

Federalism in Australian Schooling: Its impact upon quality and equity

An Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project

THE PROJECT

The *Federalism in Australian Schooling* project is designed to support the objectives for schooling in Australia that have been identified by the Council of Australian Governments. These objectives are in the face of growing inequities in the distribution of educational resources, growing concentrations of students with high levels of educational needs, and imbalances in the distribution of resources across key stages, especially in early childhood education. By examining the ways in which federalism contributes to the structural barriers to these objectives and by developing and validating a set of structural reforms the project will contribute to these national objectives.

THE SEMINAR SERIES

The *Federalism in Australian Schooling* seminar series has been designed as both an input and an outcome of the project. Key participants in and witnesses of historical and current developments in schooling that are strongly influenced by the federalist frame are being approached to reflect upon the particular events and processes that influenced these developments. They are designed to gather reflections and commentary on different historical and contemporary aspects of schooling and federalism, from these participants and wider contributions from people who are able and interested to attend the seminars.

SEMINAR 1

Feb 18 2010
Whitlam Institute

Launch at the Whitlam Institute at the University of Western Sydney

The project was launched at the Whitlam Institute, with addresses from Former Minister for Education John Dawkins and Chief Investigator Professor Jack Keating.

"In the end the education revolution will be a fizzer unless it can address the core structural problems...Central to this has to be a renegotiation and restructuring of the autonomy and school resourcing across the federation." Professor Jack Keating (Sydney Morning Herald, February 18 2010)

SEMINAR 2

May 26 2010
Mercure Hotel

Exploring the Federal Contours of Australian Schooling

More than seventy people gathered at the Mercure Hotel in Melbourne for this second in the series of seminars from the *Federalism in Australian Schooling* project, hosted by research partner DEECD. Speakers included Dr Ann Morrow (former senior officer in the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet in the early part of the Hawke Government), Associate Professor Louise Watson (former senior adviser on schooling to the Minister for Education, Employment and Training, John Dawkins in the Hawke Government) and Professor Brian Galligan (University of Melbourne). Attendees, including from across the Victorian Departments of Education and Early Childhood Development and Premier and Cabinet, the Foundation for Young Australians and Latrobe, Victoria and Melbourne Universities, heard an historical narrative and examination of the impact of federalism on Australia's system of schooling, with particular focus on the Hawke-Keating years.

SEMINAR 3

Sept 3 2010
University of Melbourne

The Theodore Fink Memorial Seminar in Australian Education

The third seminar in the series, *The Australian Schools Commission and School Funding*, was hosted by the University of Melbourne. Presenters Professor Ken McKinnon (former Chairman of the Commonwealth Schools Commission) and Peter Anett (former Deputy Director of Catholic Education in Melbourne) reflected on the role of the Schools Commission.

"The problem is that formulation, dissemination and acceptance of potential solutions for long-term funding difficulties and other educational improvements will take time, probably more than one parliament." Professor Ken McKinnon (September 3rd 2011)

2011 SEMINAR SERIES

The *Federalism in Australian Schooling* seminar series continues in 2011:

- [Why is education reform so hard?](#) with Tasmanian Premier David Bartlett (March 2011, hosted by the Whitlam Institute, Sydney)
- [Canada and Australia: Comparing the impact of federalism on education in two countries](#) with Prof. Ben Levin from the University of Toronto (April 2011, hosted by the University of Melbourne)



MELBOURNE GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Whitlam Institute

WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY



FOUNDATION FOR
Young Australians



Department of Education and
Early Childhood Development