Governing Board

RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON THE OUTCOMES OF PISA - A PROPOSAL

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RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON THE OUTCOMES OF PISA – A PROPOSAL

Introduction

1. At the 22nd meeting of the PISA Governing Board in Dublin 16-18 October 2006, Ms. Schreiner, Norway, presented a proposal to organise a conference on the research outcomes from PISA. The PGB:
   - WELCOMED the idea and INVITED the Norwegian authorities, in collaboration with other interested countries, to explore this proposal further, including any direct and indirect resource implications.

2. This paper gives a progress report. The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research is willing to support such a conference. It turns out that the Mathematics Expert Group has also discussed the idea of a research conference on PISA, and the present proposal has been discussed with Ross Turner from ACER, who is a member of the Mathematics Expert Group.

Draft outline of a research conference on the outcomes of PISA

3. The aim of a research conference is to gather research on PISA outcomes from participating countries. The idea is to present research on PISA data in different countries. Researchers are invited to share their findings and to discuss experiences in using PISA data. The focus should be on secondary data analysis. By including policy makers, it is of special interest to discuss the policy relevance and the policy consequences of PISA in general, and of secondary analyses in particular. Such a conference would encourage a real exchange of ideas, and hopefully mutual learning and reinforcement that would further encourage productive use of PISA outcomes. To make the results available to a larger audience, the goal should be to produce a conference publication with selected high-quality papers after the conference.

4. It is proposed that the conference should cover both research related to the PISA cognitive domains (reading, mathematics, science, problem solving), as well as more general topics related to students, schools and education systems. Research involving comparison between countries is particularly welcome. Studies that seek to explore the PISA data in light of supplementary findings from national analyses, be it qualitative or quantitative, are also highly relevant.

5. Participants should primarily be researchers from the participating countries, but also policy makers who are working with PISA results and with the further development of PISA.

6. We suggest that the conference should take place some time between the turn of the year 2008/09 and the first half of 2010, but the time schedule needs to be discussed further. Several factors should be taken into consideration:
   - IEA will hold their biannual research conference in Taiwan in September 2008.
   - We estimate that at least one year is needed for conference preparation, i.e. planning, sending out invitations, reviewing proposals, and finalising a program.
The conference should take place well before the results from PISA 2009 are published, that is before the end of the year 2010.

Resource implications

7. Research conferences are normally financed by a fee paid by participants. To limit the fee, it is proposed that support is sought from countries to cover costs and expenses for key note speakers. It could also be considered that support is sought in order to subsidise the participation from partner countries and economies, as well as from other interested countries for which conference participation may be limited by economic constraints.

8. Furthermore, personal resources need to be provided for the organisation of the conference.

Organisation

9. To organise the conference, we suggest that the PISA Governing Board appoint a committee consisting of representatives from three to four countries. This committee should have the administrative responsibility for the conference and assist the country hosting the conference. The committee will nominate members to a scientific committee, consisting of researchers who will be responsible for preparing a call for papers and coordinating reviews of paper proposals. The PISA Governing Board may want to consider cooperation with the expert groups in appointing the scientific committees.

10. It is proposed that the burden on the OECD Secretariat should be limited, but some support from the Secretariat would be needed in setting up the committee. If the PISA Governing Board opts for the publication of conference proceedings, it may consider including the volume in the analysis and reporting plan, drawing on Secretariat assistance.

11. The members and observers of the PISA Governing Board are asked to:

- Consider active participation in the conference organisation, including location and funding of staff
- Appoint a committee of PISA Governing Board representatives which will coordinate the organisation of the conference
- Nominate, together with the PISA Expert Groups, the scientific committee, and elect the members of the scientific committee, which will carry out the scientific organisation of the conference
- Provide directions on the involvement of the OECD Secretariat in the conference organisation and documentation.