

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2012-2013**

Outcome 2 – Schools and Youth

DEEWR Question No. EW0132_13

Senator McKenzie provided in writing.

Question

Grattan Institute report

The Grattan Institute report *Catching up: Learning from the best school systems in East Asia* says that “In Shanghai, the average 15-year old mathematics student is performing at a level two to three years above his or her counterpart in Australia”. Four of the world’s five highest-performing systems are Hong Kong, Korea, Shanghai and Singapore, according to the OECD’s 2009 PISA assessments of students and the Grattan Institute report outlines ways in which Australia can practically emulate their success through a focus on supporting teachers. Has the government read the Grattan Institute report? Are you considering implementing any of the author’s suggestions? Would you? What steps are we taking to ensure Australia joins Hong Kong, Korea, Shanghai and Singapore in having one of the world’s best education systems?

Answer

In September 2011 the Grattan Institute held the “Learning from the Best Roundtable” event that was attended by educators from Australia, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Korea and Singapore. Attendees from the Australian Government participated in the Roundtable. Lessons taken from the Roundtable were used to inform the Grattan Institute report titled *Catching up: Learning from the best school systems in East Asia* (the Report).

The Report examines policy areas and programs that have been integral to the success of education systems in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Korea and Singapore. It identified that these four education systems focused efforts in the areas of learning and teaching. The Report does not claim that the policy making structures of these four education systems can or should be reproduced. Countries have to tailor reform to their individual systems and circumstances.

Since 2007, the Australian Government has implemented foundational national reforms for our school system focusing on learning, teaching, transparency and accountability, addressing educational disadvantage and supporting excellence. These reforms aim to make every school a great school and ensure that schools have the capacity and are better able to provide a world-class education for every Australian student and improve outcomes.