

# **EXCELLENCE & EQUITY?**

## **PROBLEM ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN AUSTRALIA'S PARAMOUNT EDUCATIONAL GOAL**

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY



# THIS PRESENTATION...

- The remit: “what has happened in the equity areas?”
- Not much, why?

Equity as an educational goal

Equity in Australian school education

Equity in school funding, and its impact on equity in education

Forensic examination current educational system architecture.

- Possible, highly promising, solutions



# DEFINE “ A FAIR GO” FOR ALL STUDENTS

- Access
- Participation
- Resourcing

Educational EQUITY1.0: equality of opportunity



- Performance
- Attainment
- Achievement

Educational EQUITY2.0: equality of outcomes

Does Aust subscribe to both models?

Not clear

I argue that the current system doesn't attend to either – there is a flaw in system architecture for monitoring and measurement of equity.

The “needs based” funding aim hasn't been realised.

Its hard to argue that we have equity of opportunity – nevermind equity of outcomes.

Why has the hope for needs based/equity funding been so dashed?

I THINK YOU SHOULD BE MORE SPECIFIC HERE IN STEP TWO



## THE LOGIC OF MIS-ALIGNMENT



**WE HAVE CLEAR EDUCATIONAL GOALS**

**EQUITY IS FOREMOST AMONG THEM.**



# FROM HOBART TO MPARNTWE: 4 DECADES OF CLARITY

## Hobart (1989)

To provide an ***excellent education***... [that] is relevant to the ***social, cultural and economic*** needs of the nation.

To enable all students to develop high standards of learning and to develop self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, respect for others and...personal excellence

To promote ***equality of education opportunities***

To respond to the current and emerging economic and social needs of the nation



## Adelaide (1999)

***Schooling*** should develop fully the ***talents and capacities of all students***

- analysis...problem solving...communicate ideas and information...collaborate
- self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem...commitment to personal excellence

***Schooling*** should be ***socially just***

- free from the effects...***of differences arising from students' socioeconomic background or geographic location***
- outcomes ***of educationally disadvantaged students...match those*** of other students





## Melbourne (2008)

***Australian schooling*** promotes **equity and excellence**

- free from **discrimination based on...socioeconomic background** or...location
- ensure that **socioeconomic disadvantage ceases to be a significant determinant of educational outcomes**

All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens



Flipped!

## Mparntwe (2019)

The *Australian education system* promotes 1. **excellence and equity**

2. All young Australians become:

a confident and creative individuals

b successful lifelong learners

c active and informed members of the community



**TEACHERS WORK**

**VALUING TO EQUITY AND NATIONAL GOALS.**



# WORK IN SCHOOLS— ARE TEACHERS PURSUING THE EQUITY GOAL?

- Survey of  $\approx 18,000+$  educators in NSW public schools ( $\approx 1,400$  principals/deputy principals,  $\approx 11,300$  classroom teachers)



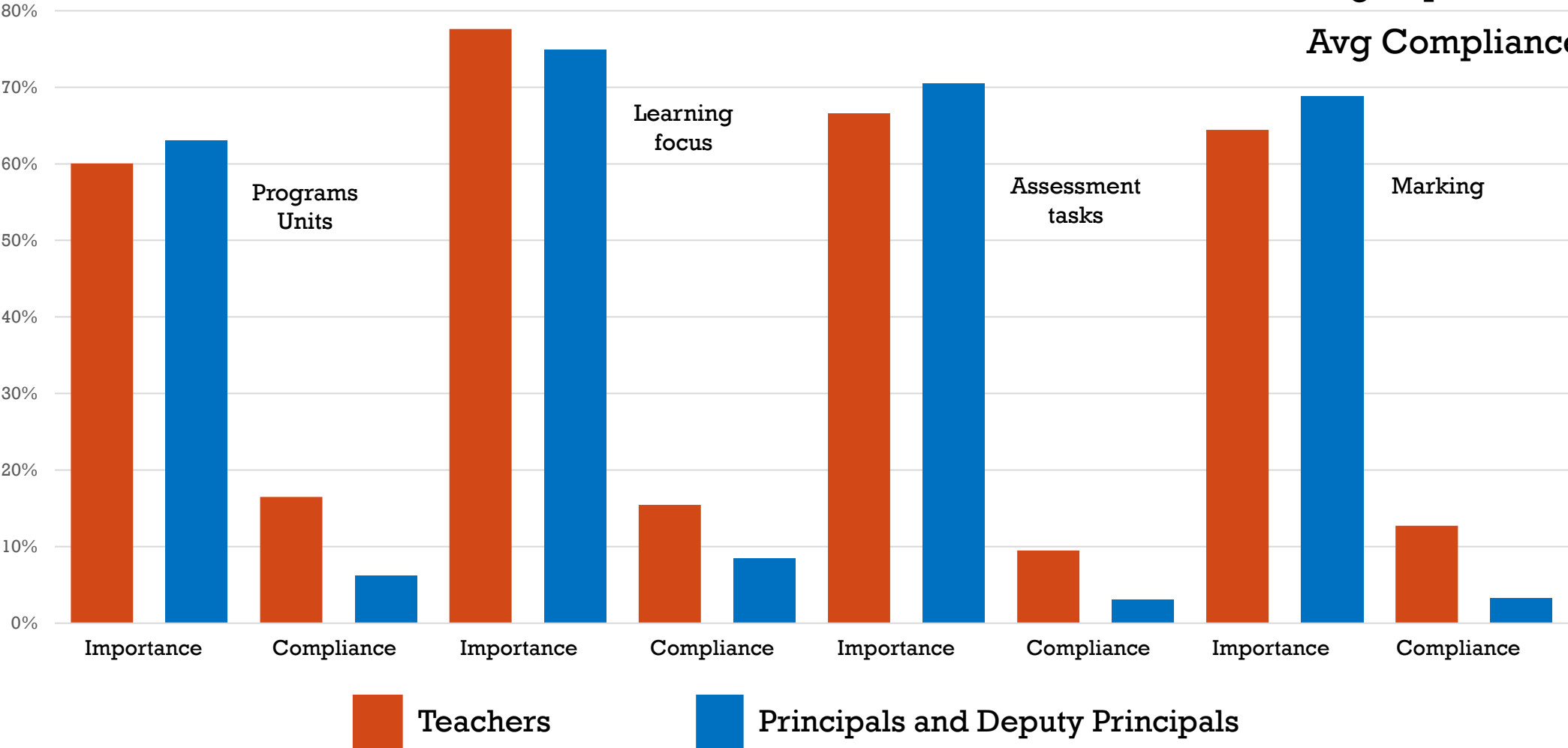
- What work activities do you complete?
- How important do you perceive these activities to be?
- To what extent do you consider they are:  
teaching and learning  
AND  
compliance and accountability?



# VALUING OF WORK IN SCHOOLS

Avg Importance = 68%

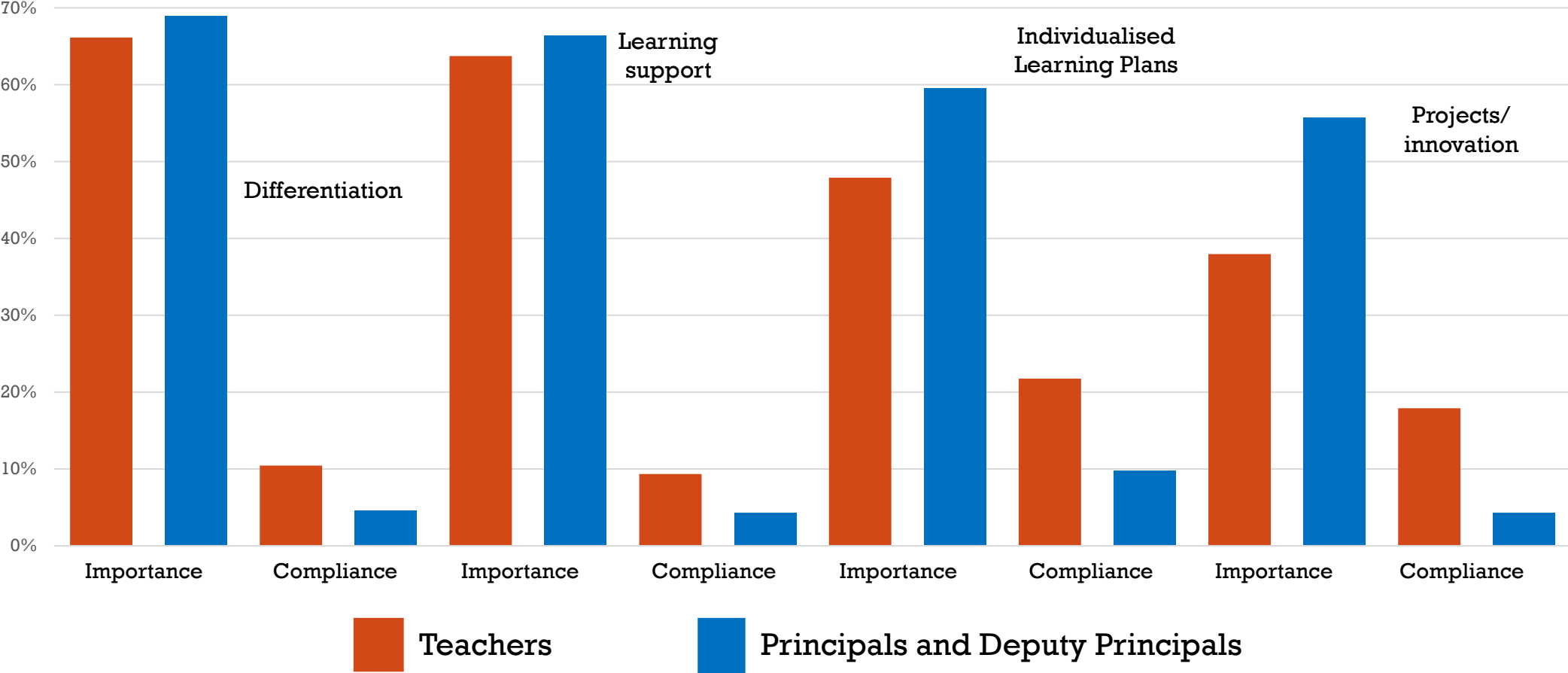
Avg Compliance = 9%



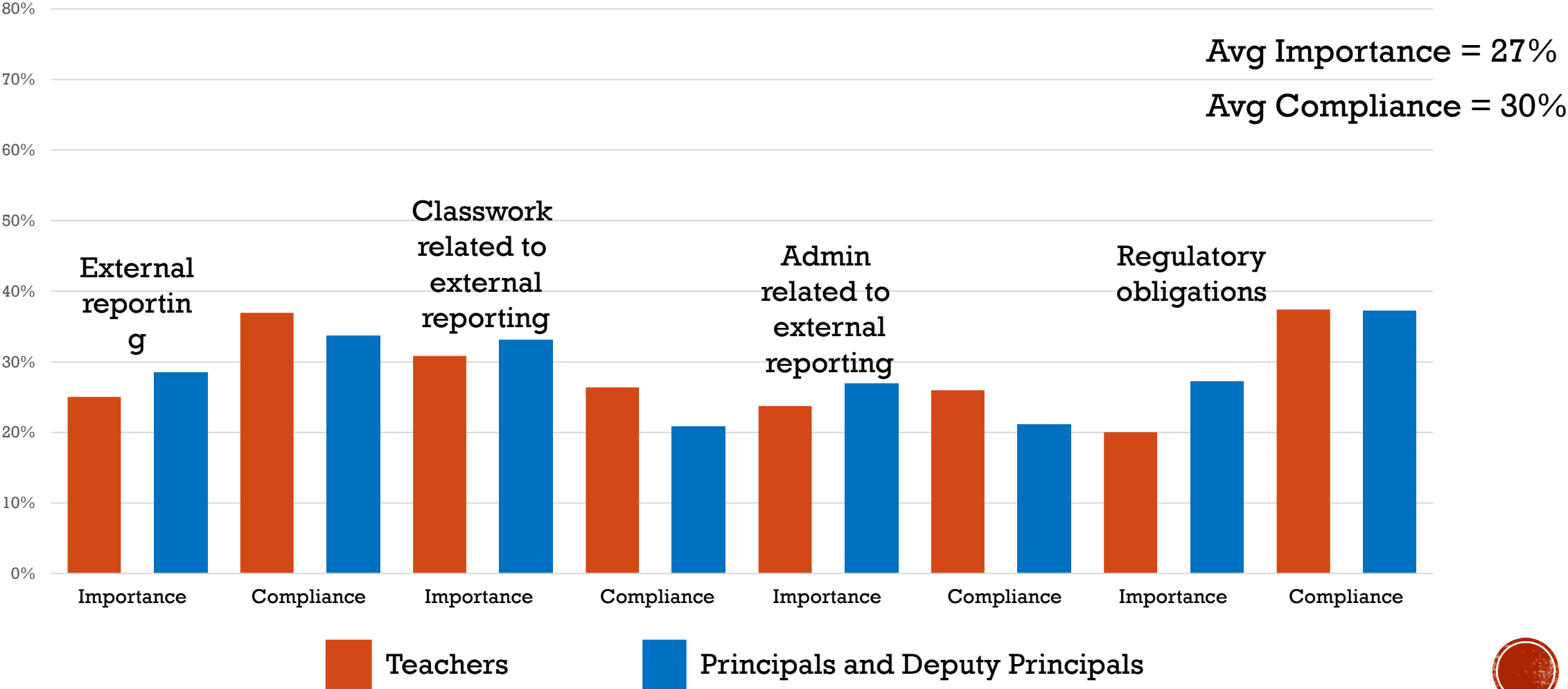
# PRINCIPALS' VALUING OF THEIR WORK

Avg Importance = 58%

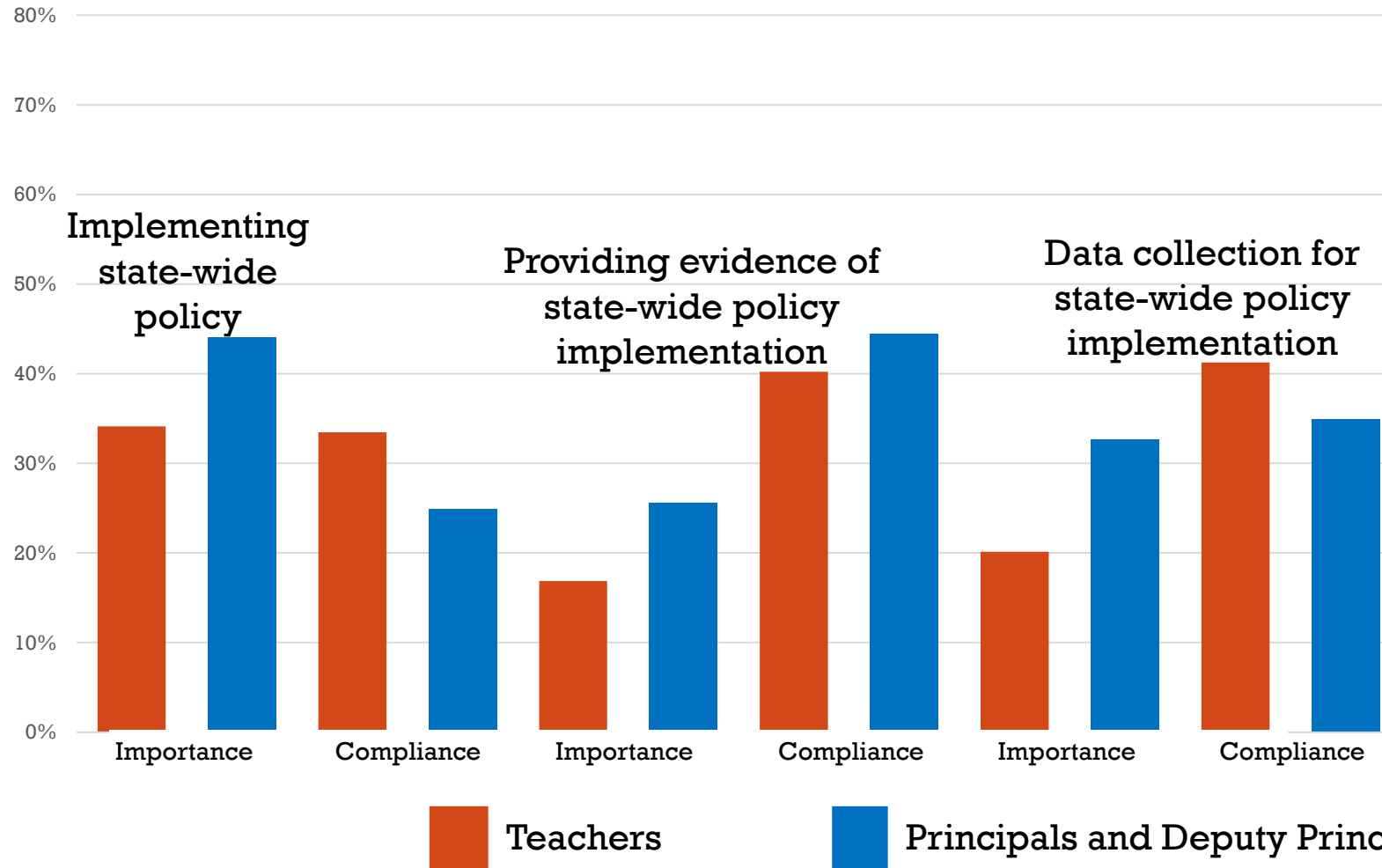
Avg Compliance = 10%



# PRINCIPALS' VALUING OF THEIR WORK



# PRINCIPALS' VALUING OF THEIR WORK



Avg Importance = 29%

Avg Compliance = 37%





# EQUITY IS **IMPORTANT** TO PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

Focus on teaching and learning as core work, aligned to national goals.

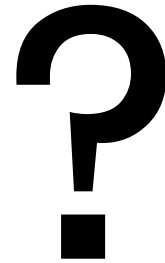
Focus on equity is clear in most highly valued tasks.

Teachers don't value much of the school assessment/data & accountability frameworks

**Why?**



# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION?



Source: [National Report on Schooling](#)



# EQUITY & THE NATIONAL REPORT ON SCHOOLING

## THE GOALS:

- excellence and equity
- confident and creative individuals
- lifelong learners
- active and informed members of the community

- Measures and reporting are not linked to national goals
- Equity is mentioned 6 times in the 138 page document, mostly just in preamble to data reporting
- There is NO REPORTING against LBOTE, SES and disability equity groups. LIMITED REPORTING against Indigenous.

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National Report on Schooling in Australia 2018

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# EQUITY & THE NATIONAL REPORT ON SCHOOLING

- Reporting against equity groups is mostly absent

For national reporting purposes, KPMs for student participation, achievement and attainment are disaggregated by equity measures: Indigenous status, sex, geolocation, socio-economic status and language background, where it is possible and appropriate to do so.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> With the exception of retention to Year 12 by Indigenous students, which relates to a COAG target for Closing the Gap, equity measures are not listed separately in the schedule of KPMs contained in the measurement framework.

- Rather, readers are directed to the data portal to conduct their own analyses of equity.

Data for KPM 1(f) by state and territory, disaggregated by Indigenous status, sex, geolocation and language background are provided in the National Report on Schooling data portal.



**MUCH OF OUR SYSTEM DOCUMENTATION  
IS NOT ORIENTED TO GOALS**

**- NOT EVEN EQUITY**

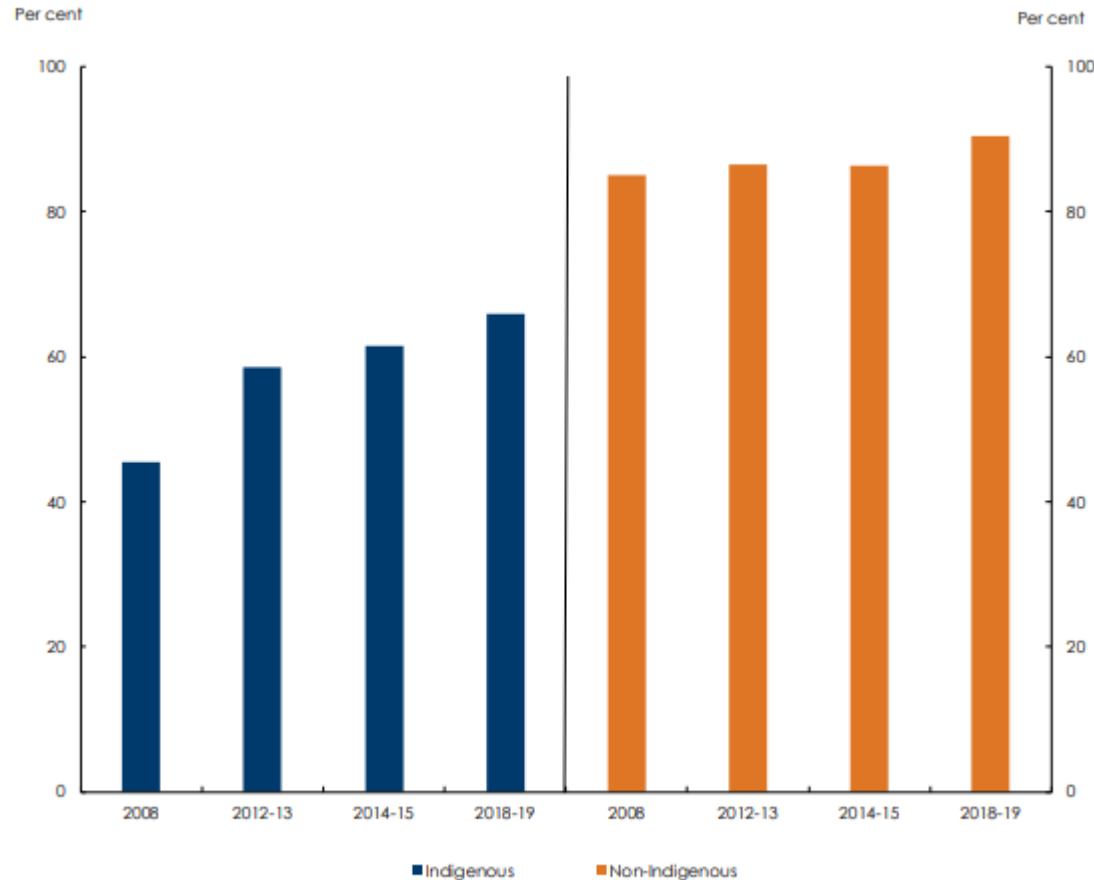


# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION?

## Equity groups

- Indigenous status
  - Sex
  - Socio-economic status
  - Geolocation
  - Language background
  - + Students with a disability
- NRSA
- MFSA

National Year 12 or equivalent attainment rate, 20–24 year olds, 2008–2019<sup>a</sup>



equality of opportunity

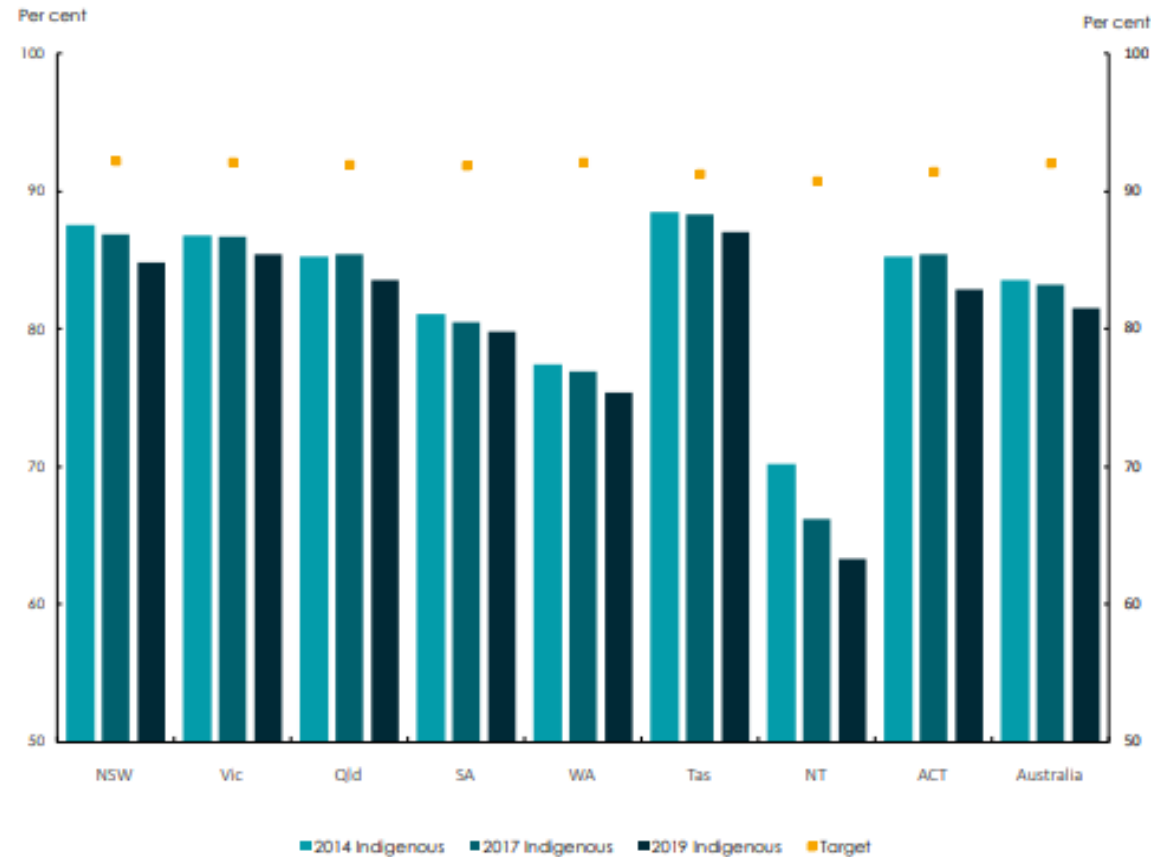
Rises in year 12 attainment over a decade

Source: [Closing the Gap report](#) (2020)



# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION?

Indigenous student attendance rates, by jurisdiction, Semester 1 2014–2019



equality of opportunity

All states and territories show declining school attendance between 2014 and 2019

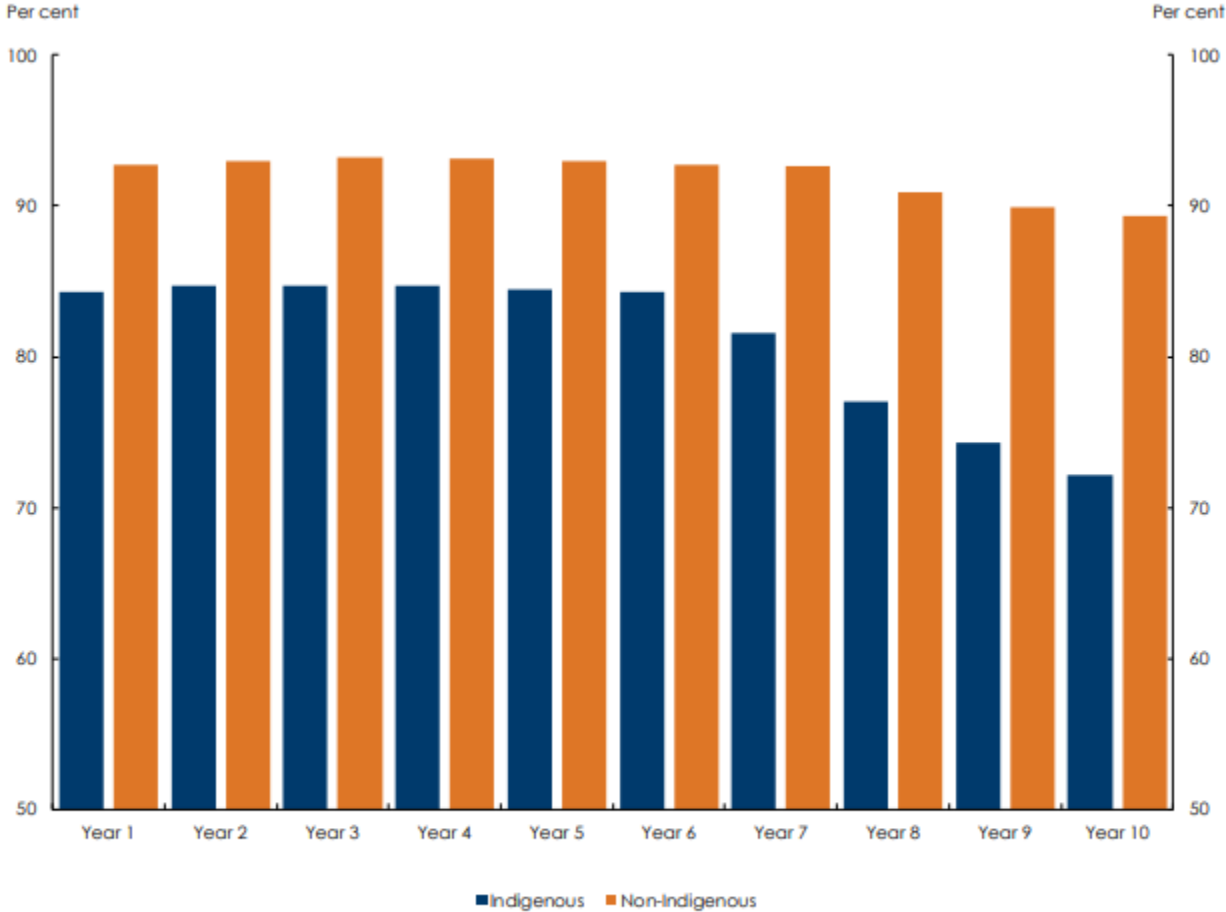
Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2019, unpublished.

Source: [Closing the Gap report](#) (2020)



# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION?

equality of opportunity



Poor attendance increases across the school years.

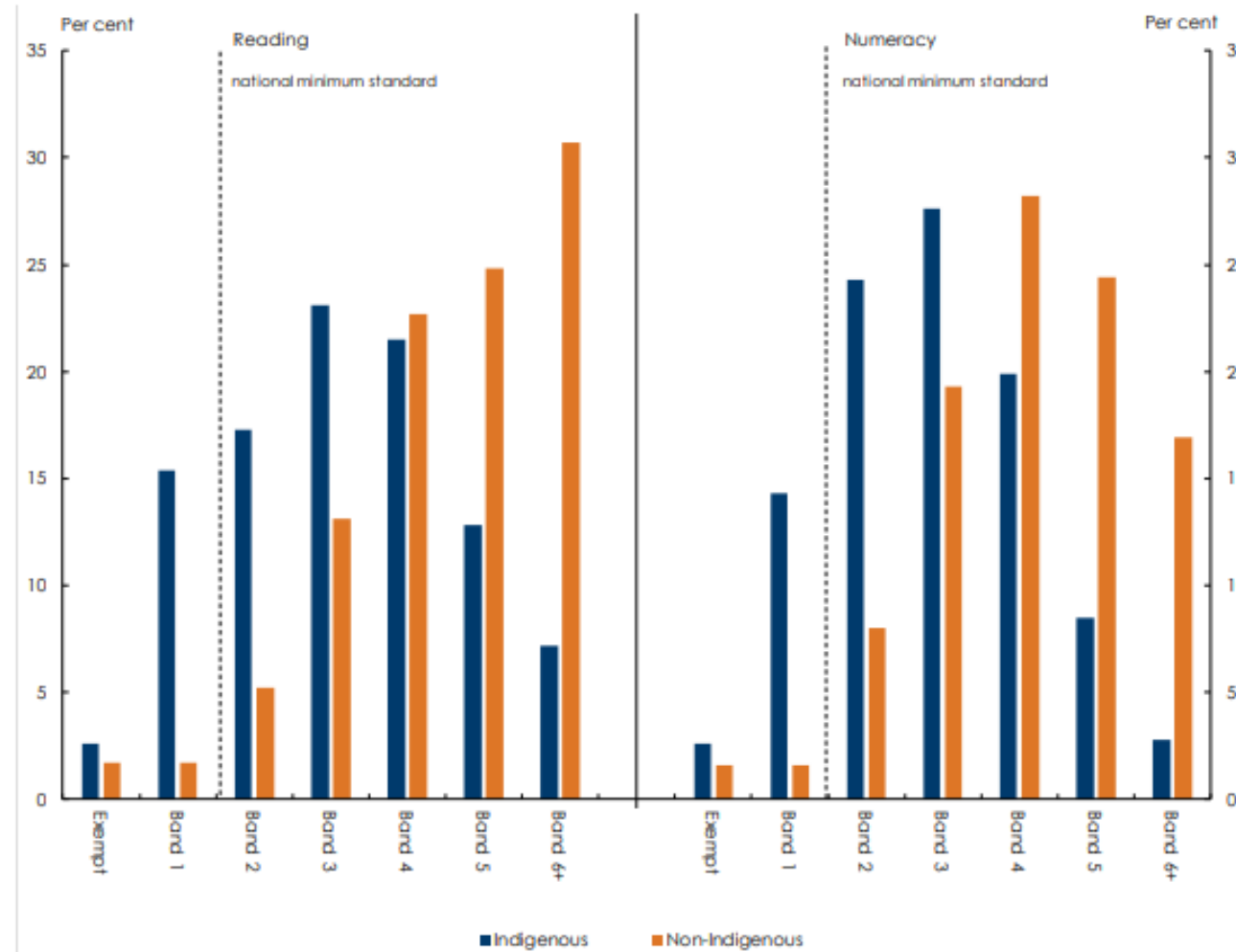
Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2019, unpublished.





# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION?

Proportion of students by NAPLAN attainment band, Year 3, 2018<sup>a, b</sup>



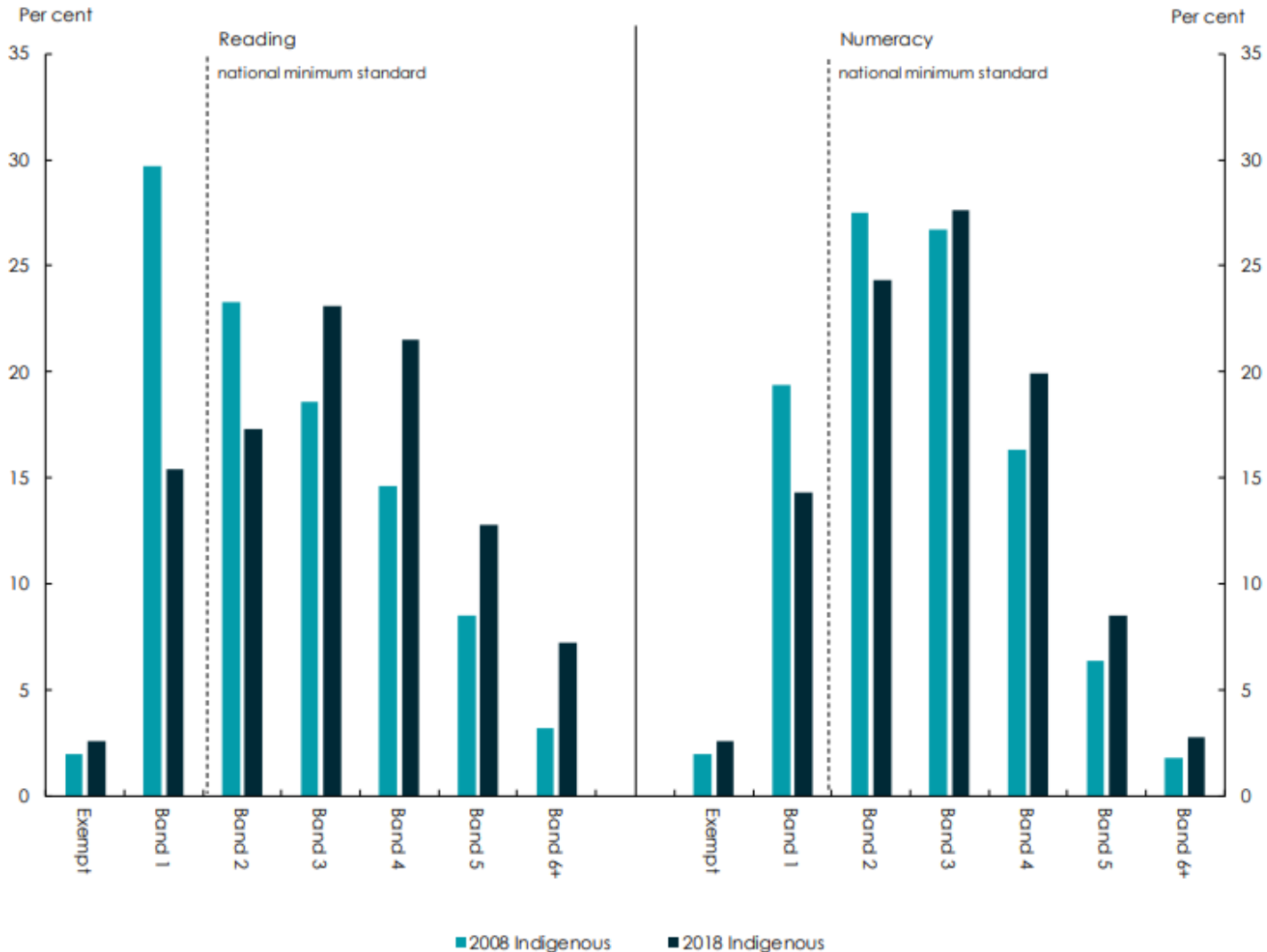
equality of  
outcomes

The gap remains large  
in reading and  
numeracy



# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION?

Proportion of Indigenous students by NAPLAN attainment band, Year 3, 2008 and 2018<sup>a, b</sup>



equality of  
outcomes

Some improvement  
over the decade in  
reading but not in  
numeracy



# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION?

Progress against the targets<sup>a</sup>

Target	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUS
Child mortality (2018) <sup>b</sup>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Early childhood education (2025)									
School attendance (2018)									
Literacy and Numeracy (2018) <sup>c</sup>									
Year 12 or equivalent (2020) <sup>d</sup>									
Employment (2018) <sup>e</sup>									
Life expectancy (2031) <sup>f</sup>		—		—	—	—		—	

Notes: (a) A blue box indicates the target is on track. A dash indicates the data is either not published or there is no agreed trajectory. The other targets are not on track or have not been met. For more information on the target trajectories see the Technical Appendix.

Tracking equity through CTG



# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION?

Chart 1: Equity Students by School Sector, 2019 (% of sector)

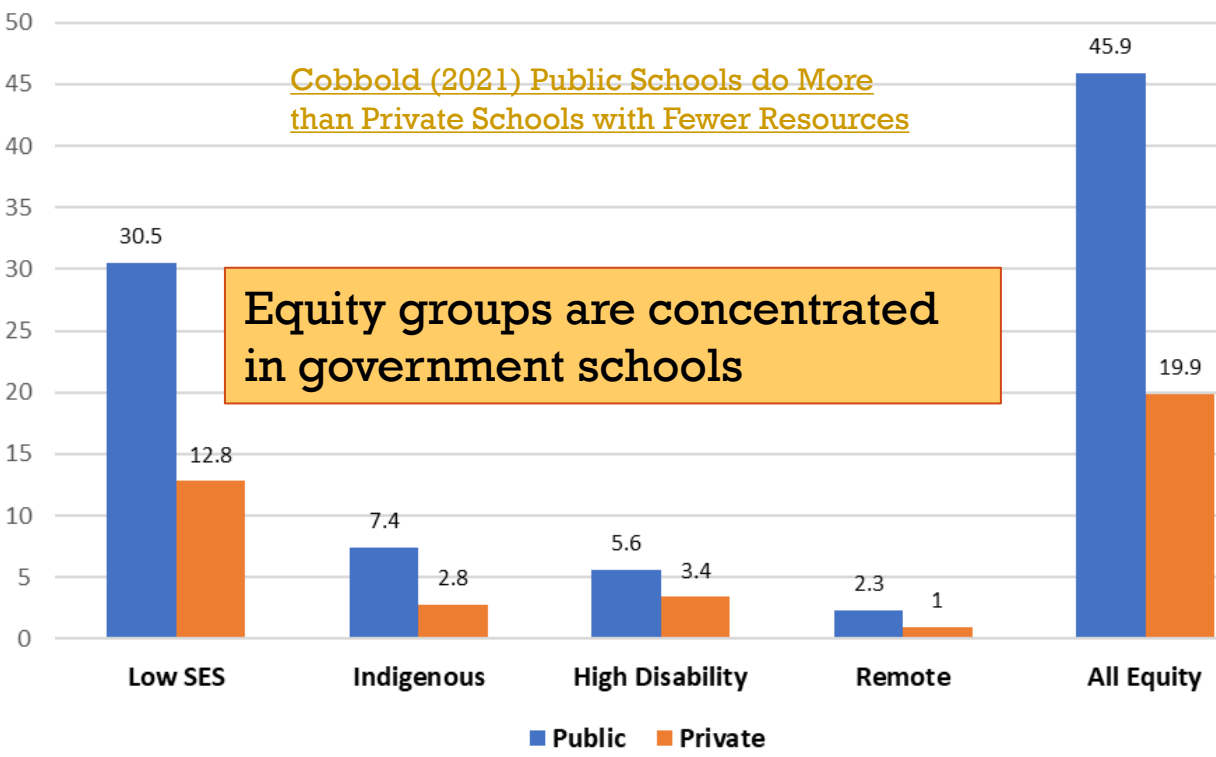
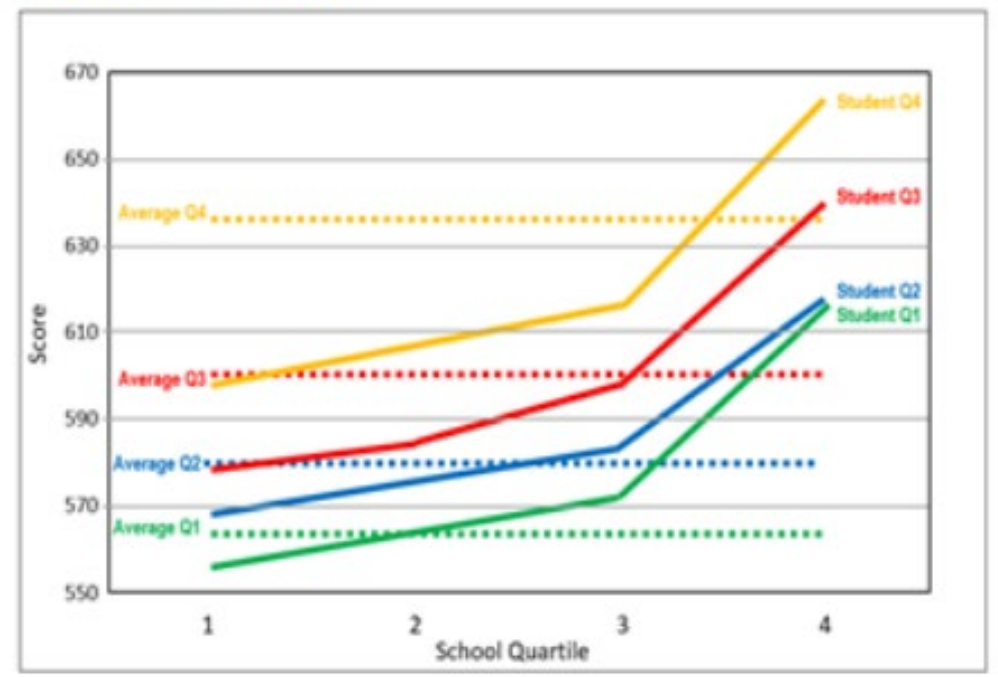


Figure 2: Dynamics between student SES, school ICSEA quartile among Year 9 NA performance in literacy and numeracy



Source: Chesters & Daly (2017)<sup>21</sup>

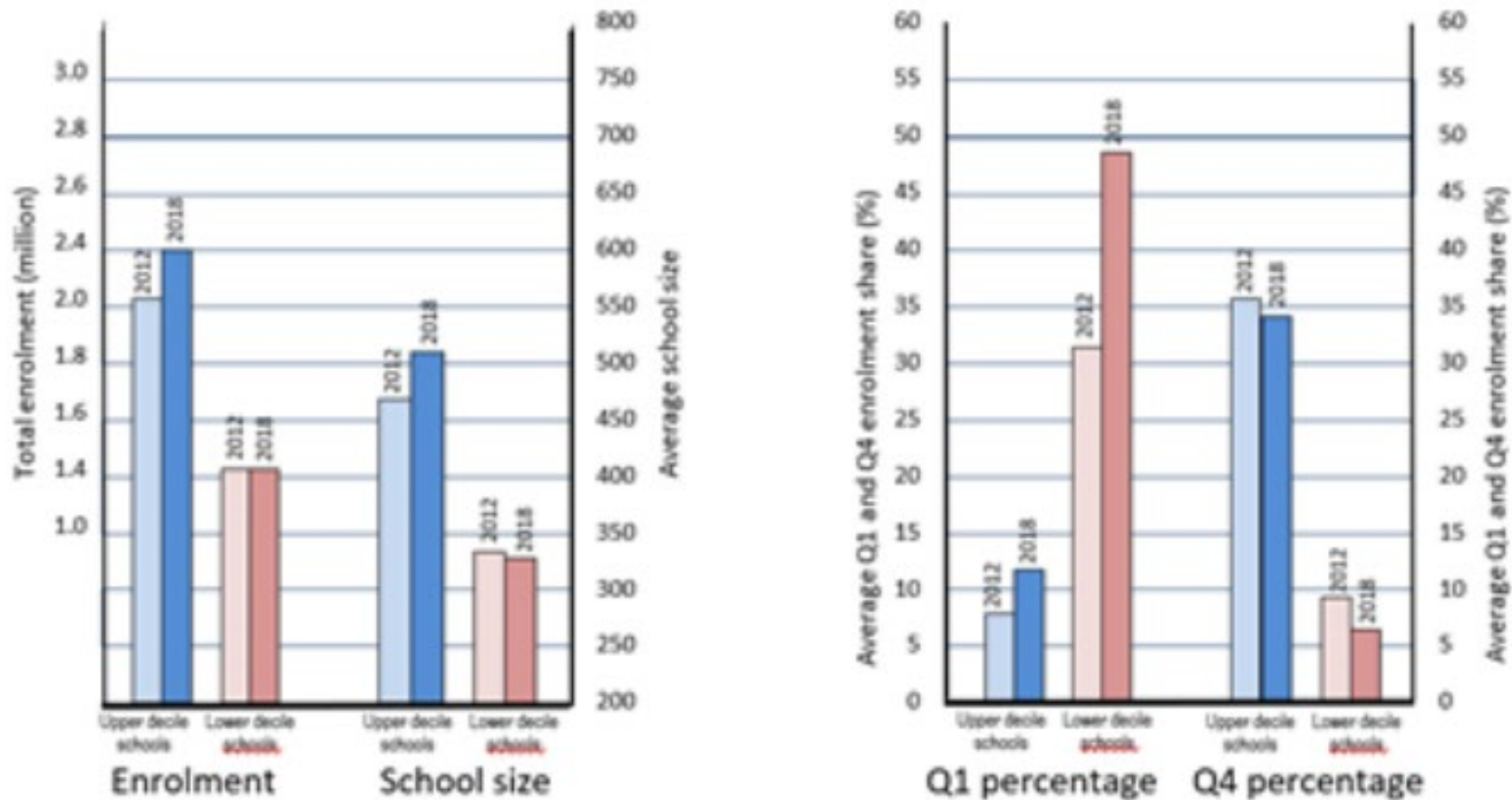
**Student performance is impacted by school ICSEA – correlated with school %'s in equity groups**

Sources: ABS, Schools Australia 2020; Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services 2021.



# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION?

Figure 1: Contrasting enrolment patterns between schools in upper and lower deciles of ICSEA



School segregation is growing

- increasing concentration of disadvantaged students in disadvantaged schools
- Growth in enrollment among advantaged school
- implications for overall student achievement

Source: My School 2012 and 2018. Upper decile schools = 50-99, Lower decile schools = 0-49



# DOES SCHOOL FUNDING IMPACT ON EQUITY?

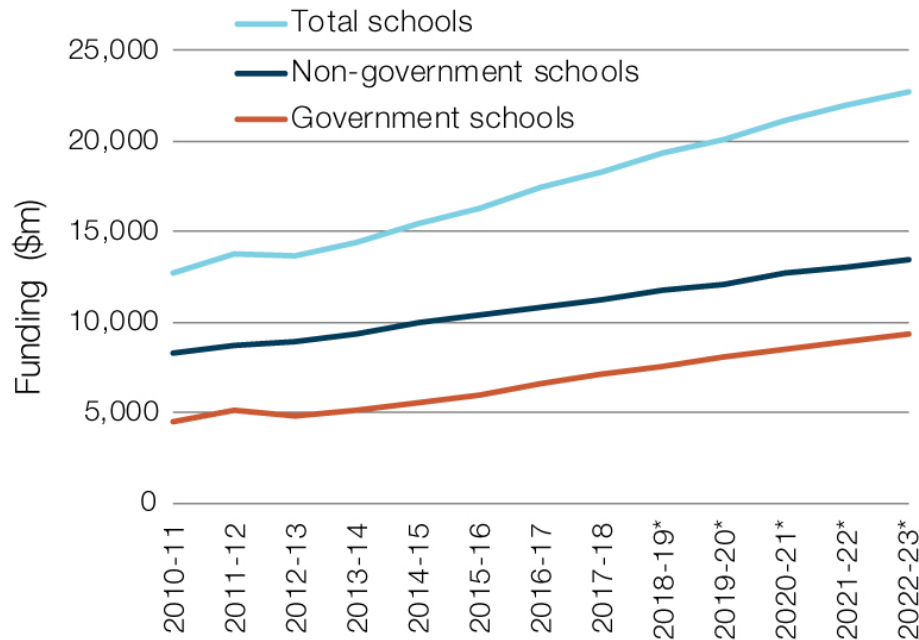
Most recent review in Jackson, C. K. (2020):

- puzzling “long-standing debate”
- two clear categories of research:
  1. older literature provides strong support for there being a positive economically important association between increased school spending and improved student outcomes.
  2. recent quasi-experimental literature overwhelmingly supports a causal relationship between increased school spending and student outcomes.



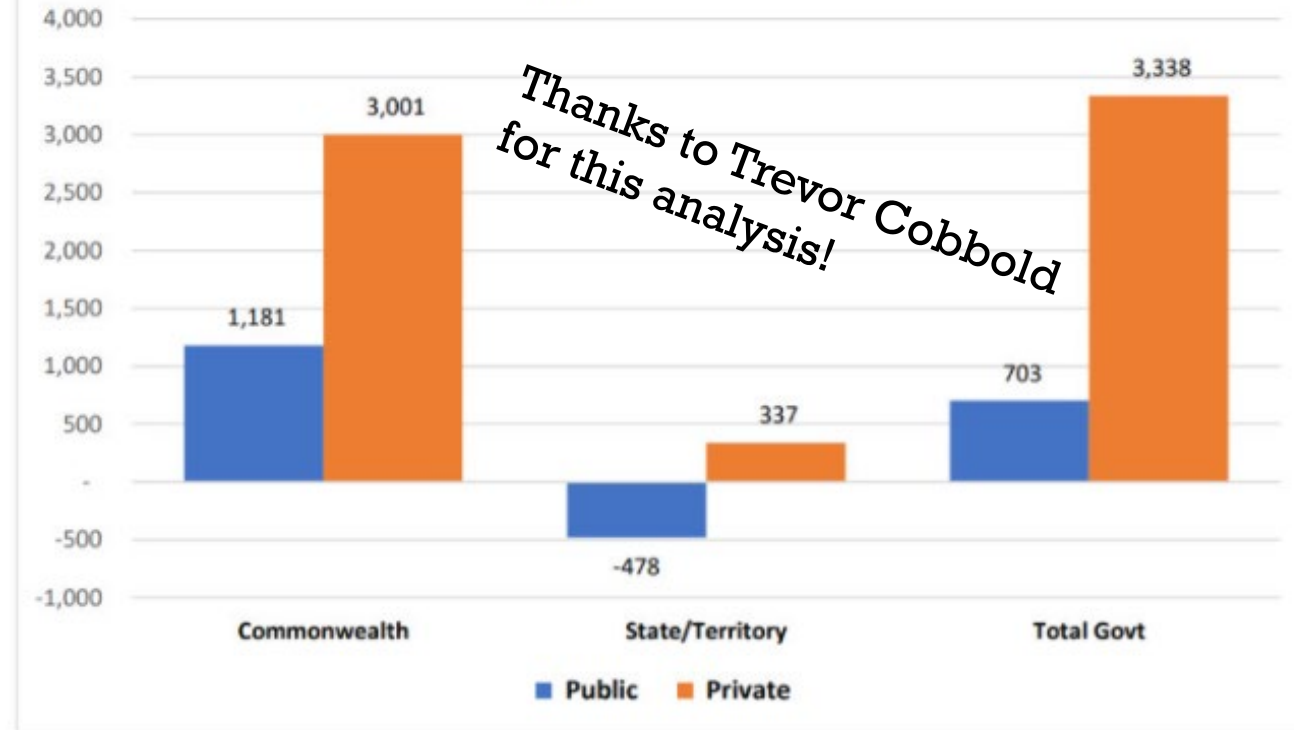
# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL FUNDING?

Figure 1: Australian Government funding for schools (real values), 2010-11 to 2022-23



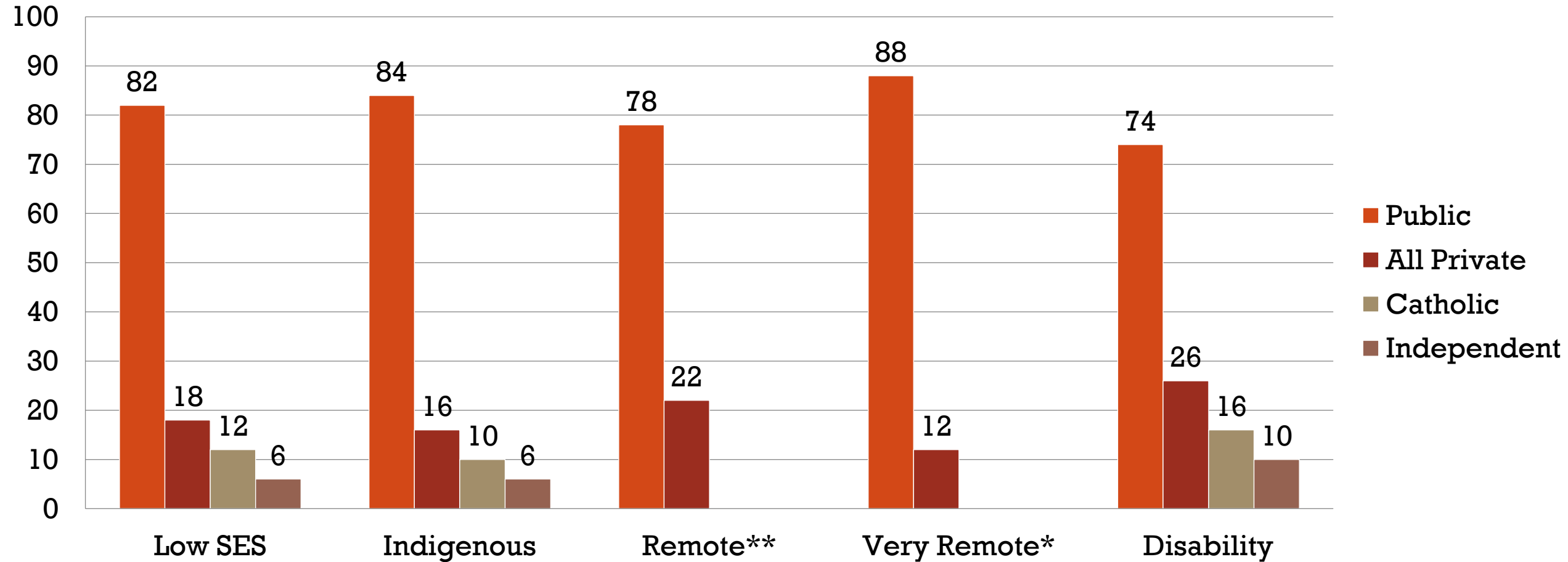
Sources: Australian Government, *Budget strategy and outlook: budget paper 1: 2019-20*; Australian Government, *Final budget outcome*, various years. Notes: \*Estimates and projections; real values expressed in 2017-18 constant dollars based on CPI (2010-11 to 2017-18) and 2019-20 Budget estimates for CPI changes from 2018-19 to 2022-23.

Chart 1: Change in Government Funding by Source, Australia, 2009-10 to 2019-20 (\$ per student adjusted for inflation)



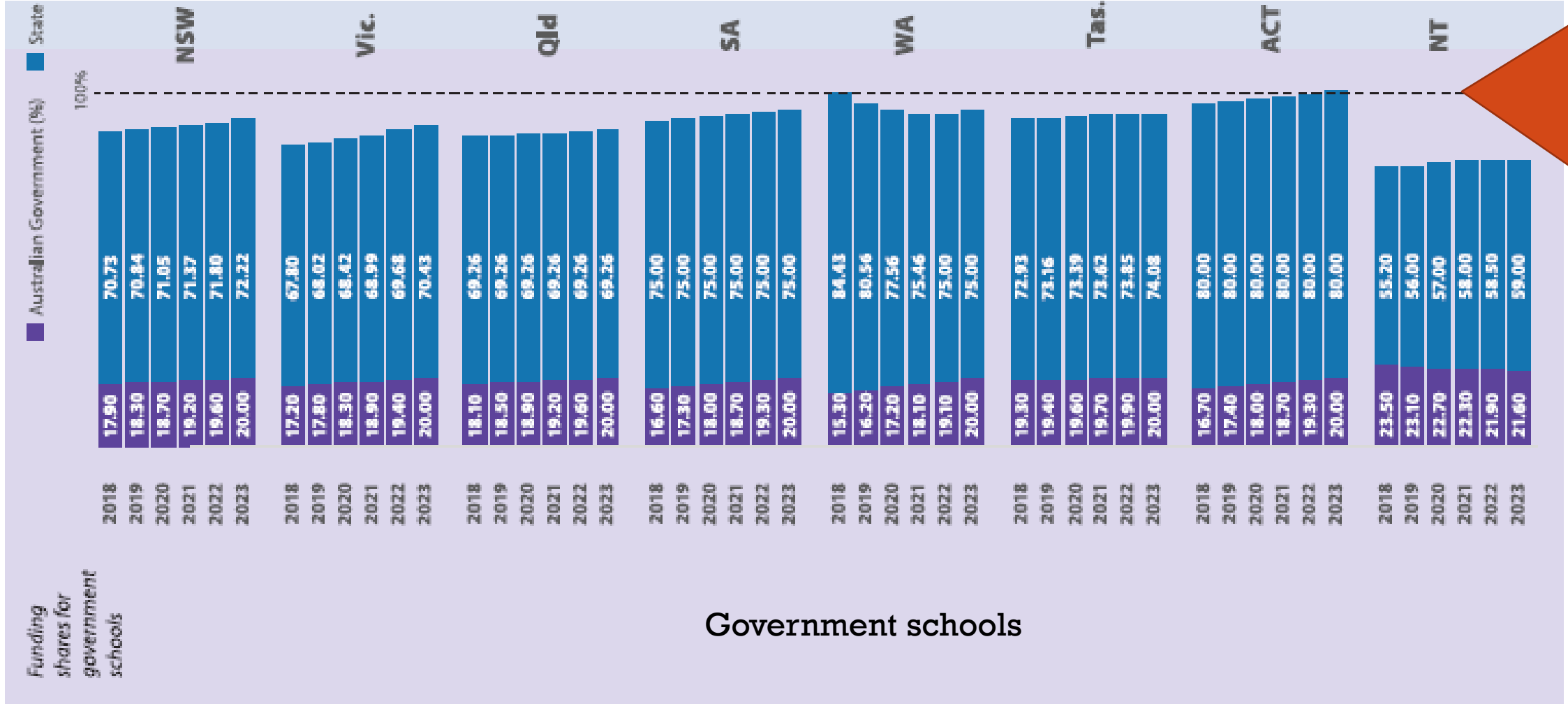
Source: Report on Government Services 2022. The figures have been adjusted to exclude book entry items (use of cost of capital, depreciation) and other items (payroll tax, school transport) which are included in the Report's data for state/territory government recurrent funding of public schools but are not included in the figures for private schools.

## ENROLMENTS OF STUDENTS WITH GREATER NEED BY SCHOOL SECTOR (%)





# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL FUNDING?

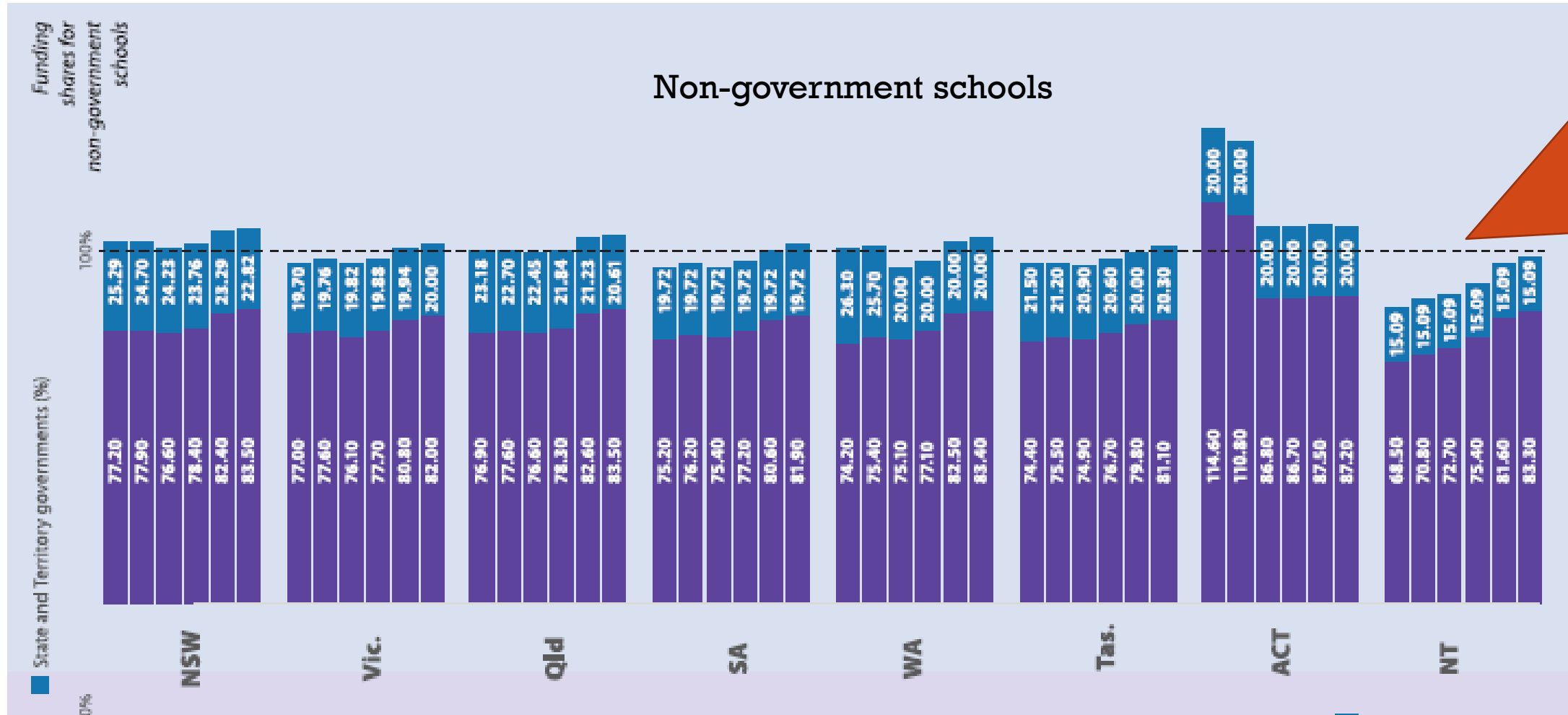


SRS – school resourcing standard

Source: NSRB. (2019) [Review of needs-based funding requirements](#)



# HOW EQUITABLE IS AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL FUNDING?

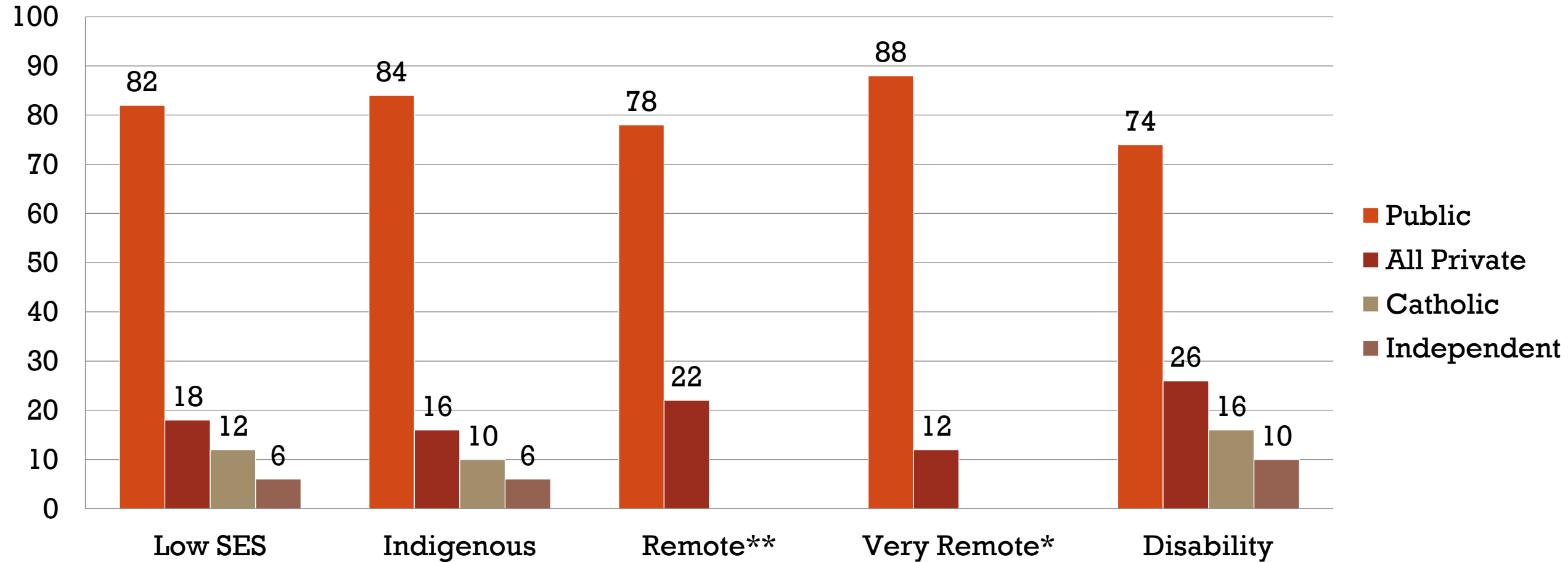


SRS – school resourcing standard



Source: NSRB. (2019) [Review of needs-based funding requirements](#)

## ENROLMENTS OF STUDENTS WITH GREATER NEED BY SCHOOL SECTOR (%)



# SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE FOR EQUITY?



# EQUITY IS **IMPORTANT** TO PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

Focus on teaching and learning as core work, aligned to national goals.

Focus on equity is clear in most highly valued tasks.

Teachers don't value much of the school assessment/data & accountability frameworks

Is it because teachers' values sit in contrast with:

system architecture?

monitoring and reporting?

**Why?**



# SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE ALIGNMENT AND LOGIC



# SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE ALIGNMENT AND LOGIC

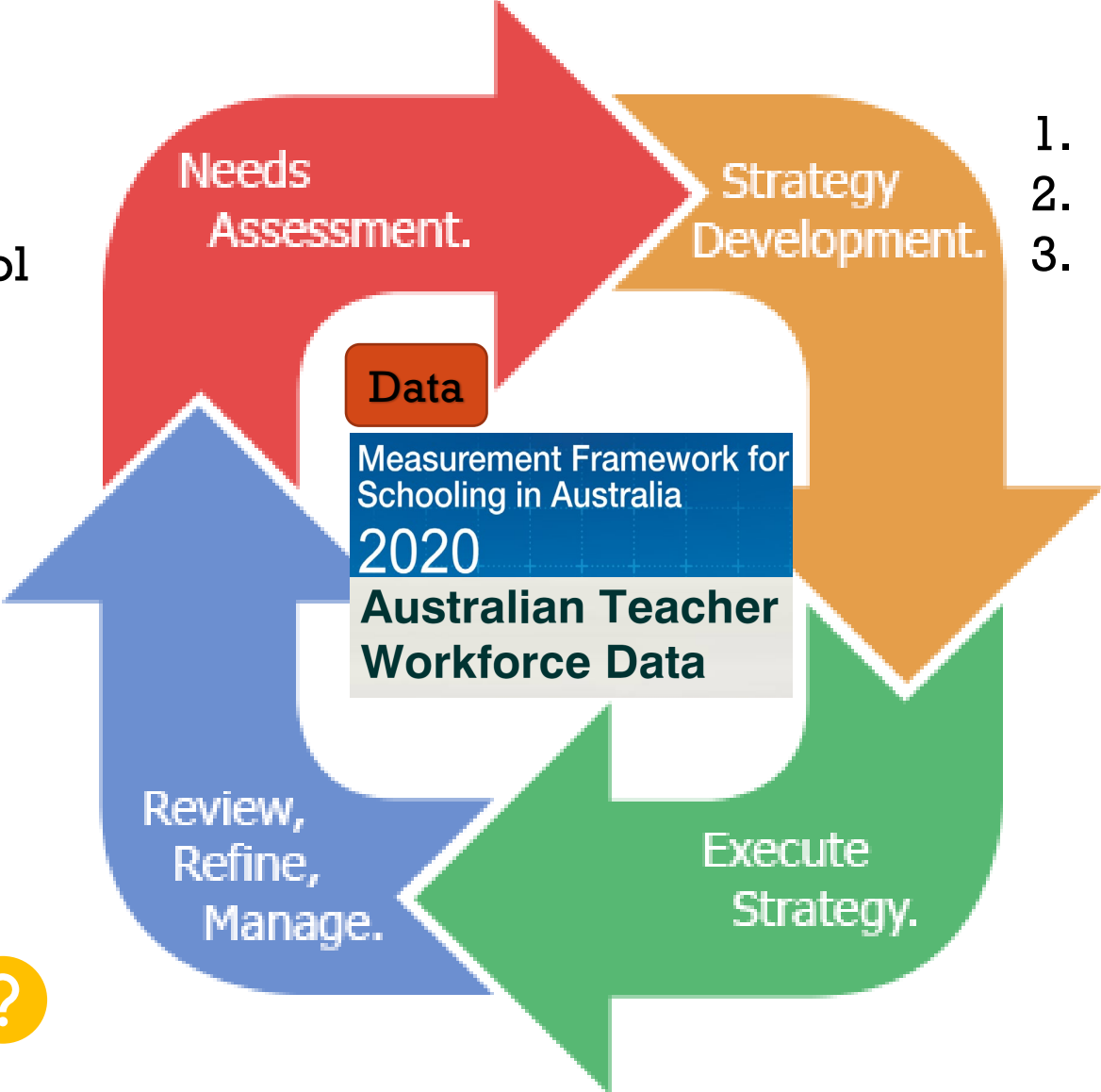


Stakeholder needs:

- Students ?
- parents
- Principals and school leaders
- teachers ✘



- Annual reporting ✔
- Against goals ✘
- Policy evaluation cycle ?



1. National goals
2. National reform agreement
3. State & Territory strategic plans

Commonwealth and State/Territory policy implementation

School operations ●

# MPARNTWE DECLARATION

The rationale - Good data....(NAPLAN, NAP sample, PISA, TIMMS, PIRLS)

- Allows teachers to **evaluate** their **classroom** practice...

- supports educational growth, and design of programs.

- ...**informs programs**, partnerships with parents and partnerships business.

data aren't ideal, or aligned with goals

Doesn't this explain why teachers don't value the assessment, data and accountability work?

- But, again, not specifically designed, not customised/suitable for this, narrow and not aligned to all goals



# MPARN DECLARATION

The rationale for the declaration (NAPLAN, NAP-OLDS)

- Allows teaching practice...  
■ supports educational growth, and teachers' progress and learning programs.

Rationale for school accountability  
BTW "The collection of data should be proportionate and not unduly add to the workloads of educators." 🤔 🤔 🤔

- ...inform relationships with parents, allocation of resources, and connections with business.



# MPARNTWE DECLARATION

The rationale – “Good data ....”

.... the ACARA annual report on schooling doesn't effectively report on equity groupings

“used to inform policy development and implementation as well as track progress against the goals of this Declaration.”

Except data DON'T report on  
Creative  
Confident  
Active/Informed  
- ...or even the full curriculum



# **CONCLUSION:**

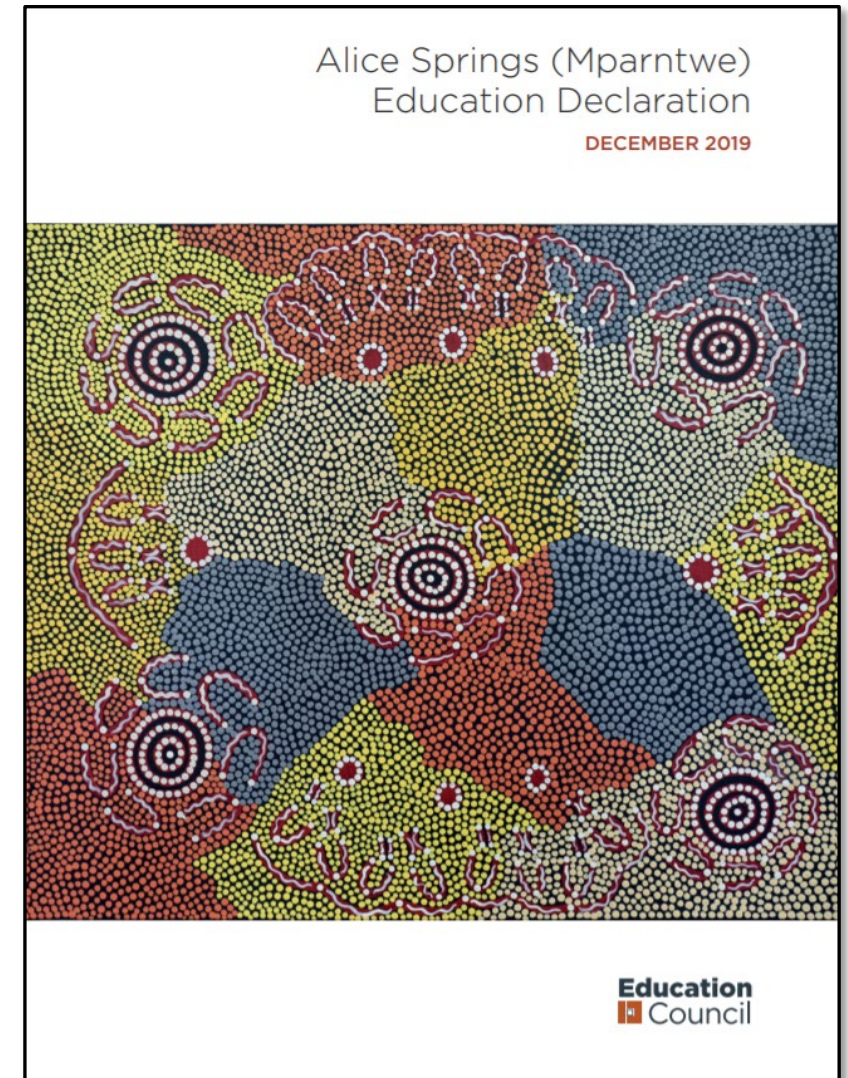
**SYSTEM DATA IS NOT ORIENTED TO GOALS**

**AND EQUITY ANALYSIS AND REPORTING IS  
EXTREMELY LIMITED**



# MPARNTWE DECLARATION

1. Poor alignment between education goals and system component parts
2. System accountability is an expectation, but focus has been just on schools



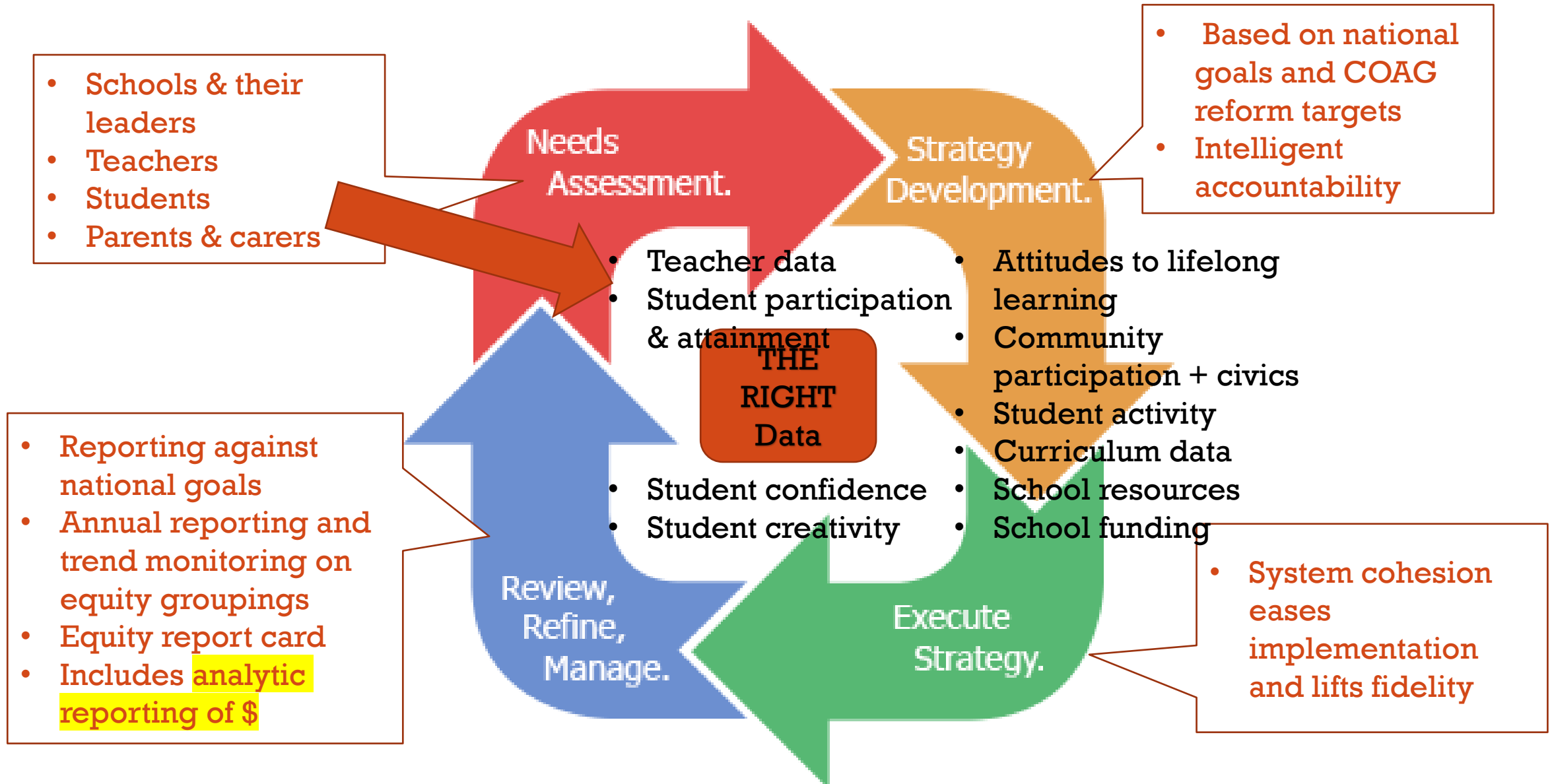
# THE REMEDY?

ALIGN STRATEGY, DATA AND REPORTING TO GOALS.

FOCUS ON EQUITY



# SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE ALIGNMENT AND LOGIC



Stakeholder  
needs  
assessment?



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Create an equitable  
school environment

**STUDENTS?**

LEARN MORE >

REQUEST A DEMO >

**TEACHERS?**

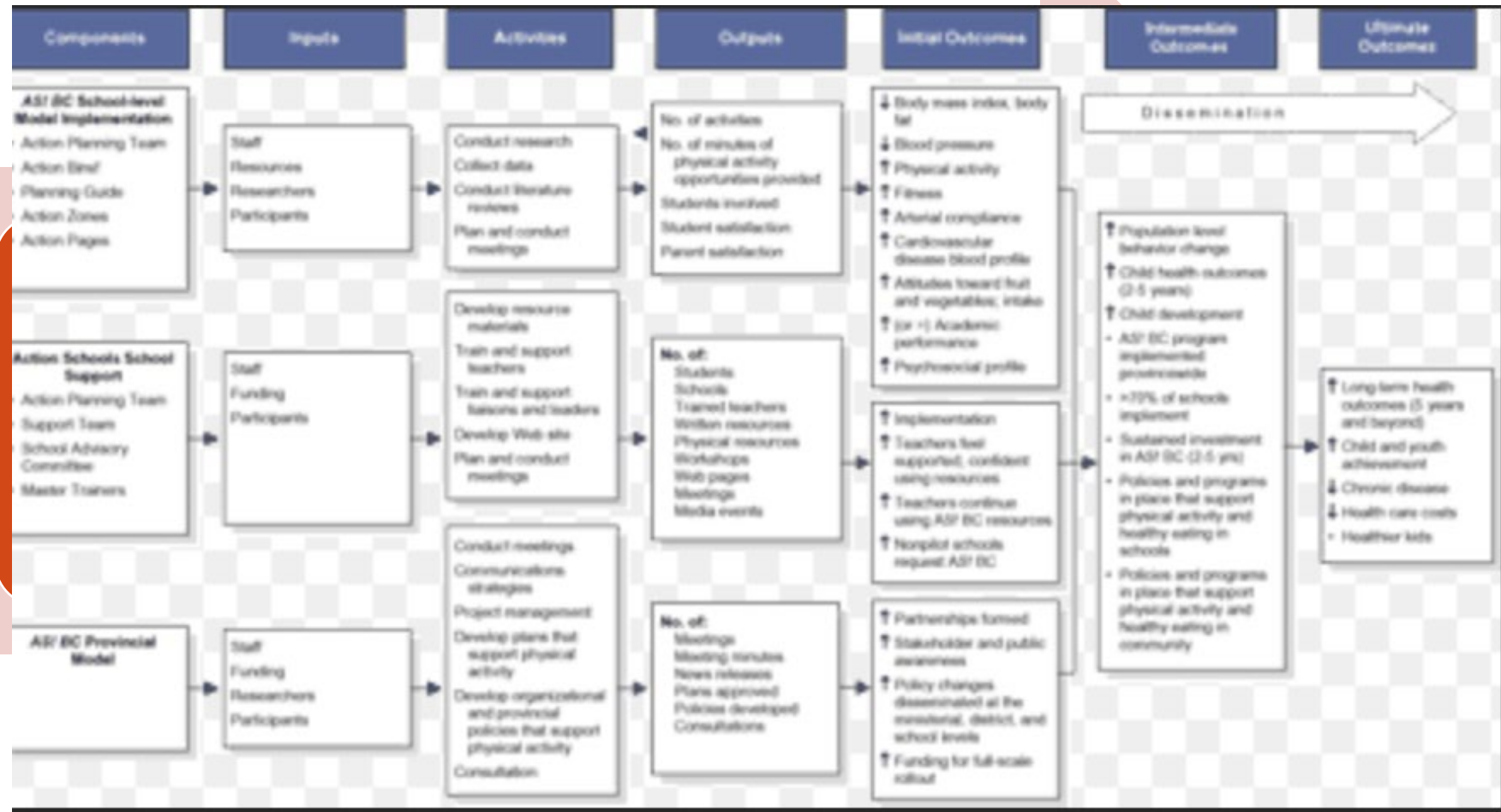
- Under-represented and valued in policy development
  - Consultation process
  - Policy documents
  - Data
- Advocates for educational equity
- Advocates for system accountability



# PROGRAM LOGIC

Sometimes called 'Program theory'

Provide clarity on how programs, policies, interventions & systems are meant to work.





# PROGRAM LOGIC

To develop  
programs  
we can  
the aims/9

What would Australian education look like if  
we STARTED with the NATIONAL GOALS?

# GOALS

Outcomes

Outcomes

Impact



# PROGRAM LOGIC

To develop a program policy we can start with the aims/goals

How would Australian educational equity look if we JUST IMPROVED POLICY ALIGNMENT with the NATIONAL GOALS?

# GOALS

Outputs

Outcomes

Impact



# References

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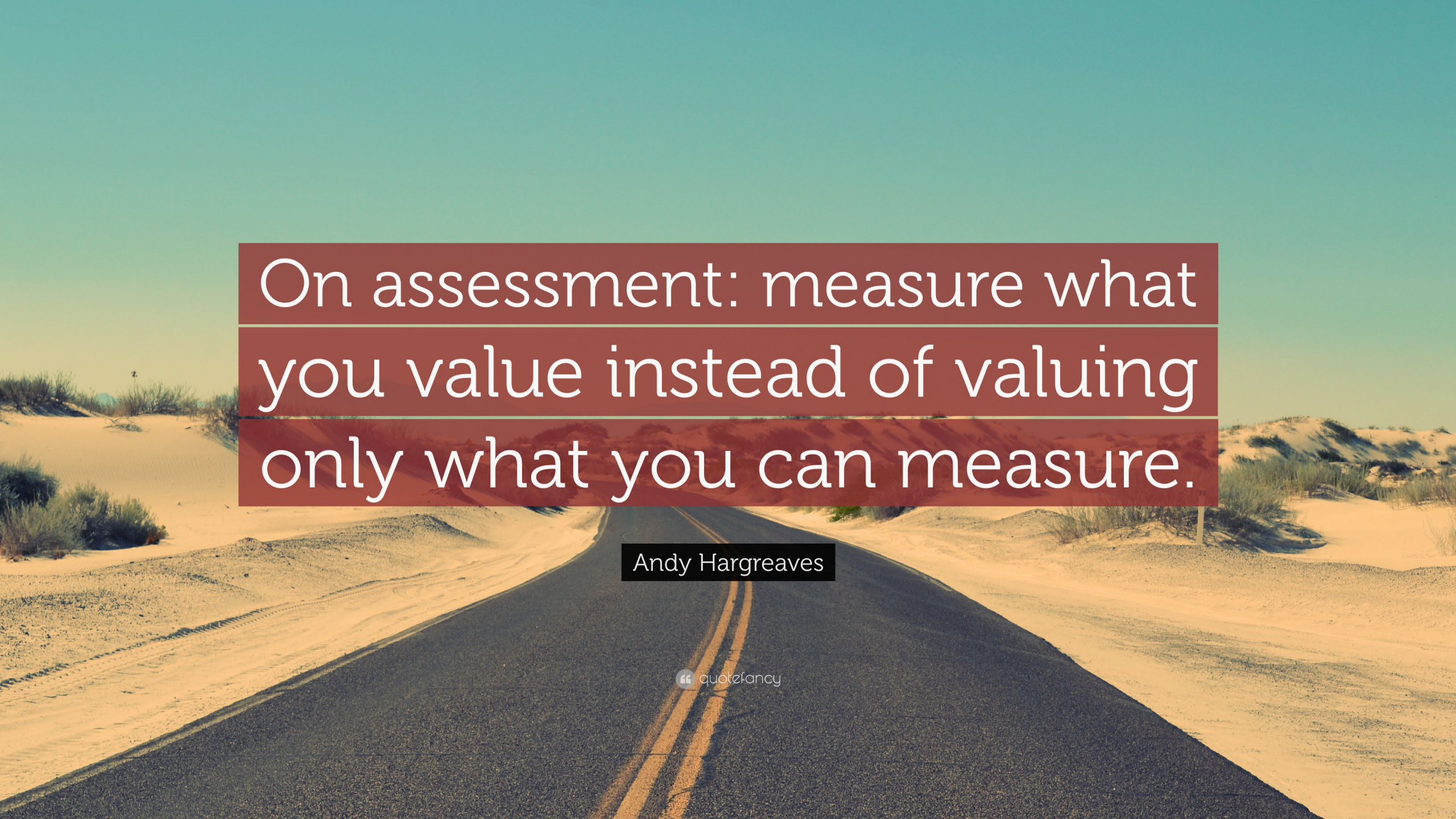
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On assessment: measure what  
you value instead of valuing  
only what you can measure.

Andy Hargreaves