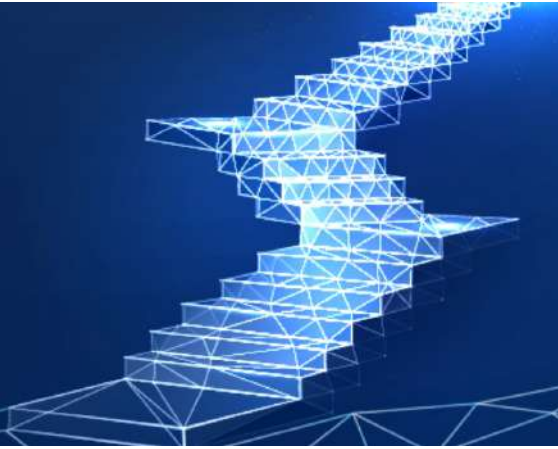




ASCL CYMRU CONFERENCE 2022


Towards a Fairer Future



Equity 2.0

8 December 2022

Cardiff, Wales

 [pasi_sahlberg](#)



**Southern Cross
University**



“Radical action needed to create a truly equitable education system for all.”

Welsh Government
June 16, 2022

0 Comments



In a keynote speech to the Bevan Foundation later today (16th June), the Education Minister will outline measures to tackle the impact of poverty on educational attainment and set high standards for all.



Some of the actions outlined will include:

- Exploring ways to incentivise teachers to the most disadvantaged areas, to tackle issues many schools face in recruiting and retraining teachers in challenging areas. The aim will be to pilot different approaches initially.
- Introducing a programme to provide peer-to-peer support for senior leaders working in the most disadvantaged areas. As part of this programme, they would receive mentoring from colleagues who have worked in similar areas and can offer practical guidance and support.
- Commissioning research into the teaching of learners in “mixed attainment groups”. International evidence indicates that many of the countries that have the most equitable systems are those that adopt mixed attainment groupings for as long as possible. This will result in national guidance for all schools.

The speech will set out a series of measures as part of a whole-system approach, supporting early childhood education and care, primary and secondary education and all forms of post-16 education, training and lifelong learning.

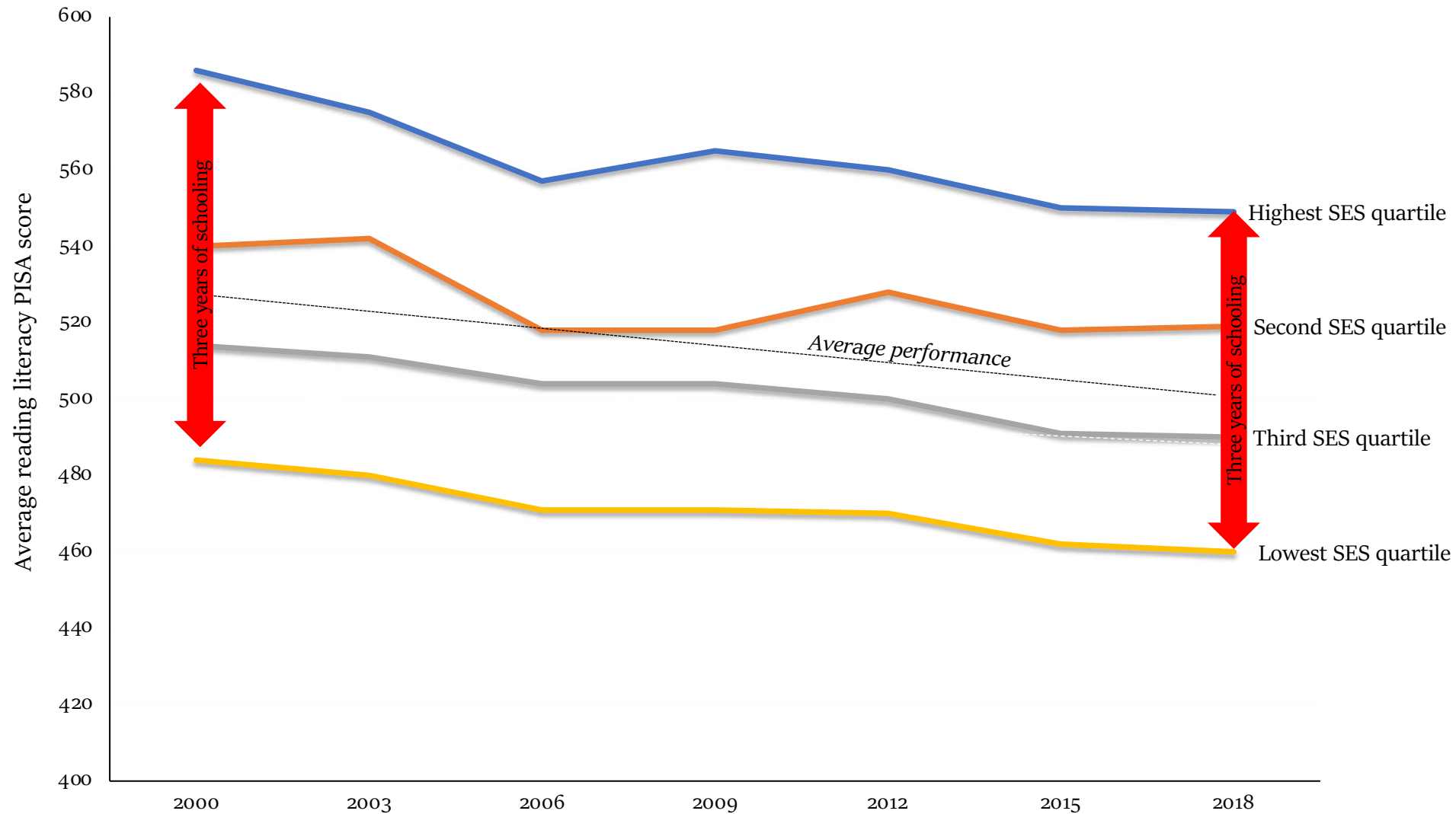
These will be underpinned by a focus on our schools engaging effectively with their communities, providing the highest quality teaching and leadership, and a focus on health and wellbeing.

If schools would only **work harder**, would that be a way to more equitable education?

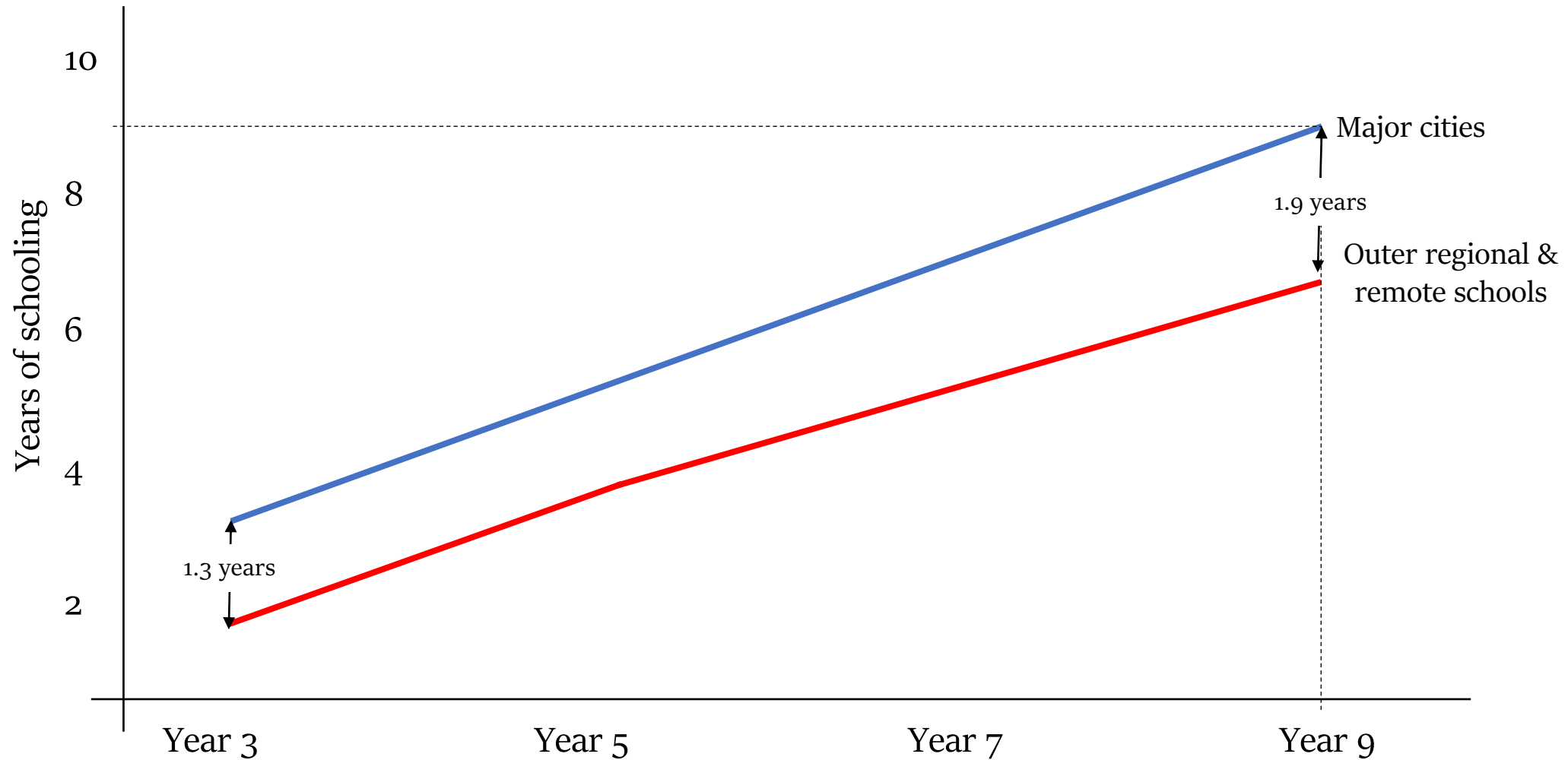


What does inequity look like (in Australia)?

Average reading literacy performance of Australian 15-year-olds since 2000

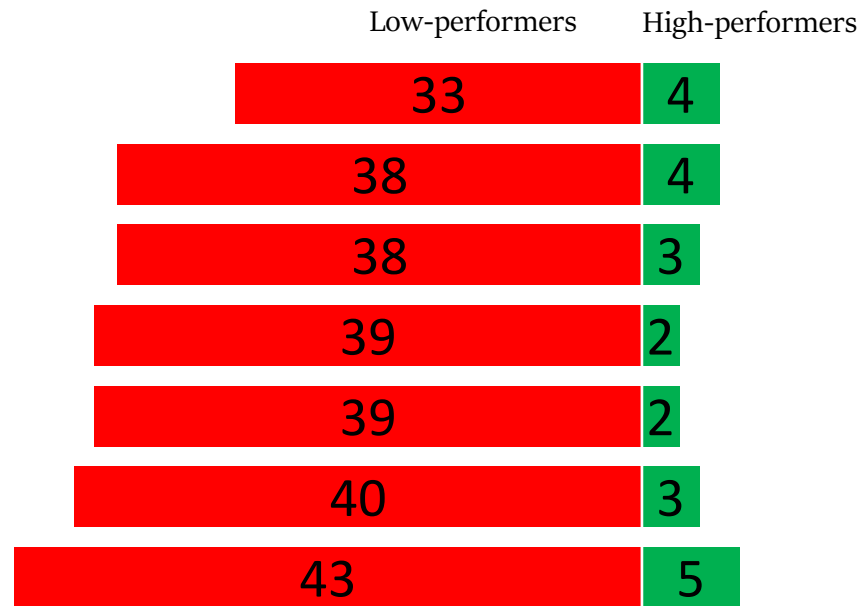


Single cohort through school (Year 3 to 9) urban-rural achievement gap

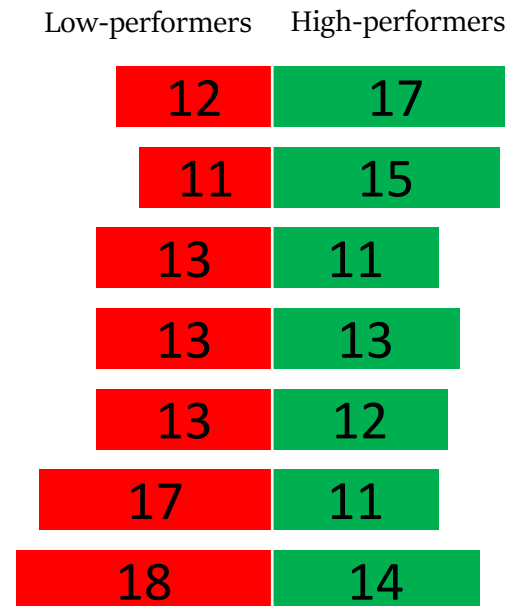


Proportion of low and high performing 15-year-old students on the reading literacy proficiency scale

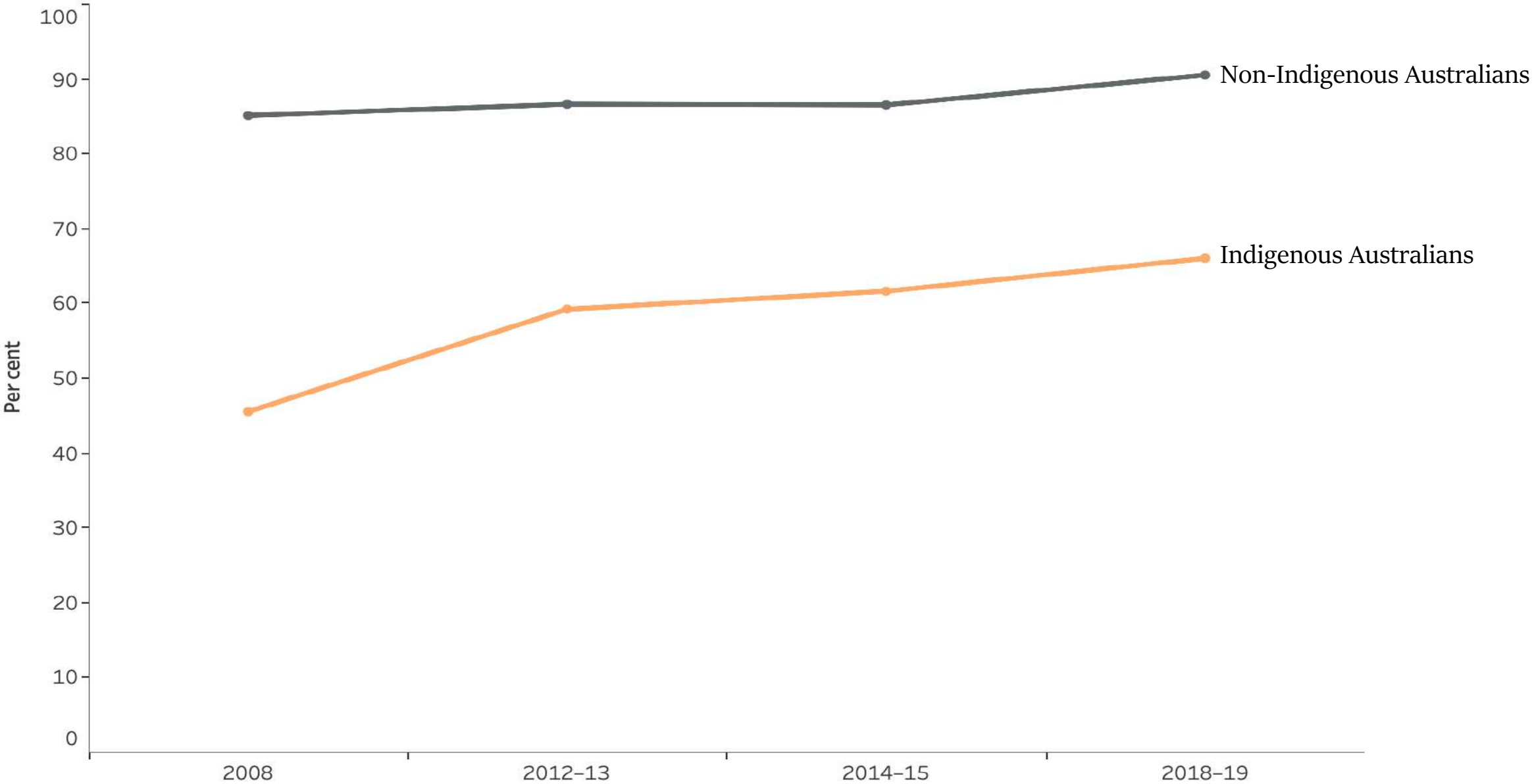
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students



Non-indigenous students



Percentage of young people (20–24) who had completed Year 12 or equivalent (2008 to 2018)



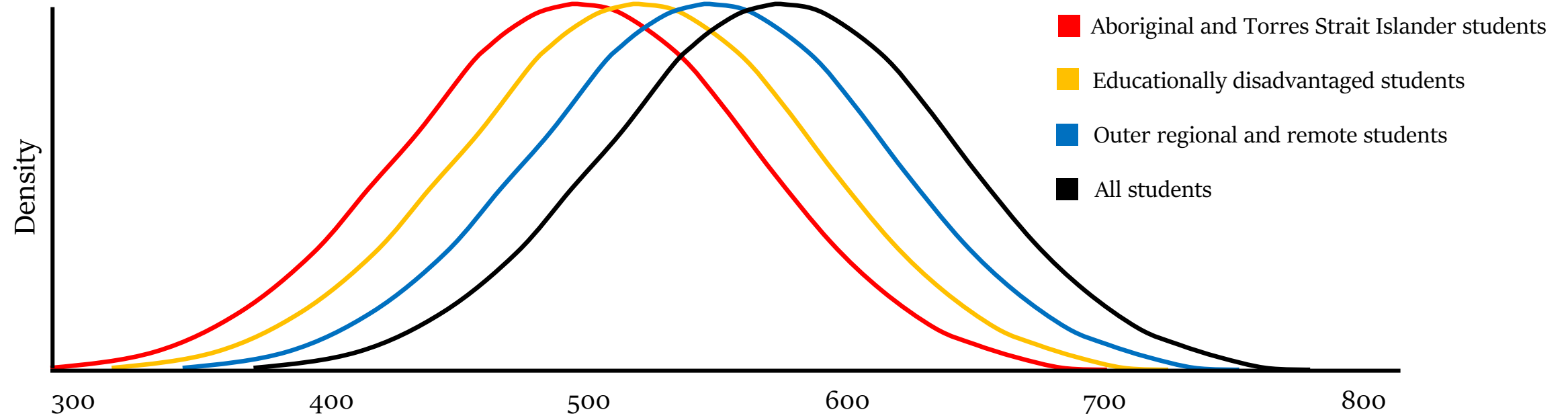
Source: Australian Government, 2022



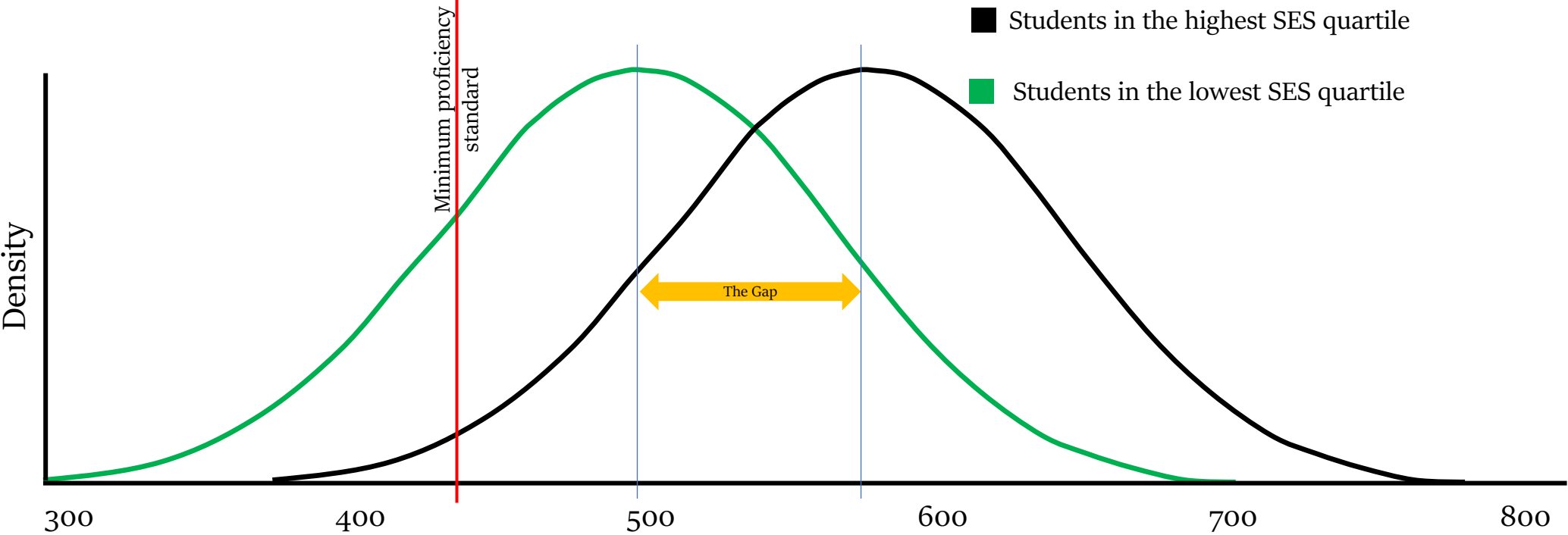
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Defining equity in education
(is the first step towards achieving it)

More equitable distribution of student achievement

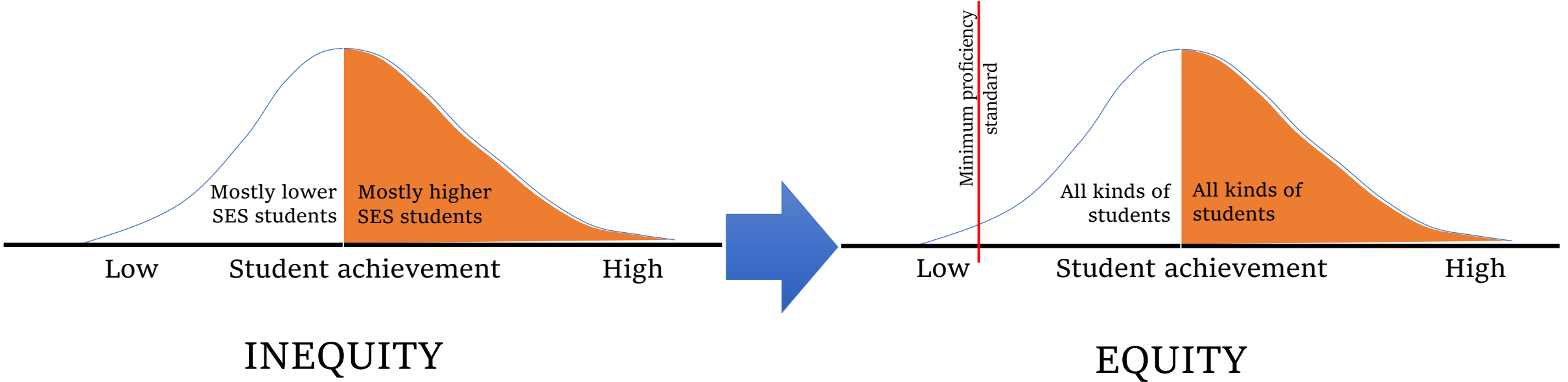


More equitable distribution of student achievement



SOCIAL EQUITY

(e.g., effect of socio-economic status)



DEFINING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

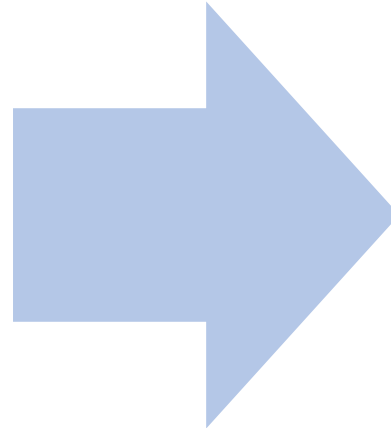
INDIVIDUAL GOAL:

All children receive an adequate education that enables them to realise their talents and fully participate in society in a way of their own choosing.

+

SOCIAL GOAL:

Children from different social groups should achieve similar average education outcomes and similar distribution of these outcomes.

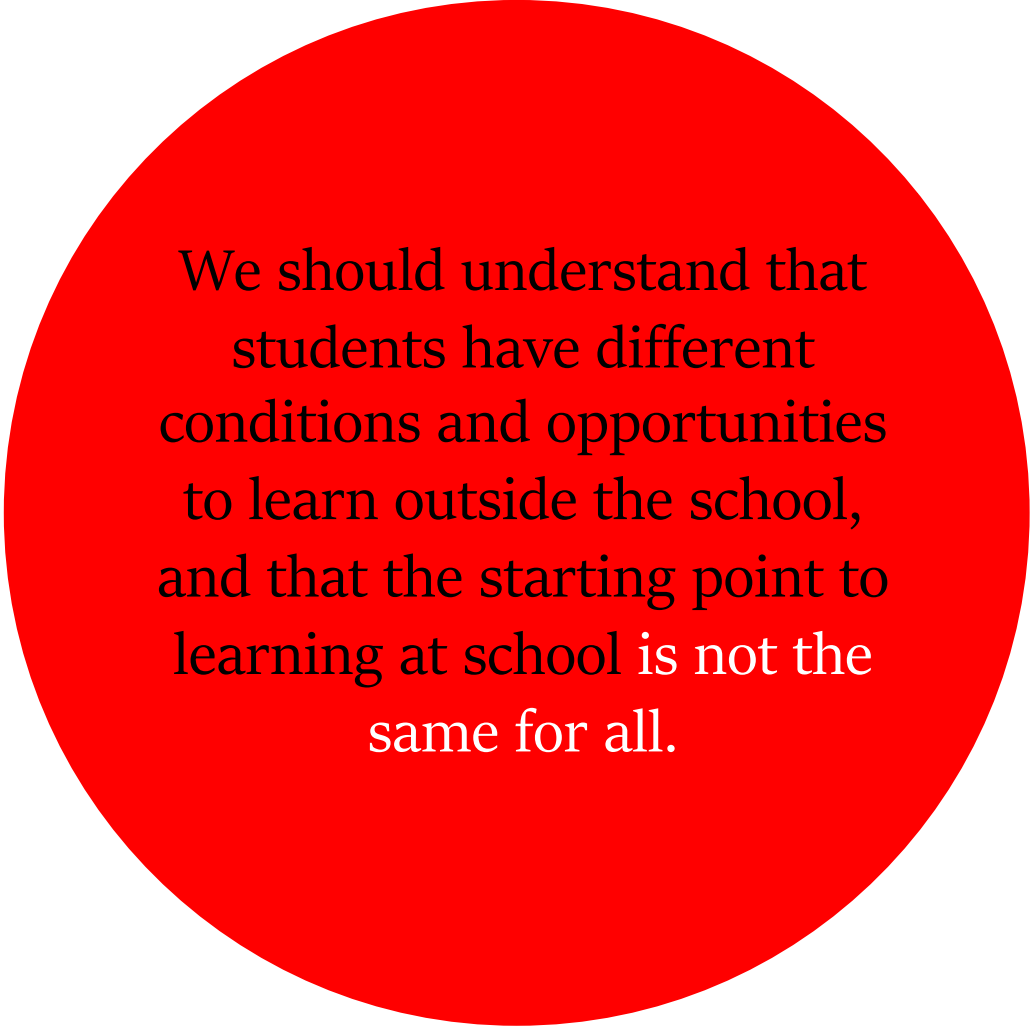


Equity in education means that all students receive an adequate education, and that the learning outcomes for different social groups are similar.



Towards 'radical action' for equity in Wales

If schools would only **work harder**, would that be a way to more equitable education?



We should understand that students have different conditions and opportunities to learn outside the school, and that the starting point to learning at school is not the same for all.

Common action for equity

NEEDS-BASED FUNDING

Additional allowances paid to schools based on the educational status and income level of the parents, and the number of children with any special needs.

FOCUS ON TEACHER QUALITY

Upgraded initial teacher education to enhance the quality of teaching and leadership in schools. Invest in professional learning so that schools can better address equity issues.

MORE ACCURATE DATA

More data about wider range of students educational performance and their family backgrounds and living circumstances to better monitor progress made in equity.

Radical action for equity

INVEST IN EARLY YEARS

Every pound invested in high-quality 0-to-5 early childhood education for disadvantaged children delivers a 13% annual return on investment, much higher than the 7 to 10% return delivered by preschool alone.

REDEFINE WHAT SCHOOL IS

Teach wellness & health as essential 21st century skills in every school. Whenever possible, make health services available in schools. Identify key wellbeing outcomes and monitor the progress in achieving them.

PERSONALISE SCHOOLING

Personalise curriculum, teaching and assessment for each student's individual strengths, needs, skills, and interests whenever possible and relevant. Redesign special needs education to prevent school failure.

There will be no student wellbeing without stronger equity



Understanding equity in education. Part 1: What is equity?



Dr Pasi Sahlberg
Professor of Education, Southern
Cross University

Dr Pasi Sahlberg investigates the concept of equity as it applies to education. This article is the first in a two-part series on equity in education.

What do people want?

Three years ago, I asked my colleagues the following questions: What do Australian adults think about educational equity? Do they think our school education is fair and inclusive for all students? What do they think equity in education means? Do they care about this issue at all?

We did what academics normally do; we conducted a survey that included more than 2,000 adults in NSW to find out their beliefs and attitudes about educational equity. The results were surprising (Gonski Institute for Education, 2020). By using a scale from 1 to 10, the importance of achieving educational equity in Australia was rated 9, on average. These same people rated the NSW school systems a 6.3 on a 10-point scale evaluating their performance on educational equity. Nine of every ten respondents



Understanding equity in education. Part 2: What can we do?



Dr Pasi Sahlberg
Professor of Education, Southern
Cross University

In his second article in a two-part series, Dr Pasi Sahlberg considers the power of family background on student learning and suggests practical ways that schools can strengthen equity of education.

Ever since students' performance in school has been measured by standardised assessments, one question has trumped all others: What explains variability in these tests?

The question really is, why are some students more successful in school than other students? Some parents think that their children don't work hard enough for success in school. There are authorities who think that students' success in school depends directly on how good or bad the teachers are. Students may believe that their learning outcomes vary because some students are simply smarter learners.

Whatever the answer is, our aim must be clear. In the [Alice Springs \(Moorntje\) Education Declaration](#),

Thank you!