



2017 INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT ON THE
TEACHING PROFESSION



**EMPOWERING AND
ENABLING TEACHERS TO
IMPROVE EQUITY AND
OUTCOMES FOR ALL**

EDINBURGH, UK • MARCH 30-31





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TEACHING
2017 INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT ON THE
PROFESSION

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The 2017 International Summit on the Teaching Profession was jointly organized by the UK and Scottish governments, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Education International (EI).

INTRODUCTION: THE FUTURE IS NOW

The world is changing fast. The rapid pace of scientific discovery, profound technological change, and globalization have had a major impact on the way we live. Many types of jobs have disappeared while new types are being generated. The automatization of routine jobs and the digital revolution have led to a rising demand for highly skilled people capable of doing non-routine jobs while the demand for workers with lesser skills is declining. Professional stability over a lifetime has been replaced by the need to change jobs and fields, to work freelance or to design one's own work. These changes, comparable perhaps in magnitude to the industrial revolution, are leading to the emergence of jobs and ways of working that did not even exist and could not even be predicted a few years ago.

The world in which today's students live is fundamentally different from the world in which today's adults were raised. Schools are facing increasing demands to prepare students for rapid social and economic changes, for jobs that have not yet been created, for technologies that have not yet been invented, and to solve social problems that have not yet been anticipated. Governments are therefore setting increasingly ambitious goals for their education systems in terms of excellence, equity, and new "21st century competencies." The adaptability of education systems and their ability to evolve depend in large measure on a high-quality teaching profession that can transform outcomes for all students. It is these challenges that brought ministers of education, teachers' union leaders, and outstanding teachers to the annual International Summits on the Teaching Profession.

The seventh International Summit on the Teaching Profession was held in Edinburgh, the capital city of Scotland, in the shadow of the iconic Edinburgh Castle. Scotland has a proud tradition in education. Its education system has produced a long line of influential writers and intellectuals such as Robert Burns, Walter Scott, Adam Smith, David Hume, and, more recently, Ian Rankin and J.K. Rowling, as well as inventors such as James Watt, Alexander Graham Bell, and Alexander Fleming. Scottish universities were major contributors to the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century and have influenced the development of higher education in other countries. But like other countries, Scotland faces the challenges of a rapidly changing world in which its school

system has fallen behind and is in the process of being substantially redesigned.

The 2017 Summit was jointly hosted by the UK and Scottish governments, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Education International (EI). The theme of the Summit was: Empowering and Enabling Teachers to Deliver Improved Equity and Outcomes for All. It focused on three interrelated questions:

- **What do teachers need in professional learning and development, now and in the future, to support their work?**
- **What can governments and teachers' unions do to ensure the most appropriate national structures and policies are in place to support this?**
- **How can systems strive for sustainable excellence and equity in learning?**

Since the first Summit in 2011 in New York City, the International Summit on the Teaching Profession has become an important global platform for dialogue on effective teacher policies. It brings together governments and teachers' organizations from a number of high-performing and rapidly improving school systems as measured by recent results on OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). In 2017, official delegations of ministers of education, teachers' association leaders, and outstanding teachers attended from Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, as well as representatives of Scotland, Wales, and England, three of the devolved education systems in the United Kingdom. In addition, observer delegations attended from the Czech Republic, United States, and Vietnam.

The Summits have evolved over time into a complex, multilayered set of events. In addition to the Summit plenaries, there were site visits to primary and secondary schools that allowed participants to see Scottish education firsthand. Presentations on the National College for Teaching and Leadership (England) and the Scottish College for Educational Leadership and on Social Mobility Opportunity Areas (England) and the Scottish Attainment Challenge enabled participants to learn about educational innovations in England and Scotland. Ministerial meetings and meetings of teachers' union leaders as well as bilateral meetings between countries allowed delegates to dig more deeply into other countries' practices. Meetings of individual country delegations enabled attendees to reflect on the implications of the dialogue for their own countries and set priorities for the next year. In the background, high school bagpipe bands and traditional dancing gave the Summit a distinctly Scottish flavor.

SUMMIT OPENING

Nick Gibb, Minister of State for School Standards, of the UK Department for Education, opened the 2017 Summit. He said that while improving achievement is not easy, we increasingly know what can be done to improve outcomes for all students. Knowledge is power and knowledge of effective teaching practice needs to be at the heart of the teaching profession. He cited a number of research studies that challenge certain teaching



practices in areas such as use of technology, memorization, and the balance between direct instruction versus discovery learning. Teachers need ongoing access to high-quality research in, for example, cognitive science that will empower them and lead to well-evidenced instruction.

Knowledge is power for pupils too. Studies in England have shown that disadvantaged children are less likely to attend a school with a strong academic core. The government is therefore incentivizing secondary schools to offer a strong core curriculum up to age sixteen in English, math, two sciences, history or geography, and a foreign language, as well as education in the arts. This secondary school qualification framework will provide a broad academic education for pupils as well as facilitate expanded access to higher education.

John Swinney, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Scotland, said that the Summit was occurring at a time of unprecedented political attention to the improvement of education in Scotland. It is this government's defining priority. Scottish education has many strengths, including large proportions of young people attaining educational qualifications, but Scotland's academic results have gone down on its own literacy and numeracy tests and have declined to the international average on PISA. Working in partnership with teachers' unions and other stakeholders, the government is therefore undertaking an ambitious effort to redesign its education system with the goal of helping every young person to reach their potential. The effort rests on three policy foundations that cut across education, health, and local authority services.

1. *Getting It Right for Every Child*. The government is expanding early childhood education for three- and four-year-olds and for vulnerable two-year-olds as an essential foundation to support educational excellence and equity.



2. *Curriculum for Excellence*. Developed over the past ten years, the curriculum is designed to develop a well-educated and resilient population of young people who are successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors.

3. *Developing Scotland's Young Workforce*. The government wants to ensure that every young person has a pathway to a positive adult destination through stronger linkages between education and employment.

The goal is to draw together all these elements into a single National Improvement Framework that will deliver equity of opportunity within a framework of excellence. The government plans to invest heavily in strengthening school leadership, in raising the quality of teaching and learning, and in rethinking governance. The Scottish government is engaged in an open dialogue with the teaching profession and is taking a number of steps to learn from international experience. Maintaining the status quo is not an option. Swinney hoped that the Summit would help the Scottish government to create a truly world-class education system in Scotland.

In his opening remarks, Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary of Education International, the global federation of teachers' unions, stressed the importance of this continuing dialogue between governments and the teaching profession. When the 2016 Summit met in Berlin, the world was in

the midst of a refugee crisis, and in 2017, many countries are facing severe challenges to their democratic values and institutions. All this impacts the work of teachers. Teachers are part of the glue that holds society together, creating bonds within groups and creating bridges across communities. And one of the crucial roles of the profession is to ensure that students not only develop the skills to earn a living but also become informed citizens and critical thinkers—able to critically evaluate information and make informed decisions. “Truth springs from arguments among friends,” he said, quoting Scottish philosopher David Hume, and the

“Schools are facing increasing demands to prepare students for rapid social and economic changes, for jobs that have not yet been created, for technologies that have not yet been invented, and to solve social problems that have not yet been anticipated.”

Summit is an important mechanism for advancing teacher professionalism by debating how best to establish higher standards and provide stronger professional supports.

FRAMING THE SUMMIT

Andreas Schleicher, Director for Education and Skills and Special Advisor on Education Policy to the Secretary General, OECD, presented the findings from an OECD background paper,

Empowering and Enabling Teachers to Improve Equity and Outcomes for All, prepared for the Summit by Montserrat Gomendio, Deputy Director for Education and Skills. The report drew from a number of major OECD studies, including the PISA 2015 Results, the Teaching and Learning International Survey 2013 (TALIS), and *Governing Education in a Complex World*.¹

In his framing remarks, Schleicher emphasized the powerful impacts of digitalization on modern life—connecting countries and disciplines, democratizing but also concentrating power, changing the nature of work, empowering and disempowering individuals—and the urgency of preparing all students for a rapidly changing world that requires very different skill sets—including critical thinking, digital literacy, and global competence. The disappearance or hollowing out of jobs requiring low-level skills means that all students need to learn these higher-order skills.

Policymakers are struggling to keep schools abreast of the changes happening outside the classroom. And teachers today need support to develop a much broader array of effective teaching strategies and the ability to constantly adapt instruction to the needs of students and society. He argued that education systems need a fundamental shift from an industrial form of organization to one based on teacher professionalism. “Change is needed, change is happening, and more change is on the way,” he warned participants. He shared OECD’s key research findings on the nature of educational policies, structures, and systems that support high-quality teaching and how systems can address the issues of equity as well as excellence. These findings on the Summit’s three questions were taken up in greater depth in the sessions that followed.

In his framing remarks, John Bangs, Senior Consultant to Education International, noted that between the 2016 and 2017 Summits, many countries had experienced extreme political turbulence from which education cannot be immune. It is more important than ever that education be based on knowledge and evidence rather than ideology. He reviewed what had been achieved in previous Summits. First, they had put together an impressive and distinctive body of knowledge—in background reports, country

¹ Gomendio, M. (2017). *Empowering and Enabling Teachers to Improve Equity and Outcomes for All*, International Summit on the Teaching Profession, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264273238-en>.

commitments, and Summit reports. Second, the unique space that the Summits create for governments and teachers' unions to meet and discuss issues frankly has enabled many countries to set ambitious but achievable objectives to work on between the Summits.

“Maintaining the status quo is not an option.”

Bangs discussed what had been learned from previous Summits about the conditions that enable effective professional development, including knowledge and skills, but also leadership, careers, and commitment to professionally defined standards. However, such professional development opportunities vary widely between countries and even between schools in the same country. And in many places, an excessive workload is undermining teachers' self-efficacy. It has become clear from past Summits that the most effective education systems are those that have a system-wide and career-long approach to teacher policy, developed and implemented in conjunction with the profession. And nowhere is this more important than in the creation of robust policies to address social deprivation and inequity, issues addressed in the New Zealand 2014 Summit, taken up again in the Berlin discussion of immigration in 2016, and scheduled to be the major emphasis of the third session of this Summit.

RESULTS OF PREVIOUS SUMMITS

Udo Michallik, Secretary General of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder of the Federal Republic of Germany, reflected on the 2016 Summit in Berlin. Held against the backdrop of the migrant crisis, the Summit focused on how to strengthen the teaching profession to meet new demands, including the influx of large numbers of refugees and immigrants.

Over the past several years, Germany has enacted several major education reforms. As a result of these policy measures and of intensive efforts by German teachers and school leaders, there has been a significant improvement in academic achievement and reduction of the performance gap between social groups, including that between native-born students and those with an immigrant background. Michallik said that none of this would have been possible without the knowledge of education policies and politics that has come from international discussions.

The Summits have indeed developed as a unique forum for the discussion and sharing of ideas, but they have also propelled countries from dialogue to action. For countries that have attended regularly, Summits represent a chance to reflect on their progress; for new countries, Summits provide a chance to learn from the successes and failures of others.

The Summits have developed a form of professional accountability: Each year, participating countries are asked to submit summaries of their actions over the preceding twelve months to follow up on the commitments made at the previous Summit. Anthony Mackay, CEO of the Centre for Strategic Education in Australia, and moderator of the Summits, analyzed the results. Although each country's progress is different in its details, he saw ten key issues that countries have been actively working on:



- **There is an intensification of efforts to prepare teachers to address the challenges of inclusion and cultural diversity.**
- **There is a growing movement to expand the curriculum beyond subject matter knowledge to include broader competencies, engaging in extensive stakeholder consultation.**



- **There are efforts to enhance teacher skills through induction, partnerships between universities and schools, and highly effective initial teacher education.**
- **There is greater investment in professional learning, increasingly led by the profession through peer networks.**
- **There is an increasingly career-long perspective on the teaching profession through standards, career paths, and collaborative learning networks, sponsored by both governments and teachers' unions.**
- **There is increasing focus on school and teacher leadership as crucial to lifting learning outcomes.**
- **Generating and mobilizing research and evidence and investing in innovation and experimentation are seen as increasingly vital.**
- **Initiatives are under way to enhance the identity, status, recognition, efficacy, and well-being of teachers to increase the appeal of the profession.**
- **There is an increasing focus on the development of end-to-end learning pathways for students to address the full diversity of student needs and interests.**

- **Genuine progress is being made on strengthening partnerships between governments, teachers' unions, communities, and industry.**

This report is not a proceedings of the Summit but tries to capture the main themes of the discussions. It attempts to show where there was agreement, disagreement, or different approaches, as well as where there is simply not enough evidence to evaluate different paths. The report is based on the Summit discussions, background reports, and site visits. It tries to capture the actions and policies that have been inspired by past Summits and the commitments that countries made about their work over the upcoming year. Written by Vivien Stewart, Senior Advisor for Education at Asia Society, its intention is to spread the discussion that took place in Edinburgh to a wider global audience of people interested in how education systems can provide high-quality teaching and learning for all.

WHAT TEACHERS NEED TO SUPPORT THEIR WORK

While many factors influence education, teachers are the backbone of any education system. Finding and cultivating talented teachers is therefore central to securing children’s right to a quality education. Some high-performing countries have a plentiful supply of teachers, and teaching has similar characteristics to other professions—rigorous training and licensing, systematic induction and mentoring, an active professional association that sets standards and provides support, substantial workplace authority, relatively good compensation, and high prestige due to the public’s perception of its advanced knowledge and skills. In other countries, however, there are concerns about the attractiveness of teaching as an occupation, the quality of its training, the lack of induction and ongoing professional learning opportunities, the lack of professional autonomy and the extent of supervisory control, and negative working conditions. In these countries teaching might be seen by the public as a semi-profession.

At the Summit, participants focused on three of the dimensions of professionalism: how to improve the professional knowledge base of teaching, how to strengthen the role of professional peers, and how to increase teachers’ professional autonomy. In other words, how to make teaching a profession in reality, not just in rhetoric.

WHAT KNOWLEDGE DO TEACHERS NEED?

What is the knowledge base of the teaching profession? There was a lively debate about what knowledge was most important for teachers, with some governments arguing the supremacy of subject matter knowledge and teacher-directed instruction over pedagogical content knowledge and student-oriented instruction. The importance of teachers having strong knowledge of the subject they teach is undisputed. Research shows that teacher knowledge is the single strongest predictor of student outcomes. OECD’s Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) shows that with respect to math teaching, for example, teachers in Japan and Finland have significantly higher levels of numeracy than teachers in the United States and Poland, so there are differences in the quality of subject matter knowledge of teachers in different countries.



On the whole, teachers feel well prepared in their subject—90 percent of teachers in the thirty-four countries that participated in the 2013 TALIS survey thought that their initial teacher education prepared them well in their chosen subject. Still, the rate at which knowledge changes in today’s world means that teachers, like other professionals, need to keep up with developments in their subject during their whole working career.

Teachers’ perceptions of their needs for professional development are similar across most countries according to surveys by OECD and teachers’ unions. First is always the need for more help in dealing with children with special needs and for working in the increasingly multicultural and heterogeneous environments of modern classrooms. Second is the need to keep up to date with rapidly evolving information and communications technology (ICT) and its effective use in learning and teaching. Third, assistance in dealing with problematic student behavior is an increasingly urgent request by teachers in many countries.

In addition, research from the rapidly developing learning sciences underscores the importance of pedagogical content knowledge—that is, the body of knowledge concerned with creating effective teaching and learning environments. Teachers need to employ a wide variety of instructional strategies and know when to use which ones. For example, while teacher-directed strategies lead to higher outcomes on tests, student-directed strategies lead to more student engagement. Memorization

strategies are useful in the early stages of math learning but become less useful as problems become more difficult. Elaboration strategies, such as project-based instruction, are less useful in early math but become more important as problems become more difficult. Also, teachers increasingly need to understand how to analyze and use newly available school- and student-level data to diagnose student needs and assess the effectiveness

of interventions. All of these types of knowledge underlie the exercise of teachers’ professional judgment and autonomy.

The Berlin Summit in 2016 emphasized the importance of what have come to be called 21st century competencies, in recognition of the vastly changed context into which the current generation of students will graduate when they leave school. Although there is no single international definition of 21st century competencies, there are common elements among many countries’ goals. These generally include cognitive skills that go beyond simple knowledge of academic content, to include critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity. They also include interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, such as communication and collaboration, cross-cultural awareness, self-direction, motivation, and learning how to learn. Some of these are termed socioemotional skills; and since research in several countries has shown that socioemotional skills matter as much as, if not more than, cognitive skills to school and college completion and improved labor market outcomes, some countries are working to more explicitly address these skills in their teaching and learning systems.

Echoing the discussion in Berlin, several governments and teachers’ union leaders called for a renewed and greater focus on citizenship. Citing John Dewey’s classic text, *Democracy and Education*, they reminded participants of the importance of teaching young people common moral values and encouraging them to become

concerned and active citizens. We face real dangers like war, terrorism, and omnipresent violence. The increasing diversity in all societies can lead to greater creativity and tolerance or to young people embracing extremism and ethnic nationalism. Schools have a major role to play in helping students learn to live with and value the diversity of their communities. And in an age when companies manufacture goods around the world and ideas and events traverse the internet in seconds, schools must prepare students to solve problems that have no national boundaries. Responding to the concerns of countries about this new global context and the increasing need for cross-cultural competence, OECD is developing a new measure of global competence, as part of the 2018 PISA, that will assess students' awareness of the interconnected global world in which we live and their ability to deal effectively with the resulting demands.

Participants agreed that the world awaiting our students will be VUCA—volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. Preparing our students to thrive in this fast-changing and highly connected world will place even greater demands on teachers. The knowledge base of the profession is becoming ever more complex. The rapid changes in content knowledge in many fields and educators' broadening responsibilities for inculcating new competencies suggest that teacher policies now urgently need to take a career-long perspective on the development of teacher professionalism.

HOW COUNTRIES SUPPORT TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

In too many countries, the traditional approach to teacher competencies still prevails—an initial teacher preparation program followed by occasional “professional development days.” In too many countries, lack of systematic induction mechanisms leads to high attrition rates among young teachers. And in too many systems, ongoing professional development is provided in some schools but not in others. Clearly those approaches will not develop a highly effective teaching profession that can provide excellent learning outcomes for all students.

Since the start of the International Summits, some countries have been working more systemically on approaches to teacher professional learning and development. Government and teachers' union leaders from several countries described their initiatives and resulting challenges.

Netherlands: The Netherlands is a highly decentralized system in which all schools are autonomous and parents are free to choose which school their child attends. In a system with few central controls, the quality of the teaching profession is key to its effective functioning. Over the past few years, the Netherlands has introduced a package of measures to improve the quality of the profession and give teachers more professional space and a sense of ownership. This has included: (1) an expanded induction program for new teachers that has reduced teacher dropout from the profession in early years; (2) a change in the role of government inspectors away from traditional inspection and toward deep conversations about school improvement; (3) development of a new national curriculum for elementary and secondary education involving wide public discussion but particularly teacher input; (4) a Teacher Innovation Fund, run by teachers, that awards teachers grants to implement innovative



ideas and then to disseminate them across the system; and (5) legislation on teacher accreditation. A new independent body, the Education Cooperative, has been set up to establish standards for teaching and criteria for teachers' registration and reregistration.

“An education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers, but the quality of teachers is a result of the system that trains and supports them.”

In such a decentralized system, there are real challenges in implementation. The government, teachers' unions, professional associations, and local school boards all have to be at the table. Ensuring that policies are based on research is essential. The Education Cooperative is in its early stages but is an example of new bodies and agencies that are emerging to support the professionalization agenda.

New Zealand: It is impossible to think about professional development without thinking about the overall architecture of the system and public expectations for education. For six years, the current government has been focused on the big system levers—legislation, funding, and creating pathways for children—with the goal of raising achievement for every single child, regardless of background, culture, and language. The quality of the teaching and leadership profession is absolutely central to achieving this goal. In New Zealand, there is now a solid partnership between government and the teaching profession, centered on learner impact.

Four times a year, the wider education agenda is discussed in a cross-sector forum, involving all stakeholders, including teachers' unions and business, civic, tribal, and church leaders. Teacher improvement issues are dealt with through joint working groups between government and teachers' unions. There is not always agreement. For example, it was impossible to say what impact the government's annual investment in professional development was producing. So a joint working group has devised a new professional development

policy that is now being implemented. Requests for professional development must henceforth articulate what educational achievements they will address, be driven by school data, and be peer reviewed. Policy and practice are moving away from a primary focus on individual teacher development to an emphasis on groups of teachers and on outcomes that individual teachers cannot achieve by themselves.

The Education Council, a new professional body, has renewed an aligned code of ethics and teacher standards and is now reviewing initial teacher education, induction, and ways to improve appraisal across the system, including for school leaders. A new Center for Leadership Excellence is being created to focus on improving leadership at every level. And new roles are being created such as Community of Learning leaders and cross-system leaders to facilitate increased collaboration across schools—with the goal of increasing teacher quality and efficacy. Perhaps the biggest challenge to all these initiatives is how to reconcile the pace of teacher development with the need for real-time results for every child.

Estonia: A small country of 1.3 million people, Estonia emerged as a top performer on PISA in 2012, with high overall scores and high equity. Its school system has been decentralized for some time. Estonia has revised its national curriculum to meet the requirements of a new IT-rich economy and to ensure consistent standards across schools. It has also focused heavily on revamping teacher training and continuing professional development. In 2014, it introduced a career structure for teachers based on professional standards and, under its lifelong learning strategy, Estonia has developed collaborative learning communities within schools, led by master teachers. In Estonia's experience, the key to an effective professional learning system is (1) making training relevant to teachers' classroom concerns and (2) restructuring roles and time to make it part of the everyday life of teachers.

Canada: Canada has shown continuing high performance and high equity as measured by PISA since 2000, despite the fact that Canada has no federal government role in education. Education is a responsibility of the ten provinces and three territories; and most of the provinces have emphasized, in different ways, building the capacity of teachers and school leaders. British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario have all developed formative assessment and inquiry-based

collaborative learning networks that help teachers and schools develop and implement evidence-based school achievement plans. A province-wide Teacher Development Framework in Ontario helps schools to plan professional development through induction programs, annual learning plans, and teacher appraisal. And an Ontario Leadership Framework and funding have created recruitment, standards, training and mentoring, and succession planning for school leaders.

The state of professional development is not consistent across all the provinces; and in Ontario, a real problem is teacher fatigue due to the number of initiatives that have been introduced over the past few years. A government–union committee is examining how to deal with work overload and stress and reviewing what is most critical to continue and what could be dropped.

In other countries, the emphasis on continuous professional learning is nascent or more recent:

Finland: Finland is well known for the high quality of its initial teacher education. All teachers have master’s degrees with a heavy emphasis on research. Teachers enjoy high status in Finnish society, which has always valued education. And they have a great deal of autonomy and pedagogical freedom. But teachers are relatively isolated. The Ministry of Education and teachers’ unions have been rethinking the role and design of professional development to move it from a system based on supply to one based more on demand and needs.

They have also been examining what structures within schools can make professional learning part of everyday life. They are proposing that schools can choose “tutor” teachers (like “master” or “senior” teachers or “teacher leaders” in other systems). Tutor teachers will have reduced teaching loads in order to focus on creating professional learning opportunities within and between schools. Reformers foresee a system in which young teachers learn from senior teachers but senior teachers can also learn—for example, about ICT use—from younger teachers. So, the emerging policy framework centers on a demand- and innovation-driven model but in a culture that is focused on a team, not an individual.

Sweden: Swedish education is in a very difficult situation marked by declines in the quality of learning outcomes, increases in social inequality, and major teacher shortages. In order to break out of a highly politicized debate about education, the Swedish government appointed a Schools Commission consisting of researchers and teachers’ associations to develop a shared vision for a system for school and learner development. To overcome the teacher shortage (one in five Swedish teachers does not have a professional qualification), the government has undertaken a large funding initiative of 150 million euros to increase salaries for teachers. Also, learning from international colleagues, Sweden is exploring the development of a career track for teachers, connected to professional learning. Swedish teachers’ union leaders emphasized that teacher shortages mean

that current teachers are overloaded and lack time to prepare lessons, to collaborate, and to focus on individual pupils. They argued for more student support personnel, long-term financing for professional development, and the opportunity for teachers to conduct research to create a better evidence base for the profession.

Vietnam: Vietnam is a middle-income country that has substantially expanded its education

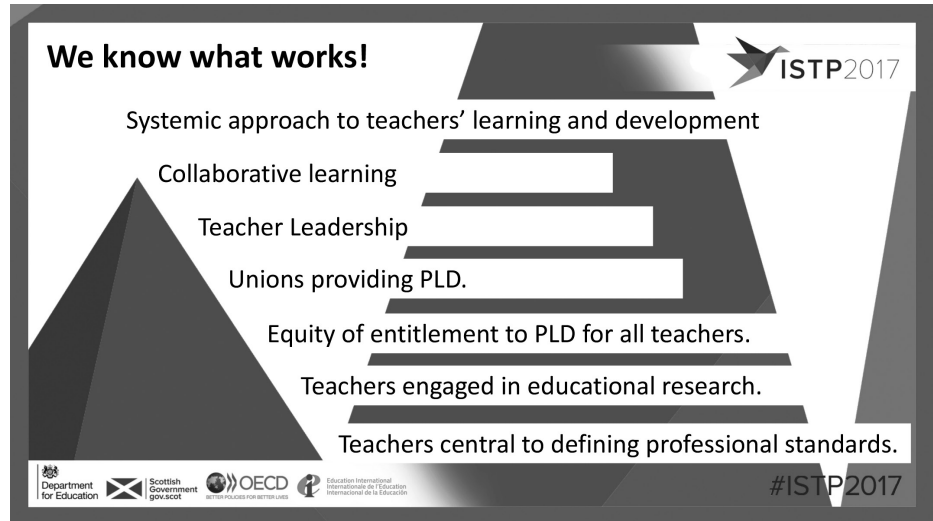


system over the past two decades and its performance on PISA has been improving rapidly. Following a major reform of the system (the Fundamental and Comprehensive Education Reform Act), which included revisions of the curriculum and textbooks, Vietnam's major focus is now on enhancing its teaching and school leadership profession. Under a grant from the World Bank, it is: (1) improving its university teacher training; (2) conducting a needs assessment to inform continuing professional development; (3) developing a school-based continuing professional development system for 30,000 teachers and 5,000 principals; and (4) developing an online system to provide information about and access to professional development. Vietnam hopes to draw from the world's best expertise and experience in carrying this out.

Poland and Slovenia: In both Poland and Slovenia, societies are changing rapidly and professional development is needed to help teachers adapt. For example, EU funding is helping Slovenia to conduct professional development on 21st century competencies. In Poland, teachers are very well educated (90 percent have master's degrees) but only 64 percent of teachers participate in any professional development. There are also too many providers of professional development and very little use of modern technology in schools.

CHALLENGES IN THE DESIGN OF EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS

“An education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers, but the quality of teachers is a result of the system that trains and supports them” is an oft-quoted maxim. If nobody disputes the centrality of teachers' ongoing learning and professional development, why isn't it universal? There are many reasons.



“Empowering and Enabling Teachers to Deliver Greater Equity and Improved Outcomes for All”

Briefing by Education International for the International Summit on the Teaching Profession 2017. www.ei-ie.org

In some countries, sheer lack of resources is the key issue. Portugal, for example, which has suffered a long period of austerity, needs greater investment in education overall. However, in systems where expenditures per capita are already fairly high, resources may need to be found through reconfiguration of the existing financial base. Teachers in most OECD countries report that lack of time, lack of relevance, and lack of incentives are the main reasons why they don't participate in professional development, not resources or money. Teachers have reservations about courses provided by universities, believing they are too “academic” to be helpful in their classrooms. Poland reported that there are far too many providers of professional development, leading to problems of quality control. In England, government and teachers' unions disagree about what the content of professional development should be.

The research data on what kinds of professional development are needed by whom and for what ends is not nearly as fine grained as the data we have on student needs, but governments need data on impact to justify the investment of public resources. And there are disagreements between governments and teachers' unions about a reasonable timeframe for seeing results from investments in professional development. On the one hand, teachers argue reasonably that it takes a long time for new practices in the classroom to result in stronger



learning outcomes for students. On the other hand, policymakers need to see results from investments of public money in “real time,” and children who have only one shot at education cannot wait five to ten years to see improvement.

On a broad level, we know what works in effective professional development. Instead of mandatory lectures that are only weakly connected to their day-to-day work, the most effective forms of professional development for teachers are through collaborative teacher learning involving regular expert input, teacher modeling, peer observation and feedback, and peer coaching.

Designing professional development systems means finding creative ways to reconfigure time, space, and resources to allow it to happen as part of teachers’ everyday lives. In many systems, the way teachers’ time is configured and the workload in terms of hours in front of a class leave little time for regular ongoing professional learning. Different models of configuring time in schools need to be explored. In Shanghai, teachers meet together weekly in “teaching and research” groups organized by subject and grade level and receive regular classroom observation and feedback from other teachers. The trade-off for this amount of time devoted to continual improvement of practice is large class sizes. The amount of time devoted to professional collaboration in Shanghai might not be feasible for many systems but every country that has developed more systemic approaches to professional development, as described earlier,

has found ways to find time within the regular school day. In Singapore, individual schools make their own decisions but many will reconfigure class sizes for different subjects to create time for teachers, or teams of teachers will take responsibility for groups of students, again creating more flexibility in a teacher’s day.

Another design issue is what should be the balance between centrally mandated professional

development versus that which is tailored to local circumstances, and should the local tailoring be at the level of the school, clusters of schools that serve children across the age spectrum, or the individual teacher. Again, Singapore uses a mixture of all these types.

Very importantly, if professional learning is to be practice-based and led by outstanding teachers, then the system will need: (1) clear and credible selection criteria for such lead teachers; (2) clear definitions of their roles and responsibilities for improving teaching, including in relation to the role of the principal; (3) a focus on clear and specific instructional and academic improvement outcomes for students; (4) a plan for getting high-quality teaching into schools of greatest need; and (5) incentives for people to take on these instructional leadership roles.

In Singapore, this is done by having very clear career ladders. Every teacher has an opportunity to choose one of three career tracks—senior teacher, curriculum specialist, or school leader. Advancement along the tracks depends on performance and is accompanied by specialized professional development and salary increases.

Differentiating the profession needs to be well thought through, including the structures of teacher appraisals that form the basis for professional learning plans and for advancement. But differentiating by continuing professional development might be one place to start. Systems

could structure incentives and rewards for teachers to engage in professional development relevant to their and their schools' needs, and for participation and its effects on professional abilities to be recognized.

“The biggest challenge is how to reconcile the pace of teacher development with the need for real-time results for every child.”

The goal must be to make participation in professional development self-sustaining and to use it to significantly improve the whole profession. Government has an important role to play but the profession must have a significant role also. A professional culture and expectation that every teacher will engage in upskilling needs to be created.

There are, perhaps, lessons for teaching from the medical profession. The medical profession owns continuing professional development but it also owns standards, licensing, and discipline. As a result of owning both incentives and negative

regulatory punishments, the direction of the profession is owned by the profession rather than being externally imposed. If the teaching profession became stronger professionally and more research-based, it might also enable education policy to become more consistent across political cycles.



NATIONAL EDUCATION STRUCTURES AND POLICY ENVIRONMENTS

What kinds of national structures and policy development processes would serve to increase excellence and equity and stronger professionalism and enable education systems to adapt to a world with rapidly changing requirements?

At the 2016 Berlin Summit, participants had discussed the difficulties of bringing about national reforms. Every year hundreds of reforms are introduced into education systems around the world. But despite resources and political capital, the vast majority of them fail or do not accomplish the substantial improvements in achievement that are needed. It seems that traditional policy development and education governance models are no longer effective.

Participants agreed that in an increasingly complex world, education governance structures need to change. A number of trends—higher societal expectations of schools; more demand from parents and communities that schools meet individual students’ needs; more information available about school and student achievement; and broader stakeholder interest—are leading countries to move away from traditional hierarchical governance models to multilevel, more decentralized governance. The governance models among Summit participants vary a lot depending on the country’s historical development, political and institutional frameworks, and approaches to education funding. They range from highly centralized national systems, to federal systems with responsibilities split between national, state/province, and local authorities, to countries with national/local authority arrangements, to those where authority has been substantially delegated from the national government to local schools. Although a few, like England, the Netherlands, and New Zealand, have decentralized to the school level, all systems are decentralizing to a greater degree than in the past. As education systems decentralize, the challenge is to find ways to balance responsiveness to local needs and diversity with the ability to ensure national achievement goals.

The government and teachers’ union leaders of three of the devolved education systems in the United Kingdom—Scotland, England, and Wales—which have taken very different approaches, described the ongoing evolution of their governance structures. They were followed by Singapore and New Zealand and then a general discussion:

Scotland

Scotland is a system in transition. Stimulated by Scotland's own findings of weaknesses in educational performance, which were confirmed by disappointing PISA scores in 2015, Scotland is in the throes of reimagining and redesigning its system. Because everything in education is contested continuously and there is no definitive evidence on the effectiveness of many interventions, the Scottish government tried to get the broadest possible involvement in developing a shared vision for education, including all sectors—national and local governments, professional associations, parents, employers, and academics—in developing its National Improvement Framework.

This Scottish way of governing has led to a fairly unified and coherent agenda at both national and local levels, from which actions can subsequently be derived to enhance teaching, leading, parent support, pupil well-being, and performance information.

The government is now undertaking a governance review of the structure of Scottish education. This is not about lines on diagrams. The question at the heart of the review is: If teaching and learning are central, what structures and processes will lead to improvement in terms of both excellence and equity? Does it come from a government agency, such as Education Scotland, that combines inspection and improvement, or from some other mechanisms? Schools will be in different places in terms of challenges and achievements so the agenda needs to be relevant to all. Unlike the reforms in England, Scotland does not wish to decentralize governance to the level of the school but rather to strengthen the collective autonomy of schools working together in the middle tier, including both local government and the functions of national bodies working together on a regional basis. How can the middle tier empower teachers to work together in collaborative networks? And how should the national government challenge and



support local authorities that fail? One idea under consideration is to require collaboration between successful local authorities and failing ones. Another important element in system redesign is data. The national government needs data for its public accountability purposes but needs to prevent it from being misused. To make a difference in schools, better data is needed at the school level to track students' progress and to identify problems and needed interventions.

Other important questions for redesigning governance include: How can the professional experience and wisdom of teachers, potentially a vast resource, be taken into account in redesigning governance? And how can services from outside education be brought together across bureaucratic barriers to support vulnerable children? At this stage of its journey, Scotland has more questions than answers.

England

Education in England is overseen by the UK Department for Education and in the past most schools reported to local authorities. England is now in the throes of a radical decentralization to the school level with most secondary schools and an increasing number of primary schools becoming "academies"—that is, self-governing non-profit charitable trusts run by a board of trustees. There are many different types of academies. Some were started as part of interventions by a previous government to deal with failing schools; others have

voluntarily converted to academy status for greater freedom. Academies must follow the national curriculum in English, math, and science and must administer the Key Stage 3 and GCSE exams but are otherwise free to set their own curriculum. Many have developed specialized curricula. Free schools are another type of academy. These are new schools, often set up by parents or teachers, and some have shown outstanding results in low-income areas, including getting more students to go on to higher education. Increasingly, academies are linking together in academy chains.

This high degree of structural autonomy is very controversial, as attested to by the teachers' unions at the Summit. Results among academies so far have been mixed with some academies showing outstanding results while others have been identified by national government inspectors as underperforming at key stage examinations. Concerns were raised about the development of such a highly devolved system of governance without first putting in place structures and capacity to support schools and without safeguards for equity or the proper use of public funds.

Wales

After a long period of piecemeal and short-term policy changes, Welsh education now has a clear long-term shared vision around raising standards and reducing the attainment gap. The strategic directions, as set out in the government report "Qualified for Life" (2014) and subsequent documents, center on a high-quality teaching profession, an engaging and attractive curriculum, internationally respected qualifications, and improved leadership at every level. With the strategic direction set, the focus now is on trying to build the capacity and performance management to deliver on that vision. Wales, like Scotland, also operates through a middle tier of local authorities and all

schools belong to a local authority. However, the twenty-two local authorities do not have the capacity to provide significant school improvement services so the Welsh government is developing a regional capacity for school improvement. Recent OECD reviews have recognized improvement in policy development and coherence in Wales. As Wales tries to change many of the elements of its system—from curriculum to accountability to IT and so on, these changes are being developed in conjunction with the teaching profession.

Singapore

Singapore, which routinely tops the tables on international assessments, is often considered one of the best-designed systems in the world. With 5 million people, it is about the size of Scotland. The structures it has developed to create and maintain a very high quality teaching profession—from recruitment, initial preparation, and induction to mentoring, continuous professional development, and career paths—have been discussed in previous Summits. Like England, Singapore is trying to avoid a middle level of government between the Ministry and the schools. In Singapore, the middle level is not government but governance by the profession.

Commenting on the debate about professional autonomy in the previous session, which often seems to pit teachers against the government, Singapore's answer has been to design a system where there is considerable porosity between the government and the profession. For example,





led Academy of Singapore Teachers, the teachers' union, and the university-based National Institute of Education.

Ownership by the profession is key. But because there is porosity across these structures and teachers can move between them, teachers develop confidence and trust, which is crucial. "What's fundamental is trust. The system won't work itself. People will make the system work if there is trust between the government, the

teachers and principals rotate between postings in schools and in the Ministry.

As to the debate between government provided versus locally designed professional development, the Singapore government believes that both are necessary. Resources and structures (such as a mandated 100 hours of professional development per year) are provided centrally but ownership is spread between the Ministry and schools. There is no standard professional development that every teacher receives. There is a balance between professional development that responds to individual choice versus that set by progression along the three career tracks mentioned earlier. Teachers can receive both local professional development, which is designed at the school level, and subject matter or leadership-track professional development, which is more centrally directed. That balance is customized for each teacher in consultation with their supervisor.

"If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together."

In the Singapore system, there is a single layer of government, a rich middle layer of professional activity, and a broad lower level with many providers of professional development, including the teacher-

leadership, and teachers." This alignment of vision across all the participants in the system is what enables Singapore to constantly move "from good to great."

New Zealand

Since 1989 New Zealand has had no layer of government between the Ministry of Education and local schools, which are governed by boards of community members and hire their own staff. The problem with this marked decentralization was that there were no structures for improving schools. The government and teachers' unions came together to create a shared vision of lifting achievement for every child and creating opportunity pathways from birth to age eighteen. The government and teachers' unions worked together on a range of initiatives, including the creation of a new structure called Communities of Learning. Fifteen hundred of New Zealand's 2,500 schools voluntarily formed themselves into communities of learning of about seven schools each. Teachers trained in inquiry methods use data from the schools to identify problems, propose solutions, and create personalized pathways for every child. These communities have also developed new roles for teachers: "lead" teachers who work with other teachers in their school to improve performance, and "expert" teachers who work across clusters of schools. A further government-union partnership has now developed an evaluation framework for assessing what is and isn't working.

“What’s fundamental is trust. The system won’t work itself. People will make the system work if there is trust between the government, the leadership, and teachers.”

The role of the government now is to control the big system levers such as funding, data, and a policy architecture that guarantees access to continuous professional development, while leaving the profession to lead learning. In New Zealand, sustainable change has been based on a government–union partnership that is premised on trust and respect and underpinned by a process that guarantees ongoing access.

United States of America

The United States has undertaken a wide range of activities across the country to promote teacher leadership. However, the United States is now in a time of major transition in its governance arrangements. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), passed in 2015, is giving states the major role in implementing school improvement and accountability arrangements with a much lighter role for the federal government than has been the case over the past thirty years.

ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE NATIONAL STRUCTURES AND POLICIES

As systems around the world are redesigning themselves for this era of change, ministers and teachers’ union leaders debated some of the critical elements in designing national structures and policies.

Co-construction of Policies: The most effective education systems combine a democratic steering of the goals of the public education system by the larger community with devolved responsibility to the education professions for building its curriculum

and pedagogical tools. In some countries, there has been a long tradition of close working relationships between government and teachers’ unions, a true social partnership, but TALIS data shows that in too many others, mechanisms for regular consultation are limited and there is often outright mistrust and hostility between government and teachers’ organizations. But the Summits have contributed to growing recognition by governments that without engaging the profession, policies simply won’t reach the classroom. In fact, a number of countries are moving beyond simple consultation to real co-construction of policies and reforms with teachers’ organizations and other stakeholders.

Slovenia, for example, like all school systems, faces steeply rising demands from society. A new national reform program is being developed through regional meetings to create a dialogue with all sectors in society and, especially, with teachers.

Denmark enacted a major set of school reforms three years ago, which raised standards, simplified the Danish Common Objectives, opened up schools to their communities, and put a major emphasis on digital technology. This reform created major challenges for teachers so the government has reestablished a dialogue between the government and teachers’ unions about how to overcome the barriers and make the reforms work. The government is trying to understand how to diminish the gap between public and political ambition for the education system and everyday obstacles in the classroom.

Switzerland is a highly decentralized education system with authority at the cantonal and local level. There has often been confrontation between governments and teachers’ unions. One structure that has facilitated some of the more successful reforms in Switzerland is that of joint government working groups on important aspects of school policy. A new working group will examine the recent increase in stress and deterioration in the health of teachers as evidenced by increased absenteeism.

Canada has no federal ministry of education but there are many examples of this co-construction in some of its thirteen jurisdictions: British Columbia is including teachers in its updating of special education policy; Quebec teachers have been involved in a province-wide study of professional development needs; Alberta held a province-wide set of discussions with the general public as to what the educated Albertan should look like in 2030,

followed by working groups of teachers and school leaders; and in Manitoba, the provincial government and teachers have designed a series of teacher workshops on cultures of inquiry, in which teachers act as researchers, producing and using data to improve achievement.

New Professional Institutions: For any profession to be able to exercise its professional autonomy, it must be recognized and respected by the public for its high standards. In other professions, professional organizations set rigorous standards for training and entry into the profession, establish and update its knowledge base, specify the continuing education required to keep up to date with new knowledge, and require accountability on the part of its members. Over the last few years, a number of countries have strengthened both qualifications and professional standards through either new or existing institutions as part of an overall redesign of the teaching profession to strengthen its status and quality. This

includes Australia, New Zealand, England, Scotland, Sweden, Estonia, and the Netherlands.

Building Capacity in Schools: Portugal, like many other systems, is decentralizing authority from the central government to municipalities and/or schools. They are now wrestling with the challenge of how to increase the autonomy of schools and teachers without increasing inequity since different municipalities have markedly different levels of capacity.

Sweden agreed on the need for a long-term perspective on system-building rather than short-term reform projects. But sometimes a system needs to move quickly. For example, the recent migrant crisis has meant that 8 percent of the sixteen- to eighteen-year-old cohort in Sweden are new arrivals, which produced an urgent need for more teachers to have world-language competence. If a system has a good and stable infrastructure of support for

BUILDING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND

As education systems increasingly give more autonomy to the school level, many are devoting greater attention to enhancing education leadership capacity in schools. And they are going beyond the traditional focus on training headteachers/principals to a broader conception of leadership within and across schools. England and Scotland provided two examples:

In England, the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) was created in 2013 through a merger of the National College for School Leadership and the Teaching Agency. An executive agency of the Department for Education, NCTL has broad responsibilities for ensuring that enough highly qualified and motivated teachers enter the profession, for promoting school-based continuing professional development through Teaching School Alliances, and for providing career paths for teachers by developing new national professional qualifications for leaders. In the context of England's highly decentralized school-led system, having enough high quality leaders in schools is critical to school improvement. NCTL has developed new national professional qualifications for middle leaders, those who lead a team within a school; senior leaders, those who lead across a school; headteachers, those who lead a school; and executive leaders, those who lead across several schools, including as heads of academy chains.

The Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) was founded in 2014 following a recommendation in the report, *Teaching Scotland's Future*, with the aim of ensuring the best possible leadership at all levels across Scotland's schools. As part of Scotland's National Improvement Framework which focusses on delivering excellence and equity for every child, SCEL supports programs for teacher leaders and middle leaders, who wish to become leaders of learning and teaching within their schools, as well as programs for aspiring and experienced headteachers. They also provide support for system leaders, a new role in which highly qualified headteachers work with other schools, in addition to the their own, to help design interventions to improve outcomes.

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-college-for-teaching-and-leadership
www.scelscotland.org.uk

teachers, then it can use it to respond to new or emerging issues. Sweden currently has a very mixed, market-oriented education system, including a publicly funded voucher system and profit-making schools. There are teacher shortages, and trained teachers are leaving lower-income areas, so Sweden could be facing increasing inequality in the next few years. The government believes the only way to attract new teachers into the profession and build the capacity of this mixed system of schools is to create a career ladder system, like that in New Zealand, in which senior teachers can support school improvement both within and across schools.

Latvia, like many countries, is introducing new curriculum content that will focus on developing digital competence, leadership, communication, and cooperation. The government and the teachers' union have been collaborating closely over the past two years to provide teachers with professional development in these new curriculum areas. They offered a piece of traditional wisdom "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together."

Increased autonomy at the school level also increases demand on school leaders. Research shows that weak school leadership is associated with poor school performance and high teacher turnover while strong school leadership can lead to significant improvement, particularly in the

most challenging schools. Over the course of the Summits, there has been increased attention to leadership in schools, both teacher leadership and school leadership. Australia, China, England, Ontario, Singapore, Scotland, and the United States have all invested in new leadership training efforts in the past few years.

Evidence, Innovation, and Accountability:

Everything in education is contested. Everyone has been to school and has opinions on how schools should work. Major decisions are often made based on ideology rather than data. And the research base of education, while growing, is still not able to answer many of the key questions about the effectiveness of different approaches. Research findings are also not easily available to teachers or principals in the way that agricultural or medical research reaches practitioners in those fields.

This is beginning to change. Governments have had national- or state-level data and evaluation capabilities for some time and are using research, including international benchmarking research, more systematically to underpin policy development. Just as important, more granular student- and school-level data has started to become available in schools to support school improvement—by tracking individual students and assessing what is working or not working in particular schools. Such data is important for

ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

- **Focuses on processes not structures:** Almost all governance structures can be successful under the right conditions. Strength of alignment across the system is key.
- **Is flexible and adaptable to change:** A system's ability to learn from feedback is fundamental to adaptability as well as quality assurance and accountability.
- **Works through building capacity and stakeholder involvement:** Stakeholders' involvement is important but it only works when there is strategic vision and processes to harness their input.
- **Requires a whole-of-system approach:** This means aligning policies, roles and responsibilities to improve efficiency and reduce conflict.
- **Harnesses evidence and research to inform policy and reform:** A strong knowledge system combines descriptive system data, research findings, and expert practitioner knowledge.

Gomendio, M. (2017). *Empowering and Enabling Teachers to Improve Equity and Outcomes for All*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/978926427338-en>

guiding improvement but also to ensure accountability. It is possible for collaborative cultures to lead to paralysis unless they are driven by evidence focused on the needs and growth of students. In Estonia, a high-performing system, school-level data will now be available to the general public, part of a very open approach to school improvement. In some countries, teachers are also taking on greater roles in piloting and researching new approaches in schools. This is an explicit role of senior teachers in Shanghai, for example, and of lead teachers in New Zealand's Communities of Learning. The Netherlands, through its Teacher Innovation Fund, encourages teachers to design, implement, and then evaluate innovations in schools and play a role in spreading them more broadly across schools. And in several Canadian provinces, teachers routinely engage in cycles of inquiry approaches to school improvement.

Unfortunately, time at the Summit was too short to discuss all the elements of modern education governance. But as participants debated the pros and cons of different structures for propelling education forward, some key insights emerged.

“Processes and coherence may be more important than structures.”

First, *processes and coherence* may be more important than structures per se. Education systems with structures as different as those of Hong Kong, Finland, and Singapore are all high achieving, for example. There is no one perfect governance structure that guarantees success. Countries may decide on different balances of central and local control, depending on their own circumstances; but coherence and alignment are



critical, as are robust processes for developing capacity and adapting to constant change. A balance also needs to be struck between outside pressure to change and internal support.

Trust too is fundamental. No system works itself. People make it work if there is trust. Trust can be built only through consultation. A common societal vision focused on the needs and growth of students and on the rapidly changing demands of society must be created through broad public consultation. Then giving the profession a role in the development of policies and practices helps to ensure that the system will actually move forward.

Most noticeably, over the course of the Summits, there has been a significant shift in the conversation toward a more intentional focus on long-term system redesign rather than short-term and specific policy reforms.

STRIVING FOR SUSTAINABLE EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY IN LEARNING

The final session focused more intently on the fundamental challenge of achieving equity in education. The public discourse on equity and excellence often frames them as trade-offs and, in fact, in most countries of the world, education policies tend to reinforce rather than moderate poverty. The poorest pupils often have the least qualified or least experienced teachers, for example. The challenges to education systems in this area are magnifying: inequality is increasing across the globe and societies are becoming more culturally diverse. But, for reasons of morality, economics, and social cohesion, education systems need to strive for *both* excellence and equity.

Equity, according to OECD, means that a person's personal background, such as gender, ethnic origin, or socioeconomic circumstances, has little impact on student learning opportunities or outcomes. Stated another way, equity is "assuring that all students, regardless of background, have the opportunity to obtain a quality education and reach their full potential."

Looked at internationally, it is clear that poverty need not be destiny: the poorest students in some countries do better in math than students from affluent socioeconomic groups do in other systems. As international comparisons have shown for many years, the world's strongest systems achieve high overall performance and strong equity as well. However, to achieve equity, specific measures need to be put in place to address factors known to hinder student performance. While many countries have achieved some gains in this area, no country is truly satisfied with its progress.

In session three, countries discussed how they were tackling the bottom 25 percent of their students—the students at greatest risk. What policies had

“We should never separate excellence from equity, but one doesn't flow automatically from the other. It requires a deliberate effort to reconcile them.”

they put in place? What was working and what measurable impact could they show? What were the challenges and next steps?

Several countries described their efforts, from both ministry and teachers' union perspectives, followed by a general discussion of challenges and effective approaches:

SCOTLAND

Scotland's policy focus, under the mantra of "getting it right for every child," is a commitment to significantly impacting the poverty-linked attainment gap during the life of this parliament and reducing it almost entirely in ten years. There are many challenges in tackling what is in many places multigenerational social deprivation but this is a broadly supported agenda between government, the teaching profession, and other stakeholders. It is not just an education objective but a whole of government objective in which there is an effort to align all interventions across different services. For example, when a child is born into a challenged family, help should be available to the mother starting in the prenatal period. Later, health visitors undertake vocabulary checks at twenty-seven months. If a child does not have fifty words, that is an indication of a communication deficit, and educational interventions need to be linked to the childcare for which vulnerable children are eligible.

This is work in progress but there are some measures of success in closing the poverty-linked attainment gap. Over the last ten years there has been a doubling of the number of pupils from deprived areas who get at least one higher qualification; there has been an increase to 93 percent in the number of pupils going on to "positive destinations" after secondary school; and there has been a significant increase in the numbers of students gaining vocational qualifications.

As to next steps, Scotland has hitherto not had systemic data on pupil performance until age sixteen. But starting in 2016, the government began collecting data on performance and progress at younger ages so that educators can intervene earlier to improve learning outcomes. In addition, the government has provided £120 million over five years that will go, proportionately, directly to 95 percent of schools based on the number of children in receipt of free meals. Professionals at the school level will decide how the funds will be used to meet their local circumstances. The government is also committed to doubling the number of hours of early learning and childcare provisions for three- and four-year-olds and vulnerable two-year-olds from 600 hours to 1,140 hours per year by 2020. And access to higher and further education will be expanded.

One of the things Scotland has learned from previous International Summits is the need to think systemically. While Scotland's poverty-linked performance gap has closed slightly, Scotland's top performance on PISA is flat. Therefore, Scotland needs to take a range of actions under the National Improvement Framework to focus on both excellence and equity.

ENGLAND

When the current government came into office in 2010, it also brought a significant focus on closing the attainment gap. England already had lots of data from testing at the primary school level and



at age sixteen, which showed clearly that pupils who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch performed far worse than their more advantaged peers. Closing the gap was the mantra for all the reforms undertaken by this government, one of which was the pupil premium. The pupil premium is huge—£2 1/2 billion per year (or approximately £1,000 per pupil at secondary school and £1,300 per pupil at primary school). This was an enormous commitment to make in 2010 when the country was still recovering from the global recession. The government allows schools to decide how to use the funds but requires schools to publish on their websites how they are using the funds. It should be noted that the pupil premium is over and above the weighting of funds toward disadvantaged communities within the regular school funding formula.

Second, the government indicated that it would no longer tolerate low expectations for poorer children. One of the most alarming statistics was that one in three pupils was still struggling with reading when they left primary school. So, the government developed a £23 million phonics program that paid for improved training in schools and required a test of decoding skills at age six. In 2012, only 58 percent of pupils passed but by 2017, 81 percent of pupils passed.

The government also rewrote the whole primary curriculum. They looked around the world for the best curriculum. In math, they adapted the Singapore 2001 curriculum to an English context and in English, they made the grammar more stringent. At the secondary school level, the government raised the expectations for General Certificate of Secondary Education examinations (GCSE), believing that a high proportion of students should be taking five subjects at GCSE—English, math, two sciences, a humanities course (either history or geography), and a foreign language. At the time, only 20



percent of pupils were taking five subjects at GCSE and only 8 percent of low-income pupils were. This GCSE standard became part of the performance evaluation of schools (England has strong accountability systems through school performance tables and government inspections) and the percentage of pupils taking five subjects has risen to 40 percent. Finally, since the school performance tables were creating perverse incentives to shunt low-income students into weak vocational courses, many of these have been removed.

The first of the new GCSE examinations will be taken in 2017–2018 so it is too soon to evaluate the impact of these reforms. There have been some complaints that the standard is too hard. But the larger debate is about the impact of the academies or the “marketization of schools” on poorer families. Moreover, with respect to the pupil premium, while schools have come up with a wide range of ideas for its use that have some evidence base, most schools have used the pupil premium primarily for student support and well-being rather than to address the teaching and learning challenges in the classroom and to raise teachers’ capacity to improve learning outcomes.

SINGAPORE

The overall Singapore model is one of public schools—99 percent of students attend public school but there is choice within them. Funds for schools

are allocated from the central government and the approach is to differentially allocate resources—for schools, for educational programs, and for social services—asymmetrically to reduce inequality and improve equity. For example, in the first few years of primary school, there are intervention programs targeted at numeracy, literacy, and attendance as well as support for dynamic class sizes for those needing more support. There isn't a hard target for these programs but the policy goal is clearly to improve equity.

In Singapore, it is also a fundamental premise that to reduce inequity in society, you must differentiate the profession through performance appraisal, rewards, and a systematic career structure with levels of progression linked to incentives and rewards. Singapore moves teachers around the system. It doesn't assign them or pay them more but teachers apply for posting to a disadvantaged school for the professional challenge and because working in a challenging school helps their career advancement. Vice principals and principals are posted directly from the Ministry of Education and the best are posted to the most challenging schools.

Indicators of success include the fact that dropout rates over the past ten years have declined from 3 percent to 0.6 percent. Placement in post-secondary education has gone from 87 to 98 percent. Singapore tracks the PISA data on resilience closely for its most disadvantaged pupils. For sixteen-year-olds from disadvantaged families, gender is no longer an issue in terms of educational achievement; and for the bottom 15 percent of twelve- to sixteen-year-olds, the chances of taking a math GCE "N" level examination has risen from 40 percent to 70 percent over ten years.

In terms of challenges, Singapore has problems with growing wealth inequality and needs to be increasingly aggressive on equity. A significant aspect of inequality is the role of parents. Educated or more affluent parents are ambitious for their children and provide educational help, such as tutoring for examinations. How can an education system compensate for that? Singapore's approach includes early primary interventions in the schools, targeting literacy and numeracy, and work with community organizations to provide early childhood education, tutoring support, and homework help.

NETHERLANDS

Like other countries, the Netherlands has a long tradition of pupil premiums—that is, additional resources for disadvantaged students like those that have been introduced in Scotland and England. In addition, early childhood education has been funded for a decade and poor children can start at age two and one-half. A number of programs have successfully reduced dropouts by half over the last five years. Despite these efforts, PISA shows a slight deterioration in the Netherlands' performance on equity. So, the Netherlands is now focused more intentionally on the effectiveness of interventions that are being introduced. Hitherto, the government has given additional funding to schools with poorer pupils but has not required evidence of the effectiveness of its use. For example, many schools reduced class size but that was not effective in improving equity. Now more data has been introduced into schools to track pupils' progress and judge which approaches are working and which are not.

Choice for parents and pupils is a very important value in the Netherlands. There are many different types of schools but all are publicly and equally funded. About 20 percent of schools are doing outstanding work and have strong professional development programs. But more than 60 percent of schools, with the same amount of funding, are coasting. The current challenge is how to get all schools to be excellent, not just the pioneers. In particular, there needs to be a focus on developing outstanding leaders who can lift up a school by creating a dynamic school culture and supporting teachers' development.

CANADA

Canada's most populous province, Ontario educates about 40 percent of all Canadian students. On PISA measures, it achieves both high performance and strong equity outcomes, which is particularly encouraging given Ontario's high proportion of immigrant students: one-quarter of its students were born outside of Canada, and English is a second language for half of them. Starting in 2003, Ontario began a first round of reform focused on closing the performance gap in literacy and numeracy, reducing dropout, and increasing public confidence in schools. Additional funds supported targeted interventions including literacy

and numeracy coaches, and more time devoted to literacy instruction, to teacher collaboration around student work, and to using data to guide decisions. At the secondary school level, students at risk of dropping out were identified and re-engaged through mixes of school and a work environment. These reforms were sustained over a number of years, aided by coherent leadership at the school, district, and province level, and led to widespread positive results. In 2004, only 54 percent of students in grades three and six met provincial standards and only 68 percent of high school students graduated within five years. In 2016, 72 percent of students in grades three and six met provincial standards and 86 percent of students received their high school graduation certificate within five years.

In its current phase of reforms, Ontario is focusing on broader definitions of the outcomes of schooling, especially student well-being. In Ontario, excellence and equity are viewed as one goal not two. The government believes that systems that put designing for equity as a core principle also achieve excellence. Equity is taken to mean the differentiated distribution of resources of all kinds, first to level the playing field and second to address systemic barriers. Ontario is now collecting data on identified groups that are at risk of early school leaving and poor health and mental health outcomes. These include indigenous people, specific ethnic groups, and LGBT youth, among others. This data is then used to target curriculum and community support interventions to support these groups. Access to and affordability of childcare is also a major issue and the government is making a big financial commitment to add 100,000 new childcare places. Many disadvantaged students need wraparound services, bringing together health and social support services around the school.

A major underlying reason for the progress Ontario is making is the work that has gone on

to strengthen the profession. A new framework for teaching and leadership development was introduced that included two years of mentoring and induction for new teachers, a teacher appraisal system combined with annual professional learning plans, and a talent identification and leadership development system for principals focused on instructional leadership.

GERMANY

In 2016, when the Summit met in Berlin, Germany was experiencing a huge migration challenge. How Germany is handling this is just one element in a long-term process of education reform. In 2000, Germany was shocked by its PISA results, both by the overall level of performance and by the degree of inequity they revealed. This PISA shock caused a major shift in German education. Germany is a large system of 45,000 schools, 11 million students, and 750,000 teachers. Because it is a federal system, many reforms are developed at the Länder (state) level. But the Länder came together to create a national strategy, involving the development of national standards in different subjects, and a national system to monitor progress, beginning with six-year-olds. Germany is now in the second round of this national assessment and its value is becoming apparent. For example, the first assessment identified weaknesses in language development in some of the newer states, so the Länder instituted professional development programs for



teachers in those areas. On the second round of assessment, those states that had put programs in place were the best in the country.

Another focus of work has been on inclusion. Germany had had a separate system of schools for children identified with learning disabilities, most of whom came from low-income backgrounds. These children are now being integrated into regular schools. The professional development that has been put in place for the teachers of these students is also helping with integrating newly arrived immigrants.

In Germany, educators are tired of the language of school reform. They want instead to conceive of a system of continuously improving schools. There is an annual award from a non-governmental organization (NGO) for the best German schools. Research is now being done on these schools to see what makes them successful, with the goal of transferring the results of this research to other schools.

Germany also faces the challenge of bringing the needs of the public and the needs of the profession together. Equity in Germany means equal funding for all schools, yet schools in poor areas need greater funding to address the motivational and learning needs of students. There are shortages of teachers, especially in migrant areas; teachers in these areas often lack qualifications and it is hard to find school leaders. A critical question for Germany therefore is how to persuade society that poor students need more resources.

NEW ZEALAND

The International Summits on the Teaching Profession have helped to shape New Zealand reforms over the past six years. A range of reforms were introduced to address the equity/excellence challenge. The development of granular data helped to ensure that every school knew who among its students needed additional help. Curriculum change, professional development, intervening early, and focusing on impact data were all elements.

The results on the National Certificate of Educational Achievement, the school-leaving qualification for sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds, indicate that there have been gains in academic achievement for every population group in New

Zealand. The biggest gains were in the Maori and Pasifika communities, where as recently as 2008, only one out of two students were leaving school with minimum qualifications but now three out of four do so. This could not have been achieved without working with the profession and with community organizations. New Zealand is a small society and the whole society must share this vision of not losing any child.

The teachers' unions have worked closely with the government and see their role as a collective voice for the profession and for children, not just regarding pay and conditions. A special focus has been a joint initiative to develop Communities of Learning among schools and teachers. Each one must demonstrate that it is making a real difference for children. Next steps in the New Zealand journey are for some Communities of Learning to focus more centrally on language, culture, and identity, especially for Maori children, and then test whether or not it makes a difference. There is also an ongoing conversation between government and the teachers' unions about career pathways models, linked to professional learning opportunities and considerations of how to get the best teachers into the neediest schools.

EQUITY POLICIES AND CHALLENGES

Compared to a generation ago when most education systems focused primarily on excellence but not equity, the clearer focus on and increasing commitment by many countries to promoting equity is apparent. An older generation of equity policies that focused on students after they had already fallen behind is giving way to earlier intervention and more strategic policies. These include:

- Setting higher levels of expectations for all students
- Expansion of early childhood education—in general and to even younger ages for the most vulnerable children
- Early intervention in primary grades to assure that children acquire foundational literacy and numeracy skills
- Greater use of data and more granular data at the school and student level to identify students in need and track student progress

PURSUING EQUITY IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND

Every country faces the challenge of reducing the link between a child's family background and his or her educational and life destinations. England and Scotland shared recent initiatives aimed at breaking the link between social deprivation and educational and adult success:

Social Mobility Opportunity Areas in England

Following the report of the government's Social Mobility Commission, twelve regions in England were designated as Social Mobility Opportunity Areas in 2015 and 2016, based on a set of indicators of limited social mobility and weak educational outcomes. The Opportunity Areas, which include rural, urban and coastal regions, will receive priority under existing national programs for teaching and leadership, career services, and higher education outreach but will also receive additional new funding of £72 million for initiatives that will be determined locally. (This is in addition to existing national per pupil equity funding). Each Opportunity Area will have a cross-sector governance structure that includes local authorities, employers, and representatives of the voluntary sector. In each Area, six broad barriers to educational achievement and social mobility have been identified, including access to early childhood services, the home learning environment, quality of schooling and educational outcomes, aspirations and experiences, and lesser post-16 progress to employment and higher education. Interventions will be introduced to address each of these barriers. The goal is that, at the end of three years, the Social Mobility Opportunity Areas will be able to show improvement on a range of indicators including readiness to learn, quality of schooling, engagement with business and career advice, and access to higher education. An accompanying evaluation will also capture the experience and the evidence base for this community-wide approach.

The Scottish Attainment Challenge

Scotland is undertaking a major set of interrelated education reforms aimed at increasing both excellence and equity. One of these initiatives, the Scottish Attainment Challenge is focused exclusively on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. Launched in 2015, it consists of nationally funded programs in teaching, leadership, career education and university outreach as well as £750 million in additional resources targeted to all schools that include low-income children and especially to nine Challenge Authorities and 56 additional Challenge Schools where there are high concentrations of social deprivation. These Challenge Authorities include, for example, old de-industrialized areas such as Glasgow, where 38 percent of children live in poverty. Heads of local schools are given considerable discretion as to how they use these additional resources but there is advice available from Attainment Advisors who are attached to each local authority.

Participants in the Summit were able to visit several schools that are part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge, one of which was Craigoyston Community High School. Situated in an area of multi-generational poverty, high unemployment, and crime, 74 percent of Craigoyston's students are in the bottom two categories on indices of social and economic deprivation. In 2013, only half the students stayed in school past the minimum school leaving age. Using funds from the Scottish Attainment Challenge, the school set itself the goal of having students stay in school until Standard 6 and leave school with a portfolio of qualifications, experiences, and skills that would enable them to go on to positive destinations, whether in higher or further education, apprenticeships or employment. The school redesigned the curriculum to make it relevant for more students and, in partnership with thirty local businesses, created paths to employment in, for example, games design and the hospitality industry (it runs a school for chefs). Teachers worked together to make exclusion, once a common approach to discipline, a rare event, and became mentors to students - in school and beyond - to help set high expectations and aspirations. As a result of participating in the Scottish Attainment Challenge, the school uses data intensively to identify problems and track progress. The school staying on rate has risen from 54 percent in 2013 to 93 percent by 2016, the proportion of students taking national exams has increased from 23 percent to 35 percent, and the proportion of students going on to positive destinations has grown to 93 percent.

- Allocation of additional funding to schools in deprived areas in recognition that students from deprived areas need extra support
- Efforts to cut across traditional bureaucratic boundaries to bring together a range of health and social support services to children and families in need
- Identifying students at risk of dropping out and offering them alternative pathways to graduation
- Professional learning opportunities for teachers in dealing with increasingly heterogeneous and diverse classrooms that include new immigrants and second language learners
- Assignment of highly effective leaders to schools in disadvantaged areas and the development of a continuous cycle of improvement

Few countries have adopted *all* these approaches in a robust or systemic way. For example, some have not reallocated funds sufficiently to meet the needs of deprived areas. The United States has improved equity on PISA scores and has the highest graduation rate ever at 83 percent, with graduation gaps closing between minority and majority students, but the reliance of school funding on local property taxes creates highly disparate resources between schools serving middle-income families and those serving the poor.

Even where countries have increased the quantity of resources in disadvantaged schools, they have not necessarily increased the quality of resources in the most challenging schools. Only a few top systems like Singapore and Shanghai have addressed head-on the challenge of getting great teachers and school leaders in every school.

In some countries, the decentralization of schools and expansion of choice to parents and students, without safeguards for equity,

has exacerbated inequalities, as discussed in session two.

And the challenges confronted in classrooms are getting greater. For example, in some European countries, children who are in school today may be poorer when they grow up than their parents' generation. And almost everywhere, classrooms are more complex in terms of heterogeneity with new immigrants, multiple languages, and renewed attention to indigenous populations. The needed outcomes of education are also broadening beyond attainment in core academic subjects, secondary school graduation, and attendance at post-secondary institutions, the criteria against which equity policies are typically measured.

It was clear from the presentations that some countries are indeed moving the needle on equity. But for most, the progress is not nearly as great as is needed. The public discourse on education often creates a dichotomy between excellence and equity. But the encouraging fact is that some countries have attained both high performance and high equity. Education policymakers should never separate excellence from equity, but one doesn't flow automatically from the other. It requires a deliberate system and policy design to reconcile them, as discussions during this session showed.



LESSONS LEARNED AND NEXT STEPS

Change is needed, change is happening, and more change is on the way. Every country at the Summit recognizes the urgency of redesigning its education system to meet constantly evolving challenges both now and into the future. Scientific advances, digitization, and globalization have changed the nature of economies and jobs. No longer are providing basic literacy skills for the majority of students and higher-order skills for a few adequate goals. Instead, the goals of schooling today must be to develop a broader range of knowledge, skills, and dispositions for *every* student. Tackling both excellence and equity is imperative.

Each country undoubtedly took away different insights from the Summit based on its particular history and current situation. But here are some broad observations from the Summit discussions about the direction of change, about where progress is being made, and about where continuing challenges remain. Countries need to:

1. Implement a 21st century curriculum. Since the first Summit in New York in 2011, most countries have moved from merely debating the changes needed in their system's goals and curriculum to undertaking major changes in the curriculum through the development of national or state frameworks and other curriculum descriptors to promote high standards for all and to encompass the broader skills needed in the twenty-first century. Several countries stressed the need for a renewed focus on citizenship education given the widespread challenges to democratic institutions, the increased diversity in most societies, and the increasing need for collaboration across borders, but there has been far less attention paid to citizenship goals than to curriculum areas more closely related to the economy. Curriculum goals and frameworks may have changed, but implementation is a different matter. Countries that lack clear mechanisms to align and support new curricula with textbooks and materials, teacher education, professional development, and assessment are experiencing difficulties in implementing new curricula with fidelity in classrooms and need to develop greater alignment and coherence.

2. Strengthen the teaching profession. Over the course of the Summits, the need to strengthen the teaching profession and specific ways to do this have become ever clearer. Every participating country is deeply engaged in

some aspect of this as shown by their reports. Although every country is taking some steps, only a few have put in place most or all of the elements of a comprehensive system—that is, efforts to attract the best candidates into the profession; selection procedures and pre-service training that meet high standards; support for practicing teachers through effective forms of professional development that integrate observation and mentoring by highly skilled teachers and school-based, outcome-focused professional collaboration; and an attractive career structure with opportunities for lifelong learning and exercising leadership. Areas where there has been less progress in many countries are in the differentiation of the profession and assuring that the most challenging environments receive high-quality teachers.



“Change is here, change is happening, and more change is on the way.”

3. Build leadership at every level. As education systems have devolved more responsibility to schools, they are recognizing that “school leadership with a purpose” is critical to raising student achievement. Many countries have therefore recently invested in new institutions to provide new types of training and leadership development to school principals or heads. There is also increasing innovation in teacher leadership, with teachers providing instructional leadership within but also across schools—ways of using the best teacher talent to raise the quality of teaching across the whole system.

4. Design effective governing systems. Building on the discussions in Berlin in 2016 on how

to bring about reforms in education, Summit participants debated what national structures, policy environments, and governance arrangements would lead to greater excellence, equity, and adaptability. There were lively unresolved debates about the merits or otherwise of highly decentralized structures. But the consensus was that many different structures could be effective and that ensuring that the right processes were in place was more important than structures per se. Critical processes include: developing broad public support for a long-term vision for education; building substantial capacity at the school level; ensuring alignment and coherence of the instructional system; and using data and research to inform decisions at all levels. Rather than focus on specific short-term policy reforms, participants were reaching for ideas of continuously improving systems at both the school and the policy/governance level.

5. Create partnerships between government and the teaching profession. There will never be full agreement between government and teachers’ unions but ministers of education can’t accomplish much on their own. The most effective systems are those where governments have found ways to involve teachers and their unions in the design of policies, not just in their implementation. This co-construction of reforms also helps to build the trust that is fundamental to making any system work, whatever its governance structure. There has been genuine progress in this area over the course of the International Summits with the number of effective

partnerships between government and teachers' unions growing.

6. Design for equity and excellence. Traditionally most education systems focused just on excellence for the few. That is no longer an option. Equity and excellence are not mutually opposing goals, as they are sometimes regarded, but one does not automatically flow from the other. Both have to be designed for. Some policies such as high common standards for all and a strengthened teaching profession will help both goals. However, providing genuine equity to remedy decades of social deprivation or the disruptions of international migration demands additional approaches. Some go beyond the walls of the school to involve “whole child,” “whole of government” approaches such as early childhood education, wraparound services, parent support, and employer connections, among others. Schools serving disadvantaged populations need additional financial resources, and many governments provide these, but more rigor is needed to ensure that the ways in which funds are used actually improve student well-being and achievement. Achieving excellence and equity has proved elusive for most countries but the highest-performing systems offer inspiration by showing that high levels of both are possible.

7. Base policy on the best available evidence. There is wide agreement that educational reforms would be stronger if they were based more on evidence than on ideology or opinion. In certain areas of education, there is a strong evidence base

but most countries lack mechanisms to get it out on a regular basis to teachers or school leaders. In other areas of education where significant innovation is taking place, almost by definition there is not a well-established body of research. Therefore, policy innovations need to be designed from the beginning to gather information on their effectiveness. An important new development is that increasingly schools have data available on individual pupils, groups of pupils, and schools. Sometimes this proves overwhelming to teachers but in well-run schools, it can drive school improvement and it enables teachers and leaders to conduct their own research on what works and what doesn't in their schools. At present, in most countries, there is less specific data available on teachers to inform teacher policies.

8. Balance change and stability. The current pace of change creates huge dilemmas. On the one hand, systems need to become nimbler at adapting to the rapid changes in economies and societies; on the other, teachers reasonably want more time to learn new content and new approaches, or to adapt to new populations. Teachers in some countries report high levels of stress about the number and types of changes they are expected to embrace and, in some countries, teacher absenteeism, burnout, or attrition from the profession has become a significant problem. Education leaders need to find ways to balance these competing demands for change and stability. Where countries have strong structures in place for ongoing professional development, change is much easier to handle.



COUNTRY COMMITMENTS

During the Summit, each country's delegation met to reflect on what they were learning from the Summit as it applied to their own situations, and they identified the priorities that they intend to pursue and report back on at the 2018 Summit.

Canada: The Council of Ministers of Education



of Canada and the Canadian teachers' unions committed to a joint work plan: to strengthen indigenous education through pre-service teacher education and ongoing professional learning; to explore evidence- and experience-informed pedagogies that support the development of knowledge and abilities that enable students to become global citizens; and to implement the conditions for teacher leadership through professional learning developed and led by teachers.

Denmark: The Danish government and teachers' organizations have developed a way of working on issues of teacher professionalism between Summits. This includes a joint working group on the development of the teaching profession and an annual joint conference that disseminates ideas from the Summit more broadly among Danish schools. This year, the focus will be on how to strengthen teachers' autonomy, commitment, and professional accountability. The working group has developed twelve benchmarks of good teaching and will initiate a national professional debate on the definition of good teaching and how good teaching is created.

Estonia: Estonia will focus on supporting the wider provision of support services in schools; fostering early childhood education provision and quality; and strengthening the role of teachers as leaders.

Finland: Finland will introduce legislation concerning staff structure and competencies in early childhood education, and will develop

a systematic and continuous program for teachers' professional development and teacher leadership. Recognizing the growing diversity in Finnish society, Finland will also focus on the development and integration of education for immigrants.

Germany: To respond to the challenges of inclusive education and integration of young refugees, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs

and the German teachers' unions will focus on strengthening teachers in dealing with increased diversity in the classroom—through both initial teacher training and continuing professional development. Competencies for teaching and learning in a digital world will also be included in initial teacher education. Finally, Germany will seek to apply knowledge from its new national monitoring data to address the poverty-related achievement gap.

Latvia: The government and teachers' unions will organize regional conferences on raising the professional prestige of teachers; work out legal guarantees for teachers' social protection; and develop principles on teachers' salaries. To strengthen trust, teachers' unions will be involved in working groups before the introduction of new reforms. And a program will be developed to motivate young teachers.

Netherlands: The design of the Netherlands' new curriculum and the setting up of a national teacher register will provide opportunities for teacher leadership. To remedy some teacher shortages, the Netherlands will invest in career paths and more flexible teacher training routes in order to retain existing teachers and attract new recruits. To bridge the attainment gap, schools need to provide better evidence on the effectiveness of interventions in their school.

New Zealand: Society and its expectations about education have become more complex and



demanding on teachers. Teachers' well-being must be a priority. The New Zealand delegation will work together on ways to rearrange time, space, and people to grow time for better-quality outcomes for young people and for teacher well-being and efficacy.

Poland: Poland has already completed two of the commitments made at the 2016 Summit. In 2017, Poland will establish a new national professional development system through cooperation between the ministries of education and science, schools, social partners, and universities. Financial support will be provided to small rural schools to enable them to become lifelong educational centers for whole communities. A professional mentoring system for teachers and a vocational advisory system for students will be introduced in cooperation with social partners.

Portugal: Portugal aims to improve teachers' well-being and the attractiveness of the profession by unlocking teachers' salary progression, facilitating teachers' retirements and bringing in new teachers, surveying teachers on workload issues, and releasing more time for collaboration. A working group will be created within the Ministry involving teachers' unions and academic experts to identify training needs and to propose changes in the system. The Portuguese government will also try to promote a greater role for teachers in school leadership as well as teacher autonomy on curricular and pedagogical issues.

Singapore: Singapore will focus on the themes of professional learning, excellence, and equity by developing a strategic framework to ensure that all teachers understand the best pedagogical practices and innovations. Singapore will provide continuing professional development and resources to implement a deliberate curricula shift toward higher-order thinking and applied learning with a special focus on global competencies

and problem solving. And specific professional development will be provided so that literacy and numeracy support can be extended from primary to secondary schools.

Slovenia: Slovenia will continue to cooperate with social partners on legislation and funding for more continuing professional development for teachers and principals in areas where society is demanding change, including through international mobility opportunities provided through the European Union.

Sweden: Sweden will work through the National Gathering for the Teaching Profession to strengthen cooperation and trust-building between the government, teachers' unions, and other stakeholders. Top priorities are to attract and retain teachers; envision and develop professional development as a lifelong learning system; and keep working on improving the status of the teaching profession in order to provide challenging education for all students, with particular attention to the newly arrived.

Switzerland: Switzerland's vision is that 95 percent of young adults have a secondary II diploma, including refugees and immigrants. The Swiss governments and teachers' unions will focus on strengthening the relationships between pupils, teachers, and parents and help teachers to recognize students' health needs.

UK: Wales: Wales will focus on improving the national approach to professional learning,

underpinned by development of professional standards for teaching and leadership; will strengthen the wraparound preschool provision; and will improve its accountability framework.

UK: England: England will take specific actions to ensure that every pupil achieves their potential, regardless of social background; and will take specific actions to raise the status and quality of the teaching profession and ensure it is grounded in high-quality research.

UK: Scotland: Working jointly with the teachers' professional association, the Scottish government will develop and evaluate a program for equity-related continuing professional development, and will jointly consider a range of options for career pathways for teachers.

CLOSING

The International Summits have become a reference point for actions to enhance the teaching profession and improve student learning. Participation extends domestic dialogues, enabling participants to get outside of their own context and established patterns of thinking, learn from successful and unsuccessful approaches elsewhere, consider the cutting edges of education policy, and share unresolved challenges.

The 2017 Summit certainly didn't answer all the questions about designing systems for excellence, equity, and adaptability, but it did set in motion processes that might start small but eventually grow to a larger scale. Looking back over the course of the Summits, it is clear that they have stimulated actions to strengthen the teaching profession in every participating country. And they have done so in part by creating a unique opportunity for ministers of education and leaders of teachers'

unions to discuss and collaborate on critical issues of teacher policy and broader educational policies.

At the end of the Summit, the Portuguese delegation offered to host the 2018 Summit in Lisbon, where participants will have a chance to report on their actions since the 2017 Summit. In the meantime, this report aims to spread the discussions that began in Edinburgh to a wider global audience of people interested in how education systems can deliver greater equity and improved outcomes for all.

This report was written by Vivien Stewart, Senior Advisor for Education at Asia Society and author of A World-Class Education: Learning from International Models of Excellence and Innovation.



PARTICIPANTS

First Name	Last Name	Position	Organisation	Country Delegation
Sophie	Aisbitt	Official - ISTEP Support Team	Department for Education	
Eulália	Alexandre	Deputy Director General	Ministry of Education	Portugal
Mohamed Khalifa	Alneaimi	Director of Education Affairs	Crown Prince Court - Office of Strategic Affairs	
Claire	Amos	Deputy Principal	Hobsonville Point Secondary School, New Zealand	New Zealand
Björn	Åstrand	Dean	University of Karlstad	Sweden
Alexander	Badrick	Private Secretary	Department for Education (UK)	UK: England
Hans	Balfort	Senior Advisor	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	Netherlands
Anton	Baloh	Headmaster	Osnovna šola Koper - Basic school Koper	Slovenia
John	Bangs	Special Consultant	Education International	
Undarmaa	Batsukh	Programme Officer	Education International	
Stefan	Bauer	Head of GEW Nordbaden	GEW	Germany
Peter	Baumann	Headmaster	Verband Schulleiter - Innen Schweiz	Switzerland
Annette	Beaton	Headteacher SCEL Fellow	Perth and Kinross Council	
Chantal C.	Beaulieu	Executive Director	Council of Ministers of Education Canada	Canada
Udo	Beckmann	President	VBE Germany	Germany
Shahana	Begum	Official - ISTEP Support Team	Department for Education	
Yuri	Belfali	Head of Division, Early Childhood and Schools	OECD	
Stephanie	Biondo Ly	President AFT New Mexico	American Federation of Teachers	
Christine	Blower	President	ETUCE	
Aase	Bonde	Adviser	Danish Union of Teachers	Denmark
Anders	Bondo Christensen	President	Danish Union of Teachers	Denmark
Anna	Boni	HMI	Education Scotland	UK: Scotland
Mary	Bousted	General Secretary	Association of Teachers & Lecturers (ATL)	
Jack	Boyle	President	New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association	New Zealand
Gerhard	Brand	Vice President, Federal Treasurer	VBE GERMANY	Germany
Manfred	Brinkmann	International Secretary	German Education Union (GEW)	Germany
Denise	Brock	Official - ISTEP Support Team	Education Scotland	
Sławomir	Broniarz	President	ZNP (Związek Nauczycielstwa Polskiego)	Poland
Catherine	Brown	Senior Media Manager	Scottish Government	
Merel	Brugman	Teacher of the year (vocational education)	ROC A12	Netherlands
Rod	Bryans		States of Jersey, Education Department	

PARTICIPANTS

First Name	Last Name	Position	Organisation	Country Delegation
Raymond	Buckley	Official - ISTP Support Team	Scottish Government	
Liam	Cahill	Official - ISTP Support Team	The Scottish Government	
Line	Camerlain	2e vice-présidente	Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ)	Canada
Sian	Carr	President and Executive Principal	ASCL and The Skinners' Kent Academy	UK: England
Rebecca	Carradice	Official - ISTP Support Team	Scottish Government	
Marc	Carrière	Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sport	Ministry of Education and Higher Education of Quebec	Canada
Christopher	Chapman	Professor	University of Glasgow	
Marie-France	Chouinard	Programme Officer	Permanent Delegation of Canada to the OECD Canada	
Janet	Conner	Deputy Southern Regional Director	American Federation of Teachers	
Robert	Copeland	Policy officer (international)	UCU	
Whetu	Cormick	President	New Zealand Principal's Federation	New Zealand
Jean-Francois	Coulombe	Senior advisor	Ministère de l'éducation et de l'enseignement supérieur	Canada
Kevin	Courtney	General Secretary	National Union of Teachers	UK: England
Thi Thanh Huyen	Dang	Education	National Academy of Education Management	Vietnam
Farai	Dangarembizi	Official - ISTP Support Team	Department for Education	
Steve	Davies	Director for Education and Schools	Welsh Government	UK: Wales
Cassandra	Davis	Communications Manager	OECD	
Joke	de Jong	Drama teacher and teacher trainer	Het Schoter Haarlem	Netherlands
Ilona	de Ruijter	Spokesman Minister Sander Dekker	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	Netherlands
Sander	Dekker	State Secretary	Netherlands	Netherlands
James	Dinn	President	Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association	Canada
Graham	Donaldson	Professor	University of Glasgow	
Adriane	Dorrington	Teacher Quality Senior Policy Analyst	National Education Association	
Frances	Douglas	Official - ISTP Support Team	Education Scotland	
David	Edwards	Deputy General Secretary	Education International	
Elaine	Edwards	General Secretary	UCAC	UK: Wales
Anna	Ekström	Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training	Sweden	Sweden
Lily	Eskelsen Garcia	President	National Education Association	
Cindy	Eu	Deputy Director, International Cooperation	Ministry of Education, Singapore	Singapore
Jelmer	Evers	Teacher	Education International	

PARTICIPANTS

First Name	Last Name	Position	Organisation	Country Delegation
James	Fennell	Official - ISTP Support Team	Scottish Government	
Maike	Finnern	stellvertretende Landesvorsitzende	GEW NRW	Germany
Jesper	Fisker	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Education	Denmark
Larry	Flanagan	General Secretary	The EIS	UK: Scotland
Pablo	Fraser	Analyst	OECD	
Barbara	Geier	Teacher	GEW	Germany
Andis	Geizans	Head of Minister's Office	Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia	Latvia
Rt Hon. Nick	Gibb MP	Minister of State for Schools	UK Government	UK: England
Deborah	Golder	Official - ISTP Support Team	Scottish Government	
Montserrat	Gomendio	Deputy Director for Education and Skills	OECD	
Norman	Gould	Vice President	The Canadian Teachers' Federation	Canada
Sanni	Grahn-Laasonen	Minister of Education and Culture	Finland	Finland
Natalja	Grjazeva	Coordinator of External Relations	LIZDA	Latvia
Roar	Grøttvik	Political Adviser	Union of Education	Norway
Frauke	Guetzkow	Board Member	GEW	Germany
Jean-Marc	Haller	Secrétaire général	Syndicat des enseignants romands	Switzerland
Cassandra	Hallett DaSilva	Secretary General	Canadian Teachers' Federation	Canada
Gillian	Hamilton	Chief Executive	Scottish College for Educational Leadership	UK: Scotland
Max	Grundtvig Haug	Personal Secretary to the	Minister Ministry of Education	Denmark
Louise	Henderson	Official - ISTP Support Team	Scottish College for Educational Leadership	
Kirsten	Herbst Gray	Teacher	Langholm Academy	Germany
Clare	Hicks	Deputy Director	Scottish Government	UK: Scotland
Anna	Hinkema	Teacher Special Needs	Dr. J. de Graafschool	Netherlands
Susan	Hopgood	President	Education International	
Joanne	Hornsby	Official - ISTP Support Team	Department for Education	
Morgan	Horton	Official - ISTP Support Team	Department for Education	
Jane	Hough	Official - ISTP Support Team	Department for Education	
Kelly	Ireland	Official - ISTP Support Team	Scottish Government	
Dagmara	Iwanciw	Teaching Professional	SOSW nr 1 Bydgoszcz	Poland
Johanna	Jaara Åstrand	President	Läraryöbundet / Teachers Union	Sweden
Hywel	Jones	Headteacher	West London Free School	UK: England
Tear	Jones Murphy	Manager-Office of the President	American Federation of Teachers	
Patricia	Keefer	Director-International Affairs	American Federation of Teachers	

PARTICIPANTS

First Name	Last Name	Position	Organisation	Country Delegation
Andreas	Keller	Vice-President	German Trade Union for Education and Research (GEW)	Germany
Paul	Kett	Director General of Education Standards	Department for Education	UK: England
Annet	Kil	Advisor	Education cooperative	Netherlands
Petri	Koikkalainen	President	Finnish Union for University Researchers and Teachers	Finland
Monika	Konczyk	Supporting Official	Ministry of Education	Poland
Heike	Kriwet	Teacher	Städtischen Gymnasium Wülfrath	Germany
Toomas	Kruusimägi	President	Estonian School Heads Association	Estonia
Minako	Kuwahata	Interpreter	Japan Teachers' Union	
Mart	Laidmets	Deputy Secretary General for General and Vocational Education	Estonia	Estonia
Sheila	Laing	Senior Teaching Fellow: Leadership & Learning	Edinburgh University	
Helen	Lalor	Official - ISTP Support Team	Department for Education	
Anh Phuong	Le	Education	Hue Pedagogic University	Vietnam
Virpi	Lehmusvaara	District Manager	City of Vantaa	Finland
Alexandra	Leitão	Secretary of State	Portugal	Portugal
Emma	Lennard	Curriculum Project Director	Core Knowledge UK	UK: England
Hilde	Lesage	Head of Division Education Staff Policy	Department of Education and Training	Belgium
Ya-jing	Li	CEO, Professional Development Center	NTA, Taiwan, ROC	
Yuchuen	Lin	Director, Int'l Affairs	NTA, Taiwan, ROC	
Olli	Luukkainen	President	Trade Union of Education in Finland OAJ	Finland
Anthony	Mackay	CEO Centre for Strategic Education		
Rachel	Macpherson	Official - ISTP Support Team	Scottish Government	
Maja	Makovec	Brenčič Minister	Slovenia	Slovenia
Antonella	Manca-Mangoff	Director International	Council of Ministers of Education Canada	Canada
Terrence	Martin	VP-Detroit Federation of Teachers	American Federation of Teachers	
Lubomir	Martinec		Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports	Czech Republic
Matias	Marttinen	Special Advisor to the Minister	Ministry of Education and Culture	Finland
Bill	Maxwell	Chief Executive	Education Scotland	
Maureen	McLaughlin	Senior Advisor to the Secretary and Director of International Affairs	U.S. Department of Education	United States
Manuela	Mendonça	Member of the National Board	FENPROF	Portugal
Daisy	Mertens	Teacher of the year (primary education)	Bbs. De Vuurvogel	Netherlands

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First Name	Last Name	Position	Organisation	Country Delegation
Udo	Michallik	Secretary General	Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in Germany	Germany
Kristi	Mikiver	Head of Teacher Department	Estonian Ministry of Education and Research	Estonia
Mandy	Miller	Principal Teacher of Music	Lochgelly High School	
Chris	Minnich	Executive Director	Council of Chief State School Officers	United States
Gregor	Mohorčič	Director General	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport	Slovenia
Graham	Moloney	General Secretary	Queensland Teachers' Union	
Sarah	Moore	Official - ISTP Support Team	Department for Education	
Nick	Morgan	Official - ISTP Support Team	Education Scotland	
Shelley	Morse	Vice-president	Canadian Teachers Federation	Canada
Brigitte	Morten	Ministerial Advisor	New Zealand Government	New Zealand
Kenneth	Muir	Chief Executive	The General Teaching Council for Scotland	UK: Scotland
Thuy Hong	Nguyen	Education	Ministry of Education and Training	Vietnam
Søren Poul	Nielsen	Minister's advisor	Denmark	Denmark
Annette	Nordstroem-Hansen	President	GL, National Union of Upper Secondary School Teachers	Denmark
Sheila	Nunan	General Secretary	Irish National Teachers' Organisation	
Jens	Nymand Christensen	Deputy Director-General	Belgium	
Sinead	O'Sullivan	Director of Teachers and Teaching Group	Department for Education	UK: England
Masaki	Okajima	Acting President	Japan Teachers' Union	
Maria Luísa	Oliveira	General Director of School Administration	Ministry of Education	Portugal
Lay Ling	Ong	Deputy Director, Educational Support	Ministry of Education, Singapore	Singapore
Lay Kheng	Ong	Senior Officer, International Relations	Ministry of Education, Singapore	Singapore
Alida	Oppers	Director-General Primary and Secondary Education	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	Netherlands
Anna Maria	Ostrowska	Deputy Director of Information and Promotion Department	Ministry of National Education	Poland
Jan Adam	Pakulski	Head of Evidence-Based Policy and Evaluation Unit	European Commission	Belgium
Hekia	Parata	Minister of Education	New Zealand	New Zealand
Kristiana	Paunina	Teaching Professional	Riga Boarding School for Deaf Children	Latvia
Manuel	Pereira	School Leader	National Association of School Leaders	Portugal
Rachel	Phillipson	Official - ISTP Support Team	Department for Education	

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First Name	Last Name	Position	Organisation	Country Delegation
Hanne	Pontoppidan	President	Union of Education Denmark / Uddannelsesforbundet	Denmark
Roger	Pope	Chair of National College for Teaching and Leadership	Department for Education	UK: England
Michael	Powell	Assistant to the President for Communications	American Federation of Teachers	
Ilze	Prizevoite	Vice President	LIZDA	Latvia
Ryszard	Proksa	President	KSOIW NSZZ SOLIDARNOSC	Poland
Janil	Puthuchear	Minister of State for Education	Singapore	Singapore
Mark	Ramsankar	President	The Alberta Teachers' Association	Canada
Ana	Resende	Advisor	Ministry of Education	Portugal
Merete	Riisager	Minister for Education	Denmark	Denmark
Stuart	Robb	Official - ISTP Support Team	Scottish Government	
Fiona	Robertson	Director of Learning	Scottish Government	UK: Scotland
Anne	Rochette	Political Advisor	Ministry of Education and Higher Education of Quebec	Canada
Bruce	Rodrigues	Deputy Minister	Ontario Ministry of Education	Canada
Anne	Roewer	Assistant to Executive Board	VBE Verband Bildung und Erziehung	Germany
Shan	Ross	Journalist	The Scotsman	
David	Roy	Official - ISTP Support Team	Scottish Government	
Hans	Ruesink	Policy Advisor	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	Netherlands
Anders	Rusk	International Coordinator	Trade Union of Education in Finland	Finland
Louise	Sanders	Headteacher	Scottish Borders Council	
Jorge	Santos	President	FNE Portugal	
Zenny	Saunders	Head of Workforce Strategy	Welsh Government	UK: Wales
Josée	Scalabrini	Présidente	Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement (FSE-CSQ)	Canada
Andreas	Schleicher	Director for Education and Skills	OECD	
Nicolas	Schmidt	Teacher	Emmy-Noether-Gymnasium	Germany
Seamus	Searson	General Secretary	Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association	UK: Scotland
Fraser	Shand	Digital Communication and Events Coordinator	General Teaching Council for Scotland	
Heather	Smith	President	Canadian Teachers' Federation	Canada
Silvia	Steiner	EDK Chair Person	EDK - Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education	Switzerland
Howard	Stevenson	Director of Research	The University of Nottingham	
Vivien	Stewart	Senior Advisor	Asia Society	
Graham	Stoop	Chief Executive	Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand	New Zealand

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First Name	Last Name	Position	Organisation	Country Delegation
Marcus	Strinäs	Political Adviser	The Ministry of Education and Research Sweden	
Branimir	Štrukelj	Secretary General	Education, Science and Culture Trade Union of Slovenia	Slovenia
Ida	Strutt	Senior Officer	Lararförbundet	Sweden
Lynda	Stuart	President	NZEI Te Riu Roa	New Zealand
Ulla-Karin	Sundqvist Nilsson	Desk Officer	Ministry of Education and Research	Sweden
John	Swinney	MSP Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills	Scottish Government	UK: Scotland
António	Teodoro	Advisor	FENPROF and FNE	Portugal
Marlis	Tepe	President	Gewerkschaft für Erziehung und Wissenschaft	Germany
Rebecca	Tessier	Assistant to the Deputy Director	OECD	
James	Thewliss	General Secretary	School Leaders Scotland	UK: Scotland
Mike	Thiruman	President	Singapore Teachers' Union	Singapore
Svante	Tideman	Vice President	Lärarnas Riksförbund	Sweden
Ba Tien	Tran	Education	Vinh University	Vietnam
Andrew	Travis	SCEL Fellow/Head Teacher	SCEL/Aberdeenshire Council	
Karine	Tremblay	Senior Analyst, TALIS	OECD - Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development	
Marco	Tullner	Minister	Germany	Germany
Tomosz	Urbański	Security Officer	Ministry of National Education	Poland
Jeroen	van Andel	Senior Beleidsmedewerker	Algemene Onderwijsbond	Netherlands
Luli	van der does-ishikawa	Consultant	JTU (Interpreter)	
Fred	van Leeuwen	General Secretary	Education International	
Liesbeth	Verheggen	President AOB	Algemene Onderwijsbond	Netherlands
Vladimir	Viies	Ass. Prof PhD, Chairman	Tallinn University of Technology, UNIVERSITAS	Estonia
Reemo	Voltri	President	EEPU	Estonia
Tim	Wallace	Vice-President	Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland	UK: Scotland
Stephanie	Walsh	Official - ISTP Support Team	Scottish Government	
Robert	Weil	Director of Field Programs	American Federation of Teachers	
Randi	Weingarten	President	American Federation of Teachers	
Kirsty	Wells	Organiser (Scotland)	NASUWT	
Victoria	White	Official - ISTP Support Team	Department for Education	
Rebecca	White	Official - ISTP Support Team	Department for Education	
Brett	Wigdortz	Founder and CEO	Teach First	UK: England
Evelyn	Wilkins	Digital Engagement and Publications Officer	The General Teaching Council for Scotland	

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First Name	Last Name	Position	Organisation	Country Delegation
Kirsty	Williams	Cabinet Secretary for Education	Welsh Government	UK: Wales
Rob	Williams	Director of Policy	NAHT(Cymru)	UK: Wales
Elaine	Wilson	Official - ISTP Support Team	Department for Education	
Siew Hoong	Wong	Director-General of Education	Ministry of Education, Singapore	Singapore
Gareth	Young	National Official	NASUWT	UK: England
Anna	Zalewska	Minister of National Education	Poland	Poland
Beat W.	Zemp	President	Dachverband Lehrerinnen und Lehrer Schweiz LCH	Switzerland



TEACHING PROFESSION

2017 INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT ON THE

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