

*COAG Productivity Agenda:
opportunities for Educational
Research*

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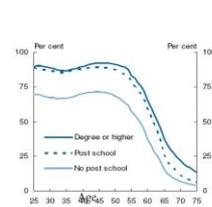
Executive Director, Policy

SAIER 31 March 2009

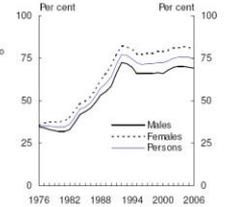
Summary

- The national productivity policy **agenda** and **processes** present significant opportunities for policy-driven research in SA, that addresses local needs, and positions SA research community as national resource
- We need to move beyond “2-worlds view of knowledge translation” if insights from education research are to have an impact on policy and practice
- Some ideas.....as a basis for discussion

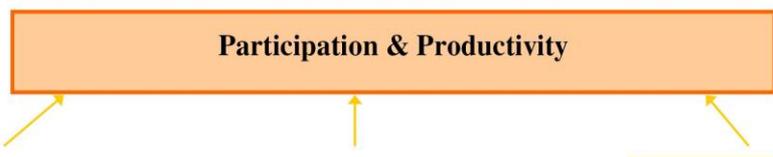
Participation is highest for those with post-school qualifications.....



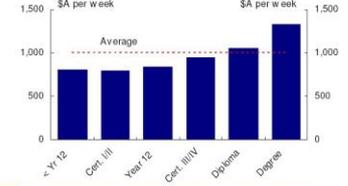
... but Yr 12 retention has stagnated



Early childhood, education, skills and workforce development policies could boost participation by 0.7 percentage points, and productivity by up to 1.2 per cent by 2030 (PC 2006). This corresponds to an increase in GDP of around 2.2 per cent, or around \$25 billion in today's dollars.



Average earnings are highest for those with high-level qualifications



	Early Childhood Development	Schooling	Skills and Workforce Development
ASPIRATIONS	That children are born healthy and have access to the support, care and education throughout early childhood that equips them for life and learning, delivered in a way that actively engages parents, and meets the workforce participation needs of parents.	That all Australian school students acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in society and employment in a globalised economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All working aged Australians have the opportunity to develop the skills and qualifications needed, including through a responsive training system, to enable them to be effective participants in and contributors to the modern labour market. Individuals are assisted to overcome barriers to education, training and employment, and are motivated to acquire and utilise new skills. Australian industry and businesses develop, harness and utilise the skills and abilities of the workforce.
OUTCOMES	<p>Children are born healthy¹</p> <p>Children acquire the basic skills for life and learning</p> <p>Children will benefit from better social inclusion and reduced disadvantage, especially Indigenous children</p> <p>All children have access to affordable, quality early childhood education in the year before formal schooling¹</p> <p>Quality early childhood education and care supports the workforce participation choices of parents with children in the years before formal schooling</p>	<p>All children are engaged in and benefiting from schooling</p> <p>Young people are meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards, and overall levels of literacy and numeracy achievement are improving</p> <p>Schooling promotes the social inclusion and reduces the educational disadvantage of children, especially Indigenous children</p> <p>Australian students excel by international standards</p> <p>Young people make a successful transition from school to work and further study</p>	<p>The working age population have gaps in foundation skills levels reduced to enable effective educational, labour market and social participation</p> <p>The working age population has the depth and breadth of skills and capabilities required for the 21st century labour market</p> <p>The supply of skills provided by the national training system responds to meet changing labour market demand</p> <p>Skills are used effectively to increase labour market efficiency, productivity, innovation, and ensure increased utilisation of human capital</p>
INDICATIVE PROGRESS MEASURES²	<p>Proportion of children born of low birth weight¹</p> <p>Proportion of children with basic skills for life and learning, and who are vulnerable, as identified by the Australian Early Development Index</p> <p>Proportion of disadvantaged three year olds in early childhood education</p> <p>Further performance measures need to be identified for children aged 18 months to 3 years¹</p> <p>Proportion of four year olds accessing quality early childhood education</p> <p>Proportion of parents who can access the quality early childhood education and care services required for their preferred labour force participation</p>	<p>Proportion of children enrolled in and attending school</p> <p>Literacy and numeracy achievement of Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students in national testing</p> <p>Proportion of students in the bottom and top levels of performance in international testing (eg. PISA, TIMSS)</p> <p>Proportion of the 19 year old population having attained at least a Year 12 or equivalent or AQF Certificate II²</p> <p>Proportion of young people participating in post-school education or training six months after school</p> <p>Proportion of 18-24 year olds engaged in full-time employment, education or training at or above Certificate III</p>	<p>Literacy and numeracy achievement of working age people in national and international testing</p> <p>Proportion of 20-64 year olds with or working towards the post school qualifications in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cert III & Cert IV Diploma & Advanced Diploma <p>Level and proportion of total investment in structured (including nationally recognised) training by industry, individuals, businesses and governments</p> <p>Proportion of graduates employed after completing training</p> <p>Extent of skills shortages, recruitment difficulties and labour market vacancies</p> <p>Proportion of people employed at or above the level of their qualification</p>
COAG TARGETS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal access to early learning for all four year olds by 2013 Halving the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five years old within a decade¹ In five years all Indigenous four year olds in remote Indigenous communities will have access to a quality early childhood education program¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lift the Year 12 or equivalent attainment rate to 90 per cent by 2020 Halve the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade At least halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates by 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> halve the proportion of Australians ages 20-64 without qualifications at Certificate III level and above by 50% between 2009 and 2020 double the number of higher qualification completions (diploma and advanced diploma) between 2009 and 2020
ELECTION COMMITMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Access to a quality early childhood education program for children in the year before formal schooling, for 15 hours per week, 40 weeks per year National rollout of the Australian Early Development Index Early childhood workforce strategies: 1500 new university places, HECS remission for early childhood teachers working in areas of high need; and removal of TAFE fees for child care trainees National Quality standards for child care and preschool A National Early Years Learning Framework Streamlined quality assurance and regulatory arrangements Up to 260 new child care and early learning centres on school grounds and other community land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Year 9-12 students have access to a computer and teachers are trained appropriately All secondary schools have access to Trades Training Centres delivering high quality industry recognised training at Certificate III National Curriculum supports world-class teaching in all Australian schools from Kindergarten to Year 12, including literacy and numeracy standards Asian Languages— Increase the number of qualified language teachers and develop national curriculum for advanced students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of Australian Technical Colleges into broader trade training arrangements 450,000 additional training places over the next four years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 90% at Certificate III or above Establish Skills Australia to advise the Government Greater involvement of Industry Skills Councils
POLICY DIRECTIONS	<p>Policy directions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving antenatal care¹ Strengthen the health, development and learning of 0-5 year olds Improving the quality and sustainability of the early years workforce Enhancing and integrating the provision of Early Childhood Education and Care services Boosting the participation of parents in the learning and development of their children 	<p>Policy directions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving teacher and school leader quality High standards and expectations Greater accountability and better directed resources Modern, world class teaching and learning environments including ICT Integrated strategies for low SES school communities Boosting parental engagement 	<p>Policy directions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placing clients (individuals and businesses) at the centre of the system Reforming training products, services, information systems and regulation to meet a more demand and client driven system Driving further competition in current training arrangements and strengthening capacity of providers and businesses to build the foundation and deeper and broader skills required by the 21st century labour market Creating an investment environment and settings that optimises investment from all sources (governments, individuals, businesses and industry) including funding for delivery, tax policy, employment programs and incentives Renewal of governance framework to reinforce the role of industry and maximise effectiveness and efficiency in intergovernmental relations Ensuring that skills are fully utilised and wastage of human capital is reduced

¹ The Productivity Agenda Working Group will work in partnership with Indigenous and Health COAG Working Groups ² The target and related progress measures need to be consistent ³ All measures will be disaggregated by Indigenous and socio-economic status

The national policy context

Underlying assumptions.....

Investing in ECD and Schooling will improve productivity and social inclusion

A focus on outcomes and public reporting of comparative performance against these outcomes/targets will lift performance

Increasing states' flexibility to move resources around in this context will lead to more cost-effective investments

Worthy of testing in their own right?

The outcome for SA.....

A **National Education Agreement (NEA)** between all jurisdictions

A **SPP** from the C/W that rolls in small C/W targeted programs to give states more flexibility (\$1.3b + \$104m to 2012/13).....ongoing with periodic review by Heads of Treasuries who will advise COAG

Funding agreements to 2012 between the C/W and independent schools and Catholic sector, that mirror the NEA

National Partnerships (NPs) ...

Provide additional C/W \$s for evidence based reform in priority areas to facilitate roll-out and reward achievement of outcomes.....

Reform NPs:

3 Smarter Schools NPs (\$200m x 4/5 ys)

Low SES Schooling Communities

Quality Teaching

Literacy and Numeracy

Early Childhood Reform (\$65.5m x 2.5 ys)

A potential new **NP on Year 12 attainment** and Youth Transitions

National Partnerships (NPs) ...

- **Project NPs:**
- Building Education Revolution (\$1b)
- Digital Education Revolution
- Trade Training Centres in Schools
- ...
- ...
- ...

- SPP is ongoing with periodic review...no financial penalties for poor performance
- Reform NPs are time-limited, to be evaluated, and financial rewards and/or penalties will be linked to performance against outcomes/targets
- Project NPs also time limited with financial rewards and/or penalties linked to performance against targets and milestones

Status of NPs.....

- EC Reform.....bilateral negotiations underway
- 3 Schooling NPs being progressed as a package under cross-sector SA NP Council advising Minister Lomax-Smith
- Feedback received from C/W on 1st drafts, final drafts being prepared for final bilateral negotiations...sign-off in late May?
- COAG will consider progress on new NP on Year 12 in April, then final proposal in July.

Re our (schooling) NPs.....

- In June we will know the interventions and programs to be funded under the NPs (and where?)
- We will need to know
 - whether outcomes, targets and indicators are being/have been achieved
 - What exactly made the difference in our settings

A challenge for the 3 schooling sectors to work together, share data, compare performance and disseminate best practice

Re the NEA.....

- States have agreed under the NEA to some additional reporting arrangements
 - Comparative reports on states' performance by the COAG Reform Council (CRC)... 1st by Sept this year
 - New arrangements for public reporting on individual school performance through ACARA

Some implications.....

- We need to have credible evaluation partners for the long haul...*(yet to hear how local evaluations will coordinate and link to contribute to national evaluations)*
- Evaluation partners will need to be multidisciplinary, and may need to draw together capacities across units...*(social and economic return on investment will be at centre)*
- If the research community is proactive, based on their knowledge of the reforms to be rolled out and the data that will be collected, there are opportunities to leverage investigator-driven research too

Implications cont.....

- There will be increased effort at national and state level to improve ECD and schooling related data and information management *(this will support research and is research agenda in its own right)*

Implications cont.....

- To build research capacity in this new context we must share an understanding of:
 - The strengths and weaknesses of our evidence-base
 - The unanswered questions that lend themselves to applied and investigator-driven research
 - A useful SA research agenda (s, m and l-term) and its links with a national/international agenda
 - Potential funding sources
 - Our capacity (multidisciplinary and cross-institutions)
 - What it takes to build collaborations and partnerships in SA despite competitive environment for research community shaped by structural factors

Implications cont....

- How can we achieve this? Are our current structures and processes adequate to the task? eg TELC and SARIE....

In 5 years' time we want.....

- To know
 - whether outcomes, targets and indicators are achieved
 - what contributed and what would it take to rolled it out effectively in SA
- To be sure that all stakeholders including the public understand the findings and implications
- A more enquiry-based culture in our sector
- A cadre of young people who will remain in the sector, focused on translation of evidence into practice in SA settings

In 5 years' time we want.....

- Enhanced and competitive research capacity based in SA attracting funding from a range of sources
- ?? Established SA as a national leader in the science of translation (of evidence into policy and practice in Aust'n EC and education settings).....*this is overlooked completely in Aust at present*

A few words about SA NT DataLink

- A comprehensive data linkage capacity is being established in SA
- To provide a reporting, policy development and research capacity previously unavailable to South Australian policy makers and researchers.
- The whole of government and whole of population approach to linking data from all major human service providers creates a research base more powerful than that obtained from individual surveys or pilots of interventions.
- Data linkage will not only assist in directly measuring performance against government objectives and targets eg under Productivity Agenda, but better enable understanding of the drivers of change. This understanding can be used to design interventions.
- It is important to differentiate between the research needs satisfied by a linked data set and the administrative needs of individual agencies. Linking records across agencies for research purposes does not remove the requirement within agencies for unique identifiers to facilitate service delivery and administration.
- UniSA is the host institution, SA Health convenes the Consortium, the Director is about to be appointed, SAIER should request a presentation, David Engelhardt and Liz Finlay in DECS are managing DECS' involvement.

SA NT DataLink....

Will support (md) research in SA that....

- Reflects a “life course” approach
- Focuses on early childhood development
- Helps tackle the social gradient
- Supports Skills development
- Aims at closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage
- Enquires into service utilisation
- Seeks to understand primary, secondary and tertiary prevention...etc

The national policy processes are....

Conducive to applied research, as they emphasise....

- Focus on outcomes and targets
- Evidence based policy and action
- Performance reporting
- Data/information in the public domain
- Informed public debate (in theory)
- Innovation and diversity, experimentation and evaluation
- Potential for new \$s for info management and data to support new COAG performance reporting and evaluation requirements

The challenge of moving beyond the simplistic “2 worlds view of knowledge translation” if insights from education research are to have an impact on policy and practice (*“bench and field” for long haul on big issues, and communicating directly to the public*)

The urgent need to know more about students, parents and communities (it’s not just about best practice, schools, teachers, pedagogy and curriculum)