

# TRANSCRIPT

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL LEGAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

### Inquiry into the State Education System in Victoria

Melbourne – Thursday 9 May 2024

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Renee Heath

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Lee Tarlamis

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Melina Bath

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Georgie Crozier

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David Ettershank

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Richard Welch

**WITNESSES**

Professor Larissa McLean Davies, Deputy Dean, and

Associate Professor Lisa McKay-Brown, Associate Dean, Diversity and Inclusion, Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne.

**The CHAIR:** Welcome back to the Inquiry into the State Education System in Victoria. Joining us for this session are two professors from the Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne, Professor Lisa McKay-Brown and Professor Larissa McLean Davies. Welcome, professors. Before we continue, I just want to read this to you, if I may, please.

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All evidence is being recorded. You will be provided a proof version of the transcript following the hearing. The transcript will ultimately be made public and posted on the committee's website.

Before we continue, I will just quickly introduce the committee to you. I am Trung Luu, the Chair of the committee. The deputy is Mr Ryan Batchelor, and we have got Mr Joe McCracken, Ms Melina Bath to my right, Mr Richard Welch to my left, Mrs Moira Deeming and Dr Renee Heath, and Mr Lee Tarlamis is joining us on Zoom as well.

Just for the Hansard recording, could you please state your full name and title and the organisation you are representing.

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** My name is Lisa McKay-Brown. I am the Associate Dean of Diversity and Inclusion at the Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** My name is Larissa McLean Davies. I am Deputy Dean and professor of teacher education in the Faculty of Education at the University of Melbourne.

**The CHAIR:** Again, it is delightful to have someone who has actually had great input in relation to our education system, current and moving forward, here giving evidence. I would invite you to make a quick opening statement, and then it will be open to the committee to ask questions.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** We are very grateful for the opportunity to speak with the committee today. Certainly in our submission we acknowledge the work that is done in this state and the great partnerships between the universities, particularly our university, and the education department in Victoria. We have noticed many initiatives in our submission, and we come here in that spirit of looking at the ways in which we can support teachers and support school systems. We are obviously, between us, particularly looking at teacher education and the support for the system. We have a teaching crisis at this time, which we are well aware of, and it was very instructive to hear the voices of the students in the previous submission. We take that as core to our business together in this state. We are particularly concerned about issues of wellbeing and inclusion, and we look at the ways in which we work together. I think in brief, the working together is the way forward, and teachers professional learning across the career is something that we would want to call out. We notice that the state has made many inroads into this work, so we build on that position of strength in our conversation today.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. I know that time is very short, so I will open it to the committee. Just be mindful there are a lot of us, so I will give you about 3 minutes for your questions, please. Then we have got time to come back. Deputy Chair, do you want to start?

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Thanks, Chair. Thanks, both of you, for coming on. Your submission uses the phrase that the role of teacher education has become highly politicised, with a couple of challenges. Obviously with a room full of politicians that is going to spark our interest. What do you mean by that?

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Thank you for the question. For some time now we have had a focus on improving the education system through focusing on initial teacher education. We have seen initial teacher education as a kind of panacea for the challenges that we see in our system. We know that there have been many inquiries. In fact I think Professor Bill Loudon some years ago wrote that there were 101 inquiries into initial teacher education. We have had several federal reports into improving and strengthening teacher education at the initial phase. This is not to say that this is not important, and it is not to say that teacher education certainly historically has not needed some very careful scrutiny. Particularly at the University of Melbourne, since 2008 we have had a clinical model of initial teacher education which has closely worked in partnership with schools, and we have understood the importance of theory and practice working together.

The point of saying it is becoming politicised I think is to say that we are not looking at what we need to look at in terms of improving education systems. We need to look at teaching across the whole of the career to understand, in any profession, that you would have an input measure of four, if you are an undergraduate, or two years, then to see that as going to set you up. Certainly being ready for teaching and – we will hear this phrase really often – ‘ready for the classroom’, ‘classroom ready’, is extremely important. But one cannot be ready for the classroom for all contexts and for all time, so what happens then, once teachers are in schools, is vital to how we understand the improvement and the support of students in our schools. When we say that it has become politicised, we have not yet looked at the measures that we need to support continued professional learning. We have got an opportunity here to think about career pathways for teachers. We looked at reviewing documents again in preparation for our conversation today. We have really clear guidelines on how much professional learning a teacher needs to do and how might we actually differentiate a pathway for an educator so that, if you end up being a teacher who is exceptional at supporting new teachers in their role as a mentor, then that is a valid and affirmed and remunerated teacher pathway going forward. So the idea that I guess we are seeing fundamentally – and we have written about this and research shows this – is that while we should focus on the initial teacher education phase, this is missing a really important part of what we need to be doing if we are serious about school reform and we are serious about supporting all teachers.

We know that teachers in schools in various different contexts will need new knowledge over time. I was an English teacher in the 1990s. What English teachers need to know now is not in the way that I was trained to be an English teacher. We need to update our professional knowledge, and we need to understand that teachers themselves are central to building that professional knowledge over time. What we knew, for instance, in our system or the way in which we educated around Indigenous knowledges – how we knew to really empower teachers to understand and feel that they are able to really embed Indigenous knowledges in a curriculum – is different in this decade to what it was in the past, and we would recognise that. So new knowledge is needed in a whole range of fields; teachers need to be supported to develop that and given the time for that, not just in the initial phase. I am happy to take more questions on that matter.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Necessary but not sufficient.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Yes.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Thanks, Chair.

**The CHAIR:** I will keep this short, if I could, Professor. We heard previously from La Trobe University about how they are actually trying to prepare their new teachers and graduates under this new system, only going a few years back, on evidence-based reading instruction and the science of language and reading. I was wondering, being the University of Melbourne, one of the leading universities, are you running similar programs to produce teachers moving forward, or is it a different teaching system you are using to produce future teachers from Melbourne University?

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** We have probably both got something to say about this.

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** I might start then. The science of learning, which includes the science of reading, is central to certainly some of our professional courses – so teachers who are coming back to retrain. We certainly explicitly teach, particularly when we are training up teachers to work with learning difficulties or disability, how they understand those evidence-based practices, understanding how students learn, understanding the cognitive processes behind learning and certainly building in the understanding of executive function, learner profiles and learner differences and using evidence to support that. So it is very much central

to the work that we do. Certainly that is being embedded also in aspects of our initial teacher education programs. So we absolutely support the idea of the science of learning and the science of reading and feel that it really does need to be a focus in any type of teacher education program because it allows us to understand how students learn but then how to select the best type of intervention or response to help them move through their learning journeys.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** And from a literacy point of view, which is an area very close to my own professional interests, we are absolutely committed to ensuring the evidence base around literacy and reading – and not just reading but writing and speaking and listening – is embedded in pre-service teacher education and drawing on that evidence to ensure that all teachers are teachers of literacy. It is not just the responsibility of some teachers.

**The CHAIR:** I will keep it short. I will pass it on. It is great to hear that so far at least two of the major universities are producing teachers of the highest standard. I will pass on to Ms Bath with a few questions.

**Melina BATH:** Thank you very much for being here and your wisdom. The 2022 teacher supply and demand report speaks to projected teacher shortfalls that are I think significantly alarming – in the vicinity of 5000 in the next few years, to 2028. What do you think are the key drivers and key reasons for this? You have touched on some of them, but what must this Victorian government or any Victorian government do to address those teacher shortages?

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Probably there is not one approach. I think some of those approaches are to ensure – and I have spoken previously about – where is the attraction, in the first instance, for the attraction of teachers and the retention of teachers. In order to address that shortfall, in terms of attraction we need to ensure that teachers are – we want to look at issues of pay, support and remuneration as teachers move into contexts. When we look at a teacher workload model, we have opportunities to think about how in your first years of teaching you may be given more time and support, so what are the levers that we can work with here? There may be workload matters that we could consider with greater support. We may look at in terms of attraction how we may attract into certain areas and target those with clear pathways into school. There are great programs at the moment that the Victorian government is starting around internships and pathway programs that have been in train for some time. Developing those more systematically and systemically with schools is one of our options. In terms of looking particularly at attracting teachers in, we need to think about, we are a graduate school of education, so how we ensure that career changers are attracted into teaching and what supports they have. Part of our submission really focused on the particular category of career changers and what might be required to support them to both come into teaching – so the kinds of financial supports when you are making a career change –

**Melina BATH:** So I am an accountant, and now I want to become a teacher, but I do not want to go back to being a pauper in that process.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** That is right, so how can we support those people who will make excellent teachers in our system to make that transition? And how can we then, when they move into schools, identify them as having a particular kind of value in the system? We have a fairly flat structure when teachers move into teaching, so how do we nuance that in different ways? How do we acknowledge expertise? This is one of the challenges that has been with us for many years, but pathways, once one is a teacher, into teaching, these are options for us and levers that we may be able to draw on.

Then in terms of retention, I have already touched on issues of how we support teachers to develop new and vital knowledge that they need to develop in their context. We know the complexity of students with needs in our system. We have got better visibility of that than we have had in previous times, so how do we develop that and how do we support teachers who are working in particularly challenging contexts to have the time that they need to work with those teachers? It is a whole-of-career and a whole-of-school approach that is needed.

**Melina BATH:** And removing some of that burden which is weighing down their shoulders and not enabling them to learn and specialise, potentially.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** That is right. When we look at how teaching has developed, a teacher is often doing everything. They are doing the data analysis, they are doing all of the pieces of work that need to be done around their context and in their classroom. How might we be able to see what parts of that work could be done

by expert others within our system so that we do enable teachers to focus on their work? We often hear the conversation that teachers are recognising too much of the administrative burden in it, and I do not think it is that teachers are not capable of doing that. In fact they continue to do it because they are capable of doing it, but rather, where do we want them to be able to put their time?

**Melina BATH:** Teaching.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** That is right, and really working with the data that they have to be much better focused on the needs of their students all the time.

**Melina BATH:** Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Ms Bath. Mr Welch.

**Richard WELCH:** Gosh. There are so many questions and not enough time. I think I will go to the question I asked the SRC, because I think it is really probably one of the biggest educational challenges and opportunities we have, which is AI. I guess from an academic and expert point of view, this double-edged sword, which we know it is – how do we tame the beast, and benefit from it?

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** Well, I certainly see there are a number of benefits in AI, and certainly at the basis of it is us understanding what AI is, but also working out how we can teach to use it. I think that something that is important is us understanding how it can be used in a way that supports learning and supports students, but also how it can help teachers as well. Certainly AI is incredibly useful when thinking about even reducing teacher workload or reducing teacher burden. There are certainly initiatives underway where AI is being used to develop tools for teachers that will help them in things like marking. So –

**Richard WELCH:** What do you see are the risks in that, because I am a big proponent of AI. I am all for it, but what is the worst-case scenario that we need to avoid in getting there?

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** The worst-case scenario, similar to what the students said, is assuming everything you read is true. I think it is teaching how to be a critical consumer of information and how to understand that there are other ways in which to engage with and find information. AI is a great tool for getting started on something, but it is not the end of something. So those critical thinking skills, those research and review skills, I think are an important part of using AI in a way that is effective but also harnesses the power that it does have.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** There is no turning back from AI now, and it seems like at the beginning of February 2023 with ChatGPT there was a sudden explosion. We have been using AI in all of our teaching in different forms, but I think the ubiquitous nature of it and the availability of that has now forced us to look at it in different ways. All of those things I think are absolutely correct. The regulation of AI has been the initial response, but we do need to think of how we work with AI and how we develop it – as Lisa said, the critical capacities around AI. There has been a lot of research that says we are in a post-digital phase, which means that it is no longer technology as the add-on to our teaching and our work in education. It is no longer the teacher and then the tool over here. The teacher and the tool are deeply connected. So the way forward is to absolutely understand how even AI harnesses large language models and why you might be having information that is so-called correct or not correct – so the critical capacity of teachers and students. I was speaking earlier about the new knowledge that we need to allow and support teachers to develop in this moment that we may not have had when teachers were prepared –

**Richard WELCH:** Yes, we talk about professional development.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** X amount of years ago. We need to name this as yet another area of really vital professional learning not only so that you as a teacher understand how this system works and how you can harness it but so you have the right pedagogies or the evidence-based pedagogies that will support your students to be critical consumers and users. We heard from the students how it can be incredibly helpful but also incredibly unhelpful if you are not able to understand your own position as a reader in this text.

**Richard WELCH:** It could generate cognitive atrophy in a way as well in these areas.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Yes.

**Richard WELCH:** And the dangers – we know that these models themselves can be ideologically skewed as well in how they work.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Absolutely to an earlier comment: a large language model can only harness the information that is available from a particular –

**Richard WELCH:** Yes. Rubbish in, rubbish out.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Exactly. To understand that and to not anticipate that it is going to give you answers – understanding the internet of ideas and things that are coming into this is vital in this time.

**Richard WELCH:** How much work is the university doing on this specifically?

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** An enormous amount of work.

**Richard WELCH:** When do we start to see the fruits of that? When will you start putting out reports or studies on this?

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Some are already in train. At a wide university level we are focusing on this as well, and then we have particular colleagues within our faculty of education for whom their research is particularly dedicated to that, who are currently on Australia Research Council grants that are particularly attending to these kinds of questions. I guess the other thing to say is this is not new thinking, as in for researchers in education, but it is the opportunity now to get some of these out and to have a public interest in this that may not have been quite as tuned prior to this.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Welch. Mr Tarlamis – Lee.

**Lee TARLAMIS:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you for coming along today to present to us. The previous witnesses from the SRC commented on and mentioned the metrics program that the University of Melbourne are running. Could you tell us a little bit more about that?

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Yes. That is led by Professor Sandra Milligan, and the work of that group, the New Metrics group, is really looking at alternative ways of thinking about assessment and credentialling, particularly in the senior years of schooling – so really seeing, exactly as the SRC representatives talked about, what the core business of schooling is. What is the purpose of schooling, and how do we actually credential that? And how do we look at different forms of assessment that are going to enable us to get at what we really want to know in terms of the purpose of learning? The new metric program – and I can certainly provide more information about that – has partnerships with many, many schools around Australia in terms of the support of this way of approaching assessment. We are, in Victoria, as we all know, in a high-stakes assessment system. You heard the reports of the experiences of students within that system and also the experiences of teachers with that, and questions we all have around whether that is preparing diverse students for their futures. Certainly New Metrics shows us that there are better and different ways of approaching assessment and credentialling – so that students can take pathways into a really productive future – that are different to the way we are currently assessing in the senior years of schooling.

**Lee TARLAMIS:** How is some of that work being viewed by others? Has that been well socialised in the sector, and what is the feedback that you are getting? Is that positive?

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** There is a great appetite for the work in the sector amongst schools, and there has been an ongoing conversation with Professor Milligan and system leaders and school leaders. I think we are all recognising the need for this work now, the timeliness of it and the need to ensure that young people are undertaking assessments that are reflecting the learning that they are undertaking, that are supporting them as learners in the system and that are enabling them to move forward in different pathways into their future beyond schooling.

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** Could I just add too that I think it is particularly important for students from diverse backgrounds or students who maybe have a disability or learning difficulties, because very often the way the assessments are structured, the high-stake ones in particular, they are testing skills that do not need to be tested. They are not necessarily assessing a student's understanding of content or knowledge, they are assessing how fast a student can handwrite, and for a student who has difficulty with handwriting, while there

are special provisions that may be available, it may not allow them to actually show what they know. So New Metrics is very much focused on that idea of universal design and that idea that students need an opportunity to show exactly what they know, not what other ancillary skills might be being tested but are not important for this particular moment.

**Lee TARLAMIS:** Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Lee. Dr Heath.

**Renee HEATH:** Thank you. Thank you so much for your submission and your presentation. I am hoping to get to two questions in this next 4 minutes, just so you know. The Grattan Institute released a report earlier this year that you would definitely be familiar with. One of the findings was that only 12 per cent of Australian 15-year-olds are able to read at an advanced level. Where are we going wrong?

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Oh, my goodness. We are both very invested in this.

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** I will be really quick. I think that we need an agreement. It is going to be a longer term fix, because we really do need to go back to moving away from a whole-language approach, which is what has traditionally been used, and that is certainly how I was trained back in the 80s when I did my teacher training – gosh, that is showing my age – and moving into understanding phonics, explicit teaching, the science of reading and all of those really strong elements that allow us to teach effectively and to get really good outcomes for young people.

**Renee HEATH:** Just on those things you said there, would you recommend that that is a recommendation that we put forward?

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** Absolutely. While I know the government certainly is looking at phonics testing, we have to make sure it is the right type of assessment, we have to make sure it is going to tell us what we need to know. But it involves a lot of teacher retraining, it involves removing a lot of programs that might be called evidence-based but actually are not, so it is really having a very strong review of what is out there and being quite specific about the way forward.

**Renee HEATH:** Thank you.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** I think it is a whole-school approach as well to understanding reading, because we do know from our research that if you have certain interventions with teachers and support them to develop this understanding, we do need to ensure that the school is resourced in a way so that leaders are understanding the importance of literacy instruction for all of the school. When we talk about 15-year-olds, we are recognising that they are reading in a range of subject areas but that literacy and reading are vital in all of those subject areas. All of our teachers do need to understand, as I mentioned before, that they are teachers of literacy and that there is no learning outside of language. So if there is no learning outside of language, then how do we support our teachers to ensure that they do have the skills to ensure that every young person in their classroom can be reading, can be decoding, can be engaging with the material and can be richly comprehending the material? So it is certainly a teacher professional learning and support piece, but what we know is that there need to be significant supports across the school and across all learning areas. It will not be sufficient if the student is experiencing support in one particular subject area but not in another subject area. To build those capacities for tests such as those that you are looking at, they are reading in a new context new materials, so we are developing the skills of the reader across the curriculum.

**Renee HEATH:** That is fantastic. Just a quick one on that, Churchill Primary School have done an amazing job, as you would have seen. They sent all of their teachers to do that OG training, which is science based, but then they had one teacher that was like a coach that would go in and help all the different teachers actually implement what they had learnt, and I thought that was really great.

My second question is really looking for an answer to a question you asked before, Larissa, which is: what is the purpose of schooling?

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** That is such a big question.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** It is a big question. When we think about the purpose of schooling, it has changed over time. The purpose of schooling in an industrial model is to set students up for particular kinds of work. It is absolutely to enable you – we would all have probably a different view around this – so that you can contribute positively to society, so you have choice, so that education gives you options, so that you can be and contribute to the best world that you possibly can, so that you individually are able to undertake the life that you have a right to in this society. That is the purpose of schooling, and disciplinarity we understand through schooling – I feel like I am going into a little lecture about schooling now. We understand that with disciplinary understandings, particularly as we move through primary into secondary, there are certain disciplines and certain bodies of knowledge that will enable you to make that productive contribution, that will give you pathways, that will help you make decisions about where you are going to be able to be supported.

But of course schooling is also about developing you as a whole person, so your wellbeing is vital. In order for education to do that kind of work – and probably historically, Lisa, we have not focused on student wellbeing and the integrated part of that in learning the knowledge that you need in order to be able to have those options in your life. It is that integrated piece. I think to not kind of try to answer the purpose of schooling but to raise that as the core question that we need to be directed towards in our conversation is the thing – for this time and in this way. One of the purposes is so that you can, with all of the tools available to you, including AI, be that productive member so that you have access to the future.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Lisa, are there things that you would want to add?

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** I would agree, and I would say one of the things that I think is kind of missing for some students, particularly those who are finding it difficult to be at school, is that sense of social inclusion, which links back to that wellbeing piece. I think a really important concept for us to consider is what social inclusion is for all students, because that is a really big part of schooling and is certainly something some students are missing out on.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Renee, there is one other thing I would like to say on that, though, and that is on the purpose of schooling – because it is absolutely the individual, but we have schooling because we are setting a kind of brief for our society. We are looking at the kinds of people we want and the way in which they will work together in the future. Our curriculum has words like ‘collaboration’ and ‘understanding our histories’, so the purpose of schooling is also to set the kind of nature of a society going forward. It is working together collaboratively, and it is the individual as well.

**Renee HEATH:** Would you say, though – and I know my time has run out – on that, isn’t it really families that should be shaping the person?

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** I think that is a great point, and in some work that we have been fortunate to be able to do with departments in other parts of Australia as well we see that it is an absolutely integrated, connected piece. Families are the first teachers, absolutely, but setting up that whole person and setting them up in the community, we do see that there is a very important piece between schools and the education system working with families and communities. It is that absolute working together, and you will find that question around purposes of schooling will vary in contexts as well, which is one of our interesting challenges.

**Renee HEATH:** I well and truly went over my time. Thank you for the chat.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Moira.

**Moira DEEMING:** Thank you. A lot of my questions have already been asked, but I was just wondering: if everything is on the table with education, one of the things that I saw work successfully and I have always wondered about as a former teacher was in a school in central Melbourne that had a higher proportion of students who were from war-torn places around the world. They would often be highly educated, intelligent children but they had no English. What he did was he established a silo system, so no matter what age you were, maths was the first two periods of the day and you went to whichever class that you were at the level of, and the same thing with English and literature. It was a silo system. It was based on assessing where that child was up to realistically and in a way that is measurable. I know students get upset about the stress of that, but they have really worked hard to build a culture where the children are not humiliated. They made it very clear –



very clear – to the children that there was nothing to be ashamed of and this is how you learn; you start where you are at and you build. I loved that. As a high school teacher, I used to often get kids in and think they were just at such disparate places in their understanding. They are all perfectly intelligent, but they actually just are not on the same level, and it is difficult to teach them all in the one class. So I have always been wondering about why we progress them through on the basis of age, mostly, and having covered the curriculum, rather than something very objective – like that kind of a silo system. I just wanted to know if you had done any research on it or if you had any comments, that is all.

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** Certainly there are schools that are using that silo or vertical streaming approach because it might be the philosophy of the school, it might be the school population. I think you are absolutely correct in that if you are going to look at something like vertical streaming, it has to be a whole-school culture linked to that. Otherwise you do have students who think, ‘I’m dumb; I’m 15 but I’m with the –

**Moira DEEMING:** But they think that anyway.

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** Yes, exactly. So I think this is where inclusive education comes in as a really important way of thinking. Inclusive education and schools set up that are inclusive can have flexible ways of learning and flexible options. I would love to see additional flexibility available in that, but I would also like to see an inclusive education system, which we do not have yet in this state. We know the research is very clear that inclusive education systems and the flexibility they can afford and the highly trained and skilled teachers that are in those spaces provide better outcomes for all students, not just students from diverse backgrounds. We need targeted programs and community supports for some students, we need extension for other students – there is such variability in groups. So, yes, I think that inclusive education should be our goal, and flexibility within that is very important, but it will depend on the school culture, the structure and who is available.

**Moira DEEMING:** Do you think we can build that into our system? Do you think it is possible to change it around so that we do have those really objective measurements for every single kid, no matter what background they are from, no matter what else is going on? If in a particular subject area our goal is to teach them one particular set of skills, then we really focus on that and focus on mastery rather than just rolling them over by age.

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** I think mastery is important. I think that if we are going to meet the sustainable development goal 4, then we have to start thinking differently. We are in a schooling system that has been around since the industrial era. But that takes a lot of time, it takes a lot of courage and it takes resources to support the shift.

**Moira DEEMING:** Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Mr McCracken.

**Joe McCracken:** Yes, a lot of talk about the short amount of time, which is a shame. We could be here for another 4 hours, I dare say. Just thinking about the education system, ideally what would you like to see the education system look like in 20 years time compared to now? What are the key things that you think need to change in order for it to be a genuine 21st-century model that serves the needs of the people that we are trying to help, the students – big-picture stuff.

**Lisa McKAY-BROWN:** Do you want to start?

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** Oh, yes.

**Melina BATH:** And you have got 3 minutes.

**Larissa McLEAN DAVIES:** I do think we are getting to fundamental questions of structure here. On a school level we would look at what is open to us in terms of different forms of instruction. We would want to see every young person in our education system able to be supported through the system – that their continuous learning journey is supported. We currently have a system where we focus on stages of schooling. Our research would show that understanding the continuous learning journey of a student as they move through the education system – the data that is collected – so that we have that around students, teachers, when students

move around. We know that that would be a vital thing in future, so that we actually can support the student over the time.

We need to think about teachers and resourcing. What I would like to see in the system is a highly valued profession that is recognised for the expertise that it has, where teachers are able to have different pathways once they are teachers, their expertise can be developed in different ways and knowledge can develop over time – we understand that new knowledge is needed at this time; we have spoken about some examples of that – and that we have a system that supports that, so a real commitment. We have got good structures in place. We have got the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership here, so we have got a great commitment to that. How do we build on that to think about the career of the teacher? I think we would want to see a system in that way. We would want to have a system for the future so that all of the opportunities for technology are embedded in our system so that we are not playing catch-up with that, but we are able to get ahead of that, and we need to think of what a future classroom looks like in that way – so the resourcing around that.

**Joe McCracken:** The comment I would make on that is that 20 years ago I was in year 11, and I think about the classroom now compared to what it was back then. It is a little bit different, but it is not that much different.

**Larissa McLean Davies:** So how can we use technology to assist learning in different ways? We have enormous opportunities here for us in terms of curriculum, in terms of the way in which we might support students. There is the opportunity now to take up some of that so that we do have a purpose-built curriculum and system for the future. Because I think you are probably not the first person to make that comment – that in some schools and in some places, in many places, we might not see a measurable or really substantive difference. We have got this amount of students in our classroom: how do we tailor support and how do we ensure that teachers are able to support students at the individual level? Lisa, what would you like to see for the future?

**Lisa McKay-Brown:** Well, I have already said I would like to see a truly inclusive education system where segregation has been removed and where we do have schools that are always teaching at the point of need, so we know what a student's needs are and we have the skills and capabilities in order to meet that need and the flexibility to create learning environments that are safe and where young people feel like they belong, because certainly there are young people now who do not feel that. It has to be a system-wide approach; it has to be systemic. It will be a big change, but we need to think long term for anything like this to work.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Professor. Our time is running out. I would like to say that we will take some questions on notice and we will actually forward some questions to you, and hopefully you can get back to us on notice. I just want to make a quick comment in relation to the value of the profession. This is probably just my perspective: I think it has more of a cultural base. From an Asian background, regardless of how much the teachers are paid, educators are really highly valued. Maybe that is something we have got to think more deeply about in relation to how we see the profession of teacher in a Western society, moving forward. That is my little comment. But again, thank you so much for coming in and being producers of our new educators for our country – having you here giving evidence has been fantastic – and for great contributions for us to put forward for our recommendations. We definitely hope that with some the questions we put forward to you, when we get some information back that will assist in relation to our recommendations, which might be how you look at the education system moving forwards to 20 years time and our students in the future. Thank you very much for your time.

**Moira Deeming:** Excuse me, Chair. Can I just put on notice that you get back to us with what you meant when you said 'segregation' and 'ending segregation' – just on notice?

**Lisa McKay-Brown:** Yes, sure.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Witnesses withdrew.**