

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Better teacher appraisal equals higher performing students**

“Australia’s systems of teacher appraisal and feedback are broken, and students are suffering as a result. It is time for change,” Dr Ben Jensen, Grattan’s director of School Education, said today on the release of the report, [\*Better Teacher Appraisal and Feedback: Improving Performance\*](#).

A new system to measure the performance of Australia’s teachers would raise the effectiveness of teaching, recognise our best educators and lift the outcomes of Australian students to the best in the world, a Grattan Institute report has found.

Dr Jensen said that teachers and principals were among the strongest advocates for change. Nearly two-thirds of teachers say that appraisals of their work are merely tick-a-box, bureaucratic exercises, while 91% say the best teachers do not receive the most recognition, and 71% say that poor performing teachers are never dismissed.

The report, the third in Grattan’s series on improving teacher performance, combines an analysis of international research with extensive interviews with educators in order to propose a new system of appraisal and feedback to meet teacher, parent and public concern.

The report examines eight methods of assessing teacher performance and suggests that schools use at least four of them to produce a balanced scorecard of teacher achievement. The eight methods are: student performance and assessments; peer observation; direct observation of classroom teaching and learning; student feedback; parent surveys; 360-degree assessment; self-assessment and external observation.

It argues that teacher appraisal and feedback must be decentralised to individual schools, with schools given autonomy and responsibility so that they can assess their own teachers.

“This is big, difficult but vital reform,” Dr Jensen said. “It requires a culture change in many schools and across the education system. Principals and teachers must lead it, and governments must help them to appraise and develop teachers properly.”

Dr Jensen said a new system of appraisal and feedback would bring overdue recognition to the best teachers and spread good practices through their school and beyond. It would also provide, once established, for greater labour market flexibility.

All studies show that better teachers are the key to producing higher performing students. Grattan’s analysis shows that systems of appraisal and feedback directly linked to improved student performance can increase teacher effectiveness by as much as 20 to 30%.

This would not only arrest a recent decline in the outcomes of Australian students in important areas but lift their performance to the best in the world.

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