

Now that's what we call progress!

30th January 2015

The Australian Council for Educational leaders applauds recent commentary on tracking academic progress rather than solely focusing on static achievement data at a single point in time. (Achievement matters but what about tracking learning progress. The Age, 27.01.15)

Tracking student progress data provides insight into student learning and the success of teaching strategies and programs.

Overemphasis on static achievement data misses the opportunity to celebrate the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms across Australia.

Quoting from research that investigated the link between student growth in literacy learning and the teacher's use of classroom strategies, Associate Professor Stephen Humphry from UWA says, "Progress data spanning two or more time points is the best source of information by which to gauge the extent of learning and the impact of specific factors".

The research, titled *In Teacher's Hands*, conducted by Edith Cowan University and the UWA in over 200 classrooms, provided a clear picture that teachers can make a big difference to student learning.

This difference is not necessarily evident when only static achievement data is used to measure performance.

Many factors impact on achievement at a given point in time. It is virtually impossible to obtain clear evidence of teacher impact based on static achievement data. Although progress is also affected by many factors, progress data can provide a better indication of the impact of a teacher than static achievement data.

Tracking student progress, as suggested in the original article, provides opportunity to recognize and celebrate successful learning and teaching.

The Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) gives access to world- class empirical research along with the practical support to achieve excellence in leadership in the education sector.

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