Education PAEC Questions on notice

Question on notice no:	**1**
Question:	Please provide a high level analysis of validated assaults on staff in Victorian schools in 2016-17 and 2017-18.
PAEC Transcript page reference:	7

RESPONSE

a) Schools report incidents via the Department's Incident Reporting Information System (IRIS). Incidents are not validated at the time of reporting.

b) Schools are also required to report to Victoria Police if the severity of an incident may constitute a crime, such as assault. Victoria Police will investigate and proceed or not with charges, as appropriate. In turn, a charge may or may not lead to a conviction. Victoria Police's decisions and actions, and any subsequent court action, are not captured by the Department. Consequently, the Department cannot confirm the number of validated assaults.

Question on notice no:	**2**
Question:	With respect to physical maintenance being carried out at schools: a. How is the department going to improve its monitoring of maintenance being undertaken by schools? b. When will annual maintenance expenditure increase to 2 per cent of asset value every year?
PAEC Transcript page reference:	10, 22-23

RESPONSE

The Victorian Government has invested more than $3.8 billion to improve classrooms, upgrade facilities and build new schools across Victoria. This school building boom has delivered more than 1,300 school upgrades and 70 new school projects across the state.

The Department has commenced the Rolling Facilities Evaluation, which will provide schools with up-to-date information about their facilities. This will make it easier to identify and prioritise issues, streamline maintenance planning, minimise administration and give schools more time to focus on teaching.

Approximately 20 per cent of schools will be assessed each year over a five-year period – each school will be assessed once in the five-year cycle. The rolling cycle means that no school will go longer than five years without a condition assessment.

Approximately $98 million was allocated toward school maintenance annually until 2016–17 when the $200 million Essential Maintenance initiative increased annual funding by $25 million to $125 million. Maintenance funding is delivered through the Student Resource Package, Planned Maintenance Program, Emergency Maintenance Program and Maintenance Reform Projects like the Rolling Facilities Evaluation.

In addition to maintenance funding, the Government provides funding for school infrastructure through the capital works program. The 2017 Victorian Auditor General's Office report on Managing School Infrastructure indicated that the Department is objectively allocating the centrally managed maintenance funding to assets in greatest need of repair.

Question on notice no:	**3**
Question:	When are the government and department going to become more transparent with the public about: a. How schools are selected for maintenance and upgrades b. The five-year plan for maintenance and upgrades c. How the location of new schools is determined?
PAEC Transcript page reference:	22-3

RESPONSE

Questions A and B

The Department of Education and Training is implementing two key projects from 2018 to better support and monitor maintenance activities undertaken by Victorian government schools.

The Rolling Facilities Evaluation (RFE) commenced in early 2018. The RFE will assess the condition of assets at twenty per cent of all Victorian government schools each year over five years. The RFE identifies maintenance issues at schools and provides recommendations about how to address and prioritise these issues.

This information will be used to develop a five-year school maintenance plan, which will help schools to plan and deliver their maintenance activities. The plan is an agreement between the Department and the school regarding the maintenance to be undertaken over a five-year period. It is a key accountability tool for monitoring and improving asset management practices.

Both the condition assessment and the school maintenance plan enable the Department to provide specific support and guidance to schools so that they can deliver their maintenance activities in planned ways. This will improve the condition of schools and minimise their workload over the long term.

Question C

Developing a new school is a significant investment and involves a number of stages to ensure that public money is invested in the right place at the right time. These stages include demographic assessment, site selection and a site suitability assessment, land acquisition, school design and, finally, construction. The Department of Education and Training (DET) annually reviews the need for new schools using demographic modelling and works with State and local planning authorities to identify future sites for government schools. In doing so, DET regularly consults with local Councils, the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA), and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to ensure that the findings from DET's demographic modelling are consistent with what is being experienced on the ground, and that identified sites are ready for development as a school. This ensures that current and future demand for education services is assessed consistently across Victoria by considering local community needs and characteristics.

3

DET collaborates closely with the VPA and local government through the precinct structure planning process to identify and plan school sites in Melbourne's growth areas up to 30 years in advance, in order to effectively deliver appropriate school provision in an efficient and transparent manner. The VPA undertakes precinct structure planning in Melbourne's greenfield growth areas, in regional towns and cities, and in urban renewal precincts and strategic development sites in Melbourne's established areas. Through this process, DET has the opportunity to identify opportunities for new government schools that will meet the needs of these growing communities.

Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) outline the future urban structure for new neighbourhoods, showing the potential location of future roads, town centres, parks and sports fields, schools, community facilities, drainage reserves and land for proposed government and non government schools. There are many opportunities for DET to input to the development and implementation of a PSP. In particular, DET helps to determine how many proposed government school sites are needed, and the potential locations for proposed government schools. Every PSP is publicly exhibited to engage the community and other agencies and gain their views in a transparent way.

Question on notice no:	**4**
Question:	Will the increase in funding of the *Student Transport* initiative[1] provide transport for special and special development school students to attend and be members of school councils?
PAEC Transcript page reference:	28

RESPONSE

The $22.5m funding for the Students with Disabilities Transport Program is to meet growth demand and to replace older buses.

It provides eligible students with transport options to travel to school at the start of the school day, and home after the completion of the school day. Activities outside of school hours including school councils are not funded under the program.

[1] Department of Treasury and Finance, *Budget Paper No.3: 2018-19 Service Delivery* (2018), p.41

Question on notice no:	**5**
Question:	With regards to the mental health of principals: a. What statistics are maintained by the Department on principals' mental health? b. Please supply the WorkCover data that enables the Department to monitor principals' mental health.
PAEC Transcript page reference:	29

RESPONSE

a) What statistics are maintained by the Department on principals' mental health?

The Department's Workers' Compensation Unit maintains statistics on Workers' Compensation Claims that relate to the mental health injury of a principal.

The Department's human resources function maintains statistics on principal leave records such as personal leave, but this data does not specifically set out whether the leave was taken for mental health reasons.

The Department's eduSafe system tracks reported injuries or near misses, which can include mental health concerns from principals and other staff.

The Department conducts an annual survey, the *Principal Work and Wellbeing Survey* conducted by the Bevington Group. This survey is not specifically about the mental health of principals.

b) Please supply the WorkCover data that enables the Department to monitor principals' mental health.

Workers Compensation Claims for Mental Health Injury to Principal Class Employees (as at 31 May 2018)	
Year	**Total Number of Claims**
2016	21
2017	17
2018	5

Question on notice no:	**6**
Question:	Please provide the Committee with the results of the evaluation of the pilot Navigator Program.
PAEC transcript page reference:	31

RESPONSE

Please find at Appendix A

Question on notice no:	**7**
Question:	With respect to Government funding for asbestos removal in schools: a. Was funding allocated to independent and Catholic schools to assist in asbestos removal? b. Was funding removed from the recurrent funding bucket that forms the 25% funding agreement with the non-government sector? c. Did departmental officials ultimately make the decision to leave funding for asbestos removal out of non-government funding arrangements?
PAEC transcript page reference:	33-4

RESPONSE

The Government's commitment on asbestos removal focuses on government schools, and this is being delivered through the Asbestos Removal Program.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017, managers of a workplace must identify asbestos-containing materials on their site, keep an asbestos register and manage any asbestos risks accordingly. As the employer and site owner of government schools, the Department of Education and Training is responsible for these activities.

In fulfilling its responsibilities, the Department has completed a state-wide audit of 1,712 government school sites by 2016. These audits captured comprehensive information about asbestos in our school buildings, which informs the rollout of the Asbestos Removal Program.
The Asbestos Removal Program has prioritised the removal of all high-risk asbestos identified in the audits, which was completed by March 2016. The Department is now undertaking the next phase of the program to remove identified asbestos that, although not classified as high-risk, may pose a risk in the future.

As workplace managers, non-government schools maintain their own information about asbestos in their buildings.

The Victorian Government is delivering $120 million to help build and upgrade Catholic and independent schools across the state through its Non-Government School Grants Program. The Government will continue to work closely with the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and Independent Schools Victoria to ensure available funding targets the areas of greatest need.

Question on notice no:	**8**
Question:	With respect to the increase in full-time equivalent number of executives between June 2017 and anticipated in June 2018, as reported in the questionnaire: a. What is the equivalent increase in headcount between June 2017 and the expected June 2018 figure? b. Please provide a list of positions and branch names corresponding to any increase in headcount.
PAEC transcript page reference:	37-8

RESPONSE

a. What is the equivalent increase in headcount between June 2017 and the expected June 2018 figure?

The following table provides updated information on EFT and headcount figures for contracted executive officers within DET.

Contracted Executive Officers on Pay

	June 2017	**Estimate provided PAEC Questionnaire March 2018**	**Updated Estimate June 2018**
EFT	88.6	93.5	90.5
Headcount	90	95	92

b. Please provide a list of positions and branch names corresponding to any increase in headcount.

It is not possible to answer the question asked as the estimated number represents the net figure of cessations and commencements of contracted executives on pay over a twelve month period. Therefore this process will not produce a list of positions that support the increase.

Navigator Pilot Program

Impact Evaluation - Executive Summary

Prepared for the Department of Education and Training

August 2017

synergistiq

INSPIRED | TRUSTED | ADVISORS

Navigator Pilot Program: Impact Evaluation

Executive Summary

Synergistiq has been commissioned by the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) to conduct a process and impact evaluation of the Navigator pilot to broadly assess the success of the program in identifying and then re-engaging learners back into education. The overall findings from the evaluation will inform future engagement and re-engagement investment by the Department.

The Navigator pilot, which commenced in July 2016, aims to connect young people between 12-17 years that have 30% or less school attendance with case management support to help them re-engage with education. Community Service Organisations (CSOs) in eight Areas have been funded by DET to work with Navigator Coordinators (Coordinators), young people, schools and other appropriate services to make re-engagement possible. CSOs were encouraged to form consortiums that created place based partnerships to meet the needs of young people in each Area. In seven of the eight Areas a joint effort was formed between a Lead Provider (Provider) and one or more Partner Providers.[1] As a Pilot program, Navigator has been open to an iterative learning process that seeks input from the key stakeholders involved.

The Navigator pilot is expected to help meet the key Education State target of halving the proportion of students leaving school early from years 9 to 12 over the next 10 years.

The Evaluation

A Process and Impact Evaluation have been conducted in order to build an in depth understanding of Navigator's implementation and impact.

The process evaluation report was delivered in November 2016 which demonstrated that the Navigator model had generally been implemented as planned across the pilot Areas. The inputs and activities at the organisational and program level that were planned to occur were identifiable across the data. The learning curve of the Pilot meant that Providers were working with DET during the early stages to clarify the parameters of the program, causing some extensions to implementation timeframes. Data collected for the process evaluation suggested that Providers came to value this process as it gave them a chance to genuinely contribute to the establishment and design of the model. The need for ongoing work to continue to provide clarity was noted, both within the pilot Areas and across the program more generally. While the Navigator program was not seen as a panacea to the problem of disengaged learners, most key stakeholders expressed an appreciation for the value it represents and for the gaps that it fills.

This impact evaluation report highlights the key findings from the Navigator Impact Evaluation conducted between March and July 2017. As a theory driven evaluation it examines the extent to which Navigator achieved its outcomes based on the conceptual framework of the program, the Program Logic, and answers the Key Evaluation Questions outlined by DET. The evaluation includes 85 interviews and 160 survey responses from across the key stakeholders; Community Service Organisations (CSOs), the

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[1] In Hume-Moreland, there is only one Provider -Jesuit Social Services (JSS)

Department of Education (DET), schools and education institutions, young people and parents. Primary and secondary data has been analysed and aggregated to build a robust and nuanced understanding of impact.

Further, a matched comparison group case study design was used in this impact evaluation to address the counterfactual question. The case study examines the situation of student disengagement and re-engagement from the perspective of two schools within a DET Area that was not selected as a pilot site. These were matched to two schools in a Navigator pilot Area.

Key Findings

The impact evaluation examines the extent to which the Navigator model was implemented successfully in the eight pilot Areas. The data suggests that Navigator is a distinctive model, in that it uses holistic case management practices developed in the health and wellbeing sector to work primarily towards an education goal.

Overall, the data reveals that short-term outcomes are evident while medium-term outcomes are still emerging, which is to be expected at this stage of implementation (just over 12 months). The evaluation demonstrates that Navigator is proving to be an effective model for working with young people who are grappling with multiple and complex issues toward an educational re-engagement goal.

Additionally, Navigator has activated a concerted effort between the education and community service sectors which provides fertile ground for significant innovation and impact. Providers are not only working with DET, Coordinators and schools, they have also established three different types of joint efforts between Providers and Partner Providers: (1) Provider and Partner Providers all deliver; (2) Provider delivers, Partner Providers contribute; (3) Provider governs, Partner Providers deliver. Contributing factors to successful joint efforts include a shared vision, effective communication and transparency and shared resources and knowledge.

Overall the program is showing clear indicators of success with 37.1% of referred young people already returning to education in some form. The evaluation illustrates that there are a number of factors supporting successful implementation, including:

- Effective joint efforts that include a shared vision, effective and transparent communication and shared resources and knowledge
- Skills in intensive, trauma informed case management including assertive outreach
- A client-centred approach
- Skilled and committed staff that can work and manage across the eco-system of school disengagement- with young people, families, schools, community and government
- Consistent, regular, adaptable communication and engagement approaches with all stakeholders.

The matched comparison case study further supports the importance of intensive case management, a single point of referral and regular communication with DET. These were identified as gaps in the non-Navigator areas, giving comparative advantages to Navigator Areas over similar non-navigator areas.

The core findings from the impact evaluation are presented under the following Key Evaluation Questions.

i. How effective has the Navigator model been in identifying disengaged learners in Victoria?

Navigator has had a clear impact on DET and Provider knowledge and understanding of the client cohort. To date, 1097 referrals were reported across the eight pilot Areas, which means that Navigator has been effective in identifying on average 137 students per site that are experiencing educational disengagement.

Prior to Navigator, gathering data on the target population was a challenge. Navigator has provided a central point for visibility and an improved understanding of the multiple and complex barriers to education that the cohort are experiencing. There is strong evidence that Navigator has been a catalyst for creating conversations and joint efforts between CSOs, DET, families, young people and, to some extent, with schools. Navigator has provided ground for more systematic and collaborative thinking between the education and community services sectors.

The breadth of young people experiencing multiple barriers to education highlights the need for a program such as Navigator. The depth of young people in the community in need of Navigator's services is emphasised by the extensive client wait lists (255 young people at Q4). Stakeholders further identified that young people are missing out on Navigator services who are either under the age of 12 or who are disengaged from school but haven't reached the less than 30% attendance figure, e.g. they might be at 50% attendance. The evaluation illustrates that greater understanding, focus and accessibility around prevention and early intervention approaches is required to provide a more holistic re-engagement strategy: not withstanding any expansion to the eligibility criteria that would likely require a substantial increase in resources.

ii. How effective has the Navigator model been in catering for different cohorts of disengaged learners?

Different cohorts of young people require appropriate and targeted intervention and support to reconnect with education. The Navigator model is designed to harness community knowledge of these supports through joint efforts between Providers, Partner Providers, CSOs, parents and young people. It recognises that no single organisation is likely to have the breadth of expertise required to cater for the needs of various cohorts.

Of the 434 clients who participated in the Navigator Census, 21% (n=90) identified as having disabilities, 13.6% (n=59) identified as Koori and 13.8% (n=60) identified as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse young people.

A further cohort of young people who have to travel long distances within metropolitan and rural areas was identified in this evaluation. Consistently across Areas, the Providers and Coordinators commented on the difficulty of travel time for some young people and case. Stakeholders in both area types pointed to their large geographical boundaries and a lack of access to affordable and practical transport options for young people as causes. Caseworkers also identified that the travel time further limits the number of clients with whom they can undertake outreach work.

iii. How effective has the Navigator model been in re-engaging learners in education and in improving educational outcomes?

Findings from the evaluation show that the program is achieving short-term outcomes (i.e. increased readiness for education by young people), and progressing toward medium-term outcomes (i.e. improved engagement with education institutes over two terms). The DET re-engagement targets for Navigator are:

- Re-engagement of 70% of Navigator clients in school
- 50% of re-engaged clients remain in education for more than 6 months (measured by attendance of greater than 70%).

While sustained re-engagement with education is the ultimate goal of Navigator, it is important to highlight the other achievements leading up to re-engagement. Currently the program is tracking at:

- 407 young people who have returned to education by the end of Q4. This represents 37.1% of the total referrals received (1097)
- Just over 10% of students (n = 114) reported to be on a full time study schedule with a minimum 70% attendance rate
- 1.3% of Navigator clients (n = 14) are considered to have exited Navigator successfully (measured as 70% attendance for 26 weeks).

While Navigator may have not fully realised the program targets within the timeframe of this evaluation, the findings here are promising.

There have been a number of explanations for why targets have not been met, including delays in starting the program, recruitment and training of new staff and forging new partnerships and working agreements. In addition to this, the data shows that there was not a realization, at the programmatic nor Provider level, of the prevalence with which clients would be considered highly complex.

The majority of young people participating in the Navigator Census (n=434) experience significant barriers to education; 77% of Navigator clients were diagnosed or suspected to suffer from anxiety, 63% from depression and 33% from other mental health issues, while 51% reported that a parent or carer suffered from a mental health concern. The multiple barriers to education facing many of these young people has contributed to 58% (n=249) being a Navigator client for more than 20 weeks at the time of the Navigator Census. For future iterations of Navigator, the caseload, returns to and re-engagement with education targets should be reflective of the high numbers of complex clients with multiple barriers to education.

This Pilot phase has taken important steps to creating an evidence base that captures its outputs and outcomes. However, during the course of this evaluation it became clear that there have not been universal guidelines and definitions for how each Provider reports on outputs and outcomes to DET. This has contributed inconsistent datasets that limit the ability to undertake effective and efficient comparative analysis.

iv.   Are the program participants satisfied with the services delivered by their respective Provider?

The data for this impact evaluation reveals that the majority of young people across all areas who participated in interviews (n=18) and surveys (n=65) reported satisfaction with the services being delivered by Navigator.

Eighty-six percent of (n=56) young people felt that they could always trust the Provider staff to support them. Eighty-nine percent (n=58) of young people stated that they were satisfied with the amount of support from the Provider and with their re-engagement plan. Often, young people associated the Navigator service with the case worker they had been assigned to rather than the organisation. This relationship with a trusted person that is consistent, can communicate on their level and is able to provide novel ideas regarding school re-engagement is pivotal. Overwhelmingly, parents reported that they were satisfied with the Navigator service as well, with many commenting the Navigator case worker was

different to other workers they or their family had seen in the past. They expressed a sense of gratitude that they were treated as a person not just a number.

v. **Has the Navigator initiative had an impact on other components of the wider Victorian education system such as school exclusion practices or the support provided to dis-engaged learners in pilot areas and non-pilot Areas?**

At this stage, Navigator has not had a recognised impact across the wider system, the major focus has been on the engagement of young people. In particular, schools generally felt that there had been limited improvements to school practice since Navigator, with 29% (n=16) agreeing or strongly agreeing that their school had a greater capability to support students back into education since the Navigator program. However, several providers and Coordinators indicated plans for strategic work with schools in the next phase.

The evaluation emphasizes that Navigator offers a significant opportunity for positive systemic impact. It has created a fertile space for renewed thinking to advance coordinated prevention, early intervention and school re-engagement strategies for vulnerable and at-risk young people.

Overarching Recommendation

1) *Continue the Navigator Program*

Based on the evidence collected throughout the process and impact evaluations there is a strong case supporting Navigator to continue past its Pilot phase as the visibility of the level and complexity of student disengagement that Navigator has afforded may be difficult to replace.

Further to our overarching recommendation, we offer additional recommendations that have been categorised into three sections based on timeframe and scope, including: (1) recommendations for current program improvement, (2) for future program design, and (3) for future development of systemic education re-engagement policy in Victoria.

Recommendations for current program improvement

2) *DET to develop guidelines on data reporting*

Collecting and analysing data for this Impact Evaluation demonstrates that the current reporting format for Providers is producing inconsistencies. This makes it difficult to swiftly and accurately track the progress of each Area and carry out rigorous comparative analysis. We recommended that DET further develop Navigator reporting guidelines and requisite templates to ensure consistency of reporting across Providers, avoid challenges in aggregate reporting and allow DET to rigorously monitor and evaluate the impact of Navigator in the future. The guidelines require an outline of;

- The type of data to be reported
- Definitions of indicators and criteria e.g. caseload, waitlist
- A defined period of time for data-set reporting e.g. by quarter or cumulative.

We suggest developing the guidelines in collaboration with Coordinators and Providers. The use of technology to collect and manage data is also recommended, including data collection tools that allow for

real-time and qualitative data collection. It is expected that the new 'YES' database will facilitate some improvements in reporting.

3) Improving School and Service Provider Relationships

The data for this impact evaluation has illustrated that the relationships between many schools and Providers varied across the pilot and within each Area. In some instances, positive structural relationships had been formed between schools and Providers, supported by a shared vision, effective communication and transparency and shared resources and knowledge. However, the interview and survey data suggests that this is not happening in a uniform way within an Area or across areas. This report shows that effective collaborations and partnerships are occurring between schools, Providers, Partner Providers and DET when there is a shared narrative for school re-engagement and structures for regular communication, negotiation and decision making.

We recommend that DET uses its Coordinators to co-create structures for communication, adopting a client centred approach to help build shared narrative and formalise structures for negotiation and decision making. DET may wish to consider using supporting materials similar to its *Partnership Support Package* developed for Learn Local Organisations.[2]

Recommendations for future program design

4) Utilisation of client data in future program design

Navigator has shown that it has increased the knowledge and understanding of the target population by both Providers and DET. However, what is clear from this impact evaluation is that Providers initially underestimated the complexity of potential navigator clients in their Areas. This meant that initial model designs and required support services needed to be modified as the Pilot matured. It is anticipated that the 'YES' database will collate client information in a more systemic way once operational.

To assist and streamline the design of Navigator supports in future, it is recommended that the information collected in the YES database be interrogated to refine design and delivery. Sharing this information with future consortiums will support them when selecting organisations for the joint effort.

5) Define Joint Efforts for the delivery of Navigator

The evaluation has underscored the role and success that different joint efforts can have in working towards a common goal and that transparency and a clear articulation of roles is vital. Whether Navigator is being delivered by a sole provider or in a consortium, having the flexibility to define relationships between members in a fit for purpose manner should allow for more successful joint efforts.

If Navigator is to expand to new areas and new consortiums are formed, we recommend that DET consider a less prescriptive key selection criteria of *'Strong Partnerships'*. Instead, prospective Providers should describe their place-based, integrated approach to delivering Navigator with an articulation of the form of

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[2] http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/training/providers/learnlocal/program/partsupportpkg.pdf

joint effort, individual organisations' roles and responsibilities and how services will achieve improved outcomes *together*.

6) Recognition of the environmental factors: working with families

The majority of Providers identified the importance of working with the families as well as young people. The family environment can contribute significantly to educational disengagement. The Navigator Census showed that 51% (n=219) of its clients had parents diagnosed or suspected to have mental health concerns, and a further 32% (n=136) identified as a victim of domestic violence. While several Providers indicated that their models were working with families, the interview data from parents generally spoke about caseworkers communicating with them about their child.

We recommended DET ask providers to outline their current approach to working with families and encourage organisations that aren't already working with families to develop collaborative approaches to working with services who specialise in family support. This approach will maximise the wrap around support to young people who are living in unstable environments.

Recommendations for future development of systemic education re-engagement policy in Victoria

7) Develop a framework for an integrated approach to school re-engagement

DET has identified that Navigator is just one of the programs within its continuum of support for disengaged young people. The continuum includes Learn Local Organisations, Lookout Education Support Centres, Reconnect, School Focused Youth Service, Flexible Learning Options (FLOs) and Managed Individual Pathways (MIP). This impact evaluation makes it clear that Coordinators, schools, Providers and Partner Providers do not universally have a consistent understanding of how these various supports are supposed to be working together to support young people remain in education. Interviews also highlight that communication and collaboration between Providers, Partner Providers, Coordinators and other parts of the continuum of supports is inconsistent.

We recommend that DET develop an overarching, cohesive framework that articulates the components of the system designed to support vulnerable young people remain connected to education. This overarching framework should develop and articulate how the different components of the system work with each other to achieve a common purpose, retaining young people in education.

8) DET to develop or update policy position on the role and expectation of FLOs

Interview data for this evaluation shows that the messaging around FLOs is currently not clear. Providers and young people particularly spoke of the value FLOs as an education pathway. However, other stakeholders expressed concerns over the variability of FLOs with approved curriculum. Return to education data and interviews from in this report show that FLOs are increasingly being used as a re-engagement pathway. By Q4 of the Pilot 30% (n = 124) of all Navigator clients returning to an education setting went to a FLO, up from 18% (n=27) in Q2.

We recommended DET develops an up to date policy position on FLOs by undertaking an assessment of the current operating context. It should explain the difference between curriculum in FLOs and mainstream

education institutions. The goal of this work would be to develop shared understandings of FLOs across the education system.

9) Identify and communicate school support best practice

This impact evaluation highlighted a number of schools who spoke of their effective school practices designed to retain students at risk of disengaging. However, the data also showed that this was not happening categorically across schools.

We recommend that DET undertakes some research documenting applied successes in supporting these young people re-engage with education. This would need to be referenced against school data to demonstrate that the practices have been effective in supporting young people staying at and returning to education. Building an evidence base of initiatives developed by schools for schools is also likely to support greater buy-in. Additionally, DET may wish to use school leaders to act as a champion to help instigate change across Areas.