

Academic Standards Inquiry Submission

John Fleming
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Background

From 1977 until 2005 I was a teacher in the Victorian Government School System. For the last ten of those years I was Principal of Bellfield Primary School. Since 2006 I have been Head of Campus for Haileybury College Berwick- an Independent School.

I have been recognized in several awards for my work at Bellfield:

2006- Special Achievement Award for Literacy and Numeracy in the National Literacy and Numeracy Week Awards

2006- The Bruce Wicking Award for services to the education of disadvantaged students

2005- Finalist in the Victorian Education Excellence Awards for School Leadership

2003- Finalist in the Herald-Sun/Monash University Principal of the Year Awards

2003- Educational Leadership Award from the Australian College of Educational Leadership

In 2003 I was a member of the Minister of Education's School Improvement Leadership Group.

In 2006 I addressed MCEETYA in Brisbane and COAG in Canberra re School Improvement.

In 2005 I presented at the launch of the National Inquiry into Literacy at Federal Parliament.

Bellfield Primary School

Bellfield Primary School is one of the most disadvantaged schools in Australia. In the ten years I was Principal at the school it was transformed from a seriously underperforming school to one of the best schools in the country.

In Statewide testing student performance was at the top of the State in all areas tested.

In 2004 Melbourne University selected Bellfield as part of the International Research into high performing schools.

In 2005 it was the first school in Victoria to gain Accreditation as a high performing school by the Victorian Education Department.

Awards-

2000- Victorian Government Award for Literacy and Numeracy Achievement

2000- Herald-Sun/Monash University Teaching Team of the Year Award

2000- National Quality Schools Award for Literacy and Numeracy

2003- National Quality Schools Award for Literacy and Numeracy

Haileybury

At Haileybury College I am implementing the recommendations of the National Inquiry into Literacy.

Research

The research is consistent in defining effective teacher practice. The US National Reading Panel Report, The Australian National Inquiry into Literacy, The UK Rose Report, The New Zealand Let's All Read Parliamentary Report and Project Follow Through all agree on effective teaching strategies.

Implications for Teaching Training

The teacher training Institutions have not kept pace with the latest research. They espouse outdated and ineffective teaching strategies. There needs to be a significant review of their courses.

At both Bellfield and Haileybury I have had to retrain the teachers to enable them to become effective classroom practitioners.

I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss these issues with the members of the Inquiry. I firmly believe the recommendations of the National Inquiry into Literacy need to be implemented Australia wide.

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