

10 May 2013

### COMMUNIQUÉ

The Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) today met in Sydney. Ministers from around Australia and New Zealand welcomed the opportunity to debate a variety of significant education and early childhood policy issues.

#### **Initial Teacher Education**

Ministers today endorsed for publication an *Initial Teacher Education Data Report* prepared by the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). This report is a new collation of public domain material as well as customised data that has been collated from multiple sources.

Ministers agreed that this should become an annual report, allowing the identification of trends and comparative analysis. It is also intended that the categories of data reported will be extended, and users will be encouraged to provide suggestions about data that would prove valuable to the education community.

#### **Review of National Architecture**

Ministers agreed to request senior officials to refine the Terms of Reference for the Review of the National Architecture by 17 May 2013 to support delivery of Standing Council's strategic priorities, including those reforms that support school improvement and enhance national data, accountability, analysis and research capability.

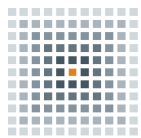
#### **Progressing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan**

Standing Council agreed to renew and accelerate their commitment to progressing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan. Ministers noted that a National Plan for School Improvement will include specific actions to accelerate achievements and track progress against the closing the gap targets agreed by COAG.

#### **Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability**

Ministers noted the findings of the PwC Final Report on the 2012 Trial of the *Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability*. The report noted that the 2012 trial is suitable for a full, national implementation as the basis for a nationally consistent collection of data on school students with disability. The report also indicates that there are significant benefits to be gained from the implementation of a data collection model of this type, as well as significant support for a collection of this nature in schools.

Ministers were pleased to endorse the model for a nationally consistent collection of data on school students with disability. The national data collection will first take place in October 2013 subject to finalisation of the implementation plan and support material, and thereafter in alignment with other elements of the National Schools Statistical Collection.



### **Government strategies to lift student achievement in New Zealand**

The Standing Council welcomed the Hon. Hekia Parata MP, New Zealand Minister of Education and Minister Responsible for the Education Review Office to the meeting. Minister Parata outlined strategies used by the New Zealand Government to lift student achievement in Aotearoa.

### **The availability of child care in Australia**

The Standing Council today discussed the availability of child care throughout Australia. Ministers provided updates from their respective states and territories on capacity to respond to demand for child care. The Australian Government noted that there is considerable variability in approval requirements for child care centres across Australia and that there are considerable differences in planning processes including for growth areas and in existing areas of need. Ministers agreed that they would continue to monitor the availability of child care within their jurisdictions and address any impediments to availability at a local level.

### **Australian Curriculum**

Ministers today endorsed the *Australian Curriculum: Geography* for years F-10, developed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, with implementation the responsibility of individual states and territories. The Geography curriculum aims to ensure that students develop a sense of wonder, curiosity and respect about places, people, cultures and environments throughout the world; a deep geographical knowledge of Australia, Asia and the world; and the capacity to be competent, critical and creative users of geographical inquiry methods and skills.

### **Harmonisation of Funding Regulatory Frameworks for Non-Government Schools**

The Standing Council agreed to continue collaboration on the harmonisation of funding regulatory frameworks for non-government schools, noting the significant benefits for non-government schools and all governments in clearly articulating a strategic approach to national non-government school funding assurance.

Ministers agreed that the Strategic Policy Working Group, via the Australian Education, Early Childhood and Youth Senior Officials Committee, advise Education Ministers on how to maximise opportunities to improve the regulation of non-government schools to support quality schooling. It was agreed to include non-government sector representation to facilitate engagement by the sector with recommendations to be made to the Standing Council.

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