



Policy, Practice and

Evaluation Symposium

Program

Welcome Message

Thank you for joining us for the 'Policy, Practice and Evaluation' Symposium, being held in Melbourne on 8 and 9 September 2014.

Our collective responsibility for improving learning and wellbeing outcomes is something that continues to bring diverse groups of us together. The current policy environment also reinforces the importance of parental engagement, including the government's 'Students First' strategy. The recent 'Turning around schools: It can be done' report, released by the Grattan Institute, also highlighted the critical role parents and the community play in building stronger schools and communities.

This ambitious symposium seeks to rise to the challenge of informing policy, practice and evaluation in our shared efforts to improve outcomes for children and young people in Australia.

We are proud to bring together both national and international guests and presenters, and you will note the program includes ample time for symposium delegates to reflect and contribute to a set of insights and recommendations which will be shared with key stakeholders, including relevant Ministers.

We invite you to join us for two days of robust, engaging and informed conversation, and we remain committed to ensuring this event has both impact and influence at this important time.



Adam Smith

Chair
Family-School Community Partnerships Bureau – Governance Committee

Master of Ceremonies
Policy, Practice and Evaluation Symposium

Family – School and Community Partnerships Bureau

The Family-School & Community Partnerships Bureau is an organisation dedicated to improving student learning outcomes through effective, authentic and sustainable parental engagement and community involvement in schools. It conducts research, disseminates best practice and provides practical support and advice to parents, principals, teachers and others about how to build and sustain partnerships.

The Bureau, which has been funded by the Australian government, was created, and is governed, by the two peak parent bodies from both government and non-government school sectors – the Australian Council of State School Organisations [ACSSO], and the Australian Parents Council [APC]. Both Councils have long been involved with, and have frequently collaborated in, the promotion of parent and community engagement with schools.

The Bureau aims to transform Australian education and schooling by researching, building and promoting effective engagement and partnerships between schools, families and communities with a vision of families and schools and community working together as partners in the education of children and young people.

The principles guiding the operations of the bureau:

- Parents are the primary educators of their children.
- Effective parental partnerships are predicated on the understanding that their foundations are built from the time of a child's birth and earlier.
- Good schools play an integral role in assisting parents to nurture and develop their children.
- Parents bring unique perspectives and capacities to the schooling enterprise.
- When parents and teachers work in partnership the personal, social and academic development of children is significantly enhanced.
- Real and effective partnerships between families and schools have beneficial outcomes for parents, teachers and school leaders.
- Effective family-school and community partnerships contribute to Australia's growth as a nation by building social capital, fostering social inclusion and boosting productivity.
- Parent organisations bring support, expertise, confidence and empowerment to families and school communities.
- More than 40 years of research now shows that when families, schools and the community partner effectively, children and young people's life and learning outcomes improve.
- In their recent report on Turning Around Schools, the Grattan Institute found engagement of parents and the community to be one of the five steps common to school turnaround.

If systemic and systematic partnerships are to be built between families, schools and communities, then what are the critical policy levers, how do these translate into practice and how is effectiveness measured? These are the critical questions that will be explored by accessing the wisdom and experience of a team of international and national experts in the field.

It is time to move from rhetoric to action, from ad hoc to systemic, from measuring activities to impact, if we are to provide all children and young people with the best start in life....

Australian Council of State Schools Organisation

The Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) is the peak national organisation representing the interests of the parents, families and school communities of more than two million children attending government schools throughout Australia. ACSSOs formal structure currently comprises six State and Territory peak government school organisations and their membership networks.

ACSSO was formed in 1947 to develop national parent organisation policies in education and to represent these policies and the interests of its affiliates at the national level.

Our functions are increasingly diverse and extensive, and include in particular to:

- conduct, commission and publish research on educational issues
- lead and facilitate public debate and discussion to establish the strategic directions and priorities for education
- provide an interactive information service to government and to schools and their communities
- ensure that community needs and priorities are reflected in education decision making processes
- develop and manage a range of initiatives and community projects to improve the effective involvement of parents and families in student learning and development.

ACSSO believes that it is the responsibility of schools and the school system to ensure equity of access to an appropriate range of opportunities for all students. All children have the right to schooling which gives them independent access to knowledge as well as the skills and understanding necessary to shape their own lives and to participate in shaping the society in which they live.

ACSSO is committed to the principles of equity of access, equity of opportunity and equity of outcomes for all young people

Australian Parents Council

The Australian Parents Council is one of Australia's greatest social movements with a strong and reputed 50 year history of providing the unique 'parent perspective' in education policy and reform.

We are the national voice and advocate for the parents of 1,285,000 students attending non-government schools in Australia (Catholic and Independent). We represent mums, dads, grandparents and carers and on their behalf advocate the needs and aspirations for their children's learning and wellbeing.

Our work with stakeholders and governments has brought about inclusive education reform, policy, practice, programs, leadership and partnerships in schooling and learning.

Our work has increased educational outcomes of students and social capital of school communities throughout Australia.

We are a not-for-profit organisation, funded by parents and supported by government and are non-denominational and non-party political.

Symposium Speakers



Dr Michelle Anderson
Australian Council for Educational Research
(ACER)

Michelle has a passion for improving learning and community cohesion through effective relationships between schools and businesses, not-for-profits and philanthropy. She is called upon to lead, speak, facilitate, research and collaborate across these spaces.

Michelle is the Director of Interface2Consulting and on the board of Schools Connect Australia, the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation's Youth Grants Advisory Panel and the interim founding board of Australian Schools Plus. She is an immediate past Principal Research Fellow at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) where she initiated Tender Bridge™, a national service to help schools or schools in partnership with others source additional education-related funding. Alongside this, she initiated and led a multi-year national research and development project, Leading Learning in Education and Philanthropy (LLEAP) in partnership with The Ian Potter Foundation, Origin Foundation, Scanlon Foundation, Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation and the Myer Foundation and Sidney Myer Fund.

Michelle has worked as a teacher, senior researcher at the National College for School Leadership in England and executive across health and education. She has published widely and been a recipient of awards, including a Churchill Fellowship and Australian Council of Educational Leadership (ACEL) Fellowship (Victoria). Her PhD at the University of London investigated social and cultural factors for inclusive leadership.



Philomena Billington
Director of Catholic Education
Sandhurst Victoria

Phil is in her final year as Director of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Sandhurst in Central Victoria. She is committed to working with Diocesan church and education at diocesan, state and national level. She has contributed to the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) on the Religious Education Committee, and is a Director of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV), the Catholic Capital Grants Company and chairs associated Committees. Phil is an educator and leader with 40+ years experience in Catholic and Government education across five dioceses and four states of Australia, teaching in remote, rural and city locations and has led curriculum design and development in two dioceses. She is passionate about education and especially in rural Australia, the Arts in education, parents as leaders and key partners and lay ministry within the Catholic church.

Symposium Speakers



Ms Caz Bosch (Batson)
BA, Dip Ed, Grad Dip Rec, B Soc Sc (Hons: Psych)

Caz is President of the Australian Parents Council and sits on the Governance Committee of the Family-School & Community Partnerships Bureau, a joint initiative of the Australian Parents Council (APC) and the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO). Board chair of Rostrevor College (SA) from 2008 - 2011, and a Life Governor and Past President of YMCA Australia, Caz is highly committed to young people's education, health and well-being. Caz holds a Master of Psychology (Work and Organisational) and is an organisational leadership and development consultant in her paid work life.



Michael Bourne
Principal
St Marks Primary School
Fawkner

Michael Bourne is the principal of St. Marks Catholic Primary School in Fawkner, Melbourne. He is married to Sandra and has five children, three of whom are still at school. For the past 28 years he has worked in the A.C.T., N.S.W. and Victoria in a variety of schools. He serves on the National Executive Council for the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA), has co-lectured on a part time basis in 2013 - 2014 at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne. He is passionate about the KidsMatter framework for primary schools and about the importance of family school partnerships.



Mr Michael Devlin
Parent Representative

Michael was involved in the development and implementation of the Catholic Education Sandhurst's Parent Leadership and Engagement Strategy which was launched in 2013. Michael is currently an SSEB Parent Leader since 2011. He was St Marys Echuca School Board Chairperson 2010 - 2012 and a Board member from 2006 - 2013. Along with the other Parent Leaders, Michael presented at the 2013 ACU International Leadership Conference Sydney. He brings to his leadership a Bachelor Applied Science Human Movement and Graduate Diploma Business Management. Michael is actively involved in numerous community and sporting groups as a committee person/coach in the Echuca Moama Community. He operates a Family Business and has three school aged children..

Symposium Speakers



*Associate Professor Joseph Flessa
Leadership, Adult and Higher Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto*

Dr. Flessa received his PhD in Educational Policy Research from the University of California, Berkeley. He currently holds the position of Associate Professor, Policy and Politics, Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education and has been a faculty member since 2005.



*Peter Garrigan
President
Australian Council of State Schools Organisation*

Peter Garrigan is the current president of the Australian Council of State School Organisation and a member of the Governance committee of the Family School & Community Partnerships Bureau. Peter has a long history of participation in family and community engagement in education. He played a significant role in the support of parental engagement in both the Flying Start project in Queensland and through the Northern Territory Council of School Council Organisations (NTCOGSO) where he served in many roles including President. Currently Peter serves on the Executive of NTCOGSO. Peter is known for his particular expertise in school governance. In his current role as President Peter is an active member of the Asia Education Foundation and speaks with great authority as an advocate on behalf of the families with children in our nation's Public Schools.



*Dr Sara Glover,
Director of Education Policy,
Mitchell Institute
Victoria University*

Dr Sara Glover is a highly-regarded policy and research expert in the field of education and early childhood. Most recently Sara was an Executive Director at the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development where she was responsible for the strategic development of an integrated research and evaluation program to deliver a powerful evidence base for policy. Prior to her role in State government, Sara was the Director of Education and Training and a principal researcher at the Centre for Adolescent Health at the Royal Children's Hospital/University of Melbourne for eight years.

Symposium Speakers



*Anne Henderson
Senior Consultant with the Institute for Education
and Social Policy at New York University &
Senior Fellow Community Involvement Program
Annenberg Institute for School reform*

Anne's specialty is the relationship between families and schools, and its impact on students' success in school and through life. Since 1981, she has steadily tracked research and effective practice on how engaging families can improve student achievement, especially in diverse and low income communities.



*Ms Annette Jacob
Parent Representative*

Annette is an Occupational Therapist with her own practice, lectures at tertiary level but is passionate about being known as a parent at St Mel's education community in Shepparton and her youngest son in Year 6. She is on the St Mel's Parish Education Board (PEB) and has been a member since 2008. She is currently Chair of St Mel's PEB since 2011 and is a member of the Catholic Education – Shepparton Mooroopna Committee. Annette has been a Parent Leader on the Sandhurst Schools Education Board since 2012 and has been instrumental in the Parent Leadership & Family Engagement Strategy. Annette is a committed and passionate advocate for Parent Leadership and Family Engagement and is generous in her contribution at diocesan events.



*Dr Ben Jensen
CEO
Learning First
Formerly Program Director School Education
Grattan Institute*

Ben has considerable experience in education reform, advising governments in numerous countries. He spent five years at the OECD conducting international research on school and teacher effectiveness, and led an international expert group on how to develop and use measurements of school performance. Ben recently left the Grattan Institute where he was Director of the School education program for five years. His reports had a significant impact in Australia and internationally. Ben has also held positions in government and academia.

Symposium Speakers



Patrick Lyons
Partner
Synergistiq

Patrick has provided evaluation and strategic advice to a range of Commonwealth and State Government departments and agencies, as well as several Community Based Organisations.

Patrick has a particular interest in evaluating programs designed to build capacity, including programs that aim to influence behaviour and culture through education and information.

Patrick also has a passion and deep experience working with programs that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Recent projects include the evaluation of the impact of the Play by the Rules program (Australian Sports Commission); evaluation of the suite of professional development programs offered by the Bastow Institute for Educational Leadership; the Impact of Professional Learning Initiatives for Education Support (ES) staff; the Evaluation of the Victorian International Teaching Fellowship; the evaluation of the Supporting New Teachers Program; Evaluation of the suite of services provided to members of the Stolen Generations; Evaluation of Victorian Koorie Youth Justice Programs and the development of an Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Framework. Patrick also provided strategic guidance of the impact evaluation of Wannik: The Victorian Government's Aboriginal Education Strategy, the evaluation of Koorie Transition Officers and the evaluation of the suite of programs aimed at Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes for the South Australian Department of Health.



Dr Karen Mapp
Senior Lecturer on Education
Director, Education Policy & Management Program
Harvard Graduate School of Education

Karen L. Mapp, Ed.D., is a senior lecturer on education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) and the faculty director of the Education Policy and Management master's program. Over the past 20 years, Mapp's research and practice focus has been on the cultivation of partnerships among families, community members, and educators that support student achievement and school improvement.

Symposium Speakers



Senator, the Hon Scott Ryan

Scott Ryan was born in Brisbane in 1973 and raised in Essendon. He is married to Helen, they have a son and live in Melbourne.

He was elected to the Senate at the 2007 Federal Election as the youngest Liberal senator ever elected from Victoria. He was re-elected at the 2013 Federal Election that saw the election of the Abbott Government. Scott was appointed to the First Abbott Ministry as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education. Prior to this appointment, Scott was Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Fair Competition between 2010-2013 and has also served as Chair of the Senate Standing References Committee on Finance & Public Administration. Immediately before entering the Senate in 2008, Scott worked as a consultant in the health and insurance sectors as well as serving as a Research Fellow at the Institute of Public Affairs in Melbourne.

Scott is a member of the Essendon FC, the Institute of Public Affairs and the Centre for Independent Studies and the Samuel Griffith Society.



Adam Smith
Chair: Family School & Community Partnerships Bureau
Education Analyst & Director
ACER & Public Education Foundation

Adam is an expert commentator and consultant specialising in partnership development and network building in and around schools. Adam is a Board Member of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), and regular Education Analyst for Channel 10's The Project. As former CEO of the Foundation for Young Australians and Education Foundation Australia, Adam has a background in non-profit leadership and has personally generated significant philanthropic and corporate investment in public schools. Adam is passionate about promoting equity and excellence in all schools and encouraging additional philanthropic support of school education.

With Thanks

We wish to acknowledge the following organisations for their valuable contributions in making the symposium possible:

Australian Government Department of Education

Bureau Research Advisory Group

Education Services Australia

Executive of the Australian Council of State Schools Organisation

Executive of the Australian Parents Council

Symposium partners



Agenda

| Monday 8th September | |
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| 8:00am - 8:30am: | Registration |
| 8:30am - 8:40am: | Acknowledgement of country |
| Session I: Policy | |
| 8:40am - 9:15am: | <p><i>Setting the Scene</i></p> <p>Adam Smith Education Analyst Director, ACER and Public Education Foundation</p> |
| 9:15am - 9:45am: | <i>Current perspectives of family engagement</i> |
| 9:45am – 10:00am: | <p><i>International Perspectives: Beyond random acts</i></p> <p>Dr Karen Mapp Senior Lecturer on Education Director, Education Policy & Management Program Harvard Graduate School of Education. In this session Karen will talk about her experiences working at the national level, particularly with the National Roundtable, around engaging with the policy process with respect to parental engagement.</p> <p><i>Some areas that she highlights include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current state of play in the US at the national level with respect to parental engagement • The process of developing/ informing national policy in the US – including outcomes/outputs • Key learnings/ reflections from that process – what worked well/ not so well/ what would you do differently • What lessons/factors should we be mindful of as we engage in national policy-making around parental engagement here in Australia? |
| 10:00am - 10:30am: | <p><i>Key policy takeout</i></p> <p>Associate Professor Joseph Flessa Leadership, Adult and Higher Education Ontario Institute for Studies in Education University of Toronto</p> |
| 10:30am - 11:00am: | Morning tea |

Session 2: Scaffolding Practice

11:00am - 12:15pm: *What constitutes family engagement: Implications for policy & evaluation?*

Associate Professor Joe Flessa

Leadership, Adult and Higher Education Ontario Institute for Studies in Education University of Toronto

In this talk Professor Flessa will examine the latest research literature on family/school engagement policies. Policymakers, educators, and community members often describe the purposes of family engagement differently. How do policies reflect these different purposes, and which purposes seem most valued? A critical examination of the latest policy trends can support efforts to build more effective links between home, community, and school.

12:30pm - 1:30pm: *Lunch*

1:30pm - 2:00pm: *Integrating Family-School partnerships in the school improvement agenda*

Dr Ben Jensen

CEO
Learning First
Formerly Program Director School Education Grattan Institute

2:00pm - 3:00pm: *Stimulus Sessions*

Leadership

Dr Ben Jensen, CEO, Learning First
Formerly Program Director School Education Grattan Institute

System Response

Phil Billington, Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst Victoria joined by Mr Michael Devlin & Ms Annette Jacob

Pre service

Michael Bourne, Principal, St Mark's Primary School, Fawkner

Philanthropic/Community Partnerships

Dr Michelle Anderson, Director Interface 2 Consulting
Former Principal Research Fellow and Project Director, ACER

3:00pm - 4:00pm: *Key practice takeout*

Reflections & provocations

Adam Smith

Education Analyst
Director, ACER and Public Education Foundation

4:00pm - 4:15pm: *CLOSE DAY 1*

Adam Smith

Education Analyst
Director, ACER and Public Education Foundation

4:15pm - 5:00pm: *Networking & Sponsors*

Tuesday 9th September

8am: Arrival

Session 3: Evaluation

8:30 - 8:45am: *Welcome to Day 2*

Adam Smith

Education Analyst
Director, ACER and Public Education Foundation

8:45am - 9:15am: *So, what do we know*

9:15am - 9:45am: *Understanding current policy*

Senator the Hon Scott Ryan,

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education

9:45am - 11:30am: *Family Engagement: What counts, who counts it & who does it help?*

Associate Professor Joe Flessa

Leadership, Adult and Higher Education Ontario Institute for Studies in Education University of Toronto

In this talk, Joe discusses policy assessments, and the incentives they create, matter. How are schools' efforts to engage families and communities typically evaluated, by whom, and with what impact? Attendance numbers at school-convened meetings or the size of the bottom line after a fundraiser are frequently used, but they're probably better understood as proxies for a school's socioeconomic location than for its efforts to thoughtfully engage parents.

In this talk Professor Flessa will describe the complexities of doing useful assessment of parental engagement efforts, and will suggest alternatives.

In an educational policy environment that emphasizes data-driven accountability, what data do principals have to assess the effectiveness of their work with families and communities? What data should they have?

Notes

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