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What Teachers Want: Better Teacher Management

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Overview

Having been through school education, most of us can remember the teacher who inspired us and who was fundamental to our learning and development. And for many of us, there were also experiences with less effective teachers.

So it is not surprising that research consistently shows that quality teachers are the most significant influence on student performance. With an excellent teacher, a student can achieve in half a year what would take a full year with a less effective teacher. And the impact is cumulative: students with effective teachers for several years in a row out-perform students with poor teachers by as much as 50 percentile points over three years.

Thus improving the quality of teachers and teaching should be a central goal of education policy. Evaluating the work of teachers and developing their teaching skills is a key part of improving the quality of teaching. However, an OECD survey reveals that teacher evaluation and development in Australia is poor and amongst the worst in the developed world.

Teacher evaluation and development does not identify effective teaching. Ninety-one per cent of Australian teachers report that in their school, the most effective teachers do not receive the greatest recognition. Nor does it recognise quality teachers or teaching, with 92% of teachers reporting that if they improved the quality of their teaching they would not receive any recognition in their school. And 83% of teachers report that the evaluation of their work has no impact on the likelihood of their career advancement.

Teacher evaluation is not developing teachers' skills and the teaching students receive. Teachers and school principals report that problems in their schools need to be addressed. However, 63% of teachers report that the evaluation of their work is largely done simply to fulfil administrative requirements. And 61% of teachers report that the evaluation of teachers' work has little impact on the way they teach in the classroom.

Teacher evaluation and development is not addressing ineffective teaching. Ninety-two per cent of teachers work in schools where the school principal never reduces the annual pay increases of an under-performing teacher. And 71% of teachers report that teachers with sustained poor performance will not be dismissed in their school.

Although all Australian schools have systems of evaluation and development in place, they clearly aren't working. Teachers believe that the systems are broken. They want meaningful evaluation and development that recognises quality and innovation in the classroom – evaluation that identifies problems and leads to development and improved teaching and schools.

It will not be easy to create a culture of accurate evaluation that recognises and develops good teaching. However, Australian teachers want it to happen, and the rest of the world shows that improvement is possible. Improving evaluation in practice should be a central priority for Australian schooling. Given that current systems are not working, substantial reform is required so that evaluation and development becomes effective in improving the quality of Australian schooling.

1. Context

The greatest resource in Australian schools is our teachers. They account for the vast majority of expenditure in school education and have the greatest impact on student learning, far outweighing the impact of any other education program or policy (Aaronson, Barrow, & Sander, 2007; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 1998; Hanushek, Kain, O'Brien, & Rivkin, 2005; Leigh, 2010; Nye, Konstantopoulos, & Hedges, 2004; Rockoff, 2004). It is critical to develop the quality of teaching to maximise the impact upon students' education. To develop teachers and their teaching it is essential to first evaluate their current practices, teaching methods and how these impact on students. Evaluation and development should recognise and foster effective teaching and address less effective methods.

Considerable resources are already devoted to school evaluation, teacher evaluation, and teacher development. Some states and territories are working to incorporate a culture of evaluation and development into schools and teachers' careers. However, such efforts are unlikely to succeed if evaluation does not recognise effectiveness and there are few positive or negative consequences for teachers. Previous analysis of teacher evaluation in Australia shows that virtually all teachers receive satisfactory ratings and progress along their career structure so that teacher salaries essentially depend on their tenure (BCG, 2003; Ingvarson, Kleinhenz, & Wilkinson, 2007). Despite the considerable resources, policies, programs and regulatory regimes aimed at teacher evaluation, it is clear that it has little impact upon teachers' careers.

There is comparatively little analysis of the impact of this situation on teachers and their teaching. This report fills this gap, using data from the first OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) to present the views of Australian teachers and compare their reports of school education with those of teachers in other countries.

In many respects, this report is important because it presents the views of teachers. Not politicians, not union officials, not academics, but the views, beliefs and reports of those at the coalface of education. Teachers are the most important resource in school education. They are telling us loudly and clearly that change is needed: meaningful evaluation and development are required.

What is TALIS?

The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) took an important step in education policy analysis by asking teachers about key education issues. This was the first time that an international survey has been conducted seeking the opinion of classroom teachers about key education issues. It surveyed a representative sample of lower-secondary teachers across 23 countries in 2007-08 (OECD, 2009). It focused on five main areas: teacher professional development; teacher evaluation and feedback; teaching practices, beliefs and attitudes; and school leadership (OECD, 2009). See Annex A for a more detailed description of the TALIS program.

Improving teacher quality is vital to Australian students as three issues demonstrate:

- A large percentage of students only progress to minimum or below minimum levels of literacy and numeracy. For example, 30% of year 9 students perform at only the basic minimum levels of writing literacy (MCEETYA, 2009). Given the social and economic difficulties encountered by those with only basic literacy and numeracy skills, a focus on teacher quality should aim to raise students' skills above minimum standards throughout each student's school education;ⁱ
- More schools are failing to lift the performance of at least some of their students over time. Relative to other countries, Australia has wide inequality in student performance within schools compared to inequality between schools (OECD, 2007). Therefore, teachers need to be supported to understand each student's individual learning needs and adapt teaching strategies to enable learning and improvement for all students; and,
- Increases in education expenditure have not been matched by improvements in student performance. Funding in the Australian school education sector increased by 41% between

ⁱ In a research paper for the Productivity Commission, Forbes et al (2010) found that increasing levels of education will increase individuals' labour productivity (as reflected by individuals' wages). Further, the Business Council of Australia (2007) notes that increasing a country's literacy scores (relative to the international average) will result in a 2.5% relative rise in labour productivity. Also, raising literacy and numeracy scores for people at the bottom of the skills distribution will have a greater impact than developing more highly skilled graduates.

1995 and 2006 (OECD, 2007). However, between 2000 and 2006, Australian student performance stagnated in mathematics and significantly declined in reading (Thomson & De Bortoli, 2008). This reflects a long-term trend of declining student outcomes despite significant increases in government expenditure (Leigh & Ryan, 2010).ⁱⁱ

These issues show the need to improve school education and highlight that increased resources and expenditure have been used ineffectively. They also illustrate the impact of poor policies and programs on students. Reform to teacher evaluation and development will help not only teachers, but also their students. Improving teacher quality has been shown to have the greatest impact on students most in need of help (Aaronson, et al., 2007).

This report begins by discussing the evidence of the importance of teacher quality to students' learning. A brief discussion is then presented on the evaluative framework in school education and the need for effective school and teacher evaluation. Sections 4 and 5 present teachers' views about the evaluation of their work and how this affects them and also their school. Australian teachers report that they need development in key areas of

ⁱⁱ Leigh and Ryan (2010) compared student outcomes for 14-year-old students in Year 9 in Australia between 1964 and 2003 (for numeracy) and 1975 to 1988 (for literacy). Between 1964 and 2003, funding in the Australian school education sector (government funding for both public and private) increased 258%, while numeracy test results significantly fell by 1.1 points. In addition, between 1975 and 1988, government funding in the Australian school education sector increased by 10%, while there was a statistically significant decline in both literacy and numeracy for both boys and girls. Leigh and Ryan note that the increased expenditure was largely driven by policies reducing class size over this period.

education and that evaluation is not identifying or addressing different levels of effectiveness. The benefits of school evaluation and teacher evaluation are highlighted in Section 6. Teachers report that school and teacher evaluations can have an effective impact on classroom teaching. Concluding comments are presented in Section 7.

This report presents the views of Australian teachers about the current state of teacher evaluation and development, and argues that extensive change is required. This will be the first in a series of Grattan Institute reports on these issues. Future reports will include proposals for a new system of teacher evaluation and development.

2. The importance of teachers

Most of us who have been through school education can remember the teacher that made the biggest impact upon us, the teacher that inspired us and those that were fundamental to our learning and development. And for many of us, there are experiences with less effective teachers. It should come as no surprise then, that the biggest influence on student outcomes (outside of family and background characteristics) is the quality of teaching that students receive (OECD, 2005). Effective teachers can help all students improve at a higher rate than less effective teachers, regardless of the heterogeneity of student backgrounds in their classrooms (Nye, et al., 2004). What teachers know and do have a large impact on students; improvements in the quality of teaching can have a large impact on student outcomes.

Various education policies and programs can influence student outcomes, but improving teacher quality will have the largest influence on student achievement. Improving the quality of teachers and teaching should be a central goal of education policy.

2.1 Impact on student performance

There is ample evidence that there is wide variation in the quality of teachers and that this quality impacts student learning (Aaronson, et al., 2007; Hanushek, 1992; Hanushek, et al., 1998; Hanushek, et al., 2005; Murnane, 1975; Nye, et al., 2004; Rockoff, 2004; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997).

An excellent teacher can have a large impact on the amount that a student learns in just one year. In Australia, Leigh (2010) found

that more effective teachers can significantly advance student learning. He used a Queensland data set that included 10,000 school teachers and 90,000 pupils to estimate teacher effectiveness as determined by the changes in student test scores over time. He found considerable differences in the effectiveness of teachers on student performance.

Leigh (2010) analysed Queensland numeracy test results for students in years 3, 5 and 7 from 2001 to 2004 and estimated teacher effects on the gains made by students. Even with conservative estimates of teacher effects, the quality of teachers can have significant impacts. For example, moving from a teacher at the 25th percentile to a teacher at the 75th percentile would raise student test scores by approximately one-seventh of a standard deviation. That is, a student with a higher quality teacher could achieve in three-quarters of a year what a student with a less effective teacher could in a full year. To extend the comparison, a student with an excellent teacher (in the 90th percentile) could achieve in a half year what a student with a poor quality teacher (in the 10th percentile) could achieve in a full year (Leigh, 2010).

Hanushek (1992) estimated the difference in outcomes between a student who has a poor teacher and a student who has a good teacher can be as much as a full year's difference in achievement. Similar studies found that a student who spent a semester with a teacher who had been rated two standard deviations higher in quality could add 0.3 to 0.5 grade equivalents (or between 25 to 45 % of an average school year) to the student's maths scores

(Aaronson, et al., 2007). Similar findings are made by Rockoff (2004) and Hanushek, Rivkin, and Kain (2005).

2.2 Impact on students over time

The impact of effective or ineffective teachers is cumulative (Wright, et al., 1997). In a study in Dallas conducted by Jordan, Mendro, and Weerasinge (1997), students with three 'effective' teachers in a row were 49 percentile points higher on school assessments compared to students assigned 'ineffective' teachers after three years. Sanders and Rivers (1996) found that students who were assigned high performing mathematics teachers three years in a row achieved scores approximately 50 percentile points higher than students who started with comparable maths scores but were assigned to low performing teachers three years in a row (Sanders & Rivers, 1996).ⁱⁱⁱ

While having a high performing teacher can help achieve results greater than expected, a high performing teacher cannot fully compensate for a student previously taught by a low performing teacher. Sanders and Rivers (1996) found that when a student was assigned a highly effective teacher after a series of ineffective teachers, the student made greater-than-expected progress, but not enough to make up the lost ground of the previous ineffective teacher.

Students with an effective teacher are more likely to be on top of what they are learning, are stimulated and consolidating their

ⁱⁱⁱ Teacher effects were estimated for each grade level examined. Teachers were then grouped into quintiles with teachers in the first quintile demonstrating the lowest degree of effectiveness and teachers in the fifth quintile the highest degree of effectiveness.

knowledge, intellectually extended and as a result eager to approach the next year's work. Students with a less effective teacher are more likely to fall behind and not keep up with other students in subsequent years, even if assigned an effective teacher in later years. This can have a serious impact on students, particularly those most in need.

2.3 Impact on inequality

Inequality in education is affected by teacher quality and the distribution of more and less effective teachers across schools. Aaronson et al. (2007) found that teacher quality is particularly important for students with lower initial ability levels – high quality teachers have a larger impact on students with low levels of achievement.

Nye, Konstantopoulos and Hedges (2004) found that the effectiveness of teachers varied considerably more in schools with students of low socio-economic status (SES), compared to schools with high SES students. This means that teacher allocation matters more for students in schools serving poorer communities (OECD, 2005). Schools with high proportions of low-SES students often struggle to recruit and retain high quality teachers attracted by higher salaries and better conditions in high-SES schools (Krei, 1998; Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002).

The point of this discussion is not to assign blame or point the finger at teachers. On the contrary, this report highlights that systems of teacher evaluation and development are failing teachers and students. Teachers want to provide the best school education possible to students and they want meaningful evaluation and development to help them achieve this objective.

3. Effective teacher evaluation and development

Given the importance of teachers to school effectiveness and student outcomes, the success of most school improvement initiatives depends on how they affect teachers and the quality of teaching. For school education to reach its potential and have the maximum positive impact upon student learning, high-quality teachers and effective teaching are the main requirements. There are four main mechanisms to improve the quality of teachers and the effectiveness of teaching:

- Improve the quality of applicants to the teaching profession;
- Improve the quality of initial education and training;
- Develop teachers' skills once they enter the profession and are working in our schools; and
- Promote, recognise and retain effective teachers and move on ineffective teachers who have been unable to increase their effectiveness through development programs.

These objectives and their policy responses are related. For example, improved education and training (either initial or on-the-job) should lead to improvements in the quality of applicants to the profession who are attracted by the improved development opportunities. This follows research showing that high performing school systems:

- Get the right people to become teachers;
- Develop their teachers to be effective; and

- Put in place systems to ensure that all children are able to benefit from good teaching practices (McKinsey, 2007).

An effective evaluative framework should advance each of these objectives by recognising, developing and rewarding effective teachers and teaching. It identifies strengths and weaknesses within schools and individual teachers. Strengths are recognised, celebrated and expanded to have the maximum positive impact upon students. Weaknesses are addressed through both the developmental facets of evaluation and the recognition of teacher effectiveness. Implementing such a framework would greatly enhance the individualised teacher development required in our schools.

Behn (2003) outlines eight different purposes for performance evaluations: to evaluate; control; budget; motivate; promote; celebrate; learn; and improve. In this sense, teacher evaluation should be formative, identifying weaknesses which inform development plans and opportunities for individual teachers. Evaluations provide an opportunity for feedback for staff, identifying what is and is not working and why. This provides important information for learning and improvement. This can be utilised not just as a learning opportunity for individuals, but also as an opportunity to spread effective practices across schools.

An effective evaluative framework that provides individualised development for teachers would also have an indirect impact on initial education. When the strengths and weaknesses of early-career teachers are identified and developed, it provides an evidence base to assist initial education institutions in better

preparing teachers to work in Australian schools. In the longer term, this should improve initial education as institutions adjust their teacher education in response to the experiences of their graduates in schools.

Effective evaluation and recognition is also important to attracting people to become teachers. Australian teachers clearly believe that not only is effectiveness not recognised within schools, relatively ineffective teachers receive the greatest recognition in their schools (see Section 6). This sends a loud signal to all potential teachers about the nature of teaching and working in schools. It is clearly discouraging if potential teachers believe that investing in becoming a good teacher is not recognised. An evaluative framework that recognises, develops and rewards effectiveness would reverse the signals currently sent to prospective teachers. It would encourage effective teachers, or those who believe they would be effective, into the teacher workforce.

4. Teacher evaluation in Australia

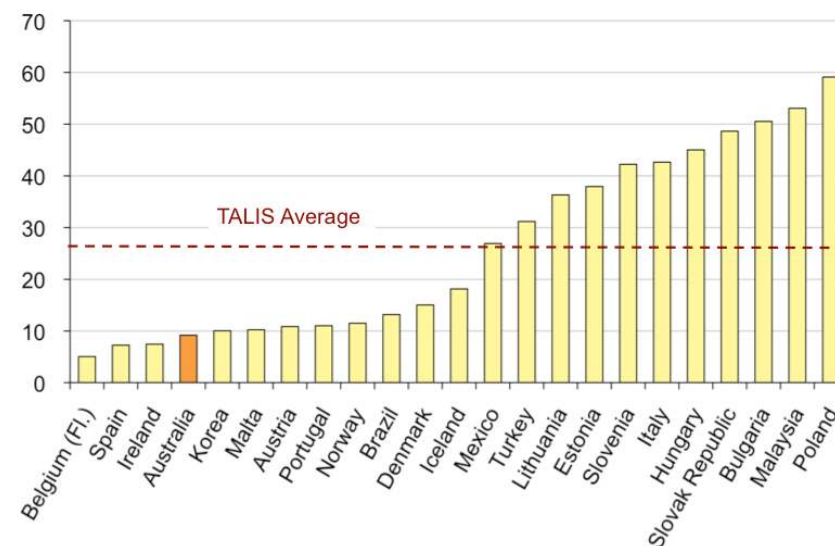
Australian teachers report that there are substantial problems stemming from a lack of meaningful evaluation of their work. There is virtually no recognition of effectiveness, effective teaching is not developed within schools, and numerous problems are created by systems that recognise and reward comparatively low-performing teachers.

4.1 Teacher effectiveness is not identified in schools

The failure of the current systems to identify effectiveness in teacher evaluation and development is almost universal across Australian schools. Ninety-one per cent of Australian teachers report that in their school, the most effective teachers do not receive the greatest recognition.^{iv} As shown in Figure 4.1 the extent that effectiveness is recognised in school education in Australia is the 4th worst of the 23 countries in the TALIS program.

^{iv} Teachers were asked several questions about their school, its working culture and how effectiveness and innovation are recognised and developed. Recognition is used here to include a variety of actions and consequences. Teachers were asked the extent to which they (strongly) agreed or (strongly) disagreed with the statement: “In my opinion, the most effective teachers in this school receive the greatest monetary or non-monetary rewards”. While non-monetary rewards were not defined in the question, the TALIS questionnaire focused on such non-monetary rewards as opportunities for professional development; public recognition from the school principal or colleagues; changes in work responsibilities; and their role in school development initiatives. For a more complete discussion of these issues and the questionnaires used in the TALIS program see OECD (2009).

Figure 4.1 Percentage of teachers who report that in their school the most effective teachers receive the greatest recognition (2007-08)



Source: (OECD, 2009), Table 5.9.

Without a meaningful evaluative framework, teacher effectiveness is not identified in schools. This hinders development and school improvements and prevents teachers from receiving the recognition and rewards they deserve. It is a consequence of systems that recognise tenure instead of effectiveness and clearly has considerable impact on teachers and their teaching.

This is supported by previous research analysing teacher evaluation and development. Most Australian jurisdictions require teachers to undertake an annual performance evaluation to be eligible for a salary increment. However, these evaluations rarely have any consequence (Ingvarson, et al., 2007). In the most recent survey of teachers (2007) by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, only 6% of (secondary) classroom teachers classified themselves as receiving salary increments largely based on performance evaluations, while 78% stated they received salary increments largely based on years of service (McKenzie, Kos, Walker, & Hong, 2008). Research conducted by the Boston Consulting Group (2003) for the then Victorian Department of Education and Training, estimated that 99.85% of teachers were granted a 'satisfactory' outcome on their performance review. In contrast, school principals estimated that up to 30% of teachers were either 'below average performers' or 'significant under-performers' (BCG, 2003).

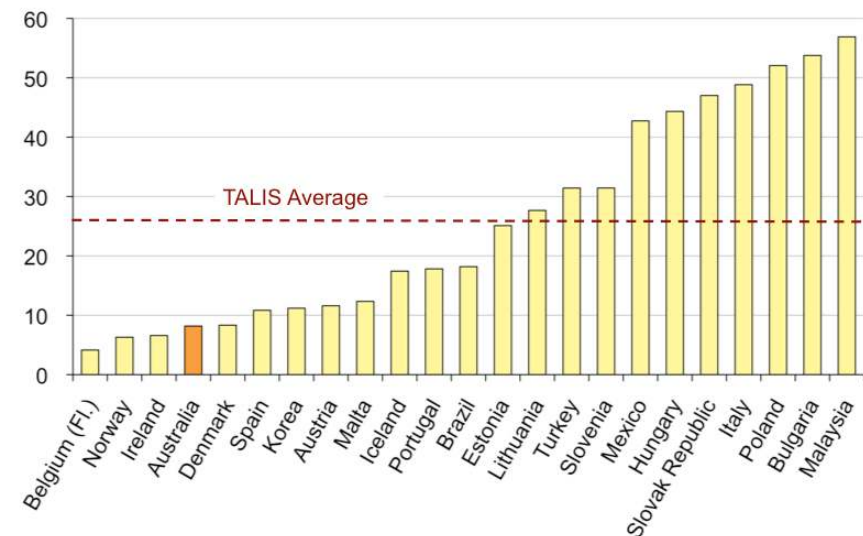
91% of Australian teachers report that in their school, the most effective teachers do not receive the greatest recognition.

4.2 Teacher quality is not recognised in schools

Efforts to create and promote effective systems of teacher evaluation and development are stymied, and to some extent wasted because they are not effectively linked to teachers' development and career progression. Systems have no real consequences and therefore little meaning.

Over 90% of teachers report that if they improve the quality of their teaching they would not receive any recognition in their school. As shown in Figure 4.2, Australia is the 4th worst of the 23 countries in the TALIS program in recognising quality teaching in classrooms.

Figure 4.2 Percentage of teachers who report that they would receive some recognition if they improve the quality of their teaching (2007-08)



Source: (OECD, 2009), Table 5.9

A lack of meaningful evaluation of teachers' work means that teachers receive no recognition for quality teaching. Not only is this demoralising for teachers but it also implies that there is no meaningful evaluation that is required for teacher development

and school improvement. It is a waste of teaching resources that is hurting all Australian students.

Other industries are never perfectly comparable but it is illuminating to consider data from a survey of mid-level and senior managers and corporate officers of large US based companies. Conducted by McKinsey, the survey was designed to identify what top performing companies do differently to average performing companies in relation to 'managing talent' in the workforce (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001). Survey respondents indicated that reward and recognition had a large influence on their decision to remain at the company or look elsewhere for employment. When asked why they may leave the company in the next two years, 65% of respondents reported that they 'don't feel valued by [their] company' and that the company's 'insufficient reward or recognition' were critical or very important factors in their decision. While caution is always needed when comparing different datasets and different industries, it is difficult to believe that teachers would not have broadly similar needs to be recognised for their work.

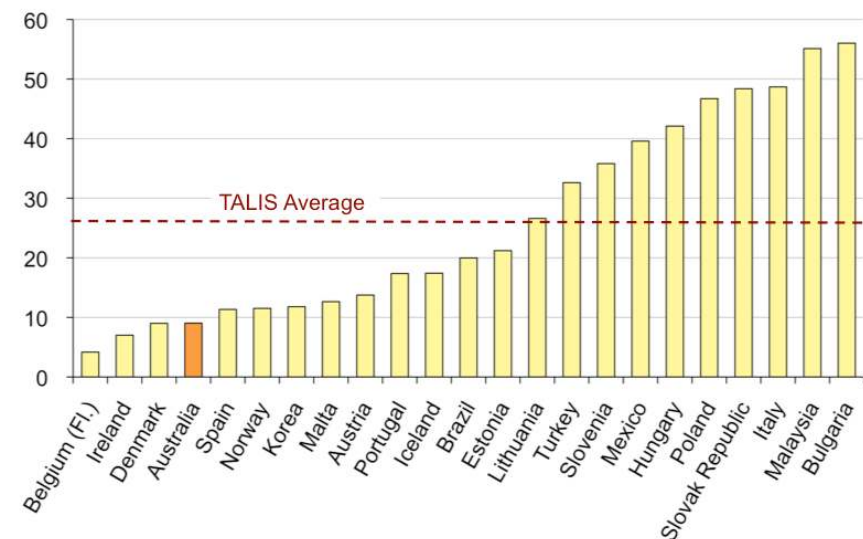
92% of Australian teachers report that if they improved the quality of their teaching they would not receive any recognition in their school.

4.3 Teacher innovation is not recognised in schools

Over 90% of Australian teachers report that they would receive no recognition if they were more innovative in their teaching. Figure

4.3 shows the low level of recognition for innovation in Australian classroom teaching compared to other countries.

Figure 4.3 Percentage of teachers who report that they would receive some recognition if they were more innovative in their teaching (2007-08)



Source: (OECD, 2009), p.39.

Teachers indicate that government efforts to increase innovation are hampered by not focusing on teachers and recognising their work in schools. Considerable resources are devoted to increasing innovation and improving education in our schools. Both federal and state funded programs have been implemented to encourage innovation in teaching:

- The Federal Government's Australian School Innovation in Science, Technology and Mathematics has funded projects worth \$33.66m which commenced in 2004 and will continue until 2010-2011.^v The projects were designed to encourage innovation in Australian schools, promote world-class teaching and learning and encourage teacher attraction and retention;
- The Victorian Government implemented the 'Leading Schools Fund' between 2003 and 2008 which provided \$162m for schools to 'find new ways of delivering education' to meet the learning needs of their students (DEECD, 2006);
- The NSW Government has signalled its intentions to create a Cooperative Research Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning to strengthen research and development into innovation in teaching and learning;^{vi}
- The Queensland Government has developed several initiatives to encourage the innovative use of information and communication technology in Queensland classrooms with the development of 'Smart Classrooms'^{vii} incorporating ICT into school education, the ICT learning innovation centre^{viii} and an e-learning expo (a two-day conference) on incorporating ICT into school education; and,

^v http://www.asistm.edu.au/asistm/asistm_home.17201.html retrieved 27 April 2010.

^{vi} https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/.../research/concept_paper.pdf retrieved 28 April 2010.

^{vii} <http://education.qld.gov.au/smartclassrooms/> retrieved 27 April 2010.

^{viii} <http://www.learningplace.com.au/defaultqa2.asp?orgid=35&suborgid=234> retrieved 27 April 2010.

- The South Australian Government has previously funded a program to improve and encourage innovation in teaching students who have English as a Second Language (ESL).^{ix}

These large funding programs are designed to promote innovative teaching practices. Despite these programs, Australian teachers report that they do not feel recognised or rewarded for innovative teaching practices. An essential part of stimulating innovation in schools must be recognising and developing teachers.

91% of Australian teachers report that if they are more innovative in their teaching they would not receive any recognition in their school.

Meaningful teacher evaluation is an obvious mechanism to identify and recognise innovative classroom teaching practices. Currently this opportunity is being missed. Evaluation is the starting point to identify innovative practices. Once identified, the impact of these practices on student learning should be assessed and tracked over time, allowing teachers to determine which are the most effective practices for particular students. Successful practices can then be promoted to other teachers.

The fact that teachers report that they receive no recognition for innovative teaching in their classrooms indicates that there is little focus placed on innovative teaching practices in many schools.

^{ix} <http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/curric/pages/ESL/Innovative/?reFlag=1> retrieved 29 April 2010

This must be addressed to encourage innovation within classroom teaching, thereby continuing to improve teacher quality which matters most for student learning. Innovative teaching at the classroom level needs to be encouraged, developed and shared amongst all teachers. Recognising innovation within classrooms may be more effective and cheaper than formal, large-scale government programs.

4.4 Teacher evaluation has few consequences

With so many Australian teachers reporting that effectiveness, quality, and innovation are not recognised, it is not surprising that virtually all teachers report that the evaluation of their work has little consequence for their careers. Again, it is important to analyse the impact on teachers rather than theorising or making assumptions about teacher behaviour.

Ninety-eight per cent of teachers report that the evaluation of their work does not lead to any sort of bonus or monetary reward. Perhaps of greater significance is that 83% of teachers report that the evaluation of their work has no impact on the likelihood of their career advancement (OECD, 2009).

Teachers are saying that there is virtually no link between the evaluation of teachers' work, their performance or the quality of their teaching, and their salaries, any financial bonus or career advancement. As discussed below, teachers report this as being a severe problem in schools throughout the country.

83% of Australian teachers report that the evaluation of their work has no impact on the likelihood of their career advancement.

Teachers want meaningful consequences to flow from their performance evaluations. Such consequences have the potential to significantly improve the quality of teachers, their morale, and the retention of high-quality teachers. When surveyed by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) in 2007, 70% of teachers agreed that higher pay for teachers demonstrating advanced competence would help retain teachers in the profession (McKenzie, et al., 2008).

These problems extend to addressing poor performance in our schools. Over two-thirds of Australian teachers report that in their school, teachers will not be dismissed because of sustained poor performance. Interestingly, this is more prevalent in Government schools. Seventy-nine per cent of teachers in Government schools report that the sustained poor performance by their fellow teachers would not lead to dismissal. In addition, 43% of Australian teachers report that in their school, sustained poor performance would be tolerated by the rest of the staff (OECD, 2009).

The reports of Australian school principals support the notion that teacher evaluation is not meaningful, with few consequences for poor performing teachers. Over 90% of teachers work in schools where the school principal reports that when weaknesses are identified in a teacher evaluation, actions such as reduced annual increases in pay are never undertaken. Clearly, even if some

teachers are under-performing in a school they will still receive annual increases in pay. This is consistent with the perception of teachers: 93% of Australian teachers report that in their school the principal would not take steps to alter the monetary rewards of a persistently under-performing teacher.

71% of teachers report that in their school, teachers with sustained poor performance will not be dismissed.

The dearth of outcomes stemming from teacher evaluation shows that the evaluative framework in school education lacks meaning and does not address problems of under-performing teachers. The systems have no teeth and therefore fail their developmental roles in improving the teaching offered to students.

5. Teacher evaluation is not linked to development

The evaluation of teachers' work and the way they educate students should be fundamental to improving the education offered to Australian children. Even though the frequency of teacher evaluation in Australia is high compared to other countries with 76% of Australian teachers receiving evaluation and/or feedback on their work at least annually, teachers report it is merely little more than an administrative exercise. Meaningful evaluation of teachers' work is required to improve the education provided to students.

5.1 Teacher evaluation is largely just an administrative exercise

Sixty-three per cent of Australian teachers report that teacher evaluation is largely completed simply to fulfil administrative requirements (OECD, 2009). This figure is slightly higher in government schools (69%) where fulfilling administrative requirements is reported as the main factor behind teacher evaluation rather than developing teachers and improving instruction.

63% of teachers report that the evaluation of their work is largely done simply to fulfil administrative requirements.

Government regulations often require teachers to be evaluated on an annual basis before they receive their annual pay increase and

promotion along the career structure (OECD, 2008). It is clear that such regulations are having little impact other than being administrative tasks that do little other than consume vital resources.

5.2 Teacher evaluation does not develop teaching in classrooms

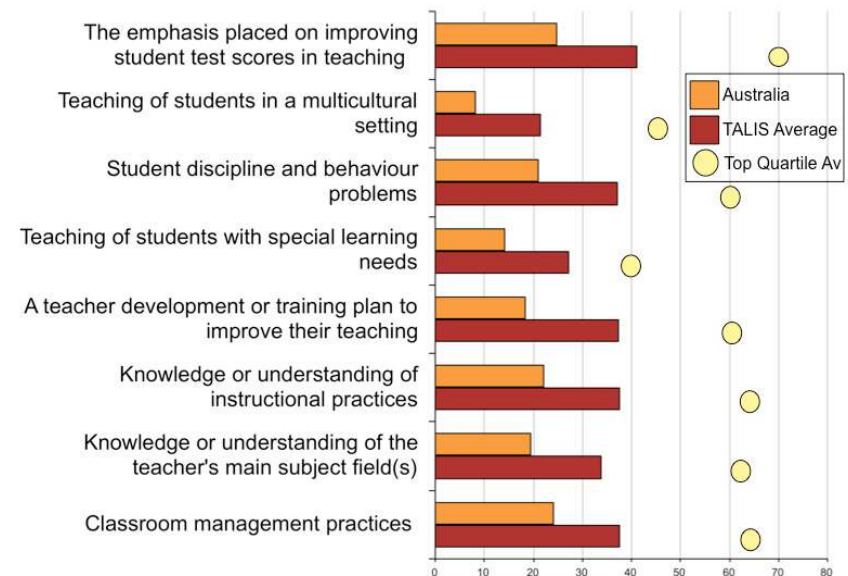
Opportunities for improving the education of Australian students that are driven by teacher evaluation are being missed. Sixty-one per cent of Australian teachers report that in their school, teacher evaluations have little impact on the way teachers teach in the classroom. Using this measure of effectiveness, teacher evaluation in Australia is the least effective in all but two of the 23 countries participating in the TALIS program. While teachers in some countries such as Korea report that teacher evaluation has a large impact on different areas of teaching, Australian teachers again showed that toothless evaluation systems fail to have meaningful impact.

61% of teachers report that the evaluation of teachers' work has little impact on the way teachers teach in the classroom.

Teacher evaluation in Australia has a minor impact on teaching compared to countries that are more successful in using evaluation for teacher development. Figure 5.1 presents eight

important aspects of teaching that can be improved with teacher evaluation and development. On average, less than one-fifth of Australian teachers report that the evaluation of their work led to a moderate or large change in any of the eight critical aspects of teaching. In comparison, across all TALIS countries, 35% of teachers reported moderate or large changes following the evaluation of their work. This percentage increases to 58% of teachers if we consider teacher evaluation and development in the most effective quartile of countries. In these countries, teacher evaluation leads to substantial improvements in teaching. This highlights the importance of meaningful evaluation in improving the quality of education received by students.

Figure 5.1 Percentage of teachers who report that the evaluation of their work led to moderate or large changes in the following aspects of their teaching (2007-08)



Source: (OECD, 2009), Table 5.8.

Note: Teachers were asked “to what extent has evaluation directly led to or involved changes in any of the following?” Teachers were asked to report if their evaluation led to “No change”, “A small change”, “A moderate change”, or “A large change” in facets of their work.

5.3 The need for individualised teacher development

A key aspect of evaluation is not only recognising effective teaching. The developmental aspects of evaluation are crucial for improving student learning and creating school improvements.

The lack of meaningful evaluation has resulted in teachers not receiving the development they need to provide the most effective teaching to Australian students.

Given the lack of meaningful evaluation, it is important to consider key developmental issues in schools that need to be addressed with meaningful evaluation and development. School principals and teachers report that development is needed in a number of areas:

- Too many teachers lose too much class time to factors other than effective instruction;
- School principals report that a lack of teacher preparation is a serious problem in Australian schools; and
- Teachers report that more meaningful professional collaboration between teachers is needed in schools.

Meaningful evaluation is the first step in addressing these issues and improving the education received by Australian students.

5.3.1 Ineffective teaching and learning in classrooms

An important aspect of effective teaching and learning is 'time-on-task'. Unfortunately, teachers report that in Australia's classrooms a considerable amount of class time is lost to factors other than effective teaching and learning. On average each Australian (lower secondary) teacher loses 24% of their class time, or 196 teaching hours per year. One-quarter of Australian teachers are losing at least 30% of their class time to factors other

than effective teaching and learning, which includes undertaking administrative tasks and keeping order in the classroom.^x This is largely an issue of classroom management with two-thirds of the lost time taken-up with keeping order in the classroom. Only 8% of effective class time is lost to administrative tasks which is equal to the average in all TALIS countries.

Unfortunately, 11% of Australian teachers report that they lose half of their class time to factors other than effective teaching and learning (OECD, 2009). These teachers are losing, on average, 45% of their class time on keeping order in the classroom.

25% of Australian teachers lose at least 30% of their class time to factors other than effective teaching and learning, and 11% lose at least 50% of their class time.

This lack of effective teaching and learning in classrooms has clear implications for students. Meaningful teacher evaluation and development is required to first identify where effective teaching and learning can be improved and second, how teachers can be developed to improve their teaching to maximise student learning.

^x Teachers were asked 'What percentage of class time is typically spent on each of the following activities? (a) Administrative tasks (e.g. recording attendance, handing out school information/forms), (b) Keeping order in the classroom (maintaining discipline) and (c) Actual teaching and learning.

5.3.2 Poor preparation for effective classroom teaching

School principals report that a number of teachers need to improve their preparation for their classes. Over one-third of Australian teachers work in schools where their school principal believes a lack of pedagogical preparation by teachers hinders instruction in their school 'a lot' or 'to some extent'.^{xi}

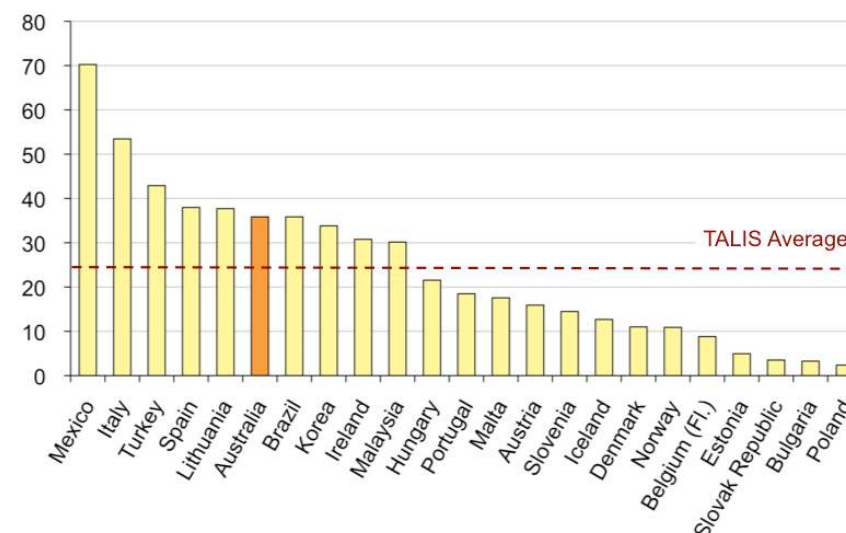
36% of Australian teachers work in schools where their school principal believes a lack of pedagogical preparation by teachers hinders instruction in their school 'a lot' or 'to some extent'.

As shown in Figure 5.2, of the 23 countries participating in TALIS, only Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Spain and Turkey had more teachers whose school principal considered this such a large problem in their school.

Addressing this issue requires evaluation of teachers' work to help them identify the cause of these problems and development so they can improve their classroom teaching.

^{xi} School principals were asked to rate the extent to which certain student and teacher behaviours hindered instruction in their school. Teacher behaviours were: arriving late at the school; absenteeism; and a lack of pedagogical preparation. School principals were asked to respond either: "Not at all"; "Very little"; "To some extent"; or "A lot".

Figure 5.2 Percentage of teachers whose school principal reported that a lack of pedagogical preparation by teachers hindered the provision of instruction in their school 'a lot' or 'to some extent' (2007-08)



Source: (OECD, 2009), p.39.

These findings emphasise the need for the development of teachers in Australian schools. They are clear examples of teachers telling us that improvements are needed. However, there are a number of additional facets of teaching that require focused development to improve teaching and school education in Australia. Professional collaboration between teachers has been shown to be an effective school improvement initiative but teachers report that it is relatively weak in Australia (OECD, 2009). In addition, 15% of Australian teachers report that they have a high need for development that improves their teaching of

students with special learning needs. Yet, these teachers report that relatively little emphasis is given to teaching students with special learning needs in the evaluation of their work.

Meaningless teacher evaluations that fail to recognise effectiveness mean that opportunities are missed for teacher development that is clearly needed to improve school education. Problems are not identified let alone addressed. This is particularly wasteful given the resources devoted to teacher education and training. More focused and effective teacher development can be implemented when evaluations of teachers' work identify their strengths, weaknesses and required development.

A system of meaningful school and teacher evaluation would identify each teacher's developmental needs, allocate the required development, and monitor its impact over time. Clearly, the current systems operating in Australia fail to achieve these important objectives.

6. The benefits of meaningful evaluation and development

Given the substantial problems arising from school systems that do not recognise effectiveness, it is clear that teachers would benefit from a more meaningful evaluation system. While few teachers report they receive meaningful evaluation, when it does occur teachers report that evaluation can be helpful and improve classroom teaching (OECD, 2009). Analysis of the reports from schools principals and teachers shows that:

- Schools that more frequently evaluate teachers have more effective teachers; and,
- Schools that emphasise particular aspects of teaching in their teacher evaluations create improvements in the quality of teaching in these areas.

These benefits would be magnified in Australian schools if the focus of school evaluations and teacher evaluations was better aligned. School principals and teachers report that the focus of school evaluations differs from teacher evaluations to create an incoherent evaluative framework.

6.1 The potential for improvement in teacher evaluation

Australian teachers who report greater levels of self-efficacy in their role as teachers^{xii} receive more frequent evaluation and

feedback about their work, are more likely to have innovative teaching practices emphasised in their evaluations, and receive public recognition from principal/colleagues following evaluation of their work (OECD, 2009). Teacher evaluation systems with these characteristics are more likely to have teachers that consider themselves to be more effective in their teaching and have a greater impact on students.

Figure 6.1 presents the correlation between the focus of school evaluations, the focus of teacher evaluations in the corresponding school, and changes in specific teaching practices emphasised in teacher evaluations. Teachers and school principals reported on six important aspects of teaching. Column one presents the correlation between the importance given to these aspects in the evaluation of a school and the emphasis given to these aspects in the evaluation of teachers in that school. Column two presents the correlation between the importance given to these aspects in teacher evaluations and the extent that it led to actual changes in these aspects of teachers' work.

^{xii} TALIS asked teachers several questions about their effectiveness as teachers. A scale was developed that measured teachers' self-efficacy. Multi-variate analysis illustrated the factors that are significantly associated with teachers' self-efficacy (see Ch. 7 OECD (2009)) for a fuller discussion of these issues.

Figure 6.1 Links in the evaluative framework

Factors in teacher evaluation	Correlation between the emphasis on an aspect of teaching in school evaluation and teacher evaluation	Correlation between the emphasis on an aspect of teaching in a teacher evaluation and a change in teaching practices
Student discipline and behaviour problems	0.08	0.32*
Knowledge and understanding of main subject field	0.13	0.37*
Knowledge and understanding of instructional practices	0.11	0.38*
Students with special learning needs	0.06	0.38*
Students in a multicultural setting	0.20*	0.51*
Classroom management	0.09	0.30*

Note: Figures represent correlation coefficients.

* Indicates the relationship is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.^{xiii}

Teachers report that the greater the emphasis on an aspect of their teaching in the evaluation of their work, the greater the change in what they do in the classroom. In each of the six aspects of teaching presented in Figure 6.1, an increased emphasis on the aspects of teaching in the evaluation of teachers' work led to larger changes in that aspect of teaching in classrooms. For example, when teachers report that teaching students with special learning needs was emphasised in the

evaluation of their work, they reported that it led to greater changes in how they taught these students.

The impact of school and teacher evaluations on teaching practices offers a valuable lever for policy makers and administrators. An effective evaluative framework begins with clear policy objectives. While these would most often encompass outputs such as Year 12 completion rates or literacy and numeracy standards (MCEETYA, 2008), specific teaching practices and areas of education can be emphasised. Policy makers and administrators can influence teaching practices and specific aspects of school education by creating strong links between school evaluation, teacher evaluation and teaching practices. For example, if it was considered that it was important for Australian school education to improve its performance with teaching students with special learning needs then school evaluations and teacher evaluations can be structured to emphasise these issues.

This highlights the developmental nature of evaluation and the potential benefits of an effective evaluative framework. If positive change can be achieved with systems that teachers report are prone to being little more than an administrative exercise, then the potential for improvements in teaching in Australian schools is greatly magnified with reform to create a meaningful evaluative framework.

A more meaningful evaluative framework will also require a more cohesive framework that aligns both the content and outcomes of school evaluations and teacher evaluations. It is important that schools are evaluated against the same objectives as teachers

^{xiii} The OECD conducted path analysis to test the relationships between school evaluations, teacher evaluations, and teaching practices. For a fuller discussion of the analysis see OECD (2009) p. 164.

given that teachers are largely responsible for the effectiveness of schools (Lazear, 2001).

Schools principals report that particular aspects of teaching are emphasised when Australian schools are evaluated. However, their teachers are being evaluated on different aspects of teaching. For all areas except for teaching in a multi-cultural setting there was an insignificant correlation between the extent that an aspect of teaching was emphasised in school evaluations and the extent that it was emphasised in the evaluation of teachers in the corresponding school. It is well documented that a misaligned evaluative system can create substantial inefficiencies and reduced effectiveness (Lazear, 2001).

Other countries have more coherent evaluative frameworks with a stronger alignment of the focus of school and teacher evaluations. This may explain why the impact on teaching practices is greater in these countries (OECD, 2009).

7. Conclusion

This report has presented the views of teachers about the evaluation of their work, their development and their teaching. Unfortunately, the views of teachers are often not included in education policy development even though they are the views of those who have the greatest impact on student learning. It is clear that teachers believe that reform of teacher evaluation and development is required as the current systems are broken.

Teachers report that they are in need of development and that there are specific issues in school education that require change and improvement. Yet, teachers report that the evaluation of their work is largely meaningless and is therefore ineffective in developing teachers and their teaching. The resources devoted to the evaluation of teachers' work are clearly being wasted. These findings need to be addressed to improve the quality and effectiveness of Australian school education.

Policy development in these areas has historically focused on developing teacher standards. It seems this will continue with the development of new draft national professional standards for teachers.^{xiv} Standards are developed for initial teacher accreditation and for promotion once they become teachers. However, standards mean nothing if evaluation is meaningless. Very few teachers do not pass the standards set for each level of promotion (BCG, 2003). In fact, the emphasis on centrally determined standards in teacher evaluation and development may have disempowered school principals who should be responsible

for teachers in their schools. School principals are not evaluating or developing the impact teachers have on students in their school. Instead, teachers report that their evaluation is little more than an administrative exercise. The emphasis on teachers reaching various standards for promotion is not contributing to meaningful development of teacher quality.

To effectively develop and evaluate teachers the important issue is how to assess performance in improving the impact of teaching on students. Only then can effective development address teachers' individual development needs. This key question will be discussed in a forthcoming Grattan Institute education report.

This report adds impetus to part of the federal government's policies aimed at lifting teacher quality through the National Partnership Agreements. Teachers and school principals completed the TALIS survey in 2007-08, when the Labor party was coming into government in Canberra, and policies such as the Rewarding Teaching Excellence trials in Victoria and the Highly Accomplished Teachers program in NSW will hopefully expand the recognition that teachers need. Responsibilities for teacher evaluation and development in government schools rest largely with States and Territories. While data does not permit interstate comparisons, the extreme nature of most of these findings rules out large differences between states. For example, when over 90% of Australian teachers report that the most effective teachers in their school do not receive the greatest recognition it is clear that this is a problem for all Australian school systems. This also holds true for different systems in the non-

^{xiv} http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/npst2010-consultation-call_for_submissions.30532.html retrieved 6 May 2010.

government sector. The data could not distinguish between systems in the non-government sector (for example, between independent and Catholic schools). However, only in a couple of instances were problems of a lack of meaningful evaluation and development smaller in non-government schools.

In moving forward, we need to avoid simplified assertions linking teacher pay solely to student test scores. Such assertions are misinformed and do not recognise the complexity and broader objectives of teaching and school education. There are numerous effective methods to evaluate teachers and teaching. Peer review, direct appraisal of teaching, and the evaluation of teachers' ability to identify and address each student's learning needs are fundamental to meaningful teacher evaluation. School principals should be given greater responsibility to have meaningful evaluation and development of the work of their teachers. They will need support for this and will need to draw on broader resources and programs for teacher development.

School principals will also need support for recognising effective teachers and addressing under-performing teachers. Otherwise, teachers will not receive the recognition they clearly need and students will continue to suffer if less effective teachers and teaching are not addressed. While development is crucial and should be the first step in addressing under-performance, there must be meaningful mechanisms in place to move on persistently under-performing teachers. Teachers report that the current mechanisms are ineffective. This will require reform to the career structures of teachers with a greater emphasis on the consequences of teacher evaluation.

Teachers are telling us that they work in systems that do not develop their skills or address weaknesses in their schools. They are bearing the burden of systems that fail to recognise effectiveness and therefore reward ineffectiveness. Change is clearly needed if we are to revitalise our school education system. We will lose our best teachers if change does not occur and we will continue to fail to attract the best and brightest into teaching. And the greatest impact will be on students. Students gain the greatest benefit from effective teaching and they lose the most from ineffective teaching.

Annex A: What is TALIS?

TALIS is the first OECD international survey of teachers and their school principals and has a focus on lower secondary education in both public and private schools. It offers a rich dataset that provides representative samples of teachers across 23 countries (Australia, Austria, Belgium (Flemish Community), Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, and Turkey). Data was obtained on a number of issues but concentrated specifically on aspects of teacher professional development; teacher beliefs, attitudes and practices; teacher evaluation and feedback; and school leadership (OECD, 2009).

In each of the 23 participating countries, about 200 schools were randomly selected to participate in the survey. In each school, one questionnaire was completed by the school principal and another by 20 randomly selected teachers. The questionnaires each took about 45 minutes to complete and could be filled in on paper or on-line. In total, TALIS sampled around 90 000 teachers representing more than two million teachers in TALIS countries.

The OECD sets high response rates to ensure a representative sample that far exceed those normally achieved in surveys of teachers (for further information see the TALIS Technical Report (2010)). It should be noted however that a representative sample was not obtained from each State and Territory. Care must therefore be taken in interpreting the data, particularly for issues that have large regulatory or policy differences between jurisdictions.

It is important to remember that the TALIS data is not administrative data but is the voice of teachers and school principals. It is their beliefs and reports on themselves, their teaching and work, and their school. This makes TALIS a unique and important dataset in shaping public policy and the development of schools and teachers.

In the TALIS analysis, teachers focused on both evaluation and feedback. The definitions provided to respondents were:

Evaluation was defined as when a teacher's work is reviewed by the principal, an external inspector or by his or her colleagues. This evaluation can be conducted in a range of ways from a more formal, objective approach (e.g. as part of a formal performance management system, involving set procedures and criteria) to the more informal, more subjective approach (e.g. through informal discussions with the teacher).

Feedback was defined as the reporting of the results of a review of teachers' work (however formal or informal that review has been) back to the teacher, often with the purpose of noting good performance or identifying areas for development. Again, the feedback may be provided formally (e.g. through a written report) or informally (e.g. through discussions with the teacher).

TALIS defined school evaluation as an evaluation of the whole school rather than of individual subjects or departments.

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