Harvard Report

Representatives from the Family-School & Community Partnerships Bureau attended the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Programs in Professional Education course Closing the Achievement Gap held on 29 June to 3 July 2014.

The course brought together 99 participants over the five days with representatives from school communities, educational services, universities and family organisations throughout America, Australia and Canada.

The primary goal for participating in the course was to improve and build on our current understanding of how to raise achievement levels for all students while narrowing the gaps between groups and increasing teacher, student and family engagement.

The main presenter and facilitator over the five days was Ronald F Ferguson, Senior Lecturer in Education and Public Policy with a joint appointment between the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) and Harvard Kennedy School (HKS). He is also Senior Research Associate for the Malcolm Wiener Centre for Social Policy at HKS. Ronald leads the Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard and has written many publications with a focus on racial achievement gaps.

Each day had a theme:
- Framing the work
- Parent, family and community engagement
- Instructional leadership and teacher engagement
- Student engagement
- Taking action

There were plenty of opportunities for participants to network and share ideas particularly at the end of each day in their allocated group meetings.
Day 1 Sunday 29 June 2014

Session 1

Framing the work

This session explored who we are, why we are here and what we can do with colleagues and communities about the achievement gap.

Ronald Ferguson started with a poem which was a summary of a paper titled *Cultivating new dreams*.

The below diagram shows that it is not about closing the gap but ensuring an equity of outcomes for ALL.
Key thematic ideas and goals for framing the work:
- **Group-proportional equality** of achievement
- **Excellence with Equity**
- **Shift school and district level focis to external benchmarks** as points of comparison, instead of inter-group comparisons in the home community
- **Build a movement** for excellence with equity, grounded on a socio-ecological perspective that aims to enrich learning and developmental experiences for all children across all of the places and spaces where children learn and develop.

A book was mentioned titled ‘*I Used to Think………But Now I Think*’ which describes a routine for reflecting on how and why our thinking has changed.

Ronald talked about the importance of strong leaders understanding the complexities of the task ahead. These complexities include:
- Trust
- Beliefs
- Student peer support
- Supportive and ongoing monitoring
- Shared leadership
- Scarcity
The challenge is to believe the potential is there of all students and draw it out.

‘*Any fool can count the seeds in an apple, but only God can count the apples in one seed*’
Reverend Robert Schuller

**Session 2**
**Race and social Hierarchy**
Ronald Ferguson talked about concepts for discussing social hierarchy. These are as follows:
- Prejudice/dislike/antipathy/mistreatment
- Social stigma and negative stereotypes
- Imperfect information
- Statistical discrimination
- Stereotype anxiety
- Implicit bias
- Signalling
- Code switching—be respectful of the code they come with—refusal to code switch can marginalise people
- Marginalisation

*Note: Code switching was a light bulb moment for a lot of people and became part of participants’ vocabulary over the next four days.*

Ronald talked about the Socio-ecological system around the child’s development.
(Bronfenbrenner 1979)
Ronald explained the effects of each of the socio-ecological system as follows:
- Micro ecology is a setting that includes the child
- Meso ecology is the system of micro-ecologies
- Exo-ecological setting is a setting where things happen and decisions are made that effect the child, but the child is not present eg parent’s workplace
- Macro ecology is the overarching set of beliefs and meanings—the cultural blueprint—in the context of which the whole social system functions.
Group meetings
The purpose of these meetings were to:
• Reflect on the information throughout the day
• Form networks
• Represent all voices in the final reflection on day five.

Outcomes from day 1
The Big ideas that the group came up with to explore throughout the institute were:
• Relationship between parent engagement and achievement gap
• Comparative perspectives on achievement gaps across US and other contexts
• Income & race in explaining achievement gaps

Migrant populations in Australia:
• Persistent and pervasive underachievement among indigenous populations
• Middle eastern, African refugees (Sudanese / Muslims), Pacific Islands (Samoa, PNG)
• One useful idea / what we found to be most helpful and relevant from today’s sessions:

Feedback from group members
• It was interesting to see data that heighten the gap between groups and across time à having a broad perspective on how prevalent and pervasive this issue is
• Concepts of social hierarchy was a useful tool (i.e., signalling and code-switching when working with school leaders and parents)
• Concept of excellence with equity—white students also need to be pushed was a helpful idea, feel slightly anxious about potential tension I might encounter as I think about bringing this up in the multicultural campus where much of the rhetoric emphasizes white privilege, social injustice, oppression and power.
• Ron redefined the gap, you tend to think of student of colour but he included everyone. Group proportionality
• External benchmarks, teachers cannot see outside of classrooms or schools. Not creating internal competition but preparing them to connect to the world
• In Australia every school can be compared to national average and published on a website, that’s how parents select schools for their kids they just see numbers, they don’t get to see what goes into the numbers (Discussion on MySchool website and NAPLAN)
• Helpful but can be perilous with all the comparisons with desegregated data
• The missing piece is the growth students are making (focus more on growth model, longitudinal data) that is what matters
• In academically selective schools, there is almost no growth and these teachers are more anti-growth modelling
• I liked the idea of having feedback at all levels to close the gap.
• How do these different dimensions of social hierarchy affecting student performance and broadly achievement gaps? This is never discussed through this framework. How can we begin to talk about this at my school / organisation?
• Code switching and survival skills are implicit. I don’t know how to teach that. How do we make this systematic and explicit?

REMAINING QUESTIONS
• High quality options (what it looks like and how we move them in that direction without determining or tracking them) vs. 4-year college track for kids
• I need to process more on the ecology PowerPoint. Little bit more information about the other areas

LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS
• Strategies for relieving anxiety around overwhelming pressure to move people towards change
• Creating a sense of urgency and possibility—what does that look like in daily practice? It is very hard to get staff to own it. There is a lot of work to be done but concrete examples of places that have done it to prove that this is not an impossible feat.
• Expectations and aspirations—those two words resonated with me all afternoon.
• How do we know parents are engaged, and what does involvement mean?
• How do I “code-switch” so I can translate and talk about achievement gaps from an economic perspective to my colleagues who are coming more from an anthropological, sociological perspective?

Day 2 Monday 30 June 2014
Session 3
Using data to identify issues and set priorities
Elizabeth City is the Director of the Doctor of Education Leadership (Ed.L.D) Program. Elizabeth discussed effective ways of engaging stakeholders in the use of data to improve learning and teaching.

Elizabeth introduced a paper titled Being Strategic-strategy in action, R E Curtis and E A City, Harvard education press 2009 which talks about 3 questions for being strategic and three kinds of data. Three questions are:
• What, why and how
Three kinds of data collection:
• Count, see and hear

A YouTube was introduced titled How great leaders inspire action by Simon Sinek (September 2009) In the video he presents a simple but powerful model for how leaders inspire action www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action

The model is called the ‘Golden circle’
• Why they do it
• How they do it
• What they do

All inspired leaders think from the inside out. People don’t buy what we do, they buy why we do it – If you’re not OK with where you are think about where you need to be.

Data Wise Project at the Harvard Graduate School of Education has trained school-based teams in an eight-step process for using data to improve learning and teaching.
Schools that use data to make real improvements in learning and teaching bring a distinctive approach to their work, and have come to call this disciplined way of thinking the ACE Habits of Mind, where A stands for a shared commitment to Action, Assessment, and Adjustment; C stands for Intentional Collaboration; and E stands for a relentless focus on Evidence.

Website for data analysing tools [http://www.gse.harvard.edu/datawise](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/datawise)

Elizabeth finished her presentation with “Quality matters more than quantity’

**Session 4**

**Jigsaw: Framing the work with a focus on Parenting**

In their groups participants were asked to read their allocated reading and consider the role of parenting as a source of achievement gaps and also as a lever for helping to close them. Groups were asked to discuss the research on effective parenting practices and explore ideas for community level campaigns designed to engage parents in improving their parenting.

**Required readings**

1. Seeding success concept paper on parenting  
   Ballantine A; Ferguson R; Goodman G; Ramchandani S; Riegelhaupt C. (2012)
2. An empirically derived parenting typology  
   Jelani Mandara (2010)
3. The contributions of parenting to ethnic and racial gaps in school readiness - *The future of children.*  
   Project muse  

After the jigsaw was completed Ronald tied the discussions together with feedback from the groups on the various parenting styles.

Parenting styles ages 3 and higher

- Authoritarian
- Strict Authoritative
- Authoritative
- Permissive
- Neglectful

In conclusion authoritative parenting has the highest impact on student achievement and behaviour.

**Session 5**

**Part 1 - Building the capacity for systematic family engagement**

**Karen Mapp** is a lecturer on education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE)
Working definition of Family Engagement

*Family Engagement is any way that a child’s adult caretaker (biological parents, foster parents, siblings, grandparents, etc.) effectively supports learning and healthy development.*

Karen stated that you can’t do reform without your family and community members.

She talked about the various roles when families are effectively engaged in their children’s education and in the improvement of schools. Various roles are:

- Supporters
- Encouragers
- Monitors
- Models
- Decision-makers/chooser
- Collaborators and co-creators

We need to change our thinking from seeing parents as clients to seeing parents as co-creators and partners.

**Why is family engagement so important?**

The PISA study on family engagement 2010 shows the impact of family engagement of students with engaged families.

The key measurables are:

- Exhibit faster rates of literacy acquisition
- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Enrolled in higher level programs
- Are promoted more and earn more credits
- Adapt better school and attend more regularly
- Have better social skills and behaviour
- Graduate and go on to higher education

The above is what Karen calls the beef.

Organizing schools for improvement 2010 lessons from Chicago Five essential supports

- Leadership as driver
- Professional capacity
- Parent community ties
- Student centred learning climate
- Instructional guidance
Family engagement is an essential ingredient for a successful school.

Following are the different types of schools:

**Fortress School (Below Basic)**
- Parents don’t care about their children’s education, and they are the main reason the kids are failing
- Parents don’t come to conferences, no matter what we do
- Principal picks a small group of “cooperative parents” to help out
- We’re teachers, not social workers
- Curriculum and standards are too advanced for these parents

**Come-if-We-Call School (Basic)**
- Parents are told what students will be learning at the fall open house
- Workshops are planned by staff
- Families can visit school on report card pickup day
- Parents call the office to get teacher-recorded messages about homework

**Open-Door School (Proficient)**
- Parent-teacher conferences are held at least twice a year
- There is an “Action Team” for family engagement
- School holds parent events three or four times a year
- Parents can raise issues at PTA meetings or see the principal

**Partnership School (Advanced)**
- All family activities are connected to student learning
- There is a clear, open process for resolving problems
- Parent networks are valued and cultivated
- Families are actively involved in decisions on school improvement
- Staff conduct relationship-building home visits to families

The Dual Capacity Framework was formulated using:
Research on the following:
- Effective home-school partnership strategies
• Adult learning and motivation
• Leadership development

**Intention of the Framework**
Instead of a *roadmap*, the framework provides a *compass*; a direction for the development of effective high impact strategies and initiatives.

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**No relationship - No engagement**

*Remember that families have assets, focus on growth if we anticipate problems then things won’t change*

**Session 6**
**Part 2 – Building the capacity for systematic family engagement**
**Michele Brooks** is the Assistant Superintendent for family and student engagement for the Boston Public Schools.

Every parent who comes through the door comes with an educational experience.

Systemic engagement is about moving from a program to practice. It is linking to core enterprise to improve student achievement. There needs to be shared responsibility and accountability and an alignment to climate and culture.

**Conditions for engagement**
• Core beliefs and clearly articulated goals
• Rituals and norms embedded in school culture
• Expectations and accountability
• Time and resource allocation
Preparing to build capacity
Inventory—what is already in place?

Capacity
- Who or what resources currently are in place?
- What do we do well?
- What are the challenges?
- Where are the gaps?

Every school will welcome every family and every student, actively engaging them as partners in student learning school improvement – Boston Public Schools.

PARENT UNIVERSITY

Parents Are Teachers
- Child Development
- Parenting Strategies
- Supporting Learning from Birth to Five

Parents Are Advocates
- Navigating the BPS Learning Standards
- Advocating for Children with Disabilities and English Language

Parents Are Leaders
- Leadership Skills
- School Parent Council/ School Site Council
- Organizing Skills

Parents Are Learners
- Areas requested by parents
- Nutrition
- Money Management
Group Meetings

One new I want to try
- Concepts of teaching supporting documents for
  - command
  - language
  - make elements of effective efforts visible to parents
- Reframe thinking public understanding around AG
  to inform policy (diversified nuanced def of AG)
  beyond demographics
- Consciousness awareness conversations, unpack data @
  aggregated level
- Build critical mass ppl think this
- Gather evidence reading, formulating

Data wise "g" improvement process
apply to eval/assess

"Smart is malleable"

$ to invite Ron @ my school
L where CRT, racial microaggressions pro
- tension btw universal vs. targeted
- reconsidering inst. priorities re: AG
  in the midst of so many needs

Family engagement as a way to equip
empower, affirm good parenting
- Severe deficits cognitively to close AG
- Absenteeism, cognitive, lack of engagement, behavioral,

Cultural consciousness (Gonia Nieto)
- in response to AG demographics
  how it affects at district level
- Leadership retention is imp to close AG

Intergenerational cycle of poverty
& AG
Practices to Cultivate possible selves

- Partner w/ parents/comm to ensure kids receive thru intervention, media campaign
- Build time for kids to imagine wonder poss over time
- Exposure to role models possibilities
- Message that they are capable to build resilience
- Train teachers to understand intelligence can grow
- Social intelligence & perception people possess -> affirm, empower

Practices strategies to possible selves

- G.H.O. teachers within local comm
- Community organizing groups to equip parents as advocates
- Community volunteer mentors
- Peer-Youth (AU) match grandparents to students
- Growth mindset (Dweck’s work) thru instruction
- BLACK & BROWN male summit (by gender) Middle School 4
- Peer-to-Peer mentoring to share stories (ESL focus)
  - K-4th pairs
  - Explicit standards & requirements
  - Mentor college admissions
  - Recruit college students to help with app process, fin aid
- District-CC partnership
  - “Bridges to higher ed” for first-gen college students, exposure to post
  - Professionals visit to school on an ongoing basis
Day 3 Tuesday 1 July 2014
Session 7
High expectations teaching
Ronald Ferguson talked about the Measures of effective teaching (MET) project. Which was the largest study on teacher quality.

Student perspectives are the most reliable indicators of what goes on in a classroom. Students respect the same things in the teaching style as they do in the parenting style.

Session 7 continues..

Jonathon Saphier is the founder and president of Research for Better Teaching, Inc. (RBT)

High expectations teaching

Challenged the bell curve – said the bell curve of ability is wrong – it’s just a belief
Need to get to believe that “smart is something you can get”

Three key messages to communicate to all students:
- What we are doing is important
- You can do it
- I won’t give up on you
Session 8

Creating policies and practices that promote high expectations teaching

Creating policies and practices that promote high expectations Jonathon Saphier Harwood

Elements of effective effort:

• Time - a willingness to spend the hours needed to finish the job well
• Focus - concentrating only on the work, no TV or other distractions
• Resourcefulness - knowing where to go and whom to ask for help when I'm really stuck
• Use of feedback - looking carefully at responses to my work so I know what exactly to fix
• Commitment – Being determined to finish and do my very best work
• Strategies - If one strategy isn't working, try different ones until I find one that works

Schools must have the following belief in their policy and practice

All children can learn at a high level. It is my responsibility to be relentless in my pursuit of getting them there, and to build instructional structures and classroom climate consistent with that belief.

Good books on 'intelligence'

• Carol Dwek 'Mind sets'
• Malcolm Galdwell 'Outliers'
• Richard Nisbett 'Intelligence and How to Get it'
• S. J Gould ......... them is easier of man
• D Perkins 'intelligence I Q'
• S Cecil 'intelligence: A bio ecological treatise on .....'

'We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to do that. Whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far’ Ron Edmonds, 1979

Group meetings

Questions considered:

How is parent engagement and family school partnerships defined in your current practice?
Ronald said we always tell young people 'You have to graduate from HS but we never say you have to learn'

Schools are social environments in which students and educators, with their own identities and predispositions, endeavour together to make teaching and learning happen. Each member of this community makes assumptions about what others believe about one another, based on those assumptions they behave in particular ways and make decisions with enormous impact.

Bell shape curve - Ronald discussed John and his interpretation – Ronald: skill based IQ Jon: ability based IQ

On the axis is skill - no one is stuck at any position Jon was talking about ability IQ Social norms.

Flynn effect – ten years saw IQ changed we don’t know what ability is and how the brain changes

What do youth desire
• Sense of belonging
• Feel competent
• Feel influential and powerful

A simple engagement framework
• Options for attractive goals
• Strategies to use in working to achieve the goals that they find attractive
• Resources in which to implement the strategies
• Rewards

Ronald gave an interesting analogy with training flees and elephants – basically talked about if we limit what opportunity we give and our expectations then this will result in low achievement

‘Children do not have the right to fail’

Connect learning to their culture and identity
E.g. http://www.flocabulary.com/

Session 9
JIGSAW
Youth culture: Identity, marginality and community building

Required Readings:


Gamoran, Adam. Tracking and Inequality: New Directions for Research and Practice.

Each of the articles approached ways that identity and youth culture affect teaching.

**Session 9 continues...**

Cognitive science doesn’t necessarily think that there is different learning styles.
Differentiated instruction – not necessarily successful however knowing your kids – no science for which style suits your kids.

Some interesting and obvious observations:
- Group tracking gives better results.
- Some don’t trust that lower ability kids will get quality teachers.
- Black kids do better with either black teacher from Blue Collar family or White teacher from white collar family.

**How high schools become exemplary:**
- Have the right motives – to care about the right things.
- Be competent – deeply understand the issues.
- Be reliable – to keep to their promises.
- Be collegial – treat me and others with respect.

Resistance is rooted in Six Fears:
- Fear of wasting time and energy.
- Fear of experience incompetence when trying new things.
- Fear of becoming socially isolated co-operating with new agendas might require behaviours that valued colleagues would object to – colleagues may accuse cooperative teachers of selling out.
- Fear of unpleasant surprises – new agendas may increase uncertainty for people who like stability.
- Fear of more work.

**Session 10**
**Preparing to lead**
Ronald Ferguson introduced several basic frameworks for leadership.

**What impacts on children’s learning**

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**Socio-Ecological System Around the Developing Child**
(Bronfenbrenner, 1979)

- **Macro-Ecology**
  - Exo-ecological (e.g., school board meeting)
  - Meso-Ecology
    - Classroom (e.g., adult choir rehearsal)
    - Church (e.g., parent’s workplace)
  - Exo-ecological (e.g., parent’s workplace)
- **Meso-Ecology**
  - Home (e.g., neighborhood)
  - Neighborhood (e.g., micro ecology)
- **Exo-Ecology**
  - Exo-ecological (e.g., parks department)

- Each micro ecology is a setting that includes the child.
- The meso ecology is the system of micro-ecologies.
- Each exo-ecological setting is a setting where things happen and decisions are made that affect the child, but the child is not present (e.g., parent’s workplace).
- The macro ecology is the overarching set of beliefs and meanings—the cultural blueprint—in the context of which the whole social system functions.
Day 5 Thursday 3 July 2014
Session 11
The last day agenda changed – we had an overview session then went into affinity groups

Pulling it all together
The final session was looking at the week’s discussion – some pertinent points.
We should move to external benchmarks – not just within class comparisons
Which is the best option:
• Move all students forward
• Work to bring up the lower level (sense of urgency)

Common insights
• Gap starts as early as age 2
• Important to change kids lived experiences
• Parent friendly workplaces alleviate the stress for a child – employers have an impact
• Community impacts on others friends
• Is parenting tucked into parent engagement? Are we being offensive/ Should we be respectful in introducing
• No one choose to be neglectful
• Most children have positive values but are trapped by peer culture
• Everyone is where they are because of their life experience but we need to work together to grow
• High achievers are often intellectual bullies – kids most able often make it obvious that they can handle it

Affinity group discussions
Each of us went to affinity group discussions, based on the curriculum for the week
Dianne – Parent Engagement
Margaret – Teaching Expectations
Conclusions

By attending Harvard Graduate School of Education for professional development we improved and built on our current understanding of how the Bureau and its employees can raise achievement levels for all students through group proportional equality, excellence with equity and shifting leadership foci to external benchmarks as points of comparison, instead of inter group or school comparisons. There is an urgency in which we must address to build a movement for excellence with equity, grounded in a socio ecological perspective that aims to enrich learning and developmental experiences across all of the places and spaces where children learn and develop.

We as a national community need to be determined to achieve an educational excellence with equity where all groups are equally represented rather than continuing our focus of reducing an achievement gap which shows each identified group increasing their knowledge base but the gap never reducing. The terminology of family engagement, rather than parental engagement and its actions, different to parental involvement is a crucial component and needs to be recognised and validated as the encompassing term which defines the various family constructs that support learning which exist within Australian society. Recognition of family engagement not only underpins the naming of the Family - School and Community Partnerships Bureau but also supports language currently used within our Indigenous communities. These terms not only need to be defined but entrenched in strategies rather than the ad hoc approaches currently in place in many of our schools and systems. Of current data gathered 48% of educators are overwhelmed by the complexities of these challenges.

As we know, particularly through John Hatties work the greatest spheres of influence are parents, teachers, community, employers and peers and if we are to strive proactively and authentically to close the achievement gap each of these elements are integral. Achievement gaps are effectively reduced when we expands teachers repertoire of effective teaching strategies, enrich and expand family engagement at home and with educators and enlist students as allies in teaching and learning. A strategic approach that is data rich, aligned, coherent and a collaborative movement for excellence with equity approach has 6 goals.

- Instruction/ Quality teaching
- Climate/ Culture
- Family Engagement
- Technology
- Leadership
- Community Involvement

Deficits in Australian current educational policy and structure have been identified. The most pertinent being an inequitable dispersion of infrastructure across the identified goals particularly in the area of Family Engagement and Community Partnerships impacting on school climate/culture. We return with concrete strategies to engage key stakeholders in striving for excellence with equity and drive the implementation of strategies and within government policy.

Throughout our time at Harvard and successive meetings with researchers and educational professionals we have successfully promoted the Family School and Community Partnerships Bureau in the international arena and have formed solid collaborative partnerships with teachers, principal’s schools, districts, state and federal school systems. These partnerships have already yielded valuable information sharing at a systems level. Through these conversations and partnerships we have reflected on our own current practices and skills and those of the Bureau, identified priority areas for action and develop a plan to drive the Bureau, its website and all forms of communication in both the
near and not so near future to strengthen the purpose of the Bureau to assist schools and families to build collaborative partnerships.

The conversations conducted within our visit have assisted in improving delivery of the 2014 National Symposium and embedded the most current research and strategies into the agenda, building on current themes of evaluation, why do we do it and who does it benefit. We have generated interest in attendance at the Symposium by Family Engagement Teams within the United States at both the National and State level requesting formal invitations to be sent.

Attending Harvard and exposure to the newly developed and recently released Family Engagement Framework co-developed by Dr Mapp for the United States Government has positively impacted the updating of the current Australian Family-School Partnership Framework. This valuable information will assist to enhance information gathered through focus groups and provide a framework that is aligned with current research and relevant to schools. Challenges that have been identified in promoting the Framework to States, Districts, schools and parents within the United States have been reviewed and learnings from the challenges can be addressed to improve promotion of the newly refined Australian framework.

**Recommendations for improvement in the area Family-School and Community Partnerships:**

- Conduct a full and in-depth presentation to the Department of Education and the earliest possible time.
- Create a presentation on Harvard findings to be placed on the Bureau's website.
- There is a persistent and inequitable dispersion of family and community engagement support across sectors and communities within Australia. If we are to build a movement for excellence with equity, grounded in a socio-ecological perspective, all sectors. Schools and communities require access to all identified resources. With data showing 48% of educators are overwhelmed by the challenges suggest there is a need for specialty trained paraprofessional positions across all schools and/or regions regardless of sector, to actively engage teachers, families and community, just as there are specialty positions for teacher quality and curriculum. The Bureau and its staff are professionally equipped and strategically placed to entrench itself deeper into the area of family and community engagement as a support and advisory organisation for these positions, teachers, school and systems.
- As identified achievement gaps are effectively reduced when we expands teachers repertoire of skills and enrich and expand family engagement at home and with educators student learning outcomes improve. Collaboration between the Bureau and AITSL is required to build in criteria to the Australian standards that are supported by the Family-School Partnerships Framework.
- Data and evaluation are critical to allow identification of effective change, however currently there is a narrow mindset on evaluation strategies in the area of family engagement. We know family engagement is more robust than simply attending an event or helping out in the canteen or classroom or on school boards. We know that effective engagement is encompassing of effective 2 way communication, recognising that all families have an important role in education, making them aware of their importance and skilled in collaborative decision making practices not only at the school level but individual student learning, connecting the valuable learning experiences that occur outside of school and vice versa, build a supportive community of collegiality that is a representation of the families living, organisations and businesses living within them. These cannot only be evaluated through counting heads in attendance. The
Bureau must produce and promote the use of various forms of data collation for evaluating family engagement rather than current narrow approaches of numbers of attendees at an event or on school councils.

- Adapt Jon Saphier Concepts of teaching and growth mindset model into resources for families.