



**PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT**

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**FORUM EDUCATION MINISTERS' MEETING**

Nuku'alofa, Tonga

24-26 March 2009

**SESSION SIX**

**DEVELOPMENT OF A SET OF PROPOSED REGIONAL  
STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS**

This paper was prepared by the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment



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**DEVELOPMENT OF A SET OF PROPOSED REGIONAL  
STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS**

*Summary*

**Purpose**

This paper, prepared by the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment, outlines a proposal to develop regional standards for teachers and principals.

**Background**

2. A regional consultation of Pacific heads of education in October 2008 agreed that given the crucial importance of teachers in the quality of education, the issue of developing a set of regional standards of teachers and principals should come before Education Ministers.

**Recommendations**

3. Ministers are invited to:

- (a) Agree that the attached list of professional teacher standards developed by the Pacific Heads of education systems in consultation with development partners be adopted as the Pacific Regional Standards for Teachers;
- (b) Agree that these standards be considered by countries as the minimum set of standards for teachers, allowing for each country to add additional standards as they see fit to reflect national situations;
- (c) Agree that development partners; in particular SPBEA and UNESCO, work closely with countries to develop a strategy for collecting information that each country could use to monitor the performance of teachers against each standard and develop a plan for improving on such performance; and
- (d) Agree that an approach similar to that adopted for teacher standards is used for developing standards for school principals and head-teachers.



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DEVELOPMENT OF A SET OF PROPOSED REGIONAL  
STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS<sup>1</sup>

1. Purpose

In May 2008, Pacific Heads of Education called for an initiative that would both set Regional Standards for Teachers and Principals, and that would provide a sound basis for the monitoring<sup>2</sup> of teacher performance. UNESCO and SPBEA were asked to lead the work in this area and to report back to the Pacific Heads of Education later in the year. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Pacific Islands Forum Education Ministers with the background to this proposal for developing a set of *standards for teachers and principals* that could be considered for adoption region-wide; and to inform the Education Ministers of the current status with regard to that development.

2. Background

**Identifying what matters**

*We should be asking where the major source of variance in student's achievement lie, and concentrate on enhancing these sources of variance to truly make the difference.*

***Teachers** account for about 30% of the variance. It is what teachers know, do, and care about which is very powerful in this learning equation.*

*I therefore suggest that we should focus on the greatest source of variance that can make the difference – **the teacher**. We need to ensure that this greatest influence is optimised to have powerful and sensationally positive effects on the learner*

Prof. John Hattie, University of Auckland: Teachers Make a Difference: What is the research evidence? Australian Council for Educational Research Annual Conference on: Building Teacher Quality; (October 2003).

- 2.1 Within the Pacific region, *Quality of Education* is a recurring theme of discussion, deliberation and action within political and educational circles, between education

<sup>1</sup> This paper was prepared by the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment

<sup>2</sup> The monitoring should strictly ONLY be used for the purpose of improving the teacher's competencies rather than for performance management and remuneration.

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ministries and aid donors, and under partnership arrangements servicing the education sector.

- 2.2 Teachers within Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary sectors of formal education are relied upon to successfully inspire pupils to maximize their potential and strive for quality outcomes rather than just to aim for the bare minimum. This reliance calls upon teacher professionalism outside and inside the region's classrooms.
- 2.3 A few countries have developed systems that monitor the professional standards of their teachers. Some countries have monitoring mechanisms for their teachers, typically through some form of inspectorate. Others are in the process of developing statements of professional standards that would be applied to the teaching profession.
- 2.4 At the Pacific Heads of Education meeting held at Nadi on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008, discussion resulted in UNESCO and SPBEA being asked to present an overview of approaches used world-wide and within the region, to the setting of professional standards for teachers.
- 2.5 At the Pacific Heads of Education meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2008, SPBEA presented a set of standards that had been developed by the *Training and Development Agency*<sup>3</sup> in the United Kingdom and UNESCO presented a matrix that summarises what was already happening in the region.
- 2.6 The concept of having a set of regional teacher standards was conceived by the meeting as the countries believed that such standards would assist in their efforts to monitor and improve the quality of their teachers. On the strength of what was presented SPBEA and UNESCO were requested to consult with countries to come up with a set of standards that could be agreed to by countries as region standards but based on what is used regionally and globally.
- 2.7 Besides the use of these standards by individual countries for the purpose of monitoring and improving quality of teachers, this initiative can also be seen to dovetail well into two aspects of the Pacific Plan.
- 2.8 The first is the desire for increased labour mobility between countries of the Region, as described in the following extract from the Pacific Plan.

### ***The future of regional integration***

*17. ....Ministers recognised, among other things, the need for further examination of Pacific labour market issues, including the issue of labour mobility through the region and beyond. Forum leaders have therefore agreed to continue to consider the issue of labour mobility in the context of Member countries' immigration policies.*

The Pacific Plan for strengthening regional cooperation and integration, Nov 2007 version 29, p.9 para 17.

- 2.9 The existence of a set of teacher standards recognised at a region-wide level would provide a basis from which parity judgments can be made. There are examples of

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<sup>3</sup> Professional Standards for Teachers- Why sit still in your career? TDA, UK. 2007.

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teachers from one Pacific island country being recruited to the teaching force of another Pacific island country. The academic and professional qualifications of those recruited are available to the selection panel. However information on teaching experience in terms of classroom performance is rarely available, other than through the use of selected referees. A record of regionally-based statements on teacher standards and competencies would provide valuable additional information which could contribute to selection decisions.

- 2.10 The second relates to the Pacific Regional Qualifications Register (PRQR) which commenced operation in January 2009. Although the PRQR is principally considered as an evolving repository for accredited qualifications awarded in regional countries, and qualifications awarded on a regional basis, there may also be a place for descriptors of national and regional professional standards. The teacher standards would clearly be the latter.

The following table contains Pacific Plan references to the NQR and PRQR

<p><i>Education</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>(Leaders) agreed that the establishment and maintenance of a National Qualifications Register be included in National Development Plans/National Education Strategic Plans of Pacific Island countries;</i></li><li>▪ <i>(Leaders) noted that some countries have established professional units to oversee the development and maintenance of their national qualifications registers;</i></li><li>▪ <i>(Leaders) agreed to consider modalities for equitably sharing the long-term costs of running a Regional Qualifications Register;</i></li></ul> <p>Annex to 2007 Pacific Island Forum Communiqué</p>
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- 2.11 In addition to the above points, Pacific island countries have a vested interest in ensuring that their respective teaching force hold up well when measured against an external and established yardstick. The yardstick, or some nationally adjusted form, will provide the authorities with standards against which teachers can be monitored thereby expose weakness. Thereafter, training and assistance can be designed and implemented to reduce identified weaknesses.

### 3. Subsequent Actions

- 3.1 In November 2008, a letter was sent to all countries represented at the Pacific Heads of Education meeting regarding the intended development of 'Teacher Standards' for use in the Pacific. These were based on an analysis of what the countries currently have. The letter was accompanied by a set of *standard descriptors*, each of which could be ranked for importance on a four-point scale. Each country was requested to consider each standard descriptor and to rank its level of importance in a Pacific context. Countries were also invited to offer modified versions of the descriptors if they considered that it was appropriate.
- 3.2 The letter was sent out to fifteen countries and SPBEA received a total of eleven completed responses. These responses were then compiled into a single spreadsheet from which overall priority levels for each standard descriptor could be established.

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- 3.3 A similar exercise is yet to be done with a selection of standards that could be considered for Principals.

### 4. Response Analysis

An analysis of responses is appended as Appendix A.

### 5. Amended wording of standard descriptors

The survey form sent to each country, invited respondents to offer alternative wording to standard descriptors if it was considered to be appropriate to do so. Some countries took advantage of this portion of the survey.

### 6. Recommendations

Ministers are invited to:

- (a) **agree** that the attached list of professional teacher standards developed by the Pacific Heads of education systems in consultation with development partners be adopted as the Pacific Regional Standards for Teachers;
- (b) **agree** that these standards be considered by countries as the minimum set of standards for teachers, allowing for each country to add additional standards as they see fit to reflect national situations;
- (c) **agree** that development partners; in particular SPBEA and UNESCO, work closely with countries to develop a strategy for collecting information that each country could use to monitor the performance of teachers against each standard and develop a plan for improving on such performance; and
- (d) **agree** that an approach similar to that adopted for teacher standards is used for developing standards for school principals and head-teachers.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva

3 March 2009

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### Appendix A

#### Response Analysis

1. The standard descriptors are classified into three categories:

- Professional Attributes
- Professional Knowledge and Understanding
- Professional Skills

4.1 Countries allocated each standard descriptor to one of four priority levels.

- Level 1            Essential
- Level 2            Highly desirable
- Level 3            Desirable
- Level 4            Inappropriate

4.2 For the purposes of making a cumulative report on country responses, it was found that two prioritization levels would reflect the overall view of respondents. In the table that follows, these prioritization levels are called *prioritization A* and *prioritization B*.

4.3 In order for a standard descriptor to be given prioritization A, the total responses placing it in Level 1, had to outnumber the total responses placing it at Levels 2, 3 and 4.

4.4 Those standard descriptors that had been placed at Level 2, 3 or 4 were given a prioritization level of B. No standard descriptors were awarded Level 4 (described as 'inappropriate')

4.5 In total there are sixty standard descriptors. The following table shows the cumulative results of country prioritization for the descriptors within each category.

Standard category	Prioritization Level	
	Number at Level A	Number at Level B
Professional Attributes	8	3
Professional Knowledge and understanding	12	10
Professional Skills	24	3
Total at each cumulated prioritization level	44	16

Table 4.6

4.6 As Table 4.6 indicates, 44 of the 60 standard descriptors were considered by the majority of country respondents to be 'essential'.

4.7 Of the remaining 16 standard descriptors, all were considered to be highly desirable by the majority of respondents.

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### Appendix B

		Number of respondents			
A	Professional Attributes	Priority Level			
		1	2	3	4
<b>A1</b>	<b>Relationships with students</b>				
A1.1	Have high expectations of students including a commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full educational potential and to establishing fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with them	9	2	0	0
A1.2	Hold positive values and attitudes and adopt high standards of behaviour in their professional role	8	1	1	0
<b>A2</b>	<b>Communicating and working with others</b>				
A2.1	Communicate effectively with students, other teachers and school management	7	4	0	0
A2.2	Communicate effectively with parents and guardians, conveying timely and relevant information about attainment, objectives, progress and well-being	7	3	1	0
A2.3	Recognise that communication is a two-way process and encourage parents and guardians to participate in discussions about the progress, development and well-being of students	6	4	1	0
A2.4	Have a commitment to collaboration and co-operative working where appropriate	5	4	2	0
<b>A3</b>	<b>Personal Professional Development</b>				
A3.1	Carry out self evaluation and be committed to improving their practice through appropriate professional development	6	3	2	0
A3.2	Have a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation; being prepared to adapt their practice where benefits and improvements are identified	6	5	0	0
A3.3	Act upon advice and feedback and be open to coaching and mentoring	7	2	1	0



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		Number of respondents			
B	Professional Knowledge and Understanding	Priority Level			
		1	2	3	4
<b>B1</b>	<b>Teaching and Learning</b>				
B1.1	Have a good, up-to-date working knowledge and understanding of a range of teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies	9	2	0	0
B1.2	Know how to use and adapt teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies for particular situations	10	1	0	0
B1.3	Know how to personalise learning to provide opportunities for all students to achieve their potential	9	2	0	0
<b>B2</b>	<b>Assessment and Monitoring</b>				
B2.1	Know the assessment requirements and arrangements for the subjects/curriculum areas they teach, including those relating to public examinations and qualifications	7	4	0	0
B2.2	Know a range of approaches to assessment, including the importance of formative assessment	7	3	1	0
<b>B3</b>	<b>Subjects and curriculum</b>				
B3.1	Have a secure knowledge and understanding of their subjects/curriculum areas and related pedagogy	10	1	0	0
B3.2	Have an understanding of the contribution that their subjects/curriculum areas can make to cross-curricular learning;	7	3	1	0
B3.3	Know and understand the relevant National curricula, and framework of their subjects/curriculum areas and other relevant initiatives across the age and ability range they teach	10	1	0	0
<b>B4</b>	<b>Literacy, Numeracy and ICT</b>				
B4.1	Know how to use skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT to support their teaching and wider professional activities	6	4	0	0
<b>B5</b>	<b>Achievement and Diversity</b>				
B5.1	Understand how students develop and how the progress, rate of development and well-being of students are affected by a range of developmental, social, religious, ethnic, cultural and linguistic influences	5	5	1	0
<b>B6</b>	<b>Health and well-being</b>				
B6.1	Know the current legal requirements, national policies and guidance on the safeguarding and promotion of the well-being of students	5	4	2	0
B6.2	Know the local arrangements concerning the safeguarding of students	5	5	1	0
B6.3	Know how to indentify potential child abuse or neglect and follow safeguarding procedures	7	2	2	0
B6.4	Know how to identify and support students whose progress, development or well-being is affected by change or difficulty in their personal circumstances, and when to refer them to colleagues for specialist support	7	2	2	0

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		Number of respondents			
C	Professional Skills	Priority Level			
		1	2	3	4
<b>C1</b>	<b>Planning</b>				
C1.1	Plan for progression across the age and ability range they teach, designing effective learning sequences within lessons and across series of lessons informed by secure subject/curriculum knowledge	11	0	0	0
C1.2	Plan, set and assess homework, other out-of-class assignments and coursework for examinations, where appropriate, to sustain students' progress and to extend and consolidate their learning	10	1	0	0
<b>C2</b>	<b>Teaching</b>				
C2.1	Teach challenging, well-organised lessons and sequences of lessons across the age and ability range they teach	10	1	0	0
C2.2	Use an appropriate range of teaching strategies and resources, including e-learning, which meet students' needs and take practical account of diversity and promote equality and inclusion	9	2	0	0
C2.3	Build on the prior knowledge and attainment of those they teach in order that students meet learning objectives and make sustained progress	9	2	0	0
C2.4	Develop concepts and processes which enable students to apply new knowledge, understanding and skills	8	3	0	0
C2.5	Adapt their language to suit the students they teach, introducing new ideas and concepts clearly, and using explanations, questions, discussions and plenaries effectively	7	4	0	0
C2.6	Manage the learning of individuals, groups and whole classes effectively, modifying their teaching appropriately to suit the stage of the lesson and the needs of the students	7	4	0	0
C2.7	Teach engaging and motivating lessons informed by well-grounded expectations of students and designed to raise levels of attainment	9	2	0	0
C2.8	Design opportunities for students to develop their literacy, numeracy, ICT and thinking and learning skills appropriate within their phase and context	6	5	0	0
<b>C3</b>	<b>Assessing, monitoring and giving feedback</b>				
C3.1	Make effective use of an appropriate range of observation, assessment, monitoring and recording strategies as a basis for setting challenging learning objectives	8	3	0	0
C3.2	Make effective use of an appropriate range of observation, assessment, monitoring and recording strategies as a basis for monitoring students' progress and levels of attainment	9	1	1	0
C3.3	Provide students, colleagues, parents and guardians with timely, accurate and constructive feedback on students' attainment, progress and areas for development	10	1	0	0
C3.4	Support and guide students so that they can reflect on their learning, identify the progress they have made, set positive targets for improvement and become successful independent learners	9	1	1	0
C3.5	Use assessment as part of their teaching to diagnose students' needs, set realistic and challenging targets for improvement and plan future teaching	8	2	1	0

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		Number of respondents			
C	Professional Skills	Priority Level			
		1	2	3	4
<b>C4</b>	<b>Reviewing teaching and learning</b>				
C4.1	Review the effectiveness of their teaching and its impact on students' progress, attainment and well-being	7	4	0	0
C4.2	Review the effectiveness of their teaching, refining their approaches where necessary	7	4	0	0
C4.3	Review the impact of the feedback provided to students and guide students on how to improve their attainment	7	4	0	0
<b>C5</b>	<b>Learning Environment</b>				
C5.1	Establish a purposeful and safe learning environment which complies with current legal requirements and national policies	9	2	0	0
C5.2	Provide an environment which safeguards the well-being of students so that students feel secure, and are sufficiently confident to make an active contribution to learning and to the school	7	3	1	0
C5.3	Identify and use opportunities to personalise and extend learning through out-of-school contexts where possible making links between in-school learning and learning in out-of-school contexts	5	5	1	0
C5.4	Manage students' behaviour constructively by establishing and maintaining a clear and positive framework for discipline, in line with the school's independence of students	8	3	0	0
C5.5	Use a range of behaviour management techniques and strategies, adapting them as necessary to promote the self-control and independence of students	7	4	0	0
C5.6	Promote students' self-control, independence and cooperation through developing their social, emotional and behavioural skills	8	1	1	0
<b>C6</b>	<b>Team working and collaboration</b>				
C6.1	Work as a team member and identify opportunities for working with colleagues, managing their work where appropriate and sharing the development of effective practice with them	7	3	1	0
C6.2	Ensure that colleagues working with them are appropriately involved in supporting learning and understand the roles they are expected to fulfill	5	5	1	0