

Choice in Education

Professor Max Angus
(Professor of Education and Head, School of Education,
Edith Cowan University, WA)

ABSTRACT

Since European settlement, school choice has been an issue in Australian education. The fortunes of the public and private sectors have waxed and waned. Since the Schools Commission interventions of the 1970s, the private sector has increased its enrolment share and all the forecasts indicate that it will continue to do so. This growth has placed pressure on the public sector which so far has been unable to arrest the trend. The particular issue of concern is whether current government policies are contributing to a social polarisation of Australian schooling. This workshop overviews the background and elucidates the issues that are now posed for both the public and private sectors. The prospects of vouchers and other forms of government intervention will be explored.