

17 August 2023

Time is right for “brave” conversations on how education must value all learners beyond a single score

A national alliance of education stakeholders is issuing a statement today calling for Australia-wide education changes that sees the full picture of every young person’s contributions, attributes, skills and interests.

“We will make sure every young person has proof of their learning success beyond a single mark or score,” says the We Are More Commitment Statement, released today.

The statement was developed at the inaugural We Are More event, held in Adelaide on Tuesday (August 15).

The statement was co-designed by an alliance of more than 170 participants including schools, students, First Nations communities, academics, employers, higher education and training providers, admissions centres, and government bodies representing every jurisdiction in Australia.

“We will value what matters to different communities in a learning system that functions fairly for all young people, in every state and territory...(and) ensure that what we develop generates trust from employers, recruiters, selectors and young people themselves,” says the statement.

“In the 21st Century, it is possible to recognise achievement in far more sophisticated ways than exams, tests and scores alone... to reflect the breadth and depth of what young people know and can do.”

The We Are More event was organised by Learning Creates Australia, the South Australian Department of Education, the South Australia Certificate of Education (SACE) Board, National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition and Melbourne Assessment (the University of Melbourne’s Graduate School of Education).

Learning Creates Australia Co-Chair Anthony Mackay AM said bold discussions about the Australian school system were vital to a successful future for young people.

“It is clear that we need a new definition of learning success, with new ways to measure and report on what young people know and can do,” Mr Mackay said.

“We need a commitment to collaboration, where partners in the learning system come together with the educator profession and young people as co-creators of a future education system - one that is fit for purpose,” he said.

“We are not only advocating that this should happen - we are demonstrating that it is happening.”

OFFICIAL

SACE Chief Executive Michaela Bensley said the statement was a first step in creating informed, broad, national discussion on education change in Australia that was inclusive of multiple stakeholders, from policy makers to principals, teachers, parents and most importantly students.

“Building for the future, a fit-for-purpose education system across all jurisdictions must include acknowledging the full picture of students’ strengths and abilities and that they are more,” Ms Bensley said.

She said that while it was the role of organisations across the nation, like the SACE Board, to evolve secondary education for a changing world, it was vital that students, parents, schools and the wider community were involved in its design.

The alliance that gathered in Adelaide is working collaboratively over the next year on a plan for an education and learning system that is fit for purpose, designed for young people's future and based on new partnerships and power shifts.

To read the full We Are More Commitment Statement, visit the [Learning Creates Australia website](#).