

Answers to Question on Notice - Ms Kim Beswick, Head, School of Education, Director, Gonski Institute for Education

QUESTION

Highlighted section of transcript on page 32:

KIM BESWICK: I was going to add—and I don't have the data in my head or with me—that I think we would have to look at the trend in the extent of segregation along SES lines over the period where the decline has happened as well. I suspect that our system has become more segregated rather than less. That aggregation of disadvantage in particular schools does have a downward effect, despite the teachers in those schools doing a fantastic job. There is evidence that you find the very best pedagogy in the most disadvantaged schools. But there's only so much you can do. Those peer effects have a downward effect. So the same child in a more heterogeneous group will do better than if he's just with a group of disadvantaged peers.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: On notice, would you be able to provide some further information on that?

KIM BESWICK: I can have a look for some of that, yes. I won't promise that I can find it.

ANSWER

The highlighted transcript concerns three issues:

1. Trend towards increasing segregation of schools based on SES
2. Peer effects
3. Quality of pedagogy in disadvantaged schools

The four documents attached and listed below address the issues raised.

1. *Trend towards increasing segregation of schools based on SES*

Bonner, C. & Shepherd, B. (2017). Losing the game: State of our schools in 2017. Centre for Policy Development. Available at <https://cpd.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/FINAL-Losing-the-Game-June-21-with-dedication.pdf>

The report includes data illustrating the trend towards increasing segregation according to SES in Australian schools over the period. See in particular:

- Part A, Section 3: *Chasing advantage and avoiding the strugglers* (pp. 15-17) including Figure 6, page 17
- Part B, Section 4: *The slippery equity slope* (pp. 22-24), including Figure 10, page 23.

2. *Peer effects*

Perry, L., & McConney, A. (2010). School socio-economic composition and student outcomes in Australia: Implications for educational policy. *Australian Journal of Education*, 54(1), 72-85. doi:10.1177/000494411005400106

This peer reviewed article is based on an analysis of Australian PISA data and relates to my comment on peer effects. It shows that “that increases in school SES are consistently associated with increases in students' academic performance, and that this relationship holds regardless of individual students' SES.” Figures 1 and 2 on pages 79 and 80 show the association graphically.

Rowe, E. E., & Lubienski, C. (2017). Shopping for schools or shopping for peers: Public schools and catchment area segregation. *Journal of Education Policy*, 32(3), 340-356. doi:10.1080/02680939.2016.1263363

This peer reviewed article provides data illustrating the impacts of school choice on segregation by SES and religious affiliation in Australian schools. The Discussion of Data and Conclusion section on pp. 352-353 provides a clear summary of the findings.

3. Quality of pedagogy in disadvantaged schools

Gore, J., Jaremus, F., & Miller, A. (2022). Do disadvantaged schools have poorer teachers? Rethinking assumptions about the relationship between teaching quality and school-level advantage. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 49(4), 635-656. doi:10.1007/s13384-021-00460-w

Also peer reviewed this article provides evidence that counters the assumption that students in disadvantaged schools do less well because of poorer teaching. The first author, Jenny Gore, was on part of Panel 4.