

LINK 28: Examining public purposes of education policy, programs and practices.

This analytical tool is designed to assist better understanding of the purposes informing policies, programs and practices, and to act on this understanding. It can be used at school or system level. The ideas informing the framework are drawn from a 3 year national research project on the purposes of education, and assume that public purposes are the preeminent educational purposes.

The public purposes relate to the advancement of the interests of the society as a whole, and are based the principles of democratic and social justice.

1. Understanding the policy, program or practice.

- a. Why has this been developed?
- b. When and by who was it developed?
- c. What are its key elements?

2. Analysing the policy, program or practices.

- a. What is the stated or implied reason for this? Is the reason consistent with the official statement of purposes as reported in the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australian [25]?
- b. In what ways does this contribute to the wider social good/community benefit? For example, does it:
 - i. Help to develop capacities for democratic participation?
 - ii. Contribute to the health of the whole system?
 - iii. Include rather than exclude?
 - iv. Support a quality education for all?
 - v. Promote a culture of collaboration?;
 - vi. Model democratic decision making?

(Given your understanding of the purposes of education add some other questions that might be asked of the policy, programs and practices under review.)

3. Actions

- a. As a result of your examination and deeper understanding of this policy, program or practice:
 - i. What is your stance?
 - ii. What actions, if any, do you think you need to take to advance the public purposes of education?
 - iii. If you decide action is needed, consider how this might happen (e.g. Who? When? Where? How?)