

MEDIA RELEASE

Leadership the key to school improvement

Research Conference 2017

28 August 2017: School improvement requires leaders who champion the interests of students, build relationships of collegiality and trust, and are not afraid of data when it comes to solving complex educational problems, keynote speakers will tell delegates to *Research Conference 2017* in Melbourne today.

Keynote speakers at the annual research conference of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), commencing on Sunday 27 August and addressing the theme, *Leadership for Improving Learning: Insights from research*, will share understandings of the importance of ensuring school leaders have real agency and capabilities in data-driven decision making to solve complex educational problems if they are to sustain educational improvement.

Speaking ahead of the conference, ACER chief executive, Professor Geoff Masters AO, said educational leaders play a crucial role in setting directions for improvement and innovation.

“Recent research reveals that the practices and initiatives of educational leaders can produce significant improvements in student engagement and performance. Those practices involve setting priorities for improvement, building a shared commitment across the community, and using evidence to plan and review improvement programs with a sharp focus on the main game: measurable improvements in student outcomes,” Professor Masters said.

Professor Amanda Datnow from the University of California San Diego will report on research investigating the conditions under which data-use efforts can help to open – or close – doors to student learning.

Professor Toby Greany from the Institute of Education at University College London will report on a three-year study of the impact of a ‘self-improving’ policy in England and the tensions created by a simultaneous emphasis on leadership autonomy and accountability.

Distinguished Professor Viviane Robinson from the University of Auckland will report on research showing how leaders’ knowledge and skills intersect with their ability to build trust and solve the problems that stand in the way of their improvement goals.

Professor Chris Sarra from the University of Canberra will explore the impact of educational leadership research – for better and worse – on developing and sustaining school improvement approaches that address the profound complexities of Indigenous education.

Delegates at a Leading Thinker seminar with **Professor Stephen Dinham** OAM, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, prior to *Research Conference 2017* will investigate why learning and teaching needs to be the core educational business of educational leaders.

Research Conference 2017 takes place at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre from 27 to 29 August.

Further information is available from www.acer.org/rc

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