Independent Review of Education in Tasmania

Response to Consultation Paper

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UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

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Acknowledgment of Country

The University of Tasmania pays its respects to elders past and present and to the many Aboriginal people that did not make elder status and to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community that continues to care for Country.

We acknowledge the profound effect of climate change on this Country and seek to work alongside Tasmanian Aboriginal communities, with their deep wisdom and knowledge, to address climate change and its impacts.

The Palawa people belong to one of the world's oldest living cultures, continually resident on this Country for over 65,000 years. They have survived and adapted to significant climate changes over this time, such as sea-level rise and extreme rainfall variability, and as such embody thousands of generations of intimate place-based knowledge.

We acknowledge with deep respect that this knowledge represents a range of cultural practices, wisdom, traditions, and ways of knowing the world that provide accurate and useful climate change information, observations, and solutions.

The University of Tasmania likewise recognises a history of truth that acknowledges the impacts of invasion and colonisation upon Aboriginal people, resulting in forcible removal from their lands.

Our island is deeply unique, with cities and towns surrounded by spectacular landscapes of bushland, waterways, mountain ranges, and beaches.

The University of Tasmania stands for a future that profoundly respects and acknowledges Aboriginal perspectives, culture, language, and history, and a continued effort to fight for Aboriginal justice and rights paving the way for a strong future.

Acknowledgments

This submission was developed by Professor Robyn Cox, Professor Sharon Fraser, Professor Louise Starkey, Professor Victoria Carrington, Dr Bill Baker, Dr Lauren Armstrong, Dr Elspeth Stephenson, Dr Carmel Hobbs, Dr Robyn McCarthy and Mrs Catherine Chalmers – School of Education, University of Tasmania

Disclaimer

This submission has been developed for the Independent Review of Education in Tasmania by colleagues in the School of Education, University of Tasmania.

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Executive Summary

The School of Education, University of Tasmania welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Independent Review of Education.

This submission is made alongside the University of Tasmania's submission and that of the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Achievement. The submission has been prepared on the basis of the School's work as the main provider of Initial Teacher Education in Tasmania and the research expertise of individual academic staff.

In this submission, we focus on four key themes that reflect the expertise of the School of Education and the areas highlighted in the Consultation document where we have the skills and track record to provide additional support to the education sector. These are: early family literacy practices, trauma informed practice in education, transition and regionality, and the teaching workforce and professional development.

1. Early family literacy practices - Theme 1

The first thousand days of a child's life are critical for development, laying the foundation for future cognitive, emotional, and social growth. Language acquisition during this period plays a pivotal role in shaping a child's ability to communicate, interact, and ultimately move within and between different social strata. This section of our response focuses on early literacy in families and communities and sounds a note of caution when developing and implementing well-intentioned interventions.

We now have decades of research evidence outlining the links between early language development and long-term achievements in education, better social-emotional skills, good health, improved employment prospects and more opportunities for social mobility - in other words better life skills. BERA (British Educational Research Association) has recently released a working paper titled: The role of early language development & social mobility (Siraj et al 2024) which strongly reminds us that "... it is crucial to explore the early years of a child's life (a period characterised by rapid brain development). The language children hear, and the people with whom they engage, leave a strong imprint on their speech, language skills, attainment, well-being and cognitive development." (p.1).

Research evidence from the work of Melhuish & Gardiner, (2020) showed the early Home Learning Environment index contained seven important aspects of the child's experience and that each of these had a strong relationship with later outcomes, especially language achievement. The more experiences children had of each activity at home or when with family, the better they did in school. These seven aspects are:

1. being read to daily
2. painting and drawing
3. going to the library
4. playing with letters/numbers
5. learning activities with the alphabet
6. learning activities with numbers/shapes
7. learning activities with songs/poems/nursery rhymes.

(Siraj et al, 2024 p. 3)

These are all essential. However, we are reminded by the now-discredited but influential research of Bernstein (1975, 2003) and even earlier Labov (1972) who argued that different achievement levels could be attributed to the differing linguistic code or language use of lower socio-economic and higher socio-economic groups that calling some language practices deficit and in need of 'catch up' pedagogical practices leads to disengagement and additional disenfranchisement in communities.

The work of Heath (1983) problematised the view that the language and literacy practices of non-mainstream communities were automatically deficit. Heath's work drew sharp attention to the rich range of language practices and discourse styles that exist across diverse communities, including those that would be considered non-mainstream. In doing this, she also made clear the strong alignment between the language practices of middle class families and those rewarded in classrooms. Gee (1986) also made strong claims about the alignment of practices, claiming that; "Teachers of English are not, in fact, teaching English, and certainly not English grammar, or even 'language'. Rather, they are teaching a set of discourse practices, oral written, connected with the standard dialect of English." (p. 742).

There is evidence that not all interventions have a positive outcome for families and communities. England's education programs where teachers in the early years have been asked to "Close the word gap" (see Hindman et 2015 and others) by intervening in perceived deficits of children's home language use by actively teaching words to increase those from 'impoverished' home learning environments to develop a 'rich vocabulary' is an example of this deficit model with its negative impact on family engagement. This is a reminder that using a deficit or 'catch up' model for this work often result in disengagement by families and caregivers as a sense of judging cultural or community practice is experienced.

While the intention may be good, these deficit-based interventions often do not meet their objectives. A series of papers (see Cushing, 2023, 2024a, 2024b) has very recently been published arguing that any educational policy which promotes the acquisition of academic language as a tool for enabling social justice is a flawed theory of language which ties together race and class in producing discourses of linguistic deficiency and legitimises language policing which undermines the education of marginalised children.

We argue that Tasmania a well-trained and connected early years workforce with the knowledge and skills base to work with diverse language and discourse communities in ways that do not assign deficit. An evidence-based approach to workforce development and to early years' practice should inform the training of this workforce. This workforce needs to be trauma informed (see section 2 below) and to work from an a disposition that ensures family practices are recognized as valuable rather than deficit and that opens pathways to additional resources that do not diminish what takes place in children's homes and communities.

We know that Tasmania does not have enough trained early years workers and educators to meet the needs of Tasmanians, nor does it have the appropriate workforce training available. The School of Education is investing in new early years positions and courses to ensure our graduates reflect these values and we offer our resources to the independent review to assist partners to develop new training for Tasmania's early years workforce.

2. Trauma Informed Practice - Themes 2 + 4

The School of Education has been developing expertise in Trauma Informed Practice in relation to education and co-developed and delivered professional development for teachers and leaders in Tasmanian schools. Insights from this work as well as our own evidence-based expertise informs this section on trauma and education in Tasmania. We would welcome opportunities to use this expertise to collaborate with Tasmania's schooling sectors to ensure that all schools are trauma informed and operate on a set of trauma informed principles.

In this section of our submission, we argue that a greater investment in building and maintaining a whole of system approach to trauma informed education is critical to addressing the following themes and questions:

Theme 2: Strengthening supports and engagement for all learners at all stages of education:

1. What can be done to better support students who are struggling or at risk of falling behind to get back on track?
2. How can we ensure that all Tasmanian learners get the most out of their education and reach their full potential?

Theme 4: Support for our teaching workforce:

1. How can we keep the existing workforce feeling energised and supported so they stay?

Our submission has three areas of focus:

1. Ensuring all students can reach their potential, and supporting students who are struggling requires understanding and responding to the unique needs of all children in ways that increase their sense of safety and connection in educational settings
2. Trauma informed education within a child-rights perspective provides the opportunity to create learning environments that are responsive to the unique needs of children and young people who have experienced trauma, while upholding their fundamental rights to safety, dignity, and optimal development.
3. Trauma informed systems respond to, and support staff wellbeing needs

Strengthening supports and engagement by increasing students' sense of safety and connection. In the Tasmanian context, we have a high number of children and families who have experienced significant adversity. Nationally, data from the Australian Childhood Maltreatment Study (ACMS, 2023) has shown that the proportion of Australians (aged 16 years and older) who have experienced maltreatment before the age of 18 include:

1. 32% have experienced physical abuse
2. 28.5% have experienced sexual abuse
3. 30.9% have experienced emotional abuse
4. 8.9% have experienced neglect
5. 39.6% have been exposed to domestic and family violence.

Complex childhood trauma is described as the harm that occurs when children experience repeated damaging harm from adults who are supposed to care for them, that creates a neurological response that can overwhelm the nervous system, and that has wide ranging and long term impacts on an individual's

development and functioning (Howard & Brown, 2024). Experiences of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, and exposure to domestic and family violence are all considered significant adverse experiences and contributors to complex childhood trauma. Adverse experiences early in life negatively impact engagement in school for all family members (Cozolino, 2014; Siegel, 2012). Three areas of focus underpin our understanding of how education systems and the staff within them can operate in ways that support students impacted by trauma – these are attachment, emotional regulation, and safety. One of the most enduring outcomes of adversity is insecure attachment (Bowlby, 1982; Cassidy, 2001). The relationship between attachment and academic achievement is well documented and demonstrated from the early years through to school leaving age (Jacobsen et al, 1994; Learner & Kruger, 1997; Marcus & Sanders-Reio, 2001; Pianta & Harpers, 1996; Teo et al, 1996). In these studies, findings showed a relationship between attachment and cognitive development, academic motivation, increased attention, participation, and school completion (MacKay et al., 2010).

Theme 2 emphasises the importance of strengthening supports and engagement for all learners. Engagement in education is crucial for attainment, but hindered by school settings and systems that do not recognise the complex needs of children and young people who have experienced trauma. In addition to disrupted attachment, difficulties with emotional regulation are also common among children and young people impacted by trauma. These challenges including heightened stress responses, hypervigilance, and difficulties trusting authority figures can all contribute to classroom behaviours that do not meet school expectations, and if poorly understood, lead to students being excluded and suffering from punitive responses that further punish them for being impacted by trauma. To better understand these neurological implications and achieve a sense of safety, all employees need to be trauma informed (SAMHSA, 2014).

Despite the best intentions of schools to support students through systemic practices that emphasise positive behaviour and restorative practices, reliance on suspension to manage student behaviour remains high across Tasmania. In fact, in 2023, Tasmania recorded its highest ever rate of student suspensions (DECYP, 2023). Research further emphasises the implications for students who are excluded from learning via punitive responses to behaviour such as suspension. There are clear associations between suspension and a range of behaviours detrimental to the health and wellbeing of young people (Hemphill et al., 2017) and it is well established that students who are disengaged from education are more likely to not complete school (Noltmeyer et al., 2015). Article 26 of the University Declaration of Human Rights clearly states that 'Everyone has the right to education' and that 'Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality'.

It is recommended that teachers and pre-service teachers are provided with training and ongoing professional development opportunities to increase their understanding of why students engage in undesirable behaviour and how these behaviours can be addressed in more effective ways (Hemphill et al., 2017). Proactive measures including strengthening staff-student relationships, tiered support strategies, and strengthening cognitive and affective engagement are all necessary for engaging students and ensuring all learners are supported to flourish. It is also essential that the voices of all children and young people are heard, particularly those children and young people who are struggling at school, disengaged from school, and those who are not participating to learn more about their interactions with the education system and how their needs can be met to support them to reach their full potential.

Trauma informed education within a child-rights perspective provides the opportunity to create learning environments that are responsive to the unique needs of children and young people who have experienced trauma, while upholding their fundamental rights to safety, dignity, and optimal development. Trauma

informed education is a way of thinking and interacting with others in school settings. It is not a set of strategies or skills to be trained in and then 'apply' with students impacted by trauma. Rather, it is a way of working mindfully to ensure students feel safe at school, connected with people at school, and are learning in settings that support them to regulate their emotions.

Principles of trauma informed education align closely with the fundamental tenets of children's rights, ensuring that every child and young person's dignity, potential and unique needs are respected and addressed. Key principles that underpin a trauma informed; child rights approach include a commitment to:

1. Safety: in the form of physical, emotional and psychological safety; and safe and trusting relationships
2. Empowerment and choice: through prioritising the voices of young people and providing opportunities for children to make choices about their learning experiences, facilitating environments that enable them to regain a sense of control that can be interrupted by trauma.
3. Collaboration: through partnerships with families, caregivers and professionals; and peer support
4. Cultural responsiveness: cultural sensitivity and inclusive practices
5. Strengths-based approaches that focus on resilience and the strengthening of skills and capacity
6. Transparency and trust: via clear communication and consistency
7. Holistic perspective: taking a whole-child, person first approach, and integrating service responses.

As outlined by the National Declaration for a Trauma Aware Education Workforce in Australia (Trauma Aware Education, 2024), schools and early childhood education programs are critically positioned to be key contributors to minimise or even mitigate the impacts of trauma on children and young people, due to their capacity to provide relational learning environments and the significant amount of time children and young people spend in these environments. With the number of students experiencing childhood adversity or complex trauma in Australia on the rise (Calvano et al., 2021), the role of teachers is evolving to require greater levels of emotional and behavioural support for their students (Oberg et al., 2023). However, many studies have found that both new and experienced teachers often feel they lack the necessary skills, knowledge, and confidence to provide this support (Alisic, 2012; Brunzell et al., 2018; Levkovich & Gada, 2020; Luthar & Mendes, 2020; Oberg & Bryce, 2022; Oberg et al., 2023). Consequently, they may experience vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, or other stress-related health issues that affect their overall wellbeing (Brunzell et al., 2021). These challenges play an important role in teacher retention (Buchanan et al., 2013, Hill, 2011). Additionally, some teachers report feeling conflicted as they try to balance their teaching and learning responsibilities with providing emotional support to students with trauma histories (Alisic, 2012; Brunzell et al., 2018).

It is documented that when a teacher's wellbeing is compromised, it also impacts the well-being of their students, who tend to demonstrate increased antisocial and disruptive behaviours (Herman et al., 2018; Kokkinos, 2007). Similarly, teachers who struggle in their roles due to high levels of stress, burnout, or compassion fatigue are found to have higher absenteeism rates than their colleagues, which in turn negatively influences their students' academic outcomes (Herman et al., 2018). Conversely, teachers who achieve compassion satisfaction (i.e., positive feelings associated with helping others) are more likely to be protected against burnout and vicarious trauma (Caringi et al., 2015).

Therefore, supporting teachers to develop confidence and self-efficacy in addressing their students' emotional and behavioural needs becomes critical for both teacher and student. Research has shown that teachers who are trauma informed report increased self-efficacy in providing safe learning environments

and building safe, strong relationships with students (Schimke et al., 2022). Teachers working in trauma informed settings, who themselves are also trauma informed can utilise valuable tools and develop their understanding for navigating the challenges of working with trauma impacted students, while also supporting their own mental health and job satisfaction. Collegial support through a trauma informed lens can be empowering in this regard but requires a school-wide approach where all staff are adequately trauma informed. Achieving this requires two key elements. Firstly, just as teacher-student relationships are central to students' success, trusting and healthy professional relationships between teachers, their colleagues, and leaders are crucial to a teacher's self-efficacy and subsequent success in supporting their students' emotional and behavioural needs. A safe and supportive school environment is crucial and involves positive relationships between staff and students, clear and consistent routines and expectations, trauma informed policies and procedures such as restorative practices rather than punitive responses to challenging behaviour, and empowering students and staff through facilitating authentic opportunities for participation in decision making processes. Secondly, professional learning for all school staff that focuses on the necessary skills and knowledge for supporting students, as well as staff self-care, will contribute significantly to this goal. This professional learning is necessary not only for teachers in schools, but also for pre-service teachers as part of their initial teacher education (Hobbs et al., 2019).

Professional learning alone is not enough. Teachers with high levels of professional preparation in trauma informed practice develop a deeper understanding of how adversity and trauma impacts learning and behaviour. This knowledge empowers educators to work with greater empathy and effectiveness. Research has also shown that training for school staff can be a protective mechanism against the detrimental impacts of working with students impacted by trauma (Craig, 2016). Since beliefs drive practice (Brookfield, 2017), community members at all levels need to be given time within safe spaces to reflect on and challenge their own ontological beliefs and 'try on' new ways of being if they are to become truly trauma-informed, drive living policy, and be effective in achieving their goals.

In recent years, the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) have recognised the importance of trauma informed education and invested in efforts to embed trauma informed practice in government schools. This includes a professional learning program for all staff, guidelines for working in trauma informed ways, and specific funding directed toward schools recognised as having high numbers of students who are impacted by trauma. Whilst professional learning is key to supporting teacher development, understanding alone is not sufficient to become trauma informed, it is the translation of understanding into practice within a given context that supports a trauma informed approach (SAMHSA, 2014). To be more impactful, and ultimately improve school environments for students and staff, a whole of system approach is needed. This includes implementing comprehensive strategies and practices across all levels of the school system to address the impacts of trauma on students, staff and the broader school community. Key elements of a system wide approach include:

1. School leaders adopting a systems-aware perspective to navigate the complex relationships within the school community
2. Integration of trauma informed practice with other school improvement initiatives
3. Consistent practices across schools and the education system, clearly documented in policies and procedures
4. Adjusting classroom expectations, procedures and practices to be trauma informed
5. Embedding multi-tiered support systems that facilitate collaboration with external services, families and community
6. Cultural responsiveness and approaches that address systemic inequalities

7. Providing resources and support for teacher wellbeing
8. Evaluation and continuous improvement

We recommend the following for improving the educational experience and outcomes of Tasmanians:

1. A whole of system trauma informed approach to education that goes beyond professional learning and school-based focus to incorporating deep and sustaining system wide change that benefits students and staff
2. Systemic support for school leaders to enhance their capacity for leading and managing trauma informed practice in their settings
3. Mandatory trauma informed professional learning for all members of education communities, including leaders, administrators, educators, and pre-service teachers in Tasmania
4. Increased opportunities for children and young people to have opportunities to engage in decision making about their education that is meaningful and reaches those students who are disengaged from, or struggling with education
5. A review of the use of suspensions and exclusion in response to behavioural challenges to identify opportunities for implementing trauma informed alternatives that are more likely to lead to longer-term behavioural improvement, and that these alternatives are supported system wide.

3. Transition and Regionality - Theme 1 + 3

There is significant research evidence of a negative effect on student learning caused by changing schools (Hattie, 2009). Transition between schools cause disruptions to friendship networks (e.g., Evans et al., 2018) and can amplify disengagement, particularly among marginalised youth who can slip onto negative motivational and performance trajectories leading to increased school failure and drop out (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). In Tasmania, for many students, there is an added transition between schools from Year 10 to Year 11 (Auditor General, 2022) as these years are predominantly taught in the eight colleges. While in 2015, the Tasmanian Government introduced extension schools initiative (District School teaching years 11 and 12), to change the perception that education finished at Year 10 and to address the reality of students having to relocate, the year 12 attainment rate achieving the TCE qualification or equivalent, has not changed significantly (Productivity Commission, 2022). The report from the Auditor-General (2022) reviewing the extension schools initiative indicated problems with the ways in which the initiative was conceptualised and implemented, but significantly they identified several issues impacting success including restricted subject offerings, lack of availability of subject specialist teachers and increased teacher workload.

Importantly, for Tasmanian students who are not located within convenient commuting distance from the colleges in the three major cities (Hobart, Launceston, Burnie), face additional challenges as they may require that they relocate (e.g., Queenstown to Burnie) to complete years 11 and 12 and gain ATAR. Such a move is disruptive and expensive for the student and their families and a significant barrier to Year 12 completion rates. Such an outcome indicates the need to rethink the education policy and/or the ways in which we enable Tasmanian young people to access year 11 and 12 education. There is an opportunity to leverage digital tools and networks to share teacher expertise across the state to enable access to senior curriculum. Hybrid models where teachers teach students across schools online can enable a wider range of subjects to be taught across the state while retaining support in the local school (for example, Pratt & Pullar, 2013). Such an approach requires collaboration and appropriate policies and funding, but there is potential to improve student engagement and success in education to year 12.

4. The teaching workforce and professional learning - Theme 4 + 5

In this section of our submission, Professor Robyn Cox responds to questions of ensuring a high quality and engaged teacher workforce and the role of professional development. These are core areas of her research and policy expertise and Professor Cox would welcome the opportunity of collaboration to develop a model of professional development for teachers that would be nation-leading and effective in the Tasmanian context.

The questions this independent review are asking are the same ones commanding researcher attention and significant funding across the country and internationally. There is currently over 1.65 million dollars dedicated by the federal government to research relevant to Theme 4 – Supporting our teaching workforce with findings becoming available over the next few years (these studies were granted funding from 2021-2025). Table 1 below shows these studies from Australia Research Council website.

Table 1 – ARC funded research aligned to Theme 4 – Supporting our teaching workforce.

LP210300839 — Queensland University of Technology Career change teachers: Addressing teacher shortages in Australia.	Australia is facing a teacher shortage crisis. Consequently, there have been concerted efforts by governments to attract people into teaching from other sections of the workforce. However, career change teachers often do not stay longer than five years in the profession. There is little evidence on how their retention can be enhanced. This project aims to better understand the differing motivations and experiences of these teachers from diverse backgrounds, and to determine how they can be better prepared and supported through their early years of teaching. A clear benefit of this project will be the longer-term success for career change teachers and their schools and will ensure young people are not disadvantaged by high teacher turnover.
DP230100282 — University of South Australia Early career teacher induction: Supporting precarious teachers.	This project aims to investigate the ways in which Australian induction policies support precariously employed early career teachers to effectively manage student classroom behaviour. This project expects to generate new knowledge of workforce development and induction experiences of early career teachers employed on casual and short-term contracts. Expected outcomes of this project include alternative policy and practice recommendations to support the transition of insecure replacement teachers within the profession. The benefits of this research include, improving teachers' classroom management practices; the retention of new teachers; improving teacher workforce

	development; and building a healthier education system.
DE240100452 — Deakin University TransformUs Higher Ed: Developing confident, 'classroom-ready' graduates.	The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children has been far-reaching. Many students have fallen behind academically, are experiencing mental health challenges and have critically low levels of physical activity. These issues have become a global research priority, the focus of national and state policies, and urgently need addressing. This project offers a novel initial teacher education program that integrates meaningful physical activity into classroom learning to address critical classroom challenges, exacerbated by COVID-19. The empirical findings are expected to generate new knowledge and practices to strengthen teaching degrees from robust evidence base and benefit the learning and health outcomes of all Australian students.
DE250100045 — The University of New South Wales Addressing teacher workload in Australian education systems.	Teacher workload is a growing problem in Australia and internationally, but strategies to address it have yet to be tested. This project will investigate teacher workload reduction policies currently emerging across four Australian states. By analysing policy documents and interview data from teachers and policymakers, the project will generate new knowledge about how workload reduction strategies align with the work teachers value, assessing the contribution of such reforms to improving teacher retention at a time of widespread teacher shortages. Expected outcomes of this project include an empirically informed set of principles for the management of teacher workload concerns, to support teacher retention now and into the future.

The Independent Review of Education in Tasmania (Sept 2024) cites at least three challenges in Theme 4 – Supporting our teaching workforce where the proposed program proposed here through a series of evidenced based arguments might build on current excellence and build a more meaningful style of teaching professional learning. Three compelling arguments are made by the review:

- To ensure Tasmania's future is one of prosperity and higher educational attainment, it's essential to build on current strengths and actively seek out what's missing (p.10)

- The second is to complement the simplification of what is asked of school leaders and teachers, with improved support for implementing initiatives and practical professional learning that focusses on teaching practice. (p.11)
- The Review has heard already that while Tasmania offers various supports to its teachers, there is a need to enhance professional learning and peer support, particularly in areas related to teaching and learning. The Review has also heard that professional learning has in recent times become increasingly focussed on administrative and compliance obligations, at the expense of a focus on teaching practice. (p.12)

Saxe, Gearheart, and Nasir (2001) compared three types of support for teacher learning and found that student achievement improved most when teachers were engaged in sustained, collaborative professional development that specifically focused on deepening teachers' content knowledge and instructional practices. And Wei, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) say, "active learning opportunities allow teachers to transform their teaching and not simply layer new strategies on top of the old." Further to this they go on to say, "as research deepens our understanding of how teachers learn, many scholars have begun to place greater emphasis on job-embedded and collaborative teacher learning."

Building on this stance, Professor Robyn Cox (UTAS) proposes to this independent review a conceptualisation of the third space (Bhaba, 1990) in teacher education – not a new idea but one which has been used to build theory in a large field such as language/s teaching, and diverse cultural contexts. This movement and theory describe a genuine search for connecting Initial Teacher Education to practice in schools. Zeichner (2010) and Zeichner et al (2012, 2016) used third space theory as a framework for closing the theory-practice gap in initial teacher education, especially as it plays out in the ITE professional experience component. Third space theory is being variously applied across contexts to (re)frame school-university partnerships and the role and position of various stakeholders within them.

Professor Cox offers the notion of *third space as pivotal spaces* (TSPS) for early career teachers and those teachers who are struggling to stay focussed and remain in the profession. These pivot spaces would be where theory and practice meet successful school contexts and most importantly led by teachers themselves as a way of bringing theory and practice together in working school contexts. By sharing practice and being together on a learning journey the teachers seeking support, enthusiasm or new skills come together in these flexible spaces where the opportunity to pivot using their own teaching as a starting point. At times this might be virtual or in-person, but such an approach will provide practical "things I can do on Monday" take aways and at the same time build professional relationships which can exist teacher to teacher without the hierarchical nature of professional development models or systemic leadership models where teachers may feel under scrutiny. This program could begin as after school discussions and move to full day visits and even should the idea of TSPS evolve it might lead to temporary teacher exchange; they could also be managed locally once again to remove a sense of departmental surveillance or a culture of QA. This makes space for collaborative teacher learning that is shaped by the needs of that professional community.

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