



Issue no

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Worlds of *Education*



Someone is killing our teachers



A 'game-change' in Africa



A Bean Counter's Worst Nightmare



The great Gonski



Educating citizens



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Editorial

Opening up our Worlds of Education :

Worlds of Education's ambition is to serve as a forum for views and opinions on education developments across the world – even more so as the new online format we chose for the magazine is taking shape. We want to reach out to teachers, lecturers and education support staff whether or not they are active union members and to those involved in developing and implementing education policy including our Education International affiliates.

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Opening up our Worlds of Education

By: Fred van Leeuwen

Theme: Mobilising for Quality Education



EI delegation to the UN Youth Assembly, Malala Day, 12 July 2013

Worlds of Education's ambition is to serve as a forum for views and opinions on education developments across the world – even more so as the new online format we chose for the magazine is taking shape. We want to reach out to teachers, lecturers and education support staff whether or not they are active union members and to those involved in developing and implementing education policy including our Education International affiliates.

Our new on-line format allows us to have enormous flexibility in accessing knowledge, views and voices. In a single article we are now able to include links to blogs, social media, academic references, teaching resources, educational opinion, video links and newspaper articles. 'Worlds of Education' has the capacity to be an infinite resource but for that to happen all those who read it have to be active participants. In short, we want to hear from you-your ideas, your views and your information. We look forward to hearing from you!

A new format necessarily means new experiments and new outreach. This edition is informed by Education International's Mobilising for Quality in Education (MQE) campaign which will be launched simultaneously in [New York and Paris on October 4th this year](#). The key theme of our campaign is that qualified teachers are the most important educational resource in any education system and that to achieve high quality education for all it is vital that teachers start their careers with high quality initial training and are supported by the best professional development throughout their careers. Above all teachers must be treated as respected professionals. Teaching must also receive the best of professional and technical support and be provided in safe, secure and supportive learning and teaching environments. Our next edition will draw fully on the campaign and contain news and responses to its launch.

The articles in this edition herald EI's campaign. David Browne's special report from Peshwar on Malala Yousafzai's courageous stand for girl's education in Pakistan has become a symbol for fighting for all girls to have equal rights to education around the world. Fernando Reimers' article is a call from a senior Harvard academic for the teaching profession to be at the centre of defining education as a public, moral good. Open Society Foundation's Mary Metcalfe focusses on the same theme and applies it to education in Africa. President of the Australian Education Union Angelo Gavrielatos describes the battle to achieve a fair and equitable education funding system in Australia.



El's vision behind its Mobilising for Quality Education campaign is described by David Edwards while Haldis Holst highlights the tough challenges facing the education systems in Haiti and Pakistan in reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

One Union's programme for providing quality teaching and learning support in the classroom is outlined by President of the American Federation of Teachers, Randi Weingarten. We'd like to hear about more such initiatives.

The evaluation of higher education globally is at the centre of a crucial debate particularly about initiatives to rank Higher Education Institutions. General Secretary of the Irish Federation of University Teachers Mike Jennings and EI Consultant David Robinson take a critical and acerbic view about the latest attempts in this area.

In this first edition we've invited three contributors from England to analyse the state of educational research and curriculum reform in that country – a country whose recent reforms have had a powerful and sometimes malign influence on education reform globally. John MacBeath and Maurice Galton are senior academics who have made major contributions to the development of teacher policies and have consistently called for the empowerment of the teaching profession. Here they explore how governments use and abuse educational research. Warwick Mansell is a respected independent educational journalist who reflects on the English Government's approach to curriculum reform and the mistakes which have been made.

Worlds of Education is your resource. We hope you enjoy reading and above all using it!

Fred van Leeuwen

General Secretary
Education International

About the Author



Fred van Leeuwen

General Secretary of Education International

Educating citizens

Public education's vision for a tolerant and empowered society

By: Fernando M. Reimers

Theme: Quality Teaching



Germany, Stuttgart. Day nursery Kolpingstrasse. Morning welcome of children and teachers. Berthold Steinhilber / Reporters

The profession of teaching needs to be aligned with a moral vision to educate empowered citizens. Citizens with this moral vision contribute to democratic governance, understand and reduce poverty and social inequality, foster social inclusion, contribute to economic development, adopt sustainable forms of interaction with the environment, and participate as global citizens with others across national divides in addressing these challenges. At present, however, there are serious deficits in the number of citizens who make this contribution. Teachers and public education can help address these deficits.

To align the profession with this ambitious moral vision for public education, leaders of governments, teacher unions, and civil society must craft in each country a shared definition about what the outcomes of education should be. I believe it should be a vision focusing on cognitive, interpersonal and intra-personal outcomes, with a focus on the short as well as the long term consequences of those outcomes. All policies and programmatic initiatives to support educational improvement, including efforts to assess the profession, should be aligned with that shared vision.

Creating the social dialogue necessary to develop this shared vision is possible. Earlier this year I had the opportunity to participate in two meetings with just that purpose. The first was a meeting in London of leaders of teacher unions whose countries are members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Organised in January by Education International (EI) this conference examined the state of education globally. The third International Summit on the Teaching Profession in Amsterdam followed on almost immediately. Uniquely the Summit enabled government ministers and teacher union leaders to sit down together to focus on the broad public purposes of education which should guide teacher preparation and evaluation. The fact that the co-organisers of the Summit were EI, the OECD and the Dutch Government showed that there was a willingness among many countries to engage in dialogue with their teaching professions about the future of education as a public good.

This moral vision is grounded in the very roots of the creation of public education. The idea of universal education emerged to



serve principally the purpose of helping people work out their differences in peaceful ways. It was an idea put forth four hundred years ago by Jan Amos Comenius, a Moravian Minister who lived through thirty years of religious intolerance. Comenius argued that in order to have peaceful coexistence all persons had to be educated.

This idea, that all persons had to be educated, was also product of the Enlightenment, an intellectual movement in the 17th and 18th centuries which espoused the power of human reason to improve society, and which promoted the use of science to understand the natural world, and the place of humans in the world. The ideas of the enlightenment, particularly the challenges to the abuses of power by the State and Church, and the promotion of tolerance and of social progress as a result of reason and individual freedom, influenced the revolutionary movements for Independence in North and South America, and the emergence of democratic government.

An active civil society, of ordinary citizens that come together in the public sphere to shape, discuss and spread, as equals, political ideas and to collaborate in improving their communities, informed simply by reason, by evidence generated by science, is essential to the democratic experiment. In order to collaborate as equals in the public sphere people need to be tolerant of those who are different, and they need to be equipped to take responsibility. These are two traits highly valued in most countries around the world. Using data collected by the World Values Survey table 1 shows how when asked what are the important qualities in children, the majority of the population selects tolerance and respect for other people. They selected these values to a much greater extent than other traits such as independence, hard work, imagination, thrift, determination, religious faith, unselfishness, or obedience.

Table 1. What are the important qualities in children?

		independence	hard work	feeling of responsibility	imagination	tolerance and respect for other people	thrift saving money and things	determination perseverance	religious faith	unselfishness	obedience
Country	Argentina	44%	58%	72%	25%	72%	16%	24%	26%	9%	45%
	Australia	64%	49%	73%	43%	92%	35%	50%	21%	54%	39%
	Brazil	29%	61%	78%	27%	65%	29%	32%	56%	40%	57%
	Canada	58%	54%	72%	34%	83%	27%	49%	30%	47%	30%
	Chile	40%	27%	83%	26%	80%	40%	45%	40%	32%	52%
	China	75%	90%	71%	23%	67%	69%	28%	2%	35%	16%
	Colombia	34%	19%	83%	18%	84%	48%	20%	48%	53%	59%
	Finland	70%	15%	90%	38%	87%	26%	65%	12%	30%	33%
	France	37%	62%	79%	25%	87%	43%	55%	9%	55%	41%
	Germany	78%	26%	86%	40%	75%	49%	65%	9%	7%	16%
	Great Britain	59%	44%	61%	38%	85%	25%	40%	19%	55%	46%
	Hong Kong	24%	19%	27%	2%	14%	2%	6%	1%	2%	2%
	India	67%	82%	68%	26%	56%	56%	41%	42%	34%	56%
	Italy	59%	40%	88%	15%	74%	40%	45%	35%	44%	26%
	Japan	81%	33%	91%	31%	75%	53%	68%	6%	51%	5%
	Malaysia	79%	49%	79%	22%	74%	51%	33%	60%	30%	26%
	Mexico	41%	25%	78%	25%	79%	40%	37%	39%	48%	59%
	Netherlands	67%	30%	91%	28%	87%	41%	38%	10%	25%	40%
	Norway	91%	13%	90%	55%	93%	14%	43%	9%	20%	29%
	Russian Federation	41%	89%	80%	14%	69%	53%	52%	11%	20%	38%
	South Africa	59%	71%	55%	16%	78%	37%	33%	56%	31%	47%
	South Korea	68%	73%	91%	42%	57%	73%	45%	22%	12%	14%
	Spain	32%	63%	70%	21%	72%	19%	30%	11%	34%	37%
	Sweden	77%	11%	91%	57%	94%	38%	49%	6%	35%	16%
	Switzerland	78%	20%	91%	48%	92%	23%	73%	13%	14%	19%
	Turkey	39%	79%	75%	22%	70%	39%	37%	42%	31%	46%
	United States	54%	62%	73%	32%	79%	30%	40%	51%	38%	28%
	Average	56%	49%	76%	28%	75%	39%	41%	28%	33%	36%

<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/> World Values Survey Database. Accessed May 5, 2013.

Public Education originated therefore as a way to educate all people to participate in the public sphere in order to help improve society. It was this interplay between ideas about what schools should be about, and ideas about how to make sure that instruction achieved those purposes, combined with the social mobilization, the politics of finding common ground among various social groups, that allowed the creation of public education. In the United States, for example, Horace Mann in the state of Massachusetts, built a coalition for public education anchored in a moral vision for schools, it was a vision of helping people of different cultural origins develop trust and find common ground with one another. It was in this way that people like Horace Mann and others around the world, gradually created the institutional fabric that made it possible for every child to have a chance at developing skills that would give them access to the written word, to knowledge, to possibilities they might not otherwise had, to become architects of their own lives. Globally, it was the inclusion of the right to education as one of the thirty rights in the



Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in the aftermath of World War II, that supported a global movement to expand public education systems and provide all children the opportunity to be educated.

In spite of the remarkable achievement represented in the universal right to education, we need to improve the effectiveness of schools in educating empowered citizens. A number of studies document a decline in the vitality of civic institutions and democratic engagement, decline in social capital, lower levels of trust between and within ethnic groups, lower levels of civic engagement, lower confidence in local government, lower political efficacy and a range of other negative civic outcomes (Robert Putnam (2007). *"E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century -- The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture"*. *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30 (2): 137–174).

Evidence from the World Values Survey confirms low levels of interest in politics around the world. A large percentage of the population does not consider politics important and is uninterested in them, as seen in table 2.

Table 2. How Important is Politics in your Life?

		How Important is Politics				How Interested are you in Politics			
		Very important	Rather important	Not very important	Not at all important	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested
Country	Argentina	9%	22%	33%	37%	4%	18%	34%	44%
	Australia	10%	39%	42%	10%	14%	44%	31%	11%
	Brazil	15%	40%	26%	19%	12%	37%	26%	25%
	Canada	12%	37%	37%	14%	15%	37%	27%	20%
	Chile	6%	15%	33%	47%	5%	17%	27%	51%
	China	15%	41%	36%	8%	29%	36%	22%	13%
	Colombia					7%	15%	36%	43%
	Finland	3%	26%	49%	23%	4%	33%	39%	24%
	France	12%	36%	30%	23%	9%	28%	32%	31%
	Germany	10%	33%	40%	17%	22%	40%	25%	13%
	Great Britain	9%	31%	39%	20%	11%	33%	27%	29%
	Hong Kong	4%	24%	64%	8%	2%	12%	63%	23%
	India	15%	24%	33%	27%	12%	32%	30%	27%
	Italy	9%	28%	37%	25%	8%	30%	39%	23%
	Japan	21%	45%	30%	4%	14%	50%	30%	5%
	Malaysia	13%	33%	37%	17%	4%	30%	48%	18%
	Mexico	20%	27%	28%	25%	9%	25%	35%	32%
	Netherlands	7%	39%	37%	17%	12%	39%	28%	20%
	Norway	10%	48%	36%	6%	14%	63%	17%	7%
	Russian Federation	8%	27%	41%	23%	7%	32%	41%	20%
	South Africa	22%	26%	29%	23%	17%	28%	32%	24%
	South Korea	18%	37%	34%	11%	3%	38%	44%	15%
	Spain	8%	21%	43%	28%	5%	28%	37%	31%
	Sweden	16%	47%	29%	8%	14%	46%	32%	9%
	Switzerland	13%	44%	34%	9%	27%	45%	19%	9%
	Turkey	13%	25%	31%	32%	9%	30%	28%	33%
	United States	11%	40%	40%	9%	14%	45%	27%	14%
	Average	12%	33%	36%	19%	12%	33%	32%	23%

Source: Values Surveys Databank

Similarly, World Values Survey data show that a minority of the population are active members of a political party, of a labor union, of an environmental organization, or of charitable humanitarian organization. There are significant low levels of trust in people who are different in religion or nationality, as show in table 3.

Table 3. How Much Would you Trust...



	Country	Someone of a Different Religion				Someone of a Different Nationality			
		Trust completely	Trust a little	Not trust very much	Not trust at all	Trust completely	Trust a little	Not trust very much	Not trust at all
	Argentina	12%	51%	25%	12%	9%	51%	29%	12%
	Australia	6%	67%	22%	5%	5%	70%	22%	4%
	Brazil	6%	45%	34%	16%	3%	25%	29%	44%
	Canada	5%	75%	15%	5%	4%	74%	18%	5%
	Chile	4%	33%	43%	20%	4%	26%	44%	26%
	China	2%	16%	52%	31%	1%	12%	52%	35%
	Colombia	5%	33%	37%	26%	3%	26%	38%	33%
	Finland	12%	65%	19%	4%	11%	61%	23%	5%
	France	29%	49%	15%	8%	28%	50%	16%	6%
	Germany	2%	41%	43%	15%	2%	40%	43%	16%
	Great Britain	12%	69%	14%	6%	11%	70%	15%	5%
	Hong Kong	13%	33%	33%	22%	10%	24%	35%	32%
	India	1%	40%	43%	16%	1%	43%	41%	14%
	Italy	2%	33%	50%	14%	2%	17%	47%	34%
	Japan	5%	28%	33%	35%	3%	23%	30%	45%
	Malaysia	3%	43%	44%	10%	4%	39%	47%	11%
	Mexico	15%	65%	16%	4%	16%	70%	13%	2%
	Netherlands	2%	34%	40%	23%	3%	37%	37%	23%
	Norway	15%	49%	28%	9%	7%	42%	38%	13%
	Russian Federation	4%	38%	48%	10%	2%	25%	55%	18%
	South Africa	8%	40%	35%	18%	8%	42%	35%	16%
	South Korea	16%	72%	9%	3%	19%	71%	7%	2%
	Spain	5%	66%	25%	5%	5%	68%	23%	3%
	Sweden	2%	26%	42%	30%	2%	25%	44%	29%
	Switzerland	6%	73%	16%	5%	4%	71%	20%	5%
	Turkey	7%	46%	32%	15%	6%	43%	33%	19%
	United States	11%	40%	40%	9%	14%	45%	27%	14%
	Average	12%	33%	36%	19%	12%	33%	32%	23%

Source: Values Surveys Databank

This lack of trust limits the possibility of engaging as equals in the public sphere, particularly at a time when globalization has significantly increased migration and other opportunities and the need for people of different cultural backgrounds to collaborate. It is particularly interesting that these low levels of civic trust happen even in countries where students have high levels of educational achievement in assessments such as PISA. For example, in Canada, or in Finland, about a quarter of the population would not trust very much or at all someone of a different religion or nationality.

If we are to successfully equip future generations, native born as well as immigrants and their children, with the cultural practices that allow them to effectively contribute to the public sphere, we need to do more than make the case for civic education in our schools. We need to re-examine what kind of civic education effectively contributes to develop the capacity for students to join others, across lines of difference, in taking responsibility to make democracy work in the acts of ordinary citizens. This requires expanding the academic approach to civic education towards project based and experiential learning designed to develop not just knowledge, but the disposition and the capacity to act based on one's knowledge. We need to empower students by inviting them to take on civic challenges and develop the skills to tackle them in the process of studying them. A twenty first century conception of civic education requires that we simultaneously develop cognitive understandings, along with interpersonal and intrapersonal skills that enable people to act on those understandings. It is in this capacity to learn to govern one self and to work with and lead and influence others that we will prepare the next generation to advance public purposes.

An important challenge of twenty first century civic education is to support the development of cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies so that students can not only participate in the public sphere, critically engaging with ideas that are important for democracy, such as religious freedom, but to construct social innovations and to collaboratively solve challenges, along with others who are different among the many lines that define our multifaceted identities.

Quality teaching shall be defined as the kind of teaching that contributes to producing the full range of skills and outcomes that are part of this ambitious vision, and not just some of them. Producing such quality teaching is the responsibility of the profession of teachers, a profession that should lead the definition of the mechanisms to produce the necessary improvements to sustain such quality teaching.

These goals should also inform policies and practices that attract candidates to the teaching profession, that support their education and that appraise teaching, providing teachers feedback on their effectiveness in educating empowered citizens. Such appraisal of teaching quality should be multidimensional, in order to do justice to the multidimensional nature of teaching quality, and it will require obtaining data from multiple sources of information and multiple stakeholders.

In advancing efforts to support teachers to educate empowered citizens, citizens who can trust others to collaborate with them to advance social progress, educators and other stakeholders should model the same process of collaboration in building the commons of education. If trust is essential for democracy, it is also indispensable for educational improvement. At the core of educational improvement is learning, learning by students, by teachers, by administrators and by policy makers. No one learns very much when fear rules.

Aligning our efforts to strengthen the teaching profession with the moral vision of educating empowered tolerant citizens would connect us with the core aspirations of public education, and indeed with the core aspirations of democratic government.

About the Author



Fernando M. Reimers

Professor Fernando Reimers is Professor of International Education and Harvard University. He has played a key role in the development of thinking on the future role of the teaching profession and in the shaping of policy around the principle that education is a public good. He was a guest at EI's Congress in South Africa in 2011 and with OECD's Dirk Van Damme took part in the breakout session for the launch of EI's Education Statement. He was a keynote speaker at the Conference for EI affiliates in OECD countries this January and has been a rapporteur at the last three International Summits on the Teaching Profession. His summary speech at this year's Summit was widely praised. His article below takes forward powerfully his view that the teaching profession is vital for the future of just, fair and equitable societies.

Someone is killing our teachers

A special report from Islamabad, Pakistan

By: David Browne

Theme: Human and Trade Union Rights



David Browne - 2013

Somewhere down a dusty, nondescript street in the city of Peshawar, 160 kilometres (100-miles) northwest of here, president “Khan Sahib” and his general-secretary “Muhammad” are living in fear.



They're on a militant hit-list. Their crime? They belong to a Pakistan teachers' trade union, an affiliate of Education International.

At their behest – and to protect their identity – I've changed their names. And their photographs won't grace this article; such is the danger that stalks teachers in this South Asian nation of 180-million people.

"Many teachers are really scared," says Muhammad, who is aged in his mid-40's. "They are afraid that if they continue their duties at school they may be targeted. Maybe they will be the next target."

"The government should provide some security to women teachers and to girl pupils."

Since the advent of the "War on Terror" and relentless drone strikes on alleged Taliban militants in Pakistan's lawless Tribal Agencies, hundreds of schools in the country have been bombed and scores of women teachers and girl pupils have been murdered or attacked with acid.

Anti-education militants claim educating women is pro-Western and against the fundamental precepts of Islam.

On March 26 this year Shahnaz Nazli, aged 41, a teacher for 24-years, was assassinated only yards from the all-girls school where she taught in the village of Shahkas in the Khyber Tribal Agency, abutting Peshawar.



And on January 1 five female primary school teachers – and two female health workers – were also gunned down by militants in the town of Swabi, around 80 kilometres (50-miles) east of Peshawar, also in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province.

These killings followed the now-notorious attempted assassination of Pakistani schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai in October last year (please see main feature story).

Even without the murders and intimidation, Pakistan's public education system – especially for young girls and women – is, and has been for some time, in crisis.

"To educate a girl means educating a family, the whole of society," stresses Khan Sahib. "The whole family education lies with the mother. If she is not educated then it is very difficult."



But anti-education militants "don't want to create awareness amongst the people. They believe that (a) woman's role is only in the home. Their power is based on ignorance. And they want to keep the people ignorant," Muhammad explains.

Further to Taliban militancy, hundreds of schools in KP province -- and indeed throughout Pakistan -- were destroyed in the devastating 2010 floods that inundated one-fifth of the country, directly affected 20-million people and caused an estimated US\$43-billion of economic damage.

Pakistan is home to more out-of-school children than almost any country in the world. Five million kids, two-thirds of them girls, are not in schooling. In 2011 a mixed public and private sector task force declared the education system to be in an "emergency".

In one recent study of 164,000 public schools it was found that almost half of them did not even have lavatories for students. Many



basic facilities, such as drinking water and electricity, were also lacking. In some cases “schools” didn’t even have a school building.

It would be wrong, however, to suggest that mainstream Pakistani society is prejudiced against education. Nothing could be further from the truth – even in the socially-conservative north-western region of this beautiful country.

Even in bomb-blasted Peshawar, the first girls’ school – the Elizabeth Girls School College – was founded over 100-years-ago.

“The common man and society in general now understands that without education development is not possible,” Sardar Hussain Babak, the outgoing Minister of Education for KP province, told me in an interview soon after Pakistan’s historic May 11 elections – the first time in the history of this troubled nation that a democratic government, however flawed by corruption, passed power to another democratically-elected government.

Under fire, in the frontline in the fight for female education and emancipation, Pakistan and its courageous teachers deserve our support and solidarity.



Peshawar Head Teacher

Malala Peshawar School

Sherkhan Kili bombed

[About the Author](#)



David Browne

David Browne is a former Associated Press staff correspondent in Latin America and foreign editor of NewsVision International. He has worked extensively, both as a writer and photo-journalist, for the British and international press. In the UK, his articles and photos have been published by The Guardian/Observer; Times/Sunday Times and Telegraph/Sunday Telegraph, amongst many other publications. Since 1993, David has been working principally as a documentary filmmaker and video journalist for international broadcasters; among them the BBC, Channel 4, France 2, Sky and Al Jazeera English.

A 'game-change' in Africa

Is this the moment for it?

By: Mary Metcalfe

Theme: Economic crisis



School library of Gbonvié, in Togo. GODONG / Reporters, 2013

Africa is poised to begin a phase of social and economic development in which its substantial human and material resources might for the first time be directed sustainably to the benefit of its people. This moment follows centuries of exploitation that have diverted these resources away from citizens. However a danger persists. The institutions required to ensure that these resources will indeed be directed towards sustainable development in Africa and for the benefit of its people are not yet strong enough to ensure this goal. The greatest challenge to a potential 'game-change' is the weakness of states in which increasingly militarised conflict over resources is wreaking havoc in the lives of citizens who should be the beneficiaries of those resources.

The governance and administrative mechanisms necessary to ensure that a portion of the wealth generated is used to build the capacity of the state to deliver services to its citizens are weak, reducing potential revenues. Too often, instead of the benefits of mineral wealth growing community infrastructure, hospitals and schools, we see the strengthening of private armies to protect non-state financial interests. Instead of these resources being used to grow industrial development and agricultural processing and develop the skills needed to build employment and sustainable livelihoods and so reduce poverty and inequality, wealth is diverted wholly into private hands, bypassing the state entirely.

Education is key in developing a citizenry that can challenge these practices and hold government accountable for the use of the wealth of the country to reduce poverty, build houses, and increase access to water, improve health care, reduce child mortality and increase life expectancy.

Education – the failed promise

In [Dakar in 2000](#), 164 governments pledged to achieve a quality *Education for All* (EFA) children, youth and adults. Firm goals were set and governments, development agencies, civil society and the private sector pledged to work together to achieve six



goals by 2015 of which the centrepiece was to be that all children would be able to access and complete primary education of good quality. The [Millennium Development Goals](#) (MDGs) adopted in 2000 by all 189 member states of the United Nations set a goal for education that all children should complete primary school. This goal was part of a set of mutually complementary and interdependent development goals. In agreeing that education should be an MDG, member states acknowledged the vital role of education in giving access to the tools necessary for meaningful participation in civic and economic life and empowering citizens to engage with social problems.

However, despite rapid expansion of access to education, the simple goals of access have not been achieved. In [2011](#), more than half of the world's 57.2 million out-of-school children were in Sub-Saharan Africa. Of these, the majority has never attended school. Many have begun school, but have dropped-out before completion with gains in literacy and numeracy gains not being maintained. Those most likely to be denied access have been the children of the poor children of the poor and rural families. The rich human potential needed to build society and the economic activity necessary to reduce poverty is stifled by the lack of access to education.

For those who have minimal or no access to education, the tragedy of wasted potential is considerable. But what is the experience of education of those who do access schools? An enrolment rate does not translate into meaningful learning unless both the quality resources and quality processes exist to create the 'choices and freedoms that ignorance denies' (Sen, 1999). What is the quality of the learning opportunities that is accessed? The [Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality](#) has shown that in the fifteen participating countries, children spend their time in school in large classes, without the necessary learning material such as textbooks and materials with which to write, and progression through the system is slow. Attendance does not translate into opportunities to learn, especially for the children of the poor and those in rural areas.

Poverty and hunger with its attendant educational challenges have created systematic 'zones' of exclusion ([Lewin, 2007](#)) at multiple points in the schooling system. Those zones include those that drop out early in primary school, those that continue but are low achievers and those who repeat education without success and then become 'over-age' and drop out disheartened after years of disappointed effort and investment.

Teachers are in the Front Line of Development

It is teachers themselves who carry the social and educational burdens of poverty and absence of learning resources while laying the basis for individual and national development. Often teachers work in conditions that require them to make this contribution without having the necessary resources or support to achieve their personal educational goals in order to meet the aspirations of the communities they serve. A teacher's commitment to serve marks her with a special status as a community leader and a person whose educational privilege gives access to a world of information denied those living without access to the written symbols. However in many countries this marks them as a target for repressive regimes which threaten them with violence.

The position of teachers in the context of underdevelopment and impoverished education systems requires that they exercise moral leadership in advocating for the resources communities need for their children and adults to access the right to education in a meaningful way. This generation of teachers must take the action that will change the game for subsequent generations by ensuring that education breaks the cycle of poverty and marginalisation, and that education's potential to be an instrument of social change is realised. It is teachers through their organisations who must provide leadership for significant and sustained educational change.

What does this mean for the post-2015 agenda?

There are several demands that must be made in national forums, and by the collective international voice of teachers.

- More resources are needed to finance the quality inputs and processes that give meaning to the targets for universal access to primary and secondary schools. Targets must be set for access to 12 years of schooling of a quality which can propel social and economic development.
- The provision of adequate resources to support learning is non-negotiable. Teachers must be given the necessary support and resources that will enable them to provide education of increasing quality
- The institutions through which education are delivered must be strengthened – this includes effectively led and managed schools and competent administrative nodes which are responsible for supporting schools

The challenges facing teachers who work in developing contexts are at their core similar to teachers everywhere: how to be in



touch with the enquiring mind of every child and make professional judgments that nurture enquiry, and how to build self-esteem and deepen moral insight. Solidarity across organised teachers' formations internationally such as Education International will show that however 'exotic' and marginalized locations may be – the essential humanity involved in teaching and learning is common. The problems we face are not individual. Solutions for classroom and system problems can be shared.

If the post-2015 agenda can be focused on supporting teachers as valuable front-line workers in the battle for development, then perhaps a quality education for all will unlock the processes necessary for reducing poverty and inequality and for empowering citizens.

About the Author



Mary Metcalfe

From her vantage point in South Africa through her work in the Government and University Sector there and her role as the Chair of the Education Advisory Board of the Open Society Foundations, Mary Metcalfe is in a unique position to reflect on the teaching professions' vital role in helping to achieve the United Nation's Education Development Goals. Here she argues that social and economic development relies on enhancing education and that empowering teachers as a collective force globally is key to tackling poverty, inequality and social marginalization.

The great Gonski

Closing Australia's equity gap through education reform

By: Mar Candela

Theme: Status of Teachers



from I give a gonski Facebook page

In the current context of global educational reforms -top-down developments imposed with alarming rapidity by stakeholders ignoring what actually takes place in classrooms- it is surprising to come across a different trend. In Australia, a major debate is taking place about how the funding system can be reformed around the principle of equity. Here we find a new driver of reform. This movement is based on the original ideal of the public school system as a social leveler, to ensure the transformation needed for a sustainable future. The Australian Education Union (AEU) has played a lead role in this reform. The magic word is Gonski. Let's take a closer look.

A new funding framework

The Gonski Review was the most comprehensive investigation of Australian schools' funding in the last 40 years. Commissioned by the Federal Government in 2010, the review was conducted by an expert panel headed by senior businessman and philanthropist David Gonski. The [final report](#) was released on 20 February 2012.

During 18 months of investigation, the panel reviewed over 7000 submissions from stakeholders and members of the public, visited 39 schools, and consulted 71 key education groups across Australia.

Key findings of the review included:

- Australia is investing far too little in schools and the way money is distributed is not efficient, effective or fair;
- There are growing gaps in student achievement: students in disadvantaged areas are up to three years behind those of the same age who live in wealthy areas.

As a consequence, the review recommended shifting to a new system that better matched student funding with student needs across the country. This would mean a base level of funding for every student, with additional loadings for disadvantaged students.

Public schools, which educate the vast majority of disadvantaged students, would receive the full base amount from both state and federal governments, while the amount given to Catholic and independent private schools would vary depending on the ability of parents to pay school fees.

Recurrent-expenditure funding for non-government schools would be calculated on the basis of the so-called socioeconomic status (SES) of a school community. All schools will receive additional funding in the form of *loadings* to reflect disadvantage.

Dependent on their student enrolment profiles, additional loadings will be provided for schools which serve students from poorer backgrounds, indigenous students, students with disabilities, students who lack English proficiency and for schools serving students in rural, remote and isolated settings.

I give a Gonski: the union comes in



For over a decade, EI's affiliate, the Australian Education Union (AEU), had been campaigning for additional and more targeted investment in public education.

When the school funding review was announced, the AEU grasped the opportunity to launch a nationwide campaign to get school communities involved in the review and build support for better public school funding. As part of that campaign, over 6,000 submissions were made by teachers, principals and parents to the Gonski Review.

After the final report of the review was released, the union launched a new campaign, [I give a Gonski](http://igiveagonski.com.au), to pressure governments to act on its findings and deliver the additional resources and the new funding system it recommended.

Strong campaigning by the AEU and its members boosted huge public support for its demands. Community rallies have been held in towns and cities, from North to South. The name *Gonski* has acquired a whole new connotation of equity and quality in education.

Playing politics: Gonski in jeopardy

The campaigning and the review itself bore fruit. On 3 September 2012, the federal government announced its intention to legislate for a new funding model consistent with the Gonski recommendations. Nevertheless, the agreement of the states is also



needed to co-finance the reform.

To help achieve this, Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard tried to negotiate with state premiers and chief ministers on an AUD\$14.5 billion increase in state and federal funding over six years. However, last April, at the Council of Australian Governments' meeting, Gillard didn't convince any of the states or territories to sign up for the new schools' funding plan.

Eventually, New South Wales Premier Barry O'Farrell was the first one to sign on to the Gonski package, after agreeing on an AUD\$5 billion funding deal with Gillard.

Ms Gillard set a June 30 deadline for the rest of states and territories to sign up.

However, by the end of June, divisions within the governing Australian Labor Party reshape the political landscape. Following her defeat in a leadership ballot on 26 June, Julia Gillard was replaced by Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister.

Against this backdrop of instability, the AEU called on all political leaders to act in a spirit of bipartisanship and finalise agreements on Gonski funding negotiations between the federal and state governments.

After his swearing in as Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd affirmed his commitment to the Gillard government's school funding reform agenda. In doing so, he extended the deadline for negotiations with state governments to delivering fairer, more equitable funding arrangements for schools and a better education for children.

A turn of the screw: a new prime minister

5 out of 8 states have signed up to the federal governments' school funding reforms: New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria.

Those signed agreements will be honoured by a new conservative Government which took power in Australia at a federal election on September 7.

At this stage, however, the new government has only committed to delivering four years of funding. It has also refused to commit to delivering the Gonski funding to public schools in Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory where there are no signed agreements.

EI President Susan Hopgood said the campaign would continue with the aim of getting the new Government to commit to the full implementation of the Gonski funding arrangements over the next six years, in every state and territory.

"The real challenge is to set aside political ideology and take action based on evidence," she stated. "Australia needs a new model for schools funding, because there just aren't the resources to provide the support to the students who need it most."

Ms Hopgood went on to say: "Australia's overall performance in education has significantly fallen in the last decade and, unless we change the way we resource our schools it will continue doing so. In the long-term, the cost of inaction will be far higher than the cost of investment."

To find out more about Gonski, read an interview with [AEU President Angelo Gavrielatos here](#)



I Give a Gonski - Fairer public school funding



Give a Gonski for our kids, Mr Newman

For Our Future- Public School Bus

[About the Author](#)

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Worlds of Education



Education International



Mar Candela

Communications, Education International

Making history to benefit each and every Australian pupil: an interview with AEU Federal President, Angelo Gavrielatos

By: Mar Candela

Theme: Quality Teaching



Angelo Gavrielatos, AEU Federal President, Australia

How was the AEU involved in the Gonski review?

The AEU was not involved in the creation of the review itself, other than lobbying for it to happen. We subsequently became heavily involved and organised parents, teachers and principals in public schools across the country to work together on submissions to the review. In total, 6,200 of the 7,000 submissions that were made came through our campaign, *I give a Gonski*.

If the reform passes, how will the money be spent?

The funding will come from both the Federal and State Governments. The amounts that schools will receive will vary, depending on the needs of the students. Schools that have lots of disadvantaged students, are smaller in size, or are in regional and remote locations – will get significantly more.

What kind of new programmes could be implemented with the extra funding?

For local schools, this extra money could be used for the following:

- New or better ways of teaching: working with literacy and numeracy specialists or more focus on tracking how kids are doing every day and putting in intensive effort where it's needed
- More specialist programmes that benefit students: reading or maths remedial or extension activities for kids with special talents
- More teachers, teacher aides and specialist support staff: guidance counsellors, librarians, science laboratory technicians and language specialists who can deliver a huge range of curriculum, learning and support programmes



- Better resources and equipment: smart boards, computers, iPads and tablets that can capitalise on the [National Broadband Network](#)
- New strategies and resources to tackle bullying and help teachers get on top of behaviour management

How are the Gonski reforms closing the gap on indigenous disadvantage?

For the first time, schools will receive funding for each indigenous student they enrol. The higher the level of *concentration* of indigenous, the higher the level of funding. That will allow the adoption of specific strategies that benefit Indigenous students, whether they are in metropolitan, rural or remote settings.

What would be the cost of inaction?

Public schools would receive AUD\$390 million less in funding in 2014 if the Australian federal and state governments fail to put in place the Gonski school funding reforms by the beginning of next year. This cut would be equivalent to more than 3,000 teaching positions, according to recent budget analysis by AEU.

The worst case scenario?

The new Conservative Government does not proceed with the Gonski reforms. It maintains the current broken funding system, established in 2002, where the majority of federal funding goes to private schools.

A failure to fully implement this historic change in the way schools are resourced will have a profound impact on the education of the most disadvantaged children, denying them the resources they need.

How long have you been campaigning for the Gonski reform?

We have been campaigning actively since April 2010 when the Gonski review was commissioned by the government.

What is a 'normal day' for you?

Depending on the intensity of the campaign period, my day could start with an early morning check of all the media followed by media commentary; visits and meetings with AEU affiliates, politicians and other stakeholders; community rallies; media interviews; evening functions... During the last month, I took about 25 flights. Some weeks I was in a different city in a different state every day.

What is your assessment of the campaign so far?

We are very proud of this campaign. It has had a huge impact and a lot of visibility. The issue has widely penetrated into the public opinion; it is being reflected in daily columns and attracts huge media coverage. But we don't want history to record that we ran a good campaign. We want history to record that we won.

Why have you invested yourself personally in this campaign?

I have a fundamental belief in the transformative power of public education and what it should mean for each individual child and the nation as a whole. I believe the quality of the education should not depend on the wealth of one's parents, or where one lives.

Every child should be given every opportunity to achieve his/her very best, to be able to fully contribute to the sustainable and democratic development of society. This is really the key to creating a better world.



[Angelo Gavrielatos: Australia's campaign for education funding](#)



Australian Education Union Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos talks about the success of the I give a Gonski campaign

[About the Author](#)



Mar Candela

Communications, Education International

Challenges to quality education

An interview with Haldis Holst about Haiti and Pakistan

By: Claude Carroue

Theme: About EI



Haldis Holst

The Deputy General Secretary of Education International (EI), Haldis Holst, is supervising EI's work on development cooperation, as well as issues linked to human and trade union rights and equality. In early 2013, she embarked on a mission to Haiti, where a devastating earthquake caused the collapse of an already weakened education system. Haldis is also monitoring the education situation in Pakistan, where those promoting inclusive education, especially girls' education, encounter much danger, at times even risking their lives.

"Haiti is a very good example in that respect: 85 per cent of education there is private. We can go into Haiti and take control of the national education system - but you have to realise that, even if you put the whole national public budget on the table, you would not be able to fund education for all. There is a big challenge in building a public sector in Haiti, because politicians actually do not have control over what public services should be.

"Furthermore, if you want to develop a country as an independent country, you have to support the long-term development of the infrastructure of a political system and a public education system. This means that you need to link individual schools together in the same system.

Devastating natural disasters

"Also, natural disasters struck both Haiti and Pakistan. It is devastating for poor countries that so many of them have natural disasters: they are so severe when they strike because these countries do not have the funds to prevent or deal with the consequences afterwards.

"It is different in a society such as Japan, where [natural disaster awareness] is part of education and the whole society is trained on what to do when an earthquake disaster strikes. Some say that the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti was terrible, but it could have been a little better. Just look at the diseases that developed after the earthquake: if you had vaccination programmes, if you



had had the knowledge that just by educating girls and women on the importance of letting your children have vaccination, you could have prevented some of the epidemics and diseases later. This is definitely a vicious circle where, in many ways, education is the solution and the tool to promote development.

Emergency assistance to help rebuilding efforts

Emergency assistance to help rebuilding efforts

“Then there is the question of where do you start: that is why EI went into Haiti with emergency assistance, helping affiliates and teachers to get the basic infrastructure back after the earthquake hit.

“Now, they still have not rebuilt the country completely, and our support is increasingly directed at supporting our affiliates in building a coalition for quality public education in the country. We focus on how teachers, as professionals, and their unions can become agents and solutions to develop a quality public education system.

“With January’s mission, we were able to support our affiliates in not only having their campaign to build a quality public education system in Haiti, but also in bringing this campaign to the authorities, having a dialogue and cooperation with the latter to move forward. We want to influence authorities with the right suggestions.

Haiti: Small, sustainable steps towards quality education under teachers’ supervision

“In Haiti, the government has developed a good plan on how to move forward. EI and its affiliates are the experts on what needs doing, but are also watchdogs monitoring that the plan for education is actually implemented. It is a difficult role to take, as you cannot expect to have quality public education for all children tomorrow in this country, so you have to agree to take one step at a time, sustainable steps building on each other for the future.

“While Haiti has to work to developing public education, it also has to work on its teacher training, higher education and curriculum development.

“Even if the Government itself does not have the money to finance the public sector, it can get involved and start taking control through teacher training and curriculum development.

“It is all about finding the right way forward and it is different for every country, because they have different levels of development.

Haiti lacks the money and the infrastructure; to a certain extent, it also lacks the public policies, but it is getting some of these in place, and teachers are crucial to implementing education policies.



Pakistan: Hierarchy of exclusion

"You will see a lot of the same things in Pakistan."

"There is also a pyramid when it comes to access to education and we know, more or less, who will be the last ones to be included: usually, you reach the cities before you reach the rural areas; you reach boys before girls; you reach the mainstream population before the indigenous populations or the minorities; you reach the students with no special needs before the students with special needs."

"You can see that hierarchy in Pakistan. Cities have a higher school enrolment rate than rural areas where there are many communities with no schools at all. And we know that the enrolment rate for girls is much lower than that of the boys."



Girls' education hampered by culture and tradition

"Now, our special focus in Pakistan is girls because their rate of school participation and completion is low, and the country has a



very high drop-out rate too, both for boys and girls, but especially for girls.

"It is not the only country, but it is an example of a country where, in addition to working on the infrastructure, financing and public policies, they have to work on the cultural aspect and the attitudes, particularly with regards to girls' education. Some will say it is a religious matter: I do not know how much of it is religious, but to me it is more of a cultural and traditional aspect.

"There are fundamentalists connected to the Taliban who actively work against girls having an education, shamelessly destroying schools providing education to girls, attacking them, threatening parents and girls against school participation. They always see girls' education as a threat, particularly because being educated also means that you become independent.

"Some of this is just an inherited attitude and way of doing things. So, you need to work across a broad spectrum and also on changing attitudes, and that has to be done from within. I do not believe that we can or even should come from the outside and tell them what the right attitude is. However, we can support those who are working towards girls' education, starting with local communities, and convincing them that this is good for their girls.

"I wish to stress that there are success stories: the rate of participation is increasing and you see girls who are breaking through social classes, coming out of poverty and managing to get an education, then becoming role models themselves.

"In Pakistan, they have just held elections, so I think it is important to seize the momentum. With the new government getting into place after the elections, things will hopefully calm down.

EI's collaboration to advocate for education

"We came together with our affiliates and other cooperating partners such as the UN Special Envoy for Global Education, Gordon Brown. We got together to join forces, as in Haiti, to put demands on the government to have a development plan and a follow-up of this plan's implementation.

"EI will also shortly launch a scholarship fund in Pakistan focusing on girls' education.

"Above all, we want to sure that when violent people kill teachers, kill students, oppose girls' education, they know that we are watching them. This is about putting the spotlight on what is happening, mobilising the local and global communities into distancing themselves from this terrible attitude. It is also about supporting those who are brave enough not to give up on a good cause and who need to know that they are not alone in their struggle to ensure quality education for all, including girls and women.

"I believe that Malala Day, the initiative by the UN Special Envoy for Global Education Gordon Brown, to be celebrated on November 10, is about the same thing: Malala is one girl, a symbol of bravery and fighting for a very important cause, i.e. girls' education. On that day, we will be focusing on girls' education all over the world, not just in Pakistan.

Quality education: broad, right-based definition

Quality education: broad, right-based definition

"Concerning quality education, nothing is more important than to make sure that you do not define quality education in a narrow way: quality education is broad, not only in its purpose, but also in terms of what it entails.

"I sometimes say that even if you have 90 per cent of children at school, you will still not be really close to a quality education system if the 10 per cent who are left out are the most vulnerable, because you do not have an equality focus.

"When we look at quality education, we therefore need to not only look at the aggregated numbers, we have to disaggregate them and look at what is the situation for girls, for children with special needs, for Indigenous groups. We have to check that we have a system that is actually reaching out to all.



“That is very important today, when everything is measured by numbers, because you can have positive numbers overall, but if minorities are not included because they do not create a big impact on the statistics, you certainly cannot consider that you have achieved universal quality education for all.

“So, quality comes into the content of education, which must be sensitive to diversity, and extends into teachers’ training, teaching and learning materials, the curriculum and textbooks.”

About the Author



Claude Carroue

Education International

Reframing the debate on quality education

An interview with David Edwards on the wrong focus on education outputs

By: Claude Carroue

Theme: Quality Teaching



David Edwards

“According to the EI policy paper adopted at the 2011 World Congress, quality education is the result of both inputs and outputs. “Currently, the debate focuses solely on outputs – that, somehow, by measuring things you improve them.

“According to the EI policy paper adopted at the 2011 World Congress, quality education is the result of both inputs and outputs. “Currently, the debate focuses solely on outputs – that, somehow, by measuring things you improve them.

“What some governments and international institutions try to do is to take quality and pull it together with the idea of accountability. **Then** it is no longer about politicians being accountable to citizens, or citizens realising their rights; it is about testing, evaluating, ranking, identifying, eliminating and outsourcing to private companies.

“EI condemns the fact that decades of underinvestment, low expectations and low accountability of donors, governments and corporations, as well as low corporation taxes have systematically created education systems designed to fail.

“If you are a child living in poverty it is not possible to master basic knowledge and skills if you go to an impoverished school with overcrowded classrooms and low quality tools and where teachers are unqualified and untrained.

Avoidable learning crisis

“This is the learning crisis.

“Even though EI has repeatedly expressed its deepest concerns about the impact of education policies and under-investment on the quality of education, **some** education policymakers have said: ‘Input does not matter, process does not matter; the only things that matters are results. And we believe that if you just focus on quality results, we will be able to find innovative ways to get quality learning.’



"These policy-makers have looked around the world for places that support their assumptions, opinions and beliefs. They looked to find that one teacher able to teach a class of 80 students, students doing well in tests, and said: 'If it can happen there, it should be able to happen anywhere.'

"In a matter of a few short years, the focus was placed on education systems, often seen as too expensive, too long term, and too complex. The main idea became that it would be better to find a few cheap innovations to improve quality, quality being measured as children being able to write their names, or read a few words, not quality being defined as teachers performing formative assessment across a wide range of criteria.

"So now we have this 'innovative', narrow and relatively weak focus on quality that recasts education as merely a process where young people acquire the knowledge and skills their employers need.

"Given that, the challenge for EI, as the combined strength and vision and solidarity of the members of its 400 teacher unions, is to put forward another vision of quality public education. This new perspective should take into account the diversity of learning needs, the local level, and the global challenges that we are facing in terms of environment, increasing inequality and violence.

"How do we put forward a new vision? How do we start talking about organising around a rights-based framework where the citizens' priorities have at least as much weight as the employers' priorities? We are going to begin with a very simple definition of what quality is, and how it is fundamentally tied to equity.

"We are going to do that looking at three main pillars:

Quality educators

"In terms of our profession, the field of education, what do we need to know in terms of our contents, our pedagogy? Developmentally, what do we need to know about how people develop at different ages?

"We have to put forward an educator-led vision for ensuring quality in our trade.

Quality teaching tools

"The second pillar has to do with the quality of the tools that we have available to teach with.

"In many parts of the world, teachers do not have books, there is no relevant curriculum, and there are no adequate classroom materials to allow students to interact, i.e. in chemistry or natural sciences. We need to invest there.

"Also, there are new technologies available that only a few of our members have access to and that are being promoted in some circles as replacement for teachers. But being the knowledge workers, the wisdom workers, whose history and field goes back centuries, we are always used to the next salesman coming along with some gadget that can allegedly replace or supersede the quality teaching and learning interaction at the core of what we do. We remember the radio was supposed to replace us, along with the tape recorder, the television, the video recorder (VCR), the computer, the iPad, or the cell phone, i.e. the 'drone education'. We have appropriated and used each new technology for our teaching, and we will continue to do so.

Quality education requires quality teaching and learning environments

"The third pillar concerns quality teaching and learning environments.

Quality teaching and learning environments can be measured by focussing on completion rates versus dropout rates, inclusivity versus exclusion, relevance versus dogma, and the collaboration, knowledge creation and critical thinking which permit students to



know where to find answers, and formulate questions.

“That is our challenge. We have to communicate and implement our vision, and join forces with young people, parents, activists, concerned citizens and anyone else who thinks that the key to a better, more fair, and more just future is in quality public education.”

About the Author



Claude Carroue

Education International



Share My Lesson

Solution Driven Unionism

By: Randi Weingarten

Theme: Quality Teaching



Teaching Resources

Community

by teachers, for teachers

In the United States, teachers' commitment to their students is unwavering but they face numerous challenges—plummeting education budgets, requirements in most states for teachers to implement new core standards but without much help, and job security increasingly based on student achievement but with little or no support to help teachers become the best educators they can be.

In top-performing countries, teachers are given the tools, time and support they need to ensure great instruction. In particular, time is set aside for teachers to collaborate and share ideas. Finland and Singapore, for example, recognize the value of teachers learning from and helping each other. Some American schools strive to regularly provide teachers with such opportunities, but built-in time for teachers to collaborate is still the exception.

The American Federation of Teachers believes it is the union's core responsibility to develop solutions to overcome challenges for the people we represent and for the people we serve. The AFT calls it "solution-driven unionism".

A prime example of solution-driven unionism is Share My Lesson, the largest free collection of classroom resources in the United States that the AFT developed with its British partner, TES Connect.

The Share My Lesson web site, www.sharemylesson.com, was launched in July 2012 and now has more than 275,000 total resources available.

Share My Lesson allows educators to share tried-and-true ideas, lessons and teaching tools. It creates a unique online community so teachers don't feel so isolated. Teachers crave the tools and resources to help their students succeed. Share My Lesson offers lesson plans, worksheets, handouts, quizzes, PowerPoint presentations, videos and guidance for teaching English language arts and math, from pre-K through 12th grade. The site categorizes teacher-created resources by grade level, subject and type of resource and is completely free of charge. It allows teachers to find an array of ways to differentiate instruction to meet the needs



of all their students. Educators can upload their best resources, download whatever is on the site, and review and rate materials to ensure quality control. As Share My Lesson's slogan says, it is truly "by teachers, for teachers."

From St. Louis to Shanghai, teachers tell me that they want access to content that enables them to provide a great education to their students. Share My Lesson is an important tool to making that access truly universal.

The digital platform fills a void for educators who desperately want additional tools and resources to help their students succeed. Existing instructional web sites, teachers report, are too limited, too vast and unwieldy, inaccurate, and have hidden costs. They are looking for a one-stop-shop for the materials they need and a site that is "teacher tested."



"Teachers are in dire need of quality resources." Christy Gill | Photo Credit – Chuck Garvin

Recently, Share My Lesson was showcased at the Finnish Embassy in Washington. Finnish Ambassador Ritva Koukku-Ronde praised the online resources for teachers, saying it is reminiscent of Finland's own renowned commitment to teacher training and support.

"Sharing is caring," said Ambassador Koukku-Ronde, adding that giving teachers the tools to share their best lesson plans and activities is another way of valuing and supporting their professional growth.

EI affiliates in countries around the globe are linking their members to Share My Lesson. To quote a member of the Jamaican Teachers Association who recently tried out Share My Lesson at a union sponsored education conference, "I really need this. I can use this to help me prepare my students for the new assessment tests the government is introducing."

Opportunities for teachers to share with and learn from their colleagues are crucial to helping all children get an excellent education and keeping teachers in the profession. About 50 percent of U.S. teachers leave the classroom within their first five years because of lack of support or other frustrations. This teacher turnover crisis costs the United States more than \$7.3 billion annually and unknown costs to children's education.

Share My Lesson has become an important online resource that helps educators—and their students—learn and grow.

When teachers have the necessary tools and resources—like Share My Lesson—to do their jobs and be great teachers, kids are the winners and teachers make teaching their life-long career.



"Some of our best teachers are sharing great strategies" John Kuijper | AFT Photo



"It brings the best practices right to your fingertips." Karen Gant | AFT Photo



"Teachers are in dire need of quality resources." Christy Gill Photo Credit – Chuck Garvin



"Some of our best teachers are sharing great strategies" John Kuijper AFT Photo



"It brings the best practices right to your fingertips." Karen Gant AFT Photo



About the Author



Randi Weingarten

Randi Weingarten is the President of the American Federation of Teachers.

The Mismeasure of Higher Education

The OECD's Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes

By: David Robinson

Theme: Higher Education & Research



Photo montage - EI

*In *The Mismeasure of Man*, noted American paleontologist and evolutionary biologist Stephen Jay Gould presented a definitive critique of biological determinism as it was used in the assessment of intellectual ability. Gould tracked various attempts throughout history to measure the complexity of human intelligence, from early crude experiments claiming empirical links between intellect and skull and brain size, through to more recent quantitative tests which purportedly measure intelligence as a single quotient for each individual. For Gould, these allegedly scientific and neutral efforts to rank people on the basis of their intellectual worthiness were not only methodologically flawed, but also biased. Results were and continue to be used to show that specific disadvantaged groups — races, classes, or sexes — are innately inferior and thus deserving of their status.*

In reflecting upon the OECD's proposed AHELO programme, one may well ask if a similar critique could be levelled against attempts to measure and order the worth and quality of higher education. To what degree does such an assessment, and its close cousin in the Times Higher Education University rankings, suffer from the same basic fallacies as "scientific" assessments of intelligence? Do such assessments make the same mistake of trying to convert abstract and complex concepts into a single number? Do these assessments have the effect of reproducing and justifying existing social and economic hierarchies?

First floated at the OECD education ministers' meeting in Athens in 2006, AHELO was initially packaged as a 'PISA for higher education'; a tool that "could provide member governments with a powerful instrument to judge the effectiveness and international competitiveness of their higher education institutions, systems and policies."

While receiving a lukewarm response to the proposal from most members and stakeholders, the OECD nevertheless pressed ahead and launched a multi-million euro feasibility study to see if such a tool was even scientifically possible. Skeptics noted that AHELO raised significant methodological issues. Given the diversity of higher education systems, institutional missions, and student populations both within and across countries, would it be possible to agree upon a set of standardized learning outcomes,



let alone measure those outcomes in a way that would provide reliable international comparisons?

To explore this, the OECD's feasibility study tested three different tools or "strands": a generic strand, based upon the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) administered in the United States evaluates, a standardized test to evaluate the general skills of all students, regardless of discipline, toward the end of their undergraduate degree (e.g. critical thinking, problem solving, and written communications); a discipline specific strand that focused on assessing the knowledge and abilities of students in engineering and economics; and a contextual strand that sought to gather information about the institutional environment and background of students.

The results of the AHELO feasibility study were presented earlier this year, with the conclusion that it appears to be possible to assess discipline-specific skills. There is less scientific certainty around the reliability of the generic skills strand. In fact, the AHELO technical advisory group found that the questions used and based on the CLA "proved excessively 'American' in an international context." In an echo of Gould's critique of the mismeasure of human intelligence, AHELO seems to privilege and reinforce particular Euro-American values and knowledge systems.

Beyond the methodological shortcomings, there lay some serious political considerations concerning the potential use, misuse and abuse of AHELO results. While the OECD insisted AHELO would not be a ranking, it is difficult to see how it could be anything but, particularly when it was explicitly intended to help governments benchmark the performance of their institutions against those in other jurisdictions. Once a number is assigned to the performance of an institution or a program, whether based on research performance as are the current global university rankings or learning outcomes as proposed in AHELO, the outcome invariably will be that governments and the media rank results in a simplistic league table and use those tables improperly. No matter what the initial intention may be, the danger is that results will not be used to improve and support institutions and teachers, but rather to exert more external control.

In truth, what makes a good university or college can only at best be partially captured statistically. The quality of the education and free inquiry that takes place within an institution cannot be easily or accurately parsed, quantified, ordered and compared. Quality higher education is not a singular product or outcome subject to one simple definition or numerical score. It has to do with a diverse range of activities and processes. Assessments such as AHELO require that these complex aspects of a university or college be reduced to a number no matter how absurd the exercise becomes.

About the Author



David Robinson

David Robinson is Education International's special consultant on higher education. He has been close to the development of the OECD's Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO); the OECD's attempt to pilot a global evaluation of the quality of the world's universities. It is an attempt which looks increasingly in question; a situation predicted by David ever since AHELO was first proposed. Nevertheless it is worth analysing why the burgeoning obsession with ranking Universities is so flawed as David makes crystal clear. Alongside Mike Jennings' article it is a powerful and persuasive call for OECD and any media involved in such rankings to think again.

A Bean Counter's Worst Nightmare

Now is the time to decide – do you really want to read on?

By: Mike Jennings

Theme: Higher Education & Research



The tested egg - EI photo montage

This article is a bean counter's worst nightmare, a visceral reflection on the value and validity of measurement and ranking written by a metrics sceptic. No objectivity is claimed and no supporting statistics will be quoted.

Now is the time to decide – do you really want to read on?

Some years ago at an International Labour Organisation hosted conference on Employment Practices in Higher Education one of the invited panellists from the employer side caused noticeable discomfort to his colleagues. To their obvious dismay and disapproval he did the unforgivable at such a sophisticated forum – he blurted out his honest opinion. “It is a recognised fact”, he said, “that you cannot control that which you cannot measure”. “Bravo, for candour”, I thought, “now that’s a revelation and an explanation!”

Ever since being the beneficiary of this unexpected openness from a Management advocate I have found that I am no longer able to bring myself to differentiate between “assessment” and “control”.

“Quality Assessment” is such an accepted, innocuous phrase whereas “Quality Control” evokes images of, well, **control** and interference, not to mention deciding on what actually constitutes “quality” in the first place.

What my interlocutor has done is render me incapable of seeing “control” and “assessment” as anything other than a manipulative hand inside a fashionable glove.

When challenged at a higher education conference to speak for my first time on the topic of measurement/assessment/ranking etc I racked my brain for some personal encounter with the relatively recent obsession (oops! bias display!) with Quality Assurance. I was just about to give up when out of left field I recalled a parabolic story from my primary school reader.

Cleansed of its then ubiquitous racist stereotyping the story told was of a good-hearted but naive little boy who was sent by his



mother to purchase a dozen eggs. “But be sure”, she said as he departed on his mission “that each one is fresh”.

Now, as we say in Ireland “eggs is eggs” and they all have shells. How then to ensure “quality”? Our hero knew and accepted that Quality Assurance was his number one mandate. So, applying the logic of modern-day rankers, he broke each egg to examine its inner goodness.

Quality assured! Product destroyed! Quel dommage!

What has all of this to do with Higher Education rankings?

Well, for those of you who do not see what I see from the above let me get down to fundamentals.

Ranking implies a comparison/assessment of a **product**, an entity. Rankers are, no doubt, honourable and decent people. But, what if something is not a mere (oops, bias again!) product? What if one accepts that the expansion of the store of human knowledge (research) and the transmission of that to a new generation (teaching) is not a product but a **process**? What then for measurement/ranking?

Are there any areas of (vital) human interaction not susceptible to measurement/ranking?

If you are in an Opera House when a new Gigli or Pavorotti is singing and you feel moved to tears, do you stand up and proclaim “excuse me, but with the utmost of respect, this is so much better than the last time I was here and I don’t know why. So, if I may, could I just check (a) the response of the audience [heartbeat etc] (b) the quality of the singing [volume, resonance, timbre] and (c) the physical environment [temperature, size of the room]?”

Did you just hear the sound of a dozen good eggs being cracked open?

Throughout human history our literature has been sprinkled with the fantasy of the return to earth of departed gods and heroes.

For many years I wallowed in the fantasy that Shakespeare, Dante, Joyce and others returned to a university near me. Now my fantasy is destroyed. Ever since I entered into the world of ranking all I can see is the look on the faces of these my heroes as a well meaning official from the OECD (the Office for the Effective Codification of Discourse) presents each of them with a 15-page “user-friendly” questionnaire on what exactly made them what they are. I struggle to wake and then the realisation dawns. I **am** awake. Welcome to planet ranking aka AHELO (The OECD’s study, ‘Assessment of Higher Education’s Learning Outcomes’), aka “we just want to know what it is that you do”.

Let’s get measuring. Let’s get controlling. After all, these university guys have had it all their own way for over 600 years now and look, they have only created a world-class, fit for purpose higher education system.

Surely with a bit of measurement and the odd stop watch and clip board we can do better!

Let me conclude on a less flippant note. The current preoccupation with ranking and endless measuring is not an inconsequential fact. It may not be a crime but it is not victimless either! There is ample evidence of the distorting effects on university values arising from the pursuit of higher placements in ranked tables. Who can deny the inadequacy of even the most sophisticated ranking scheme to capture the true magic of teaching and learning?

To those who refuse to recognise the damage they have done and will do to the “product” they seek to measure and reduce to a ranked list can I, untypically for an Irishman, I assure you, quote Oliver Cromwell – “I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken?”

About the Author



Mike Jennings

This article's author Mike Jennings is the General Secretary of Ireland's Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT), and Treasurer of the European Region of Education International. Mike has been a longstanding participant in the Trade Union Advisory Committee's Working Group on Education, Training and Employment Policy (TUAC) at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). With Education International's David Robison, Mike has tracked the attempts by OECD to put in place the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO); its global evaluation programme of Universities. Both Mike and David represent EI on the OECD's AHELO's stakeholders' group. We asked Mike to enjoy himself and give his personal reflections on the pitfalls of attempting to rank the quality of Universities.

Making use of Research in Policy Making.

By: John MacBeath and Maurice Galton

Theme: Research and Policy Development



Jens Kalaene / Reporters, 2012

In the United Kingdom education research has had an uneasy relationship with successive Governments particularly in England.

We asked Emeritus Professor John MacBeath and Professor Maurice Galton of Cambridge University to give some thoughts on the recent history of the fate of education research commissioned by the English Government particularly in relation to reforms of pedagogy and the curriculum. Both John and Maurice are global leaders in research on school self-evaluation and leadership and primary education.

We believe that this area of exploration is vital for the teaching profession globally since governments are increasingly claiming that their education reforms are based on research evidence drawn both from other countries and from international studies. We would like this to be the first in a series. We want to hear from you about the use of evidence in education policy making and whether it is being used partially, as simply a weapon to impose politically motivated reforms, or whether it used as the basis for genuinely improving learning by governments and teachers alike.

In education history repeats itself

Evidenced based practice is a term politicians are fond of using when it comes to justifying their educational policies. In the UK during 1980s under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, a leading proponent of the school effectiveness movement, David Reynolds was dispatched to Taiwan to discover why that country did so well in the international assessment rankings. He concluded it was down to whole class teaching despite the fact that there were many other Asian countries where whole class teaching dominated although at the bottom of international league tables. Primary teachers throughout England and Wales were thus mandated to spend 60 per cent of a lesson using this form of instruction. Much of this policy was continued to be implemented, albeit in modified forms by the following Labour Government and its Standards Unit Head, Michael Barber. Now, with the return of the Conservatives in coalition with the Liberal Democrats, another report was commissioned to determine the lessons to be learned from leading Asian countries, written by Tim Oates (Tim Oates, *Could do better: Using international comparisons to refine the National Curriculum in England*, November 2010, Cambridge: Cambridge Assessment) of Cambridge Assessment, the University's international examining group. This time it was the way in which the curriculum, as delivered through text books, and its alignment with the assessment procedures that was said to be the key to success.

Often expert advice is rejected by English Ministers. One example is the creation of the first National Curriculum for England. The



then Conservative Government's expert committee, of which this article's author Maurice Galton was a member, recommended integrating subjects within a core of mathematics, English and science as a way of accommodating a balanced curriculum which allowed time for creative subjects such as the arts, drama and music. This advice was rejected, the committee summarily dismissed and their draft report completely rewritten by a government agency. However, within three years of the introduction of the new National Curriculum, the Government had to appoint a fixer, Ron Dearing, to reduce the resulting curriculum overload. Another example was when a Conservative Minister invited a globally renowned academic Robin Alexander to join what later became known as the 'three wise men' to make recommendations on primary teaching, having reviewed the existing research. Subsequently, Alexander described how much of what he wrote in draft was amended by the then Chief Inspector, Chris Woodhead, to reflect the Government's vendetta against what they saw as *child centred practices*, which, for example, included the use of cooperative group work.

The incoming 1997 Labour Government turned out to be equally selective in its use of evidence is substantiated by this article's other author John MacBeath. His membership of the Government's Task Force on Standards was salutary. Created shortly after the 1997 coming to power of New Labour as a forum for open policy discourse, it became quickly apparent that the boundaries of viewpoints deemed admissible had been already well established. Heresies would, at best, be given a polite and cursory hearing. Even as a sounding board for embryonic policies it proved to offer false promise as even its Chair, Education Minister David Blunkett found himself bypassed by priorities shaped and agreed around the kitchen table of the Prime Minister's office. Only through gritted teeth did Blunkett endorse the continued tenure of HMCI Woodhead.

Experts but not so expert after all?

Bringing the saga up to date, Cambridge University researchers with long experience of working on the curriculum and assessment, Andrew Pollard and Mary James, were appointed by the current Secretary for Education, Michael Gove to lead an expert panel, advising on further reform of the school curriculum following the Oates' report. They found their recommendations on a broad and balanced curriculum were being ignored so that the arts were in danger of total exclusion with draft programmes of study in other subjects ignored and replaced by ones devised by the Government. In their joint letter of resignation Pollard and James justify their decision because of their concern

'with the direction which the [Education] Department now appears to be taking. Some of these directions fly in the face of evidence from the UK and internationally and, in our judgement, cannot be justified educationally'

The real lessons of international comparisons

In reality, our experience suggests that the lessons to be learned from the countries in and around the Pacific Rim and elsewhere are very different from those absorbed by the UK Government which seems to select only the evidence which supports their ideological leanings.

In Singapore, for example, reforms such as 'Teach Less: Learn More' have been based on the growing understanding, backed by research, that, cooperation, risk taking, and strategic thinking are vital elements in the education of the young and that in an 'information based' society, *'knowing how'* to access information is more important than *'knowing what'*. Singapore has invested millions of dollars on seeking to implement these changes in pedagogy which involve much greater student interaction.

In Hong Kong, the spearhead reform, *Learning to Learn*, takes on a similar perspective for 21st century education. At primary level, Hong Kong has reduced the size of classes from around 38 to between 20 and 25 with a determined attempt to achieve a similar shift in pedagogy as that in Singapore. Following the recommendations of researchers, six pedagogic principles, based on a social constructivist approach are now embedded in most curriculum initiatives. At upper secondary school and University the old 3-4-3 system inherited from the British has been replaced by 3-3-4 such that 'Ordinary' and 'Advanced' level examinations, taken at 16 and 18 years of age respectively, have been abolished and a single leaving diploma taken at 17 years of age instituted. The 4 year University course now has a flexible foundation year. Those who initially miss out on University entrance can follow a diploma while first year students are following the foundation year and, if they gain the award, can enter the degree programme in year two of the course.

In Hong Kong a salient feature of research, including Government funded research, is the receptivity to expert findings and a willingness to adopt recommendations of researchers. Derisive comments about 'academics' and university research, such as prevailed during and beyond the Thatcher years in the UK, is a foreign notion in both senses of the word.

In some developing countries also, expert advice seems to count for more than in the UK. For example the Ghanaian Ministry has adopted the principles of Leadership for Learning, which were researched by a Cambridge team over three and half years in that country.

While 'cherry picking' of school effectiveness research findings has been put to the service of preconceived government initiatives, countries less open to a researcher-policy dialogue, including so-called 'developing' countries, have often taken a less doctrinaire stance to the research community. And in some of the high achieving countries such as Finland, Singapore and New Zealand there is a more nuanced approach to school 'effects' and to research findings in general. Interestingly, in New Zealand the Ministry of Education's own team, led by Professor Alton Lee not only reads all the papers studied thoroughly, unlike some analyses which are based only on the abstracts, but then send the conclusions out for further testing in schools, so that the theory, and the empirical findings are triangulated against classroom practice - an approach very different from that put to the service of policy in countries such as the UK.

In contrast in England, after a year and half of work on curriculum reform, much of its expert group's recommendations were ignored by the Government. So having appointed the country's leading experts on curriculum and assessment, the Minister obviously decided that he knew better having been to school himself. His research findings, in effect, rested on a stratified sample of one. Making use of research in policy making? Well, perhaps not.

About the Author



PROF.
JOHN
MCBEATH

PROF.
MAURICE
GALTON

John MacBeath and Maurice Galton

In the United Kingdom education research has had an uneasy relationship with successive Governments particularly in England. We asked Emeritus Professor John MacBeath and Professor Maurice Galton of Cambridge University to give some thoughts on the recent history of the fate of education research commissioned by the English Government particularly in relation to reforms of pedagogy and the curriculum. Both John and Maurice are global leaders in research on school self-evaluation and leadership and primary education. We believe that this area of exploration is vital for the teaching profession globally since governments are increasingly claiming that their education reforms are based on research evidence drawn both from other countries and from international studies. We would like this to be the first in a series. We want to hear from you about the use of evidence in education policy making and whether it is being used partially, as simply a weapon to impose politically motivated reforms, or whether it used as the basis for genuinely improving learning by governments and teachers alike.

How not to reform the Curriculum

By: Warwick Mansell

Theme: About EI



Based on picture from Kirsty Wigglesworth, AP/Reporters

What should the rest of the world think of England's current reform programme for education? It is hard to escape the view that, seen from the perspective of many other countries, the helter-skelter character of our changes would be enough to take the breath away. England is engaged in perhaps the most hyper-active, and possibly also the most centrally politicised, programme of schools reform in the developed world, with few aspects of provision left untouched since the Conservative-led coalition took power here in May 2010.

Multi-faceted reforms

Multi-faceted curriculum and qualifications reform, on which this article is focused, stands as just one element in a programme of change which has already introduced charter school-type status for thousands of primary and secondary schools; changes to teacher education so that it focuses much more on school-led provision than that organised by universities; and reforms to teacher pay with the aim that staff are paid according to performance, rather than receiving incremental salary increases every year. But both curriculum and qualifications reforms have been huge in their own right. They stand to affect every school year group in the country, from next year. The central question is whether they will achieve the government's stated aims of raising the quality of what goes on in classrooms and improving the country's international education standing.

England has had a national curriculum for five- to 16-year-olds since the late 1980s. Successive revisions have followed, but, since early 2011, the coalition has been attempting possibly the most radical change yet, with much more emphasis - at least in the central, or "core", subjects of English, mathematics and science - on setting out detailed factual knowledge expected of young people. (See <http://bit.ly/V5XGG1> for English Government proposals). The timescale for reform has been eye-wateringly tight. The curriculum review was set up in January 2011 but was originally due to produce new curricula in the "core" subjects by September this year, with other subjects following in September 2014. But by December 2011, this schedule had been deemed too exacting, with English, maths and science content now pushed back for first teaching from September 2014, alongside the other subjects.

The method by which the curriculum has been drawn up may strike non-English readers as extremely centralised. We no longer have a quasi-independent development body, as the coalition scrapped the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency, established under the former Labour government in succession to a string of similar organisations, in 2010. Instead, groups of experts - academics and teachers - were commissioned by ministers to produce advice on individual subject content under the



auspices of in-house Department for Education civil servants. But the experts' curriculum drafts were not made public and, it appears, in several subjects were simply rejected if they did not agree with ministerial priorities.

A separate "expert group" of four academics was commissioned to provide advice on the structure of the curriculum as a whole, but three of the four went on to make fundamental criticisms of the review. (See <http://bit.ly/NHmKAI> and <http://bit.ly/LQIF7I>) Those political imperatives have included, in mathematics, a stress on formal calculation methods, including, very controversially among experts, long division in primary schools; phonics teaching and spelling lists for primary pupils in English; and a focus on a very detailed programme of historical knowledge, with the Education Secretary, Michael Gove, contentiously talking about the importance of pupils learning about England's "national heroes".

Indeed, controversy around centralisation of political decision-making is epitomised by the existence of a widely-believed and credibly-sourced rumour that the latest version of the history curriculum – or, at least, large chunks of it – was actually written by Mr Gove himself. That version seems to be opposed by most history teachers. (See <http://bit.ly/15hmKjj>)

Critical response by academics and unions

Citing as a reason for reform the United Kingdom's stuttering progress in the OECD's PISA tests, ministers have said their proposals will raise expectations of all pupils, with "harder" topics taught earlier, especially in maths.

But there has been no end of controversy. In March, a group of 100 education academics sent a letter to a national newspaper (<http://ind.pn/10eIPfG>) making a string of criticisms, including that it was setting up children to fail by asking too much of them at a young age. Mr Gove responded with his own newspaper article in which he highlighted some of the authors' past writing and denounced them as Marxists.

Most substantively, most teachers' associations have been highly critical. (See National Union of Teachers - <http://bit.ly/X6hIRZ>, National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers - <http://bit.ly/10Q9jki>, Association of Teachers and Lecturers - <http://bit.ly/ZC8eBb>) The Council for Subject Associations, which represents more than 30 of them across the curriculum, said in its response (<http://bit.ly/178JliN>) to consultation on the plans that they "lacked coherence", overemphasising factual recall over understanding.

"Schools in high-achieving jurisdictions, such as Finland, emphasise critical understanding, reasoning and creativity, not the rote learning of facts," it added.

Yet, at the time of writing, with the plans out for consultation and due to be finalised by September, there seemed few signs of any major concessions by the government, other than the Design and Technology curriculum, which is being completely rewritten following criticism from leading employers, and in history, where only four per cent of teachers responding to a Historical Association survey backed Mr Gove's plans. (<http://bit.ly/15hmKjj>)

There remain serious worries about the schedule, with little time now to finalise teaching resources and with ministers seeming to make few plans to improve teachers' subject knowledge in support of their proposals, the philosophy being that schools are best-placed to make their own training plans. The coalition seems to have viewed rapid change as a priority, since, in our system, cross-party agreement on the curriculum has not been achieved in recent times and the government's term will end in 2015.

The coherence of what ministers have been trying to do is another frequently-voiced concern. Ironically, academies, the charter school-like institutions which operate outside of the auspices of local authorities, won't have to follow this new "national" curriculum. With the government wanting as many schools as possible to become academies, and with around half of secondary schools already having done so, many question how this fits with the standardisation implied by the curriculum reforms. Ministers respond that the "national curriculum" still serves a purpose, even in academies, in providing a reference point for all schools, which some are now free to accept or reject.

Questions about efficiency remain

But there remain huge questions over whether, given some of the problems documented above, the curriculum changes really will achieve ministers' stated aims of improving pupils' understanding.

And if this were not enough, the government has been attempting to overhaul both of England's main secondary school exam systems, taken during students' assessment-heavy final years.

Last year, Mr Gove announced plans to scrap by 2014 our exam for 16-year-olds, the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), in favour of a more traditional assessment modelled on O-levels, which operated until 1987 and were targeted at more academic pupils.

He decided to back down on that plan after concerted opposition from the profession (<http://bit.ly/UBsCAf>), but still wants to make GCSEs “harder”, though again to a slightly later timescale of 2015.

In the same year, new, radically-reformed A-levels – the exams that our 18-year-olds sit – are due to begin, although, again, there were question marks at time of writing over the degree to which these reforms were achievable in many subjects given the 2015 deadline.

England’s exams reforms seem to be pushing it further away from the other parts of the United Kingdom. Scotland has traditionally has a separate education system but Wales and Northern Ireland , which use GCSEs and A-levels, have education ministers who have fallen out with Mr Gove. (See <http://bbc.in/ODGNjI>, <http://bbc.in/TOm0Nk>.)

There are also signs that the Education Secretary is facing opposition more widely in England, with members of the National Association of Head Teachers having jeered him at a conference in May, some private school figures (<http://bit.ly/16MhTCU>, <http://bit.ly/1637uli>) having become opponents and the head of the leading employers’ organisation (<http://bit.ly/18yuQTF>) also having raised questions over the government’s overall strategy.

So debate in England now tends, perhaps understandably given the above, to polarise between those who think the Education Secretary will be the saviour of our system with his emphasis on higher expectations and old-fashioned standards, and many within the profession, and beyond, who disagree.

As an education journalist it makes for interesting – and, on occasion, surreal – times. It is possible to wonder whether better, calmer, models of change exist.

About the Author



Warwick Mansell

The curriculum in schools is at the top of the agenda for many countries yet official global studies such as OECD’s PISA do not survey how countries tackle curriculum reform. Twenty five years ago the National Curriculum was introduced in England and Wales. Since then Governments in England have initiated reform after reform to its content with Wales eventually achieving an independent education system including an independent curriculum. At every stage the changes have been highly controversial with teachers, parents and everyone with an interest in schools. We asked Warwick Mansell, an independent journalist who has tracked the twists and turns of the latest curriculum reforms in England, to kick off the debate about whether there are better ways to create to create a curriculum for schools. He spent nine years at the Times Educational Supplement and now writes regularly for the Guardian Newspaper. He is the author of *Education by Numbers: the Tyranny of Testing* (2007). His article provides a fascinating accompaniment to John MacBeath’s and Maurice Galton’s reflections on how English Governments have consistently ignored educational evidence over the years.

What the Media says

By: John Bangs

Theme: Economic crisis



If anything the financial crisis has heightened the profile of education globally rather than reduced it.

If anything the financial crisis has heightened the profile of education globally rather than reduced it. Indeed Education International's own Education in Crisis website (pages.ei-ie.org/handsup/en) is tracking the impact of the crisis on education in every region. Many governments are demanding changes to their education systems which are already damaging education rather than enhancing it. Yet the evidence is that public education systems are far more effective than privately run alternatives. The media and press globally are aware that education now has the capacity to generate big stories and that global developments can have significant impacts on each country's education system. The best education stories can be a mine of information and analysis both for those interested in educational practice and policy.

Worlds of Education invites you to tell us about stories you have come across which you think are important and interesting for education and teachers globally. To start with we have looked at key stories in the Times Educational Supplement (TES). It is an educational magazine which has recently decided to give its international educational stories a much higher profile. We have selected a few which have a real global resonance on teachers and their working lives. We look forward to your recommendations!

The most recent TES article which has attracted the greatest amount of comment recently is William Stewart's analysis of the contesting key policy players in global educational change the 14th December last year. For those that want to about the GERM, (Pasi Sahlberg's critical acronym for the 'Great Education Reform Movement'), this is essential reading. Its only problem is that Education International wasn't asked for its views which we pointed out to the TES at the time!

www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=630951



Dissemination or contamination?

news | Published in TES magazine on 14 December, 2012 | By: William Stewart

Comment: ★★★★★5 average rating | Comments (5)

Last Updated: 20 December, 2012

Section: news



The globalisation of education policy is happening, like it or not. But opinions vary widely about whether it is a benefit or an affliction.

On the floor above Sir Michael Barber's office is a white Portland stone balcony that offers one of the most impressive views in London.

In direct contrast there was a very interesting and moving May 31st article by Kerra Maddern on teachers going back in time and advising their younger selves about how to make their way in their careers. www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6337130

Wise words for my younger self...

news | Published in TES magazine on 31 May, 2013 | By: Kerra Maddern

Comment:

Last Updated: 3 June, 2013

Section: news



None of us can travel back in time. But if you could, what would you change and what would you tell your younger teaching selves? Six teachers bypass the years to write letters of advice to themselves at the start of their careers



James Wilson, 28, has been a history teacher for six years, and is assistant head of year at South Bromsgrove High School in England's West Midlands

Dear James

You are taking on a challenge with your first job. The school (Archbishop Grimshaw School in Solihull, West Midlands, now called John Henry Newman Catholic College) was in special measures. But you have chosen to work there because you

In the same edition you can find a fascinating analysis of the pitfalls of state funded 'independent' schools such as charter schools and academies by Laura McInerney www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6337131

What price liberty?

news | Published in TES magazine on 31 May, 2013 | By: Laura McInerney

Last Updated: 31 May, 2013

Section: news



Charter schools in the US, academies in the UK and partnership schools in New Zealand are all attracting controversy. While the freedom they bring is appealing, the potential pitfalls are not. Laura McInerney reports

My colleague sat, head in hands, despairing. For nearly a decade her daughter has eaten breakfast every morning with her father. He cooks, they eat together, chat about their day, then go their separate ways

The fundamental dangers of using assessment to rank teachers publically are highlighted in a devastating article by Stephen Exley published on March 8th, 'Named, Ranked and Shamed' about the suicide of a Los Angeles' teacher Rigoberto Ruelas because he had been described by the Los Angeles Times as 'one of the least effective teachers' in its published teacher rankings. www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6323230



Named, ranked and blamed

news | Published in TES magazine on 8 March, 2013 | By: Stephen Exley

Comment: ★★★★★4 average rating | Comments (24)

Last Updated: 14 March, 2013

Section: news



League tables that measure teachers individually are gaining popularity in the US, but their impact can be catastrophic. One such project resulted in a practitioner taking his own life after a poor rating

One autumn morning, Rigoberto Ruelas didn't turn up for work. His colleagues at Miramonte Elementary

The 3rd May story by Irena Barker, 'The country which found itself without any schools,' about the lockout by employers of teacher union members in Denmark is a classic description of obdurate and backward actions by those in charge of education. It could have been called 'How to destroy teacher morale and undermine education'. www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6332435

The country that found itself without any schools

news | Published in TES magazine on 3 May, 2013 | By: Irena Barker

Last Updated: 3 May, 2013

Section: news



The bizarre tale of Denmark's month-long teacher 'lockout'

Since the time of the Vikings, the small Nordic nation of Denmark has kept a low profile, with a few forays into the limelight thanks to a certain gloomy television detective. However, a somewhat farcical turn of

The persecution of the Bahrain Teachers Union including its leader Jalila al-Salman and the Union's courageous fight back is featured in Kerra Maddern's article in the 10 May edition. It includes comment from EI Executive Board member and NASUWT Deputy General Secretary Patrick Roach who led a deputation to Bahrain. www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6333649.

Arrested, tortured, but not silenced

news | Published in TES magazine on 10 May, 2013 | By: Kerra Maddern

Last Updated: 10 May, 2013

Section: news



Bahraini union vice-president Jalila al-Salman was persecuted and imprisoned for supporting a teachers' strike during the pro-democracy protests of the Arab Spring. She tells Kerra Maddern why she is determined to continue speaking out, even at the risk of her own freedom

They came in the middle of the night. The security officers burst into the house of Jalila al-Salman, a highly

Another story about the fight back of teacher unions against state oppression appeared in 14th June edition of the TES. 'Teachers risk all to join Turkey Demonstrations' by Irena Barker describes how accusing teacher union activists of terrorism in order to silence them has become an increasingly familiar tactic of the Turkish Government. EI General Secretary Fred Van Leeuwen is quoted attacking this policy backed by EI research www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6339841



Teachers risk all to join Turkey demonstrations

news | Published in TES magazine on 14 June, 2013 | By: Irena Barker

Comment:

Last Updated: 14 June, 2013

Section: news



Allegations of union suppression spur the profession into action

Pictures of demonstrators in Turkey fleeing tear gas have shocked the world over the past two weeks. The

Finally, there is an important story by William Stewart about the OECD's proposal to enable schools to use its tests from its Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6338471 in the June 7th edition. Worlds in Education will carry more on PISA after the OECD launch of PISA 2012 in December.

How would your school compare with the world's best?

news | Published in TES magazine on 7 June, 2013 | By: William Stewart

Comment:

Last Updated: 10 June, 2013

Section: news



Institutions in England can see how they fare in global context



England could become the first country where schools with 15-year-old students can benchmark their achievements against those of the highest-performing nations in the world.

New tests based on the influential Programme for International

About the Author



John Bangs

John Bangs is a Senior Consultant to the EI General Secretary



Worlds of Education

The possibilities!

By: John Bangs

Theme: Others



Critical Friends debates and interviews

We wanted have a mix of interviews and writers. Our founding writers make major contributions in the education policy and academic world but so can teachers. Ideally we are looking for a mix. Worlds of Education is a fantastic resource for teachers in classrooms across the world as it is for those who work for the unions which represent them. EI's Communications Unit, Timo Linsenmaier, Mar Candela, Claude Carroue, Frederik Destree, and myself are committed to making sure that Worlds of Education provides that opportunity.

We've enjoyed organising the first edition of the new digital Worlds in Education. As we've been through the process its potential for unlimited opportunities to access educational information and opinion has become more and more obvious. The best way to look at the first Worlds of Education is that it is a pilot edition. The comments of all our readers on how it can be shaped are going to be vital for its future.

We wanted have a mix of interviews and writers. Our founding writers make major contributions in the education policy and academic world but so can teachers. Ideally we are looking for a mix. Worlds of Education is a fantastic resource for teachers in classrooms across the world as it is for those who work for the unions which represent them. EI's Communications Unit, Timo Linsenmaier, Mar Candela, Claude Carroue, Frederik Destree, and myself are committed to making sure that Worlds of Education provides that opportunity.

In future editions we would like to see a forum of teachers' views ranging from blog to twitter length. Start writing! They can be responses to what you have read in this edition or to what you think is missing. They can be neither. Reflections on what is going on in your country or internationally would be great. Our pilot edition of 'what the media says' invites you to send us links to any articles, social media and media clips that you think the global teaching profession needs to be aware off. Doing that can take less time than composing a twitter bite!

I'm very conscious that voices from whole continents of the world are not represented in this edition. We aim to rectify that in future



but the vital thing is that you the reader feel able to send in ideas for article and articles of your own however short. Worlds of Education is your resource and your platform. We're looking forward to hearing from you.

John Bangs, Supervising Editor, Worlds of Education.

About the Author



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