

Education in Rural Australia: economic or social policy?

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Rural education is conceived of in urban cosmopolitan terms



- John Glover. Mount Wellington and Hobart Town from Kangaroo Point 1831-33 Oil on canvas. National Gallery of Australia.

National Goals of Schooling (2011)

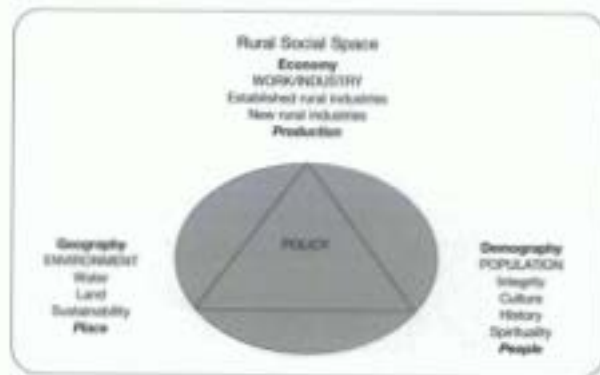
- Goal 1: Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence
- Goal 2: All young Australians become:
 - successful learners
 - confident and creative individuals
 - active and informed citizens
- 'Improving educational outcomes for all young Australians is central to the nation's social and economic prosperity and will position young people to live fulfilling, productive and responsible lives.' p.7.

Can we de-couple rurality?

- 'the belief held by many rural Australians that significant differences exist between themselves and their urban counterparts ... then the difference must affect the quality of teaching in rural schools... it will be so because neither the beginning teachers nor the students will fully comprehend each others' weltanschauung, or way of seeing the world... central to any consideration of rural education is that of the curriculum... the knowledge base from which rural students operate is different'
 - Higgins 1993: ix-xi 'Rural Difference: A challenge for beginning teachers.
- While proximity to a campus matters, access to university appears to have less influence on university participation than other factors such as socioeconomic status... In general, economic resources appear to have less influence than education and occupation background... there are other factors such as perceptions of the value of university education, the costs of education or prior academic achievement that are likely to contribute to lower participation in regional areas than in inner metropolitan areas.
 - Regional Participation Report. DEEWR 2010. P.18.

Policy needs to empower rural place

- 'individual lives ... [take] place within social and physical spaces that are connected to cultural and symbolic capital'
 - - Reed-Danahay (2005) P.132



- 'We define 'rural' as a **quantitative** measure, involving **statistics** on population and region as described by the U. S. Census; as a **geographic** term, denoting particular regions and areas or spaces and places; and as a **cultural term**, one that involves the interaction of people in groups and communities.'
- Donehower, Hogg & Schell (2007) p.2

Rural Social Space
Reid, Green et al 2010