

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

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Having trouble reading this email? Read it on the web at <http://www.acsso.org.au/AED070605.pdf>

Do you know of an event or resource that schools should know about? Email us at letters@acsso.org.au

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REPORTS

Parents' Attitudes to Schooling

The Parents' Attitudes to Schooling survey report discusses the results of a national telephone survey on parents' attitudes to schooling conducted by DEST during January and February 2007.

The survey was conducted to ascertain parents' views on a range of issues including schooling choices, content that should be compulsory, school reports, bullying and manners, improvements that could be made to schools, traditional apprenticeships, core skills, and post-school priorities.

Where possible, the report also contrasts 2007 results with results derived from a 2003 national telephone survey on attitudes to schooling.

One significant area of strong importance, and stronger now than in the 2003 poll, is the need for greater national consistency in terms of curriculum, seamless transfer arrangements between states, starting and finishing ages, tertiary entrance requirements; and national standards for teachers and school leaders.

Read the whole Report at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/33EFD6E9-5343-4C6A-9F10-EF44905360D8/16735/ParentsAttitudestoSchoolingreporMay07.pdf>

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POLITICS

Queensland State Budget Boosts Modern Education & Training System

By The Hon Rod Welford, Old Minister for Education and Training, 5 June 2007

More than \$500 million to modernise and build schools and training facilities, more teachers and a \$1.5 million commitment to drive high quality and numeracy programs in state schools are amongst the highlights of the 2007-08 State Budget.

Education and Training Minister Rod Welford said the Budget further underpinned the Government's Smart State commitment to build a responsive education and training system that equipped Queenslanders for the challenges of the 21st century.

"This is the first Budget since the Government moved to consolidate and strengthen major programs in these two dynamic, interrelated sectors by linking them in one department," Mr Welford said.

"In total, we have committed \$527 million in this Budget to school and TAFE infrastructure.

"This includes new schools on the Gold Coast, new Prep facilities statewide and new TAFE projects.

"The \$35 million Queensland Academy for Health Sciences is being established on the Gold Coast and a permanent facility for the \$43.3 million Creative Industries Academy will also open in Brisbane in 2007-08.

"This follows on the success of the Academy for Science, Mathematics and Technology which opened at the start of this current school year at Toowong.

"Our recurrent investment in state and non-state schooling and the training sector has increased by 7.2 per cent on the 2006-07 Budget to a record \$6.484 billion."

Read more at:

<http://www.cabinet.qld.gov.au/MMS/StatementDisplaySingle.aspx?id=52312>.

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EVENTS

Engaging the Learner

The **Australasian Association of Distance Education Schools** is the peak professional organisation in Australasia representing school level distance education.

AADES will host its fifth biennial conference on distance and flexible learning from 19-21 September in Brisbane.

Keynote speakers include **Mem Fox** - hugely popular children's book author and Associate Professor of Education at Flinders University until 1996; **Prof Nigel Paine** - head of People Development for the BBC and a world expert on educational technology; **Dr Ross Todd** - Associate Professor in the School of Communication, Information and Library Studies at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

The conference will acknowledge and explore how schools and educational groups are moving into flexible learning approaches as a means of engaging learners, extending the curriculum and integrating learning into work environments.

Expressions of Interest for workshops, multi-media presentations and poster sessions are welcomed.

Further information from: <http://www.aades.edu.au>.

Croc Festival

The Croc Festival is an innovative event held annually in a number of locations around Australia that builds partnerships whilst celebrating youth and culture in rural and remote communities.

The festivals engage young Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in education, careers markets, health-expo, sporting events and inspirational activities as well as performing and visual arts and crafts in a 100% drug and alcohol free environment.

In 2006 events were staged in Weipa (Qld), Alice Springs (NT), Meekatharra (WA), Halls Creek (WA), Port Augusta (SA), Swan Hill (VIC), Moree (NSW) and Kempsey (NSW).

In 2007 over 20,000 students from around 450 schools are expected to participate in one of eight events jam-packed with exciting activities. A national audience of about 60,000 is anticipated.

The 2007 schedule starts on Thursday Island on 17 July and takes in regional centres in all mainland states until it finishes up in Shepparton on 18 October.

Read more at: <http://www.crocfestival.org.au/>.

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AWARDS & PRIZES

Australian Vocational Student Prize

The Australian Vocational Student Prize (AVSP) was introduced in 2005 to encourage and recognise the achievements of exceptional Year 12 students undertaking an Australian School-based Apprenticeship or Vocational Education and Training in Schools programme as part of their senior secondary certificate.

The AVSP is a high profile initiative through which the Australian Government highlights the value and importance of vocational education and training as a desirable pathway for students.

It celebrates the achievements of students excelling in this field with up to 500 outstanding students each receiving a certificate and a \$2,000 prize.

The very best of these students may also receive the prestigious Prime Minister's Award for Skills Excellence.

Nominations close 14 June (28 June in Tasmania).

Get more information at: www.dest.gov.au/schools/avsp.

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ONLINE

The Centre for Policy Development

The Centre for Policy Development is a new, independent public interest think tank that has grown out of the policy development work of online magazine New Matilda. CPD is now an entirely independent organisation.

The CPD website acts as a library and resource centre for social policy thinking that generally diverges from the mainstream, as CPD seeks to foster a diverse, cross-disciplinary community of thinkers, and connect ideas with a wider audience of concerned citizens, policy makers, and the media.

The range of people involved in CPD as board members, staff and contributors, the quality of their input and the inclusion of Education as a major topic of discussion suggest this organisation and its website might be worth keeping an eye on for anyone interested in the future of education in Australia.

Read more at: <http://cpd.org.au/>.

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SPECIAL OFFER

Get the ACSSO Rate for Your School in The Australian Schools Directory

ACSSO is campaigning to encourage schools to actively promote their education, teaching, facilities and values, to parents and the wider community.

Schools have a lot to be proud of with dedicated teachers, stimulating curriculum, high standards, technology equipment and extra curricular activities. It's vital that this is communicated to parents, the media and the community. There are cost-effective ways schools can reach and inform parents about what their schools offer.

Many schools across Australia have posted a Feature Page on the Australian Schools Directory <http://www.australianschoolsdirectory.com.au>.

The Directory lists all government and private schools in Australia and allows parents and the public to look for schools by location and by type. According to the Directory more than 250,000 visitors looking for schools are expected over the next year.

A feature page is in the school's colours, has photos, text, announcements, the school brochure, and a map of the school's location, as well as other information. Schools have their own User Name and Password and can change and update their information all year.

It costs \$250 for a Feature Page for a year. If you are the first school in your region to take a Feature Page, it is only \$75 a year.

Digest readers can take advantage of a special price for a Feature Page on the Australian Schools Directory. If you mention to the Australian Schools Directory that your school is a member of ACSSO your school can have a Feature Page between now and June 30 for 12 months for \$150.00.

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REMINDERS

Community Building: Critical Voices, Alternative Strategies - Melbourne 19 June - www.civilsociety.org.au

Communities in Control Conference: From Advocacy to Policy - Communities Driving Change - 4-5 June - www.ourcommunity.com.au/

Community Building: Critical Voices, Alternative Strategies - Melbourne 19 June - www.civilsociety.org.au

Flame Awards - nominations close 29 June - www.abc.net.au/classic/flame/

Australian Rural Education Award - closing 30 June 2006 contact Sheila King king@usq.edu.au or John Boserio John.Borserio@twb.catholic.edu.au

AUCEA Conference: the Scholarship of Community Engagement - Alice Springs 2–4 July – www.aucea.net.au/conference.

Regional Achievement & Community Awards - nominations close 3 August – www.awardsaustralia.com

Associations Forum National Conference - Sydney 29-30 August – www.associations.net.au.

Linking Latitudes India Conference - New Delhi & Agra, India 30 September-4 October – www.griffith.edu.au.

Humane Education: a compassionate ethic for animals - Gold Coast 5–6 October – www.griffith.edu.au.

Anti-Poverty Week - 14-20 October – www.antipovertyweek.org.au.

ACSSO National Conference - Darwin 22–23 October – www.acsso.org.au/natconf.
