursuing leaders' and teachers' professional learning as the highest priority, paying attention to the physical, social emotional and resource-based conditions for student learning, coordinating, managing and monitoring curriculum, teaching and learning, reaching out to make supportive connections with parents and the wider community and sharing the leadership of learning broadly and deeply both inside and outside the school. I argue that attending to these dimensions deliberately enhances the professionalism with which leaders and teachers go about their

pedagogical 'business'.

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Increasingly, the policy imperative across the world has been to 'raise standards', particularly in STEM subjects, and to reduce significantly the numbers of young people who are leaving the school system with very limited literacy and numeracy skills, few, if any, qualifications and a deep sense of personal failure. Definitions of 'quality' have become de facto dominated by economic imperatives and encapsulated in measures of the number and level of qualifications. At the same time, 'equity' has often been seen as the need to address assumed deficits arising from disadvantaged social circumstances. Frustration with the apparent failure of education professionals to meet the challenges inherent in these definitions has led to political interventions in the structure and nature of schooling, which would have been previously unimaginable. However, evidence of success arising from such interventions has been at best limited and their impact often counter-productive.

The passivity of the teaching profession in response to this politicisation of their work has been both striking and surprising. Successive generations of teachers have come to focus on the more technical aspects of their role as they sought to respond to external demands and prescription. Formulaic conceptions of 'best practice' have helped to reinforce passivity with their implicit message that the answers to the complex questions associated with 'quality' and 'equity' are to be found elsewhere.

The challenge for the profession is to demonstrate that it has both the will and the capacity to address quality and equity issues in ways, which can achieve tangible improvement and command public confidence. That will require the kind of flexibility and inclusiveness which twenty-first century learning demands and the consequent development of new professional skills and attitudes. The profession needs to reconceptualise itself as a driver of educational change rather than as a somewhat reluctant deliverer of agendas created elsewhere. At the same time, we need to revisit what we mean by accountability to address the perverse effects of an over-reliance on crude statistics and to use its undoubted traction to promote the kind of positive behaviours which high quality education for all requires.

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In the 19th century the rat-race between the Nation States has led to the adoption education as a public service, competition continued in the cold war, and recently became a predominantly economic and global affair. That is why our thinking about education is shaped in terms of comparing systems, with their input end output, defining quality in terms of returns. An approach that focuses on finding the “Best System” or the “best method” or the “Perfect Teacher” in order to have the “Best Result”. The problem is that the process of teaching and learning is by its nature not compatible with this linear thinking, because Teaching and Learning are interactive processes, where the relationship between Human Beings is the dominant factor. The roles of the teacher and the pupil/student have little analogy with those of production factors in industry, but bear a strong resemblance to the roles of parents and children in a family.

This is not to say that method or teacher training are unimportant, but the approach should be dynamic and distributed, creating space for initiative and flexibility in the teacher-pupil interaction. It goes without saying that teachers need to be highly qualified, but in a strictly non-dogmatic sense, they should know how knowledge is being handled in life, and are able to interact with other people in the field of knowledge. Because teachers as well as pupils/students are all different individuals, the actual process will be different all the time, and the returns of the process will differ according to the amount of professional freedom the teacher is allowed. The paradox is that policies that aim to raise quality can easily damage it through diminishing the freedom of teachers.

If we were to accept this it would mean the following:

**Equity and Quality:**

Equity in this context means that the resources that are made available for the pupils are the same, neither in the material sense, nor in that of teacher quality. Ways to finance education have a tendency to distort this equality, but can also be used tot redress inequality. Inequality is not only unjust towards children and students because it weakens their chance to a successful life, but also is a negative asset for society in the sense of “opportunity cost”: talent gets lost because of it.

**Pedagogy and professionalism:**

Both words are strongly bonded to freedom, the key to educational success is inventive initiative and the ability to be the living example of the knowledgeable human being in the context of pedagogical responsibility. These are universal concepts.

**Evaluation and measurement:**

If professional freedom is the key to success one should be very careful about this. Evaluation by the teacher him or herself is of course important, and evaluation and measurement by scientific methods in order to make well-founded statements on policies possible also, but all evaluation and measurement between these two far ends of the spectrum are under suspicion of killing the life in the education process.

**Jelmer Evers**  
**Author/teacher**  
**Holland**

### **Flip the Classroom or Flip the System**

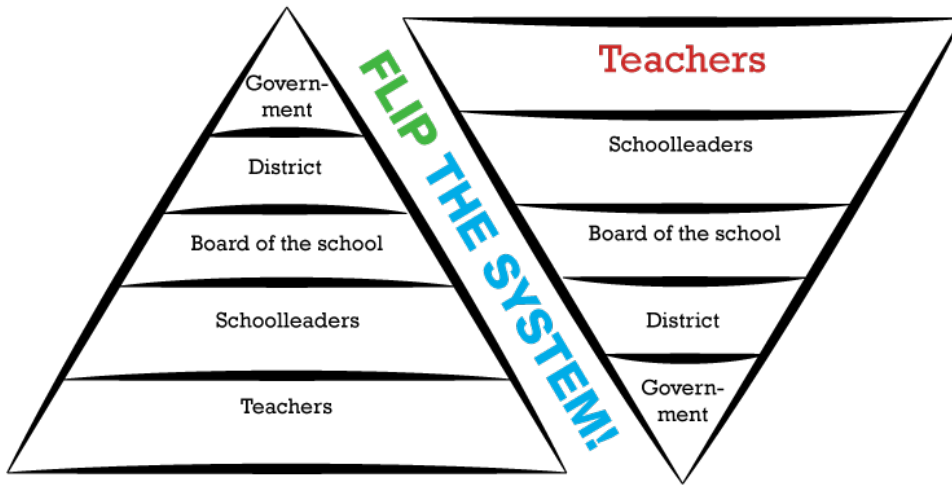
Education worldwide is at a crossroads. On the one hand there is the tendency for more standardization, privatization, de-professionalization. All summed up in what Pasi Sahlberg has called the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM). On the other hand we see a renewed focus on equity for all children, a broader holistic view of education and teacher voice as an alternative to out of control accountability. New technologies play a pivotal role in this movement. Not just because of their disruptive nature per se, but because of their empowering nature for both students and teachers.

We need to know why we use technology. Thousands of iPads being pushed into classrooms in Los Angeles is very telling and worrying example, which failed miserably. The key to profound change lies with the teacher, or better yet, teams of teachers deciding on how to shape education starting from a shared educational vision. To achieve this, teachers need to have a new set of skills. They need to be designers who balance content (learning goals, cross-curricular, real-life) pedagogy (direct instruction, project based learning) and technology (Web 2.0 tools, Maker tools, social media) into meaningful learning. Teachers need to be curators, picking up on new trends, research, pedagogies, technology, content and see how they can be put to use in a new context. Central to this is harnessing your own Personal Learning Environment (PLE) and Network (PLN): a web of (digital) tools, on and offline networks and people.

Clearly schools, or teams of teachers, have to decide locally if, why and how to implement new technology. Only then can technology be in sync with the needs of the school. Designing means research, iteration and building on lessons learned. That can only be done in a meaningful way if the design is in the hands of teachers. And by designing and researching themselves teachers acquire the skills necessary to implement new forms of education. Design, professional development and research form a coherent whole in design communities.

The question is, are our educational systems ready for this? Most aren't. The necessary conditions are usually absent: real ownership and distributed leadership on all levels, the power to set team and individual goals, being in charge of your own professional development, time, meaningful appraisal instead of over the top accountability, to name a few. So we can discuss implementing new technologies and pour huge amounts of resources into getting iPads into classrooms, or we can change the way teachers work and really achieve a transformation. To flip the classroom we need to flip the system.

*Jelmer Evers (1976)– History teacher in Holland. Author on new pedagogies and education policy, and of the upcoming book 'Flip the System' (working title/Routledge).*



**David Frost**

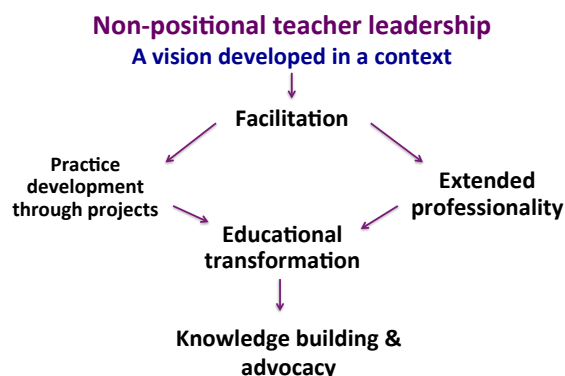
**University of Cambridge Faculty of Education and the HertsCam Network  
UK**

### **Non-positional teacher leadership and education reform**

Experience tells us that the global education crisis is unlikely to be adequately addressed by the usual policy interventions. Donors tend to promote a neo-liberal, managerialist perspective and the familiar strategies that appear to make sense in the west. For example, modern organisational structures and incentivisation strategies imported from the world of business. The influence of agencies such as the World Bank in places like Mongolia, illustrate this well (Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe, 2006).

The EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2014) presents a shocking picture of ‘the global learning crisis’ and, in highlighting the pivotal role of teachers, it says that “unlocking their potential is essential to enhancing the quality of learning”. The problem is that this report, like so many others, recommends the familiar strategies that have failed in the past; i.e. those that focus on better recruitment, training, incentivisation, career structures, targeted deployment and monitoring etc, etc. The paradigm is fundamentally flawed. The evidence is that, even in countries where they may appear to be a practical proposition, such strategies barely work, but in developing countries they don’t stand a chance. The resources and the administrative infrastructure are simply not in place. Unlocking the potential of teachers is essential to reform but I am proposing an alternative way to approach this: the idea of non-positional teacher leadership.

The book published this week (October 2014) ‘Transforming Education Through Teacher Leadership’ (Frost, 2014), contains 18 chapters: accounts of teacher leadership which, collectively, explicate a theory about teacher professionalism and educational transformation. This theory has been enacted and operationalised by teachers and those who facilitate teacher leadership in the HertsCam Network and sister networks linked by the ITL initiative in a total of 15 countries. It could be summarised with the aid of this diagram:



The vision is for a strategy that provides expert facilitation that would enable the majority of teachers, not just the talented or ambitious few and not just those designated as teacher leaders or those who occupy a formal position in the organisation, to become the new professionals that Fullan called for in the early 1990s (Fullan, 1993, 1994).

The vision portrayed in the book is operationalised through the idea of the development project whereby individual teachers are invited to identify a professional concern and then act strategically to address it. Leadership in this context is conceptualised as influence (Yukl, 2010; Fairman and Mackenzie, 2013). The facilitation that supports this is school-based and self-sustaining because it is provided by experienced teachers rather than experts from local government, universities or private providers. There is good evidence from the work of HertsCam and the sister networks within the ITL initiative that teachers can develop the capacity to organise and create the infrastructure for professional development and support for teacher leadership (Frost, 2011). Essential features of the approach include:

- individualised, time-bounded project work that mobilises teachers' moral purpose and taps into their capacity for agency
- school-based workshops led by experienced teachers who have the skills to facilitate
- a well designed set of tools that support reflection, planning, consultation and discussion
- networking arrangements that enable teachers not only to build professional knowledge together but also to inspire each other to act strategically to bring about change

The outcomes of such development projects is school improvement, which is commonly understood in terms of increased levels of student attainment, but what is important is the practice development that contributes to improvement. The development of practice includes that which builds capacity for learning and organisational capacity. Teacher leadership as construed here changes the professional culture of the school. Arguably such practice development creates 'knowledge in situ' but through teachers' networks it can be subject to a dialogic process, which adds to professional knowledge in the system. This is not codified and turned into professional standards but can be discerned in the exchange of accounts and ideas between teachers at network meetings and in their published stories. A key dimension of such stories is their power to inspire others and mobilise moral purpose.

There is evidence that this can work both in contexts such as the UK and in more challenging scenarios such as Bosnia & Herzegovina (Frost, 2011). New programmes based on the non-positional teacher leadership model will begin in Palestine and Egypt in October 2014. It is envisaged that further adaptations of the tools and techniques used will show that the model has

potential for universal application, which can address the global learning crisis identified by the UNESCO report (2014).

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### **The concept of pedagogy**

Nate Gage defined pedagogy as *the science of the art of teaching* (Gage 1978: 72). It is a science in the sense that there are propositions, which suggest that by doing 'x' a teacher will enable pupils to learn 'y'. But it is also an art, in that no two situations in the classroom are likely to be the same so that the teacher has to exhibit a degree of artistry when attempting to apply these propositions to achieve practical outcomes.

In the past, teachers wishing to adopt a more scientific approach have been confronted with a host of different theoretical perspectives, which have been difficult to apply within the classroom. Joyce and Weil (1972) attempted to represent 'families of models' based on different theories of learning but this still leads to a large number of alternatives. Deforges (2003:14) however, believes there is a growing body of evidence, gleaned from research, about effective learning and that the trick is to 'bring the practical knowledge of teachers and the theoretical knowledge of researchers together in order to promote advanced teaching practices'.

### **Implementing and sustaining effective practice**

There have been several attempts to follow Deforges' advice, particularly in countries in East Asia who seek to break away from teacher-dominated discourse and to develop more interactive approaches. Hogan et al. (2013) in Singapore have failed to engender any significant change and the same is true of Hong Kong (Galton & Pell, 2010). Nearer home (Galton (2007) has shown that successive observation studies have recorded the dominance of closed over open questions across three decades. In the United States there is according to Cuban and Tyack (1995) 'a persistent stubborn continuity in the character of instruction' and this seems to hold for most countries.

### **Creating pedagogic change through professional development**

Darling-Hammond and colleagues (2009) reviewed a large number of professional development courses, which were offered in the United States and found that few brought about desired changes in generic teaching practices. For these reason those with responsibility for changing the way that teachers teach have looked beyond the provision of courses towards Communities of Practice or (CoPs) which allow teachers to work together within their own school. Most COPs are based on a format, which in Japan is known as *lesson study*. A typical lesson study cycle involves research and preparation in order to raise a particular question for enquiry, the planning and implementation of the first lesson followed by group meetings for reflection and improvement and then the implementation of the improved lesson with further reflection (Takahashi and Yoshida, M, 2004).

A number of questions are raised by this approach not least the question of resourcing such activities, the role of teacher educators who, if the evidence is to be believed, have not enjoyed great success in bringing about change, and the possibility of agreement on a limited set of pedagogic propositions designed to produce creative, risk taking, intrinsically motivated independent learners.



### **The meaning of the concept “education” and the evaluation of its quality**

Education is an integral part of society, both influenced in fundamental ways by changes in society, but education is also supposed to have a fundamental role in shaping societies. Formal education is usually meant to constitute a basic human right to learning facilities set up with the aim to give all students both a right and a motivation to learn values, knowledge, competence and understanding that the political authorities think can give each citizen the best foundation to take active part in building the future society. A foundation for public education systems is also respect for and belief in the competence and knowledge of the teaching profession to act as agents for governments in realizing these aims for public education.

Although teachers use many different teaching methods to facilitate student learning, the concept of education is fundamentally different from the concept of learning. Learning is a built in capacity in all humans (and most animals). We learn whether we want to or not. Automatic learning or conscious learning driven by individual motivation only, is usually different from learning in the education system in the sense that it need not take into account the aims of learning in a formal, politically regulated, education system. I therefore wonder what is meant by the statement in the discussion paper that “a quality educational experience includes, but extends beyond, formal schooling”. Is formal schooling meant as equivalent to formal education? A formal education can take place in other institutions than schools. VET for example, which is a type of formal education, can take place in private firms or in other public institutions than schools. Also parts of what is sometimes labelled as academic education, even though it might just as well be labelled VET education at the tertiary level like teacher education, takes place in the working place. The same is true for the education of nurses, doctors, etc.

The concept of quality in education must therefore relate to the whole spectrum of aims set for education by the proper authorities and to the concepts of quality set by the teaching profession. Although these two sets of concepts overlap, they are not identical. The teaching profession for example, must be more specific in its definitions both of structural qualities, process qualities and result qualities than the society at large. It is the same way with most professions. Even though customers might be satisfied with a job done by a carpenter or a surgeon, the carpenter and surgeon need to be able to define in much more detail strong and weak points of their work.

There are numerous challenges and weaknesses of the evaluation systems in the formal education – sector, among which are:

- only a narrow selection of goals are being evaluated,
- there is no defined differentiation between the system for the political consideration of quality and the profession’s system,
- the representation of quality by numbers hides the uncertainty that is associated with this transformation of a learning result into numbers (also a fundamental problem in research that uses the same numbers),
- we need more research on how the use of different evaluation regimes influence teaching and leadership in education

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**Pakistan**

The recent Global Monitoring Report shows that in spite of huge strides in providing access to basic education, the “crises in learning” is acute, especially in low income countries in contexts that are remote/rural, in poor peri urban settings and for girls, children from poor families, children with disabilities and those marginalized in the society on the basis of language, ethnicity or race. Moreover, there is consensus among educational decision makers that for the enhanced levels of socio-economic participation, education in the 21st must play a role and go beyond the traditional mastery of school subject content, to promote thinking skills including communication, critical thinking and problem solving (UNESCO, 2014).

From the perspective above, the ‘all’ in the title could be interpreted as an attempt to distribute to all members of the community the benefits of education and culture that are available to a privileged few. At least two major issues emerge from this positioning of education. First, the dominant narrative of education as we know it today is premised mainly on elitist and often Euro-Western academic assumptions with concomitant values and beliefs about the purpose, process and outcomes of education. What is the relevance of an education thus premised for the learners from marginalized and often non-western contexts - remains a question. Secondly, school education system serves as a gatekeeper of privilege and power raising deep issues of social justice for the learners who are excluded. For example, it is no coincidence that the wide majority of the learners who are documented as failures in the school system come from low socio economic background, or they are marginalized due to gender, ethnicity or other forms of disadvantage. Education thus exercises power in terms of bestowing its advantage on some and excluding others. Therefore access to education must entail a critical examination of the assumptions underpinning the purpose and process of education within a framework of social justice.

Fraser (2007) proposes a useful framework to make sense of the social justice issues in education with three key dimensions of social justice i.e. “redistribution, recognition and participation” (p.17). This framework is usually employed with the country as a unit of change, to redistribute access to education across the socio-economic divide. However, the framework could be employed at the level of schools and classrooms where social justice issues are experienced locally (Halai 2014). For example, in the classroom, the teacher has the authority to ensure that the cultural capital is distributed to all learners for them to be able to learn effectively and succeed in school examination. Here, cultural capital is seen from Bourdieu’s perspective including forms of knowledge, skills and attributes that could potentially give the learners an advantage to succeed in society. Recognition of diverse needs of learners from various social and cultural contexts would require that the teacher acknowledges these diverse needs in the classroom, and creates opportunities for their optimal participation in learning.

However, participation is contingent upon recognition which is inherently political in nature because recognition demands that the larger social and cultural forces that are played out in the classroom dynamics are challenged to allow for the participation of the marginalized learners.

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### **The struggle for quality education for all: Pedagogy and Professionalism**

Research suggests that there are still too many classrooms that have remained impervious to some of the most progressive education reform ideas and initiatives of our time. Part of the explanation has something to do with the inability of the reforms to target the core business of schooling, viz. teaching and learning.

Classroom Pedagogy, which defines the interactions of the teachers with their students around a specific subject matter in a given context, remains the central component of what teachers do (or are expected to do) in schools. Yet it is these interactions that remain untouched by many of the reforms. Our major challenge in trying to bring about high quality education for all revolves around finding creative and successful ways to persuade, capacitate and enable teachers to assume the leadership for conceptualising and driving the search for different ways to orchestrate and/or structure their interactions with learners around specific subject content in different contexts. Inevitably, the search for such creative ways to persuade, capacitate and support the teachers **in leading the conceptualisation** can be discussed meaningfully in a global context, where strategies and policies can be compared and shared across borders and cultures. However, the conceptualisation and try-out of the different ways for orchestrating more meaningful interactions between teachers and learners around the content in particular contexts (or classrooms) by definition has to be driven locally.

Phrased in this way, we then have two questions to consider: First, is the question about the support and enablers necessary for teachers to assume the required leadership. Second, is the leadership for what (?) question. The first question is a global question on what resources and contexts would be required for teachers to lead in the reconceptualization of their work. This is the question that is more amenable to national or global policy interventions to structure the conditions for teaching in general. The second question, however, is a local one or more appropriately an internal one for the profession to discuss. That is, what constitutes meaningful interactions and how to orchestrate them in different contexts with different groups of learners around different subject matter? The answers to the latter question are likely to be variable and influenced by subject matter, contexts, learners, teachers, etc. The idea is to find ways to cede the leadership for setting the standards for determining what is considered meaningful in terms of classroom interactions back to the teachers and their profession. This is in much the same way that the socialists would vest the leadership for a socialist revolution with the workers. To the extent that the workers are not persuaded about the need for it or enabled to determine its character or to lead it, then such a revolution is likely to remain a pipe dream that only lives in the minds of the elite writers and strategists.

I suspect that my analogy is a bit far-fetched, but I use it deliberately to make the point about the difficulty of the challenge ahead. The teaching profession thus carries a bigger burden for leadership in the drive for quality education. This, I present, calls for a different kind of professionalism!

**Rene Kneyber**  
**Author/teacher**  
**Holland**

## **Pedagogy and Professionalism**

Recently I traveled to Toronto, Canada, and Boston, US, with a Dutch delegation led by secretary of state Sander Dekker to visit schools and the ministries of education. One of the things that struck me is how the word *pedagogy* is used across the Atlantic. When the Deputy Minister from Toronto expressed that 'it is all about the pedagogy', I must admit I was relieved, until I found out that pedagogy is actually used synonymously to what we would refer to as instruction. In Holland, and perhaps in other continental countries, we've seen a rise of the actual word 'instruction' in favor of the word pedagogy. To me this is a contentious shift, as pedagogy is closely linked to professionalism. One might argue that the move to the word instruction, as in the use of the word 'pedagogy' in Canada/US, is closely tied to a certain perception on teacher professionalism.

The word pedagogue stems from the Greek word παιδαγωγέω (*paidagōgeō*); in which παῖς (*país*, genitive παιδός, *paídos*) means "child" and ἄγω (*ágō*) means "lead"; literally translated "to lead the child". Although in Ancient Rome the 'pedagogue' was a slave (!) who guided the children of their master to school, in a more contemporary sense we can understand the 'pedagogue' as a person that guides children towards a certain goal. It is exactly here where the distinction in terms of professionalism between instruction and pedagogy can be found. Whereas instruction can be understood in terms of the Greek word *techne*, the rational method involved in producing an object or accomplishing a goal or objective, pedagogy can be better understood in terms of *telos*, the purpose or aim of the (professional) practice.

This means that when we start using the term 'instruction' in favor of 'pedagogy', or simply imply instruction through pedagogy, our view of what a teacher, a *good* teacher, should be has changed. It means we now view a teacher as someone who uses certain - probably effective - strategies to reach some pre-defined goals. Whereas in the literal sense of the word pedagogy, the teacher is someone who always zooms out of a particular method he is using to take into account the purposes of the broader professional practice and how a certain method relates to these larger aims.

Taking the argument even further we could say that the use of the word 'instruction' would like to see education as a string of effective, evidence based methods to achieve a certain set of, probably, economic goals. On the other extreme we could also look towards education as not being the about working towards goals, but it actually being constituted by goals, as being a *teleological* practice, where not the question of *how* but the question of *purpose* is the most fundamental and central question in education.

*René Kneyber (1978)– Mathematics teacher in Holland. Author of books on classroom discipline and education policy, as of the upcoming book 'The Alternative' (working title).*

1. EQUITY AND QUALITY – how to offer access to high quality learning to all?

I would turn the question around, and ask: How is it possible that high quality education is NOT offered to all? How can it happen that schools, local communities, education systems exclude, discriminate, deny basic human rights to a part of the population? Is that the remnant of the past when education was provided only to the chosen, lucky or talented? Or is it an overt or covert negative attitude towards those who are different? Or is it a system's ignorance? We all know that the costs of each child dropping out before acquiring decent qualifications is at least seven times more than all the cost of its education, including all possible supports. Why is that ignored? My suggestion is to put in effort and review *all* bottlenecks that a system poses to the excluded – review and abolish all of them (bottlenecks to access, to attainment, to high quality outcomes, to progression). They might be different in different country contexts, and one set of solutions will not fit everybody. In my country they are the following (please insert table here):

And in your country?

## **20 Questions**

- Why is there a large and persistent, gulf between our evidence base on learning and teaching, on the one hand, and prescribed curriculum on the other?
- Why do school structures, conventions and curricula in the 21<sup>st</sup> century so closely resemble those of half a century ago?
- Why perpetuate age and grade-related structures, which lack flexibility and reinforce lockstep progression and regression?
- Why is so much of curriculum reform regressive rather than progressive (cf the recent inclusion in England of the 12 times table)?
- Why is the rhetoric of equity rarely understood as futile in systems, which foster and exacerbate inequity?
- Why do we persist with examinations and testing procedures that disadvantage and deskill so many young people?
- Why have so few radical alternatives failed to take root?
- Why is there so little challenge to the language of ‘value added’, ‘delivery’, ‘targets’, ‘instruction’ (‘instructional leadership’ ugh!) And why condone the misappropriation of terms such as ‘quality’ and ‘standards’?
- Why are teachers not more able to exercise their collective power to influence policy and to resist dysfunctional reform?
- Why persist with homework policies, which are largely counter productive?
- Why are other learning experiences (e.g OLE in Hong Kong), the Children’s University, Kidzania, more engaging and educative than classroom-based learning?
- *When my kids come home from school and I ask them what they’ve learned they say ‘nothing’, or alternatively, say nothing. After Kidzania I can’t stop them talking* (Mother, Kuala Lumpur)
- Why is stress among teachers increasing as well as among children at an earlier and earlier age?

- Why is there a growing promotion of student voice but so little account taken of it in practice?
- Why are policies and priorities so often ill-informed and why is evidence so easily dismissed by governments, while other policies are promoted (and accepted) on the basis of scant evidence?
- Why is academia and academic publishing so ineffective in influencing educational policy and practice?
- Why is social trust and political trust diminishing in countries around the world? Are these, by any chance, related?
- Why are governments so addicted to numerical measures and why do academics reinforce that addiction?
- Why do policies, attainment measures and accountability continue to reinforce a deficit model? Is teacher collaboration possible in a competitive and individualistic environment?
- Why can't politicians and policy makers learn?
- Why 'still no pedagogy?' (Robin Alexander)



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### **Is there a pedagogy that 'narrows the gap'?**

Why after several decades of concerted efforts to 'narrow the gap' do we still find ourselves in a situation where 5 public schools send more pupils to Oxbridge than 2000 state schools?

Having just retired after 20 years as headteacher of an inner city school where attainment rose dramatically, I have been reflecting on what we have learnt, and why, despite our success, and that of many other schools, this gap has not narrowed significantly.

Our improvement journey as a school started with establishing clear systems, structures and expectations and moved on to creating an environment that developed social and educational capital and provided multiple interventions to support the disadvantaged pupils. However, every time we saw an improvement, this was matched by the children of the more advantaged, articulate classes. In fact, not only were our improvements matched but frequently the 'rules of the game' were changed to our disadvantage.

We soon reached a position where the gains from our intervention strategies were diminishing and we realised that if we were to continue raising standards we had to focus on the classroom, on teaching and learning. We had to provide the professional development that would enable our teachers to create classrooms where high quality learning was taking place. This we did, and the quality of teaching improved markedly. Attainment continued to rise, but, as before, our strategies and those of other schools were impacting equally on all students. The improvements were admirable but we were not narrowing gaps.

And so we started to think - is there a pedagogy or are their classroom strategies that will not only raise attainment but do this differentially? If we care about creating a fairer society do we need to start being much more analytical and not assume, as we have for some time, that raising attainment and narrowing gaps are the same thing? The last 20 years have shown us clearly that they are not. We used to say that you raise attainment in the class but narrow gaps outside. Is this correct or can we find part of the answer in our pedagogy.

**Anthony Mackay**  
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### **Learning Frontiers: progress through engagement**

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) provides national leadership for the Australian, state and territory governments in promoting excellence in the profession. Established in 2010, AITSL has worked with its partners to develop and deliver a firm foundation to strengthen, improve and recognise the practice of every Australian teacher. [National policies](#) include:

- Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework
- Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders
- Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia
- Teacher Registration in Australia

These policies are supported by high quality materials that allow teachers to [situate](#) their practice, [view](#) what practice looks like at their career stage and the next and [plan](#) for and [evidence](#) pedagogic improvement.

### **AITSL's ambition, however, extends beyond improvement.**

We know our students' world is ever-changing and that we can't stand still. Today's students want an education that meets their individual needs, and opportunities that connect them to what is happening around the globe. Australian students challenge us to be innovative and to make learning environments more exciting, challenging and rewarding.

Today's learners inhabit a borderless world offering limitless connection, data and mobility. They can choose to access knowledge and participate in dialogue on a global scale. They need education delivered in ways that are compatible with and support their world-view and their bond with communication technology.

AITSL has an opportunity through its innovation program, *Learning Frontiers*, to involve families and the broader community in the way young people learn. Learning that is engaging is much more open, transparent, and collaborative.

*Learning Frontiers* is based on the premise that engagement is a crucial element in creating fulfilling education and life experiences for young people. Informed by PISA data, *Learning Frontiers* focuses on deepening intellectual and emotional engagement in learning; helping to shape an education worth having for every Australian student.

Through Learning Frontiers, Australian teachers are designing engaging learning experiences that are:

- co created – it recognises both adults and students as a powerful resource for the co-creation of community, the design of learning and the success of all students.
- connected – it connects with and uses real-world contexts and contemporary issues; and is permeable to the rich resources available in the community and the wider world
- personalised – it builds from student passions and capabilities, and helps students to personalise their learning and assessment in ways that foster engagement and talents
- integrated – it emphasises integration of subjects, integration of students and integration of learning contexts.

This research brief explores the rationale for an innovation program like *Learning Frontiers* to act as:

A large-scale collaborative enquiry, drawing on the collective wisdom, experience, ambition and imagination of participants to develop professional practice that increases students' engagement in learning. Teachers themselves will construct the new knowledge the education community needs to move the professional practice of every Australian teacher forward.

High quality professional learning for participants in and out of design hubs who, as individuals and in groups, are likely to reconfigure their practice – leadership and pedagogic – iteratively and over time as they observe the benefits of students' increased engagement in learning. Teachers will learn from each other, from experts and others deeply interested in learning that engages learners behaviourally, emotionally and cognitively.

A system level intervention, explicitly intended to stimulate the growth of new relationships between schools, and between schools and new partners: families, communities, for- and non-profit organisations and public services amongst others. These new arrangements – design hubs – are geared to and formed for the purpose of increasing students' engagement in learning, for instance by extending learning

environments and opportunities beyond the classroom, and for connecting in-school learning with the outside, 'real world', of students' lives.

A scaling and diffusion program, designed to enable professional practice that increases student engagement in learning to spread beyond the design hub where the practice originates, to benefit students in developer schools; students whose schools are not taking part; and even students who aren't engaged in formal schooling.

**Warwick Mansell**  
**Education Journalist**  
**UK**

I'm an education journalist, based in London. I started my education reporting career on a local newspaper in Cambridge in 1997, just as the Labour party came to power nationally, then spent nine years at the Times Educational Supplement, before leaving in early 2009 to go freelance.

I now write a regular diary column for the education section of the Guardian, as well as occasional longer pieces, mainly for that newspaper and the Observer, while writing long blogs for the National Association of Head Teachers.

My interest has always been in the impact of policies on classroom reality, and I have tended to be drawn, perhaps unsurprisingly, to the issues within the English system, which have either been most significant, in political/policy terms to the party in power, or have most influence on what happens in the classroom.

With regard to the Cambridge seminar, I'm most interested in the third strand for discussion, on evaluation and measurement. I wrote a book on this subject, "Education by Numbers: the Tyranny of Testing", published in 2007, because I was coming across so many side-effects, as I saw them, in my reporting position at the TES, of England's high-stakes, test/exam results-driven accountability system that I wanted to try to chart them so that people could at least be aware that, if we want an accountability system of this type, then this will be its impact at the classroom level.

I've written a lot since, mainly in the NAHT blogs, about the enduring difficulties and problems of our accountability system, as well as a largely – and increasingly – dysfunctional policy-making process more generally. I continue to find myself coming across very serious side effects of the current accountability regime – some of which appear to be new types of gaming of the system, which I wasn't aware of back in 2007 – which I write about in news stories and features. Generally, I don't blame individuals for following the incentives of a badly designed accountability structure.

While I agree that some form of accountability is necessary, I do think that there are fundamental problems with the crude, high-stakes results-driven system we have currently under the UK coalition government, which in its fundamentals is unchanged from that of previous administrations.

I deal with data a lot in my reporting, and of course I think it has value. But it is often interpreted simplistically, with the language used to report and talk about exam-based school and pupils statistics, including by official authorities, often needing improvement. The current system also has huge implications for notions of public service versus self-interest, I think.

My work also currently sees me reporting a lot on the details of the coalition government's move to semi-privatise England's schools system, through the academies and free schools scheme. I

think this has potential implications for both the first two discussion strands, so I will be interested in the outcomes of them.

**Grzegorz Mazurkiewicz**  
**Jagiellonian University**  
**Poland**

The three themes of the seminar: equity and quality, pedagogy and professionalism, evaluation and measurement, create a triangle of issues deciding about the picture of contemporary education. They are culturally biased in the sense that our understanding of them is filtered through mental models, stereotypes or myths we own. And they mean something else today than even two decades ago.

We have built the ambitious understanding of the quality of education, as mechanism of individual development and social change. We aim at the radical interpretation of equity as high quality for everybody. We have developed sophisticated approaches and methods of measurement and evaluation expecting openness and reflection. And we need to be aware that it is impossible to achieve without extremely high professionalism of teachers.

We are able to create platform for discussing pedagogical challenges in global context what should result in designing the professional environment allowing high quality and equity in schools. We should focus that discussion on three broad areas of teachers' professionalism. They might grow as:

- Critical Intellectuals: what includes building awareness of the owned attitudes, assumptions, limitations and the understanding of the contemporary world;
- Educational Activists: what includes being active for a social change through involvement in projects inside and outside the school;
- Cooperating Professionals: what means using an cooperative and reflective approach to the process of teaching and learning what lead to an active and independent construction of their own profession through research, reflection, dialogue, and cooperation with others (Mazurkiewicz, 2012).

The first domain is connected to the teachers' understanding of the world and their intellectual ability to work in a certain social and political contexts. It is impossible to influence reality and students' lives without a critical understanding of the world and mechanisms shaping conditions of living. Learning is an active, socially constructed process situated in a broad socio-economic and historical context, in local cultural practices.

Teachers need to be equipped with skills allowing the interpretation of reality and understanding what societies really want from schools: protecting an unfair status quo, "improving" reality as it is or, creating conditions for radical transformation? If teachers are to take an active role in raising serious questions about what they teach and how they teach, they must take a more critical and political role in defining the nature of their work (Aronowitz, Giroux, 1991, p.108). A responsible teacher understands that the reality, society, and school are all products of contradictory forces.

The second domain stresses that teachers need to be educational activists and active citizens. The domain arises from thinking about civil society and also from experiences of environmental activists. Teachers–citizens are responsible for the sustainable development of democratic societies. The educational activists' approach to reality is characterized by readiness for interaction with the social world and involvement in the important processes in their communities and students' lives.

Teachers as citizens of civil society do not have to suffer the agony of constant bureaucratic reforms, because being a citizen means being actively involved in improving the current situation. We do not need another democratic school reform; we need democracy, and that will never appear without citizens. Through the years, there have been many efforts to stop teachers from being citizens and from acting as citizens, mainly through taking autonomy and independence away from them (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009).

The third domain is the universe of teaching and learning. The term professionalism means constant reflection, dialogue, and development, which leads to strengthening the teaching and learning process. Professional teachers are able to build their professional knowledge, conduct research, publish articles, and hold discussions. In uncertain situations, professionals make use of their independent judgment rather than routine habits or regulations (Mazurkiewicz, 2012).

A crucial ingredient of professionalism of teachers is the skill of cooperation, which allows the building of learning communities. Teachers need to place special attention on developing that skill because of the natural condition of their work, the default state of the work of the individual over collaborative work.

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## **1. EQUITY AND QUALITY – how to offer access to high quality learning to all**

In my view, education quality and education equity are indivisible. This is for two reasons:

- I. It is a principle of social justice that the purpose of education is to create the conditions for *all* citizens to achieve their full potential
- II. Mathematically, the greater the gap between highly/ poor performing students, the more the average performance of the group is reduced from its upper potential. For 'nations' or other groupings to perform at higher levels, the performance of the 'lag group' must be improved, and inequality of performance must be reduced.

The greatest source of inequality in educational outcomes is the differentiated income status of families within society. The challenge for educationists was laid out 50 years ago in two statements in the seminal Coleman Report

- It is for the most disadvantaged children that improvements in school quality will make the most difference in achievement. (1966:22)
- ... Investment in upgrading teacher quality will have the most effect on achievement in underprivileged areas. (1966:317)

It is my view that teachers are, in the main, motivated in their commitments and efforts by a fundamentally moral purpose: to create the conditions for all citizens to achieve their full potential and educational inequality. Without fail, when I ask teachers what gives them the greatest satisfaction in their work, their answer is – the success of the students they teach. This success is critical for all students. Whatever the scale (extent of employment) and 'developmental' level (subsistence, primary or tertiary productivity) of economic participation, education systems have the responsibility to create the conditions for young people to emerge from schooling with substantive achievement and a sense of worth, and with the capabilities required for full participation in family, community, political and economic life. The capacities to live, love and work must be nurtured.

Where systems generate unequal outcomes, and young people leave school with a sense of deep failure and exclusion, social inclusivity is compromised, and the seeds of alienation and social division are sown.

Education systems must allocate resources in a way that education does indeed compensate for society (remembering Bernstein). The available resources must be directed disproportionately to the most needy so that all learners experience an education that builds their sense of achievement and inclusion. Within this goal, differentiated outcomes are possible.

Quality education therefore means providing an equitable education for all, that minimizes inequity in education outcomes, and is integral to meaningful social inclusion for all citizens.

## **2. PEDAGOGY AND PROFESSIONALISM – approaches which underpin high quality education for all**

My first statement makes the claim that what gives teachers the greatest satisfaction in their work is the success of the students they teach. I believe this to be true of the majority.

In the work I am currently involved in (large scale system-reform in 1500 schools in 3 provinces of South Africa), our approach to pedagogy and professionalism is informed by the following principles (which the word limit does not allow me to elaborate on):

Responsibility for the professional development of teachers is located with:

- The teacher as an individual
- Her union and other professional associations
- Colleagues in the workplace, particularly those with formal responsibility to provide professional leadership
- The employer

In each of the above:

- Professional development should be demand-led (responsive to teachers specific needs, when they need it) rather than supply-led (provided on the basis of what others think they need)
- Modalities for the professional development of teachers should make use of technologies that give teachers maximum access to demand-led support
- Demand-led, teacher-driven (including union-driven) development ideally should allow respectful opportunities for the broad community of teachers (in different configurations) to share learnings, innovations, and provide safe spaces for the confession of inadequacies and frustrations as a basis for authentic enquiry
- Even when the context requires highly structured (directive) curriculum support to the teacher, it is fundamental to teachers' professional development that this be rooted in an approach that requires innovation, reflection, and articulation of the rationale for professional decisions as a basis for improving practice.

I believe these principles to be as valid in Manhattan as in Monrovia, and in London as in Lusikisiki.

## **3. EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT – how best to chart achievement and progress in schools and systems?**

The word limit is exhausted, so I will make only one statement that is deliberately provocative: It is immoral to monitor and measure teachers in any way if the fundamental purpose is to use the information in any other way than to respond with, 'how can we help you?' The purpose of any monitoring must be to report the information to those whose responsibility it is to drive improvement (any of the 4 categories above but primarily the teachers herself) so that they have better information with which to support the teacher to improve her pedagogy. (This incorporates Elmore's principal of reciprocal responsibility in education). The value of the

'evidence' is its use in structuring professional conversations of mutual accountability and meaningful support. My key learning from ISTP2013 was that the vast resources used to 'appraise' and identify a small minority of 'bad' teachers would be better used better supporting the vast majority of teachers doing their best under difficult circumstances.

**Kirsten Panton**  
**Western European Lead, Microsoft**

Different research indicates the need for radical change to the educational paradigm to engage students in their learning and prepare them for their future life and contribution to society. Education systems are expected to develop new competences in students and new ways of teaching these. Active, personalized and collaborative learning environments are to be designed and offered to students for them to engage in effective, efficient and rich learning paths, developing the knowledge and key competences needed by 21<sup>st</sup> century societies. Technology, properly integrated for the sake of learning, can substantially drive education systems' success in facing this complex challenge.

What is then the right mix of ingredients needed to support education systems to fully exploit the benefits arising from the numerous possible technology based teaching and learning opportunities and provide very student with a high level learning experience?

I believe the answer is multi-faceted and will involve changes at system, school, teacher and student level. The 'pedagogical core' embraces all levels. In what could be called traditional pedagogy, a teacher's quality was assessed primarily in terms of their ability to deliver content in their area of specialization. Pedagogical capacity was often secondary important; its development in colleges and education has varied a lot by country and culture. In most places, 'teaching strategies' overwhelmingly meant direct instruction. In recent decades, technology has been layered on top of content delivery and used primarily to support students' mastery of required curricular content.

A refreshed approach to pedagogy seems crucial. A pedagogy where the foundation for teacher quality is a teacher's pedagogical capacity – their repertoire of teaching strategies and their ability to form partnerships with students in mastering the process of learning. Where technology is pervasive and it is used to discover and master content knowledge and to enable learning goals of creating and using new knowledge in the world.

It is important to emphasize that this is not new pedagogy, these thoughts build on a tradition going back to e.g. Piaget and other key theorist. The new part is technology can make it possible and can drive teaching shifts from focusing on covering all required content to focusing on the learning process, developing students' ability to lead their own learning and to do thing with their learning. This way the learning gets characterized by exploration, connectedness and broader, real-world purposes. But technology alone CANNOT make the change only when system change knowledge, pedagogy, and technology are thought about in an integrated way can technology make a dramatic difference to outcomes.

**Fernando M. Reimers**  
**Harvard Graduate School of Education**  
**USA**

**Reframing the Politics and Knowledge Base of Education Reform.**  
**Mobilizing Teachers to Advance Equity in Education.**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, schools will be able to support students in gaining the skills they need to thrive, only to the extent they engage teachers and students in the generation of the knowledge base to support this effort. This requires two interrelated shifts: 1) replacing the dominant approaches to education reform, inspired by 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial management techniques suitable for hierarchical business organizations, with approaches based in collective intelligence and networks, and 2) shifting the goals of reform from efficiency to relevancy.

A popular approach in use to lead educational change borrows heavily from industrial era management: define the outcomes (standards), measure them, and hold schools, teachers and students accountable. Further elaborations of this basic approach diverge between those who argue that a) the specifics of how to translate mandates and incentives into the production of high quality education are too complex to be effectively micromanaged, so the details of execution should be left in the hands of local actors, or b) those who argue that support of various kinds is needed –resources, capacity building—to help local actors, teachers and school principals, effectively respond to those incentives.

This hierarchical approach to change leads to preoccupation with the risk that reform will be poorly implemented, executed, at scale. This leads reformers to have modest ambitions for change, to pay close attention to the pacing and sequencing of reform, because the assumption is that in large systems, loosely coordinated, ‘less is more’. The result is that most reforms are largely about improving the efficiency of what the education system does, in small steps, leaving the larger goals unchanged, seldom questioning whether what is learned remains relevant. As a result, the systems that most succeed at those efficiency reforms, are those least able to induce innovation enhancing reforms, because the instruments used to achieve efficiencies, and the short-term orientation that they reinforce, crowd out the innovation and long range perspective that are necessary for adaptive reforms. There is a real zero sum dynamic between closing ‘achievement gaps’ in the core academic subjects, and generating the innovative learning environments that foster collaboration, problem solving, creativity, tolerance, global mindedness or entrepreneurship among students.

Drawing from the emerging field of ‘collective intelligence’ I have proposed the creation of systems that effectively engage the knowledge of practitioners –teachers and school principals— in the definition of education purposes, and in the development of pedagogies and curriculum that prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Reimers 2014 and Reimers and Villegas-Reimers 2014).

We live at a time of unprecedented opportunities for educational innovation, it easier for ordinary people –often in small groups—to take on challenges in the past reserved for governments. There is great promise in the study of these grassroots innovations that are helping

students develop the competencies they need in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, cases of success against the odds.

In addition to the study and dissemination of good education practice, and in addition to the different professional learning communities which can be structured to facilitate an appropriate transfer of those practices across contexts, educational inclusion could be accelerated by the promotion of innovation through improvement networks that engage those innovators to collaborate in a 'collective mind' that can take on challenges too complex to tackled by each of them individually.

Reimers. Innovation, Scale and Disruption to Advance Equity in Education. UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children 2014: Innovation for Children, Innovation for Equity* (forthcoming November 2014)

Reimers, F. and Villegas-Reimers. Getting to the Core and Evolving the Education Reform Movement to a System of Continuous Improvement [*forthcoming New England Journal of Public Policy. 2014*]

**Dennis Shirley**  
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**USA**

- Equity and Quality. In many countries, achievement results have been sought in recent years by infusing marketplace models of innovation into the education sector; these have been correlated with high achievement in some jurisdictions and declines in achievement in others. Even in jurisdictions that have improved achievement, however, the trend lines are clear that markets increase social segregation and thereby contributed to internally divided and fundamentally unfair social systems. I am opposed to much standardization of education but am in favor of standardizing teacher quality (so that all students have access to high-quality instruction) and student funding (so that the social class of parents is irrelevant to per-pupil allocation).
- We have learned a phenomenal amount about good pedagogy in recent years but much of it has not worked its way into our everyday practices in schools. I have visited schools in rural Mexico that have increased their student achievement results through tutorial relationships that are meticulously taught to students and teachers; these involve learning how to study and document the process of learning and giving public exhibitions of one's mastery of a subject. For more information, go to <http://documentalmaravillas.com/home/>
- Relying on greater evaluation and measurement as catalysts for improving student learning has displaced a focus on teaching and professional cultures in many jurisdictions in recent years; it also has introduced punitive surveillance systems into schools that erode rather than enable the kinds of professional trust of which we now are most needful. Periodic sampling of student work in selected locales on different subjects can restore a proper sense of balance in the profession that focuses on learning rather than the management of one's school profile for public relations purposes.

## **Pedagogy and professionalism**

The pedagogy theme is closely related to both the other themes of the seminar (equity and quality, and evaluation and management).

Pedagogy is concerned with pupil learning - not just the substantive matter alone, but also about developing as a learner per se. The kind of learner, and indeed the kind of person, a pupil becomes is influenced in no small part by his or her experiences of education. Consciously or not, teachers contribute to pupils' identity formation, particularly through the pedagogue, discourse and classroom culture they employ and foster. Schools and classrooms vary enormously across the globe, not least in the quality of resources, cultures, and pedagogies, often increasing children's pre-existing inequities.

Much has been written elsewhere about the influence on classroom practices of inspection and accountability measures, particularly when driven by a narrow set of high stakes attainment tests. These are extremely important considerations but not rehearsed here. Too often evaluation and measurement systems negatively affect pedagogy by leading to approaches that attempt to meet short term test demands but compromise future development as a learner. Instead, what is needed is pedagogy that is similar to David Boud's notion of 'double duty' assessment – that which serves the present *and* fosters lifelong learning.

A great deal is already known about learning and teaching, although the allure of finding with certainty 'what works' may privilege some research approaches and result in over simplified conclusions. Learning and teaching are complex processes, and desired outcomes not necessarily agreed. Questions of pedagogy deserve to be addressed systematically in thoughtful, critical, research-informed ways, keeping in mind both the immediate and long term desired outcomes.

There are a number of approaches that have much to offer in terms of the double duty of serving immediate learning needs and developing lifelong learning. These include: assessment for learning; dialogue; self regulated learning; visible thinking routines; learning stories; mindsets; habits of mind. These are essentially ways of thinking, working and communicating that require little if anything in the way of resources, making them useable in classroom throughout the world, not withstanding the huge discrepancies in for example class size, resources and technology.

These pedagogical approaches do however require teachers who are competent and confident to introduce and lead them, quite a challenge given the majority of teachers are likely to have had and draw on much more traditional pedagogies. Professional development employing similar approaches including collaborative working routines and critical friendship enables teachers to experience and model the learning processes. Professional learning is an essential element of teacher professionalism, as is providing the best education experience possible for pupils.

Utilising pedagogies that aid pupils' achievement at school at the same time as helping them develop as confident, capable, and considerate lifelong learners must surely be aim for individual teachers and whole education systems.



**Raymond Chegedua Tangonyire, SJ**  
**Society of Jesus, Ghana**

The world will be a happier and more fulfilling human family if everyone can access quality education. The marks of quality education are: conscience, competence, character, compassion and service to the common good. In Africa, the following factors hinder provision of quality education:

- Selfishness, corruption and their attendant social and political unrests;
- Limited financial resources;
- Limited view of education – education is reduced to job training. Dore (1976) calls it “the diploma disease”, a ritualized process of qualification-earning, which degrades the teaching-learning process;
- Feelings of insecurity by many people due to conflicts, diseases, and the breakdown of essential human institutions such as the family that normally provide the context for human growth.

Yet, there are existential prospects: the growing desire and readiness of many for education: formal and informal. This is an opportunity that international and local stakeholders of education can seize. The Jesuits<sup>1</sup> have seized this opportunity in our Refugee Centres and mainstream schools through a pedagogy called the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP) to provide equity and quality. The IPP personalizes learning, and stresses the social dimension of teaching and learning. This paradigm has five cyclical steps: context, experience, reflection, action and evaluation.

**Context:**

Human experience never occurs in a vacuum but in a context. Thus, the actual context within which teaching and learning take place is key. Teachers are trained through workshops and retreats to see the school as a place of service, feel loved and as co-owners of the school and not mere employees. They are encouraged to understand:

- the real context of their students’ life: family, peers, social situations, the politics, economics, and cultural climate within which each student grows;
- the institutional environment of the school – networks and relationships that create the atmosphere of school life.

**Experience**

Teachers are encouraged to experience their students and be experienced by their students. Experience in this context means to “taste” something interiorly. Through experience, the mind, heart and will of the teachers and students enter the teaching and learning experience.

**Reflection**

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<sup>1</sup> The Jesuits are members of an international religious order in the Catholic Church called Society of Jesus. The order was established by Ignatius of Loyola in 1540 and had since 1548 been deeply involved with education. The IPP is what the order’s network of 2000 educational institutions adapt to their individual contexts. The Link to the document from which the IPP is taken is: [http://www.sjweb.info/documents/education/pedagogy\\_en.pdf](http://www.sjweb.info/documents/education/pedagogy_en.pdf)

Reflection forms the conscience of learners – their beliefs, values, attitudes and their entire way of thinking in such a manner that they are led to move beyond knowing, to undertake action. Through reflection meaning surfaces. The learners understand the truth, implications of what they have grasped for themselves and for others; who they are and who they might be in relation to others.

### **Action**

After reflection, the learner considers the experience and makes choices: a person may decide that truth is to be his or her personal point of reference for any decisions. At this point the student chooses to make the truth his or her own while remaining open to its consequences. In time, these meanings, attitudes, values, which have been interiorized, impel the student to act, to do something consistent with this new conviction.

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation helps to ascertain if there is growth in competence and actions consistent with being a person for others.

This pedagogical paradigm can contribute toward provision of quality education universally by adjusting each step to suit the local contexts.

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**Aleesha Taylor**  
**Open Society Foundations**

The overall theme and subthemes of this year's summit are at the core of the current debates around the direction of the sector and how it will be framed as we move into the 'post 2015' development scenario. The opportunity to reflect on them has been useful, as it has helped me to clarify my own position and areas of concern for the sector in general.

I fully agree that how we understand and define equity goes to the heart of policy choices. I note that discussions and studies of equity are typically approached from a national perspective, focusing on the extent to which all learners within a system have an opportunity to access and excel in quality learning services. My own reflection on equity tends to focus more at the system level and the extent to which various government systems are capable of addressing the needs of and delivering services to even the most marginalized group of citizens. My systems-level perspective on equity may also imply that an entire national population can be taken as marginalized, from a global perspective. For example, a learner from a relatively upper class segment of a significantly crisis-affected society is disadvantaged from a global perspective because a weakened public governance system that is charged with delivering services to them.

The subtheme that I am most attracted to is 'pedagogy and professionalism'. I find the questions about the extent to which teachers are equipped to address pedagogical challenges and the extent to which quality assurance and inspection services can be supportive of most interesting but based on the assumption of a relatively well-functioning system. My concern is that in many of the countries in which I work, teachers are so preoccupied with conditions outside of the classroom that lack of support at the pedagogical core is, most unfortunately, a secondary concern.

Has the system in which this teacher operates been able to provide sufficient initial training and preparation? What happens when the teachers themselves have relatively low proficiency in core subject areas (but were selected and trained to be teachers because their skills were sufficient relative to others in the country)? Is the system strong enough to be able to identify and target low-skilled teachers for additional training and pedagogical support? Does the system provide a livable wage for teachers, or are second jobs and private tutoring necessary for survival? Is the teacher paid regularly or forced to be preoccupied with (or absent from the classroom due to) salary issues?

Are we overlooking these (perhaps) primary questions that may be of concern to a larger number of teachers globally? As we move into the post 2015 development scenario, are we in danger of further marginalizing teachers and learners in the least developed contexts by not attending to the systemic questions that precede and preclude the teacher learner interface?

**Dennis Van Roekel**  
**National Education Association of the United States**  
**USA**

**EQUITY AND QUALITY - how to offer access to high quality learning to all?**

Educators must lead the movement to bring equity and excellence to our public schools. A strong future for public education depends on leading an agenda focused on student success and educator quality, not as an afterthought, but as our first priority. More equitable school financing systems, measures to ensure effective teachers and curriculum, and access to high quality early childhood education can all help relieve inequalities. We know that education creates opportunity and helps to ensure a level playing field for students who might be attending schools that are not equipped with the most up-to-date tools and resources. The real challenge for our education system is in lifting up all districts so all students attend well-staffed and well-resourced schools. Equally important is to keep these issues in the spotlight and move equality strategies forward. It's not right that in the U.S., the richest, most powerful nation on earth is not dealing with the issues that are affecting this country's youth. We're on the cusp of a movement to address education opportunity gaps. These gaps are real. It depends on your zip code. It depends on the socioeconomic status of parents. It's wrong and we need to build addressing this issue into everything we do. Our students with the highest needs deserve more. We must create accountability for the whole system that drives greater equity in every school. A comprehensive approach to equity includes access to high quality pre-school and early learning opportunities and access to high quality, rigorous curriculum, adequate facilities and other learning conditions in schools and attention to out-of-school needs so we are educating the whole child. Educators must create a counterforce that leads the nation toward equity in public education. And we cannot do that without a student-centered strategy deeply committed to social justice. New partners, new strategies, new priorities, and new policies will be required. Equity, excellence, and accountability for the whole system. That must be our focus and our agenda.

**Anna Vignoles**  
**University of Cambridge Faculty of Education**  
**UK**

- Measurement and good data are key to evaluating the progress of individuals, of schools and of the system as a whole. Further, without adequate data and careful measurement, our understanding of the extent of the inequities in the system and the causes of those inequalities will be limited.

- What we measure however, is critically important not just because it affects how we evaluate the system but also because it will influence the behaviours of teachers, school leaders and other professionals within the system. If we measure the wrong thing there is a distinct danger that we can produce unfortunate and detrimental behaviours that negatively impact on the school system, for example teaching to the test or inequalities as some groups of students receive more attention than others in response to measures of schools performance. Hence we need multiple high quality measures of performance that are seen as valid by teachers.

- Measurement and data are also not enough to tell us about the effectiveness of an education system. Evaluation requires careful analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data with sufficient attention to comparability, selection bias and generalisability issues. Good evaluation is essential if we are to better understand inefficiencies and inequities within the education system.

- Evaluation can be entirely externally imposed by regulators and the government, or undertaken by professionals within the system. The latter approach is likely to be particularly beneficial in terms of improving schools and the wider education system. This requires us to build up the skills of those working within the system to undertake their own high quality evaluation.

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**Learning at the Bottom of the Pyramid:  
The serious challenges of improving educational quality among the marginalized**

The World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien (Thailand) was a watershed moment in international education and development. Held in 1990, the conference embraced two key challenges: first, to significantly increase access to education of children in poor countries; and second, to promote the *quality of learning* in education. A decade later, at the Education for All (EFA) conference in Dakar in 2000, these same two challenges were enlarged in a more detailed list of six education targets.<sup>2</sup> They were reinforced again in the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for 2015, where universal primary education was made the second of eight major goals.<sup>3</sup> These global efforts led not only to substantive increases in international development assistance to education but also to greater attention in the broader public arena regarding the importance of children's learning on a global scale.

This paper provides an analysis of the scientific tensions in understanding learning among poor and marginalized<sup>4</sup> populations – those at the *bottom of the pyramid* (BOP). While often invoked by international agencies such as UNESCO and OECD as the 'target' of their investments, the empirical science of studying these very populations remains a matter of serious debate. We review three key issues involved in sorting through consequences for research, policy and practice in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

**1. Boundary constraints: Skills and Population Sampling**

Learning is so ubiquitous and so varied that its presence can only be measured with instruments that can provide an accurate estimation (or proxies) of attributes while simultaneously detecting changes over time. In education, we call these instruments *learning assessments*. If the assessment needs to be representative of an entire population of a country, and for multiple countries in a comparative framework, then resources (time and cost) will likely expand significantly. Up to the present, time and cost have been controlled by delimiting the range of *skills* that would be assessed (the *skills sample*), and by constraining the *population* that would be included (the *population sample*). These two forms of *boundary constraints* need to be understood in terms of technical and statistical requirements, as well as policy requirements and outputs. Each of these issues poses empirical and statistical challenges when the focus is how to improve learning among the most marginalized.

**2. Comparability of Learning Outcomes across Contexts**

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<sup>2</sup> The six goals of Dakar EFA Framework for Action were early childhood care; compulsory primary school; ensuring learning needs for all; adult literacy; gender disparities; and quality of measurement of learning outcomes (UNESCO 2004, 28).

<sup>3</sup> United Nations (2000).

<sup>4</sup> See UNESCO's GMR on Marginalization.

Comparability is central to global education data collection, such as the large-scale data collection carried out by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and OECD. Nonetheless, if comparability is the primary goal, less attention is paid to the local and cultural validity of the definitions and classifications of learning. If this is the case, are empirical findings less meaningful and potentially less applicable at the local ground level? This is a natural and essential tension between universalistic *etic* and context-sensitive *emic* approaches to measurement, and it is particularly relevant to the study of marginalized populations.<sup>5</sup>

Can both comparability and context sensitivity be appropriately balanced in learning research? Should countries with low average scores be tested on the same scales with countries that have much higher average scores? If there are countries (or groups of students) at the “floor” of a scale, some would say that the solution is to drop the scale to a lower level of difficulty. Others might say that the scale itself is flawed, and that there are different types of skills that could be better assessed, especially if the variables are evidently caused by race, ethnicity, language and related variables that lead one to question the test as much as the group that is tested. Yet having different scales for different groups (or nations) seems to some to be an unacceptable compromise of benchmarks established by international policy makers (such as by GEFI or USAID). If the most important goal is to improve learning at the BOP, how credible are the findings at the tail of the distribution from international (or even national) assessments?

### **3. Who should be the stakeholders of results on learning outcomes, and does it matter?**

Policymakers, ministers of education, community leaders in rural villages, teachers, parents and education specialists should be held to account for what and how children learn. Yet, until today, educational specialists and statisticians in most countries (and especially in low-income countries) have been the primary “guardians” of learning processes and their importance for school and economic success. This restricted access to knowledge about learning is due, at least in part, to the complexities of the empirical science of learning, as described earlier. But it is also due to insufficient knowledge—and at times erroneous beliefs—among both parents and children about the importance (or lack of importance) of learning and schooling for life’s chances.<sup>6</sup>

Today, it is more important than ever before to involve multiple stakeholders in education decision-making and in learning. Public interest in children’s learning and school achievement has grown in many countries due in part to globalization, but also to the influence of international agencies, efforts of NGOs, greater community activism and parental interest.

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<sup>5</sup> “Emic” approaches are those that are consciously focused on local cultural relevance, such as local words or descriptors for an “intelligent” person. “Etic” approaches are those that define “intelligence” as a universal concept, and try to measure individuals across cultures on that single concept or definition. Some also see this as one way to think of the boundary between the disciplines of anthropology (*emic*) versus psychology (*etic*). See Harris (1976).

<sup>6</sup> Much evidence suggests, from many societies, that poor communities underestimate the value of learning and schooling. See Stevenson and Stigler (1982) for a comparison of parental beliefs in the U.S., China and Japan.

Some of the recent Pratham, Uwezo and EGRA field studies have involved strong community engagement that has led to significant government take-up of empirical findings.<sup>7</sup>

Knowledge about the importance of learning—and how it can be achieved in formal and non-formal settings, and in structured and informal ways —has the potential of breaking new ground in policy development, community and family participation, and local ownership. This is nowhere more apparent at the BOP, where parents and communities are only now becoming more aware of the role of learning in their children’s lives.

#### **4. Conclusions**

TO BE DISCUSSED

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<sup>7</sup> See Bhattacharjea, Wadhwa and Banerji (2011) on India; and Piper and Korda (2009) on Liberia. Though solid research is lacking to date, there has been considerable attention to the Uwezo initiative, in several African countries, that has adapted a version of Pratham’s community mobilization and accountability approach. See <http://www.uwezo.net/index.php?c=38>; and Pratham (2012), <http://pratham.org/file/Pratham%20Annual%20Report.pdf>.



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### **What does the international data tell us about systems of teacher evaluation?**

At the 2013 International Summit on the Teaching Profession the following question was raised: is the purpose of a system of teacher appraisal – and the feedback to teachers that should follow – to identify and punish the few bad teachers in a system, or to help all teachers to improve? If it is the latter, and if our goals are to improve both teachers *and* teaching, policy makers and school leaders need to review what their current teacher evaluation systems emphasise as being most important for teachers, as well as how and whether the evaluation systems actually impact teaching. The 2013 OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) provides data that indicate country priorities in their systems of teacher appraisal and feedback. On average across countries, the number one emphasis of the feedback teachers receive is student performance, with 88% of teachers reporting that it is given moderate or high importance. Following this, 87% of teacher report that their feedback gives moderate or high importance to both student behaviour and classroom management and pedagogical competencies in teaching their subject, and 83% of teachers report this level of emphasis is given to the knowledge and understanding of their subject. Across countries, the lowest percentages of teachers report moderate or high importance is given to teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting (44%) and providing feedback to other teachers (57%). When looking at how the emphasis of teacher feedback has changed over time, we see the biggest change in the emphasis that is placed on student performance in the feedback teachers receive. On average across countries that participated in both cycles of TALIS, the percentage of teachers reporting a strong emphasis on student performance was 67% in 2008 and increased to 87% in 2013. The difference is particularly evident in the countries shown in the table below.

*Percentage of teachers reporting a moderate or high importance on student performance in the feedback they received in TALIS 2008 vs TALIS 2013*

| <b>Country</b> | <b>% of teachers in 2008</b> | <b>% of teachers in 2013</b> |
|----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Australia      | 51%                          | 88%                          |
| Denmark        | 29%                          | 72%                          |
| Iceland        | 45%                          | 78%                          |
| Italy          | 62%                          | 95%                          |
| Norway         | 47%                          | 73%                          |
| Portugal       | 64%                          | 95%                          |

The objective of appraisal and feedback systems should be improvement of all teachers, but this is not the case in all countries at present. Korea, Singapore and the province of Ontario in Canada have strong links between their teacher appraisal systems and professional development plans or even career paths for teachers. Yet TALIS data show that just under half of teachers on average report that the feedback they receive leads to a positive change in the amount of professional development they undertake. Just more than four teachers in ten work in schools where the principal reports that a development plan is created most of the time or always for teachers following formal appraisal. Finally, only half of teachers on average feel that the appraisal and

feedback in their school is only conducted as an administrative exercise. Teachers with this perception also report lower job satisfaction all TALIS countries.

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## **KNOWLEDGE, EVIDENCE AND LARGE SCALE REFORM. THE NEED FOR BUILDING BRIDGES**

Today, changes in educational systems are being put in place everywhere. It is difficult to find a country, which is not in search of improving equity and quality. Indeed new laws and legal reforms have been created, budgets have been increased, educational institutions have been reshaped, and emergent programs and methods have been proved. “Raise the bar and close the gap” is an expanded, claim, nonetheless the real meaning of this formula changes dramatically in different national realities.

This urgency for change is rooted in the massive recognition of education’s transformational power. Education is assumed as the main public policy to improve individual life and societal welfare, with a dose of volunteerism and unconscious of it’s boundaries. True or false, it is considered a unique way for simultaneously developing economy, reducing social segregation and strengthening citizenship. The social and political groups who push for this educational reform cover a large spectrum: from the business man to workers and migrants, from political right to left, and from the elite to the base of society.

The promise of attaining superior results is part and parcel of our public expectations and successive governments have tried to meet them. They need clear and rapid solutions for deep problems, which require complex and profound transformations in teacher and student practices, parent involvement, leadership or school culture, and frequently to modify other variables (as poverty, residential segregation or child employment), which do not correspond to the educational sector –but are crucial to it. It is well known that long-term educational changes are challenged by short political tenure. The temptation to promote wrong drivers and false solutions (for example, to exacerbate the educational virtues of new technology or monetary incentives) is real. The existence of powerful international economic agents interested in the promotion of their *products* and *services* add complexity to the decision making process. Under these conditions, the problem of good leadership and techno-political management of educational change is serious. In other terms, the politics and economics of educational policies is one of the big (but less studied) issues of the reforms.

Where to search for these needed solutions? One frequent answer for politicians, as well as policy makers, is to observe successful systems on the “PISA thermometer” (Finland, Singapore, China-Shanghai), which are presented as final destinations, if not as models to follow, for their countries. However, every educational system has it’s own history, culture, strengths and problems, that must be carefully respected. “Copy and paste”, in more or less sophisticated versions, is not possible nor desirable. Put in positive terms, the capacity to know international experiences to build national (or *idiosyncratic*) answers seems a requirement for success.

More generally, a big challenge for educational systems to design and implement their large-scale reform is to incorporate actual knowledge and relevant evidence in the process. Different strategies should be taken to accomplish this goal from policy makers to researchers and practitioners. Interesting examples are the incorporation of researchers and practitioners in some

moments of the decision making process; the entrenchment of researchers and practitioners in institutional apparatus; or gradual “colonization” of the large school system by successful experiences developed by researchers and practitioners (scaling up). In summary, the promotion of efficient ways to mobilize knowledge coming from research and practice into educational reforms is essential. The vision of large scale reforms as a social learning process, which must surpass complex political, technical and cultural obstacles, could be inspirational to arrive at effective results on equity and quality.

**EQUITY AND QUALITY – how to offer access to high quality learning to all?**

I reflected on this question in relation to the developing contexts that OSF works in to advance access to quality primary and secondary education. I believe that the key to achieving quality and equity in education is shifting our gaze from the global to the local. Increasingly, global education reform demands standardization across systems, often with a narrow focus on a few subjects (usually math, reading and science), and a singular emphasis on learning outcomes as measures through high stakes tests for students and test-based accountability for teachers and schools.

Turning our gaze to the local means organizing education systems in ways that aim first and foremost at answering the question: what must we do to ensure that ALL children (in this village, this urban center, across this country) see themselves as directly having a stake in and able to contribute to change, progress and development of their village, urban center or country and are able to see the relationship between what they are learning at school and the kinds of things that would really make a difference in their broader community? With this central question driving the way we organize education systems and schools, teaching and learning take on greater relevance and space is created for all children, not just some, to participate fully in the process and see their place in it.

When reading, math and science, for instance, are pursued from this localized perspective, then not only do they have meaning, for students and their communities, outside the walls of the classroom but also teaching and learning become more dynamic as schools draw on local community resources to help bring life to the ideas being discussed. Local farmers, artisans, craftsmen, businesses, fisherfolk can work alongside teachers to facilitate learning of and through everyday things.

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My statement draws on twenty years of experience as an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) teacher educator, ten years of developing and working on a blended learning masters programme for serving teachers. Most recently I have developed and lead a whole system teacher education reform programme in post soviet, Kazakhstan.

My position now is based on this experience and it is that there ought not to be an artificial divide between ITE and CPD but rather we ought to focus on teacher education from novice to expert, beginning to master or whatever construct we agree to use to define the stages of the trajectory.

I support Michael Fielding's proposition of joint practice development, however I take issue with David Hargreaves's more recent interpretation, which reduces the role of universities to glorified CPD providers. I believe that university education departments have a crucial role to play in updating pedagogical content knowledge and in supporting teachers to access, use and produce research knowledge in a robust critical way.

New teachers coming into the profession have a lot to offer a school in terms of energy and enthusiasm. Furthermore new teachers also are more likely to be expert users of digital technology and where this knowledge is recognised and valued this can go some way towards updating a schools collective understanding of the importance of digital technology.

However in the UK there is a huge problem of teacher retention with many new teachers leaving the profession within their first three years. This is a complex problem but my own research shows that where schools value and look after new teachers in the difficult first few years then new teachers are more likely to stay on and grow. Retaining and supporting the best new teachers is vital to the continued growth of the profession.

To this end it is also essential that school leaders understand the importance of managing teams of people as well as being able to interpret data sets. I would like to see school leaders standing up for their teams, supporting them whilst at the same time holding teachers to account as professionals who are duty bound to do their very best for every child in their school. In such schools where intelligent accountability prevails the core values are about developing the whole teacher and child rather than simply responding to inspection regimes or the demands of high stake testing.

I also have tried to draw on recent research but to also provide guidance on GERM\* free systems, processes and structures to help bring about change by supporting the implementation of development in the Kazakhstan. I believe that theorising and implementation must be more closely linked.

\*GERM = Global Education Reform Movement, Sahlberg

### **Reflection on in 'education and equity' from the Dutch policy context**

One of the policies of the Dutch government is strengthening the steering capacity and responsibility of school boards to address students' needs and develop positive learning environments.

To realize this, a three-years programme (School aan Zet, 2012) is implemented. This programme aims to leverage internal motivation to increase the effectiveness of the education provided through work in six areas. The six areas are:

1. Results-oriented work;
2. Human resource management/ learning organisation;
3. Basic skills;
4. Dealing with differences between students;
5. Excellence / gifted students, and;
6. Science and technology skills

### **Reflection on Pedagogy and Professionalism from the Dutch policy context**

The Dutch Government launched the Teachers Program 2013-2020 in October 2013. One of the main goals of this program is the improvement of teacher training colleges and improving mentoring programs for young teachers.

Schools have to be learning organisations. The idea is that teachers, teaching teams, managers and boards work together on building a learning-based atmosphere, in which the quality of education is paramount. Teachers should have sufficient professional space, development opportunities and career prospects.

Another goal is for teachers to keep their knowledge up to date and their skills sharp. This will improve the education for their students. 44,000 teachers have already utilized a 'teacher scholarship' by which they are able to study towards a bachelor or a master degree while working.

Schools in the Netherlands are very autonomous. They are free to develop their own pedagogical vision.

The Education Cooperative supports the need for high-quality professionals and a strong position for teachers. The Education Cooperative is working on the improvement of the profession. The organization will achieve further improvements by introducing skill requirements and managing the teacher register. From 2017 teachers will be required to enter a Teachers' Register to monitor their competencies and needs for professional development. The Education Cooperative is helping develop competency frameworks and standards with the aim of safeguarding the quality of the profession.

### **Reflection on Evaluation and measurement from the Dutch policy context**

Starting 2014-2015, an already existing standardised student assessment will become compulsory at the end of primary education to evaluate students' numeracy and literacy. Schools will retain the right to choose from a variety of test providers. The test results can be in some cases used to confirm access to secondary education after consideration of schools' advice.

Schools are required to create an internal supervisory board to assure compliance of legislation, approve the annual school report, and oversee the financial management of the school (2010). The Windows for Accountability (2012) benchmarks primary and secondary schools for key stakeholders, such as parents, primary schools, municipalities and the Inspectorate. In efforts to increase accountability, the database contains quantitative and qualitative information provided by schools to the Council for Primary and Secondary Education.

The Inspectorate is extending the supervision framework (now only for weak or very weak schools), to schools that have had moderate, average or good results for considerable time, yet without a clear drive to improve performance. This includes the differentiation of quality indicators to raise ambitions in schools and help schools with good results to raise further student achievement. The government also implemented an "excellent school" prize and identifying 'good schools' to reward them for their quality and disseminate these good practices.