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## *The* **WELLNESS EDITION**

INCLUDING FEATURE ON THE  
**2017 ACE National Conference**  
*Think Global, Teach Local*



# The Wellbeing Edition + the 2017 ACE Conference Round-Up

Editorial by ACE National President, the Hon. Bronwyn Pike, MACE

Being an Educator today is very different to how it was when I started teaching (a few years ago now). Earlier this year, the College, in partnership with the Australian Scholarships Group (ASG), delivered the first annual Teacher's Report Card. In this, we not only sought members feedback on how they view our profession, but how they feel about working as an educator in 2017.

What the Teacher's Report Card found was that whilst the overwhelming majority (96 per cent) of respondents find teacher rewarding, it is also a profession that is incredibly demanding and stressful. Almost half the teachers surveyed, 48 per cent, reported they are stressed either 'most of the time' or 'fairly often' in a typical week, with only 12 per cent of teachers indicating they are very rarely stressed.

Feeling stressed is, unfortunately, a part of our modern-day work environment, no matter which profession we have chosen to pursue. However, I would argue that within the education profession these stressors have the potential to have significant impacts upon teaching performance and student outcomes. Extensive research has been published into the positive and long-term impacts of excellence in teaching and teaching practices as being a major contributor to educational excellence and student outcomes. In his 2003 paper *Teachers Make a Difference, What is the research evidence?* John Hattie notes, 'the greatest source of variance that can make the difference [in student achievement] – the teacher'.

So, what happens when your profession is having a negative impact upon your health and wellbeing? And how do you, your school and your professional network help in ensuring educator health and wellbeing?

This edition of *Professional Educator*, The Wellness Edition, investigates a range of issues relating to educator and student health and wellbeing.

Susan Beltman's article, *What is teacher professional resilience and whose responsibility is it?* investigates research about teacher professional resilience as it relates to retaining a quality teacher workforce and teacher wellbeing. The article addresses the complexity

of resilience as a concept and looks at factors such as personal capacities, strategies to overcome challenges, and positive outcomes such as a sense of commitment and wellbeing. Susan puts forward a number of ideas as to how understanding the concept of resilience helps to identify where to provide resources to respond to a difficulty or to prevent a potential difficulty.

Andrew Fuller and Andrew Wicking's *Innovative Practices for Building Resilient Schools* broadens the discussion from individual resilience to organisational resilience, and the critical importance of investing in resilience and wellbeing strategies to improve mental health, educational engagement, academic outcomes, future job prospects and lives.

The *Social Emotional Learning: What It Is and Why It Matters* article by Jenny Williams delivers information on the work of the not-for-profit organisation, Positive Pieces Education, and the programs they are delivering in the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) space.

Finally, there is a fantastic article from Helena Granziera of The University of NSW, early career educator, idealist, education enthusiast and all round 'outside the box' thinker. It is great to have contributions like these to our national publication.

This edition also contains a ACE 2017 National Conference Lift Out – 'Think Global, Teach Local', highlighting a number of articles from the fantastic national and international speakers we hosted at this year's Conference.

This is a great double edition of *Professional Educator* that will no doubt keep members entertained and engaged on some really interesting topics.

Happy reading.



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# CEO Report

## Managing stress

by Helen Jentz

Stress is a part of everyday life. All of us approach and manage stress in different ways. The physical manifestations of stress are many and varied – lethargy, agitation, headaches, insomnia, colds and infections, no doubt we have all experienced this at some point in our working lives.

Many of us may be experiencing symptoms such as these now. Over the course of the past decade or so, the impacts of workplace stress have been extensively researched and, fortunately, talked about a lot more. Particularly in relation to mental health and wellbeing. This edition of Profession Educator (a double edition of Volumes 2 and 3 for 2017) is focussed on this challenging, yet fascinating topic – Wellness.

We have been fortunate to collate a number of innovative articles regarding wellness with a particular focus on resilience, not only personal resilience but institutional and organisational resilience.

Over the course of the last four months, the ACE National Office team has had to be very resilient as we have been progressing with an aggressive change management program for the College.

Some members have been experiencing certain levels of frustration at these changes which have related to both external (website) and internal (management software) systems and the team and I have been working really hard to try and minimise the problems as much as possible.

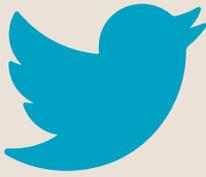
On a positive note, our updated website has, in most cases, been embraced by members and the new personalised members portal and exclusive members only access to information has been widely endorsed. The website continues to be a work in progress, Websites, by their very nature are organic and dynamic 'beings' and we are continuing to improve, develop and add to the site every day.

The College has also been extremely active at the state and regional levels thanks to our growing number of dedicated members and volunteers. Events, networking, professional development and workshops have been delivered across the country

on a range of topics including Re-imagining our professionalism, the STEM Teacher Enrichment Academy and Educating the Cyber Generation.

Many States have held their Annual Awards over the course of the last few months and on behalf of the ACE Board and staff I would like to congratulate all the very deserving award recipients.

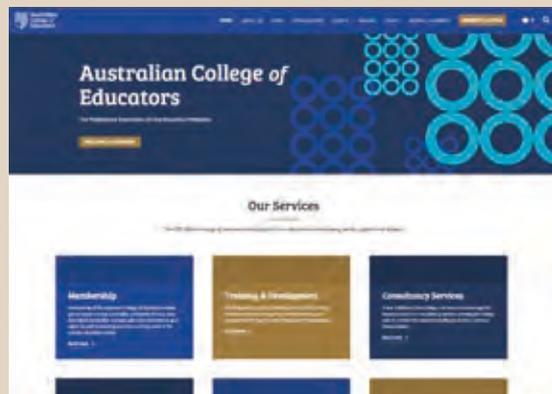
Finally, we are gearing up for the end of 2017. Planning is well underway for an even bigger and better 2018 here at the College. I look forward to working with you all.



# From the Twittersphere

The new  
**@AustCollEd**  
website is looking  
really good

[www.austcolled.com.au](http://www.austcolled.com.au)



Thanks to **@AustCollEd** for a great early career teacher seminar this evening!  
Lots to think about.

Congratulations to Brisbane Metro region **@AustCollEd** for hosting a great selection of panalists discussing Re-imagining our Professionalism.

Victorian **#teachers** to get 4 non-teaching days each **#school year**. The ASG-ACE Teachers Report Card reveals the demanding workloads and time pressures felt by **#classroom** teachers.  
**#worklifebalance**

[bit.ly/2xi1mMD](http://bit.ly/2xi1mMD)

# Happy

## #worldteachersday!

Thank you  
**#australianeducators**  
for inspiring the next  
generation.

This country wouldn't be  
the same without you.

# ACE in the News

## The Australian

12 September 2017

### **Play School: There's a bear in there, and lots of hard work too**

For the past 18 years, Cathie Harrison has helped shape the colourful stories and sing-a-long adventures of Big Ted and his Play School pals while encouraging Australian children from Sydney's inner west to outback Queensland to enjoy learning.

Dr Harrison is not only one of the early childhood advisers on the ABC's children's television program but also a senior lecturer in early childhood education at the Australian Catholic University in Sydney.

Play School has been running for more than 50 years and one of the factors behind its longevity is the importance it places on having the child at the centre of the show. "The commitment to the child, that's been a constant," Dr Harrison says, "whereas I think if that's not the case you can be subject much more to varying forces."

Her role at Play School, which started in 1999, came about by chance when one of her presentations caught the eye of the executive producer.

"Each series is a product of an extensive period where we start with a brainstorm," she says.

"Together we map out possibilities and then we meet subsequently, five times for each episode, and scripts are developed for each episode by a writer who also attends these meetings.

"When the scripts are ready they are sent out to the actors and we have a half-day rehearsal for each episode. The following week each episode is recorded in studio — so it is an extensive and collaborative process."

In a way her role is to be the voice of the child.



"And that's also interesting because it's which child, because increasingly we recognise the diversity of childhood experience," Dr Harrison says.

"It's about saying: 'Well, we're all sitting in the inner west and children are going to be watching this from Central Australia to Queensland to wherever, so how do we also include their diverse perspectives, including the child with a disability, or a child with a parent with a disability, or a child who speaks a language in addition to English.'"

Dr Harrison, who has worked in the field for four decades, has been singled out as one of the nation's best educators, recently receiving an Australian College of Educators NSW Branch excellence in education award.

The recognition, she believes, helps to "frame education beyond school education and recognises that children learn from everyday life experience such as television but also things like cooking, cleaning, shopping and gardening".

"At Play School we try to make these things fun and playful and positive educative experience as well," she says.

She says early-years education needs to focus on what the research says is in the best interests of the child.

ACE chief executive Helen Jentz says Dr Harrison's huge contribution to early childhood education has influenced the lives of thousands of Australians.

## Catholic Outlook

8 August 2017

### **CEDP leader named NSW's best educator**

<https://catholicoutlook.org/cedp-leader-named-nsws-best-educator/>

## Port Macquarie News

11 August 2017

### **Mark Brown honoured with Australian College of Educators (NSW branch) Excellence in Education Award**

<http://www.portnews.com.au/story/4845367/top-teaching-award/>

## Liverpool City Champion

15 August 2017

### Science teacher is 'a point of light'

<http://www.liverpoolchampion.com.au/story/4855699/teacher-is-a-point-of-light/?cs=12>

## The Educator

9 August 2017

### NSW best educator named

<http://www.educatoronline.com.au/breaking-news/nsw-best-educator-named-239738.aspx>

## The Educator

27 October 2017

### The value of social and emotional learning

<http://www.educatoronline.com.au/news/the-value-of-social-and-emotional-learning-242899.aspx>

## The Educator

### Magazine 2017 Hot List

<http://www.educatoronline.com.au/rankings/hot-list-2017/helen-jentz-chief-executive-officer-australian-college-of-educators-242730.aspx>

## St George Sutherland Shire Leader

### Shire music festival scoops award

<http://www.theleader.com.au/story/4860598/shire-music-festival-scoops-award/?cs=1507>

## Education Today

### Heather Schnagl named Victoria's best educator

<http://www.educationtoday.com.au/news-detail/Heather-Schnagl-named-Victoria-3701>

## Sydney Morning Herald

5 November 2017

### NSW schools falling behind in teaching key life skills: expert

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/nsw-schools-falling-behind-in-teaching-key-life-skills-expert-20171104-gzetjn.html>

## The West Australian

8 November 2017

### Award winning Scotch College headmaster calls for overhaul in schooling

<https://thewest.com.au/news/education/award-winning-scotch-college-headmaster-calls-for-overhaul-in-schooling-ng-b88652600z>

## ACE Media Release

### O'Connell named state's best educator

A leading Perth educator has been awarded the Australian College of Educators highest teaching accolade.

Dr Alec O'Connell, Headmaster of Scotch College, has been awarded the prestigious Australian College of Educators (WA branch) College Medal at a dinner celebrating the state's most passionate and gifted teachers.

The College Medal recognises the outstanding contributions of an individual relating to educational practice, theory and discourse.

A passionate teacher and leader, Dr O'Connell has spent almost four decades shaping young minds and influencing the educational outcomes of Perth students.

# Innovative Practices for Building Resilient Schools

Andrew Fuller & Andrew Wicking

Resilient Youth<sup>1</sup> began with a single innovative idea: to measure student resilience in the school setting. This is what we call the science of wellbeing. We call this the ‘science of wellbeing’. Since 2013, we have surveyed more than 193,211 young Australian primary and secondary school students aged 8 to 18, using our Resilience Survey.<sup>2</sup> The dataset that we have collected, and the practical work of resilience building that we do with schools around the country, has led us to conclude that as a nation we are not committing sufficient attention, intention and resources to building the resilience and wellbeing of our young people.

In the February 2016 Volume 15 Issue 1 edition of ‘Professional Educator’ Hon. Bronwyn Pike MACE wrote about the need to ‘create fertile educational ground for innovation to flourish’. This was followed by The Minister for Education and Training Simon Birmingham’s piece, “Fostering innovation in our education system”, which explained the need for innovation in our education system, describing a number of areas of investment priority for the Federal Government.

We respectfully suggest that the vital area of resilience and wellbeing is in urgent need of intention, investment and innovation: to improve mental health, educational engagement, academic outcomes, future job prospects and lives.

Despite a large investment in education by all governments over the last 10 years, academic outcomes as measured by Naplan remain stubbornly immovable. We recommend that concept of “Shifting the Dial”<sup>3</sup> as cited in the Productivity Commission’s report on our economy, be adopted to inspire innovative interventions focused on wellbeing to improve education outcomes.

In this article we offer some innovative ideas for ‘shifting the dial’, based on the data and insight we have collected over years of practical and clinical experience working with young people.

## Innovation 1: Use practical measurement

When we established our not-for-profit a few years ago it was our vision to put a practical measurement tool in the hands of educators. As a “practical” measure, the Resilience Survey is distinct from the measures commonly used by schools for accountability, attitudes to school surveys, or by researchers for theory development. Instead, the Resilience Survey allows Principals to harness student voices to capture student views about their lives, to assist them accelerate improvements in educational engagement and outcomes in their classrooms and schools. Our survey tool offers a rapid and valid way for schools and communities to inform their intentional resilience building efforts in realtime.

## Innovation 2: Commit to a Process

We began to collect and report resilience data to students, teachers, parents, schools, councils and state governments five years ago. We quickly realized, no matter the audience, that Dr. Eileen Depka is 100% right: “Without a process, data analysis can be only an event. Time is spent viewing and analyzing data, but there is no intended result other than to comment on what is observed. Although time is not wasted, data viewed without a process will not likely become a catalyst for change”.<sup>4</sup>

We have learnt from experience that the best kind of process for developing a resilient school culture is one that is multi-year and to which the School Principal is personally committed. There are a number of elements to an effective process but at its heart it must be informed by data but driven by people. There are three steps: gather the knowledge (Data); discuss ideas and settle on a plan (Planning); rollout the intervention(s) (Action). We suggest that involving as many people in the school community as possible, to develop a positive plan to address specific focus areas, is ideal.



## Innovation 3: “Connected Protected Respected”

The fruit of our work with more than 800 schools and 193,211 young people is the discovery that young people thrive when they feel: Connected, Protected and Respected. This is our innovative concept of resilience, which we also abbreviate to CPR.<sup>5</sup>

In our CPR model, Connected Protected and Respected each include three domains:

Connected: understanding self, positive relationships, and social skills;

- **Protected:** feeling safe, mental health, and being an engaged learner;
- **Respected:** one’s positive sense of self, positive values, and positive contribution.

As one example of the content of one domain, the ‘positive values’ domain has 4 values that we consider to be essential to every young person’s life:

**Trust,  
Forgiveness,  
Integrity,  
Compassion.**

These values are the ingredients of positive relationships and the basis for a resilient school culture.

In our experience, resilience is a complex, hard-to-

measure and explain concept. That is why we have developed the multi-dimensional CPR model that captures the essential ingredients of a resilient life, and incorporates the ‘relational’ nature of resilience, in an easy to explain and comprehend format.

Our experience convinces us that CPR applies universally: its use will develop better outcomes: in schools, families, young people and communities with high levels of abuse, violence, drug use and despair; and with schools, families, young people and communities that have measurably abundant levels of resilience.

## Innovation 4: Develop a resilient school culture

A resilient school culture is one where people feel connected, protected, respected; but this isn’t download-able. CPR is uploaded one relationship at a time. The places where most of us feel love, compassion, hope and connection is in our families, schools and communities. Therefore, to increase resilience, we need to powerfully connect people with their family, school and community. Resilient schools, families and communities enable young people to feel “Connected Protected Respected”. The overriding principle: let’s all follow the golden rule. Treat others as you yourself would like to be treated. But what does this look like in practice?

The data is clear that good schools cultivate a resilient culture as well as academic success. The best ones do it by creating an intensely interactive community that applauds success, forgives mistakes, and helps people realise their potential. They support positive interactions and help people reduce abusive or destructive acts. They actively reduce loneliness and isolation. No one is on the outer because there is no outer. When people make mistakes, they are not rejected or treated harshly, but are helped to become an involved member of their group. Following these steps can create a sense of belonging that generates the trust that underlies the golden rule, the very basis for a resilient culture.

You may like to try our quiz: Characteristics of a Resilient School. Answer the questions to see to what extent your school has a resilient culture.<sup>6</sup>

## Innovation 5: Integrate resilience into your Curriculum

Fostering resilience is strongly linked to improved academic outcomes (Literacy and Numeracy), as demonstrated by thorough peer reviewed evidence of the impact improvements in socio-emotional learning have on academic outcomes. A well-known study by Durlak et al<sup>7</sup>, reviewed 213 school-based, universal social and emotional learning programs involving over 270,000 U.S. students from kinder to high school and found significantly improved social and emotional skills, improved positive attitudes about self, others, and school, improved behaviours lasting at least 12 months, together with an 11-percentile point gain in academic achievement. A subsequent study by Sklad et al,<sup>8</sup> found an 18-percentile point gain in academic achievement.

The Australian Curriculum's Personal and Social Capability domains support students in becoming creative and confident individuals, where it quotes The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians: (students develop) "a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing", with a sense of hope and 'optimism about their lives and the future'. On a social level, it helps students to 'form and maintain healthy relationships' and prepares them 'for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members'.

All of these Personal and Social Capability requirements are embraced within our CPR model, and we believe that these vital elements of personal growth and learning should not be left to chance. For this reason, Resilient Youth is developing our Resilience Curriculum, providing teachers and

students with developmentally appropriate lessons for 36 aspects of resilience presented in the CPR framework. We plan that lessons for primary years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be available from the second half of 2018, via easy online access.

## Conclusion

To create more resilient students and raise educational engagement and academic outcomes we need to do something different. The most powerful way shift the dial is for us to work together to foster innovative ideas and implement interventions focused on the relational nature of resilience. We wish you good luck with your wellbeing efforts, and would love to hear inspiring stories and innovative thoughts from your work.

Andrew Fuller, Clinical Psychologist, Director: Resilient Youth, can be contacted at [inyahead@satlink.com.au](mailto:inyahead@satlink.com.au) or [www.andrewfuller.com.au](http://www.andrewfuller.com.au), Andrew's most recent book is "Unlocking Your Child's Genius" (Finch, 2015)

Andrew Wicking PhD, General Manager Resilient Youth, can be contacted Phone: +61 400 113945 [www.resiliencyouth.org.au](http://www.resiliencyouth.org.au)

We would like to thank the schools, teachers, communities and young people who have participated in the Resilience Survey to date for their valuable contribution to our understanding of Australian young people aged 8 to 18.

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"Connected Protected Respected" is a registered trademark of Resilient Youth

Available at [www.resiliencyouth.org.au](http://www.resiliencyouth.org.au) from December 1 2017

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# Social Emotional Learning

## What it is and why it matters

Jenny Williams

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), originating in the United States, defines Social Emotional Learning or SEL as “the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.” (CASEL.org, 2017)

There are many excellent resources for schools in Australia on the topic of Social Emotional Learning, for example, the Kids Matter project which has been in schools for over 10 years, has a framework that helps schools support students’ wellbeing and mental health. Their framework is structured on four components: positive school community, social and emotional learning for students, working with parents and carers and helping children with mental health difficulties. (Kids Matter, 2017)

The teachings in Social Emotional Learning underpin the guiding principles of the Safe Schools Framework that emphasise the importance of student safety and wellbeing for effective learning at school.

- **Affirm** the rights of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe at school
- **Acknowledge** that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning
- **Accept** responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching communities that also fulfill the school’s child protection responsibilities
- **Encourage** the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued
- **Actively** support young people to develop

understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe

- **Commit** to developing a safe school community through a whole-school and evidence-based approach (Department of Education and Training, 2016).

Our Australian Curriculum also highlights the importance of social and emotional learning in its charter where it notes that our Curriculum is designed to help “students become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.” (Department of Education and Training, 2016)

The evidence is clear that Social Emotional Learning does have a positive impact on students’ wellbeing and academic success. There is a steady momentum building in Australia around the SEL movement with the goal to continue to build momentum to ensure all schools have an SEL framework embedded within their school to set children up for lifelong success. Many examples of strong SEL are emerging from schools and systems around Australia.

This article describes a framework that began over 20 years ago and is now gaining recognition and results in several states and school systems. Originally based at Yale, CASEL moved to the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1996 and in 2001, the board changed the name to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning to reflect the new research in the



field and to ensure that academics were a part of the conversation (Edutopia, 2011).

CASEL started its research into the SEL area in 1994. Their goal was to create first class, evidence-based Social and Emotional Learning and implement it into schools. To be emotionally intelligent and have the skill to read other people’s moods and emotions is a skill that can be taught. Therefore, CASEL researchers believe, like many other educators and scholars in this area of SEL research and practice, SEL needs to be taught in schools.

CASEL outlines Five Core Competencies for Social-Emotional Learning:

- Self-Awareness**
- Self-Management**
- Social Awareness**
- Relationship Skills**
- Responsible Decision Making**

CASEL and their collaborators broke new ground in 2011 after releasing a meta-analysis of 213 social and emotional learning programs which demonstrated positive impacts of Social Emotional Learning. In 2017, they followed this up with a further meta-analysis in which they analysed the results from 82 different SEL programs involving more than 97,000 students from kindergarten to high school. CASEL highlighted some of the results from the research as outlined below.



They noted that, 3.5 years after the last intervention, the academic performance of students exposed to SEL programs was on average 13 percentile points higher than their non-SEL peers, based on the eight studies that measured academic performance. At other follow-up periods, behaviour problems, emotional distress, and drug use were all significantly lower for students exposed to SEL programs, and the development of social and emotional skills and positive attitudes toward self, others, and school was

higher (CASEL, 2017).

The not-for-profit Foundation for Young Australians produced its The New Basics Report which was delivered to schools and principals this year. The report looked at a range of 'big data' sources to help understand the economic and social conditions affecting Australian young people today and into the future. The Report highlighted the importance of teaching enterprise skills to students from primary school through to secondary school. These skills include: problem solving, communication skills, digital literacy, teamwork, presentation skills, critical thinking, creativity and financial literacy. The report found that over a three-year period of analysing job vacancy advertisements from over 6,000 sources the proportion of jobs that directly cited the need for critical thinking increased by 158 per cent, creativity increased by 65 per cent, and the requirements for presentation skills had increased by 25 per cent while proficiency in team work rose by 19 per cent. Interestingly, CASEL's five core competencies outlined and specifically taught in their SEL sets the basis for instilling these enterprise skills (Foundation for Young Australians, 2017).

The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), whose goal is to source quality, evidence-based information and resources to support those who work with children, families and communities in the welfare sectors, have funded several organisations across Australia to implement the Second Step Program in the communities and schools they are working with. (Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2017).

The Australian and New Zealand partner of the Second Step Program, Positive Pieces Education trialed this global program (currently used in 70 countries) with Australian schools and Educators in 2014. Feedback received from trial participants confirmed that Second Step not only meets CASEL's five core competencies and is aligned with the Australian Curriculum, but also explicitly teaches empathy, an important part of social awareness. Their feedback guided the Australian adaptation of this well-researched, classroom-based program designed to decrease problem behaviours, increase students' school success and promote social-emotional competence and self-regulation.

NSW Education & Communities as part of their commitment to supporting the wellbeing of students has incorporated SEL into their Wellbeing Framework. The framework outlines its goals **"to support... students to connect, succeed and thrive at each stage of their development and learning; to provide opportunities that are age appropriate, rigorous, meaningful and dignified; and to do this in the context of individual and shared responsibility underpinned by productive relationships that support students to learn."** (NSW Department of Education and Communities, 2015).

Since May 2015, Positive Pieces Education, a not-for-profit organization based in Australia, has provided professional development to educators and has supported implementation of Second Step resources into schools across Australia and New Zealand.

## Biography

Jenny Williams, Founder of Positive Pieces Education has a comprehensive background in Social Emotional Learning and has worked with educators, students and parents for over 20 years.

In 2014, Positive Pieces was established to bring to the Australian and New Zealand school communities contemporary, evidence-based programs and educational resources that support children's well-being and learning, providing valuable resources to educators and parents. Positive Pieces Education is a Not-for-Profit organisation with a mission to influence the social and emotional well-being of children, teachers and parents in Australia and New Zealand.

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Feature

# The ACE 2017 National Conference

**Think Global,  
Teach Local**



# The Future of Work and Skills

Phil Lambert PSM FACE FACEL

There is growing interest across the globe in identifying and progressing the competencies young people will need to navigate the complexities and challenges of life and work.

A considerable amount has been written and said about the importance of twenty-first century competencies in government policy and educational literature. While some would say that many of these competencies were also needed in previous times, their status has increased considerably, as Silva (2009) observes, they are:

**...not new, just newly important. (p 631)**

This is because it is recognised that the competencies today's students need for a fulfilling life extend far beyond those required by young people from previous times (Griffin et al, 2012; Bruett, 2006; Autor et al., 2003; OECD, 2005; MCEETYA, 2008; Rotherham and Willingham, 2010; Trilling and Fadel, 2012; Voogt et al., 2012).

## Competencies: Global Interest

The interest in twenty-first century competencies is also one that is context dependent. It is not a case of policy-borrowing (Phillips, 2015; Halpin and Troyna, 1995; Ball, 1998), a not unfamiliar practice to Australia. While there is a degree of similarity, countries have their own economic, environmental and social interests in mind and their own issues to address. The drivers are different.

Obtaining and retaining knowledge remains a fundamental competency. However, this competency is but one of many needed to survive and thrive in a world recognised as volatile, unpredictable, complex and ambiguous (Bennett and Lemoine, 2014; Berinato, 2014) -VUCA<sup>1</sup>. Though terminology differs across the globe the competencies most countries are now including and in some cases foregrounding in their curricula are:

- Problem solving (critical and creative thinking)**
- Communication (multi-literacies)**
- Social skills and teamwork**
- Resilience**
- ICT skills**

- Self and social awareness**
- Respectful relationships**
- Innovation and enterprise**
- Intercultural understanding/global mindset**
- Self-efficacy**

Many countries, for example, are engaged in two projects that are exploring the extent to which these and other competencies are addressed or being addressed in curricula, practice and assessment: the OECD's Future of Education and Skills: OECD Education 2030 Framework and UNESCO's Transversal Competencies project. More on these projects later.

## What are the Drivers?

While there are variations in the particular competencies countries are looking to have addressed in teaching and learning, there are five drivers, the need for:

- Economic competitiveness**
- Contemporary employability skills and dispositions**
- Active citizenship and understanding regarding identity**
- Improved social cohesion, understanding and Valuing of diversity, respect, and**
- Competencies related to personal growth.**

### Economic Competitiveness

The transition from an information-based economy to a knowledge-based economy is of interest to most countries across the globe. A dual change: rapid technological and scientific advancements and rapid obsolescence of existing knowledge and resources (Powell and Snellman 2004) is the cause.

This is not surprising to see given the range of issues countries are grappling with in terms of workforce and industry reform. Hence, the global interest in





STEM subjects and broader competencies such as enterprise, creative thinking and innovation. These competencies are seen as having the potential to create new knowledge, transform work and create new forms of employment. They are also seen as developing young people who can adapt to such changes: being flexible in mind and having the capacity and disposition to acquire new skills and knowledge. Some countries have very clear strategies for achieving this. Others, like Australia, have many STEM-related projects underway but are yet to find focus and direction.

### Contemporary Employability Skills and Dispositions

In addition to the interest in STEM and knowledge-economy related competencies, there is a desire to broaden the capabilities of young people in skills and dispositions that are recognised as being particularly conducive in contemporary workplace settings.

Competencies such as collaboration, cooperation, resilience and flexibility are all seen as valuable qualities required to participate actively and effectively in the workforce. These competencies, often referred to as “soft skills” are no longer seen as “soft”. They are essential for sustained employability whether in high end or low-end professions. Guy Berger (2016), LinkedIn economist, emphasises this point:

***Hard skills vary based on the job, but soft skills are required for every job.***

In some countries the drivers for change relate to the rapid increase in numbers in the middle class and the resultant demand for better services and products. For others the change to a more service-orientated economy has taken place over time. In this latter case there has been a time-lag issue: emphasising and addressing the kinds of competencies needed in the workplace and the role education can play in equipping young people for a successful transition from school to work.

### Active Citizenship and Understandings Related to Identity

Renewed interest in citizenship and national identity are also featuring in curriculum policy discussions and/or redesign processes in many parts of the world. The basis for this varies and includes mass migration (such as that recently experienced in Europe), new democracies and those transitioning to a democracy, heightened concern for the environment (at both local and global levels) and increasing geo-political tensions.

Competencies that are seen as enabling young people to contribute positively both locally and globally include, for example, compassion, empathy, social responsibility, pro-social skills and behaviours

(Peredo and McLean, 2006); civic responsibility and attitudes about civic liberties (Barr et al., 2015); and intercultural competence and cultural humility (Deardorff, 2006). Added to these are competencies such as critical thinking and communication skills that are recognised as equipping young people to participate and contribute to reform agendas.

### Improved social cohesion; understanding and valuing diversity; respect

A range of social issues and changing demographics are presenting new challenges for countries across the globe. The response has been to identify competencies to support social cohesion, equity, conflict resolution and inclusivity.

Added to these are dispositions such as tolerance, compassion, empathy and sympathy that are seen as necessary requirements for reducing violence (Finlay and Stephan, 2000) and for forming or maintaining a society that is both cohesive and inclusive and which treats its citizens fairly and respectfully.

### Competencies related to personal growth

One of the drivers behind growing interest in these competencies is a concern with the level of anxiety, depression and overt behaviours demonstrated by students in countries where the stakes are high in terms of keeping pace with curriculum demands, achieving in the face of fierce competition and attaining particular results at school and for entry to university.

The development of personal growth competencies is increasingly being seen by countries as fundamental to student wellbeing (Dweck, 2017) and essential for later life. These competencies, which include being a challenge seeker, having a growth mindset, agency and optimism; utilising self-efficacy skills; being resilient and having perseverance are also seen as valuable for accessing and maintaining employment, and for successfully managing the increasing demands of work (Duckworth, 2016; Laursen, 2015).

## Competencies Projects

As mentioned earlier, two projects that have enabled countries to share their efforts and planned directions are the OECD’s Future of Education and Skills: OECD Education 2030 Framework and UNESCO’s Transversal Competencies project. Both projects are looking at competencies from the perspective of the formal curriculum and its implementation.

In the case of the UNESCO’s Transversal Competencies project, which has involved many countries in the Asia-Pacific region (including Australia), the work has focussed on the extent to which a specific set of transversal competencies<sup>2</sup> are included in curricula,

the approach to implementation and how (or if) the competencies are assessed (internally or externally). The project looks particularly at educators' beliefs and understanding regarding the assessment of transversal competencies as well as some of the challenges faced by them when teaching and assessing competencies.

The OECD's Education 2030 project involves a number of contributing elements with over 20 countries participating including Singapore, Japan, Korea, China, Canada, Finland, Russia, Mexico, Poland and Australia. A key aspect of the project is the development of the Education 2030 Framework which, when finalised in 2018, will provide guidance in relation to supporting students to navigate the complexities of work and life. One part of the project includes data collection and analysis on curriculum policy (vision, goals, structure and issues such as time-lag, curriculum overload and values). Another is the mapping of curricula against a set of proposed competencies. A further aspect of the project includes the in-depth analysis of content and teaching in mathematics and physical education/health. This work is progressing well and has enabled fruitful and revealing information about the challenges involved in the development of curriculum and its implementation.

## A Final Comment

These are just two examples of initiatives taking place across the world. There are other similar projects as well as networks of schools looking to enable young people to live and thrive in what is and will continue to be VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) world.

## Biography

Dr Phil Lambert has extensive experience in education as a principal, inspector, Executive Director, Assistant Director-General, Regional Director, Sydney (including CEO Sydney Region Registered Training Authority) and General Manager, Australian Curriculum where he recently led the development of Australia's first national curriculum. He has authored books, presented a number of papers and keynotes at national and international conferences, had a number of articles published in journals and led statewide reviews and reforms.

Dr Lambert completed both his Masters and Doctorate at the University of Sydney where he continues to support the education faculty as Adjunct Professor and Chair of the Dean's Advisory Board. He is a member of the Dean's Advisory Board of Notre Dame University and Adjunct Professor at Nanjing Normal University. He is both a Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders and the Australian College of Educators (ACE). He

is also State President of ACE, Chair of the ACE National Council and a member of the ACE Board. He was recently appointed National President-elect of ACE. Dr Lambert has received a number of honours and awards. In 2011 he was acknowledged for his outstanding community work and leadership in a unanimous resolution in the Parliament of NSW. In the 2012 Queen's Birthday Honours he was awarded the Public Service Medal for his outstanding contribution to education. He was also the 2013 recipient of the prestigious Australian College of Educators' award, the Sir Harold Wyndham Medal.

Dr Lambert represented Australia at the World Education Leaders conference in Boston; at the World Expo in Shanghai and was a member of the Australian team at the Global Education Leaders Program initiatives in New Delhi (2013) and London (2014). In November 2016 he presented for the OECD at the Future of Education and Skills: Education 2030 forum and on strategic system planning at the G20 Education Dialogue in Beijing.

Dr Lambert has recently supported the development of national curriculum reforms in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, assisted the Brazilian government in the development of its national learning standards and undertaken a review of senior secondary curriculum for the United Arab Emirates. He is also Lead Curriculum Expert to the OECD Education 2030 Framework project. In March 2016 he was appointed by the NSW Minister of Education with two other eminent educational leaders to Review the Board of Studies, Teaching and Education Standards, subsequently named NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). He was also recently commissioned by the National Rugby League to review its education programs.

Phil contributes to the community in various ways. He is the inaugural Deputy Chair of the Our Watch Board, the national foundation to prevent violence against women and their children. In May 2016 he was appointed by the Federal Government as a Director on the Australian Government Financial Literacy Board and in October he was appointed by the NSW Attorney General as a member on the Children's Court Advisory Committee. He was recently appointed Chair of the National Respectful Relationships Education Expert Group. He is currently featured in an exhibition of 50 Positively Remarkable People from Sydney.

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VUCA is an acronym used to describe or reflect on the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity of general conditions and situations (Wikipedia).

Critical and innovative thinking; interpersonal skills; intrapersonal skills; global citizenship; and media and information literacy.

# Outsourcing of Transformational Change

## Implementing the Digital Technology Curriculum

Rachel Sheffield, Curtin University  
Paul Moro, Datacom

This article challenges the previously held notions around professional learning and the role of the school community, industry and academic partners. It proposes that professional learning does not have to be an either-or experience; either held in-house where the teachers construct and deliver the professional learning (PL) for their colleagues or facilitated through a slickly created outside presentation. This PL brings together the collective collegiality of the local teachers with the bespoke program developed by a time-rich industry team and coupled with the evaluative expertise of a university academic. This approach acknowledges the new role of teachers professional learning networks (PLNs), Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and their affordances and limitations in supporting teaching change.

In 2018, Western Australia will adapt, adopt and implement the Digital Technology Curriculum (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2017) across schools in all education sectors. Teachers will be expected to unpack the strands, create new learning activities and develop assessments that not only address the curriculum but other educational initiatives such as project-based learning, inquiry-based learning and STE(A)M. In primary schools where teachers teach across all learning areas this has been identified as a challenging task and teachers have indicated that they need professional learning and significant support to effectively address this challenge. This challenge is particularly evident in rural areas in Western Australia where there are often significant issues around connectivity and where being able to interact and engage with other colleagues is important. Research has also identified that teachers can often be reluctant

to adopt these technologies despite being part of the digital revolution (Buzzard, Crittenden, Crittenden & McCarty, 2011).

As a catalyst for transformational change in professional learning the need to implement an approach where the facilitators increase the opportunity for a change to occur and are not permanently consumed or even participating directly in the process. Instead the team sought to build capacity within the community of participating teachers and as a catalyst were not directly 'consumed' in the process. 'A catalyst is a substance that increases the rate of a chemical reaction without itself undergoing any permanent chemical change or a person or thing that precipitates an event'. The industry and academic team worked together employing best practice through programs, models and literature and as 'catalysts' supported the teachers, Principals and school communities to effect transformational change.

## Teacher Professional Learning Models

### Models

Supporting teachers' practice and helping them enact change in their classroom practice is a complex process and incorporates a number of key elements. The Goodrum, Hackling and Rennie (2001) model brought together three distinct elements including face-to-face support, resources and reflective opportunities and interwove them to produce a comprehensive approach to teacher professional learning designed to bring about prolonged and sustained teacher change. The model has been adapted for this Professional Learning Program™ which addresses the transformational shift required for primary schools into the Digital Technologies paradigm. The three main elements of the project are: professional learning, the use of Digital Technologies content, and the creation of a reflective research space developed through a community of "thought leaders". Scaffolding teachers to reach the space in which the elements align is the goal of this project. This model however is static and does not illustrate how it can influence transformative teacher change. The vision of our project was to acknowledge the iterative nature of transformative learning, and how opportunities for both personal identity development and professional identity development need to be provided. The stages or iterations of the project have been developed into Reflective Identity Formation Model (Sheffield & Blackley, 2016, Sheffield, Moro & Blackley, 2017) unpacked in this theoretical framework. Scaffolding teachers to reach the space in which the elements coalesce is the goal of this project and acknowledges the powerful influence of identity formation upon successful professional learning.

**Figure 1: Reflective Identity Formation Model (Sheffield, Moro & Blackley, 2017)**



This innovative project incorporates the key components of highly effective teacher professional learning to

leverage transformational change. Teachers from diverse locations collaborated through a distributed digital learning network or a guided professional learning network (PLN) which was called a Cluster to develop and reflect upon their digital capabilities to implement a new curriculum. This Cluster approach is designed to provide long-term sustained support to teachers around the 'learning by doing' approach to build confidence and competence in teachers' skills in the Digital Technology area through a 10 week action research project.

The Cluster approach was trialed in 2016 in regional Western Australia. Each Cluster containing 20 teachers from 10 schools who were supported over the 10 weeks with a detailed action research program instigated by the industry facilitator. An academic team collected the data and sought to validate the professional learning model and determined its capacity to support teachers' professional learning. Subsequently, in 2017 the program was further developed to a distributed Cluster approach where digitally-engaged classroom teachers were involved in an extensive professional learning program of their own to lead Clusters in their own networks. Principals who recognized the potential of this opportunity nominated their school to become a Lead School in their local community. They also identified a technology focused, accomplished teacher who would lead and collaborate with their local area network. The Principal was instrumental in the creation of the network Cluster. The lead teachers were called Digital Edge Teachers and were provided with all the materials and resources to then share the Digital Technologies learning in their established networks. The Digital Edge Teachers were supported throughout the program by the industry and academic team, but it was the Digital Edge Teachers who implemented the professional learning through the Cluster.

In order to create and maintain transformational change industry and academic partners developed and provided the necessary scaffolding to support the process. Once the needs had been identified the industry partner created and delivered the necessary resources whilst the academic community partnered to ensure links into best practice literature and development of evaluative tools. The outsourcing of change practices enabled school principals and administrators to choose solutions that support and build the capacity of their teachers. For teachers, the outsourcing has enabled them to collate and subsequently curate the vast amount of online data currently bursting through social media.

## Professional Learning Networks

In recent years, teachers have been able to take control of their own learning using networks to connect and

curate new knowledge in ways that really demonstrate lifelong learning. Learners are empowered to be in control of when, how and what they learn through the connectedness of Professional Learning Networks (PLNs). Professional learning networks (PLNs) are “uniquely personalized, complex-systems of interactions consisting of people, resources, and digital tools that support ongoing learning and professional growth” (Trust, Krutka, & Carpenter, 2016, p. 35). As Trust et al. (2016) propose this has led to the rise on social media through Twitter and Facebook of these communities where teachers can work together around a common idea or theme. There has been a steady rise of these in the last decade but there is still a lack of evidence to demonstrate a connection between PLN and gains for teachers’ professional development (Macia, & García, 2016). Educators and researchers have been trying to negotiate this complex system, the PLN, to determine if it can be harnessed to support focused learning. This attempt to harness and guide the PLN may defy the organic nature of an individual’s PLN which reflects to the needs of the individual and the community it supports.

Each individual teacher has a unique PLN that they have created based on their interests, colleagues and connection and their ability to connect to communities. What has been of concern has been the rise of the intrusion of PLN’s, particularly through Facebook into every moment of teachers’ lives. This coupled with well meaning ‘super’ posters, people who post materials continuously onto social media for teachers to engage with and adopt into their classroom means that there are always lots of engaging and exiting ideas to share. The ‘flip side’ consequence to this positive flow of learning opportunities is an anxiety in monitoring and assessing the constant stream of new ideas through Facebook, which has the effect of sending teachers into a spiral of anxiety. Teachers are keen to engage in strategies and skills to be the best possible teaching practitioner they can be.

The power of people working together is not new it was recognised by Vygotsky (1978) who captured the term ‘social constructivism where he posited that people were able to learn new concepts more effectively using discussions to unpack and develop new understandings. This connectedness of communities was later recognised and researched by Wenger in the early 1980’s and then subsequently in a digital frame (Wenger, 1998; Wenger, White, & Smith, 2009). This research recognised the power of communities of practice and how they are formed to support the participants and ensure they master new ideas. Consequently, this professional learning model utilised a strong component of connectedness developed through the Cluster model and supported teachers by reviewing and curating materials to help filter the vast amounts of material and make it manageable.

## Effecting Teacher Change

It has become clear over the last several decades that professional development innovations are an important instrument in fostering teachers’ continued development as life-long learners (Guskey & Huberman, 1995; Smylie, 1995). The attributes of effective change innovation include: the ability of teachers to work collaboratively and collegially; an understanding of teachers’ prior knowledge; promotion of experimentation and risk taking; provision of time for teachers to reflect on their learning experiences, and to seek further clarification where necessary; the involvement of teachers in all aspects of the PD; a supply of appropriate rewards to encourage teacher participation; and the provision of links to the department, the school, the wider organisation (Guskey & Huberman, 1995; Loucks-Horsley, Hewson, Love, & Stiles, 1998). These attributes correspond with the necessary features of the adult learning theories, which promote the best learning system for teachers (Smylie, 1995). Loucks-Horsley et al. (1998) also advocated that the process of change is not a single event or a single unsupported strategy, but rather an on-going process, which occurs over weeks, months and even years. Decades of research into the characteristics of effective teacher professional learning (for example, Fernandez, Cannon, & Choski, 2003; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallagher, 2007) have confirmed that transformative learning occurs when the instruction and support is: over time, onsite, collaborative, reflective, and has clearly identifiable links to the curriculum. (Jacques, Behrstock-Sherratt, Parker & Bassett, 2017). These are the characteristics that underpin the framework used in this project

Critically to the success of this project was that technology provided the affordances for teachers who are in non-urban areas to participate in the reflective and transformative professional learning (Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2011). In schools, there are also some teachers who are reluctant to engage with digital technology despite the upcoming implementation of the Digital Technology Curriculum (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2017).

Whilst the evidence of the efficacy of project is still being examined, the support within the Clusters and the digital community within the Digital Edge teachers has demonstrated that it is potentially a powerful and effective tool in professional learning. Connecting teachers enables them to communicate and collaborate through a digital conduit sharing resources and supporting each other when energy levels flag. This is also a demonstration of a new era of professional learning that can be customised to meet the needs of teachers who are able to share their learning journeys.

The last word is from a Digital Edge teacher and her very supportive Principal.

***We have been fortunate enough to be chosen as a lead school for the DREAM Project and the knowledge we***

**have gained from Datacom and Curtin University has enabled us to guide the 7 other schools in our cluster in the implementation of the Digital Technologies Curriculum. As the lead school of the Northern Beaches Cluster, we believe the DREAM Project has assisted us to further develop our knowledge and skills in the Digital Technologies area as well enabling us to effectively implement the DoE STEM kits in our classrooms. From being a part of this project, we have built a solid foundation of “Digital Capabilities” in our school where teachers now have a growing confidence in their abilities with the new technologies and are able to integrate the Digital Technologies Curriculum into most learning areas. The most beneficial part of this project was being able to create and collaborate with a supportive Network of teachers from surrounding schools whom we can develop and share knowledge, skills and resources with during the program and into the future. The DREAM Project has further supported Two Rocks Primary School to change the way Digital Technologies is used in our school to prepare our students for the technologies of the future.**

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# The evidence ecosystem in education

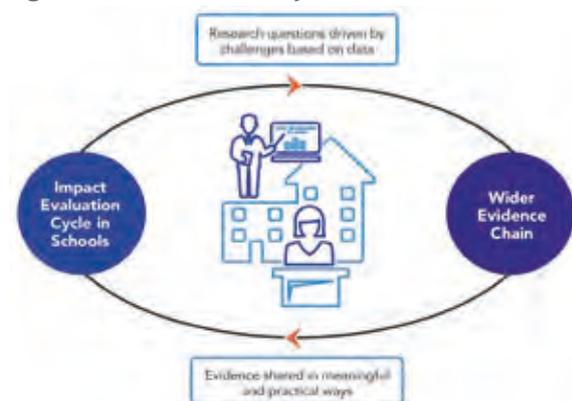
Tanya Vaughan, Matt Deeble and John Bush

Evidence for Learning (E4L) is a knowledge broker operating in the Australian primary and secondary school sector (5-18 year olds). It is independent, non-profit, national and cross-sectoral. With a mission to help educators increase learning through building, sharing and encouraging the use of evidence, E4L is commissioning new mixed method evaluations of programs in schools; promoting the Teaching & Learning Toolkit (the Toolkit), a web based, open access global evidence summary of 34 approaches to teaching and learning; and developing implementation and in-school evaluation support services. E4L builds, shares and encourages the use of evidence to strengthen school decision-making, leading to improved educational outcomes for students. E4L conceptualises it's work as existing within an evidence ecosystem that is detailed below.

## The evidence ecosystem

The work of E4L builds on a conceptual model, the evidence ecosystem (Evidence for Learning, 2017a), adapted from the work of Professor Jonathan Sharples (2013). It has two intimately connected and reinforcing processes as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: The evidence ecosystem**



Source: (Evidence for Learning, 2017a)

School leaders and teachers are the centre of this work. The activity of schools and the data and evidence they generate (through a cycle of impact evaluation) is the starting point that informs and feeds into research questions. The work of the wider evidence chain is then shared back to schools in meaningful and practical ways.

The conception of this 'evidence ecosystem' is informed by three principles:

1. To effect change in practice, we need to understand how research will be used by practitioners. 'Creating evidence ecosystems ... requires coordinated efforts from a wide range of stakeholders [but] it is imperative that professionals drive these developments ... it is frontline professionals who ... should be at the heart of evidence-informed practice' (Sharples, 2013, p. 24).
2. Placing frontline professionals and students at the heart of the work requires updates to thinking about their role in research and evidence. They cannot be regarded as passive recipients of knowledge but as active generators of new knowledge. 'School leaders

need to be continually working with their staff to evaluate the impact of all on student progression ... Schools need to become incubators of programs, evaluators of impact and experts at interpreting the effects of teachers and teaching on all students' (Hattie, 2015, p. 15).

- The relationship between frontline professionals engaging in a cycle of impact evaluation in their schools and other contributors in the wider evidence chain must be one of mutual dependence in a network of shared pursuit to improving educational outcomes. 'These networks would aim to inform educators as to what is more likely to work where, for whom, and under what conditions. Moreover, as educators used this knowledge, the knowledge itself would evolve and be further refined through its applications' (Bryk, 2015, p. 473).

Based on these three principles, certain activities must occur in the two processes depicted in Figure 2.

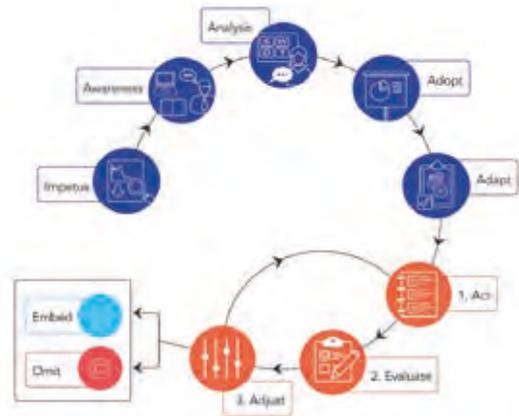
## Creating impact evaluation cycle in schools

School leaders can ensure the approaches they choose in their school are informed by, and responsive to evidence. The ten stages involved in this process are depicted in Figure 2. They need to be data and evidence-informed and do not replace the importance of professional judgement – they support, enhance and improve this judgement. The stages of the impact evaluation cycle are:

- The Impetus must come from school level data and appreciation of local needs.
- School leaders need to have an Awareness of which approaches have good evidence of success and be able to easily distinguish them from the plethora of available information.
- Analysis of the evidence-based approaches entails understanding the conditions that have led to prior success and consideration of whether it is likely to provide similar benefit in the specific local context.
- Intentional Adoption and Adaptation of the program includes the use of 'implementation science' to articulate the 'theory of change' and manage the barriers to success (including staff training and measures to determine efficacy in that context).
- Implementation is conducted in a mini cycle of Act, Evaluate and Adjust. It ensures active learning to make immediate change and generates new data and knowledge for sharing with the wider evidence chain.
- A deliberate decision to Embed- or Omit (discard) the program based on the local evidence of impact;

choosing what to stop (omit) is just as important as choosing what to keep (embed).

Figure 2: An impact evaluation cycle



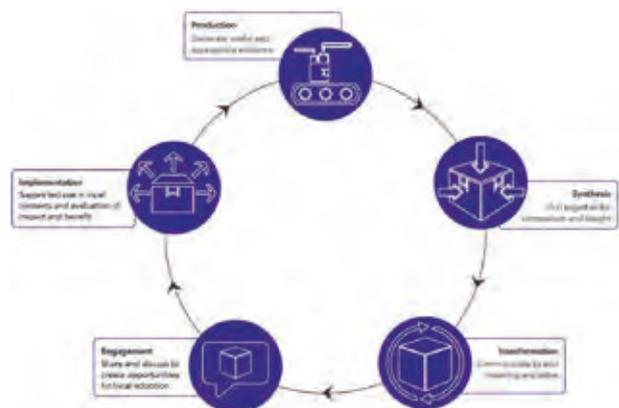
Source: (Evidence for Learning, 2017b)

This work in schools should be supported by activities in the wider evidence chain. This includes producing and communicating evidence that school leaders and teachers can understand and use to improve their practice.

## Connecting with the wider evidence chain

The wider evidence chain can be conceptualised as a cycle that begins with new knowledge generation in the production stage, based on the questions generated from data and evidence in the school system. To be useful and adopted, this evidence needs to be synthesised with similar research on the same topic and transformed into plain English with additional contextual information, such as costs and key success factors. Finally, it needs to be effectively shared through authentic and engaged networks of frontline professionals. As they engage in an impact evaluation cycle in their school, they must be supported in their implementation to realise the benefits of the evidence-informed change.

Figure 3: The wider evidence chain



Source: Adapted from (Sharples, 2013)



Parts of this evidence ecosystem appear to be present and active in Australia. Reference to evidence is built into national, state and territory education frameworks such as the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership’s (AITSL) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2014), New South Wales’ School Excellence Framework (Centre for Education Statistics & Evaluation, 2017), and Victoria’s Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) (State Government of Victoria, 2017), which are themselves built on international evidence. State departments of education are also investing in evidence. A few examples include, Victoria bringing the Teaching & Learning Toolkit to Australia, Queensland’s Evidence Hub (The State of Queensland, 2016) defining standards of evidence to support educators in assessing education research, and New South Wales establishing the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) (Centre for Education Statistics & Evaluation, 2017). After the Toolkit was brought to the State Government of Victoria, Evidence for Learning became the licensee of this work developed by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) (Education Endowment Foundation, 2017).

Teachers and school leaders are increasingly engaging with evidence in Australia, too. There is

robust debate in the Australian education ‘Twitterverse’ about research evidence and its day-to-day usefulness in schools, and there are two new annual Australian conferences for educators interested in evidence: the Australian version of researchED (Australian College of Educators, 2017), which started in the UK, and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) Excellence in Professional Practice Conference (Australian Council for Educational Research, 2017). With the documentary “Revolution School” (Australian Broadcasting Commission, 2017), the focus on education evidence and impact has even made it into mainstream media. Amidst this activity across the complex education systems in Australia, the Australian Government has recognised the possibility that national coordination of education evidence could have a beneficial impact. As a result, the Productivity Commission has undertaken an inquiry into the education evidence base (Australian Government: Productivity Commission, 2017).

There are still missing pieces in the evidence ecosystem in education, which, if present, would significantly contribute to helping achieve great outcomes for children in Australia. E4L aims to fill some of these gaps by supporting schools in their evidence uptake.

## Biographies

### Dr Tanya Vaughan

Associate Director, Evidence for Learning

Tanya is Associate Director (Education), Evidence for Learning. Tanya has worked in education as a teacher, in policy design, implementation and evaluation in key Australian organisations including AITSL, ACARA, PAI, Learning First and Educational Transformations. Tanya has co-authored one international book, three chapters, four articles and facilitated over 40 conference workshops in educational research.

### Matthew Deeble

Director, Evidence for Learning

Matthew is the Director of Evidence for Learning. He has more than 20 years' experience in building and running enterprises in education, health and clean technology. He was involved in provisioning the first Internet services in Australian schools and developing internet management software used by thousands of schools in Australia, NZ, the UK and USA. More recently he has worked on data, identity and privacy projects for the National Schools Interoperability Program.

### John Bush

Associate Director, Evidence for Learning.

John's career spans education and social enterprise, with expertise in leading and managing education social enterprises; grant-making and evaluation; designing and developing transformative learning experiences; and recruiting and developing exceptional teachers. He has transferred his classroom teaching and school leadership experience in the United States and Australia into designing, developing and managing programs in Australia and to evaluating program implementation and impact.

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# What is explicit teaching

Greg Ashman

I often write and give presentations about 'explicit teaching'. When I do so, I mean something quite specific. It is the set of practices that emerged from the process-product research of the 1960s and 1970s. Briefly, researchers visited classrooms, recorded various teacher behaviours and then looked for correlations between those behaviours and students' academic gains.

Thomas Good and Jere Brophy worked hard to collate these findings (Brophy & Good, 1986) but probably the most elegant summary comes from Barak Rosenshine in an article for *American Educator* that I often link to and that I strongly recommend (Rosenhine, 2012).

The experimentalists amongst you will note that this model emerged out of epidemiological research – a set of correlations – rather than from experiments. This is true. But, as Rosenshine points out, it has since been verified in a range of different contexts.

## Lecturing

Rosenhine has written a separate piece that helps explain why I prefer the term 'explicit teaching' to 'direct instruction'. The latter term is ambiguous, with Rosenshine identifying five different meanings (Rosenhine, 2008).

One meaning of 'direct instruction' is any form of teacher-led instruction, whether it uses the practices identified in the process-product research or not. Another use of 'direct instruction' is pejorative where it is portrayed as a harsh, authoritarian system or as lecturing.

Explicit instruction is clearly not lecturing because it is highly interactive. Rosenshine suggests asking lots of questions throughout any period of teacher exposition. This serves two purposes. Firstly, students will pay attention if they think they might be called upon to contribute at any time. Secondly, teachers suffer from the 'curse of knowledge', a cognitive bias that makes us assume that students understand more than they do (Froyd & Layne, 2008). By constantly asking questions, we are forced to

backtrack and re-explain concepts that they haven't grasped. It essentially provides real-time feedback on our performance.

I would also add that, in a supportive explicit setting, students are more likely to ask their own questions of the teacher, providing additional, powerful feedback.

## Whole system

Explicit teaching, in the way that I have defined it, is a whole system. It follows the 'I do, we do, you do' model with the 'you do' part ranging from a close replication of what the teacher has just done to tackling ill-defined tasks by selecting and applying the strategies the teacher has taught. The defining feature is that canonical methods are fully explained and modelled to students before they attempt to put them into practice themselves. Yet this doesn't mean that this is the only phase in the process.

When people assert that a particular model of inquiry learning or project-based learning includes some 'explicit teaching', they are not using this term in the same way that I am. They must mean a bit of just-in-time lecturing. It's worth pointing out that 'inquiry learning featuring a bit of lecturing' did not emerge out of the process-product research as a highly effective approach.

This also highlights the vast difference in overall levels of guidance between explicit teaching and inquiry learning. Teaching explicitly forces us to confront the curse of knowledge and break things down even more than we might initially think necessary whereas inquiry requires us to leave out some guidance from the outset. The two approaches therefore diverge significantly and



this is the reason why inquiry is less effective (Kirschner et. al. 2006).

## A range of objectives

Despite what some may claim, I am aware of no evidence that explicit instruction is only any good for the recall of basic facts and that some alternative is needed to reach more highfalutin goals.

I teach VCE physics and maths. Both of these subjects have state-set exams and these exams always include some questions that are different in form to those that have come before. This means that I have to teach for transfer. The way I attempt to do this is to get students to master skills and procedures before exposing them to a range of increasingly varied and complex problems – an explicit teaching approach.

I have also worked a little with English teachers. The challenge here is to identify the component parts because everyone is focused on the final complex task; the essay. But those components exist; knowledge and understanding of a text, the construction of topic sentences, analysis as opposed to summary and so on.

## Is explicit instruction ‘traditional’?

Traditional approaches to education are teacher-led. This is probably biologically primary; the natural way to teach (see Geary, 2007 for a discussion of biologically primary skills). Humans have presumably been instructing each other since the advent of language.

However, explicit teaching is a particularly effective form

of teacher-led instruction. Left to our own devices, we might not replicate all of its features.

I think this leads to an important conclusion. If teachers want to become more effective, then explicit teaching is a way to do this that works with the grain. It is going to be easier to adopt than some revolutionary teaching method that probably isn't very effective anyway.

## Biography

Greg Ashman is an Australia teacher, blogger and PhD candidate. He blogs at [gregashman.wordpress.com](http://gregashman.wordpress.com) and he can be found on Twitter at [@greg\\_ashman](https://twitter.com/greg_ashman)

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# The Case for Teacher-led Innovation

Louka Parry, Director of Programs, Education Changemakers

Everyday, millions of educators go to work to fulfil one of the most important roles in society; to equip young people to thrive in the world. And yet, education systems have been slow to react to the rapid shifts and disruptions in practically every sector of the economy, moving the goalposts, the sought-after skills and the 'job for life' mentality. We are in the midst of the Fourth Industrial Revolution that is giving rise to the 'Internet of Things', robotics, 3D printing, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence and autonomous vehicles, all accelerated by a globalised inter-connected world. So what is actually going on? And what can we as teachers and leaders actually do about it?

Research by PWC (2017) predicts that 44% of jobs are at high risk of being disrupted by computerisation and technology in the next 20 years, with a further 18% classed at medium risk. These are terrifying statistics for both policy makers and educators alike as age-old certainties slip away. Even a university degree doesn't provide the same clout, as the big accounting firms drop the qualification as a prerequisite for employment.

Of course, the vast majority of educators understand the case for change; that in a different century education should not just look different, but be different. One of the challenges is that complex school systems by their sheer size tend to struggle with inertia. Plus, most people have gone through the process of schooling which means we all have an opinion to share. In school, kids' learning is on the line, and the safest best was to stay the same and provide certainty. That is no longer acceptable.

In business if a company doesn't innovate, it will evaporate. In education if we fail to innovate, we fail our students.

At Education Changemakers (EC), we are not interested in waiting for answers to appear from above, rather we believe that it is teacher-led innovations that transform schools and communities. We don't accept the

'education is broken' rhetoric either, as there are myriad examples of teachers, principals and schools doing things in continually more powerful ways that deepen learning. We just need to amplify the collective genius.

Yes systemic coherence is always an important consideration, but by unleashing the potential of those closest to the learning - teachers and school leaders - we can move from teacher centred to student driven, from pilots to prototypes, from scarcity to abundance, from compliance to innovation. This is an age where agility and adaptability become the language of change for an uncertain future.

## Leadership from the ground-up

Where we see teacher-led innovation embedded we see growth as educators create extraordinary outcomes. There is an abundance of evidence that supports distributed leadership practices that empower teacher agency to lead and catalyse support positive school changes (Harris, 2013). Or as we say 'the only thing more powerful than ownership is authorship' (Tait & Faulkner, 2016). This is the concept that recognises the power of distributed leadership and authentic engagement.



Our contention is that it is teachers and leaders that best understand the context improve student outcomes through the specific combination and timely implementation and management of strategies within a context (Day et al., 2009). Collaboration increases the available strategies and can lead to an increase in collective efficacy, one of the most powerful levers for impact. Our programs at EC ([www.educationchangemakers.com](http://www.educationchangemakers.com)) and learning events like EduChange ([www.educhange.com.au](http://www.educhange.com.au)) are designed to capitalise on harnessing the collective genius to enhance impact.

## Why leadership development matters

Just as the performance of students can be limited or increased by the overall performance of a teacher, the performance of a school is likely limited by leadership quality. Barber, Whelan and Clark (2010, p.5) note that for every 100 schools that have good leadership and management, 93 will have high student achievement standards. Conversely, for every 100 schools without effective leadership and management, only one will have good standard of student achievement, and even that seems quite the miracle. Of course, surveys

consistently reflect the truism that people don't leave jobs, they leave bosses. Creating a positive learning culture that enables teachers to do their best work and to solve problems is not just the most powerful thing leaders can do, it also makes everyone's work more effective.

This is evidenced by the findings of AESOP (An Exceptional Schooling Outcomes Project) conducted by NSW DET, University of Western Sydney and University of New England (Dinham, 2008). This research found that both positional and distributed leadership were major factors in outstanding outcomes achieved by students, teachers and schools. When we intentionally support the development of staff to innovate and lead at multiple levels, we pull a powerful lever for school improvement and increased learning outcomes.

## A movement of educators innovating powerful solutions

At EC, we believe every educator (and student) should be supported by a process that enables them to:

- Identify problems or missed opportunities in education
- Understand them at a deeper level
- Innovate real world solutions to them
- Take that idea into action in schools and education systems.

Great educators and leaders know their values at a fundamental level and then use this knowledge with a passion for their purpose, leading with their heart as well as their head (George et al., 2007, p. 130).

As Ann Fudge said, 'all of us have the spark of leadership in us...the challenge is to understand ourselves well enough to discover where we can use our leadership gifts to serve others.'

Teachers and leaders are incredibly hard working, despite all that ridiculous talk of eight to three workdays and constant holidays. It is not about doing more, it just can't be. It is about acting differently. When we as teachers and leaders catalyse a learning community to support innovation at every level, that's when we see the transformation and powerful learning we all seek for our classrooms, teams, schools and communities. That's how we can best equip young people to make an impact in their world. At Education Changemakers we will keep growing and supporting this movement as best we can.

## Biography

Education Changemakers is an organisation that exist to unleash innovation in education. Cofounded by Dave Faulkner and Aaron Tait, EC works across the globe with 25,000 teachers, leaders and entrepreneurs each year to equip them to make change in their classroom, school and organisation. In 2016 Wiley published their book titled *Edupreneur: unleashing teacher-led innovation*.

To join the movement  
[www.educationchangemakers.com](http://www.educationchangemakers.com)

Louka Parry is Director of Programs at Education Changemakers. An award-winning educator, he previously worked in South Australia as a K-12 teacher and a former principal in challenging settings as well as a system leader. He holds two Masters degrees, one in Applied Linguistics from University of New England and another in Instructional Leadership from the University of Melbourne.

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# The ACE 2017 National Conference





# What is Teacher Professional Resilience?

## And whose responsibility is it?

Susan Beltman, Associate Professor, School of Education, Curtin University.  
Caroline Mansfield, Associate Professor, School of Education, Murdoch University.

### Why is Resilience Important?

There have been ongoing concerns in Australia and internationally about high levels of teacher attrition, teacher stress and burnout, and the need to retain a quality workforce. Researchers have been investigating these issues and, rather than looking at

why teachers leave the profession, over the past 15 years research about teacher professional resilience has increased – focusing on what helps teachers survive and thrive in the profession. The wellbeing of educators at all stages of professional life is extremely important (Day & Gu 2014; Riley 2012) and researchers have examined the challenges faced by pre-service

and in-service teachers and how these are managed or overcome to retain commitment to, and ongoing growth in, the profession (Beltman et al. 2011; Johnson et al. 2014; Mansfield et al. 2014).

Based on national and international research, this article poses some questions that have been intriguing researchers and practitioners. It summarises different views of teacher professional resilience and their implications for where the responsibility lies for enhancing resilience and providing resources. We have been part of several research teams that have been investigating ways of supporting teacher professional resilience. These projects have been based nationally (e.g. <http://www.brite.edu.au>) and internationally (<http://www.entree-online.eu/>) and we have been fortunate to work with early childhood educators and pre-service and in-service teachers in Australia and Europe as we collaborate to explore resilience. This article is based on an invited presentation for education staff and research students at RWTH-Aachen in Germany (Beltman 2016).

## What is Resilience?

Resilience is complex and is made up of many different individual concepts. In a recent paper we listed 51 separate factors that researchers have written about in the past 15 years when they have studied teacher resilience (Mansfield et al. 2016). We grouped these factors into:

- **Personal Resources** e.g. motivation
- **Contextual Resources** e.g. mentors
- **Strategies** e.g. problem solving
- **Outcomes** e.g. commitment

Researchers generally agree that resilience is dynamic and multi-faceted (Beltman et al. 2011) but this makes it somewhat difficult to explain succinctly. For example, Yonezawa et al. write about 'the conflation of resilient characteristics of teachers and the environmental supports' (2011 p.915). One comprehensive definition of teacher professional

resilience that we use (Beltman 2015 p.21) says that teacher professional resilience includes:

- **The capacity** of an individual teacher to harness personal and contextual resources to navigate through challenges
- **The dynamic process** whereby characteristics of individual teachers and of their personal and professional contexts interact over time as teachers use particular strategies
- **To enable the outcome** of a teacher who experiences professional engagement and growth, commitment, enthusiasm, satisfaction, and wellbeing.

## What Challenges do Teachers Face?

There is agreement that resilience occurs or is only evident when challenges are present. Challenges for teachers can include increased accountability pressures, a lack of mentors, unsupportive leadership, or difficulties in catering for diverse student needs (Beltman et al. 2011). In a study aiming to understand the experiences of early career teachers (Mansfield et al. 2014) we interviewed beginning teachers about their challenges and categorised these as shown in Table 1.

Experienced teachers also encounter challenges in their everyday work and lives. A large UK project has described and discussed these in depth in a number of publications (e.g. Day 2014). One key finding is that rather than a particularly traumatic single event, challenges for teachers typically arise from the 'everyday' aspects of their work. Similarly it is the 'everyday' resources they draw on that sustains teachers and hence the authors speak of 'everyday resilience' (Gu & Day 2013).

**Table 1. Challenges Reported by Beginning Teachers**

<b>Personal</b>	<b>Interpersonal</b>	<b>Infrastructure</b>
Work-life balance <i>e.g. no time for hobbies</i>	Family and friends <i>e.g. less contact</i>	Policies and practices <i>e.g. poor housing</i>
Personal attributes <i>e.g. perfectionist</i>	Teachers and administration <i>e.g. lack of recognition or support</i>	School organisation <i>e.g. moving rooms; lots of meetings</i>
Knowledge <i>e.g. lack of reporting</i>	Students <i>e.g. challenging behaviour; multiple needs</i>	Classroom resources <i>e.g. lack of teaching materials and resources</i>

## What Are Key Views of Teacher Resilience?

Resilience is understood differently by different people and this becomes important if we ask the questions ‘whose fault is it if a teacher is seen not to be resilient?’ or ‘whose responsibility is teacher resilience?’ For example, is it an individual’s responsibility to counteract a deficiency in skills or knowledge, or is it a school’s job to facilitate the presence of supportive colleagues and professional learning opportunities, or should the system be responding to teachers’ needs? Three different perspectives will be briefly outlined:

- **Person**- focused perspectives
- **Process**- focused perspectives
- **Context**-focused perspectives

In person-focused perspectives resilience is understood as a particular attribute or characteristic of an individual such as when referring to a ‘resilient personality’ (Pretsch et al. 2012 p.323). In some ways this perspective helps us if we want to build personal capacities such as knowledge or skills. For example, we developed the BRiTE (Building Resilience in Teacher Education) online modules so that pre-service teachers could find out for themselves about skills such as positive thinking or emotional awareness which may not be available in their university course (Mansfield et al. 2016). These ideas have also been incorporated into a text book chapter for pre-service teachers (Beltman 2015). We emphasise in the BRiTE modules that resilience is not a fixed, personal trait but this is the potential danger when focusing on the individual. If someone is ‘not resilient’ is this their fault? Bruce Johnson and Barry Down (2013) provide a critique of this more traditional view and write about the ‘theoretical shortcomings of individualistic and pathologising assumptions underpinning the field of resilience research’ (p.705). In other words, if resilience is seen to be the responsibility of individual teachers, this can contribute to a deficit way of thinking which blames teachers.

Process-focused perspectives shift the focus and concentrate on the strategies used by individuals to actively identify and gather resources to overcome challenges and achieve resilience-related outcomes. We wrote about resilience as a process in one of our papers (Mansfield et al. 2014) and this focus ‘centres not on key attributes of the teacher or resources in the environment, but on strategies teachers employ’ (Castro et al. 2010 p.623). The responsibility for resilience is broader in this view. While individual teachers can learn strategies, such learning could typically occur through interacting with an online resource, through observing or learning from more experienced teachers, or from deliberately engaging

in professional development. For example, workshops and resources for teachers based on mindfulness aim to provide a range of strategies and skills to enhance wellbeing and resilience (for a list of resources for the general population see [http://life.curtin.edu.au/health-and-wellbeing/mind\\_resources.htm](http://life.curtin.edu.au/health-and-wellbeing/mind_resources.htm)). The question remains of whether a process view is comprehensive enough. Teachers work in a variety of contexts so how do these facilitate the development of personal capacities or the use of effective strategies? How can contexts support resilience?

Context-focused perspectives include those that focus on the role of supportive communities and collaborative colleagues. Resilience is viewed as a collective construct which is ‘the culmination of collective and collaborative endeavours’ (Gu & Li 2013 p.300). Australian studies have also highlighted the positive role of relationships in sustaining teachers (Le Cornu 2013; Papatraianou & Le Cornu 2014). In her studies of teachers in high risk and low resourced schools in South Africa, Liesel Ebersöhn writes of ‘relationship resourced resilience’. Resilience is viewed as ‘the result of accessing, mobilising, networking and nurturing sustained resource use by means of systemic relationships’ (Ebersöhn 2012 p.35). Individuals are active components in a web of resources and resilience is seen to be a collective responsibility.

Context-focused perspectives also include ecological or systems models where attention needs to be paid to individuals but as they exist and interact with and between multiple levels of context. So individuals are important but they exist as part of families, friendship groups, sporting organisations, schools with parent groups and particular community characteristics. Such communities may be urban or rural, well-resourced or struggling financially, and they exist in local, state, and national policy frameworks, within particular national cultural and historical features. An ecological approach ‘directs our attention away from the “here-and-now” specifics of individual teachers’ lives and contextualises their experiences within broader social, cultural, and political arenas’ (Johnson et al. 2014 p.533). So families, friends, colleagues, pupils, school communities, employing bodies and educational policy makers all have a part to play in being a potential source of culturally appropriate support for professional teacher resilience.

## What does this mean for Responsibility and Resources?

If we take a systemic or ecological perspective on teacher resilience the emphasis is on the socially constructed nature of resilience where both personal and contextual resources are important. Michael Ungar’s Resilience Research Centre is based in Canada

and has been responsible for examining resilience in very challenging contexts around the world, leading to the definition of resilience as being:

***'both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways'*** (Resilience Research Centre 2014)

Taking such a perspective enables us to look at resilience from a number of different starting points with the responsibility for supporting or enhancing resilience being a distributed one. At a personal level individuals do have a responsibility to be actively seeking out knowledge and skills and using resources such as the BRiTE modules or mindfulness workshops to build their individual capacities. Pre-service teacher educators can embed such resources within their courses and examples of how to do this are being developed through the Authentic Cases of the StayingBRiTE Fellowship (<https://www.stayingbrite.edu.au/authentic-cases>) (Mansfield, 2016) Supportive colleagues and school leaders play a critical role in facilitating processes that enhance resilience. There are many resources available to develop 'resilient schools' where the resilience of pupils, of teachers and of the whole school community are addressed (e.g. Cefai & Cavioni 2014; Henderson & Milstein 2003; <https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/>). An example of system level support in Australia is the Principals Australia Institute (PAI) workshops on wellbeing for principals and teachers (<http://www.pai.edu.au/content/health-and-wellbeing>).

Supporting individual teachers and building their capacities is important, but focusing only on this can lead to a deficit way of thinking and can also limit the opportunities that research has shown can help create resilient education communities. It is heartening that in Australia we are world leaders in providing resources at the personal and school community levels and that our education systems are developing more and more opportunities for educators and teachers to sustain their commitment and thrive in the profession.

## Biography

**Susan Beltman** is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at Curtin University. A former School Psychologist, Sue has contributed to the Aussie Optimism and ResponseAbility programs. She has been a co-researcher in two Australian OLT funded projects: Keeping Cool: Embedding Resiliency in the Initial Teacher Education Curriculum and BRiTE (Building Resilience in Teacher Education), as well as a European Union Lifelong Learning Program project called ENTREE (ENhancing Teacher RESilience in

Europe). Sue is currently an advisory group member for two projects relating to resilience in higher education settings. Research findings have been disseminated with colleagues at national and international conferences including paper presentations and symposia. Sue has presented workshops on teacher resilience for groups such as the Child Australia Conference, the Cockburn-Fremantle Education Network in WA, and the EU funded RESCUR (Resilience Curriculum) project in Crete. <http://oasisapps.curtin.edu.au/staff/profile/view/S.Beltman>

**Dr Caroline Mansfield** is an Associate Professor in Education and Associate Dean of Research in the School of Education at Murdoch University, Western Australia. Her research focuses on teachers and students with an emphasis on motivation, wellbeing and resilience. Caroline has lead two large projects about teacher resilience - Keeping Cool and BRiTE. In 2016 she was awarded a National Teaching Fellowship (Staying BRiTE: Promoting resilience in higher education) to lead a team of colleagues across Australia to embed resilience in teacher education programs ([www.stayingbrite.edu.au](http://www.stayingbrite.edu.au)) and build a national and international network of interested researchers and practitioners. Future research will continue to explore innovative approaches to promoting resilience in education and how school communities can support resilience.

## Article Summary

Research about teacher professional resilience has increased in the past 15 years as there have been concerns in Australia and internationally about retaining a quality teacher workforce and about teacher wellbeing. Resilience is a complex concept and involves personal capacities, strategies to overcome challenges, and positive outcomes such as a sense of commitment and wellbeing. Challenges for teachers can include increased accountability pressures, a lack of mentors, or catering for diverse student needs. Resilience is understood in different ways and this becomes important if we ask the question: 'whose responsibility is teacher resilience?' For example, is it an individual's responsibility to counteract a deficiency in his or her own skills or knowledge, or a school's job to facilitate the presence of supportive colleagues and professional learning, or should the system be responding to teachers' needs? How we understand the concept of resilience helps us identify where to provide resources to respond to a difficulty or to prevent a potential difficulty. Based on international research as well as national and local projects, this article summarises different views of teacher professional resilience and their implications for responsibility and resources.

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# Managing Stress in Early Career Teachers

An emotion regulation approach

Helena Granziera, The University of NSW

## A memoir of an idealist

As a first year out teacher, I was practically bursting with enthusiasm as I bounded through the school gates on my first day of Term 1. Full of hope, optimism and a genuine belief that I could change the lives of the next generation one child at a time, I prepared to take my place as a 'real' member of a teaching staff.

By mid Term 2, I often woke up filled with dread and unable to control my anxiety about what lay ahead. I spent hours overanalysing even the most innocuous comments from parents and students, I had a seemingly endless to-do list, and with limited professional guidance, I questioned my efficacy and competency as a teacher. Moreover, I felt utterly isolated, with no mentor or senior staff member to turn to for support. Exhausted and dejected, I was seriously wondering why I had decided to become a teacher in the first place.

When I raised these concerns with my fellow early career teacher friends, they reported similar feelings of disillusionment with the profession, frustration at the barriers to achieving their teaching goals, and stress in the face of a mounting workload. What was more concerning is that none of us knew how to effectively deal with the stress we were experiencing.

## The state of the nation

Early career teachers (ECTs) frequently report experiences of stress and subsequent social, emotional and physical burnout. Burnout can be broadly defined as a "psychological syndrome that involves a prolonged response to stressors in the workplace" (Maslach, 2003, p. 189). The reasons for burnout in ECTs are many and varied; difficulties with behaviour management, negotiating staff politics, a perceived lack of organisational support and an excessively high workload are but some of the reasons frequently cited as antecedents to this phenomenon (Buchanan et al., 2013; Fetherstone & Lumis, 2012; Goddard & Goddard, 2006).

Concerningly, stress and burnout are strongly associated with an intention to leave the profession entirely. Although statistics regarding intentions to leave are difficult to obtain because of a lack of uniform national data, studies report that between 22% and 40% of teachers will leave the career within the first five years (Gallant & Riley, 2004; Goddard & Goddard, 2006; Paris, 2010). These statistics underscore the need for both individuals and broader institutions to address the issues underlying burnout in ECTs, and implement policies and procedures which foster positive psychological, social and physical health.

## But what actually works?

Determined to find some ways of coping with the stressors my colleagues and I faced – that is, strategies that didn't involve alcohol consumption or eating a whole box of Cadbury's Favourites- I set out to investigate what strategies were out there. After mapping the key stressors from my own experiences, I came to the mildly disheartening conclusion that there was very little I could do to change or minimise the sources of anxiety. I couldn't make the parents or students retract their comments – which in hindsight, were probably not meant to be hurtful anyway- , I couldn't change school organisational structures, and I certainly wasn't going to be able to change departmental or government policies. I could however manage my response to these stimuli. With this realisation came a flurry of typing, and Google revealed the world of emotion regulation strategies. Put simply, emotion regulation strategies are techniques that allow us to manage our response to events, and deal with difficult situations. Below I have detailed two of the emotion regulation strategies that strengthened my ability to cope with stress, and enabled me to build the resilience needed to not only survive, but thrive as a teacher.

### Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a practice derived from meditation, in which the individual focuses on paying attention to the present moment without judgment (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Mindfulness can be both formal and informal in nature; in addition to guided mindful breathing, progressive muscle relaxation and mindful meditation, mindfulness can be practised during regular activities such as exercising or driving. The key to mindfulness is focusing on the present, and noticing the smells, sounds and feelings around you without judgement. In recent times, a number of mindfulness apps and videos have been developed, and are accessible via Youtube, and on phones and tablets. I used the Smiling Mind app, which is designed by the Australian organisation Reach Out.

Mindfulness has been linked to decreases in anxiety, increased positive affective states (Davidson et al., 2003) and improved attention and emotion regulation (Lutz et al., 2008). More recently, researchers in the United States have found that mindfulness interventions can reduce the psychological symptoms of burnout in teachers, such as emotional exhaustion and poor attentional focus (Flook et al., 2013).

### Cognitive reappraisal

Cognitive reappraisal is an emotion regulation strategy in which an individual reframes an event to change the ensuing emotional response. By changing the way we think about an event, we can prevent the

negative emotional trajectory that inevitably follows. For example in the past, when a student told me that they were bored and did not like what they were doing, my gut reaction was to think “I am a terrible teacher. I can’t provide students with stimulating learning experiences”. This pattern of thinking and feeling led to a state of negative affect, demotivation and a lowered sense of self-efficacy. However, using cognitive reappraisal, I have been able to change my reaction to this event, preventing the onset of negative emotion and the subsequent spiral. In such instances I may reappraise the situation so that I think “This student clearly has learning needs that must be addressed to enhance their engagement in learning. How can I meaningfully address these next lesson?”. Although it’s not easy to cognitively reappraise during times of heightened emotion, over time it becomes easier, and eventually becomes second nature.

Individuals who report using reappraisal strategies appear to experience less negative emotion, display greater social functioning, and report higher levels of general wellbeing (Haga, Kraft & Corby, 2009). Promising research also exists (Pakenham, 2005; Troy et al., 2010) to suggest that cognitive reappraisal can help to manage stress and depression, by acting as a buffer for negative emotions.

## Moving forward

Acknowledging the challenges faced by early career teachers, and validating them as both real and significant is vital as we move towards reducing stress and burnout in teaching populations. There is, unfortunately, much that we cannot control in the face of rapid organisational changes and increasing external pressures. Despite this, we must not forget that we can be agents of our thoughts and feelings, and must actively strengthen our emotional armour in the face of growing challenges.

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# Global Education Reform

## How privatisation and public investment influence education outcomes

Edited by Frank Adamson, Bjorn Astrand and Linda Darling-Hammond (Routledge, 2016)  
Book Review by Colin Power, FACE.

The Global Education Reform is the product of a collaborative effort by ten universally-respected education experts, one that every education policy-maker, administrator and educator should study carefully, discuss widely and act on. The book documents two educationally and politically distinctive approaches to the structuring and reform of education systems: market-based approaches at one extreme, and strong state investments in public education on the other. This book makes a major contribution in illuminating the choices to be made by nations and their consequences.

The introductory chapter provides an overview of the two policy approaches, the market-based reforms implemented in Chile, Sweden and the United States with efforts made to build a strong and equitable public education systems as exemplified by Cuba, Finland and, to some extent, Canada. One of authors, Sahlberg, has popularised the term GERM (Global Education Reform Movement) to describe market-based policies that are designed to reduce public investment by promoting private provision of education, school choice, competition and high-stakes testing, and expanding the use of under-qualified and therefore cheaper, teachers.

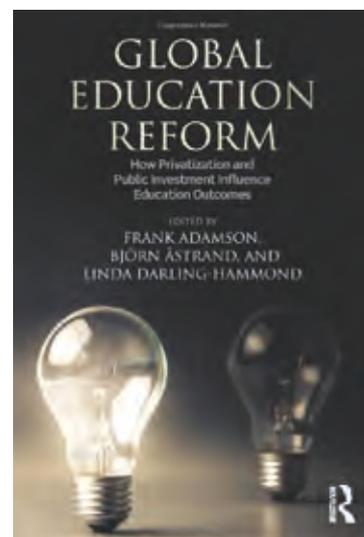
In the early 1970s, the economist Milton Friedman argued that market-based systems can deliver better and more-cost-effective education services than governments, the assumption being that "free" markets would promote competition, improve efficiency and lead to higher quality. During the 1980s, market-based education policies were aggressively pushed by the World Bank and IMF as a condition for loans. Developing countries were forced to make savage cuts in their education budgets, further disadvantaging the poor, children with special needs, and in particular, girls and women. Since then, GERM has become the new educational orthodoxy among international development agencies (UNESCO being the exception), consulting firms and in many nations, including

Australia.

Using three sets of paired comparisons of education systems, the authors provide us with a powerful and authoritative analysis of the impact of these two approaches on teaching, learning, equity and the quality of education in six countries: Chile and Cuba;

Sweden and Finland; USA and Canada. Their work forces us to question the assumptions underlying the political and economic models that have been driving educational ideologies, policies and "reforms" in countries like our own. It warns us that market-based education reforms are based on faulty assumptions, and have failed to deliver the outcomes promised by their neo-liberal economic advocates. They have not helped improve the quality of teaching and learning at any level of education, significantly increased inequality, accentuated the disadvantages facing poorer and vulnerable students and families, and have led to a narrowing of the basic purposes of education in a democratic society.

The case studies lift the lid on what can happen if the ideology of the market, GERM, is applied to education. In the 1970s, the Chilean dictator put Friedman's market-based theory into practice, privatising social sectors and publically-owned enterprises, including education. But as the case study of Chile reveals, the free-market "reforms"



led to sharp increases in inequality and corruption, degraded the teaching profession, and had a pernicious effect on the quality of education. In contrast, Carnoy's chapter helps us to understand Cuba's successful approach to providing high quality, equitable and affordable education, despite the obstacles. Many may be tempted to ignore Cuba, but the findings are consistent with research evidence from other countries:

- **State-generated social capital matters:** national government policies need to generate cohesive and supportive family and school educational environments;
- **Curriculum matters but its implementation depends on teacher quality:** Cuban students cover fewer subjects but more profoundly, and their teachers are well-trained, highly motivated and supported;
- **Teacher education** needs to be practice-based and co-ordinated with existing curricula;
- **Instructional leadership** and supervision is the key to improving instruction.

In the 1970s and 80s, Sweden had a strong public education system. It was at the top of international league tables in student performance and equity. But in the early 1990s, it made a U-turn. As Astrand's chapter documents, the economic and national debt crisis of the 1990s was a key precursor to Sweden's decision to adopt market-based policies. The emphasis shifted to expanding the private sector, with choice displacing collective responsibility in what has become an increasingly segregated system, with a private sector now dominated by "for profit" companies. OECD studies and reports show that over the past 20 years there has been a sharp decline in student performance in maths, science and reading in Sweden. "From citizens to consumers," the story of education in Sweden is not unlike our own: it sheds light on the weaknesses in our education system.

Much has been written about the Finnish paradox: the delivery of a high quality public education within a competitive market economy, one that consistently places it at the top internationally in terms of quality, equity and performance outcomes. As Shalberg puts it, Finland remains immune to GERM because it does not believe that cut-throat competition, standardised testing and high-stakes accountability systems are smart ways to improve quality and equity. Unlike much of the rest of the world, Finland encourages collaboration among schools, focusses on whole child development, trust-based accountability, empowerment of teachers and investment in a highly professionalised teacher labour force.

The chapter on education "reforms" in the USA by Frank Adamson and Linda Darling Hammond also poses the key question: "Privatisation or Public Investment?" It summarises US research on educational privatisation such as voucher programmes and charter schools, and

compares these approaches and outcomes with those used in Massachusetts. What is intriguing is that the highest achieving states in the US are those that have had the least engagement with market-based reforms. The chapter concludes that there is little evidence of systemic improvement associated with any of the GERM initiatives. The states that are doing well are those that have made strategic investments in equity, improved teacher education and stronger support for children. The fundamental question for both the US and Australia is whether to continue down the privatisation path or to seek to reclaim public education with reforms that serve the common good.

Canada, and especially, Ontario, offers an illustrative example of the latter. Since launching its whole system reform strategy in 2003, Ontario continues to demonstrate the significant improvements in student achievement and equity that can be made in a diverse public education system. One of the key architects of the reforms, Fullan, explains how: relentless focus on a few ambitious goals, collective capacity building linked to results, and a progressive partnership with the teaching profession.

In the concluding chapter of the book, Adamson and Darling-Hammond dissect the educational outcomes of the differing economic and governance approaches as well as the policy implications. They conclude that the core assumptions of privatisation are wrong. Moreover, the contributors to this book insist that governments must assume full and direct responsibility for ensuring all children, youth and adults have equitable access to quality education. The authors admit that there are publically managed education systems that do not provide quality education for all, and that when dissatisfaction with public systems emerges, privatising options are most appealing. Ultimately, they conclude the challenge is to create a system filled with schools worth choosing, schools that all students and families have a genuine right to choose and be chosen. Timely advice for a nation like Australia that to date has had a reasonably good, publically-managed system, one that has always included government and non-government institutions. But, in recent years, Australia has adopted market-based educational policies, and these have may well have contributed to the declines in performance and increases in inequality evident in international assessments.

The book concludes by asking: Do we as a nation have a coherent, evidence-based theory of action? What are the key things we need to do to ensure all young people can become productive, responsible citizens prepared to participate effectively in the political, social, economic and cultural life of our democracy? The cases presented challenge us to think critically about the alternative approaches to the structuring, funding and provision of education, and how these are likely to affect our students, teachers, educational institutions and nation.



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