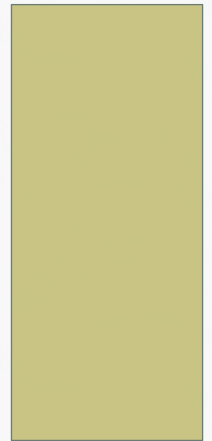


USING THE IEA INTERNATIONAL DATASETS FOR INFORMING POLICY AND PRACTICE

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HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL



SCHOOL SAFETY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Achievement
Gaps

Family and
Community

School Safety

School
Leadership

Language and
Learning

SCHOOL SAFETY IN SOUTH AFRICA



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=REIGTNN2kmM>

'YOUR SON IS A SISSIE'

- Krugerlaan School is a public school in Vereeniging, Gauteng.
- The incident occurred on 12th June 2015.
- Learner bullied allegedly with permission of teacher.
- Case of assault being investigated by the police.
- Education MEC visited the school.
- Not an isolated incident.



SCHOOL SAFETY IN SOUTH AFRICA

POLICY AND PRACTICE USING TIMSS DATA

A GLOBAL CHALLENGE

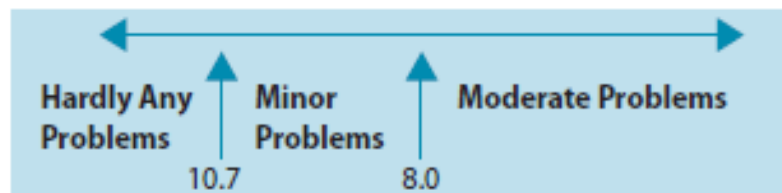
- Global increase in concerns about school safety.
- Often fatal.
- High-profile episodes of violence widely reported.
- Safety concerns can take many different forms.
 - Bullying
 - Homophobic bullying
 - Sexual harassment
 - Cyber bullying
- Impact on ability to learn.
- Legislation – National School Safety Framework.
- Teachers – perpetrators or victims?

EVIDENCE FROM TIMSS 2011

- TIMSS data on school safety available for school principals, teachers and learners.
- Safe and orderly school.
- School discipline and safety.
- Experience of bullying.

To what degree is each of the following a problem among eighth grade students in your school?

	Not a problem ↓	Minor problem ↓	Moderate problem ↓	Serious problem ↓
1) Arriving late at school -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) Absenteeism (i.e., unjustified absences) -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) Classroom disturbance -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) Cheating -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5) Profanity -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6) Vandalism -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7) Theft -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8) Intimidation or verbal abuse among students (including texting, emailing, etc.) -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9) Physical injury to other students -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10) Intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers or staff (including texting, emailing, etc.) -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11) Physical injury to teachers or staff -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

- Over 40% of South African school principals viewed school safety concerns as serious compared to 18% of principals internationally.
- Learners in safer schools performed better in mathematics and science.
- Relationship could flow in the opposite direction.

School discipline and safety – Index	Hardly Any Problems		Minor Problems		Moderate Problems	
	% learners (SE)	Average Ach. (SE)	% learners (SE)	Average Ach. (SE)	% learners (SE)	Average Ach. (SE)
Mathematics (SA)	4 (1.2)	406 (26.9)	55 (3.6)	352 (4.1)	41 (3.4)	345 (4.6)
Mathematics (Int. Avg.)	16 (0.4)	483 (1.7)	66 (0.5)	467 (0.7)	18 (0.4)	437 (1.8)
Science (SA)	4 (1.2)	391 (34.6)	55 (3.6)	329 (6.4)	41 (3.4)	326 (6.3)
Science (Int. Avg.)	16 (0.4)	492 (1.7)	66 (0.5)	477 (0.7)	18 (0.4)	452 (2.0)

PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

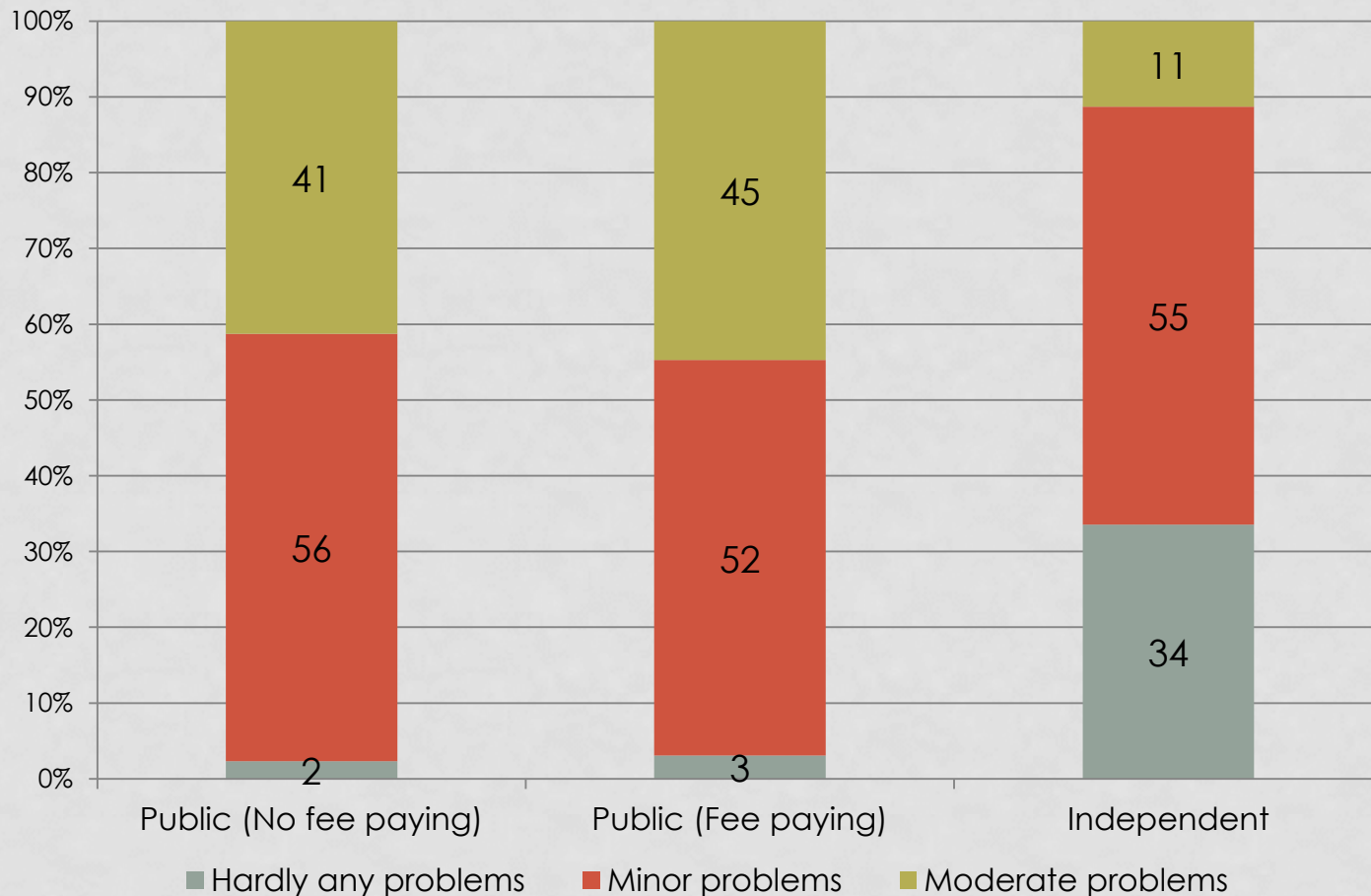
- Department assigns public schools a quintile rank (Q1 to Q5).
- Q1 most economically disadvantaged public schools.
- Q5 most affluent public schools.
- Q1 to Q3 are no fee schools.
- Q4 and Q5 are fee paying public schools
- Independent schools.

PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

- According to school principals, independent schools are somewhat safer but bullying is still practiced.
- In public schools (fee paying and no fee), less than 5% of school heads reported 'hardly any' problems of school safety.
- Over one-third of independent schools were viewed as safe.

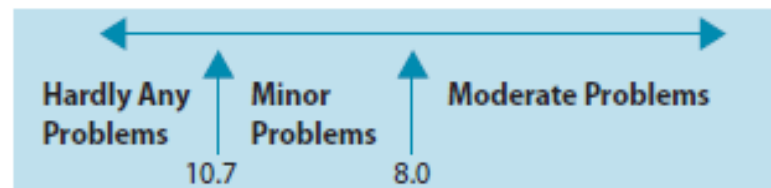
PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

Principals' perspective on percentage of learners affected by school discipline and safety conditions, by school type, 2011



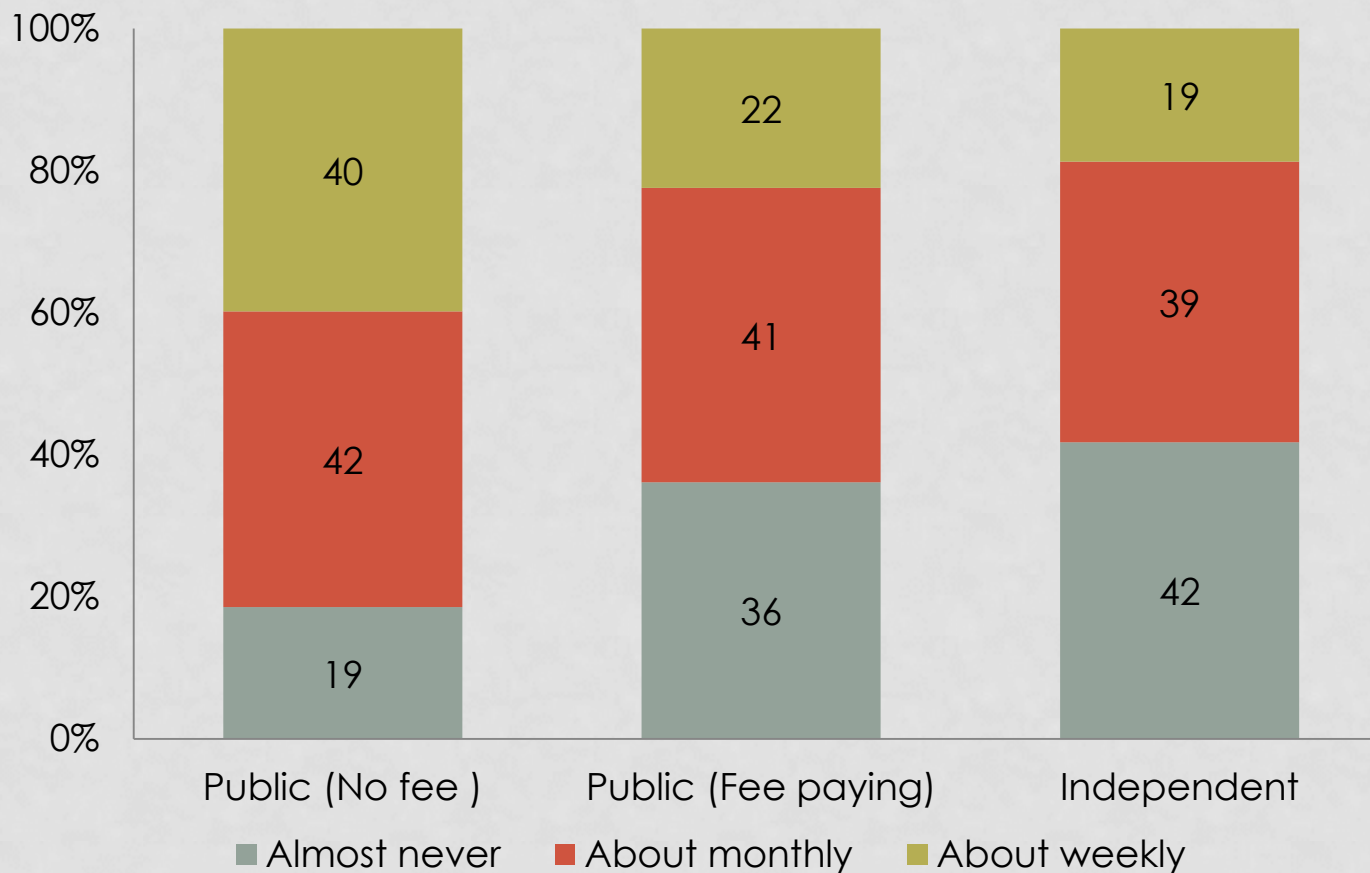
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THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Percentage of learners affected by bullying, by school type, 2011



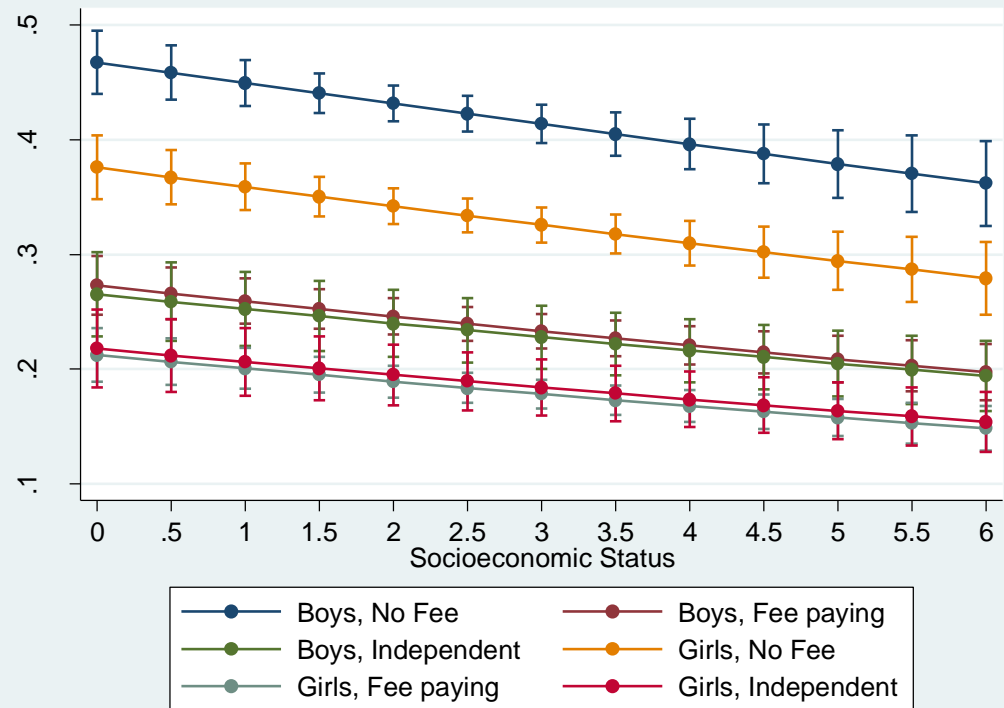
THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- There is a clear link between social status and bullying within different types of schools.
- Learners of lower socioeconomic status are more likely to be victims of bullying than learners of high socioeconomic status.

THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- Boys in no fee public schools have the greatest chance of being bullied.
- There is a link between social status and bullying in different schooling environments.

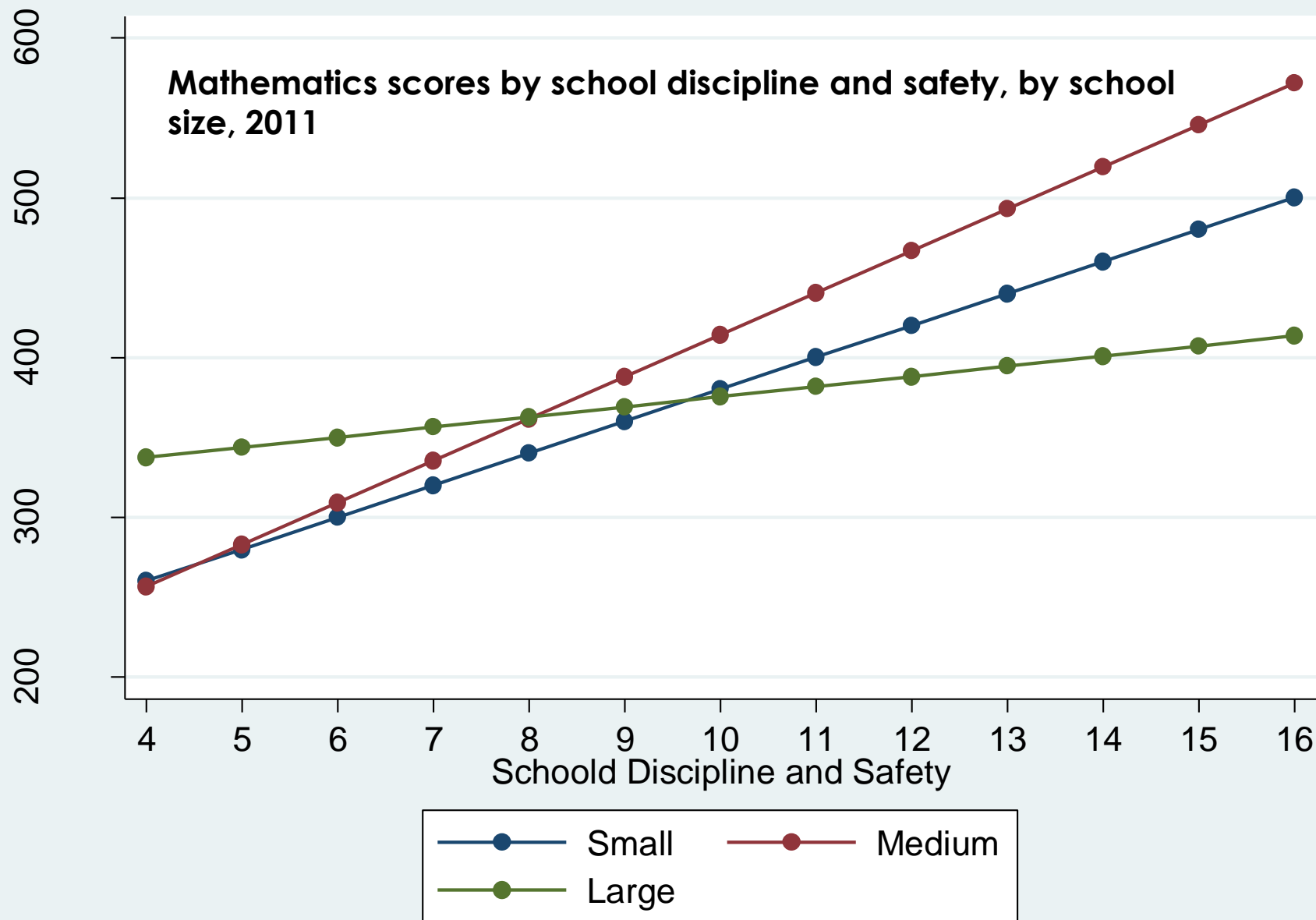
Probability of bullying based on socioeconomic status, by school type, 2011



THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- Schools with fewer discipline and safety problems achieve better results.
- Dependent on school size.

Mathematics scores by school discipline and safety, by school size, 2011



SCHOOL SAFETY IN SOUTH AFRICA

- What do we know about school safety based on TIMSS?
- What don't we know about school safety based on TIMSS?
- What should we consider in the future?



WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT SCHOOL SAFETY BASED ON TIMSS?

- Violence in South African schools is viewed as more serious than in many other countries.
- Compared to public schools, independent schools are somewhat safer but one in five learners is bullied on a weekly basis.
- Younger learners in public schools are bullied more frequently than older learners.
- The socioeconomic status of learners within a school is a strong indicator of how vulnerable learners are to acts of violence.
- Schools where there are fewer discipline or safety problems achieve better results but this link is dependent on the size of the school.

WHAT DON'T WE KNOW ABOUT SCHOOL SAFETY BASED ON TIMSS?

- Cross-sectional data means that causal links cannot be assigned.
- Under-reporting of statistics related to violence. Many victims leave the school or drop out of the system.
- Different viewpoints about what constitutes violent behaviour and what can be viewed as discipline (corporal punishment).
- Unclear who the perpetrators of acts of violence are.
- Access to drugs and weapons
- Exposure to violence outside school and its link to safety within schools.


WHAT SHOULD WE CONSIDER IN THE FUTURE?

- Do policies need to be tailored to the specific requirements of individual schools?
- How do these results compare to other local and international studies that focus on safety?
- Is this problem more serious at different phases of the education system?
- How can we determine the impact on perpetrators, victims and bystanders?
- How can we involve different stakeholders in the discussion?

WHAT WE SHOULD CONSIDER LOOKING FORWARD


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South African learners value mathematics more than their international peers



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