

**Panel session: Achieving engagement and equity for all students
Saturday 3 October 2009**

Question 2:

What are the challenges of a national curriculum for equity and engagement?

- Student diversity
- Do not overload with content
- allow room and time to negotiate with students.
- University training and professional learning for experienced teachers
- support for individual minority groups
- An overcrowded mandated curriculum
- Expectations by year level problematic.
- Trying to be all things to everyone.
- We need to have a broader understanding of what equity refers, which goes beyond what narrow notions of culture.
- Pedagogy that's used to address equity and engagement in delivering equity and engagement.
- Leaving time for teachers to personalise learning
- Differentiation needs to happen at the classroom level at the point of need.
- Flexibility to personalise learning
- Comparing schools by national tests.
- a notion of the local - concern that local needs will be ignored in a content driven curriculum
- QLD may have biggest adjustment.
- accessibility to every student
- Professional development for whole school initiatives.
- flexibility to be responsive to community groups
- Insufficient time been given for considering these complexities.
- Too content focussed
- Ability to differentiate for individual needs; flexibility; keep what's good in state policy re equity ;
- professional development issue balance between prescription and professionalism core learning essential assessment practices and engaging pedagogy
- engagement relies on the person implementing. Tension between responding to community and the constraints of the curriculum. Equity is different for every school.
- Time constraints so not enough consultative process with local communities
- challenge is expressing the content as simply as possible so that teachers can contextualise it.
- Equity is not about treating people the same. It recognises that it is not a homogenous group. That the difference becomes the focus.
- meeting needs, dealing with complex diversity of needs, being responsive to learner centred learning, funding vs resources vs student needs, funding for teacher development, how will accountability be measured?
- resourcing and professional development eg. where do we find the teachers who can teach Indigenous languages?
- capacity for personalised content. Curriculum should be a framework, not prescriptive
- national curriculum must value diversity and must be inherently indigenous
- advocate for an informed understanding of equity and engagement to be clearly articulated in the national curriculum
- Lack of appropriate resources that reflect diverse needs of students.
- Is there a rationale underpinning the National Curriculum?
- Schools being resourced according to context and at necessary times.
- should meet students at point of need
- Consultation with stakeholders to be inclusive of all students.

- Implementation within the timeframe in regard to equity
- identify whose knowledge is being privileged and for what purposes?
- Notion of Service learning- how does this translate into a content focussed curriculum?
- flexibility to service the local and global and individual
- Being not too prescriptive.
- Defining, understanding and enacting differentiation to meet the needs of all students
- Involving families and community organisations and support networks.
- difficulties of translating a theoretical curriculum into daily practice?
- Need different models of teacher development and equity education.
- Recognising the teachers' professionalism.
- speed of change needs to be considered, especially with respect to connecting with communities and groups
- Modify curriculum to achieve for differentiation.
- Whole school development plans.
- communication; equity and engagement can look very different in different contexts
- Interdisciplinary approach
- Ensuring that achievement standards for special needs students are articulated and clear
- There is still a large difference of opinion in our attempts to overcome inequity - we need a consensus
- need to apply standards that don't negatively impact on disadvantaged students (focus on what can rather than what can't do)
- The very nature of a national curriculum runs the risk of reductionism and generalisation, particularly around definitions of identity.
- Catering to individual teacher's passions.
- Provision of funding to jurisdictions to provide professional learning including mentoring to teachers to develop and embed the curriculum.
- social factors and societal issues impacting on readiness for school
- Organisational structures in place that will promote equity
- Teacher willingness to change practice if it's not working
- needs to be broad enough to create personalised learning opportunities for all learners
- Is compromise the best answer because we are not all going to be satisfied?
- leaving room in the prescribed content for adapting and meeting local needs and contexts
- Timeline too rushed.
- Students working individually can be threatening to some students. Group work also intimidating for some cultures/backgrounds.
- Teachers need TIME and resources to implement meaningful change More teachers less time
- Pedagogy is ignored
- The national curriculum still reinforces individual competition, which conflicts with equity and engagement.
- there is no simple definition of equity.
- provision of well rounded education, and not just preparation for the workforce
- Links with community agencies
- Why would writing a national curriculum solve the problems that aren't address in state curricula?
- At leadership level in school institute policies that promote equity.
- curriculum structures are limiting ie. organisation by stage of schooling and subjects, does not recognise need to engage students at different points in own learning
- assessment limiting
- Equity in Assessment
- quality teaching essence
- ensuring that teachers and schools are supported to connect the national curriculum to the local community
- low definition syllabuses - can not be all things to all people
- rethink the expectation of teachers. teachers need to implement they need time, resources, MORE TEACHERS
- It is difficult to create equity in assessment

- Content of curriculum needs to address inequities, power, multiple perspectives
- Provide a pathway and framework that helps teachers address the needs of diverse learners.
- assumption of year level appropriateness
- lack of state based contexts: inflexible, NAPLAN, has not worked overseas - public reporting.