



Improving both equity and quality in education Pointers for Policy Development

INVESTING IN EQUITY AND QUALITY IN EDUCATION PAYS OFF

- Across OECD countries, almost one in five students do not reach a basic minimum level of skills and students from low socio-economic background are twice as likely to be low performers. Investing in equity in education enhances individual well-being, economic prosperity and social cohesion and reduces the high economic and social costs of school failure.
- Individuals who successfully complete secondary education are more likely to have better employment and healthier lifestyle prospects, to contribute to more democratic societies and sustainable economies, and are less dependent on public aid and less vulnerable to economic downturns.
- A policy strategy for more equitable education outcomes requires investing early and up to upper secondary education:
 - Invest in high quality pre-primary, primary and secondary education for all, as it reinforces equity and promotes efficiency.
 - Focus on children from disadvantaged backgrounds, as there are substantial long-lasting benefits.

AVOID SYSTEM LEVEL POLICIES CONDUCIVE TO SCHOOL AND STUDENT FAILURE

1. Eliminate grade repetition.
2. Avoid early tracking and defer student selection to upper secondary.
3. Manage school choice to avoid segregation and increased inequities.
4. Make funding strategies responsive to students' and schools' needs.
5. Design equivalent upper secondary education pathways to ensure completion.

SUPPORT LOW PERFORMING DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS

1. Strengthen and support school leadership.
2. Stimulate a supportive school climate and environment for learning.
3. Attract, support and retain high quality teachers.
4. Ensure effective classroom learning strategies.
5. Prioritise linking schools with parents and communities.

FURTHER READING

These Pointers for Policy Development are drawn from *Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*, published in 2012. Country background reports prepared by 9 countries, country spotlight reports, working papers and other documents are available on the OECD website www.oecd.org/edu/equity.