




# Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting

## Sharing Best Practice and Moving Towards National Standards

*Future of Schooling in Australia Conference*  
25 September 2007

**Prof. Peter Dawkins**

Chair, Review of the Adelaide Declaration Steering Committee  
Secretary, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development



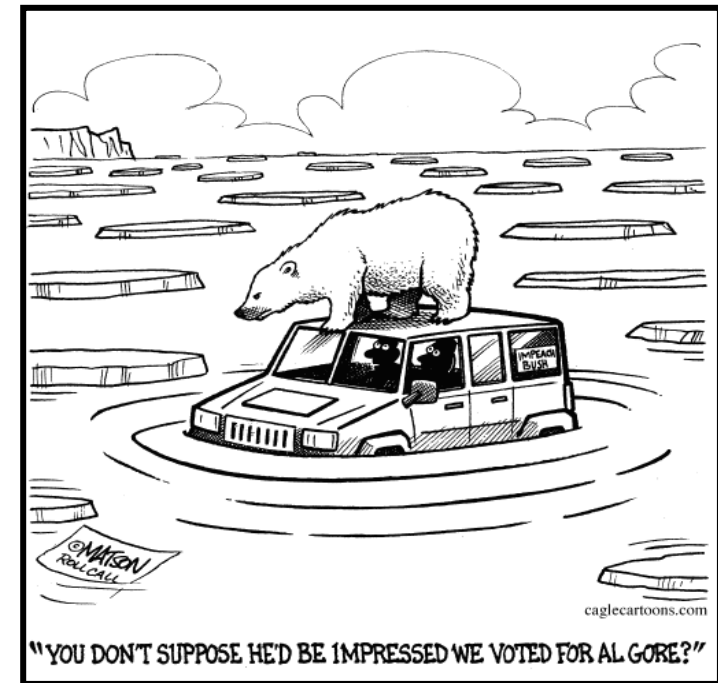
# Overview

- What has changed or become clearer since the Adelaide Declaration?
- A broad framework for designing curriculum
- Towards a national curriculum
- Enhancing assessment and reporting



# What has changed or become clearer since the Adelaide Declaration?

- Global environment
  - 9/11
  - Global warming
  - Information revolution
  - the rise of China and India
- Research evidence
  - the economic impact of school education
  - the social impact of school education



# Dealing with these challenges of the 21 Century

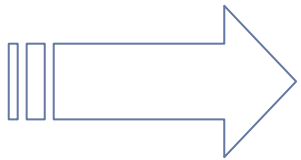
- Education is crucial for future economic prosperity.
- Young people need the right skills to operate in an information-rich world.

- Education is critical to both understand & address emerging environmental challenges.

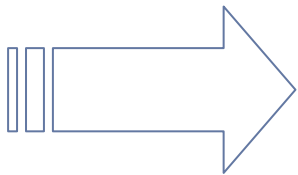
- Education promotes social cohesion
- Key driver for delivering equality of opportunity
- Spiritual, moral, cultural, & physical development

# Curriculum: a solid foundation to enable advanced learning

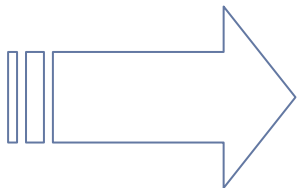
It is critical that every student achieves/develops:



A **solid foundation** in skills and knowledge on which further learning and adult life can be built.



**Deep knowledge and skills** enabling advanced learning, ability to create new ideas & translate them into practical applications.



**General capabilities** that underpin flexible thinking, a **capacity to work with others**, an ability to move across subject disciplines

# Curriculum offering for all students

“All students in Australian schools should have access to a broad and comprehensive curriculum that details the knowledge, understandings, skills and values to be achieved and provides a basis for the attainment of high standards of achievement”

# Early Years

- Literacy and numeracy
- Social, emotional and physical development



# Middle and Later Years

- Increasing focus on disciplines within science, social science and humanities
- Specialised areas of learning
- Problem solving, synthesising, teamwork and being able to move across disciplines





# Learning Areas

## Key Disciplines

English

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Maths & Science (incl. physics, chemistry and biology)

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Languages

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The Arts

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Humanities & Social Science

- History; Geography; Economics
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# Learning Areas

Key Disciplines	Other important areas of learning
English	Health & Physical Ed
Maths & Science (incl: physics, chemistry and biology)	Technology
Languages	Civics & Citizenship
The Arts	Business
Humanities & Social Science • History; Geography; Economics	

# Towards national curricula



“Collaboration between the States, Territories and Commonwealth... has put in place a number of agreements that provide a framework for national curricula.”

# Towards national curricula

Now a general will to take this collaboration to the next stage:

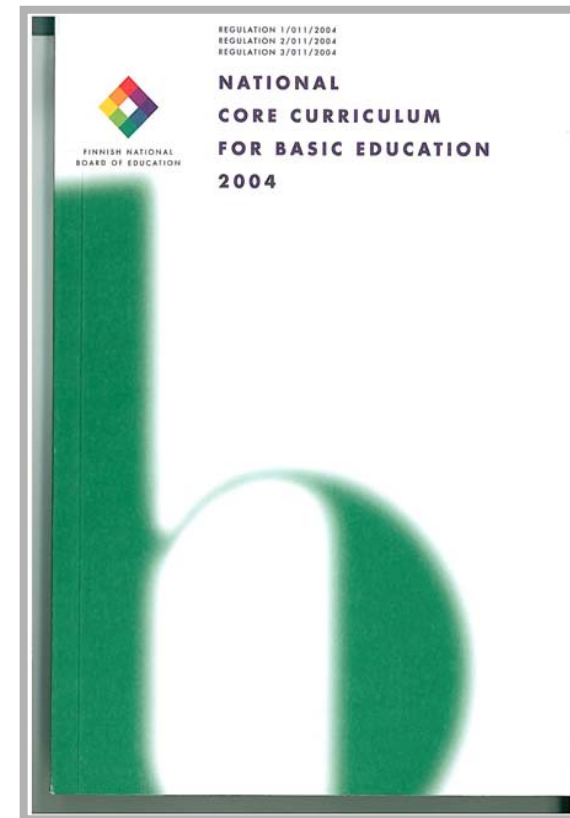
- National dialogue
- Sharing best practice
- Using curriculum expertise
- Interest in comparing student outcomes
- Assisting students who cross state boundaries
- Economic efficiencies



# Learning from overseas successes

Report takes note of the success of curriculum reform in Finland

- Moved to national standards
- Core content specification
- Flexibility for schools in timing and methods



# Towards national curricula: the action plan

**States and Territories commit to working together in collaboration with Catholic and Independent sectors to share high quality curriculum material**

**Developing nationally consistent curricula that:**

- Sets core standards and achievement standards
- Provides flexibility for jurisdictions and school sectors
- Establishes standards as a basis for national testing
- Broadens options for students
- Ensures achievement reported on same scale nationally

# Assessment and Reporting

- diagnostic assessment is most important
- parents and students need reports on progress
- more sample assessment of students
- school comparisons not straightforward -value added measures have promise



# Action Plan for Assessment and Reporting

## Testing to improve student performance

Working together to:

- improve school capacity to assess performance
- ensure quality national tests & explore sample tests
- *share targeted intervention strategies in like schools*

## Reporting on performance

- reporting in clear language
- reporting at all benchmark levels in national tests
- fair, public reporting on school performance ('value added')

# Curriculum, assessment and reporting – just part of the collaborative agenda



**ALSO**

- Quality of teaching & school leadership
- Early childhood
- School retention/transitions
- Improving indigenous outcomes
- Partnerships with parents, community, business

# Summary

- Develop national core content and achievement standards
- Commitment to literacy and numeracy; Disciplines; General capabilities plus ability to work across disciplines
- Focus on meaningful data
- Our students internationally competitive
- Parents and community informed and engaged
- Working collaboratively, sharing best practice

