INNOVATING AND LEADING FOR BRILLIANCE

HOW SCHOOLS RESPONDED TO THE COMPLEX CHALLENGE OF MEETING THE NEEDS OF HIGH POTENTIAL LEARNERS

Hear their insights and understand their journeys of innovation.
ABOUT AISNSW

The Association of Independent Schools of NSW is the peak body supporting and representing independent education, specifically independent schools, through offering services in:

- advice and consultancy
- professional learning
- funded programs and projects
- support for students with diverse needs
- research and data
- advocacy and partnerships.

We also work with governments, statutory authorities and a wide range of other educational stakeholders on behalf of over 480 independent schools, their boards, their principals and heads, their executive, their teachers and support staff. These schools educate over 200,000 children from the increasing number of families choosing independent education.

With the core values of integrity, professionalism, respect and collegiality AISNSW seeks to further the ideals of independent education: choice, diversity, quality, opportunity and excellence.

ABOUT THE AISNSW SCHOOL

INNOVATION DIVISION

The School Innovation Division is a future-focused project team formed at a time of considerable interest in reshaping schooling. School Innovation coaches provide extended support in disciplined innovation, including design thinking. The team supports educators as they use processes such as ideation and prototyping, and focus on the enabling conditions required to lead significant change. Disciplined innovation suits schools that are seeking to explore new solutions to complex challenges in their distinctive context.

ELEVATE: agile design for high potential learners is the signature initiative of the team and is amplified by a strategic partnership with the Innovation Unit. ELEVATE is the first large scale community of practice using disciplined innovation methods provided by AISNSW and is inclusive of government and Catholic system schools and interstate independent schools. Funding for this program was provided by the Australian Government Students First Support Fund and AISNSW.

ABOUT OUR STRATEGIC PARTNER

Innovation Unit is a not-for-profit social enterprise supporting governments, organisations and communities to co-design, develop and implement at scale innovative solutions to pressing social, educational and health issues: solutions which deliver significantly better outcomes, often for significantly lower costs. It draws on the expertise of its practitioners, designers and researchers in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States and globally to work in partnership with clients from the public, private, and third sectors.
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FOREWORD

The Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AISNSW) is pleased to present the ELEVATE INSIGHTS Series which shares and celebrates the valuable learnings from our work with a diverse group of outstanding educators from all school sectors across the nation as they transformed learning experiences for Australia’s most able students.

From 2015 through to 2018, AISNSW was in the unique position of being able to offer ELEVATE: Agile design for high potential learners – a multi-year program designed to advance the national conversation around how best to identify and challenge high potential learners, and how to design and implement practices to address the needs of such learners, including gifted students, now and into the future.

The ELEVATE INSIGHTS Series is an invitation to all educators to engage with the lessons learnt from ELEVATE. It offers insights into the strongest themes that emerged from the work of the school teams and we hope it stimulates and enriches professional conversation and action across even more schools.

The ELEVATE INSIGHTS publications are connected and document participants’ insights and learnings. Accompanying each publication are complementary professional learning resources created during the project that will help inspire the possibilities that exist for others.

Unleashing Brilliance

HOW HIGH POTENTIAL LEARNERS ARE CHALLENGED AND SUPPORTED AROUND THE WORLD
- Our Case for Change
- A horizon scan

Sharpening Focus – Discovering Brilliance

WHO ARE HIGH POTENTIAL LEARNERS?
- Discover and understand their needs and hear what matters to them

Innovating and Leading for Brilliance

HOW SCHOOLS RESPONDED TO THE COMPLEX CHALLENGE OF MEETING THE NEEDS OF HIGH POTENTIAL LEARNERS
- Hear their insights and understand their journeys of innovation

We hope that by sharing the process and collective learnings from ELEVATE you will be inspired to imagine new possibilities for high potential learners in your own school, and feel supported in your own efforts to innovate for the future.

Dr Geoff Newcombe AM
Chief Executive, AISNSW
ELEVATE: Agile design for high potential learners
DISCIPLINED INNOVATION PROCESS: AN OVERVIEW

ELEVATE was a multiyear initiative involving leading educators that explicitly focused on identifying and realising the high potential in learners.

The program involved 40 ELEVATE schools across three Communities of Practice, supported by 70 schools in a Community of Engagement and approximately 2500 individuals in our Community of Interest.

Using a disciplined innovation approach, schools were empowered to explore their context and create adaptive learning environments that focused on deepening and extending their students’ abilities and achievements in academic areas and beyond.

The design of the ELEVATE program incorporated three core components:

- To *elevate* the learning opportunities for high potential learners and unleash their potential;
- To *collaborate* as a profession and use collective wisdom to design practices and models that have an impact;
- To *innovate* “next practices” by using innovation methods and design thinking.

This publication, *Innovating and Leading for Brilliance*, is the third publication in the ELEVATE INSIGHTS Series and shares the learnings that emerged from the process. It focuses on three of the key ELEVATE program goals:

1. Leaders creating the conditions that enable a shift towards more powerful and effective teaching and learning experiences for high potential learners embedded throughout the school.
2. Teachers having the confidence, competence and agility to reshape practices for their context and improve the evidence base to enhance achievement, wellbeing and engagement of high potential learners.
3. Emergence of curriculum and pedagogic designs that are responsive to pace, depth and level of complexity for high potential learners, creating challenges and opportunities for them to achieve excellence and become further motivated.
DISCIPLINED INNOVATION PROCESS: THE SIGNIFICANCE

The design process was underpinned by three key models that proved significant to the ELEVATE schools:

- the ‘nested communities of professional practice’ model
- the ‘triple-diamond’ disciplined innovation model and
- the ‘three fields of knowledge’ model.

The ELEVATE schools discovered the model of nested communities provided energy and support. As teams advanced, they embraced the complexity of innovation together. The opportunity to meet regularly was significant in:

- bringing together different perspectives and expertise
- raising the levels of ambition with and for each other which allowed for breakthrough ideas
- harnessing the collective wisdom generated through purposeful feedback
- uniting with curiosity and generosity in support of one another.

It was evident teacher confidence, competence and agility was intensified within the nested communities model as school teams advanced together to reshape practices for their context. The same model of nested communities was also used within each participating school as part of the innovation process taking new practices to scale with colleagues and learners.

ELEVATE used a ‘triple-diamond’ disciplined innovation model to provide a robust process to stimulate, incubate and scale new solutions. It embraced multiple design thinking tools to guide divergent and convergent thinking, whilst consistently keeping the learner needs central. The model provided school teams with structure and pace to innovate, design and lead change.

The discipline of the model was significant in supporting the leadership of change, scaffolding relationships and providing program management structures throughout the design led process. The model tempered the typical pace of school teams; it created a pace and rhythm that allowed teams to explore the depth and complexity of the challenge. It gave schools permission to slow down and work towards more refined, impactful and robust solutions.
THE THREE FIELDS OF KNOWLEDGE MODEL

Another key aspect of the ELEVATE program was the use of a three fields of knowledge model. This model honours both the best of what is known from research and what we know as professionals within a specific context leading to the new knowledge we can create together.

Knowledge was acquired and co-created through highly collaborative and design led processes, and all three communities of practice developed ‘new’ knowledge that informed their own contextually-based theories of change. It honoured their expertise and the existing evidence base allowing teams to advance with confidence.

The power of using these three models was substantial in emphasising the school teams’ roles as pedagogical designers and as leaders of innovation and change. There is rich evidence and participant quotes throughout this publication that indicate the ELEVATE schools deepened their collective understanding of disciplined innovation processes. As one school shared:

“One of the major advantages is the process itself. We have learnt so much – the type of process is new – not like anything we’ve ever used before, we’ve never prototyped. I’ve often been part of a pilot scheme but that is completely different.”

ELEVATE Participant

ELEVATE also provided teams with an expanded repertoire of leadership capabilities. There was a deliberate distinction made between challenges that are best advanced through improvement methods and those which lend themselves to transformational leadership approaches.

DISCIPLINED INNOVATION PROCESS: THE INNOVATION ZONE

All school teams recognised complex challenges required new methods for designing and testing solutions, which placed them in an innovation zone. Teams were guided to adopt a ‘split screen’ perspective that distinguished their innovation efforts from existing or traditional improvement approaches, whilst still working in the current context.
Each of the Communities of Practice started at a different point of time in the ELEVATE program. Due to the iterative and phased nature of the process, the shared experience of each community of practice was unique but also enriched by what was happening in the other two communities.

In this particular publication of the ELEVATE INSIGHTS Series, we will give you a sense of the shared innovation journey of the ELEVATE schools, as well as glimpses into the individual experiences of each community of practice, as they wrestled with their ‘how might we’ challenge questions in various phases of the process.

ELEVATE challenged participants’ mindsets and reframed their thinking; providing them with new design thinking tools to innovate and lead for brilliance. In Innovating and Leading for Brilliance we offer what we found compelling, in terms of what schools learnt, and share these insights hoping that they will enable action in schools beyond the original ELEVATE program.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Is there a challenge in your school where the Nested Community of Practice model might assist?
2. What other complex challenge demands more than improvement and development? What could be redesigned using disciplined innovation methods?
Innovating for Brilliance
The ambition of ELEVATE was to utilise disciplined innovation methods and the collective efficacy of leading educators to respond to the apparent underperformance of Australia’s top students. It was about effective next practice pedagogy becoming the norm rather than the exception in all schools. All school teams were challenged by a single, overarching question:

“How might we redesign practice so our high potential learners, including gifted students, can thrive?”

The Stimulate Phase of the ‘triple-diamond’ disciplined innovation model helps teams understand the complex challenge by developing a compelling case for change with evidence from their own context. The rich exploration of the existing evidence base, inclusive of horizon scanning, is an important component of this initial phase. An emphasis on the user needs is of great significance in any innovation process in providing focus for designing meaningful solutions.

The Stimulate Phase is a fundamental and highly crucial stage in the innovation journey. In the first year of the ELEVATE program, a horizon scan called Unleashing Brilliance was commissioned, which is the first publication in this ELEVATE INSIGHTS Series and was designed to support participants in the early part of the Stimulate Phase. In our second publication in this series, Sharpening Focus – Discovering Brilliance, we offered a taste of what school teams discovered through ethnography about the needs of their high potential learners.

Ethnography sharpened the focus on the things that mattered to the high potential learners, and this resulted in 12 key prevailing themes emerging for action. Each ELEVATE team developed their contextually-based ‘how might we’ challenge questions within their design briefs. The design brief articulates a clear and specific challenge that schools seek to address. It culminates in the proposition of ‘how might we’ questions to define challenges. This demands further investigation and prototyping as teams move between the Stimulate and Incubate Phases of the innovation model.
In what ways are we developing teacher agility to respond to the needs, interests and motivations of high potential learners?

How might we liberate learning, thereby enabling teacher freedom and flexibility to challenge high potential learners?

How might we facilitate learning as a partnership between students and teachers, which is focused on real world problems that are relevant to our students?

How might we leverage our school culture to develop teacher practices that encourage great student engagement and risk taking?

How might we ‘flick the switch’ in our students, so that they believe in their own potential? So that they act on their potential?

How might we provide opportunities to ignite passion and build self-efficacy in high potential learners?

How might we address the problems of perfectionism, fear of failure and reluctance to take risks that are limiting the achievements of our high potential learners?

How might we have a concurrent approach with students as creative risk takers in their learning as well as being ‘exam smart’?

How might we inculcate a culture of autonomy whereby self-reflection, peer collaboration and independence enable learners to be adaptive?

How might we ensure our high potential learners have personalised and authentic learning experiences that position them to be leaders and initiative takers in their future workplaces and communities?

How might we enable voice, choice and agency in our community in order to unleash potential?

How might we provide time and space for learners to explore the topics that interest them?

How might we tap into the passion, interest and skill sets of students that aren’t currently harnessed by the curriculum?

Each of the 12 Prevailing Themes were confronted in some way by ELEVATE schools as points of inquiry when seeking to improve the outcomes for high potential learners.

We offer these in an inquiry form of 12 Promising Pursuits to assist educators beyond the community of practice who are committed to developing the quality and effectiveness of opportunities for high potential learners. They are provided as starting points for consideration, discussion and action and are accompanied by a selection of ELEVATE schools’ ‘how might we’ challenge questions that demand a solution.
12 PROMISING PURSUITS

How might we re-vision assessment to open doors for next generation learning and teaching?

How might we design curriculum that challenges, engages, empowers our students so they can fulfil their highest aspirations as learners, leaders and global citizens?

How might we devise ways to uncover unknown potential?

How might we establish a culture in which ‘striving for the highest’ means valuing growth and achievement?

How might we cultivate, share and sustain a deeper organisational knowledge and understanding of our high potential learners and their needs?

How might we shift community perception of what matters and how we measure success?

How might we recognise achievements that fall outside the mainstream classroom experience?

How might we extend learning beyond the school walls and engage our learners in real-world, meaningful projects?

How might we change school systems to allow high potential learners to engage with industry?

How might we help motivate and encourage students to pursue a real-world field of study and explore new ways of engaging with these concepts that extend beyond the current curriculum?

How might we co-construct learning to ignite passion, purpose and meaning?

How might we effectively co-design learning experiences to increase motivation and engagement for high potential learners?

QUESTIONS

Do any of these challenges speak to your school’s particular context? Have you been wrestling with any of these 12 Promising Pursuits? If yes, how have you sought to address them in the past?
NAVIGATING COMPLEXITY WITH FILTERS

As part of the disciplined innovation approach employed by the ELEVATE program, multiple design thinking tools, including filters, were used throughout the process. These filters kept the high potential learner at the centre of the process, enabled a focus on the future in all solutions and helped school teams to raise the level of ambition in their responses. The two filters used were the:

- ELEVATE Strategic Filter; and,

These filters were applied consistently throughout the innovation process and school teams placed emphasis on different aspects of the filters, when developing a robust design brief and engaging with their specific challenges. The design brief became the key strategic document to anchor the school teams throughout the incubate phase.

The following filters will be familiar given their application in the ELEVATE INSIGHTS Series: Sharpening Focus – Discovering Brilliance through the Stimulate Phase of the ‘triple-diamond’ innovation model.

**ELEVATE Strategic Filters**

Are you convinced that your challenge/practice/condition will ...

- ... reasonate with specific needs of high potential learners right now (not simply the needs of teachers and schools)? **RELEVANCE TO HIGH POTENTIAL LEARNERS**
- ... significantly impact on long-term outcomes for high potential learners? **OUTCOMES**
- ... relate to the skills and attitudes that high potential learners today will need in their lives and careers, shaped by the world as it will be in the future? **FUTURE ORIENTED**
- ... be relevant to a large number of high potential learners in different contexts and with different backgrounds? **SIGNIFICANT APPLICABILITY**
- ... provide the basis for a very different way of looking at the problem (and opportunity) that can help us do something different to what we already do now? **PERSPECTIVE SHIFT**
- ... contain the potential for many different kinds of opportunities and solutions? **OPPORTUNITY LADEN**
The use of the strategic filters was strong and consistent throughout the journey of ELEVATE. We found they worked universally to raise ambition and maintain focus. The emphasis on the ILE Principles however, varied across school teams and Communities of Practice. This variance can be attributed to the context specific nature of the user needs and the existing school culture.

Research tells us all seven ILE Principles play a role in the creation of effective learning environments; however, school teams highlighted a smaller range of these principles as being absolutely crucial to their design brief. The schools’ emphasis framed the focus of their prototypes and emerging solutions to their ‘how might we’ challenge questions. In some cases, one principle framed the challenge, and another guided the solution; for example, a challenge relating to engagement may be answered by developing a practice that uses collaboration. Consequently, both principles come into play at some stage of the process and, subsequently, the high potential learner’s environment develops.

There was much in common between the ELEVATE schools’ challenges and emerging solutions. It was also clear collaborative participation in the community of practice led to some cross-fertilisation of ideas and focus on certain principles. While, the robust disciplined design process ensured schools remained focused on their individual contexts and students, the opportunity to learn from one another was significant.

One principle that was less evident in all of the schools’ prototyping was assessment. This was not because the principle was less valued or prioritised as a vital aspect of building an effective, innovative learning environment for high potential learners but more reflects a team’s decision to tackle other conditions and practices that would in turn enable future changes to assessment. Significant discussion around the importance of changing approaches to assessment, and indeed the very definition of success, regularly occurred and were considered. Many school teams wanted to address this principle but the possibility of overhauling or innovating something as complex and entrenched as assessment was beyond the scope of this project’s timeframe. Other teams decided there were a number of steps that needed to be taken before change to school-based assessment would be possible and it was in these associated areas they innovated. There was one thread that ran through all three years of the program and that was a desire to use meaningful feedback for assessment and diversified ways of evidencing learning.

While many trends emerged over the three years, each community of practice also had aspects unique to their contexts and challenges. The experience of each community of practice also shed light onto the impact and effectiveness of using innovation to solve challenging problems.

**IMPACT OF THE FILTERS IN SOLVING THE COMPLEX CHALLENGE**

**OECD Innovative Learning Environment Principles**

**ENGAGEMENT** – Learners at the centre;

**COLLABORATION** – the social nature of learning;

**MOTIVATION** – responsiveness to emotion;

**ASSESSMENT** – meaningful feedback for learning;

**CHALLENGE** – stretching all students;

**PERSONALISED** – recognising individual differences;

**CONNECTED** – building horizontal connections.
The Experience of Community of Practice 1

Community of Practice 1 found the ILE Principle of engagement was a common challenge and this had emerged through the ethnographic research. Students were avoiding risk and many had established the rules of achievement early on in their schooling. Therefore, prototyping explored ways of building pace, depth, complexity and transferability into the curriculum, as well as opportunities to co-design, usually in the form of student-teacher negotiated choice or the development of an elective or specific activity. The schools sought to understand why some high potential learners struggled to act on their potential. Although they may have been “doing well” by existing standards, there was frustration from teachers that challenge and stretch was not welcomed by these “doing well” students. Early in the program, a conviction surfaced that teacher agency and professional capacity were key factors, be they as enablers or inhibitors to change, to unlocking the puzzle of developing a learning environment that would create the right conditions for high potential learners.

“We have learnt that when encouraging risk taking in students, we must be able to provide the environment for that to happen. It is important to explore what really challenging learning experiences are like.”

ELEVATE Participant

The Experience of Community of Practice 2

The challenges identified by the second community of practice had a particular focus on personalised, connected solutions that provided specific stretch and challenge for high potential learners. A focus on engagement was still prominent, and the teams tended to work from the perspective that development around this ILE Principle relied on students experiencing the relevance of what they were learning and doing in the classroom. Their prototyping explored the causal links between personalising learning and providing stretch through challenge.

“They (the students) designed activities they believed would be more engaging, exciting for their peers, while responsibly considering limitations and practicalities of actually delivering the project.”

ELEVATE Participant
The Experience of Community of Practice 3

Connected, challenge and personalised emerged as dominant ILE Principles, especially in terms of developing robust solutions and practices, in the third community of practice. Engagement and motivation were also underlying principles for the ideas proposed. Design briefs focusing on collaboration, continued to highlight explorations of learner-teacher negotiated choices and mentoring conversations, often framed as preliminary steps on the path to more complex co-designing of assessment and curriculum. Underlying all challenges and ideation was an awareness of the influence of teacher agency and capacity. For some teams, most progress was made in the realm of professional awareness and practice, but this was acknowledged as vital and foundational to the success of more ambitious plans for organisational change and student agency.

Across the communities of practice, school teams exploring challenges around the design of curriculum found a number of aspects were key to enabling new ways of addressing learner needs:

- definitions of success
- assessment
- relevance of current curriculum to student interests and passions
- relevance of the curriculum to real-world issues
- perceived rigidity in curriculum that inhibited personalisation and
- finding purpose in their learning.

All communities of practice had some school teams pursuing forms of co-design as a way of liberating the curriculum and offering meaningful and authentic collaboration. Students reported enjoying the chance to have more agency in curriculum design. Depth, level of complexity and pace were identified as being important in a curriculum that has the potential to engage and motivate high potential learners. These school teams listened to their students and, in designing their prototypes, used a variety of curriculum and pedagogic designs that built on the knowledge and interests of high potential learners. They recognised the vital importance of passion to engage high potential learners, while acknowledging this could require curriculum change. External industry experts were involved as resources within the curriculum, complementing teachers’ content and pedagogical expertise. Some schools recognised that as this is new for many teachers, they would need assistance to manage it.

“Staff are starting to use ethnographic studies as a way of gaining a better understanding of their students as people first, also as learners ... this has resulted in a much more meaningful relationship being developed with students.”

QUESTIONS

How would you start the journey of creating the right conditions for high potential learners?
What mechanisms and filters does your school use for bringing about these types of conditions?
RESPONDING TO THE COMPLEX CHALLENGE

Emerging by the beginning of the third year of ELEVATE were significant patterns in the school teams’ responses to meeting the needs of high potential learners and there was a developing understanding of what mattered when designing learning for these students. Through the Incubate Phase of the innovation process, teams were able to move from prototyping to theorising. Their school-based theories of change captured the evidence around inputs, enabling conditions and new practice, which in turn led to a set of determined outcomes. Such theories had predictive qualities that enabled other staff to adopt and adapt the key learnings from the ELEVATE project. In addition to a focus on developing teacher agency and capacity, it became clear learner agency was a key factor in activating change for high potential learners.

In this section we drill down into the experiences of each community of practice and share specific insights that emerged from both process and responses to meeting the needs of high potential learners.

EVIDENCING IMPACT

Participating schools from all three communities of practice successfully used a basket of measures to:

- identify high potential learners; and
- monitor their progress and growth.

It was evident early in the ELEVATE journey that schools recognised their strategies for systematically identifying high potential were at best inconsistent and at worst non-existent. The ways in which teachers used data varied depending upon their school context and previous experiences. For example, K-Year 3 teachers who had been involved in specific Literacy and Numeracy programs, went straight to data on a continuum; while Years 3-6 teachers were often working on a blend between graded testing, continuums, standardised testing and very close teacher observation. In the secondary years, data came from a full spectrum of subjects, standardised testing and a variety of diagnostic tests. Given that schools generally have a great deal of quantitative data available to teachers, the inclusion of strategies for gathering ongoing qualitative data in the context of the innovation provided school teams with potential for triangulation and richer understandings. As school teams engaged more confidently with ethnographic research, the blend of this richer qualitative data with the existing quantitative sources, allowed for deeper and more meaningful conversations to identify and meet the needs of their high potential learners.

As one AISNSW coach reflected:

“Evidence is a tricky thing in innovation. Hard evidence, student outcomes, that’s not something in an innovation process that you will see in the short term because you are changing behaviours and ways of doing things. You have to think differently with the evidence you collect.”

Student voice is a familiar notion but the ELEVATE program brought its relevance into sharp focus. By engaging with learners’ perspectives, school teams could better understand student motivation and engagement. All school teams found the development of Learner Profiles through ethnographic research (shared in ELEVATE INSIGHTS Series: Sharpening Focus – Discovering Brilliance) had high impact on teachers’ knowledge of their students. This new knowledge was often the data missing from existing profiles of student achievement. For some schools this led to greater conviction that learning for the high potential student needed to be more personalised and more challenging in terms of complexity and pace.

In addition to new assessment approaches, a range of tools were considered by schools to monitor the progress and growth of their high potential learners. Examples of evidence collected to measure impact were: student perception surveys designed with teachers and students; a Year 12 exit survey isolating the top 30 per cent; parent observations and conversations; teacher reflections; and student self-efficacy measures and reflections.

A school described their experience of finding evidence for change by looking at existing data and comparing it to the findings from their ethnographic analysis:

“We have students who are high potential on paper but are quite significantly underachieving. How to engage them? If they aren’t engaged by Year 9 or 10 they become cynical and lack engagement and can leave school. We know [now] if they were engaged on some level we would have held on to them.”

Data and using evidence to learn, confirm or adjust is an iterative process when working within the disciplined innovation model. Schools became accustomed to asking themselves, how will we know and what will be the indicators or evidence that this works? They developed confidence in diversifying the sources of evidence whilst retaining a focus on their desired impact.
PROTOTYPING EMERGING FROM IDEATION

Principles of Prototyping

TEST EXCITING IDEAS
Test how you will meet your greatest challenges and opportunities, not just what you think might work.

FOCUS ON LEARNING
Pinpoint exactly what you need to learn.

REDUCE RISK BY DESIGN
Design experiments that are as cheap, quick and low risk as possible for your learning focus.

INVOLVE THE TARGET USER
Use your prototypes with high potential learners, teachers and other key stakeholders.

Prototyping is an essential innovation method of testing out ideas with others in order to learn how to make the ideas even better. It is underpinned with rapid experimentation, evaluation, learning and adaptation. Prototyping energises the process of change by surfacing many perspectives to test and shape new solutions.

“Prototyping has highs and lows for real learning; it’s like a pinball machine.”
ELEVATE Participant

“A strong focus on evaluative thinking informs an iterative approach to innovation.”
ELEVATE Participant

“Prototyping must be a way of bringing people in, along with learning and designing together.”
ELEVATE Participant

“I now see the power of prototyping – to bring people in, to have great dialogue and to not invest too much too early. It is critical to the success of process and programs.”
ELEVATE Participant

Ideation starts the divergent thinking at the beginning of the Incubate Phase, where multiple ideas are proposed, combined and then refined. The refined ideas for solutions are then built upon through the process of prototyping. Prototyping allows the component parts of the ideas to be tested and refined, aspects of the idea that have the desired impact can be enhanced, and aspects that are not desirable can be left behind.

The following examples will give an idea of some of the solutions explored by the communities of practice during the prototyping phase of ELEVATE:

- Inquiry-based, flexible learning activity using self-nominating vertical groupings of Years 5-8 students
- Teacher-student negotiated challenges based on students’ progress in core skills/knowledge
- Year 10 elective opportunity for students to pursue a negotiated learning experience that links them directly to industry or community leaders in local area
- An innovative space where secondary students and staff can work together on negotiated challenge enquiries using different pedagogies and approaches not possible in the classroom
- A new learning culture developed through workshops that develop students’ metacognition and pinpoints individual progress on a learning continuum
- A problem and challenge-based interdisciplinary elective using external community and industry coaches.
The Theories of Change from across the communities of practice showed the range of student and teacher actions and behaviours necessary for change to occur in these particular schools. Of additional interest during the prototyping phase were approaches for ensuring the acquisition and utilisation of future focused skills in the classroom. The overall picture that emerged from the innovative work of these particular schools, was the significant role played by teacher and learner agency in the creation of learning experiences that could be responsive to the needs of high potential learners.

Our analysis of these school teams’ theories told us a number of changes to conditions and practices had to occur, in order for learner and teacher agency to thrive. The following is a representation of how specific components of a Theory of Change work dynamically to strategically plan actions that lead to changes in behaviour, and ultimately convince practitioners that they are making progress. This representative sample is an illustration to provide an understanding of the nature of the conditions and practices within the Theory of Change and the power of the dynamic relationship between them. This power comes from the connection between the proposed changes and the impact these have on learner and teacher experience.

The appetite for innovation is strong but a culture of inconsistency has meant limited follow through in the past.”

ELEVATE Participant

“Doing this work requires bravery, vulnerability, risk-taking and collaboration.”

ELEVATE Participant
If you made one or more of these changes to practice in your school context, what differences would your high potential learners notice? What conditions would you need to change to make it happen?
One of the anticipated outcomes of the program was diffusion of key learnings and new knowledge to colleagues within the ELEVATE schools, educators in the wider communities of engagement and future adopters of the innovations. The school teams were acting on behalf of their colleagues with the goals of:

- scaling the core ideas for increasing growth of high potential learners
- identifying the conditions conducive to developing professional practices that facilitate high expectations and high impact pedagogy.

A close analysis of the 40 school team solutions revealed a number of key factors and concepts the schools diffused and could prepare to scale through new practices for their specific challenge. These can be broadly categorised in three clusters: the two user groups of teachers and students and the nature of learning. The following factors and concepts were found to have impact on the high potential learner and were taken forward in plans by the school teams for scaling and diffusion.

### Teachers

- Agency and confidence with relevant skills to be designers of pedagogy
- The role of professional learning and coaching to build desired capacity
- Confidence and skill as co-designers and collaborators with learners to achieve greater personalised, connected learning for high ability students
- Skill with processes, strategies and tools for identifying high potential learner needs and the shifting points of dynamic tension

### Students

- Self-perception and self-concept of themselves as a learner and their impact on learning
- Agency and voice of the learner to co-design their learning and develop future focused skills
- Building on passions, purpose and interests valued by the learners

The nature of learning, provision of curriculum and quality of learning experiences

- Assessment that is transparent, purposeful, formative and explicit
- Defining (or redefining) the meaning of success and achievement
- Curriculum that leads to experiences that are relevant to the learner and connected to the world beyond school
- Authentic, purposeful and personalised learning sequences
- Learning as a social and contextual activity – to be both leveraged and enabled
- Use of a variety of data to understand context, describe individual progress and inform high impact pedagogy to take the learner forward.

In summary, the ELEVATE program and the 40 school teams were able to draw some universal conclusions around high impact ideas, conditions and pedagogy as well as articulate key understandings around the development of robust, effective learning environments designed for the needs of high potential learners. These conclusions and understandings have been shared with the hope of sparking possibilities and strategies in your schools.

“It’s all about how you see yourself. Sometimes we’re in this very fixed mindset of being solutions focused, give me a solution, let’s go with it, let’s move, let’s go, we’re always in a hurry. It’s really time … to sit back and look around. It’s about building our ideas and really tapping into that collective genius and seeing what’s possible. Because we can shape what happens and we have to sit back and give ourselves time to do that. You’ve got to reset yourself and free fall a little. It’s scary but it’s worth it.”

ELEVATE Participant
Leading for Brilliance

Teams joined ELEVATE because their schools had a compelling case for change and sought new ways of engaging with high potential learners. The program was designed around engaging the leadership of school teams as innovators and leaders of change who could participate in a responsive authorising environment open to transformation.

ELEVATE school teams were comprised of experienced leaders and expert practitioners. The leading educators within the program brought with them a high level of expertise in curriculum design, teaching and learning and change management. It was recognised that for the vast majority of participants, disciplined innovation was a new approach for designing and leading for change.
As teams commenced their work in ELEVATE, they needed to appreciate their context in terms of knowing their school environment and their user needs. We equipped teams with two new processes; the Case for Change and ethnography. Ethnographic research from across the 40 ELEVATE schools revealed 26 common learner insights that became dominant across the program and schools, more specifically, had clear patterns of user needs unique to their contexts. Whilst the complexity of the learner within and across contexts was significant and varied, the constraining factors that constituted the current state of play for ELEVATE schools had far greater congruence.

Over the course of the program, the school teams developed theories around conditions and practices that would enable change and overcome constraining factors. As teams came to conclusions about what was needed for their change to be effective and be sustained, they became aware of the importance of leading enabling environments, and how vital the active engagement of all types of leadership was to the process of transformative change. They also realised that without such engagement and commitment to change, taking new approaches to scale would be a struggle.

“The dynamics of the team is really important. The innovation team selection is key to success.”

ELEVATE Participant

“I encourage you to think about changing the system, changing the structures. Don’t just look at the bolt on small bright flames that come up for 2 weeks, 4 weeks, 6 weeks and then dies down again.”

ELEVATE CoP1 Participant addressing CoP3

“We’ve already recognised that the infrastructure that’s in our schools at the moment, is to some degree suffocating what we want for high potential learners and what we’ve got to do is get those shackles away from ourselves to enable us to explore this fabulous ideation.”

ELEVATE Participant
So, what were some of the constraining factors leaders encountered that affected high potential learners in the ELEVATE schools?

The following diagram lists the common constraining factors that surfaced through ethnography and Cases for Change across all three communities of practice:

**LEARNER CONSTRAINTS**

Within the schools, Communities of Practice found high potential learners demonstrated a range of constraining behaviours such as:

- risk-aversion, compliance and coasting
- poor motivation and disengagement from learning
- being marks focused and intent on ‘playing the game’
- being high in ability but registering underperformance
- demonstrating high levels of achievement outside of school, yet not valuing in-school learning experiences
- viewing success with a narrow focus
- lacking necessary resilience.

**SCHOOL CONSTRAINTS**

Within the schools, the Communities of Practice found:

- teacher understanding of how to personalise learning for every child was inconsistent
- teachers realised they had to find different ways to increase motivation and engagement
- teachers needed to recognise and provide opportunities to effectively stretch and challenge students
- current teaching and learning programs were not preparing students with work skills for anticipated future
- the current curriculum was not providing desired development of core competencies
- current assessment activities often lacked meaning and relevance to the learner
- inflexibility in systems, structures and procedures limited scope of change and innovation
- involving and building partnerships with external experts and industry is challenging
- some aspects of school cultures nurtured compliant, risk-adverse students, who were teacher dependent
- a focus on marks was dominant
- students often lacked the opportunity to share their voice and choice in how and what they learnt
- there were unnecessary barriers for inclusion in existing enrichment opportunities
- high potential learners were not clearly identified.

“The leadership focuses on a culture of change to build structures and experiences that foster relationships. Experiences are designed to be flexible and challenging whilst exploring opportunities to respond to student voice.”

ELEVATE Participant
TRANSFORMATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

At the heart of the program was an appreciation of the importance of relationships within enabling leadership environments. Participating schools valued the interactions, collaborations and learning:

- with the AISNSW School Innovation coaches
- with others in their school; and
- with others in the community of practice.

Schools came to realise that such relationships sustained their efforts and energised their work. Involving others in the process helped to lift their ambition and advance them towards refined and impactful solutions.

WITHIN A COACHING CONTEXT

The program used a blended model that incorporated coaching, mentoring and workshop facilitation. The role of the AISNSW School Innovation coaches was fundamental to the program design.

This was to challenge and support schools to hold the big picture and move through the phases of the ‘triple-diamond’ innovation model. The coaching available through the ELEVATE program was recognised by schools as a powerful way of learning, and one of the most significant factors setting the program apart from other models of professional learning they have previously experienced. Frequent coaching sessions sustained momentum. This created a rich sense of “making progress together”, as one principal said.

ELEVATE schools valued the relationships they formed with the AIS School Innovation coaches:

“They speak to us at a point of need ... one of the real values of the program is they are modelling what they want us to be doing. They propose that we coach our own staff, and indeed we coach our students in their learning journeys.”

ELEVATE Participant

Coaching cohesion was supported through team planning, pairing and debriefing, documentation and sharing knowledge of progress within the communities of practice. The coaches also saw their role as being one that held school teams to the disciplined process, encouraged them in their ambition and supported them when teams found themselves working at “the edge of their competence”.

“We design the coaching session to ensure we are embedding the language and the tools of the workshop; so the whole community is moving together through the discomfort, with the same foundations.”

AISNSW School Innovation coach
COACHING BEHAVIOURS FOR HOLDING THE BIG PICTURE WHILE WORKING ON THE DETAILS

AISNSW School Innovation coaches were intent on demonstrating the following behaviours:

- Asking rather than telling
- Listening and observing
- Structuring and guiding
- Demonstrating and showing
- Suggesting and proposing
- Summarising and synthesising
- Striving for win-win agreements
- Balancing tasks with relationships and
- A commitment to and focus on impact

AN UNRELENTING FOCUS ON THE PROCESS

Coaching conversations and sessions with school teams maintained a consistent focus on the following:

- High potential learners
- Design process and holding teams consistently to disciplined innovation
- Maintaining ambition within their work
- Emerging new practices and their development
- Evidencing impact
- Socialisation (scale/diffusion) and development of communities of practices/engagement and
- Relationship between innovators and adopters

QUESTIONS

Do you have any opportunities to apply this protocol in your school?
How might this protocol support and enable others to innovate and lead change?
Over the course of the program, school teams intentionally included more of their own staff to create a Community of Engagement within their schools, by socialising their learning. In order to mobilise demand, ELEVATE schools engaged with their colleagues through a variety of participation pathways, which was an important step in diffusing their work throughout the school.

The support of principals and executive teams was crucial for enabling change by creating an authorising environment and, in the most practical terms, by allowing time for a variety of pathways for teachers to participate, plan and prototype, to share progress through staff meetings and to build knowledge through professional learning sessions.

ELEVATE encouraged participants to value what others bring to challenges and harness the insights and perspectives of their colleagues, to design the best possible solutions. As a consequence of working continuously with colleagues within their school, teams gained a first-hand understanding of the iterative nature of innovation and the need for ideas generation.

Innovation was clearly a ‘team sport’ for all of the ELEVATE schools. It relied on teams of professionals coming together to share their knowledge, expertise and commitment to collaborate on better ways of designing learning for their students.

“I now know that keeping people informed all the way along the journey generates interest and brings people on board. Be invitational and open – not mandatory.”

ELEVATE Participant

“It is important to bring teachers along from the beginning with clear effective communication and opportunities for personalised professional learning to build skills and capacity.”

ELEVATE Participant

“Since ELEVATE there is a change in language and attitude. It’s provided a whiff of excitement in the whole school; added a layer of passion about what we are doing. We are doing something very exciting. All staff have made an assumption that they are part of it. This has to happen! Otherwise change will not be sustainable.”

ELEVATE Participant

“Support from the executive gave explicit permission to make the structural changes necessary for success, but also gave license to the experiment at a level that pushed the boundaries of current practice.”

ELEVATE Participant

Movement Building and Mobilising Demand
WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The relationships that developed within the Community of Practice led to a trusting environment in which schools engaged in peer critique. Sharing and receiving feedback became a valuable learning activity and a regular feature in ELEVATE workshops. Coaches used a simple feedback protocol, “Be kind, specific and helpful”. With regular coaching, both during workshops and back in the school context, teams steadily built a practice of reflective conversation using this structured feedback.

Fundamental to the program design was the creation of new knowledge. Part of that knowledge came from collaboration around what was known and what was researched. New knowledge was further refined by collective reflection and critical feedback. Transformative practice was one of many anticipated outcomes of the ELEVATE program and the communities of practice were regularly asked to share their personal growth, and emerging new knowledge, with one another. This new knowledge was shared at workshops through progress ‘pitches’ and opportunities for team reflection.

At the end of the program, each community of practice was called upon to consolidate the new knowledge and develop insights that could be carried forward into future practice. The ELEVATE program saw this as another aspect of transformational change – in this case, transformation of the professional.

“We’re learning about each other. We’re connecting with other schools. We are talking about pedagogy. We’ve got a whole day every so often we can talk about what really interests us.”

ELEVATE Participant

ELEVATE Participant
ASPECTS THAT TRANSFORMED THE PROFESSIONAL

Following are the voices of some of the educators involved in the program. They shared with one another their personal transformative journeys as professionals.

“I used to think change would happen if it was lead from the top. Now I think sustained change is grounded in each person’s own reality and their desire to make positive changes.”

“It’s taken away the hit and miss factor of introducing something new. Our school likes to move with the times and to introduce new things and this has given us an opportunity to really reflect and see things, filter things through and try things.”

“I used to feel frustrated with the lack of immediate change, now I think time is an asset – long range vision is important, celebrate as you go.”

“I used to do lots of prep in terms of ‘what’, now I do most of my prep in ‘how/process/protocols’ and lots of work afterwards to synthesise and recalibrate.”

“I used to think leadership was presenting the plan. Now I think leadership is shaping the vision and facilitating the plan.”

“The one thing you will find is you will use this [innovation] process back in your schools in other contexts and it’s highly, highly valuable.”

“What you’re learning here is not just great for what you do in change management around high potential learners in your schools; it’s great for change across the school.”

How might the advice shared by the ELEVATE schools influence or guide your leadership of a project such as ELEVATE?
“I used to think various voices would slow down change. Now I think a broad scope of voices is needed for change to occur. You actually need to listen closer to the ‘nay-sayers’ and put yourself in their shoes.”

“I used to think I have to have everything in place before beginning. Now I launch with the case for change and student-centered vision then shape/correct as we go.”

“I used to produce lots of ‘stuff’. Now I think more purposefully around the artefacts that are essential to support and sustain change.”

“I used to do lots of ideating on my own. Now I wait and ideate purposefully with a skilled team.”

“I used to think just clearer communication would ensure others would understand and simply ‘do’. Now I see the value of getting the input of many stakeholders, to find the ‘truth’, to ideate together, to be free to prototype and test out.”

“I used to think high potential learners knew who they were. Now I think they are often unaware of the fact they fall in this category … and that they do not have the skills initially to activate their abilities.”

“It’s a new way of thinking. The slow thinking process hasn’t hurt us either. Because it has allowed us to rethink and re-evaluate and refine and reimagine. Schools move at such a hectic pace, and I think what it has done has infiltrated our entire approach to change management in the school.”

ELEVATE Participant

How ready is your school to take on a new way of thinking and a new speed for bringing in change?
Enduring Insights

In this section we would like to share the big-picture program learnings of *ELEVATE: Agile design for high potential learners*. Throughout the four years of this stimulating and complex program, the AISNSW School Innovation coaches met regularly, often with the Innovation Unit, to reflect on the larger learnings and new knowledge that was emerging from the work of each community of practice. We have been able to synthesise this level of understanding and take the opportunity to share these enduring insights. We believe these will inform your thinking as you lead the way for transforming education for the future.
INNOVATION WORKS AND COACHING IS CRUCIAL

Our key programmatic insights are:

- Innovation works; we found disciplined innovation to be a valuable method to advance solutions to complex challenges within varied contexts;

- Coaching is an integral transformative relationship to the process of innovating.

At the outset of the program, the significance of the disciplined innovation model and role of coaching as a transformative relationship were predicted as being key to the impact of ELEVATE. An early independent evaluation of the ELEVATE program focused on the integrity of the program’s design. These evaluators recognised momentum was building, as school teams’ engagement with the innovation process developed. The key observations from the evaluation were:

- A deep contextual understanding of what high potential learners means for each school was emerging through the disciplined innovation process

- Teachers were redesigning their practices and were becoming comfortable with ‘messiness’ and ‘discomfort’ of innovation as a new method of designing and leading change

- Schools listened to their students and, in designing their prototypes, used a variety of curriculum and pedagogic designs that built on the knowledge and interests of their high potential learners

- There was a deeper understanding among schools of the disciplined innovation model and its benefits; the need for ideas generation; and evidence of use of the ELEVATE tools for other purposes in schools

- Communities of Practice were strengthening within schools and emerging to create and share new knowledge in other contexts

- A highly skilled coaching team challenged and supported schools to ‘hold the big picture’ and faithfully implement the program design

- Teachers appreciated a challenging program designed to reframe both language and mindset that also actively engaged them in their own professional learning

- A deepening understanding of pedagogical design for high potential learners was emerging

- A wider range of ‘evidence’ was being used in relation to high potential learners that included both qualitative and quantitative data

- The schools established a richness and complexity in the evidence used to identify challenges, opportunities, insights, needs and system challenges.

As the program progressed, both ELEVATE coaches and school teams consistently observed and reconfirmed all of the early observations of the evaluators.
THREE MODELS FOR UNDERSTANDING HOW TO MEET HIGH POTENTIAL LEARNERS NEEDS

Our conclusions around meeting the needs of high potential learners can be represented in three models:

1. Seeking points of dynamic tension for high potential learners
2. Three domains that matter to high potential learners and enabled innovation
3. A collection of drivers to meet the needs of high potential learners.

In ELEVATE INSIGHTS Series: Sharpening Focus – Discovering Brilliance, we introduced a model for seeking points of dynamic tension for high potential learners and a model of three domains that matter to high potential learners and are at play when redesigning existing approaches or designing new solutions to meet the needs of learners.

SEEKING POINTS OF DYNAMIC TENSION

Identifying and appreciating learner insights is vital to establish the points of dynamic tension that need to be in play within a learning sequence and design for high potential learners. Throughout the program we have deepened our appreciation of the insights of learners and their significance for teachers who are determined to design challenging and complex learning. It is evident that learner insights provide the nuanced data for new solutions to overcome barriers and amplify enablers to learning. They are balanced by the use of ELEVATE Strategic Filters and the existing evidence base such as the OECD ILE Principles to determine the shifting points of dynamic tension.
THREE DOMAINS THAT MATTER TO HIGH POTENTIAL LEARNERS

This dynamic model explores the interaction between three domains that are at play when redesigning existing approaches or designing new solutions to meet the needs of our high potential learners.

These domains are:

- **Intrapersonal** – Self-awareness, attitudes, beliefs, passions and interests
- **Connections** – Interpersonal, contextual and purpose in the world
- **Structures** – School (e.g. curriculum and pedagogy), family and extracurricular activities

Effective solutions and approaches require leaders and educators to recognise and embrace the complex nature of these domains and the dynamic contextual interplay between them. Where all three domains intersect, there is a positive or negative impact, be it as an enabler or constraint. In this optimal zone or ‘sweet spot,’ impact is maximised and innovation can have the most significant potential. It is also however, where the most complex challenges lie.

Rather than the size of each domain remaining static, the experiences of the ELEVATE schools demonstrated how these varied according to a school’s context and the individual contexts of each learner.

For example, through the ethnography, it was evident for some high potential learners that the predominant factors affecting their learning were within the **intrapersonal domain**. Learners’ self-perception, how they defined success and their attitudes to risk taking required considerable explicit attention from teachers and leaders as connections and structural changes were attended to concurrently.

For some schools where learners already had a strong sense of self-belief and motivation, the **connections domain** became a focus for innovative change. Connections to the real world through industry experts and community members, and the interpersonal and relational skills required, featured prominently in their innovation work. In addition, new and creative ways to **structure** the learning week, timetables and purposeful learning conversations between learners, teachers and experts required equal attention.

The size of the impact of each domain as well as the size of the zones of intersection between the domains were independently influenced by each schools’ unique context and the individual complexity of the learners for who they were designed. However, what did not vary was the significance of the point at which all three domains intersected. As school teams worked on solving their challenges, they found they needed to attend to the influence of all three domains and operate within the ‘sweet spot’ in order to have the maximum impact from their innovations.

In the long-term, the challenge for leaders will be to create conditions and cultures that are open and responsive, so these domains might work in a more fluid and flexible way. This will allow teachers to design agile solutions that fit the needs of high potential learners.
Throughout the ELEVATE program, it became evident that transformative change required the creation of a specific learning environment and professional culture. As we worked with the communities of practice, key features emerged and they were observed to be crucial drivers for transformative change in the ELEVATE schools. These drivers prepared the learning environment and professional culture in such a way that opportunities for high potential learners could be maximised and new approaches to working with these learners introduced.

We identified seven drivers that could form a strategy to be used when meeting the needs of high potential learners through agile, disciplined innovation.

Whilst each or some of these drivers could be present in an existing school, after watching the journey of each and every of the 40 ELEVATE schools, we are confident that when all seven drivers work in combination they create the conditions to progress innovation and retain a focus on the desired impact.

“By using design-thinking approaches, we have been challenged to leave the ‘safe zone’ and delve into a range of possibilities. The process is untidy, exhilarating and fast-paced. At times, it raises more questions than it answers, but throughout we know disciplined innovation is at the heart of the solutions we are seeking.”

ELEVATE Participant

1. **USER-CENTRIC PROCESS:**
   Keep the learner at the centre of the challenge/solution/work.

2. **“YES” MINDSET:**
   Commit to understanding the challenges and to making change. Be prepared to work differently and shift your thinking.

3. **COLLABORATIVE TEAM EFFORT:**
   Leadership authorises teams of innovators developing new practices that they share with colleagues.

4. **PROTOTYPING MINDSET:**
   Iterative, agile, rapid, context-driven solutions tested in real settings with the high potential learners.

5. **DEALING WITH THE SPLIT SCREEN:**
   Monitoring the tension and maintaining connection with the current practices, whilst incubating innovation.

6. **STRATEGIC RESOURCING:**
   Be prepared to leverage all existing resources, internal and external, as well as creating access to new sources.

7. **SCALE FOR IMPACT – SCALE FOR CONTEXT:**
   Create the right conditions for scaling, embrace multiple forms of evidence of impact and spread the new practice.
SPARKING POSSIBILITIES CARDS

We have developed a set of resource cards that describe the disciplined innovation process, so that you can explore the agile design approach in greater detail. The Sparking Possibilities cards provide you with guidance and ideas, so that you could consider embarking on your own innovation challenge.

DOWNLOAD HERE

SPARKING CONVERSATIONS

A powerful strategy in the ELEVATE program was the use of professional conversations. If you have been inspired by this ELEVATE INSIGHTS Series, we encourage you to:

- Share this resource with at least one other colleague – maybe a grade partner or your head of department;
- Email the link to colleagues in your own professional communities of practice or share it through social media;
- Take key findings or one aspect of the disciplined innovation process and unpack it for your school context. Follow-up with a formal or informal meet-up with interested colleagues and use the Sparking Possibilities Cards;
- Think of a challenge in your school that is proving difficult to solve and plan a professional learning experience for your staff with the aim of constructing a case for change to address this challenge. How can the challenge become an opportunity?

DOWNLOAD HERE
# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Special acknowledgment goes to AISNSW Chief Executive, Dr Geoff Newcombe AM and the advisory support from the Independent Schools Centre for Excellence Council whose leadership enabled AISNSW's first open, large scale, cross sectoral disciplined innovation program to advance solutions for a shared complex challenge.

Initiated by the AISNSW, ELEVATE was amplified by strategic partnerships with Innovation Unit for the duration of the program and with AITSL to gather voices of thought leaders who confirmed the need for action. We appreciate the evaluation conducted by the Centre for Strategic Education which gave further confidence to our professional learning model to design new solutions to the complex challenge of responding to the apparent underperformance of Australia's top students.

Appreciation and recognition goes to the 40 Community of Practice schools, over 70 schools in our Community of Engagement and approximately 2500 individuals in our Community of Interest who followed and brought enthusiasm to this work.

It was a privilege to design professional learning for, be inspired by and coach the educators on the teams from the following Communities of Practice.

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