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**Student Agency and
Teacher Practice for Implementing and
Effectively Validating Capabilities**

SASPA Conference 2026

Acknowledgement of Country



With deep respect for the Kurna people,
the traditional custodians of this land,

we honour their connection to Country and commit
to walking together on the path to reconciliation.



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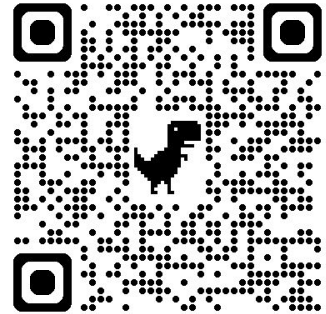
Glenunga Context Wendy

What Needs To be In Place Bec

Learning Design Cindy

Reimagining Assessment Nick

What Have We Learnt? Andrew





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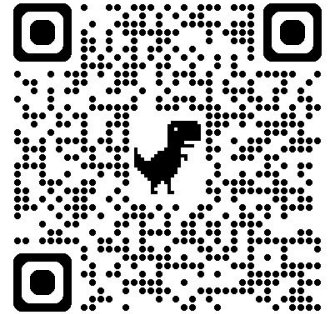
Key Demographics

- **Student Population: 2,300**
- **Cultures Represented: 101**
- **EALD Support: 1654**
- **IESP: 184**
- **ATSI: 13**



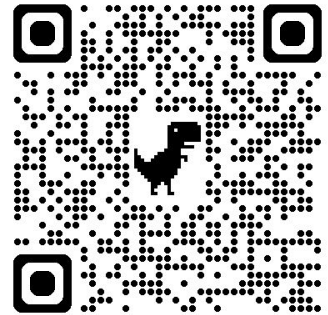
Important Aspects of Our School

- Values Driven Culture
- Fullan's Ready, Fire, Aim approach
- Everyone involved. Collective Teacher Efficacy
- Coherence



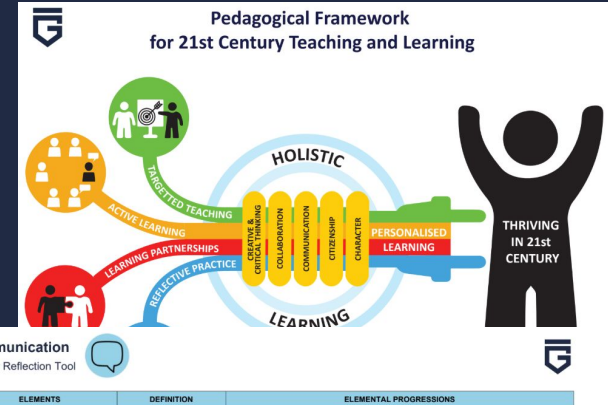
Our School Journey

- Two Journeys: Improving Teaching; Improving Learner Experience
- 2016 Fullan's Capabilities Teacher Assessed then Student Assessed
- 2020/21 UniMelb New Metrics
Developing Infrastructure



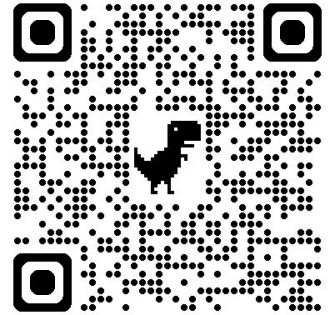
What needs to be in place?

- Pedagogical Framework
- Common Language
- Structures to Enable Collective Teacher Efficacy



Structures to Enable Collective Teacher Efficacy

- Build the Bottom
- Strengthen the Middle
- Intrigue the Top





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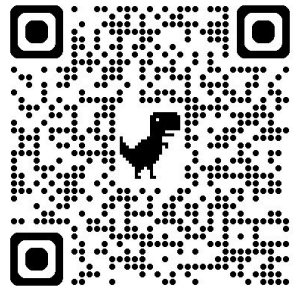
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Structures that work for us

- Line of Sight - Cascading Whole School Priorities
- Making Time for What We Value
- Teacher Leaders - Pedagogical Coaches
- Performance Development - PD&A/Drop Ins

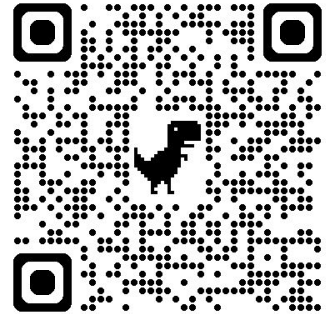
*How do the structures you currently
have in place at your school **impact**
your work with
Capabilities/Dispositions?*





Learning Design That Values Content and Capabilities/Dispositions

- How is it different?
- What does it look like?
- What is the impact?





How is it different?

	System One	System Two
Learning Intention	Fact retention, topic coverage, and rote memorisation.	Equal emphasis on deep conceptual content and transferable capabilities (e.g., critical thinking, collaboration).
Pedagogical Approach	Direct instruction, drill-and-practice, and explicit content transmission. (Sage on the stage)	Problem-solving challenges, and experiential learning to build skills alongside knowledge. (Guide on the side)
Student Role	Information receiver working individually.	Cognitively engaged in learning, applies knowledge to solve authentic, complex problems.

What does it look like?

- **Intentional**
- **Cognitive engagement (Students doing the Thinking)**
- **Capabilities development built into the active learning**
- **Pedagogical approaches for thinking**
- **Reflection on learning for both content and capabilities**





Intentional

Learning Intention:

To demonstrate Creative and Critical Thinking  while acting like a scientist by being curious, open-minded and responsible while designing your warning message.

Being Open-minded

The ability to be open to new ideas, experiences and ways of doing things.

develop?

...ing to teach the content through the capability?

Active Learning

● What activities

Active Learning: What do you notice?

Look at the image, and in your group, record down everything you see. No inferences, just observations.



What are you curious about when you look at the image?

Write your group wonderings on a mini whiteboard.

Active Learning: The task – Designing a message

- As a group read through the information provided to you

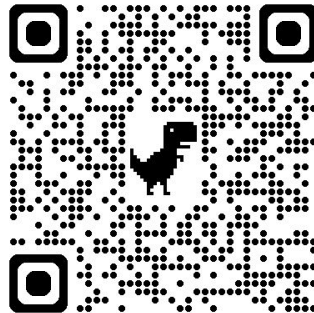
Then:

- Individually brainstorm ideas for the warning message, taking into account the information you have read.
- Consider different forms of communication that will withstand the test of time.
- How will you convey the dangers of buried uranium waste?

Active Learning: Group collaborative discussion

- Ensure that everyone's voice is heard
- Think about how you are demonstrating curiosity, open-mindedness and being responsible.
- Come to a consensus that the group is happy with what meets the necessary criteria.
- 5 minutes on laptops to look up any wonderings that you still have written on your mini whiteboard

ement





Capabilities Develo

- Team
opp

Active Learning: Group collaborative discussion

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- 5 minutes on laptops to look up any wonderings that you still have written on your mini whiteboard

Profit



Reflect

- Open-e

In your notebooks:

Active Learning: Reflection and Peer sharing

Give an example of how you demonstrated being Curious while participating in this activity.

How did being Open-minded help you to come up with the team message?

How did you demonstrate being Responsible when thinking about the message you needed to write?

Share your reflections with your group.

Did you hear anything that surprised you?

Was there anything you heard that you think you could have included in your reflection?

Learning Design
that values
Content and
Capabilities Equally



Impact

Reflection:

1. I demonstrated being curious by thinking deeply on how I could convey that the site was radioactive. This was tricky as I could not use written words and many symbols had double-meanings that may have been interpreted with the wrong meaning.

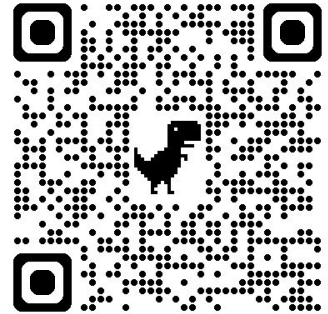
Being open-minded helped me to think of all the possible solutions for me to convey my message, as it was not very simple, as the possible ideas were not available in front of me, and I had to think deeply to come up with my own ideas. Open-mindedness also helped me to engage collaboratively with my group members, as I had to accept / respectfully challenge their ideas for the best output as a team.

I demonstrated being responsible when thinking about the message, by making ethical decisions on what symbols to consider and how it might affect anyone. For example, this meant considering if certain symbols may have offended certain minorities, and using more responsible language.

Takeaways to think about

"If you walked into a classroom at your school tomorrow, how would you know whether students are just completing content tasks or actively developing capabilities through that content?"

"What culture or structural support needs to exist in your school for teachers to feel confident moving away from content-dominant coverage toward intentional, capability-driven active learning?"





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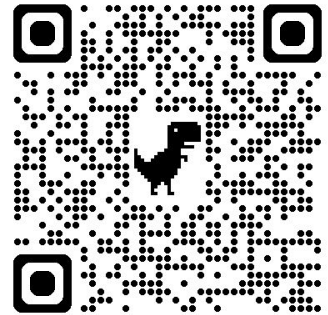
**How do you assess
capabilities?**

You don't!



How do you validate?

- Provide (multiple) opportunities to demonstrate capabilities
- Sharpen 'teacher gaze'
- Time and space for reflection
- Collect, curate and capture evidence
- Shift from Rubrics to RUBY





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The role of Student Agency

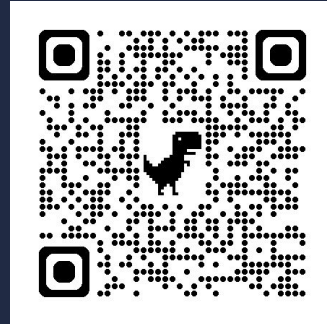
- Students are responsible for their Learning
- Student Congress
- Learning Conversations
- Learner Conferences





What we've been up to...

- 2024
 - 1800+ Fans Generated
 - Students part of Fan process
- 2025
 - Fans generated again (adults)
 - My Learning Profile (students)
- 2026
 - Learning Conversations





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21st Century Skills

Profile

Historical Results

Current Results

[Click here to Download a clearer image of your Capabilities Profile](#)

2024

2025

Student Profile



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Name Sarah Rose (Sarah) DUFFETT

Issue date 10 Dec 2025



Levels of attainment

[illegible]

This report has been generated as part of a Melbourne Robotics research project with New Pedagogies for Deep Learning. The draft instruments and level statements that support this report are currently in a trial and evolution phase. Therefore the stills listed below for this student is *representative*.

[My Learning Profile](#)

—

Sarah Rose (Sarah) DUFFETT

New York, New York School: Strong International High School



The report has been developed as part of **Maths4Meister** collaboration with schools. It is for student self-assessment only and is not a formal report. It is for use as a guide only and is not a formal report. It is for use as a guide only and is not a formal report.

My Learning Strength

[illegible]

This report has been developed as part of Wellbeing Network's collaboration with schools. It aims to support staff working with children and young people to understand and address their needs. It is not intended to be a definitive guide to all the issues that may arise in schools. It is a starting point for discussion and action.

Click here to Download a clearer image of your 'My Learning Profile'

This is the first time that we have used the 'My Learning Profiles.

We plan to utilise the fans throughout your 2026 Learner Journey. This will begin with the fans playing an important role in induction across the first few weeks of 2026.

You will explore your fan and profile to understand the component parts, reflect on the validation process, look into your capabilities and elements, before beginning to identify opportunities for growth in 2026 and your strategies.

We expect to see Fans at different levels, as individuals we all have different strengths and areas of development.



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Teaching and
Learning
Component



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Messy Middle Ground

What could assessment look like if we
bridged the gap between possibilities
and challenges?

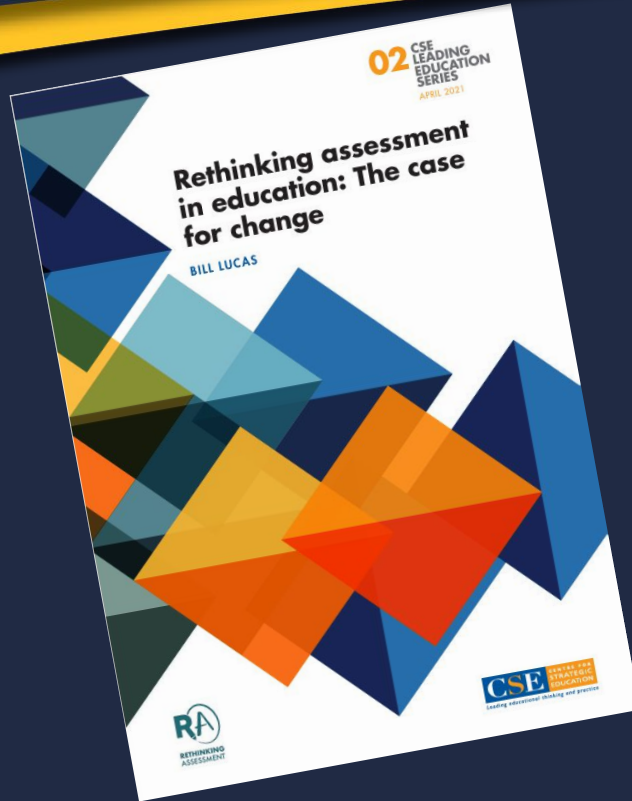
- right net/s?





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Challenging Beliefs

Why do you assess?

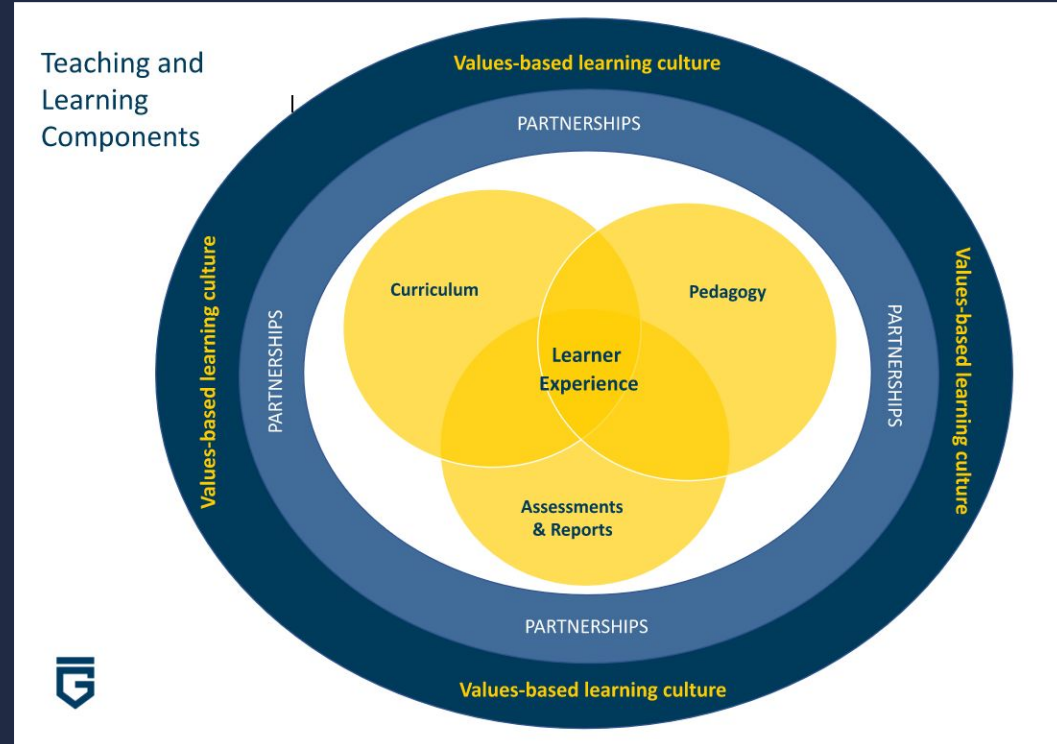
What is the purpose of assessment?

- 10. to meet accountability requirements
- 11. to assign marks or grades
- 12. to group students for targeted instruction



Key takeaways

- Curriculum that amplifies content through the lens of capabilities
- Pedagogy that enables students to develop and demonstrate their capabilities
- Create time for reflection, capturing and capturing of evidence



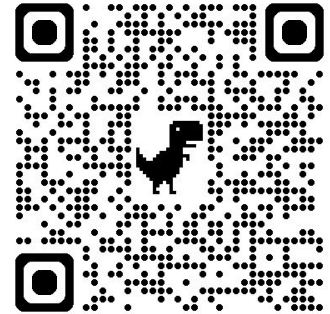


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What Have We Learnt?

- All in: *Equitable Excellence*
- Enculturate: making it normal, expected and valued
- Focus on the Learner Experience
- Develop your people
- Coherence - Learning Design and Validation
- Be bold





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Questions