

# LEADERSHIP THAT TRANSFORMS SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL SYSTEMS

**Brian J Caldwell**

**Principal Consultant, Educational Transformations  
Professor Emeritus, University of Melbourne**

**Invited presentation at Annual Research Conference  
Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)  
on the theme 'Leadership for Improving Learning'  
August 29, 2017**



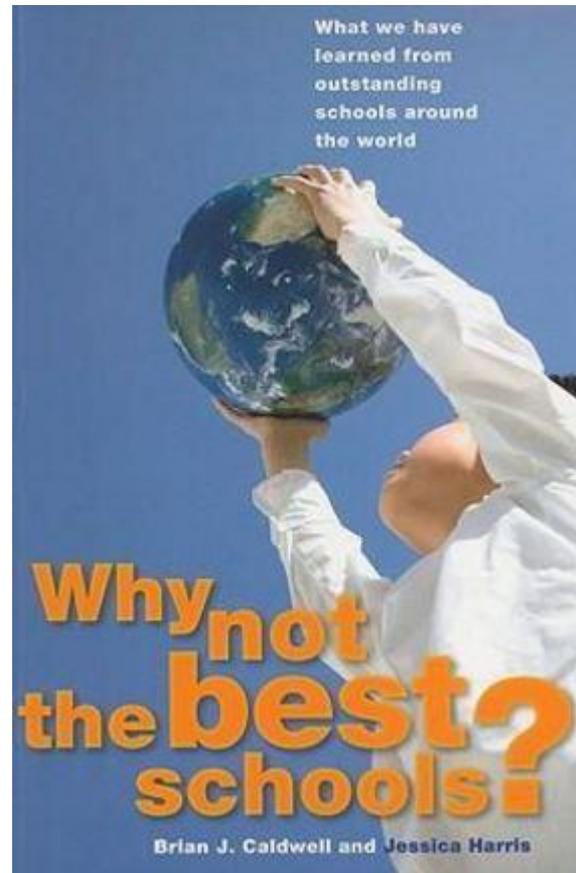
# Top 10 rankings in PISA 2015 and TIMSS 2015#

<b>PISA 2015</b>	<b>TIMSS 2015</b>
1 *Singapore	1 *Singapore
2 *Hong Kong (China)	2 *(South) Korea
3 *Japan	3 *Japan
4 *Estonia	4 Chinese Taipei
5 *Canada	*Hong Kong (China)
Macao (China)	6 Russian Federation
7 *Finland	7 Kazakhstan
8 Chinese Taipei	8 *England
9 *(South) Korea	9 *United States
10 Slovenia	10 Ireland
Australia average rank is 18th	Australia average rank is 27th

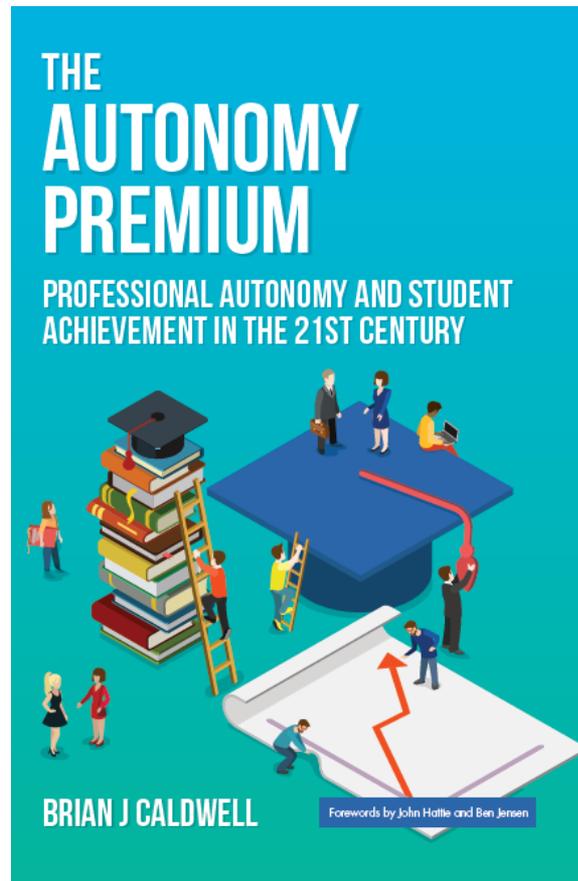
# Based on average ranking across tests in each scheme for countries that participated in all tests.

\* These countries included in research reported in this paper.

# Why not the best schools?



# The Autonomy Premium



# What the Principals Say?

## WHAT THE PRINCIPALS SAY

On School Autonomy and Student Learning in Public  
Schools in Australia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century



educational  
transformations



Professor Emeritus Brian J. Caldwell  
Managing Director and Principal Consultant

In association with

Dr Tanya Vaughan  
Director of Impact Studies

An Australian contribution to the International Study on School Autonomy and  
Learning (ISSAL)

Supported by funds from the Department of Education and Training of the Australian  
Government

1 September 2016

# Autonomy

*Autonomy* refers to the decentralisation from the system to the school of significant authority to make decisions, especially in respect to curriculum, pedagogy, personnel and resources, within a centrally-determined framework of goals, policies, curriculum, standards and accountabilities.

# Structural Autonomy

*Structural autonomy* refers to policies, regulations and procedures that permit the school to exercise autonomy. Schools may take up such a remit in a variety of ways, or not at all, including ways that are ineffective if the intent is to improve outcomes for students. The granting of autonomy may make no difference to outcomes for students unless the school has the capacity to make decisions that are likely to make a difference, and uses that capacity to achieve this end.

# Professional Autonomy

*Professional autonomy* refers to teachers and principals having the capacity to make decisions that are likely to make a difference to outcomes for students, and this capacity is exercised in a significant, systemic and sustained fashion.

Professional autonomy calls for the exercise of judgement, with a high level of discretion in the exercise of that judgement.

# Strategic Alignment

How have high-performing jurisdictions achieved strategic alignment across different levels of government when formulating and implementing policy to improve student performance? What role is played by a higher level of school autonomy, especially professional autonomy, in achieving this alignment?

# Research in 13 Countries

Narratives were prepared on strategic alignment in 13 countries: Australia, Canada (Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario), China (Hong Kong), England, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Israel, Japan, (South) Korea, New Zealand, Singapore and the United States.

# Benchmarks

1. Trust
2. Educational history
3. Societal valuing of education
4. Priority attached to the human resource
5. Innovation in education
6. Alignment of education, economy and society
7. Constitutional arrangements
8. Number of levels of government
9. Establishment of current roles
10. Local government
11. Number of schools administered
12. Disruptive change in education
13. School autonomy
14. Professional capacity
15. Preparing for the future

# Summary of contrasts on six benchmarks as they relate to the valuing of schools

<b>Benchmarks</b>	<b>High performers</b>	<b>Australia</b>
1. Trust	High	Moderate
2. Educational history	Long	Short
3. Societal valuing of education	High	Moderate
4. Priority attached to the human resource	High	Moderate
5. Innovation in education	Moderate	Moderate
6. Alignment of education, economy and society	High	Moderate
<b>Overall</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

# The agenda for enhancing the value Australia places on its schools

- bi-partisan effort everywhere
- serious reform of initial teacher education
- empowering schools through higher levels of professional autonomy
- declaring and acting on recognition that our most importance resource is the human resource, and not waiting around for another boom, mining or otherwise
- invigorating an innovative culture in our schools by encouraging and rewarding resourcefulness
- securing a better alignment of education, society and economy, especially in re-balancing upper secondary and polytechnic education as well as university and vocational education

# Summary of contrasts on six benchmarks as they relate to governance

Benchmarks	Top performers	Australia
7. Constitutional arrangements	Settled	Stalled
8. Number of levels of government	One to three	Two
9. Establishment of current roles	Stable with organic features	Frozen
10. Local government	Strong	Weak
11. Number of schools administered	Small to moderate in most	Large in number and distance in some states
12. Disruptive change in education	Noteworthy and positive in some	Inertia
<b>Overall</b>	<b>Settled, stable but organic in most</b>	<b>Inertia</b>

# Summary of contrasts on three benchmarks as they relate to professional matters

<b>Benchmarks</b>	<b>Top performers</b>	<b>Australia</b>
13. School autonomy	Various with focus on professional autonomy in curriculum	Various with focus on professional autonomy in curriculum
14. Professional capacity	Strong with focus on initial teacher education	Strong except for slow progress in changes to initial teacher education
15. Preparing for the future	Moderate especially at the system level	Moderate but high in some schools
<b>Overall</b>	<b>Moderate to high</b>	<b>Moderate to high</b>

# Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS)

- *Integrated leaders* are attentive to both instructional and distributed leadership
- *Inclusive leaders* engage staff, students and their parents or guardians in decisions at the school, but relatively less often take up a role as instructional leaders and spend less time on curriculum- and teaching-related tasks
- *Educational leaders* are strongly engaged in instructional leadership, but much less in involving stakeholders in decisions
- *Administrative leaders* spend a large portion of their time on school management and administrative issues and are, as a result, less engaged in distributed and instructional leadership activities than integrated leaders (adapted from OECD)

## Principals' engagement in instructional leadership activities in lower secondary education (percentage of principals reporting 'very often' or 'often' as reported in TALIS 2013) (adapted from OECD)

Country / Jurisdiction (10 of 35)	Integrated (%)	Educational (%)	Inclusive (%)	Administrative (%)
Australia	61.5	26.8	11.3	0.5
Estonia	11.3	1.0	76.4	11.3
Finland	2.3	9.2	14.7	73.8
Israel	9.7	82.6	3.3	4.4
Japan	15.1	76.9	None reported in this category	8.1
Korea	91.1	8.1	0.8	None reported in this category
New Zealand	25.1	69.5	0.7	4.7
Singapore	62.6	36.1	0.7	0.7
Alberta (Canada)	73.6	22.2	3.8	0.4
England (UK)	32.5	63.4	None reported in this category	4.1
<b>OECD Average</b>	<b>45.9</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>10.9</b>

## Distribution of types of leadership in lower secondary schools (percentage of principals as reported in TALIS 2013) (adapted from OECD)

Country / Jurisdiction (10 of 37)	Take action to support cooperation among teachers to develop new teaching practices Very often/often (%)	Take action to ensure that teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching skills Very often/often (%)	Take action to ensure that teachers feel responsible for their students' learning outcomes Very often/often (%)
Singapore	65.4	84.4	91.1
Alberta (Canada)	71.1	79.1	84.8
Korea	73.6	77.8	80.5
Israel	67.6	76.0	81.8
Australia	64.0	76.1	82.5
England (UK)	61.4	75.3	82.9
New Zealand	60.2	74.8	81.6
Estonia	41.3	52.0	53.0
Finland	56.6	40.0	44.0
Japan	33.9	38.9	32.6
<b>OECD Average for 36 countries</b>	<b>64.1</b>	<b>70.2</b>	<b>76.6</b>

## **Here is what a leading Australian writer had to say about Australia's approach to its schools**

There is little planning to train a new kind of person as part of the process of economic development. There is mainly belated scrambling around the mounting slope of crisis.

The people who control education are largely dedicated to diluting it, while the material demands of society suggest that it should be made, if not harder, at least more effective, so that pupils learn more.

# Extended version of the full paper

Now available at:

[www.educationaltransformations.com.au](http://www.educationaltransformations.com.au)

THANK YOU