



# COMPULSORY EDUCATION POLICY

*Regionals acknowledge that compulsory education is the constitutional responsibility of the State Governments. Accordingly, school curriculums are the responsibility of the States.*

*The Commonwealth's responsibility is limited to providing funding for the delivery of equitable nationwide education services. However, the Commonwealth has a role to engage with business, industry tertiary institutions and international educators to determine the current and future education standard required of students entering both the workforce and the tertiary education system while facilitating the communication, with and between the States to ensure the expectations of both employers and tertiary institutions are met.*

**Regionals shall:**

- **Require the State Governments to develop and deliver a compulsory education curriculum that guarantees student outcomes in literacy, numeracy and science that result in score of at least 550 across standardized, psychometrically-robust international and regional student achievement tests.**
- **Require that the compulsory education system encourages students to actively seek knowledge beyond the curriculum to validate or challenge the content of the curriculum.**
- **Require that the compulsory education curriculum be delivered over twelve grades (12-year levels).**
- **Require that the compulsory education curriculum delivered by three independent institutions, each responsible for four (4) consecutive grades (year levels), Foundation, Middle and High School.**
- **Ensure that grade 1 (year level 1) is sufficiently resourced to respond to diverse learning experience of children prior to them entering the compulsory education system.**
- **Require that additional resources be provided for grade 5 (year level 5) and grade 9 (year level 9) for remedial education to ensure any shortfalls in student outcomes by the previous institution can be addressed.**
- **Provide that, ten (10) percent of Middle and High Schools are designated as Academic Scholarship Schools to deliver accelerated learning for capable students.**
- **Reintroduce Teacher Training Colleges to provide suitable qualified teachers for Foundation Schools.**
- **Ensure Teacher Training College courses are not subject to the Higher Education Contribution Fee.**

- Provide a pathway for Teacher Training College graduates to attain university qualifications.
- Reimburse fifty (50) percent of the Higher Education Contribution Fee for Teacher Training College graduates on attaining University Qualifications.
- Require that no less than 60% of weekly Foundation and Middle School hours are allocated to literacy, numeracy and science.
- Require that no less than 10% of weekly Foundation and Middle School hours are allocated to student personal development activities to foster self-confidence and resilience.
- Require that no less than 10% of weekly Foundation and Middle School hours are allocated to arts including either music, drawing/painting, choir or dance.
- Require that no less than 10% of weekly Foundation and Middle School hours are allocated to sports and physical activities.
- Enable High School allocated hours to be tailored to provide both vocational and academic pathways.
- Require that vocational pathways be, as far as practical, integrated with TAFE institutions and include a component of work experience.
- Provide Year 9 with resources to evaluate students' aptitude and skillsets to assist them in determining their vocational or academic pathway.
- Provide for the development and public distribution of detailed universal lesson plans.
- Provide for the maximization of class time for teachers.
- Re-establish the ROTE learning method in Foundation Schools.
- Limit the literacy curriculum of Foundation Schools to core functions of undisputed language and vocabulary.
- Limit the science curriculum of Foundation Schools to core functions of undisputable scientific laws, observations and empirical data.
- Support Home Schooling.

## **Introduction**

Access to education is a human right and while the State Governments are responsible for delivery, quality education requires the collective and active participation of parents, teachers and educational institutions.

As far as practical facilities and resources shall be equally available to each student. Where remoteness and scarcity of a student population is a factor, additional technology and remedial services shall be provided to assist adversely impacted students.

## **Current Compulsory Education**

It is compulsory for children to have commenced school by the time they have turned six years of age. Children generally attend primary school until they are 11 or 12 years of age. Primary school education usually consists of seven grades (year levels).

Since 2010, it has been mandatory in all States and Territories for students to complete Year 10 and participate full time in education, vocational training or employment, until they

are at least 17 years old. Accordingly, what is commonly referred to as High School provides a number of options to cater for different academic achievement levels and vocational interests.

The current of seven primary years in a single institution in some instances allows the underperformance of students to go undetected till they reach high school. Additionally, there is little in the way of accountability or official feedback mechanisms.

### **Failure of the Current Education Model**

By international standards, student outcomes of our education system have shown a significant decline over the past three decades. This, despite ever greater spending, reduction in class student numbers, changes in teaching methods, university teacher training and the introduction of a national curriculum and testing scheme, it would appear that not only are children failing to learn, our educators and their associated bureaucracy are bumbling from one failure to the next while constantly demanding more taxpayer funds to fix it. With the decline of student outcomes guarantying increased education spending there has been no incentive to reverse the trend.

### **Central Planning Mediocracy**

The Commonwealth's encroachment into the compulsory education system has been an unmitigated failure with its focus on conformity and uniformity ('dumbing down'). At great expense to the taxpayer, it has created an education system geared deliver mediocracy through simple participation and a curriculum cluttered with hypothetical and subjective issues, more appropriately addressed in the home rather than the school. The full control of compulsory education system shall be returned to the States to create a level of competition that will foster excellence in education.

### **Universal Learning**

The mandatory components of any compulsory education are of literacy, numeracy and science. These core components of education shall not be diluted or used to further subjective or specific topics which are the vested interest of any particular sector. However, all non-core components shall comply with the structure and standard of applicable core components in relation to composition, delivery and assessment.

The non-core components of the curriculum for Foundation School shall be limited to subjects and topics with concise, factual and verifiable data. No matters classified as theory or hypothesis shall be included.

The non-core components of the curriculum for Middle School shall allow for the introduction components that are deemed theories. All theories shall be clearly identified as such, with their basis being fully detailed along with their limitations, subjectiveness and competing theories.

The non-core components of the curriculum for High School shall allow for the introduction components that are deemed hypotheses. All hypotheses shall be clearly identified as such,

with their basis being fully detailed along with their limitations, subjectiveness and competing hypotheses.

Each of the mandatory components of the compulsory education curriculum have a number subcomponents introduced in a formulated progression that are effective building blocks of knowledge. While progression of the literacy and numeracy components are well established and initiated in the first days of schooling, science with its many different fields staggers into the curriculum much later while some branches such as chemistry and physics are first encountered in High School and are never undertaken by many students who have opted for a vocational rather than an academic pathway.

The most suitable science for inclusion from the commencement of compulsory education is human biology. From initiation of the first learning engagement between infants and adults, human biology features, though it is effectively at a rudimentary level (eyes, ears, nose, knees and toes). However, within the household the conversation on human biology continues and children are receptive to this information, proving a launching pad for further learning at this formative age.

The compulsory school curriculum must harness this interest as the introduction to the science component at the commencement of a child's education. While challenging, there is a wealth of factual and uncontroversial information available to support teachers, parent and student with many components lending themselves to rote learning. Locating, identifying, naming and spelling of the bones of the human skeleton would be well suit as an initial component in Foundation School.

### **LOTE (Language other than English)**

The State shall provide a single LOTE from grade 1 (year level 1) through to grade 12 (year level 12). The language shall be determined by a panel of suitably qualified linguists and meet the following criteria:

- a. utilizes the Latin alphabet;
- b. is spoken by a large number of Australian residents at home; and
- c. provides the best foundation for the learning of other languages.

The selected language shall be compulsory for all Foundation School students and will be part of the literacy component of the curriculum.

Foundation School LOTE may be delivered by suitable, competent lay persons and classes will be conducted only in the selected LOTE.

Those delivering the selected LOTE Foundation School shall not deliver any other lessons.

A LOTE shall be compulsory for all Middle School students and will be part of the literacy component of the curriculum.

The selected LOTE shall be offered to all Middle School students, though other languages may be offered as an alternative to students where the school has the capacity and the necessary community support.

Middle School LOTE shall be delivered by suitably qualified teachers and classes will be conducted in both English and the LOTE with equal emphasis on the oral and written components.

The selected LOTE shall be offered to all High School students, though it shall not be compulsory but rather an elective of a tailored set of subjects that best provides for the student's pathway.

### **Human Biology**

The State shall introduce Human Biology at grade 1 (year level 1) and provided for and provided for the provision of suitable learning modules through to grade 12 (year level 12). The modules shall be designed by a panel of suitably qualified biology and medical experts.

Human Biology shall be a compulsory component of both Foundation and Middle School and be limited to 'nuts and bolts' presentation without reference to distorted 'psychiatric opinion'. Ideally for Foundation School the human skeleton would be an extensive unit that would lend itself to ROTE whereby the expectation is, that students could locate, identify and correctly spell every bone in the body. There is a myriad of references accessible over the internet to allow parents to engage in their child's learning and probably learn themselves. A unit confined to 'bones of the hand' would be significant if it enables children to identify, locate and the various carpal bones, metacarpal bones and the phalanges with their three extensions. A unit such as this readily lends itself to a number of learning reinforcement methods such as classmate and parent engagement.

Human Biology shall be offered to all High School students, though it shall not be compulsory but rather an elective of a tailored set of subjects that best provides for the student's pathway.

The content of Human Biology by its composition, delivery and assessment shall in part attribute to the required literacy component of the compulsory education curriculum. The literacy component can be enhanced through the prolific use and spelling of correct anatomical names and terminology together with their associated etymology.

### **Resilience**

While not a subject, Resilience is a necessary component for dealing with the complexities of the modern world. Never has the world offered so many opportunities and challenges. Students must be equipped to both identify and able to seize their best future while being equally capable of dealing with disappointment and move forward in pursuit of success.

Resilience can only be developed through experiences and competition. Simple participation demeans all educators and denies all students access to education excellence.

Self-confidence is an essential component of resilience and shall be fostered by providing and encouraging every student to regularly speak and present to their peers. Public speaking and debating need to be facilitated in both Middle and High School.