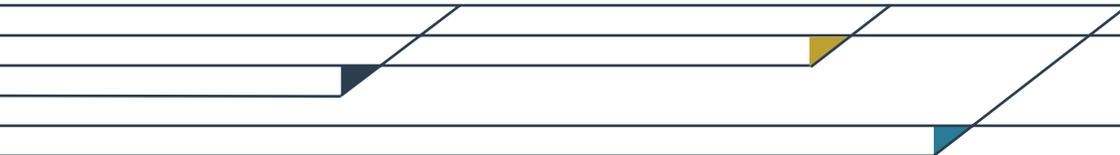


SIR JOHN
GRAHAM
LECTURE

m | 2016

Achieving Change

PROFESSOR JOHN HATTIE



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ABOUT MAXIM INSTITUTE

New Zealand is a richly textured country. It has a great and colourful history and a thriving culture. Its people have inherited a vast and dynamic landscape. They know how to live and play well.

Yet, New Zealand faces serious challenges. How we respond today shapes the future our children inherit tomorrow.

Maxim Institute is an independent research and public policy think tank. We are committed to the people, land, history, and culture of New Zealand.

We exist to promote the dignity of every person in a New Zealand characterised by freedom, justice, and compassion

As a think tank, Maxim Institute engages in the following core activities:

- producing research and informed analysis of contemporary issues;
- developing and promoting sound public policy;
- communicating our research findings and policy initiatives to the decision-makers and leaders of today;
- mentoring tomorrow's leaders for all areas of community, political and business life; and
- equipping New Zealanders to become better informed and more effective agents of change in their community.

THE ANNUAL SIR JOHN GRAHAM LECTURE

Sir John Graham is a New Zealand hero. He has spent his life training, inspiring and mentoring young New Zealanders in education and sport, having had a celebrated and distinguished career in both fields. He has been Headmaster of Auckland Grammar School, Captain of the All Blacks, and President of the New Zealand Rugby Football Union.



Sir John is a dedicated leader in our nation and his passion for New Zealand has endowed this country with a brilliant legacy. Appropriately, he was recognised for his services to education and the community with a CBE in 1994, and was further honoured when he was knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 2011. Sir John Graham's commitment to service and to this country has enriched all New Zealanders.

In honour of Sir John's life of service and contribution to public life, the Annual Sir John Graham Lecture provides an opportunity to invite leading experts to contribute to public debate in New Zealand.

PROFESSOR JOHN HATTIE

An internationally acclaimed academic, Professor John Hattie is one of the most influential voices in education research and practice, regularly advising educators and policymakers around the world. Currently the Director of Melbourne Education Research Institute at the University of Melbourne, Hattie was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to education in 2011.



Professor Hattie's major work, *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement* was first published in 2008, and has since been updated to include over 1200 meta-analyses. He has also authored or co-authored 16 other books, and over 500 academic papers. With a PhD from the University of Toronto, and former positions as Professor and Chair of Educational Research Methodology at the University of North Carolina, Professor John Hattie's international reputation and expertise is well earned, allowing him to speak about what works in education with clarity and authority.

Annual Sir John Graham Lecture Auckland, 5 August 2016

Professor John Hattie

Kia ora, and thank you for that introduction; and yes, it is wonderful to be home.

I know everybody in the room knows the incredible history and contribution that Sir John Graham has made to education. When I looked up his Wikipedia and went through the amazing things he has accomplished across so many different fields, there was one detail missing. In 2001, he became my mentor when I came here to the University of Auckland. It was the occasions I met with him, where he would make that one comment, or push in that direction— the nuggets of those moments, I treasure. Thank you, Sir John.

One of the nice things in my career now is I get invited to give lots of speeches. In fact, I have a list I keep of around 2,000 a year, and I spend a lot of time thinking how to say no. The decision to come for tonight took nary a millisecond. Thank you, Sir John.

I want to put forward an argument here this evening, taken from the perspective of looking across the Tasman back to home. I do keep a regular watch, I read the newspapers every morning, I do visit often to see my grandchild, and I do have an ongoing relationship and very close relationship with Cognition Education here in Auckland which keeps me well in tune with what is going on.

The current narrative of schooling

I want to put it to you that over the last 15 years, schools in New Zealand are finding themselves chasing the same academic pot of gold, in a market where being academic—having high achievement—is the prime indicator of market value. Thus, there is little incentive for schools to change and adapt what they are doing and develop more successful learning models that are needed for our students in our schools today.

This has led to focusing on the differences between schools and arguments about school choice – usually based on a limited set of narrow excellence (reading, numeracy), when so much more is important. It has led to many ‘cruising schools’ serving those students who start their achievement journey above the average but do not get at least a year’s gain for a year’s input. Complacency in these schools abounds!

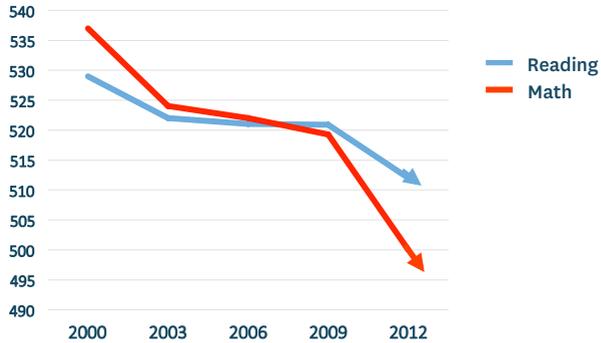
This narrative that we have in New Zealand about what success means has led us to have an over-zealous focus on the wrong drivers. There is a massive debate going on across the dinner tables and soirees around NZ: at these events, it is not long until you’re talking about how you should go about choosing schools, and the differences between schools.

This is despite New Zealand having the lowest between school variance in the world. That means if you took two students of the same achievement level, it does not matter which schools they went to. How did we allow debate about “choosing schools,” which makes little difference in the learning lives of students? It is a marvellous distraction away from the debate about what does matter: should we give parents the choice of teachers? I understand why we don’t give them this choice. But the choice of schools distorts the education of students—as so many children pass their local school every day to go to another school. And so many principals are asked to measure their success by the success they have in attracting students to pass a local school to increase their rolls.

We have created this debate and it has led unfortunately to continuing “residualisation” of the public-school system as the parents hunt the magic grail “somewhere else,” and believe that if they spend more money, they are getting a better education. It has led to more low-income families and students facing greater obstacles as they are segregated into some of those lower decile schools, and despite ***(continued on page 16)***

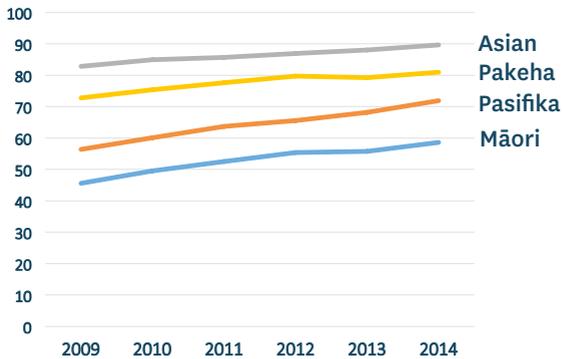
Slide 1

New Zealand PISA Results

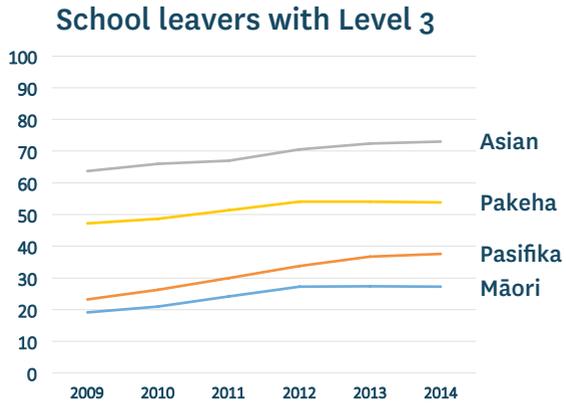


Slide 2

School leavers with Level 2

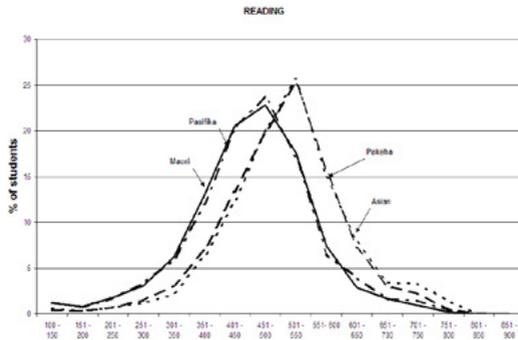


Slide 3



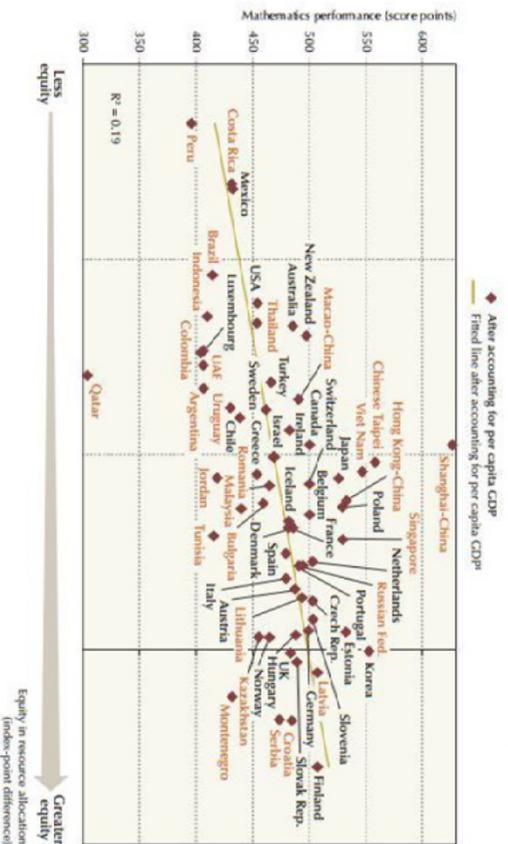
Slide 4

We still need to learn how to teach Māori students



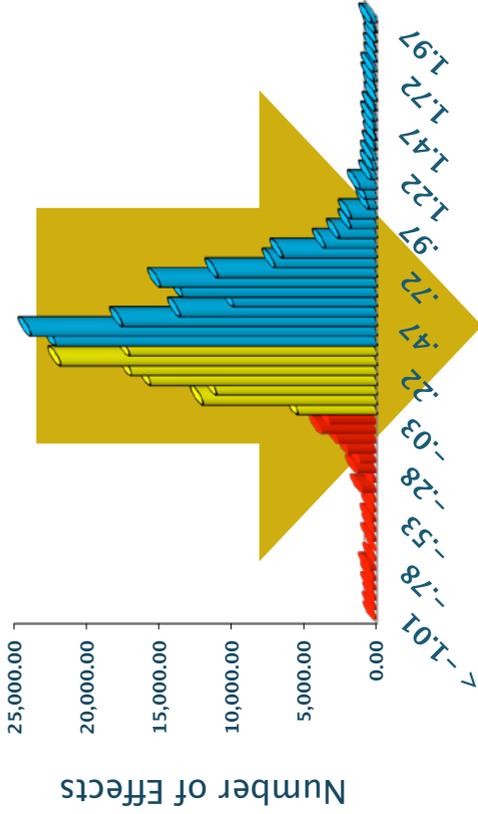
The growing pains of inequality

Students perform better when school systems allocate resources more equitably



1200+ meta-analyses

¼ billion students -- From the student; home, school, curriculum, teacher, strategies



Slide 7

NO!

Repeating classes	-.17
Student control over learning	.01
Learning styles	.03
Lengthening school day or school year	.07
Single sex schools	.08
Changing school calendars or timetables	.09
Charter schools	.09
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Mentoring	.12
Out-of-school curricula experiences	.12
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Class size	.21
Accountability models	.22
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Individualised instruction	.22
Finances	.23

Slide 8

YES!

Teacher Expertise

1. Teachers, working together, as evaluators of their impact .93
2. The power of moving from what students know now
towards explicit success criteria .77
3. Errors and trust are welcomed as opportunities to learn .72
4. Maximize feedback to teachers about their impact .72
5. Getting the proportion of surface to deep correct .71
6. The Goldilocks principles of challenge, and deliberate
practice to attain these challenges .60

some stunning success stories in these schools, the expectations of not being part of the future can doom them. When I went to primary school in NZ my two schools are decile 1 schools now—and probably were then—but no one told me I could not grow academically. The vicious deficit thinking that surrounds too many in our society is a major mountain for many to climb.

Both Australia and New Zealand have the largest number of cruising schools and cruising kids in the Western world. What a disaster that is turning out to be! I would argue that this is among the major reasons for the decline in New Zealand's performance.

Time for a reboot

I want to put to you this evening that a reboot is needed in New Zealand. And this reboot relates primarily to the narrative of schooling. I want to see in New Zealand a narrative built more on focussing on investing in expertise—in particular, enabling quality teachers and schools to work together. I want to say it again: to work together. We should not allow, as the fundamental assumption of our profession, that every teacher and every principal has the right to run their class and their school as they want. If they are not having an impact, they have no right to autonomy.

We need to get those with expertise to lead and to work together to debate and argue and answer the question about what high impact means? And to invite all to join in this debate. When I analysed the asTTle results—based on close to a million kids, following them through from Year 4 to Year 13—I see the biggest problem in New Zealand is teachers do not have a common conception of progress. It is random. Every time your child comes to a new teacher or changes school, it is random whether your kid's achievement will go up or down related to that teacher's conception of progress. Not good enough.

The teachers' conceptions of progression and their understanding of challenge needs to be contested—in a positive, trustful environment, without the whiff of accountability. Only then, if they can then demonstrate at a school level, not a teacher level, that they are having the desirable impact do they have the right to be left alone and to do their job, almost. "Almost," as these schools that have the compelling evidence of enabling most students to make sufficient learning gains have an obligation to their profession to then work with others.

The key questions are then: How do we reliably identify this expertise? How do we do it in a way that doesn't damage? How do we open our classrooms so they are not private enterprises with moats and alligators around them? How do we then target resources at the needs and fund and grow this expertise?

The evidence

Yes, PISA is “narrow excellence” and my criticism is I want more in the basket of goods that we value for our students—but literacy, numeracy and science are part of that basket. Over the past 15 years we are not only going down from the top five to being close to the 20th in the world, our absolute value is going down. It is not just that other cultures are getting ahead of us, but that we have gone down systematically. (Slide 1, page 10)

We are not, however, the world's biggest losers. We are the world's third biggest losers (and Australia is the world's fourth biggest loser)! You can dismiss the tests. You can dismiss the results. You can dismiss the analysis. But I make no bones about it, schools are there to add value to kids' knowledge of literacy and numeracy and writing. This decline should shock us. Investing more in the same is not going to turn that downward curve. I would argue that the decline is very much related to our over focus on school differences; on allowing each school to invent their local solution. We have had too big a debate about the wrong drivers and as school choice gets successful, then yes, schools do get to choose the kids they want. Surely that was not the aim?

I think we should have an argument and have a driver that schools should be inviting places to learn. Henry Levin showed that the best predictor of adult health, wealth, and happiness is not achievement at school—it is the number of years of schooling. Ninety-seven percent of adults in prison in my state, Victoria, did not finish school. The costs to them and society are enormous. I like the notion that New Zealand has a focus on NCEA Level 2 and you can see over the last five years, all groups of student across our schools are going up on this important metric. (Slide 2, page 10)

Can I suggest to you what is next? (Slide 3, page 11) At NCEA Level 3 the success drops off dramatically, particularly for our Māori and Pacific kids. Let's add a new target: let's aim for more success at Year 13—inviting more students to complete high school and enabling them to pursue even further education.

The equity problem

New Zealand still has an equity problem. We are reasonable quality, low equity, and we are slipping in the wrong direction on both. This is the latest PISA graph (Slide 4, page 11) and you can see New Zealand right down there; not in a desirable place. Our haves and our have nots (or have little) are moving apart and I ask you to contemplate what happened in England recently with Brexit and the US with their last federal election. You can trace lines across the UK showing who left and who stayed based on who had and who had not in terms of the success of education. I put it to you that when Donald Trump said the statement, as he did, “I love the uneducated,” he is feeding his community. That equity gap cannot increase.

We need to be more careful about our narrative here and abolish notions of the gaps, the tail, and Māori underachievement. Look at this graph taken from the NZ asTTle results. (Slide 5, page 12) Where is the tail? What a false argument that is—surely there are two tails we should worry about. Where is the gap? Again, there are two gaps. Of course I worry about the gap of our Māori and Pacific students below the average. Surprise, surprise there are just as many Māori and Pacific kids above the average as there are below. Who is concerned with our Māori and our Pacific students who are above the average and that gap and underachieving? The only programme that I thought was successful in New Zealand with evidence was Te Kotahitanga, and I have to say I am dismayed that it has been stopped after so much investment and success. Clearly, we have no skills, intelligence, or heart to upscale success.

Instead we would rather deal with the symptoms of the kids, and I would ask you if you were here last year to remember what Hon Sir Pita Sharples was talking about. He noted that he does not have a problem teaching his Māori kids. He does not have a problem teaching his Māori boys. He is invested in that and has much evidence of stunning success with these students. There is remarkable success in that community. We can learn so much from the success for these students, and once again, there is support for the notion that if we know how to teach Maori children successfully this can upscale to all, but the opposite is not necessarily the case—what works for all, works for Māori.

What works best

In my introduction, my work in meta-analysis was mentioned—this is a graph of a quarter of a billion students. (Slide 6, page 13) The red zone—these are the things we do in schools and our community that harms kid’s achievement. As you can see, there are not many things that we do that harm children. Isn’t that good news? Some of those down in that red zone make perfect sense, like the effect of bullying on achievement is about -0.2 . When you take those into account, 95-97 percent of things that we do to kids increases their achievement. We have to stop asking “what works” because everything works, almost. If we keep asking that question, we privilege those who come up with strange ideas. Imagine that the Minister of Education went to bed last night and in the middle of the night she had a great idea—it will work! Every parent can tell you how to run your school. They are right! Every teacher can tell you that they are successful. They are right! This is what is killing us. Instead, we need to ask “what works best” and demand evidence that any program has an impact that is in the blue zone.

I have spent the last 20 or 30 years trying to work out the story underlying the differences between those teachers and schools in the blue zone compared to those in the yellow zone? The model is simple—we go into schools, we reliably identify those teachers in the blue zone, we form a coalition of success around those and then we invite those in the yellow zone to join. We do it with a passionate and relentless pursuit about their impact, and what this notion of impact means.

The model cares little about how you teach. I certainly do not want to hear another debate about how you teach. I don’t want another app, another resource, another curriculum, another assessment, because they miss the point. I care about the impact of the teaching, the resource, and the app. We look at the impact on the test scores. We look at the impact in terms of student voice about their learning. We look at the impact in terms of classroom observations of the impact on the kid. We look at the impact in terms of the effect on the learning lives of students.

The good news? Everybody who goes into teaching went into it to have an impact on kids. All we are doing is feeding that desire. Certainly, when we started asTTle I remember a Minister speaking to a large group of teachers and pointing to an asTTle report, saying, “Look, this is where the kids are now, if you haven’t moved them up here on this asTTle scale in six months, you are not doing your job,” and I cringed and thought, “Oh, there is the end of asTTle.” The opposite was the case—teachers

and school leaders sat up straight and welcomed this challenge and that they could now know their impact. Teachers are hungry for this information. They loved it. They wanted it. I am very, very proud of the fact that whilst aTTLe is a voluntary system, it is still widely used across this country 16 years later. The need, the desire, and the passion relating to impact is certainly out there.

Look at the following factors (Slide 7, page 14) and the size of their impact! The numbers don't matter too much but remember 0.4 is the average; and these effects are tiny. I put it to you that so often in the policy area, in the newspapers, amongst the parents and particularly amongst the educators, those topics dominate and they virtually don't matter. Yes, they do lead to improved learning; but if you are thinking of making a change to the lives of kids via these factors—I am sorry.

Expertise

I want to contrast this with the next set of factors. Look at the previous low numbers; look at these high numbers. (Slide 8, page 14) It is the collaborative expertise of educators that matters. It is those schools where you have a school leader that is focussed on the impact of the adults in that school on the learning lives of kids; that ask the questions of the students about what it means to be a learner in this school. What it is that you are learning; how you go about your learning. It is working together to understand this high level of impact; which is very present throughout many of our schools. Do not tell me this is aspiration, pie in the sky stuff; these effects are based on real school, real teachers, real students here in New Zealand. This level of impact is possible; it is there now!

In my new job over the last two years in Australia, I have moved to the dark side. Australia has a federal government and many states. We have 26 jurisdictions in Australia. I am the Chair of the Board of AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership), and we need to work with all 9 ministers and their departments to get anything accomplished. My predecessors realised that teachers are the biggest users of social media, so they went directly to them. Now we have 95 percent of teachers and principals coming to us on a regular, if not a monthly, basis. This is a powerful and joined community.

There are four levels of teachers. If a teacher wants to apply to go up the levels, they are evaluated in terms of their impact on kids. Yes, there are protocols they follow, they must do certain things and they do have demonstrate their impact on

their students. We are less interested in HOW they teach and more interested in the impact of their teaching. Yes, we want to know about their philosophy of teaching, but we care more about the impact of that philosophy. And yes, it is AITSL's job to moderate these decisions, particularly to become a HALT – Highly accomplished or Lead teacher.



We called all the highly accomplished and lead teachers to a workshop about four or five months ago, in Adelaide. Most came. We asked them during the two days, what can we do that can best help advance expertise? It was a bit sad I have to say. “Wouldn’t it be nice,” they said, “if our principals recognised us; if someone came up and congratulated us; if someone worked out how to use us.” Why are we in a profession where we are the best at denying our expertise? Why do we have so much expertise but fail to know how to capitalise and use this expertise. There is incredible success out there and my fear is we are going to lose it by having the wrong narrative.

I hope that if the NZ Education Council adopts the right agenda, it can make a difference. I watch with interest and I certainly would like to try and help in any way we can, so that you don’t have to reinvent the wheel. So, you can get on to the right narrative so as esteem, identify, and use the expertise that is out there across this nation.

We need a debate more focused on progress than on achievement. It is via high progress that we lead to achievement, but a focus on the latter alone can lead to distortions. I use the following graph to make this point. (Slide 9, page 15) Too many people think high achievement are those schools in the top two parts of the graph. They are not. Great schools are the two in the progress areas and some of our best schools in New Zealand are our low SES schools where achievement isn’t high but growth is stunning. But they get in trouble because they don’t have every kid above the average and sometimes we destroy excellent schools due an overzealous focus on high achievement.

The biggest problem I see in New Zealand is that there are too many schools in the cruising category, particularly high schools. How do we change the debate from schools needing to make every kid an Einstein or Madame Curie, to schools having to show that they add growth—at least a year’s growth for a year’s input? Unlike most countries, NZ has tools to know about the progress and the achievement at the same time.

Opening the classroom door

Another key question is how do we open classrooms? Graham Nuthall, a famous New Zealand educator, did an incredible work and one of his findings was 80 percent of what happens in a classroom a teacher does not see or hear, which is why I have no time for all that teacher reflection nonsense. Why would I care about the 20 percent they looked at, that they saw? What I care about is opening the classrooms to help the teacher better see their impact.

What we trying to come up with a way of doing this, like having a mirror in the room so teachers can see their impact through the eyes of their students. Right now, we have embarked on a random control trial in England with 240 schools, 3,000 teachers. We have already completed working with 5,000 teachers. The teacher teaches the lesson and within seconds this can be provided to students on an iPad, iPhone or White board. By the end of the lesson the teacher can receive an accurate transcript of everything they have said; and get the analytics based on that observation. Further, the students can comment on their own learning.

This is not in the future. It is now. There are now many more ways of helping teachers understand their impact.

We need to start early

I do want to comment on starting early. The biggest change in the child’s capacity to learn happens between zero to five; especially the first two years. The development of language, a theory of how the world works, and listening to others think, explain, and talk happens during this time. Hart and Risely monitored the difference in the number of words a 5 year is exposed to between high resourced homes compared to low resourced homes—it is a difference of 30 million words. This is a phenomenal start for one child, and well left behind for the other.

What chances have schools of catching up? Certainly, our work has shown that by age 8, if they aren't at level two in the PISA standards I can show you study after study from the meta-synthesis, that it is almost impossible for those kids to catch up. It is a major tragedy that a person's destiny can be traced to these early ages, where they are then locked into a cycle of left behind and left out!

The answer is not play. There is nothing wrong with play, if the purpose is learning. Play that includes language, listening, and talking. To show how this kind of play can work, we located the program that had the most stunning effect on kids' learning, the Abecedarian Program. We invited Joe Sparling, one of the originators of the program, out of retirement at age 84. We took his 160 learning games; we modernised them; we are introducing them to zero to two throughout Australia, and we are getting stunning results. We are getting the parents actually speaking to the kids. We are getting the amount of language increasing. We are reducing that 30 million word gap.

NZ needs the courage to talk about what learning means in those age groups. The answer is not social and emotional development alone. It is not teaching them to read or write, but we do have a major problem if we do not address these inequitable differences too often locked in during these early years.

Conclusions

We need to put on the table the evidence that each school has had a dramatically powerful impact on all their students. We need a healthy and respective debate about what impact means within and across our schools. It seems a major concern that principals come out of their schools to talk about teaching, resources, and provide testimonials about a few. It seems a major concern that there is a major politics of distraction talking about the things that matter least.

My challenge and provocation to you this evening is: are you as a community—particularly involving parents and those in the education system—prepared to stand up and say no longer are we going to say that the fundamental premise is that every teacher and every principal has the right to teach and run their school as they like. But instead to affirm that every teacher and every principal has the fundamental right to collaborate with other teachers, with other principals, with the parents, and particularly with the students about the quality and nature of their impact.



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