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This paper discusses the context for and issues associated with the Blueprint's workforce reform initiative. It initially describes the journey that is being taken in England to pursue the vision of a reformed and more effective workforce in schools and then describes the processes that the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) plans to support to allow schools, teachers, teaching assistants and students to reap the benefits from a remodelling of the school workforce.

1. Introduction

This paper introduces readers to one of the next phases of workforce reform signalled in the Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development¹. The Blueprint contains a commitment to developing and promoting innovative work organisation in government schools and to exploring 'models for teachers to work with other professionals and paraprofessionals to deliver a wider range of learning experiences and allow teachers to focus on the areas where they have unique skills'.

The current focus on workforce reform was signalled in the 2003 Schools Workforce Development Strategy² and builds on strategies outlined in and the achievements of the previous Blueprint³.

The 'next phase' workforce reforms in Victoria will have two themes⁴. One theme will focus on 'attracting and rewarding the best people, and ensuring schools have contemporary and high quality organisational practices and cultures' and the other 'will focus on further developing the capabilities of teachers and school leaders so that professional practices sustain high quality outcomes'.

The particular initiative discussed in this paper relates to the employment and deployment of support staff in schools and reflects on a similar initiative that was commenced in England nearly a decade ago and that is generating substantial improvements in the functioning of schools.

A key element of the reform agenda established in England since 1998 was the reform of the school workforce. The vision for workforce reform expressed by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills⁵ were that by 2010:

- classrooms will be rich in the number of trained adults available to support student learning;
- teachers will be spending more of their time on teaching, lesson preparation, assessing individual pupil progress and updating their professional skills as they will be supported by teaching assistants, administrative assistants, technical support, instructors and learning mentors;
- teaching assistants will be assisting in the classroom, supervising lunchtime activities, giving pastoral and other individual support to pupils, and covering for teacher absence.

Similar visions are driving the next phase of workforce reform in Victorian government schools.

¹ Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2008)

² Boston Consulting Group (2003)

³ Department of Education and Training (2003)

⁴ Suggett (2009)

⁵ Morris, E (2001)

We will develop and promote innovative work organisation in government schools. This will include new models of teaching and learning, such as greater cooperation and sharing of practices between teachers, and work practices that make the best use of flexible spaces and technology.

We will explore models for teachers to work with other professionals and para-professionals to deliver a wider range of learning experiences and allow teachers to focus on the areas where they have unique skills.

(Blueprint for Education and early Childhood Development 2008)

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) will be drawing on the experience of Victorian schools that have already commenced the modernisation of their workforce to establish a process for supporting schools across the system to remodel their workforce. The key objective of this workforce reform initiative is to provide teachers with more time to focus on their teaching. This will be achieved in part by utilising a 'wider workforce' and enhancing and releasing the talents of other adult workers in the school.

This paper discusses the context for and issues associated with the Blueprint's workforce reform initiative. It initially describes the journey that is being taken in England to pursue the vision of a reformed and more effective workforce in schools and then describes the processes that the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) plans to support to allow schools, teachers, teaching assistants and students to reap the benefits from a remodelling of the school workforce.

2. Why workforce remodelling?

The real professionalism of teachers can best be developed when they have a range of adults working at their direction to meet the diverse needs of students⁶.

There is clear evidence that the quality of the workforce is the major factor driving the quality in schools and early childhood services. Excellent service provision can only happen when the right people are attracted, recruited and supported to do their jobs as effectively as possible.

Schooling systems in most western economies are facing similar workforce issues⁷. These include concerns that:

- a significant proportion of the teaching service is over 50
- there are ongoing teacher shortages in particular subjects and localities
- too many teachers are teaching in areas for which they are untrained
- difficulty is experienced in attracting high quality graduates
- difficulty is experienced in retaining highly effective teachers
- difficulty is experienced in locating effective school leaders
- teacher resignation rates are rising
- the most common reason given for teacher resignation is workload pressure
- the teaching profession has a low profile and status
- teachers and schools tend to work in isolation
- difficulty is experienced in breaking the nexus between low socio-economic status and low student performance
- teachers are spending too much time on routine administrative tasks.

These concerns are common knowledge for those in the teaching profession and over the last decade or so systems have been implementing strategies designed to counteract the effects of these patterns.

Top-performing school systems⁸ have adopted policies and practices such as:

- using marketing and recruitment techniques taken from business
- improving mechanisms for selecting teachers for teacher training – selection is based on characteristics such as a high overall level of literacy and numeracy, strong interpersonal and communication skills, a willingness to learn and the motivation to teach, attributes which research indicates have a strong correlation with effective teaching

⁶ Miliband (2006)

⁷ Ingersoll (2001); Boston Consulting Group (2003); Leigh and Ryan (September 2006)

⁸ Barber and Mourshed (2007)

- controlling entry to teacher training, so that supply matches demand and entry is competitive
- ensuring that all training providers meet general standards for the selection of students
- employing and paying students as they undertake their teacher training
- providing alternative entry pathways to teaching that select suitable candidates before they enter training
- increasing starting salaries
- developing processes to remove low-performing teachers from the classroom soon after appointment.

A further strategy for addressing teacher morale and teacher shortage concerns has been to review the kinds of work being performed by teachers and to re-design the school workforce in ways that enable teachers to be relieved from administrative tasks so that they can devote their time to teaching.

3. School workforce changes in England

In 1998 a British Government Green Paper⁹ included a proposal to strengthen teaching and learning 'by using the full potential of teaching assistants and school support staff' and the commitment to 'increasing the number of teaching assistants by 20,000 by 2002'. The follow up White Paper¹⁰ published in September 2001 observed that 'in teaching, as in other professions, important tasks can be delegated to key workers who are not qualified teachers, provided the task is done well'. These papers establish a reform agenda for schools, a key element of which was the reform of the school workforce.

The need for a strategy in redesigning the school workforce was most starkly revealed by research in England. In 2001, a teacher workload study¹¹ based on findings from 100 schools revealed that:

- teachers and principals work more intensive weeks than other comparable managers and professionals
- teachers are undertaking tasks which they do not believe are necessary to support learning, or which could be done by support staff or more efficiently using Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
- teachers, principals and senior teachers felt insufficiently supported to deal with the pace and manner of change
- there is a need to reduce teacher workload, foster increased teacher ownership, and create the capacity for managing change
- 20 per cent of teachers' time is spent on tasks not directly related to classroom teaching.

Two of the propositions arising from this study were that:

- routine and administrative tasks, exam supervision, student supervision outside a teacher's contact time and aspects of pastoral work should be transferred from teachers to a wide range of support staff and specialists
- new and more flexible approaches to staffing should be adopted, including administrative and business management support for principals, administrative support for teachers, more in-class support for teachers, introduction of more specialists such as IT technicians, Educational Psychologists, School Welfare Officers and Social Workers.

The study concluded that workforce reform would result in the following benefits:

- increased capacity to support the learning of individual pupils
- the potential for classroom teachers to be able to work reduced hours and have a sense of improved ownership and control of their work, with reduced stress and raised morale

⁹ Department for Education and Skills (Green Paper) (1998)

¹⁰ Department for Education and Skills (White Paper) (2001)

¹¹ PricewaterhouseCoopers (2001)

- the potential for a reduction in the workload of principals and middle and senior managers and improvements in their capacity to lead and manage change
- a school sector capable of sustained improvement and able to adapt to the economic and social demands of the future.

If we fast forward from this 2001 study to 2008 we find that there has been a dramatic change in the work being performed by teachers in England and in the composition of the school workforce.

In 2008 within the state funded school sector there were approximately 441,200 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers and 326,600 support staff¹². The breakdown of the support staff was as follows: the number of teaching assistants was 177,000 and the number of administrative staff, technicians and other support staff 149,600. In 2001 there were 411,300 teachers, 186,300 support staff consisting of 79,000 teaching assistants and 91,200 other support staff.

Since 2001 the number of teaching assistants and other support staff has increased by 140,300 and the number of teachers has increased by 29,900. Taking a ten year perspective (1997-2008) the numbers of adults working in state funded schools in England has risen by about 200,000. Of these, teachers increased by around 30,000 and teacher assistants by well over 100,000.

The range of roles being undertaken in schools by support staff has also significantly increased. The broad categories in which support staff have been engaged include teacher assistance, pupil welfare assistance, facilities and site maintenance assistance, administrative assistance, technical assistance, network (extended schools) assistance and 'other pupil support'. Around forty different support roles have been identified within the 'wider workforce' of schools. (Appendix 1 provides some examples of these new support staff roles.)

There has also been a change in understanding about the benefits of workforce reform. Initially many understood workforce reform as a means for addressing teacher shortages and teacher workload issues. More recently, evidence¹³ of the extended and creative use of classroom assistants is demonstrating that workforce reform is a way to enhance teaching and learning strategies. For example, data collected over the school year 2005/6 on support staff in schools reveal that:

- teachers' workloads have been reduced by support staff
- classroom based support staff spend much of their time in a direct pedagogical role, supporting and interacting with pupils, and this exceeds time spent assisting the teacher or the school
- with teachers, pupils were more likely to have a passive role, listening to them talk, while with support staff they tended to be the main focus of attention, and have more active and sustained interactions with them

¹² Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008)

¹³ Blachford et al (2008)

- in primary schools the presence of support staff led to more individual attention for pupils, less adult dealing with negative behaviour, but less interaction with teachers
- in secondary schools the presence of support staff meant that there was less dealing with negative behaviour and more teaching by adults
- support staff have had a positive impact on pupil attainment, behaviour and attitudes and classroom engagement.

4. Initiatives to refocus teachers' work in England

The school workforce will soon be organised according to a different professional hierarchy. Para-professionals will be leading on routine tasks; 'classroom managers' will organise lessons as projects and leading teams of paraprofessionals; and advanced teachers will be designing materials and leading on high value, high risk activities¹⁴.

The transformation in the school workforce in England is taking place because of a series of government initiatives over several years. In May 2002 a report of a 'special review of approaches to reducing teacher workload'¹⁵ was presented to Parliament. This review was asked to examine several factors that would reduce workload burdens on teachers and school leaders. This included examining whether it was possible for teachers to have more time in the working week to plan, train, think and prepare and managers have more time for their responsibilities in leading schools effectively.

Parties to this review agreed that the outcome should include 'a framework to create the conditions for re-balancing workload so that teachers could focus on their core job'. The recommendations included in this report sought to:

- reduce teachers' need to perform non-teaching work,
- protect teachers' planning and preparation of lessons, marking and recording (PPMR) time,
- limit the number of hours per year that teachers would be required to provide cover for an absent colleague,
- reduce the average weekly term-time hours worked by teachers (a target was set of reducing from 52 to 48 hours at the end of two school years and to 45 hours at the end of four school years)
- provide leadership with additional time to carry out responsibilities
- provide teachers with additional time for professional learning
- hasten the deployment of additional support staff
- ensure that additional support staff are used in ways that have maximum impact on reducing classroom teachers' non-teaching workload.

(Refer to Appendix 2 for a list of twenty-five common tasks performed by teachers that 'should, as soon as practicable, be transferred to support staff or ICT' that were referred to in the re-balancing the workload review report.)

¹⁴ Department for Education and Skills (2002) p.4

¹⁵ School Teachers' Review Body (2002)

In October 2002, the Department for Education and Skills¹⁶ produced a report on reforming the school workforce that declared, amongst other things, that to improve standards in schools:

- students need to be supported by a wide range of teachers and other adults who work flexibly and contribute to meeting students' needs
- teachers need to work in teams with other teachers and support staff
- support staff need to be recognised for their contribution to raising standards and have more opportunities to take on wider and deeper roles in support of teaching and learning.

In relation to the transference of administrative tasks away from teachers, the report observed that not only could support staff undertake a wide range of administrative tasks they could with appropriate training also perform the following sorts of roles:

- **Health and safety/site managers**
- **Attendance clerks**
- **Timetabling officers**
- **Exam officers**
- **ICT technicians**
- **Invigilators (exam supervisors)**
- **Behaviour managers**
- **Careers advisers**
- **Learning mentors/advice and guidance**
- **Cover (extras) supervisors.**

It was also suggested that some kinds of teaching activity (e.g. routine marking, developing specific resources or worksheets and supporting classroom delivery) could be delegated to trained, high-level teaching assistants and to expert coaches, practitioners and tutors, including those with further and higher education experience.

It was envisioned that teachers' time could be freed by increasing numbers of other adults such as:

- **Further Education and Higher Education lecturers**
- **Business people**
- **High-level Teaching Assistants**
- **Sports coaches**
- **Music and drama specialists**
- **Language assistants.**

This report outlined a 'seven point plan' for creating additional time for teachers and principals to carry out their roles and set out a phased implementation timeline. In January 2003 a National Agreement¹⁷ was reached between Government, employers and school workforce unions to help schools, teachers and support staff implement the seven point plan outlined in the workforce reform report. Between 2003 and 2006 work on implementing the Government's plan was undertaken. (Refer to Appendix 3 for an outline of the seven point plan.)

¹⁶ Department for Education and Skills (2002)

¹⁷ Agreement (2003)

The London Leadership Centre (LLC) at the Institute of Education, University of London was commissioned to undertake a 'pathfinder'¹⁸ program to bring about a transformation in the school workforce. The LLC worked directly with a group of 32 schools and developed the change management program that provided a structured process for bringing about a transformation in the workforce within these schools. Following the success of the pathfinder program, workforce reform became a system-wide objective. The 'cultural change' process developed by the LLC was adapted to help with the system-wide implementation of the National Agreement's seven point plan.

Central to the workforce reform process was the setting up of the National Remodelling Team (NRT) that managed the change process and the establishment of a Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG)¹⁹. The WAMG is a partnership of eleven organisations representing employers, the English and Welsh governments and school workforce unions that are signatories of the National Agreement. WAMG supports the implementation of the National Agreement and since 2003 has worked collaboratively on school workforce reforms. More recently, local partnerships have also been established to monitor workforce remodeling processes in school districts.

A School Workforce Development Board (SWDB) was also established in 2004 to provide advice on the training and development needs of school support staff. This Board which consists of representatives from the national bodies most closely involved in funding, promoting learning and skills, and providing training for school support staff. In 2006 it published a three-year strategy for training and developing school support staff that had the following three objectives:

- to support schools as they develop new ways of training and deploying their support staff,
- to create a framework of standards and qualifications to enable schools to develop the potential of all support staff, and
- to extend training opportunities to meet the development needs of all support staff²⁰.

Within these agreed parameters, processes and supporting structures schools in England have been reviewing the effectiveness of their workforces and making adjustments to 'ensure that the appropriate staff are deployed in appropriate roles with the necessary training, skills and commitment to provide an effective personalised learning experience for children, young people and other adults with whom they work'²¹. (Refer to Appendix 4 for an illustration of how support staff are working differently in schools in England and Appendix 5 for a sample support staff job profile.)

¹⁸ Pathfinder projects are a means for demonstrating how schools can make substantial progress towards achieving the government's reform vision.

¹⁹ WAMG website: <http://www.socialpartnership.org/aboutus.aspx>

²⁰ <http://www.tda.gov.uk/partners/supportstafftraining/swdb/swdb2006to09.aspx>

²¹ Collarbone (2009)

5. The effects of workforce reform in English schools

To be successful and effective, support personnel need to be trained and have access to continuing professional development that is recognised, rewarded and supported by their institutions – to be professionalised.²²

A progressive evaluation of the implementation of the seven point workforce reform plan in schools in England has been conducted by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted). In 2004²³ and 2005²⁴ Ofsted reported on the first two implementation phases of the national agreement, in 2007²⁵ published a third report and in 2008²⁶ reported on the effectiveness of the reforms to the school workforce after five years of implementation.

The Institute of Education at the University of London has also conducted a five year study of the deployment and impact of support staff (the DISS study) in schools. This study ran from January 2004 to December 2008. It obtained data on the deployment and characteristics of support staff, the impact of support staff on pupil outcomes and teacher workloads, and how impact is affected by school management and communication in the school. Several DISS reports have been produced. Strand 1 reports²⁷ describe the range of support staff employed in schools and their impact on student learning and Strand 2 reports²⁸ describe activities of support staff and their impact on teachers and teaching and on student learning and behaviour.

Ofsted's 2007 report builds on previous reports on the introduction, implementation and impact of workforce reform. The conclusions drawn from their research provide a strong endorsement for the modernisation of the school workforce.

The evidence collected by Ofsted led them to conclude 'that the reforms have resulted in a revolutionary shift in workforce culture, with clear benefits for many schools'.

They also observed that 'teachers' time and work are now focused more directly on teaching and learning' and that whilst principals and senior managers continued to sustain a heavy workload 'increasingly they are supported by well qualified and

²² Kerry and Kerry (2003)

²³ Ofsted (2004)

²⁴ Ofsted (2005)

²⁵ Ofsted (2007)

²⁶ Ofsted (2008)

²⁷ Blatchford et al(2006)

²⁸ Blatchford et al(2008)

experienced managers from outside education which is allowing them to allocate more time for strategic leadership and management’.

The 2007 Ofsted report also noted that ‘one of the greatest challenges facing school leaders was to provide an increasingly diverse workforce with relevant induction, training, performance management and professional development to contribute to an identifiable career structure’ and that the ‘full potential of the wider workforce to raise achievement and standards was not realised when schools did not match skills and expertise sufficiently closely to school needs, and when insufficient attention was given to the performance management and career development of the workforce’.

The Ofsted report concluded that ‘the substantial expansion of the wider workforce at all levels is allowing the survey schools to extend the curriculum, provide more care, guidance and support for pupils, and use data more effectively to monitor pupils’ progress’.

The 2008 Ofsted report found that ‘wider workforce was having a greater impact on pupils’ achievement and well-being than identified in previous surveys’ and that this was because ‘schools were taking better account of pupils’ learning needs and the priorities in the school improvement plan to decide how best to deploy their staff’.

The Institute of Education’s DISS Strand 1 report identified a range of support staff roles, including teacher assistant equivalent roles, pupil welfare roles, technical and specialist roles, other pupil support roles and catering, administrative and site management roles. It also indicated that support staff had high job satisfaction and felt appreciated by schools and that support staff had a positive impact on teacher satisfaction. The findings on the impact of support staff on student learning and behaviour were also positive.

Teachers also felt that support staff had benefited their teaching in a number of ways. For example they enabled the teachers to:

- concentrate more on their teaching
- adopt more varied styles of teaching
- teach at a faster pace (because they did not have to spend as much time with individual pupils),
- make teaching more challenging and take more risks
- differentiate the work for more pupils, targeting the pupils who needed help and ensuring that all ability levels were catered for.

A DISS Strand 2²⁹ report also revealed that teachers were mostly positive about the impact of support staff on teaching and that support staff had led to positive effects on teacher’s job satisfaction. The main ways that teachers’ felt that support staff affected teaching were by:

- bringing specialist help
- allowing more teaching overall

²⁹ Blatchford et al (2008) p. 12

- affecting the curriculum/tasks/activities offered
- taking on specific pupils.

Observations in this study also revealed that presence of support staff had a beneficial effect on pupils. In particular, it was observed that support staff:

- allowed more individualisation of attention
- helped to improve classroom behaviour
- allowed students to have a more active role in interactions with adults
- increased the amount of classroom engagement
- improved the attention of children in most need.

In relation to the impact of support staff on student learning outcomes the evidence gathered through observations and interviews was less conclusive. To quote the report:

‘The overall impression created by the interviewees and the observations recorded by the researchers was that some support staff had many opportunities to have an impact on the intended pupil outcomes, but most of the evidence available was indirect, impressionistic and consequently hard to interpret. The view in schools was that support staff did have an impact on pupil attainment, behaviour and attitudes; the problem the head-teachers faced was proving it.’³⁰

The difficulty of directly attributing improved student outcomes to workforce reform is also mentioned in a much earlier Department for Education and Skills (Dfes) review of research into the effects of workforce reform. This report observes that:

‘Case studies of schools reforming their workforces specifically to enhance teaching and learning (as opposed to reducing teacher workload, for example) are thin on the ground, but we should expect this to change shortly.’

The above observation about the difficulty in directly attributing workforce reforms to improved student outcomes may be as much a reflection of the early nature and uneven adoption of the reforms (making it too early to tell) as it is a reflection of the nature of the research conducted (there have been no studies contrasting learning outcome changes in schools well advanced in workforce reform with those only at the threshold of reform) and of the difficulty of isolating any one factor within a school and determining its contribution to a student’s learning improvement.

Even so, there are strong indicators that the workforce reforms in schools in England are contributing to improved teaching and to improving classroom environments. Consequently, it is not unreasonable to be optimistic about the benefits accruing to students from workforce reforms, as these reforms also help to support other

³⁰ Blatchford et al (2008) p. 14

curriculum and pedagogy initiatives designed to enhance student learning outcomes.

6. Workforce reform in Victorian government schools

Research over the past decade in Australia and elsewhere has consistently shown that successful and sustainable organisations, whether they are schools or otherwise, are those that are not only operationally effective - get the job done - but are flexible and engage and develop the commitment and creativity of the people that make up the organisation. These are also places where people want to work³¹.

The growing body of literature on the benefits of extending the range of workers within a school suggest that this is an area where further experimentation is needed. Changing the boundaries between teachers and the other members of the school workforce and opening up new ways for teachers and the wider school workforce to work will not only generate efficiencies in schools, it will also contribute to improved school effectiveness and improved student learning.

In 2003 the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) produced a workforce development strategy³² for government schools in Victoria. This three-phase strategy suggested that schools needed to establish models of effective leadership and a strong performance and development culture before moving to establish a 'significantly different workforce model and significantly improved student outcomes'. BCG suggested that this third phase of transformation could include a 'broader mix of professionals in schools, enabling teachers to make use of academics, other content specialists, social workers, psychologists and teaching assistants in delivering the best outcomes for their students'.

The BCG strategy also foreshadowed that 'the implementation of new workforce models will require changes to pre-service training and the professional development of in-school staff (teachers and others)'. Reforming the workforce was seen to be an essential ingredient for becoming a highly effective schooling system.

As has been indicated through the examination of the experience of workforce reform in schools in England, the initial impetus was to reduce the workload of classroom teachers by reallocating administrative and other tasks to support staff but the flow on from gaining efficiencies has been the realisation that efficiency gains also enable effectiveness gains to be realised. Opportunities for change and growth accompany the workforce reform agenda. By better allocating tasks, teachers and support staff are feeling more effective in their roles and more satisfied with their working situation.

³¹ Suggett (2009)

³² Boston Consulting Group (2003)

The experience within England also suggests that these improved outcomes are likely to be realised. Ofsted inspectors are reporting favourably on remodelling schools. Some of the benefits³³ identified include that:

- teachers have more time to teach
- school leaders have time to focus on teaching and learning
- all staff (teachers and the wider workforce) are more effective in their contribution to improving learning
- staff at all levels within the school demonstrate greater responsibility, accountability and professionalism
- schools are healthier places to work as evidenced by declining staff illness
- all staff have an improved work/life balance
- staff recruitment and retention has improved
- staff have more confidence and increased capacity to lead change effectively.

However, workforce practices in schools are maintained by pay and performance structures, by qualification requirements and by the experience and expectations of the school workforce. Identifying new ways of working and of allocating tasks differently is only part of the process of reform, the other part is the need to ensure that any new workforce arrangements are fair, sustainable, legal and of enduring benefit to students. Consequently, schools working on their own can only go so far in changing the way they work and the way that they allocate work to members of the school workforce.

³³ National Remodelling Team (2004)

7. Where to from here?

The recently released Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development included a range of commitments designed to improve the quality of the workforce in schools. The commitments to 'develop and promote innovative work organisation in government schools' and to 'explore models for teachers to work with other professionals and paraprofessionals to deliver a wider range of learning experiences and allow teachers to focus on the areas where they have unique skills' will be taken up by the Innovation and Next Practice Division through the Wider Workforce Field Trial.

The Field Trial will build on emerging workforce reforms in schools and help to identify the policy and regulatory measures that will need to be developed in order to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the schooling workforce and, thereby, enhance student attainment.

The Wider Workforce Field Trial is designed to increase knowledge and capability across the education system of innovative approaches to workforce organisation and to expand the range and effectiveness of workforce models and practices. The Field Trial will investigate sustainable models of workforce organisation, incorporating paraprofessionals, teacher assistants and experts from local communities, business, university and government agencies.

Approximately twenty single or cluster school sites from across the state will be involved in the Wider Workforce Field Trial. Teams from participating schools will work with other leading practitioners to explore, develop and trial innovative approaches to workforce organisation.

The Wider Workforce Field Trial places emphasis on the role of practitioner-led innovation. This is an alternative to the traditional approach of system led change. The Wider Workforce Field Trial will look at finding what works and why, linking experimentation with rigorous evaluation to identify policy and practice options that have system value. This approach is best suited to locations where people are satisfied with their existing performance but have the time and commitment to experiment to take it further.

The Wider Workforce Field Trial will stimulate thinking and capture current and potential "next practices" in relation to school workforce remodelling. Wider Workforce Field Trial schools are being asked to innovate on behalf of the school system.

Involvement in the Wider Workforce Field Trial includes support for:

- Accessing experts beyond education
- Stimulating futures thinking
- Supporting innovation and change leadership
- Testing and evaluating innovative processes and practices
- Professional learning and capacity building

– Capturing, evaluation and dissemination of Field Trial findings

The primary benefit sought from the Wider Workforce Field Trial and the wider adoption of innovative workforce models is improved teaching effectiveness and thereby improved school and student outcomes.

For further details on the Wider Workforce Field Trial contact:

The Innovation and Next Practice Division of DEECD,
innovation@edumail.vic.gov.au

Appendix 1: Examples of support staff roles in schools in England³⁴

Teacher Assistants

- Higher Level Teacher Assistant
- Teacher Assistant – special needs
- Nursery nurse
- Therapist
- Teacher Assistant – Primary
- Teacher Assistant – Secondary
- Teacher Assistant – Special

Pupil Welfare Assistants

- Pastoral Manager
- Connexions (Pathways) Advisor
- Education Welfare
- Home Liaison
- Learning Mentor
- Nurse
- Welfare Assistant

Technical Assistants

- ICT Manager
- ICT Technician
- Librarian
- Science Technician
- Technology Technician
- Media Technician
- Laboratory Assistant

Other Student Support

- Bilingual support
- Cover (Extras) Supervisor
- Student Escort (e.g. transporting ill child home)
- Exam Invigilator (Supervisor)
- Language Assistant
- Midday Assistant (Yard Duty/Canteen)
- Midday Supervisor

Administrative Assistants

- Administrator
- Bursar
- Finance Officer
- Office Manager
- Personnel Manager
- Attendance Officer
- Data Manager
- Exams Officer
- Personal Assistant to Principal

³⁴ Collarbone, P. (Presentation) (2009)

- Work Experience Coordinator

Site and Facilities Assistants

- Cleaner
- Cook
- Other catering
- Caretaker
- Grounds staff
- Premises Manager

Extended (Service) Schools' Assistants

- Cluster manager
- Extended School Co-ordinator
- Parent Support Advisers

Appendix 2: Common tasks that teachers should not routinely undertake

Common tasks that according to the Department for Education and Skills 'need not routinely be carried out by teachers and should, as soon as practicable, be transferred to support staff or ICT' are³⁵:

- collecting money;
- chasing absences;
- bulk photocopying;
- copy typing;
- producing standard letters;
- producing class lists;
- record keeping and filing;
- classroom display;
- analysing attendance figures;
- processing exam results;
- collating pupil records;
- administering work experience;
- administering examinations;
- invigilating examinations;
- administering teacher cover;
- ICT trouble shooting and minor repairs;
- commissioning new ICT equipment;
- ordering supplies and equipment;
- stocktaking;
- cataloguing, preparing, issuing and maintaining equipment and materials;
- minuting meetings;
- co-ordinating and submitting bids;
- seeking and giving personnel advice;
- managing pupil data; and
- in-putting pupil data.

³⁵ Agreement (2003)

Appendix 3: A seven point plan for creating time for teachers and principals

The British Government's Proposals³⁶

1. Changes will be made in teachers' contracts, to ensure teachers:
 - are not routinely diverted to undertake administrative tasks
 - are relieved of some of the extra classes they take to cover for absent colleagues;
 - have guaranteed planning, preparation and assessment time, to support their teaching, individually and collaboratively.

Principals will also have guaranteed leadership time.

2. A concerted attack will be made on unnecessary paperwork and bureaucratic processes for teachers and heads.

3. Schools will be helped to achieve progressive reductions in teachers' overall hours over the next four years.

4. Additional school support staff will be recruited to act as "personal assistants" to teachers.

5. New types of school support staff will take on more demanding roles in the classroom, for which appropriate training will be developed and provided.

6. New managers and others with experience from outside education will be recruited where they have the expertise to contribute effectively to schools' senior management teams.

7. Principals will be supported by a national "change management" programme, to help achieve in their schools the necessary reforms of the teaching profession and restructuring of the school workforce.

³⁶ Agreement (2003)

Appendix 4: New roles for support staff in schools in England

The School Workforce Development Board³⁷ (SWDB) has identified that school support staff are working in different ways and ‘making a difference to virtually every aspect of life in a school’. The SWDB has identified several aspects of school life in which support staff are contributing to improving student learning.

For example, support staff³⁸:

- assume responsibility for clerical and administrative tasks thereby enabling teachers to focus to a greater extent on improving the quality of teaching and learning
- play an important role in literacy and numeracy catch-up and intervention programmes
- play a key role in encouraging pupils’ participation and learning, promoting positive behaviour and improving attendance
- with bilingual skills are helping to promote the development of the first language of children learning English as a second language
- are working in partnership with teachers to provide tailored intervention for individuals or groups at risk of underachieving
- are used as mediators between different groups in the school (as support staff are usually drawn from the local community they more likely to reflect the cultures of that community than teachers)
- can bring diverse skills and talents (e.g. in music, drama, art and sport) to the school and thereby enriching the offerings within the curriculum, student clubs and after-school programs
- are involved in delivering and/or coordinating wide range of activities in schools offering extended services (e.g. mentoring; individualised support; pastoral care; healthy schools initiatives; specialist teaching and out-of-hours study support)
- assume responsibility for areas of school management that have in previous years fallen to the principal or deputy principal (e.g. risk and change management).

³⁷ School Workforce Development Board(2006)

³⁸ Agreement (2003)

Appendix 5: Sample Support Staff Job Profile

The National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services³⁹ has drafted draft job profiles cover three 'families' of support staff roles, broadly grouped as Teaching Assistants, Curriculum/Resource Support and Administration and Organisation. The Teaching Assistant role is split into two further streams, one covering classroom-based activity and the other behaviour guidance and support. The roles are set against a four-part structure based on increasing skills levels.

LEVEL 1 Teacher Assistants work under the direct instruction of teaching/senior staff, usually in the classroom with the teacher, to support access to learning for pupils and provide general support to the teacher in the management of pupils and the classroom.

LEVEL 2 Teacher Assistants work under the instruction/guidance of teaching/senior staff to undertake work/care/support programmes, to enable access to learning for pupils and to assist the teacher in the management of pupils and the classroom. Work may be carried out in the classroom or outside the main teaching area.

LEVEL 3 Teacher Assistants work under the guidance of teaching/senior staff and within an agreed system of supervision, to implement agreed work programmes with individuals/groups, in or out of the classroom. This could include those requiring detailed and specialist knowledge in particular areas and will involve assisting the teacher in the whole planning cycle and the management/preparation of resources. Staff may also supervise whole classes occasionally during the short-term absence of teachers. The primary focus will be to maintain good order and to keep pupils on task.

LEVEL 4 Teacher Assistants complement the professional work of teachers by taking responsibility for agreed learning activities under an agreed system of supervision. This may involve planning, preparing and delivering learning activities for individuals/ or groups or short term for whole classes and monitoring pupils and assessing, recording and reporting on pupils achievement, progress and development. LEVEL 4 Teacher Assistants are also responsible for the management and development of a specialist area within the school and/or management of other teaching assistants including allocation and monitoring of work, appraisal and training.

The sample job profile outlined below is for a Teacher Assistant supporting and delivering learning at skill level four⁴⁰.

³⁹ National Joint Council for Local Government Services (2003)

⁴⁰ Training and Development Agency for Schools (2009)

Duties of a Level 4 Teacher Assistant

- Support for students
- Assess the needs of pupils and use detailed knowledge and specialist skills to support pupils' learning
- Establish productive working relationships with pupils, acting as a role model and setting high expectations
- Develop and implement individual learning plans
- Promote the inclusion and acceptance of all pupils within the classroom
- Support pupils consistently whilst recognising and responding to their individual needs
- Encourage pupils to interact and work co-operatively with others and engage all pupils in activities
- Promote independence and employ strategies to recognise and reward achievement of self-reliance
- Provide feedback to pupils in relation to progress and achievement.

Support for teachers

- Organise and manage appropriate learning environment and resources
- Within an agreed system of supervision, plan challenging teaching and learning objectives to evaluate and adjust lessons/work plans as appropriate
- Monitor and evaluate pupil responses to learning activities through a range of assessment and monitoring strategies against pre-determined learning objectives
- Provide objective and accurate feedback and reports as required on pupil achievement, progress and other matters, ensuring the availability of appropriate evidence
- Record progress and achievement in lessons/activities systematically and providing evidence of range and level of progress and attainment
- Work within an established discipline policy to anticipate and manage behaviour constructively, promoting self control and independence
- Supporting the role of parents in pupils' learning and contribute to/lead meetings with parents to provide constructive feedback on pupil progress/achievement etc.
- Administer and assess/mark tests and invigilate exams/tests
- Production of lesson plans, worksheet, plans etc.

Support for the curriculum

- Deliver learning activities to pupils within agreed system of supervision, adjusting activities according to pupil responses/needs
- Deliver local and national learning strategies e.g. literacy, numeracy, KS3, early years and make effective use of opportunities provided by other learning activities to support the development of pupils' skills
- Use ICT effectively to support learning activities and develop pupils' competence and independence in its use

- Select and prepare resources necessary to lead learning activities, taking account of pupils' interests and language and cultural backgrounds
- Advise on appropriate deployment and use of specialist aid/resources/equipment.

Support for the school

- Comply with and assist with the development of policies and procedures relating to child protection, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting concerns to an appropriate person
- Be aware of and support difference and ensure all pupils have equal access to opportunities to learn and develop
- Contribute to the overall ethos/work/aims of the school
- Establish constructive relationships and communicate with other agencies/professionals, in liaison with the teacher, to support achievement and progress of pupils
- Take the initiative as appropriate to develop appropriate multi-agency approaches to supporting pupils
- Recognise own strengths and areas of specialist expertise and use these to lead, advise and support others
- Deliver out of school learning activities within guidelines established by the school
- Contribute to the identification and execution of appropriate out of school learning activities which consolidate and extend work carried out in class.

Line management responsibilities

- Manage other teaching assistants
- Liaise between managers/teaching staff and teaching assistants
- Hold regular team meetings with managed staff
- Represent teaching assistants at teaching staff/management/other appropriate meetings
- Undertake recruitment/induction/appraisal/training/mentoring for other teaching assistants.

Experience, Qualifications and Knowledge/Skills of a Level 4 Teacher Assistant

Experience

- Experience working with children of relevant age in a learning environment.

Qualifications/Training

- Meet Higher Level Teaching Assistant standards or equivalent qualification or experience
- Excellent numeracy/literacy skills – equivalent to NVQ Level 2 in English and Maths
- Training in relevant learning strategies e.g. literacy
- Specialist skills/training in curriculum or learning area e.g. bilingual, sign language, ICT.

Knowledge/Skills

- Can use ICT effectively to support learning
- Full working knowledge of relevant policies/codes of practice/legislation
- Working knowledge and experience of implementing national/foundation stage curriculum and other relevant learning programmes/strategies
- Good understanding of child development and learning processes
- Understanding of statutory frameworks relating to teaching
- Ability to organise, lead and motivate a team
- Constantly improve own practice/knowledge through self-evaluation and learning from others
- Ability to relate well to children and adults
- Work constructively as part of a team, understanding classroom roles and responsibilities and your own position within these.

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