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MEDIA RELEASE

ASTA welcomes new report calling for improved links between industry and schools

The President of the Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA), Mr Geoff Quinton, today welcomed a new report calling for improved links between industry and schools to boost Australia's future science and mathematics skills.

The report, *Optimising STEM Industry-School Partnerships*, makes ten recommendations to help schools, industry and governments develop effective industry programs to support student engagement in science and mathematics.

Mr Quinton said current industry programs in the classroom were highly valuable but were unevenly distributed and varied greatly from one school to the next.

"Our world is changing rapidly, and science and technology skills are crucial for today's young people as they prepare for their future careers. Industry partnerships can help play a role in making this happen," Mr Quinton said.

"Learning improves when students are engaged and can see the relevance of the content of their courses, including higher level science and maths. Strong industry links in schools enable teachers to inspire students by showing real world examples of where these skills come into play.

"Good industry-schools partnerships are a win-win situation: schools and teachers gain resources and support; students are engaged; and industry gains access to a broader pool of future STEM-educated citizens.

"Importantly, the report shows there are missed opportunities where businesses want to engage with teachers in schools, but don't know how. This report outlines the steps needed to turn these gaps into future productive partnerships," he said.

Backed by extensive consultation with industry and education providers, *Optimising STEM Industry-School Partnerships* was published by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Education Council today, following its meeting last week in Adelaide. The report was produced by the Chief Scientist of Australia, Dr Alan Finkel.

A copy of the report can be downloaded at <https://www.education.gov.au/>

For media inquiries please contact Mr Geoff Quinton, President of the Australian Science Teachers Association on 0423 922 539