



Ministerial Council on Education,  
Employment, Training and Youth Affairs

THIRTEENTH MCEETYA MEETING

18–19<sup>th</sup> July 2002  
AUCKLAND

## INFORMATION STATEMENT

State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers with responsibility for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, met in Auckland on 18–19 July 2002 for the 13th meeting of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, chaired by the Hon. Lynne Kosky, MP, Minister for Education, Victoria and Chair of MCEETYA for 2002.

The main outcomes of the meeting are summarised below.

### ***Stepping Forward – improving pathways for all young people***

The Ministerial Declaration, [\*Stepping Forward – improving pathways for all young people\*](#) : A *Joint Declaration by Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers for Education, Training, Employment, Youth and Community Services* was endorsed. The Declaration commits Ministers to providing leadership and establishing a common direction in developing transition opportunities for young people, particularly those most at risk.

The Declaration was one of the outcomes of the Ministerial Subcommittee on Young People's Transitions, established at the 12<sup>th</sup> MCEETYA meeting. The Subcommittee, Chaired by the Honourable Matt Foley, MP, Minister for Employment, Training and Youth, Queensland, was comprised of Ministers from New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia and the Commonwealth responsible for education, employment, training, youth and community services.

The Subcommittee also developed a stocktake of the initiatives being undertaken by States, Territories and the Commonwealth that address recommendations 16-23 from the *Footprints to the Future* report. The report on the stocktake, [\*Stepping Forward – sharing what works\*](#), is a companion document to the Ministerial Declaration, providing a national picture of current activity aimed at youth at risk across all jurisdictions.

The Transition from School Taskforce has been asked to develop an Integrated Action Plan as an effective means of actioning the Ministerial Declaration. The Plan will outline a vision in which all stakeholders work with young people to assist them to attain their goals and aspirations; and describe an effective national approach to youth transitions underpinned by five themes. The Plan will be developed in consultation with relevant taskforces and State and Territory Governments and will be reported to MCEETYA out-of-session in November 2002.

### ***Framework of principles for Funding Schools***

Council endorsed a framework of five principles to govern the funding of Australian schools. [\*Resourcing the National Goals for Schooling: An Agreed Framework of Principles for Funding Schools\*](#) represents a direction for complementary Commonwealth and State funding approaches that recognise the relative weight of different cost factors across school sectors; recognise the specific needs and cost burdens of different levels of schooling; and provide a basis for government support to meet the growing costs of schooling over time.

The Schools Resourcing Taskforce, which developed the framework, will now commence work on the development of a framework for the collection and analysis of data. Both frameworks will

then be used to develop proposals for funding models that will be presented to MCEETYA in 2003.

### ***New Indigenous Taskforce***

Council agreed to establish a specific Indigenous Education, Employment Training and Youth Taskforce, chaired by the Northern Territory, with representatives from all jurisdictions. In doing so, Ministers reiterated their commitment to maintaining their focus on developing and implementing strategies that have been demonstrated to improve education and employment opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous students, as critical to reconciliation.

The Taskforce will be responsible for advising MCEETYA on the national effort to improve Indigenous education, training, higher education and employment outcomes, and on the wellbeing of Indigenous youth.

### ***Ministerial Declaration on Adult Community Education***

[The Ministerial Declaration on Adult Community Education](#) was endorsed giving further impetus to the development of adult education in the community. The Declaration focuses on community capacity building through community ownership; the importance of the ACE sector as a pathway to further education and training for 'second chance' learners and at risk young people; and the incorporation of strategies in the form of a 'menu' that provides States and Territories with the flexibility to choose strategies according to the needs and context of their local environment.

### ***Higher Education***

MCEETYA Ministers with responsibility for Higher Education will meet in Ballarat in October 2002 to seek agreement on any changes to Australia's higher education system and provide an opportunity for the Commonwealth Minister to inform States/Territories of the outcomes of the Higher Education Review, including the results of a rural/regional impact study which will consider the specific needs of rural and regional university education, particularly the effects of any changes to HECS or funding arrangements for the sector. Other key issues that will be discussed include:

- Governance
- Private sector investment in universities
- Commercialisation and management of intellectual property
- Taxation and higher education
- Reporting requirements on universities to Commonwealth and State jurisdictions
- VET/higher education interface
- Responding to demand for higher education places

### ***Schools as Safe Learning Environments***

Council will develop, by January 2003, a national framework on ensuring safe school environments. Acknowledging and drawing on the work already being undertaken by education jurisdictions in collaboration with other portfolios, and drawing on expert advice, the framework will comprise a set of *guiding principles* for responding to incidents of violence and abuse in schools, and *appropriate action and procedures* for prevention and intervention. The framework is intended to help guide all schools so that they can have in place a comprehensive set of protocols for the provision of a safe and supportive learning environment, and for dealing effectively with instances of bullying, violence and abuse.

### ***Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership***

MCEETYA has endorsed the development of a Nationally Agreed Standards Framework for the Teaching Profession that will provide an organising structure for developing detailed professional standards that describe knowledge, skills and values of an effective teacher in Australia. The nature and content of the detailed standards will vary according to the purpose for which they are developed.

A developmental or phased approach will be taken to the development of the national framework to be undertaken by the Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership Taskforce (TQELT). The first stage of development will, through an extensive consultative process, focus on establishing the broad structural parameters of effective teaching. Progressively, further work will be undertaken to develop the detail of the framework including further consideration by MCEETYA and taking in the policy perspectives and work already undertaken by State and Territory governments in the area of teaching standards.

MCEETYA also recognised as a national priority, the need to support principals in their role as school leaders. Given their critical task and the complex set of pressures principals face, the TQELT was asked to develop national initiatives to prepare principals for their leadership role and support them in undertaking it.

### ***Performance Measurement and Reporting***

*A Measurement Framework for National Key Performance Measures*, was approved as a basis for reporting progress towards the achievement of the National Goals by Australian school students. The Framework draws on definitions of key performance measures and program measures, and includes a comparison of key performance measures with program measures already endorsed by Ministers. It canvasses the nature of targets and outlines the principles underpinning key performance measures, also previously endorsed by Ministers. Most importantly, it includes the set of key performance measures developed to date, along with a proposed assessment cycle.

Adopting the framework included agreeing that:

- the national monitoring of the information and communication technology skills and knowledge of students by means of three-yearly sample assessments should be at Year 6 and Year 10.
- there should be national three-yearly sample assessment cycles for science, civics and citizenship education, and information and communication technology, with science commencing in 2003, civics and citizenship education in 2004, and information and communication technology in 2005

Ministers also approved utilising information from the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for reporting 15-year-old students' performance in literacy and numeracy and approved interim key performance measures for students' performance in secondary science as the percentage of students achieving at or above the OECD mean score in the scientific literacy assessment of the PISA, together with the range of student achievement.

The Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce (PMRT) will review the *Measurement Framework* annually with a view to ensuring its currency and responsiveness to MCEETYA decisions and priorities.

Ministers also asked that the PMRT undertake a study to investigate the educational and measurement issues associated with the reporting to parents of an individual student's result against the national literacy and numeracy benchmarks.

### ***Student Learning and Support Services***

The Student Learning and Support Services Taskforce (SLSST) will develop a national pedagogical statement on learning in an on-line world in collaboration with other relevant Taskforces as part of its work in four priority areas:

- Pedagogy
- Student Support
- Languages of other than English in Australian schools
- E-learning.

Council also asked SLSST to review the current status and use within the States and Territories of National Statements and Profiles and to provide advice on how the States and Territories can collaborate further on consistent curriculum outcomes.

Student behaviour was also acknowledged as a key issue for Australian schools and the SLSST was asked to provide advice on programs that exhibit best practice in addressing student behaviour issues, noting that:

- education is as much about building character as it is about equipping students with specific skills;
- values-based education can:
  - (i) strengthen students' self-esteem, optimism and commitment to personal fulfilment; and
  - (ii) help students exercise ethical judgement and social responsibility;
- parents expect schools to help students understand and develop personal and social responsibilities.

### ***Education Standards under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)***

Council agreed that outstanding legal and financial issues in relation to the development of Education Standards under the DDA be further addressed by December 2002 prior to the implementation of the Standards.