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Better Teacher Appraisal and Feedback: Improving Performance

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Overview

Australia is lagging in vital areas of school education. On the latest figures, student performance has stagnated in mathematics and fallen sharply in reading. Nearly a third of Year Nine students have only basic writing skills.

All studies show that more effective teachers are the key to producing higher performing students. Conservative estimates suggest that students with a highly effective teacher learn twice as much as students with a less effective teacher. Systems of teacher appraisal and feedback that are directly linked to improved student performance can increase teacher effectiveness by as much as 20 to 30%. This would not only arrest our decline but lift the performance of Australia's students to the best in the world.

But at present Australia's systems of teacher appraisal and feedback are broken, and students are suffering as a result. It is time for change.

No one understands this more than teachers themselves. 63% of teachers report that appraisals of their work are done purely to meet administrative requirements; 91% say the best teachers do not receive the most recognition and reward; and 71% say that poor-performing teachers in their school will not be dismissed. Instead, assessment and feedback are largely tick-a-box exercises not linked to better classroom teaching, teacher development or improved student results.

This report is the third in a Grattan series on investing in our teachers. It combines analysis of Australian and international research with extensive interviews with teachers and principals in order to propose a new system of teacher appraisal and feedback.

The system will improve teaching and learning. It avoids a centralised approach. Instead, schools should have the responsibility and autonomy to appraise and provide feedback to their own teachers. It recommends that schools use at least four of eight methods found to be most effective in assessing and developing teaching and learning: student performance and assessments; peer observation and collaboration; direct observation of classroom teaching and learning; student surveys; parent surveys; 360-degree assessment; self-assessment and external observation. All of these methods provide feedback on learning in classrooms, directly linking it to effective teaching.

This is a large, difficult but vital reform. It requires a culture change in many schools and across the education system. Principals and teachers must lead it, and governments must help them to properly appraise and develop teaching and learning in their schools.

A new system of appraisal and feedback offers huge benefits for relatively little investment. It will provide constructive feedback and development opportunities to teachers and principals. It will bring overdue recognition to effective teachers, spreading good practices through their school and beyond. It will address under-performance through a continual focus on improving teaching and learning. Above all, it will raise student performance. Our schools and students deserve no less.

Addressing teachers' concerns about their appraisal and feedback

Teachers' concerns:	Addressing these concerns in the new system:
Teachers' appraisal doesn't improve teaching: over 60% of teachers report that appraisal of their work has little impact on the way they teach in the classroom.	*The methods to assess teachers provide feedback that is directly linked to improved classroom teaching and learning. Multiple methods should be used to assess teachers against their objectives. This process provides continual feedback, reflection and improvement. For example, student surveys highlight teachers' successful and less effective classroom practices.*
Teacher appraisal is just an administrative exercise with no feedback to improve student performance: over 60% of teachers report that appraisal of their work is largely done simply to fulfil administrative requirements.	*A decentralised approach enables teachers to determine for themselves what is effective teaching in their school and the most appropriate methods to assess and improve teaching and learning. These methods bring teachers into each other's classrooms, creating a direct link between the assessment process and their classroom experience. For example, 360-degree assessment (usually defined as assessment from supervisors, peers and subordinates) provides feedback from teachers, school leaders, students and parents about all aspects of teachers' work.*
Effective teaching is not recognised: over 90% of teachers report that the most effective teachers in their school do not receive the greatest recognition, and that if they improved the quality of their teaching they would not receive any recognition.	*Multiple methods of assessment are needed to recognise effective teaching. These methods increase sharing and learning of effective classroom practices between teachers. For example, direct observation by cross-faculty teams increases cross-curricular learning in schools.*
Under-performance is not addressed in schools: over two-thirds of teachers report that in their school, teachers will not be dismissed because of sustained poor performance and over half of teachers report that staff in their school would tolerate sustained poor performance.	*Schools need an agreed definition of effective teaching and learning, with assessment and feedback on teachers' performance against these definitions. Feedback should provide substantial opportunities for improvement. In doing so, this creates the process to move on ineffective teachers who have not responded to development opportunities. For example, peer observation provides instant feedback to teachers on how to improve their classroom teaching and learning.*

Table of Contents

Overview 3

1. Appraisal and feedback is needed and teachers want it 6

2. Appraising teachers' performance 9

3. Organisation of teacher appraisal and feedback 22

4. Impact on the teacher labour market 31

5. The cost of a teacher appraisal and feedback system 32

Appendix A The current teacher appraisal landscape and national teacher standards 34

Appendix B The cost of a teacher appraisal and feedback system 38

References 46

1. Appraisal and feedback is needed and teachers want it

All studies show that the key to higher performing students is the effectiveness of their teachers. Conservative estimates suggest that students with a highly effective teacher learn twice as much as students with a less effective teacher. Systems of teacher appraisal and feedback that are directly linked to improved classroom teaching and student performance can increase teacher effectiveness by as much as 20 to 30%. This would lift the performance of Australia's students to the best in the world.

1.1 Effective teachers are important

Teachers are the most important resource in Australian schools. Differences in teacher effectiveness account for a large proportion of differences in student outcomes – far larger than differences between schools.[1] In fact, outside of family background, teacher effectiveness is the largest factor influencing student outcomes.[2]

The evidence from Australia and overseas is remarkably consistent.[3] Conservative estimates suggest that a student with a teacher at the 75th percentile of effectiveness (measured with a value-added metric) will achieve in three-quarters of a year what a student with a teacher at the 25th percentile will achieve in a full year. A student with an excellent teacher (at the 90th percentile) would achieve in half a year what a student with a less effective teacher (at the 10th percentile) will learn in a full year.[4]

These impacts are cumulative. Students with less effective teachers in consecutive years are more likely to fall behind. US research shows that the achievement of a student with effective teachers three years in a row will be 49 percentile points higher than if she had less effective teachers three years in a row.[5]

Improving teacher effectiveness will also have a greater impact on Australia's economic growth than any other reform currently before Australian governments. Research comparing the impact of school and government programs and policies shows that better appraisal and feedback for teachers is the most effective program available to governments. It can improve their effectiveness by 20 to 30%.[6] Apart from its impact on students' lives, it would increase Australia's long-run GDP growth by about 0.4% a year, adding $240 billion to GDP by 2050.[7]

[1] Kyriakides *et al.* (2000); 2002) and references therein; Hanushek (1997); (2003); Krueger (1999); (2002); (2003)
[2] OECD (2009)
[3] Hanushek *et al.* (1998); Nye *et al.* (2004); Rockoff (2004); Hanushek *et al.* (2005); Aaronson *et al.* (2007); Leigh and Ryan (2011)
[4] Leigh (2010); Hanushek (1992)
[5] Sanders and Rivers (1996); Jordan *et al.* (1997)
[6] Fuchs and Fuchs (1985); (1986); Hattie (2009)
[7] This makes the conservative assumption that a one standard deviation increase in test scores will increase GDP growth by 1%. See Jensen (2010a) for details

1.2 Appraisal and feedback increases teacher effectiveness and improves student learning

Meaningful appraisal is geared to teacher development and improvements in learning. It helps teachers improve their teaching skills by identifying and developing specific aspects of their teaching. It improves the way they relate to students and colleagues and their job satisfaction, and has a large impact on student outcomes.[8]

The five main mechanisms to improve teacher effectiveness are:

1. Improving the quality of applicants to the teaching profession;
2. Improving the quality of teachers' initial education and training;
3. Appraising and providing feedback to improve teachers once they enter the profession and are working in our schools;
4. Recognising and rewarding effective teachers; and
5. Moving on ineffective teachers who have been unable to increase their effectiveness through improvement programs.

Appraisal is vital to ensuring that all these mechanisms succeed, but particularly steps three to five.

[8] Wade (1984); Hattie (2009)

Research shows that teacher appraisal and feedback significantly improves teachers' understanding of their teaching methods, teaching practices and student learning.[9]

1.3 TALIS data – teachers want appraisal and feedback

A recent OECD survey of lower-secondary teachers showed that in Australia current systems of teacher evaluation are largely seen as bureaucratic exercises that are not linked to teacher development or improved classroom teaching:[10]

- 63% of Australian teachers report that appraisal of their work is largely done simply to fulfil administrative requirements; and
- 61% report that appraisal of their work has little impact on the way they teach in the classroom.

This means that the current systems of appraisal and feedback do not identify or recognise effective or innovative teaching in schools. The survey found that:

- 91% of teachers report that in their school, the most effective teachers do not receive the greatest recognition;
- 92% report that if they improved the quality of their teaching they would not receive any recognition in their school; and
- 91% report that if they are more innovative in their teaching they would not receive any recognition in their school.

[9] Wade (1984); Hattie (2009) and references therein, Meyer *et al.* (1965)
[10] TALIS is the OECD's Teacher And Learning International Survey, OECD (2009). See also Jensen (2010b)

As well, teachers report that there are serious development issues within schools that systems of appraisal and feedback are not addressing:

- A quarter of teachers are losing at least 30% of their class time – and 11% lose half their class time – to factors other than effective teaching and learning. These factors are largely due to difficulties with classroom management; and
- 71% of Australian teachers report that in their school, teachers with sustained poor performance will not be dismissed.

While virtually all teachers in Australia are required to undertake some form of appraisal, it rarely amounts to anything more than an administrative burden.[11] Teacher appraisals are not linked to individual development goals.

The vast majority of teachers receive a satisfactory performance review, progressing along the professional structure almost automatically, even though school principals and teachers report that a significant percentage of teachers are clearly under-performing.

Australian teachers want change. They want meaningful appraisal that is strongly linked to development. They deserve recognition for effective teaching and they want steps put in place to address under-performance and development issues in their schools

Grattan Institute - gathering evidence for better teacher appraisal and feedback

This report is the third in a series that focuses on investing in teacher effectiveness. The evidence was gathered through analysis of Australian and international research, and extensive discussions and interviews with Australian principals and teachers.

In particular, we interviewed teachers and principals from schools in the government, Catholic and independent sectors, that have changed their culture and now do teacher appraisal and feedback very well. These schools are setting the example for the rest of the country to follow, and the evidence provided by their leaders was extremely helpful.

We also extensively analysed the evidence, both from Australia and overseas, about teacher appraisal and feedback methods that work. Many methods have been tried and there is good evidence about what works and what does not, and how the best methods should be put into practice.

[11] Appendix A provides a more detailed description of the current evaluation and development requirements in Australian states.

2. Appraising teachers' performance

The new system of teacher appraisal and feedback assesses teachers on multiple aspects of their teaching. It requires schools to use at least four methods of assessment that draw a direct line to effective teaching and learning. This incorporates continual feedback for teachers into the appraisal of their work.

Providing meaningful feedback to teachers is the best way to improve teaching and learning. The system relies on effective methods to assess and improve learning and teacher performance:

- Student performance and assessments;
- Peer observation and collaboration;
- Direct observation of classroom teaching and learning;
- Student surveys and feedback;
- 360-degree assessment and feedback;
- Self-assessment;
- Parent surveys and feedback; and
- External observation.

Schools should choose at least four of these methods to assess teachers' performance. Each school should be required to include student performance and assessments among the four.[12] The research shows that the greatest impact on student learning comes from meaningful feedback to improve classroom teaching.[13] The methods chosen and developed should reflect this evidence. Schools may therefore choose to place less emphasis on self-assessment and parent surveys, given that they can provide less feedback that draws a direct line to improved student performance.

However, before schools implement these assessment methods, they should define what constitutes effective teaching in their school. Schools must decide the objectives and benchmarks against which performance is assessed.

This report examines effective methods to appraise and provide continual feedback to teachers. It does not discuss the mechanisms by which excellent teachers can be recognised and rewarded for their work, nor the processes by which underperformance can be managed. Future Grattan research will examine these issues.

[12] The extent to which these requirements can be effectively put in place may vary between school sectors.
[13] Fuchs and Fuchs (1985); (1986); Hattie (2009); Leigh (2010)

2.1 A balanced scorecard: Recognising all aspects of a teacher's role

A balanced scorecard requires teachers to be appraised on a number of important aspects of their role. These reflect school and teacher objectives that build on what each school defines as effective teaching and learning in their school.

Schools should then choose at least four of the eight methods to assess teachers' performance against the objectives of effective teaching and learning in the balanced scorecard.

Box 2.1: Leadership framework helps Teach for Australia Associates set goals in their balanced scorecard

Teach for Australia (TFA) is a not for profit organisation that recruits high quality individuals to teach in disadvantaged schools. Associates teach for two years while qualifying for a Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching. A longer-term goal is to inspire them to continue to work towards addressing educational disadvantage and inequity in Australia.

TFA uses an action-oriented, practice-based approach to teacher appraisal and development. Six domains of leadership are identified and translated into action in both the classroom and other cross-contextual environments. Associates then set goals in conjunction with their mentor as part of a balanced scorecard. These goals reflect their range of responsibilities in the school and the outcomes they seek to achieve with their students.

Importantly, Associates set both job-related and behavioural development goals that will help them reach their individual objectives. Mentors frequently observe Associates in their classrooms and schools to provide feedback. Together they determine specific actions and behaviours that will assist both Associates' development and improve student achievements.

The mentors formally visit each Associate monthly and are also in weekly contact. This facilitates regular coaching feedback where Associates review their goals in six leadership domains, discuss evidence of their performance and negotiate new goals for the next month and quarter.

Box 2.2: Using teacher standards

Schools should begin the development of a balanced scorecard with a discussion of what constitutes effective teaching and learning in their schools. While learning and student performance should be of paramount importance, many schools begin the discussion of what constitutes effective teaching with reference to teacher standards. The recently released *National Professional Standards for Teachers* describe what constitutes effective teacher practice.[14] They cover all aspects of a teacher's role: professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement. In addition, each jurisdiction currently has its own standards.

It is important that the national standards are not seen as a template for teacher appraisal and feedback (something that the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership has also emphasised). Teachers already report that assessment of their teaching is a bureaucratic exercise. Simply applying the seven national teacher standards to teachers' appraisal and feedback would only exacerbate the problem. What matters are the methods used to assess teachers' performance. These provide the feedback to teachers that improves teaching and learning in schools.

Box 2.3: Balanced scorecard approach to teacher appraisal: Ringwood Secondary College, Melbourne

Ringwood Secondary College in Melbourne's eastern suburbs has introduced a balanced scorecard approach to teacher appraisal and feedback. The method is adapted from the Victorian Government's *Rewarding Teacher Performance* trial.[15]

Teachers at the school discussed what constitutes effective teaching in their school. They agreed with and adopted the Victorian Department of Education's E5 model of teaching, but added elements to reflect the school's definition of effective teaching. The school sets high expectations for its teachers in the balanced scorecard: all teachers must set goals that reflect the capabilities of highly effective teachers.

Teachers set two individual goals, with at least one reflecting the school's agreed model of highly effective teaching. Teachers must also set team and leadership goals, professional learning goals and identify other contributions they intend to make to the school during the year. They must link their individual and team goals to the school goals and priorities, ensuring that everyone is working towards the same outcomes. Further, teachers set targets for each goal and list up to three strategies to achieve them. Teachers also select data sources that will help them determine their success. The development of teaching strategies to achieve goals and selection of data sources is an especially valuable process conducted in the team environment.

Teachers initially receive examples of a balanced scorecard, with appropriate goals and data that may be used. Over time, teachers have become far more comfortable and proficient at using objective data sources to assess whether they have accomplished their goals.

[14] AITSL (2011)
[15] Victorian DEECD (2009)

2.2 Methods for assessing and developing teacher effectiveness

Principals and teachers should choose the mix of methods appropriate to their school. Eight are discussed below, with examples from schools already using these methods. In combination they should provide an accurate picture of the strengths and weakness of teachers, creating the opportunity to recognise effectiveness and establish individual development programs.[16]

2.2.1 Student performance and assessments

Student performance and assessments of their work provide indicators of teachers' overall performance and of specific aspects of their teaching. Used well, they are the most direct measure available of student learning with different teachers. Ensuring that these assessments are used well is an important aspect of effective leadership in many schools, particularly those in poorer communities.

Student assessments are an important tool to diagnose how well they are learning. Appraisal and feedback should make direct links between diagnosing students' performance and better teaching to improve their performance.

Unfortunately, test scores have often been used poorly. As a result, teacher appraisal and feedback has often been stymied by disagreement about whether or not test scores genuinely reflect teacher effectiveness. There are numerous problems in measuring the contribution an individual teacher makes to student test scores.[17] Teacher value-added scores are an improvement on student test scores but they also suffer from numerous methodological problems.[18] As a result, it is difficult to assert that student test scores or value-added measures present an accurate or complete measure of teacher effectiveness. That is why some schools use student assessment data at the school rather than the teacher level. This is the case at Methodist Ladies College in Melbourne, for example, where appraisal is focused on classroom practices.

How can it work?

Many schools use student test scores and assessments to inform teacher appraisal and feedback through two separate but not exclusive methods.

First, student assessments and test scores are used to set objectives and compare the progress made by students with different teachers. The development of *National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN) tests has made this easier. However, these tests are only available for teachers at some year levels and in some subjects.

Teachers can set their objectives for the improvements made by students, the percentage of students performing at specific levels (e.g. high-performing students), and progress made with low-performing students. Comparing progress made with different teachers provides an indication of teaching and learning in classrooms and should lead to further assessments of why

[16] Jacob and Lefgren (2008); Gates Foundation (2010); Rockoff and Speroni (2010)

[17] OECD (2008)

[18] McCaffrey *et al.* (2005)

Box 2.4: Roxburgh College, Victoria

At Roxburgh College, a government school in Melbourne's northern suburbs, a focus on the analysis of student assessments is helping to develop a culture of excellence. Comparisons of student progress in different areas of the school not only develop higher standards but provide another avenue through which teachers can be seen as excellent practitioners. This has lead to a greater focus on effective classroom teaching and growth in the number of classes offered by teachers who are now offering additional remedial, advanced and holiday programs.

students succeed in some classrooms and not others. This leads to greater recognition of effective teaching, spreading good practices across schools and identifying teachers in need of development.

Second, student performance and assessments are used to diagnose patterns in students' learning and the implications this has for teaching. This should inform discussion of the effectiveness of distinct aspects of teachers' curriculum and teaching practices.

Analysis of student performance also highlights particular groups of students that are having difficulties in specific learning areas. This provides a basis for both teacher and school development.

Importantly, student assessments should also be used at the school level to judge whether the system of teacher appraisal and feedback used in the school is leading to improved student learning. If improvements are not being made, then adaptation is required.

Box 2.5: Holroyd High School, NSW

Holroyd High School in Sydney's western suburbs sets high expectations for both staff and students. This enables the students (of whom about half are refugees) to set high personal goals, and helps the school to support them in achieving those goals. For example, teachers analyse students' NAPLAN results to examine in detail where gaps in knowledge, skills and understanding are occurring. This is essential for refugee students, all of whom have had significant interruptions to their schooling. Most students at the school have not previously sat school or NAPLAN-type tests before. The test results provide the basis to assess how individual teachers and different teaching practices are able to address some of the gaps in student learning.

2.2.2 Peer observation and collaboration

Peer observation involves teachers observing and learning from other teachers. It is frequently conducted in teams. While initially confronting for some, teachers say that it improves teaching and learning and collegiality in schools.[19]

Classroom observations should focus on more than teaching: since the objective of the class is to promote student learning, it is against this that teaching methods should be appraised. It is important that the observation focuses on teaching methods *and* their effect on student learning.[20]

Teachers, particularly those new to the profession, are reassured by the feedback they receive. They are able to test innovations, reveal hidden behaviours, address known problems and test unease. Importantly, peer observation also encourages sharing of

[19] Kumrow and Dahlen (2002)
[20] MacBeath and McGlynn (2002)

the teaching and learning experience more broadly across the school.[21]

Teachers generally respond positively to their experiences with peer observation.[22] In a study of a UK education district, Kyriacou reported that

> *"the vast majority of teachers said they found the classroom observation and subsequent discussion very useful. Most mentioned the experience as being very positive, affirming, and a valuable opportunity to get useful feedback from a colleague."* [23]

Peer observation and collaboration can promote team teaching. Rather than individual teachers having responsibility for a class, team teaching allows several teachers to teach larger classes, collaborating and continually improving effective teaching and learning.

In the USA, Peer Assistance and Review programs were introduced to both ease the leadership burden of principals (by disseminating responsibility for appraisal to teachers) and to take advantage of better informed peer appraisals. The programs have been a great success in assessing teacher effectiveness.[24]

How can it work?

Effective peer observation builds trust and mutual support among colleagues. Teams should be formed, possibly of three or four people, with roles swapping between team members so that each can observe and be observed.[25]

Pre- and post-observation meetings are crucial. The former should focus on the objectives of the teacher, the class being observed, the observation itself, and how these fit in with the school's objectives.[26]

The post-observation meeting should focus on what went well and what could be improved, while encouraging self-reflection. Constructive feedback should be provided on how this will be incorporated into teaching practice.[27]

Box 2.6: Fitzroy High School, Victoria

Fitzroy High School in Melbourne has introduced a program of peer observation that allows staff to share practice and provide feedback to one another. Teacher discussions and feedback about their practice are based on a 'theory of action' for teaching practice in their school. Teachers work in groups of three to observe each other and provide feedback at least once per term. Frequent feedback provides opportunities for teachers to assess how new or developing teaching strategies are working and how they can be improved.

[21] Blackwell and McLean (1996), Munson (1998)
[22] Kumrow and Dahlen (2002)
[23] Kyriacou (1995)
[24] Goldstein (2004); (2007)
[25] Stillwell (2009)
[26] Richards and Lockhart (1992)
[27] Blackwell and McLean (1996); Stillwell (2009)

2.2.3 Direct observation of classroom teaching and learning

Direct observation to assess teaching and learning is similar to peer observation except that it is normally carried out by a school principal or a highly effective teacher.

Principals' subjective assessments have been found to be good predictors of student achievement.[28] Jacob and Lefgren found that:

> *"…principal assessments of teachers predict future student achievement significantly better than teacher experience, education or actual compensation, though not as well as value-added teacher quality measures."* [29]

They also found that principal assessments predict parent requests for a child to obtain a particular teacher better than any of the above measures. The authors interpret this result to mean that principals can appraise aspects of teachers' effectiveness that value-added measures do not explain.[30]

How can it work?

Direct observation should be conducted in a similar way to peer observation, involving a pre- and post-observation meeting.[31] As with peer observation, the focus should be on both teaching and learning.[32] The meetings should encourage the teacher to identify areas for the observation to focus on, and should promote self-reflection, provide feedback, develop goals for improvement and recognise good teaching.[33] The more principals encourage self-reflection, the more teachers appreciate their feedback and the better the teaching becomes.[34]

A teacher could feel threatened by the presence of a principal or head teacher in the classroom. Careful use of pre- and post-observation meetings should overcome this. In these meetings the teacher and principal should come to agreement about the focus of the observation and its intended use.

2.2.4 Student surveys and feedback

Students are a vital source of feedback for teachers about individual student needs, how students are responding to distinct aspects of teaching, their progress and attitudes to class.[35]

[28] Manatt and Daniels (1990)
[29] Jacob and Lefgren (2008)
[30] Importantly, Jacob and Lefgren note that principals are only able to accurately discriminate between high-performing and low-performing teachers, but could not discriminate between the middle 60-80%

[31] These conferences are unlikely to require a third-party facilitator due to the existing hierarchical relationship between the teacher and the principal
[32] MacBeath and McGlynn (2002)
[33] Blase and Blase (2000)
[34] (2000), surveyed 800 American teachers about principal behaviours and characteristics that enhanced their classroom instruction and the collegial atmosphere of the school
[35] Craig (2011)

Student surveys have been important in the development of teaching in some Australian schools (see Box 2.7) and in programs in the USA and Canada.[36] Student surveys are also important in the assessment of teachers applying for promotion in Mexico, the Slovak Republic, Spain, and Sweden.[37]

Students are able to report on teachers with a high degree of reliability.[38] Student ratings of teachers have been found to be better predictors of student achievement than teacher self-assessments and principal assessments of effectiveness.[39] However, the validity of the survey results depends on the instrument used.[40]

Many teachers value student feedback. In his time at Box Hill Secondary College, former school principal Wayne Craig would discuss student surveys during teachers' appraisal meetings. Frequently, teachers used student feedback to identify the three weakest aspects of their teaching. From these they set goals to improve their teaching over the following year.

How can it work?

School principals and teachers should be involved in developing student surveys, emphasising aspects of teaching that are valuable to the school. The more frequent the surveys (e.g. once per term), the more useful the information is for providing feedback to teachers, allowing them to alter their methods and approach.

Importantly the age of students being surveyed affects how surveys should be designed. Students of different ages value different aspects of teaching. For example, primary students tend to rate teachers more generously than older students.[41]

Box 2.7: Student feedback identifies teachers' strengths and weaknesses

At Churchie (Anglican Church Grammar School) in Brisbane, students are asked to rate 16 teacher attributes (explained in short, simple descriptions) as a strength or weakness. These surveys are done anonymously and teachers collate the results. They provide clear feedback to teachers on how students perceive their teaching methods and areas for improvement. A sample of the survey is provided in Table 2.2.

[36] This includes Utah (Peterson *et al.* (2003)) and Iowa (Wilkerson *et al.* (2000)) and Quebec (Bouchamma (2005))
[37] Isoré (2009)
[38] Peterson *et al.* (2000), Masters (1979), Webster (1988) and Ebmeier, Jenkins and Crawford (1991) in Follman (1992). The majority of research in this area assesses the validity and reliability of feedback by college students on their teachers. There is far less research into the use of feedback from secondary or primary students, however the former should apply to the latter.
[39] Wilkerson *et al.* (2000)
[40] Goe *et al.* (2008)
[41] Peterson & Stevens (1998) in Peterson *et al.* (2000)

Table 2.1 an example of student survey items

	Agree				Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
I know what I'm supposed to do in class					
Teacher shows us how to do new things					
There is enough time to finish class work					
This class is too noisy or rowdy for learning					
I learn new things I can tell you about					
I know how well I'm doing in class					
This is a good teacher					
We have enough materials and supplies to learn					
At the end of class, I understand well enough to finish the assignment					
I know why we learn what we learn in class					
This class is not too slow or fast to learn well					
The rules in class help me to learn					

Source: Peterson et al, 2000.

Table 2.2 Extract of sample student survey from Churchie (Anglican Church Grammar School)

Attribute	Strength	Weakness
Clear direction – this teacher makes directions clear at the lesson's start		
Relevance – it is made clear why what we are learning is important		
Good instructions – this teacher's instructions are easy to follow		
Punctual – this teacher arrives to class on time		
Well equipped – this teacher has all books and resources ready		

2.2.5 360-degree feedback

360-degree feedback works on the premise that a comprehensive appraisal requires feedback from a range of sources, including the school principal, senior teachers, peers, less effective teachers and those being mentored, students, and parents.[42] It provides opportunities for feedback on work inside and outside the classroom. In this sense it can be an umbrella for the mix of methods discussed in this report.

[42] Dalesseio (1998) in Morgeson *et al.* (2005).

While there is limited research on the use of 360-degree feedback in schools, there is considerable broader evidence that the process works in providing constructive appraisal and feedback.

The 360-degree feedback process can open up candid conversations about performance, increase formal and informal feedback, goal setting and skill development.[43] It is particularly important for assessing how well teachers and school principals appraise and provide feedback to other teachers. This should be emphasised in schools trying to establish greater collegiality and professional collaboration.

The use of 360-degree feedback, particularly upward feedback for school principals and senior teachers, can significantly improve their behaviour and performance.[44] The process can also significantly improve low-performing groups.[45]

The potential benefits go far beyond the provision of feedback. Teachers report greater opportunity to share ideas with and learn from colleagues outside their subject areas. At Churchie (Anglican Church Grammar School) in Brisbane (see Box 2.8), feedback is provided following classroom observations conducted by heads of faculty not only within, but outside the teacher's normal faculty. This encourages school-wide improvements in pedagogy, student learning and staff development.

How can it work?

The feedback process can be created by gathering both quantitative and qualitative information in meetings and formal discussions, distributing surveys, and seeking context-specific or generic information.[46]

The process should be conducted at least once a year to provide rich feedback to every teacher. Feedback should be on specific, observable behaviours, ensuring validity and a development orientation.

2.2.6 Self-assessment

Teacher self-assessments are a common tool for teacher appraisal. They can be useful in that they require teachers to reflect on their methods and results.

Self-assessment often takes the form of a portfolio of work, compiled to "highlight and demonstrate their knowledge and skills in teaching".[47] Typically it contains multiple pieces of evidence that "collectively depict the teacher's approach and effectiveness at increasing student learning".[48]

[43] Morgeson *et al.* (2005)
[44] Hegarty (1974)
[45] As discussed in Reilly *et al.* (1996), the effect on initially higher performing groups is far smaller, however.

[46] Ghorpade (2000)
[47] Doolittle (1994)
[48] Oakley (1998)

Box 2.8: 360-degree feedback at Churchie (Anglican Church Grammar School), Brisbane

Churchie (Anglican Church Grammar School) in Brisbane uses a 360-degree feedback method for teachers every two years. Teachers are assigned a deputy head or faculty head as an appraiser. The appraisal process takes place within an assigned two-week period. The process and expectations of both teachers and appraisers are clearly defined. An initial meeting between teacher and appraiser is held to discuss the teacher appraisal program. Teachers assess their own performance against both the teacher standards (specific to the school) and their annual goals or key performance indicators. This includes individual goals, 'sub-school specific goals' and faculty goals. The appraiser conducts both a student survey of the teacher's classes and both the appraiser and another senior teacher (often a faculty head) conduct classroom observations. Additionally, the appraiser reviews some of the students' work and reviews student records and mark-books. The teacher and appraiser bring all this information together to establish a clear picture of the effectiveness of the teacher.

The process is very conversational and dialogue is emphasised at each stage of the process. The involvement of a faculty head outside the teacher's primary faculty also encourages cross-curricular development of teachers.

Teachers are rated against 'dimensions' or standards of being a teacher at Churchie on a scale of 'well below expectations', 'below expectations', 'reaches expectations' and 'exceeds expectations'. Both teacher and appraiser agree and sign off on the appraisal. In the rare case of a disagreement, a second appraiser will complete a second appraisal. Finally, the teacher and appraiser set goals for the next two years, including how to address specific weaknesses.

Portfolios are often a requirement of accreditation processes, but are also frequently used as a tool to appraise both beginning and experienced teachers.[49] They can be used in both formative and summative appraisals,[50] providing opportunity for self-reflection as well as a point of reference for the appraisal process.[51]

There is limited evidence regarding how well self-assessments measures teacher effectiveness.[52] There is some evidence that teachers do not consider that portfolios improve or promote good teaching practices.[53] What is more, compiling a portfolio takes up a lot of teacher time.[54]

These concerns may be reflected in teachers' reports about the current state of teacher appraisal in Australia. Portfolio assessment is often used in Australia, and it is clear that teachers report that the current systems are not working.

How can it work?

Teachers can use a range of evidence to demonstrate their teaching methods in portfolio assessments. This can include lesson plans and teaching strategies; examples of students' work; and other evidence of classroom practices.

[49] Goe (2007)
[50] Tucker *et al.* (2002); Tucker *et al.* (2003)
[51] Attinello (2006), Santiago and Benavides (2009)
[52] Tucker *et al.* (2003)
[53] Tucker *et al.* (2003)
[54] Tucker *et al.* (2003)

2.2.7 Parent surveys and feedback

Parent feedback broadens the view of teacher performance and provides the perspective of a distinct and important party in education. Parent feedback allows teachers to reflect on how they relate to both students and parents. It strengthens collaboration between parents and teachers.[55] Parents' unique knowledge about their child's education can be used to inform appraisals and contribute to teacher improvement.[56]

Parent surveys are best used in conjunction with other data sources. In Utah, and in the Teach for America program,[57] parent surveys are used as part of an appraisal that can also include student surveys, parent surveys, teacher tests, pupil achievement data, documentation of professional activity conceptually linked to performance, peer review of portfolios, school improvement involvement, and information unique to an individual teacher.[58]

How can it work?

Parents' views can be shaped by their children's views of their teachers and schools. It is therefore important that surveys ask parents questions about their child's learning that they can directly observe.

Survey results may be collated into a global score for performance review purposes, although weighting of survey items should be carefully considered and agreed upon.

Table 2.3 An example of a parent/guardian survey

	Did you ask for	Did you receive
An overview of class content and goals?	Yes/no	Yes/no
A description of the student's progress?	Yes/no	Yes/no
Ideas for home support of learning?	Yes/no	Yes/no

Did your child know what was expected in this class?	1	2	3	4	5
Was the classroom work the right difficulty for your child?	1	2	3	4	5
Did the teacher treat your child with respect, care and knowledge of the child's needs?	1	2	3	4	5
Were you satisfied with your child's overall school experience as provided by this teacher?	1	2	3	4	5

Source: Peterson et al. 2000

[55] Dwyer (1995), Peterson *et al.* (2003)
[56] Stronge and Ostrander (1997); Peterson *et al.* (2003)
[57] Oakley (1998)
[58] Peterson *et al.* (2003)

2.2.8 External observation

External observation provides a way for schools to measure their own assessments of teaching and learning that removes any school-specific bias.[59] It also ensures some uniformity across schools.

External appraisals force schools to look outside their own environment, giving them valuable information about their own strengths and weaknesses. They encourage sharing of innovations in teaching and learning and in organising schools to improve learning.

Regional leaders, school principals and highly effective teachers in other schools can play a productive role in teacher appraisal and feedback, and in identifying good teaching practice.[60] For example, Fitzroy High School brought in leaders from other schools to conduct focused observations of classrooms. The aim was to identify areas for improvement in classroom practices and develop a common theory of action. This was then developed by teachers through further internal observations. See Box 2.4 for more details.

External appraisal can foster effective networks of teachers, schools and regions to share innovations and best practice teaching. In the Flemish community of Belgium, professional networks of teachers collaborate to share innovations in teaching practices to improve regional education outcomes.[61] While voluntary and established largely for developmental purposes, they also help to appraise teachers' performance. Participants value feedback as an effective method of improving performance. Various forms of external observation are also used to appraise teachers' performance in France, Ireland and in Connecticut in the USA.[62]

How can it work?

Due to the logistic difficulty of external appraisal it invariably occurs less frequently than school-based programs. As with observations by peers and internal leaders, external observations should involve pre- and post-observation meetings, establishing the focus of the observation and allowing for self-reflection and prompt feedback.

[59] Isoré (2009)
[60] Goldstein (2004); (2007); OECD (2008); Isoré (2009)
[61] OECD (2008)
[62] Goe *et al.* (2008), Isoré (2009)

3. Organisation of teacher appraisal and feedback

School principals and teachers should be able to fashion a system of teacher appraisal and feedback to suit the context and direction of their school. They need to have greater ownership and responsibilities for teacher appraisal and feedback.[63]

3.1 A decentralised approach

As school principals and teachers have better information about their school, students and teachers, they should determine which methods are used to appraise and provide feedback to their teachers.[64]

A decentralised approach provides more feedback to teachers. In contrast, a centralised approach cannot provide the on-going feedback that is necessary to produce higher achieving teachers and students.

A decentralised approach allows more methods of teacher appraisal and feedback to operate within schools. Centralised approaches rely on standardised measures that by their very nature are restrictive and less frequently applied than school-based appraisal. For example, centralised measures that rely on standardised test scores and appraisal by external agents (e.g. an inspectorate) can provide neither the breadth of appraisal and feedback that comes with the methods suggested in this report nor the frequency of constructive feedback required for sustained teacher development.

The involvement of teachers in developing school-level appraisal systems in New Zealand schools has been fundamental to their long-term success.[65] A similarly positive impact of greater school ownership of the appraisal process is evident in Finland.[66]

Greater control over appraisal and feedback would also help address what teachers report is a serious problem with existing systems: they are bureaucratic processes that do not affect their teaching or carry any meaning in schools.

However, the degree to which decentralised practice leads to excellent school outcomes will depend upon the ability of schools to respond to greater autonomy and responsibility. Government will need to provide more assistance to schools that are performing poorly. Yet as these schools develop over time, greater school autonomy will help both school and teacher development.

3.2 The role of the principal

Effective leadership is essential to create meaningful teacher appraisal and feedback.

School principals play a vital role in designing the system of teacher appraisal and feedback in their school. School principals must lead decision-making about which assessment methods are the most viable for their school.

[63] Caldwell and Spinks (1998)
[64] Caldwell *et al.* (2002)
[65] Fitzgerald *et al.* (2003)
[66] Darling-Hammond and Rothman (2011)

The evidence shows that the greatest impact comes from teacher appraisal that provides meaningful feedback. Of the eight methods discussed in this report, self-assessment and parent surveys may provide the least effective feedback. Conversely, observation and student surveys provide immediate and, if implemented correctly, highly valuable feedback. A system of 360-degree feedback provides the most comprehensive feedback for teachers and may be considered the optimal system. But schools should decide which methods best suit them. The size of their school, the current state of appraisal and feedback and the school culture will help determine which methods are more appropriate for each school.

Some schools, such as Fitzroy High School, were established with innovative teaching structures, including appraisal and feedback.[67] Others, such as Roxburgh College, are in the process of cultural change. Still others, such as Churchie (Anglican Church Grammar School) in Brisbane have gone through a lengthy and difficult process to establish themselves as examples of best-practice teacher improvement.

Effective teacher appraisal and feedback requires school leaders to set clear objectives, develop explicit expectations of teachers and students, and identify and promote effective teaching.[68]

School principals must ensure that employees are well trained in appraisal procedures and understand how their individual goals are aligned with the school's goals. The outcomes of the performance appraisal process, including development goals, must be clearly communicated.[69] Equity must be ensured with a consistent process applied to all teachers in a school.[70] Governments and administrators will have to support school principals in this process.

School principals are responsible for developing and implementing teacher appraisal and feedback programs. Student performance is the ultimate measure. Principals must therefore be able to make difficult decisions about the viability of their programs if they are not improving student performance.

[67] Fitzroy High School was closed in 1992 and re-opened in 2004 with a mandate to implement innovative evaluations, class structures and teaching methods.
[68] Teddlie and Reynolds (2000), Pont *et al.* (2008)
[69] O'Donnell and Shields (2002); Heinrich and Marschke (2010)
[70] Lipe and Salterio (2000)

Box 3.1: Linking school objectives and teacher objectives helps teacher development

Teacher appraisal and feedback at Methodist Ladies College, an independent school in Melbourne's eastern suburbs, is based on each teacher setting clear classroom objectives. Importantly, these reflect explicit school objectives. They may not necessarily be based around student performance. Instead, they often focus on curriculum and classroom teaching, such as formative assessment and curriculum mapping. Setting clear school objectives not only provides direction and leadership, but is considered important in shaping and helping teachers develop their personal goals as part of their professional learning program.

John Fleming, a school leader at Bellfield Primary and Haileybury College, has emphasised the need to set clear and explicit objectives for improvements in student performance. He stresses that any appraisal process must begin with explicit statements about what constitutes effective teaching in the school. This not only provides teachers with clear objectives for their work, but ensures observers and mentors have clear parameters for teacher appraisal and feedback.

Box 3.2: Cultural change: Opening classroom doors in a single year

Reform at Roxburgh College, a government school in Melbourne's northern suburbs, provides an excellent example of cultural change. In a year, the school culture has changed from one typified by little sharing of teaching practices to one where classroom doors are open and effective teaching is shared throughout the school.

Previously, there was little expectation that people would share teaching practice. The education narrative in the school was more focused on what was being taught rather than how it was being taught.

Over a 12-month period, the school implemented a peer appraisal program that has fundamentally altered teacher appraisal and feedback in the school. All staff are seen as learners. A leadership group committed to change was created. The group is focused predominantly on teaching and learning, and producing cultural change through peer observation and a greater connection with student learning.

Cultural change started with a conversation about what happens in classrooms and how good practices should be shared. Staff were then grouped into professional learning teams in key learning areas to work on classroom practice and observe each other's classes, before reflecting on development opportunities. A subsequent cycle of peer observation gauged the improvement that had resulted. Teachers got more feedback. This emphasised the benefits of peer observation and why good teaching mattered. It also led to interventions for specific students, particularly those falling behind.

Peer assessment of teaching practice creates a sense of shared purpose, a greater focus on teacher development and improved classroom teaching. It has increased the sense of responsibility that each teacher has for every child, regardless of which class they are in. In time, a greater voice for students, parents and the broader community can be added.

A Toolbox for schools to implement a new system of teacher appraisal and feedback

Actions	Description	Stakeholders
1. Identify how system objectives relate to the school.	These should focus on student performance and effective teaching and learning.	School principal
2. Develop school objectives	Develop objectives that reflect those of the system and of their school community. This must involve all staff, and must set high expectations, particularly for lower socio-economic status schools.	School principal, school leaders, and teachers with input from parents
3. Develop rationale for teacher appraisal and feedback	The school principal must be explicit about why teacher appraisal and feedback matter and how they will work. The principal should focus on improved student learning, increasing teacher effectiveness and greater collegiality and professional collaboration in the schools.	School principal
4. Develop teacher objectives	Explicit statements of what constitutes effective teaching and learning must be developed in each school, setting a benchmark for teacher appraisal and feedback.	School principal, school leaders and teachers
5. Develop balanced scorecard	A balanced scorecard should be developed that reflects school and teacher objectives. These will define the important aspects of a teacher's role as the focus of appraisal and feedback.	School principal, school leaders and teachers
6. Choose appraisal methods	The appropriate appraisal and feedback methods should match the culture of the school and the aspects emphasised in the balanced scorecard.	School principal, school leaders and teachers
7. Setting roles for teachers and school leaders	New systems of appraisal and feedback will require new roles for teachers and school leaders. These roles and responsibilities should be explicitly detailed and discussed with all teachers.	School principal with input from school leaders and teachers
8. Develop training programs	Most school leaders and teachers will need training for their new roles. Training should focus on the specific methods of teacher appraisal and feedback chosen for the school.	School principal
9. Implementation and planning	Schools should develop detailed implementation plans, taking into account the school's situation and culture. Key roles for school leaders should also be identified.	School principal, school leaders and teachers
10. On-going monitoring and evaluation	Schools should continually monitor, evaluate and develop the system to ensure improving student performance.	School principal and school leaders

3.3 The role of the teacher

Teachers should have greater opportunities for professional collaboration, continual development and appraisal that recognises effective teaching.

A decentralised approach places greater responsibility upon teachers. They must fashion their appraisal and feedback system to increase the effectiveness of all teachers in their school. It should include responsibilities for:

- Participation in setting school and teacher objectives;
- Participation in determining the methods used to assess the performance of teachers;
- Providing feedback to other teachers. Peer appraisal and feedback programs may involve increased team teaching and professional collaboration within schools. This would include feedback on all elements of teaching, from curriculum development and classroom practices to how to address the needs of specific students;
- Mentoring and development. More effective teachers may be given broader mentoring roles as part of increased appraisal and feedback within schools. This requires continual feedback and a strong involvement in the work of less effective teachers;
- Appraisal of and feedback to other teachers. Especially in larger schools, better teachers should be given responsibility for providing appraisal and feedback to other teachers. For example, highly effective teachers in a given year level or subject area should be responsible for improving the effectiveness of other teachers in that area. These roles should not be administrative but focus on improved teaching and learning. Through a 360-degree appraisal process, these highly effective teachers will then be appraised on their performance in improving other staff; and
- Leading cultural change. In some schools, significant cultural change is required to introduce meaningful teacher appraisal and feedback. All teachers will need to take a leadership role. Teachers are leaders in the classroom and for a school to adopt effective methods of appraisal all teachers will have to lead in sharing, assessing and developing effective teaching practices.

Currently, teacher appraisal is a bureaucratic exercise that has little impact on what teachers do in class and fails to recognise good teaching in schools. To ensure that this problem is addressed, appraisal of all staff within schools should include their role in the appraisal and feedback of other staff. Teachers must be assessed on the feedback they provide to other teachers, on their role in the development of other staff and the extent of their professional collaboration with other teachers.

This is a significant change in the responsibilities of teachers. It requires effective leadership and support. In many schools it requires a change in the extent of collaboration and cooperation of teachers. Often this will not be easy but it is essential to improve student learning.

Box 3.3: Team-based processes provide opportunities to develop colleagues

The appraisal process at Ringwood Secondary College takes place in a team environment. Leading teachers run teams of six or seven that comprise teachers from different faculties and with different experience. This encourages collaboration and sharing of teaching practices and strategies across faculties. Principals and assistant principals also participate as team members contributing to learning and development. The teams, which meet once a term, provide the opportunity to set personal development goals and targets, develop teaching strategies with support from colleagues to meet these goals, and revise progress throughout the year.

Where leading teachers assess others in their group as underperforming, the principal and assistant principal are informed to ensure that the teacher can receive developmental support outside the group environment.

3.4 The role of government

Governments have an important role in developing and monitoring school-based programs of teacher appraisal and feedback.[71]

The success of teacher appraisal and feedback relies on effective implementation. The process must be well planned and resourced. Extensive engagement of school principals and teachers is vital.

Governments should provide schools with guidelines and templates to enable schools to develop each of the methods available to appraise teachers. Templates should also be provided to assist schools, including balanced scorecard templates from which schools can decide their own approach.

Governments have a clear role in providing training for appraisal and feedback programs in government schools. Training must begin with school leaders who will often need to enact substantial cultural change. Training will not only be needed in the objectives and principles of teacher appraisal and feedback, but in the implementation of specific programs.

While the overall system should be structured to minimise the chance of unfair or inequitable treatment, governments need to provide teachers and school principals with appropriate appeal procedures if they feel aggrieved following an appraisal of their work.

Resources and infrastructure are already provided to schools and teachers for professional development. However, they need to be better aligned to school-based assessments of teaching and learning that should identify areas for development and provide continual feedback to build on professional development undertaken.

[71] While governments have responsibilities for all schools, specific responsibilities are clearly more applicable to government schools rather than those in the independent or Catholic sectors.

A Toolbox for governments to implement a new system of teacher appraisal and feedback

Actions	Description	Stakeholders
1. Develop system objectives	Teacher appraisal and feedback needs to be measured against system objectives, including student performance, curriculum goals and effective teaching.	Commonwealth and state governments, administrators of non-government schools
2. Develop school and teacher objectives	These should be broad goals, allowing individual schools and teachers to set their own objectives according to their school context.	Commonwealth and state governments, administrators of non-government schools in conjunction with school leaders, teacher associations and unions
3. Develop rationale for teacher appraisal and feedback	All programs must have a sound rationale. This must be clearly communicated to ensure effective implementation and cultural change in many schools.	Commonwealth and state governments, administrators of non-government schools in conjunction
4. Develop organisational structure	The roles and lines of responsibility between school principals, regional leaders and central administrators for effective teacher appraisal and feedback must be detailed.	State governments and administrators of non-government school sectors, school principal associations
5. Develop the teacher appraisal and feedback framework	The framework should establish the parameters in which schools have the autonomy and flexibility to develop a new system of teacher appraisal and feedback.	State governments and administrators of non-government school sectors in conjunction with school leaders, teacher associations and unions
6. Develop implementation guidelines and templates for schools	Implementation guidelines need to focus on how each appraisal method could operate, including templates and examples for constructive appraisal and feedback (e.g. templates for balanced scorecards, surveys and peer observation).	State governments and administrators of non-government school sectors, school associations, school principal associations
7. Provide training	Training is crucial. It must focus on how to effectively assess and provide feedback to teachers to improve student learning.	State governments and administrators of non-government school sectors
8. Explicitly link teacher appraisal with improving performance	The objective of improving student learning must be explicit and linked to both the appraisal of teacher's work and the feedback they receive. Feedback is particularly helpful when focused on teacher and school objectives.	State governments and administrators of non-government school sectors
9. Establish links between teacher appraisal and feedback and teachers' careers	A meaningful teacher appraisal and feedback system allows effective teachers to be recognised and under-performance addressed. To properly address under-performance the focus should be on improving teaching and learning in classrooms.	Commonwealth and state governments, administrators of non-government schools in conjunction with school leaders, teacher associations and unions
10. Monitor and develop the system	Continual monitoring is required as some schools will provide more effective appraisal and feedback than others. There must be consequences for accountability and autonomy.	State governments and administrators of non-government school sectors

Box 3.4 Creating and supporting a performance and development culture in Victoria

In 2005 the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) introduced a *Performance and Development Culture Initiative.* One objective was for all schools to have an accredited performance and development culture by 2008. As of the end of 2009, 98.4% of schools were accredited.[72]

The objectives of the *Initiative* are very much aligned with the system of appraisal and feedback advocated in this report, recognising the importance of feedback to improve teaching and learning.

A number of Victorian school principals reported that, whatever the lasting effects of the *Initiative*, it has been a catalyst for real discussions about performance appraisal and feedback and for sharing teaching and learning methods. In this respect, it should be considered a success. However, it is only the beginning of genuine change.

In a decentralised approach, it is essential that governments monitor the effectiveness of schools' teacher appraisal and feedback programs. This includes appraisal of the quality of the programs themselves, the impact on teachers, on effective instruction and school climate and on student performance.

Monitoring schools should focus on how appraisal and feedback systems improve student performance. Effective practices in high-performing schools should be disseminated, first around regional networks, then across the broader school community. Additional autonomy should be granted to these schools. Conversely, governments have a role to intervene in schools that are not improving their performance. This creates a system where additional autonomy is granted to high-performing school principals and autonomy is reduced for those that are under-performing.

3.4.1 Appraisal and improvement of school principals

Governments will need to improve their appraisal and improvement of school principals to ensure that they have the capacity to develop effective teacher appraisal and feedback programs, that these programs are maintained over time, and that teachers are treated fairly and equitably.

In many systems in Australia, school principals are appraised against the performance of their schools. In Victoria, it is explicitly outlined in the enterprise bargaining agreement that principals are assessed annually based on demonstrated achievement against school priorities and Departmental Criteria.[73] Principals are reviewed by their designated officer, usually the Regional Network Leader. In Western Australia, school principals are also required to develop an annual performance management agreement that is subject to a review of their results. Moreover, "the performance management process will be directly linked to the intended outcomes of the school/workplace and thus to the Department's purpose."[74]

When assessing the performance of school principals, their teacher appraisal and feedback programs should be emphasised. Measures should be developed to assess their effectiveness –

[72] DEECD (2011)

[73] Victorian Government Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2008)

[74] Government of Western Australia (2008) pp9-10

above all, for improving student performance. 360-degree assessment, with feedback from teachers, should be an integral part of the appraisal of all school principals.

First, this would provide rich information about the functioning and quality of a school. The feedback received would help to develop school principals.

Second, the opinions of teachers and other school leaders are essential to assess the effectiveness of teacher appraisal and feedback programs. Again, this feedback would help to improve these programs.

Third, 360-degree feedback would help ensure that teachers and other school staff are treated fairly in their appraisal and feedback. A 360-degree assessment ensures that all parties know that teachers have a greater voice, and therefore a clear avenue to address unfair or inequitable treatment.

4. Impact on the teacher labour market

The new system of teacher appraisal and feedback will improve the functioning of the teacher labour market. It will provide greater recognition for good teachers and create a fair and comprehensive process for addressing poor teaching and learning in classrooms.

The system includes multiple methods for assessing teachers' performance, greatly increasing the information about teachers' effectiveness and development over time. It will help teachers to find the jobs they want and help school principals to hire the teachers they want in their schools.

This will lead to improved salaries for effective teachers. As their qualities and successes are recognised, their wages will grow. At the same time, teachers that have not improved with their increased development opportunities will find it increasingly difficult to find jobs.

Continual school-based appraisal and feedback provides a wealth of information about teachers' skills and abilities. Multiple methods of assessment discussed in Section 2 provide considerable information about teachers' strengths and weaknesses, their pedagogy and teaching practices, and their development over time.

This provides a more complete picture of what teachers bring to a school. The comprehensive nature of this information far outweighs existing practices and other centralised approaches to teacher appraisal.

Advocates of centralised approaches often argue that the standardisation of teacher appraisal procedures provides greater portability for teachers. In such systems teachers receive appraisals that lead to a standardised assessment score such as 'proficient teacher'. At first glance it appears that such a common approach would help teachers wishing to move between schools and allow school principals to have a common understanding of what constitutes a 'proficient teacher'.

However, we need to compare the information available to teachers and school principals. Teachers want to have evidence through which they can demonstrate what they can offer a school. In turn, principals want to assess this information to understand not just the overall performance of a teacher but also the specific attributes they can bring to their school.

A centralised approach does have the advantage of common measures of performance. However, it lacks the breadth and depth of continual school-based teacher appraisal and feedback that the new system provides.

This paper does not make recommendations on how to link teacher appraisal and feedback with teachers' career structures and procedures to recognise good teachers and address under-performance. This is the subject of the next Grattan report in our series arguing for greater investments in teacher effectiveness.

5. The cost of a teacher appraisal and feedback system

A system of teacher appraisal and feedback that uses the methods discussed in this report is relatively inexpensive to operate. Schools that are already effectively using these methods report that the extra time to undertake these activities is balanced with the decrease in time required for other tasks such as school meetings and staffing issues.

It is recommended that schools use at least four of the eight methods to assess teacher performance. Consider a school that implements systems of peer observation and collaboration; student surveys; student performance and assessments; and 360-degree feedback. If we consider an extreme example, in which no savings are made in teachers' working time, these four methods will take up about 8.5 days in each teacher's year, 17 days in each leading teacher's year and 17 days in each school leader's year. This is equivalent to, on average, 3.5% of each teacher's annual working time and 7% of each school leader's time. The estimated annual cost of this time across the government school system is $678 million. This is almost 4% of government school system employee-related expenditure and about 2% of total expenditure.

However, school principals who have implemented such systems report that the additional time requirement is much smaller. The process leads to better teaching, communication and collaboration. It significantly reduces planning requirements, team meetings, and meetings about problem students.

Appraisal and feedback should be considered a core part of the role of teachers and principals. Therefore, the extent to which this is considered *additional* time needs further discussion. Far from imposing extra hours of employment, a meaningful system of appraisal and feedback provides principals and teachers with more effective tools to do their job.

It would be a mistake to merely increase teacher salaries to match the hours undertaken for effective teacher appraisal and feedback. Teachers are professionals, not blue-collar workers. It would be more effective to pay additional salaries to teachers who not only increase their own effectiveness, but increase the effectiveness of other teachers through effective appraisal and feedback on their work.

Training costs must also be considered. Each participant must be trained in how to conduct appraisals, how to be appraised and how to turn this into better student performance. Currently most jurisdictions require each teacher to spend a minimum of 20 hours a year on professional development. For the first three years of the new system, most of this should be devoted to training staff to improve teaching and learning through effective appraisal and feedback system.

The new system will replace an old one that is dysfunctional and costly. Research comparing the impact of school and government programs shows that a proper appraisal and feedback system can improve teacher effectiveness by 20 to 30%. This would lift the performance of Australian students to the best in the world. It would increase Australia's long-run GDP growth by about 0.4%

per year, adding $240 billion to Australia's GDP by 2050.[75] This is over and above the other benefits of better education to individual and social wellbeing.

Appraisal and feedback is not a zero-sum game; the benefits of doing it properly are large. Full details of the costing estimates are provided in Appendix B.

[75] This makes the conservative assumption that a one standard deviation increase in test scores will increase GDP growth by 1%. See Jensen (2010a)

Appendix A The current teacher appraisal landscape and national teacher standards

Almost all teachers are required to undertake some form of appraisal in Australia. However, the systems vary greatly by jurisdiction. Some are designed specifically for teachers while others are for public servants; some appraisal systems are linked to development goals; and in some jurisdictions salary increases are automatic whereas in others they depend upon successful appraisals.

A.1 How are appraisals designed and conducted?

There is great disparity in how jurisdictions assess teacher performance. Western Australia and the Northern Territory require teachers to undertake the same performance appraisals as all government employees.[76] South Australia's Department of Education and Community Services (DECS) provides a general policy for all staff appraisals. Jurisdictions such as Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) require teachers to demonstrate their skills according to professional standards (Victoria) or expected skills (ACT).[77]

New South Wales teachers must satisfy professional standards and demonstrate continuing efficiency, satisfactory performance and professional growth.[78] Tasmanian teachers must complete a performance plan, guided by their role description.

Queensland also has a teacher-specific appraisal system. In contrast to other states, appraisals are conducted on a team basis. Professional standards and leadership capabilities are intended to be reference points for all staff completing the framework, however no explicit links are made with appraisals.[79]

There is also little consistency between jurisdictions as to the methods or types of evidence used to appraise teachers. Teachers are almost always required to provide their own evidence of how they have satisfied their performance management criteria. In NSW this may include examples of lesson plans or student work.

Victoria's Performance and Development Guide (Teacher Class, 2007) does not provide guidance to acceptable types of evidence for teacher appraisals. Instead, it leaves the school to decide. In some schools student outcomes, peer observation, peer feedback, student feedback, parent feedback, attendance data

[76] Western Australian teachers' performance management is governed by the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (Western Australian Government (1994)) and Northern Territory teachers are governed by the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* (Northern Territory Government (1993)). However, the Northern Territory's Accountability and Performance Improvement Framework does require all teachers to use the department's annual performance review process "*to demonstrate they have achieved expected goals, actions and standards that are established in individual Performance Reviews".*

[77] *The ACT Department of Education and Training Teaching Staff Enterprise Agreement 2009-2011 (2009)* details expected skills of teachers with varying years of experience.

[78] NSW standards are developed by the New South Wales Institute of Teaching. These have recently been linked to teacher evaluation as part of the Federal Government's National Partnership on Teacher Quality. Industrial Relations Commission of New South Wales (2009)

[79] Education Queensland and the Queensland Teachers ' Union (n.d.)

and student exit surveys are used to provide constructive feedback.[80] However, these sources are not used consistently.

A.2 How is development linked with appraisal?

A vital reason to appraise teachers is to identify areas for improvement. Unfortunately, many appraisal systems are not directly linked to teacher development activities or requirements. Only Victoria and the ACT require teachers to identify development activities as part of the appraisal process.[81] While several jurisdictions have development frameworks and whole school development days, these are not linked to individual teacher appraisal.[82] Similarly, while all teachers who undertake accreditation processes are required to fulfil development requirements this is not linked to appraisal conversations. This reduces the effectiveness of appraisals, diminishing opportunities for development to directly address areas for improvement.

A.3 Is pay linked with successful appraisal?

In most jurisdictions teachers automatically receive an annual pay rise, regardless of the outcome of their appraisal. Where this is the case teachers enter the profession on a standard salary and receive annual increments. In some jurisdictions the link between length of tenure and pay is explicit: all teachers receive an annual pay rise until they reach the maximum salary available for classroom teachers. The implication is that all teachers with the same experience are paid as though they are equally effective and improve at the same rate. There is little flexibility for schools to distinguish between excellent and average teachers and to provide recognition and reward accordingly.[83]

In some states the link between appraisal and salary increases is implicit. In Victoria, Tasmania and New South Wales, salary increments are subject to satisfactory performance management outcomes.[84] In practice however, pay rises are rarely denied,[85] reinforcing the link between length of tenure and salary. In Victoria in 2003, fewer than 1% of teachers were denied their annual pay rise despite principals estimating that up to 20% of teachers were 'significant under-performers'.[86] In New South Wales in 2001, only 0.4% of teachers were denied their annual pay rise.[87]

[80] The Boston Consulting Group (2003). 'Stakeholder perception data and performance data' are also required to be used in the Northern Territory.
[81] This is through the Victorian Performance and Development Process and the Australian Capital Territory Professional Progression Plan.
[82] For example the Queensland's Professional Development Plan for State Schools and Western Australia's Competency Framework for Teachers.

[83] Only Tasmania and Victoria provide opportunities for teachers to progress at a faster rate of one salary increment per year. Tasmania provides for this through their Salary and Progression and Advancement Assessment Guidelines (Tasmanian Government (2010)) and Victoria through the opportunities for all teachers to apply for 'Leading Teacher' positions regardless of years of tenure. The Northern Territory provides opportunities for beginning teachers to progress through salary increments at an accelerated rate (Northern Territory Public Sector Teacher and Educator 2008-2010 Union Collective Agreement (2010)) Victoria is also conducting trials to provide differential salary rewards for teacher performance under The Teachers' Reward Trial.
[84] Tasmanian Government (2010)
[85] Ingvarson (2007)
[86] The Boston Consulting Group (2003)
[87] NSW Auditor General (2003)

The Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory and Queensland have introduced performance management systems, yet none of these are explicitly linked to salary.[88]

A.4 Teacher professional standards

Many jurisdictions have developed their own professional standards over the last 10 years. In February 2011, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) also published the *National Professional Standards for Teachers* in order to provide national consistency in teacher standards, and to

> *"guide professional learning, practice and engagement, facilitate the improvement of teacher quality and contribute positively to the public standing of the profession"*[89]

Seven standards (each with multiple focus areas) detail what constitutes teacher effectiveness in four career stages: Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher. The framework provides a total of 148 descriptors of teacher practice with between four and seven focus areas for each standard detailing expected skills, knowledge and engagement.

The standards will be adopted initially as part of the accreditation process for Initial Teacher Education Programs. They will also be used as a basis for developing nationally consistent registration processes.[90]

AITSL states that there is no link between the standards, performance pay and career structure. These are managerial and industrial issues for each jurisdiction.[91]

[88] Queensland's Developing Performance Framework does provide for 'agreed reward and recognition options' following the formal review process. It is unclear what these are; they are not discussed in the award.
[89] Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2011a)
[90] Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2011b)
[91] Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2011b)

A.5 Professional standards and teacher appraisal

The *National Professional Standards for Teachers* are a positive development, as they create a common language and understanding of effective teaching. They describe what we value in an effective teacher. However, they are not a tool for appraising teachers.

While it is expected that the *Standards* will be linked to performance management processes in schools,[92] it is unclear how they will be used for appraisal purposes. There is a danger that if the *Standards* are adopted directly as a framework for teacher appraisal, the process will become unwieldy and time consuming. Adopting the *Standards* as an appraisal framework would require teachers to address all 37 descriptors of their career stage. This information is valuable but if used incorrectly can harm the teaching profession and school effectiveness.

Every school is different. It is therefore important that teachers and principals discuss what the national *Standards* mean for teaching at their school. This will promote conversations about effective teaching and provide teachers with a greater sense of ownership over effective teaching in their school. These conversations should shape teacher appraisal in schools, informing both what is appraised and *how* it should be appraised.

[92] Ibid.

Appendix B The cost of a teacher appraisal and feedback system

A system of teacher appraisal and feedback that uses the methods discussed in this report is relatively inexpensive to operate. Schools that are already effectively using these methods report that the extra time to undertake these activities is balanced with the decrease in time required for other tasks such as school meetings and staffing issues.

Improving student outcomes has an enormous economic return – both public and private – and will have a greater impact on Australia's economic growth than any other reform currently before Australian governments.

Understanding the resources required for a teacher appraisal and feedback system and resourcing it appropriately is important for its success. Several past attempts at implementing serious appraisal and feedback have failed due to inadequate resourcing.[93]

Below are cost estimates for both the current system and our proposal. They are all based upon an average Australian school, with 450 students, 27 FTE teachers, 5 FTE leading teachers and 1 FTE school principal.[94]

B.1 What does the current appraisal and feedback system cost?

The cost of the current appraisal and feedback systems can be broken down into two components: (1) the cost of teachers' time to engage in development and (2) the cost of delivering the development programs and courses teachers attend.

B.1.1 Teachers' time

Teachers in most states are required to complete professional development for accreditation. In Victoria and NSW the requirement is 20 hours;[95] in Queensland it is 30.[96] In the following calculations we have used 20 hours per year across the country for the sake of simplicity.

Working with cost per teacher hour of $50.60,[97] the 20 hour minimum requirement for the 198,190 classroom teachers in Australia costs $200.7m per year.

[93] Kumrow and Dahlen (2002)

[94] Calculated at the average Australian student:staff ratio of 13.9 and average typical leader:teacher ratio, Productivity Commission (2011). 'Leading teachers' includes heads of program and heads of faculty; 'school principal' includes deputy principals, heads of school and heads of campus.

[95] http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/registration/i-want-to-renew-my-registration/registration-process-faqs/Pages/maintenance-professional-practice-questions.aspx; https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/detresources/workforce_plan2010_VKwCekxEsO.pdf

[96] http://www.qct.edu.au/faqs.html#cpl

[97] This is the average of teachers' costs across the professional structure weighted by the distribution of teachers across the structure, taking QLD as a model and including principals and school leaders.

B.1.2 Cost of delivery

As part of the Smarter Schools National Partnership, the Commonwealth Government has committed approximately $506m over five years to Improving Teacher Quality Programs designed to "attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and leaders in schools".[98]

The Queensland Government reports that they intend to invest $44m between 2010-11 in "a range of initiatives in professional development to enhance the capability of [teaching] staff".[99] This amount covers the cost to schools to run training and development courses, provide professional development resources as well as relief teachers, where necessary. The reported investment equates to a cost of approximately $1,200 per teacher in Queensland per year.

Assuming similar investment across the country, the State-based cost of delivery could be as much as $245.1m per year.

After taking into account the cost of teachers' time spent to attain minimum professional development requirements and the cost of delivering those professional development initiatives (by both the Commonwealth and State governments), the overall estimated cost of the current appraisal and feedback system is $445.8m per year.

[98] $550m commitment over 2008-2013 with $44.3m allocated for *Closing The Gap*-specific projects; http://smarterschools.gov.au/nationalpartnerships/Pages/ImprovingTeacherQuality.aspx

[99] QLD DET (2010)

B.2 What will the new appraisal and feedback system cost?

In the following sections we have estimated the cost in time of each appraisal method. In the table accompanying each method we list the time requirement for teachers, leading teachers and school principals. Included in the time requirement for leading teachers is that of being appraised as a teacher *and* of appraising teachers as a leader. At the conclusion of the section we outline an example combination of appraisal methods and cost them by taking the weighted average cost of teachers' time and of school leaders'/principals' time.

B.2.1 Student performance and assessment

Student outcomes should be assessed once per term. Each assessment should be discussed with another teacher. A school leader will also spend considerable time analysing and discussing results.

- Meetings to discuss results (per assessment): 1 hour x 2 teachers;
- Analysis and discussion (per assessment): 1 hour x 1 leading teacher/school principal.

Table 5.1 Annual hourly requirement per school for student assessments

	Individual teacher hours	Teacher hours per school	Individual leading teacher hours	Leading teacher hours per school	School principal hours
One assessment per term	8	216	26.4	132	35

B.2.2 Peer observation and collaboration

It is recommended that peer observation be conducted in teams of three. Each team conducts reciprocal observations, involving pre-observation meetings, observations and post-observation meetings.

- Pre-observation meetings (per observation): 0.5 hours x 3 teachers;
- Observations (per observation): 1 hour x 2 teachers;
- Post-observation meetings (per observation): 1 hour x 3 teachers.

This adds to 6.5 teacher hours per teacher being observed (including leading teachers), multiplied by the number of observations per year.

Table 5.2 Annual hourly requirement per school for peer observation and collaboration

	Individual teacher hours	Teacher hours per school	Individual leading teacher hours	Leading teacher hours per school
Once per term	26	702	26	130
Twice per term	52	1404	52	260
Thrice per term	78	2106	78	390

B.2.3 Direct observation

Direct observations should also involve pre-observation meetings, classroom observations and post-observation meetings.

- Pre-observation meetings (per observation): 0.5 hours x 1 teacher and 1 leading teacher/school principal;
- Observations (per observation): 1 hour x 1 leading teacher/school principal;
- Post-observation meetings (per observation): 1 hour x 1 teacher and 1 leading teacher/school principal.

This adds to 1.5 teacher hours and 2.5 leading teacher/school principal hours per teacher being observed, multiplied by the number of observations per year.

Table 5.3 Annual hourly requirement per school for direct observation

	Individual teacher hours	Teacher hours per school	Individual leading teacher hours	Leading teacher hours per school	School principal hours
Once per year	1.5	40.5	13.1	65.5	22
Twice per year	3	81	2.2	131	44

B.2.4 Student feedback

Student surveys require a school-wide development session to agree on focus and content. They require time to administer on the part of the teacher, collation by an assistant and analysis and dissemination of results by the teacher and a leader.

- Development of surveys (once per year): 1 hour x 32 teachers/leading teachers + 1 day x 1 school principal;
- Administration (per survey per teacher): 0.25 hours x 1 teacher;
- Collation (total for the school, per survey): 0.125 hours x 1 assistant;
- Analysis and dissemination (per survey): 1 hour x 1 teacher/leading teacher and 1 leading teacher/school principal.

Table 5.4 Annual hourly requirement per school for student feedback

	Individual teacher hours	Teacher hours per school	Individual leading teacher hours	Leading teacher hours per school	School principal hours	Assistant hours
Once per year	2.25	60.75	6.85	34.25	17	4
Twice per year	3.5	94.5	12.7	63.5	26	8
Thrice per year	4.75	128.25	18.54	92.75	35	12
Four times per year	6	162	24.4	122	42	16

B.2.5 360-degree feedback

360-degree feedback is considered an appropriate method of gathering all sources of information about a teacher's

performance. It is therefore time-intensive for the leader, but not as much for the teacher. It is recommended these occur once per year.

- Leader gathering information: 4.5 hours x 1 leading teacher/school principal;
- Appraisal and feedback meeting: 2 hours x 1 teacher and 1 leading teacher/school principal.

This adds to 6.5 leading teacher/school principal hours and two teacher hours per teacher per appraisal.

Table 5.5 Annual hourly requirement per school for 360-degree feedback

	Individual teacher hours	Teacher hours per school	Individual leading teacher hours	Leading teacher hours per school	School principal hours
Once per year	2	54	32	160	58
Once every two years	1	27	16	80	29

B.2.6 Self-assessment

Self-assessment requires teachers to prepare examples of their work and then present it to a school leader.

- Preparation of evidence (per assessment): 18 hours x 1 teacher;
- Presentation of evidence (per assessment): 2 hours x 1 teacher and 1 leading teacher/school principal; and

Analysis and feedback (per assessment): 1 hour x 1 teacher and 1 leading teacher/school principal.

Table 5.6 Annual hourly requirement per school for self-assessment

	Individual teacher hours	Teacher hours per school	Individual teacher hours	Leading teacher hours per school	School principal hours
Once per year	21	567	34.8	174	27
Twice per year	42	1134	69.6	348	54

B.2.7 Parent surveys

Parent surveys require a school-wide development session to agree on focus and content. They require time to administer, follow-up and collate by an assistant and analysis and dissemination time by teachers and leaders.

- Development of surveys (once per year): 1 hour x 32 teachers + 1 day x 1 school principal;

- Administration (per survey): 16 hours x 1 assistant
- Collation (per survey): 4 hours x 1 assistant
- Analyse and disseminate (per survey): 1 hour x 1 teacher and 1 leading teacher/school principal.

Table 5.7 Annual hourly requirement per school for parent surveys

	Teacher hours	Leading teacher hours	School principal hours	Assistant hours
Once per year	108	43	17	20
Twice per year	216	104	26	40

B.2.8 External observation

Each teacher should be appraised by a regional leader or external teacher once every two years.

- Pre-observation meeting (per observation): 0.5 hours x 1 teacher and 1 leader;
- Observation (per observation): 1 hour x 1 leader;
- Post-observation meeting (per observation): 1 hour x 1 teacher and 1 leader.

This adds to 1.5 teacher hours and 1.5 leader hours per teacher, every two years.

Table 5.8 Annual hourly requirement per school for external observation

	Teacher hours	Leading teacher hours	School principal hours
Once every two years	20.25	20.75	7

B.2.9 Total cost

Table 5.9 summarises the total time per school per year for each appraisal method in the recommended format.

We recommend that all schools be required to use student performance and assessments as an appraisal method. Taking into consideration the estimated effectiveness and the aspects of a teachers role that each method observes, one possible combination of appraisal methods is peer observation and collaboration; student surveys; student assessments; and 360-degree feedback.

Table 5.9 Annual hourly requirement per school for each recommended appraisal methods

	Format	Teacher hours	Leading teacher hours	School principal hours	Assistant hours
Student assessment	once per term	216	132	35	0
Peer observation and collaboration	twice per term	1404	260	0	0
Direct observation	twice per year	81	131	44	0
Student feedback	once per term	162	122	42	16
360-degree feedback	once per year	54	160	58	0
Self-assessment	once per year	567	174	27	0
Parent surveys	once per year	108	43	17	20
External observation	once every two years	20.25	23.75	20	0

If implemented as indicated this combination will require, in total, 1,836 teacher hours, 674 leading teacher hours, 135 school principal hours and 16 assistant hours in the typical school.

Table 5.10 shows the time requirements per teacher, leader and assistant. The example system will require 8.5 days per teacher, 17 days per leading teacher and principal and two assistant days. In our interviews with Australian school principals who implement effective teacher appraisal and feedback systems, all indicated that the total cost of the system was small since it had a large impact on teacher effectiveness. It resulted in decreased planning requirements, fewer problem students and fewer administrative meetings among teachers.

Table 5.10 Time requirements for the recommended appraisal and feedback system

	Time required (days)	Percentage of year	Cost per hour
Teacher	8.5	3.5%	$44
Leading teacher	16.8	7%	$53
School principal	16.9	7%	$57
Assistant	2	0.83%	$35

At a weighted average cost of classroom teachers' time of $44/hr, leading teachers' time of $53/hr[100] and school principals' time of $57/hr,[101] this appraisal and feedback system will cost Australian State governments $678 million for the government school system, in '09/10 dollars.[102]

[100] This includes heads of program, heads of faculty etc.
[101] This includes deputy principals and heads of school or campus
[102] These are weighted average teacher and school leader costs, using the States' professional structures populated with Queensland's distribution of teachers across the profession, assumed to be typical.

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