



Australian Education Union

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28 November 2019

The Hon. Dan Tehan
Education Council (Chair)
The Education Council
PO Box 202, Carlton South
Vic 3053

cc: Ms Yvette Berry, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, ACT
Ms Sue Ellery, Minister for Education and Training, Western Australia
Mr John Gardner, Minister for Education, South Australia
Ms Grace Grace, Minister for Education, Queensland
Mr James Merlino, Minister for Education, Victoria
Ms Sarah Mitchell, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning, NSW
Mr Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Education and Training, Tasmania
Ms. Selena Uiibo, Minister for Education, NT

RE: National School Reform Agreement

Dear Ministers,

We write to express our grave concerns about the direction that we understand is being taken by the Education Council and other agencies to advance the National School Reform Agreement and to urge you to reject the proposals to:

- a) Implement the so-called 'Alpha phase' of the Learning Progressions and Online Formative Assessment Initiative.
- b) Restructure the national bodies AITSL and ACARA as outlined in the report "*Review of the National Architecture for Schooling in Australia*" dated 8th November 2019.

We note that the National School Reform Agreement (NSRA) outlines eight national policy initiatives including "assisting teachers monitor individual student progress and identify student learning needs through opt-in online and on demand student learning assessment tools with links to student learning resources, prioritising early years foundation skills" and that the NSRA makes no reference to a singular learning assessment tool, the learning progressions or a formative assessment tool.

We reject any assertion that learning progressions or a formative assessment tool are the most appropriate mechanisms for achievement of the objective stated in the NSRA.

We understand that development of these mechanisms is well advanced and yet there has been no formal consultation with the teaching profession in public schools and its union, the Australian Education Union. This failure to engage with the teaching profession through its representatives has restricted consideration of alternatives to a pre-determined model that only represents a narrow view of assessment tools.

We reject the findings of the so-called '*Discovery phase*' because the teaching profession was not appropriately represented through the formal engagement of their union in the design of any proposals.

We cannot support the implementation of such reforms unless the teaching profession as practitioners and experts is formally involved through its union from the very beginning of the process to determine the future of student assessment from first principles.

We demand that the current process being undertaken by the Project Management Group and other agencies be abandoned and replaced with an alternative which is genuinely consultative and negotiated with the union.

Any student assessment program must have teaching and learning at its heart, be aligned to the Australian Curriculum, be owned, informed and supported by the teaching profession through its democratic union structures and address any workload impacts and professional learning concerns through appropriate additional resourcing.

Furthermore we cannot support any proposal being put forward to the Education Council on the restructure of the national bodies AITSL and ACARA as outlined in the report "*Review of the National Architecture for Schooling in Australia*" dated 8th November 2019, as again there has been no consultation with the teaching profession and their unions on this matter.

The work of the national bodies impacts directly on AEU members in public schools across the country. The changes being proposed have significant professional and industrial ramifications and should not take place without appropriate consultation with the AEU on behalf of the profession.

Given the dramatic impact of the proposed reforms on teaching and learning on our schools we urge Ministers to engage in genuine consultation with the teaching profession through the AEU about all matters related to the National School Reform Agreement as a matter of urgency.

We look forward to your urgent attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Correna Haythorpe
Federal President



Glenn Fowler
Branch Secretary
AEU – ACT Branch



Maurie Mulheron
President
NSWTF Branch



Jarvis Ryan
President
AEU – NT Branch



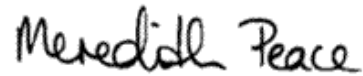
Kevin Bates
President
Queensland Teachers' Union



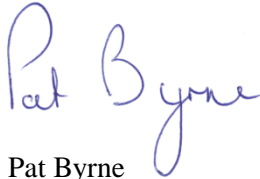
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