

# AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

Volume 2 Number 6, 11 March 2008

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**Welcome to Edition No 6 for 2008. Articles and features include:**

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## OPINION

### Recognising and rewarding good teachers

*Dr Lawrence Ingvarson*

There is a considerable level of public support currently for significantly improved salaries and working conditions for teachers, but that support will be conditional on guarantees of quality teaching and learning.

A rigorous profession-wide certification system is the best way of assuring the public that improved salaries for accomplished teachers will be linked to high standards of performance.

Most professions have a standards-based assessment system for providing certification to members who want to show they have met higher standards of performance. This is a valuable service to employers as well. Teaching is almost alone among the professions in not having such a system.

To strengthen teaching as a profession, we need a profession-wide certification system. Professional certification would then become a criterion for increased salary.

Such a redesign of teacher pay scales would send a clear message that reaching high standards of performance is the main road to high status and career advancement in the teaching profession.

Read more at [http://www.acer.edu.au/enews/0802\\_ingvarson.html](http://www.acer.edu.au/enews/0802_ingvarson.html)

*Dr Lawrence Ingvarson is a Principal Research Fellow at ACER in the Teaching and Leadership Program. This article was published by Online Opinion, Australia's e-journal of social and political debate, in a series of articles published during February 2008 entitled 'Vive la revolution educationale!'*

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## RESEARCH

### Teacher Retention factors in Rural & Regional Schools

#### Can You Help Provide Information to the Research Team?

The Australian Government is funding an important national research project to investigate the nature of successful teacher education and recruitment strategies that make rural teaching an attractive long-term career option for new teachers.

An important aspect of this research will be the identification of rural and regional schools where teachers seem to stay. Teacher turnover is a big issue for many rural schools.

So the team needs to identify a range of rural and regional schools where teachers seem to stay for periods of 3-5 years – and to explore the factors that contribute to make those locations attractive and rewarding for teachers.

If your school – or your regional cluster of schools – is one where teachers “stay on” then the research team would be very keen to hear from you. The initial information they need –by 30 April 2008 - is:

- Name of school or schools in local cluster
- Contact name
- Contact Email address and Phone number
- Website address

Thanks for your help – it will greatly assist the success of this important project.

Dr John Halsey  
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## Making a Difference ... Counting the Cost

### *The 2007 Survey of School Leadership Well-being*

The issue of school leader welfare has been a concern to principal associations for some years. It is clear to all of those working in the education system that the demands and expectations of school leaders have never been higher. The education system in general is being asked to respond to a variety of societal concerns once the province of the family, community groups or the church.

Principals, in particular, are being expected to respond to competing and increasing demands for more effective, innovative and responsive leadership. Within this context Australia, like most other industrialized nations, is experiencing a school leadership crisis with fewer people showing an interest in leading schools, ironically right at the time when the calls for educational leadership are loudest.

As with many issues impacting on the educational landscape, the voices of those in schools, experiencing the issues first hand, can be lost. It is within this context that the peak principals associations:

- Australian Secondary Principals' Association (ASPA)
- Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA)
- Catholic Secondary Principals Australia (CaSPA)

commissioned this research. Its primary purpose is to identify the impact of the role of school leadership on the members' psychological and physical health. In addition, the associations were keen to ascertain the main stressors impacting on the daily life of school leaders and to identify factors which motivated these people to continue their work of education.

Read more at <http://aspa.asn.au/images/surveys/schoolleadersurveyreport2007at20080214.pdf>

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## **Improving school leadership**

### ***Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)***

School principals have an important role to play in successful schools and how they run. Leaders contribute to student learning through their influence on other staff, organisational capacity and context. The importance of school leadership makes it vital to better understand how effective leaders can best be recruited, developed and retained.

The OECD Improving School Leadership Activity aims to provide in-depth analyses of different approaches to school leadership in 22 volunteer countries. The fact that so many countries are taking part underlines the importance of leadership issues around the world.

The Australian Country Background Report prepared by ACER in 2006 provides a national overview of information and research on school leadership, including leaders' roles, the links between leadership and student learning outcomes, the attractiveness of the leadership role, and training and professional development for school leaders.

The report also includes several short case studies of innovative practices in school leadership and the development of school leaders.

The Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (previously Education, Science and Training) released the Australian report in January. Later in 2008 an international comparative report by the OECD will draw on all the country reports to provide analysis and recommendations for OECD countries to consider.

The Australian research reviewed by the ACER team confirmed that success was more likely when the schools were collegial, consultative and involve partnerships. The review also revealed that there are major concerns in regard to attracting, developing and retaining effective school leaders. Australia is experiencing serious leadership supply problems, including the replenishment of principal vacancies, the identification of aspirants for vacancies and 'next generation' school leaders, and workplace well-being issues associated with leadership.

Read more at [http://www.acer.edu.au/enews/0802\\_Country\\_Background.html](http://www.acer.edu.au/enews/0802_Country_Background.html)

Download report at

[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school\\_education/publications\\_resources/profiles/OECD\\_improving\\_school\\_leadership.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/publications_resources/profiles/OECD_improving_school_leadership.htm)

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## **PARENT ENGAGEMENT**

### **The Parents Jury : "From home to school, good food rules"**

The Parents Jury is a web-based network of parents who are interested in improving the nutrition and physical activity environments of Australian children. It provides a forum for parents to express their views and to collectively advocate for change on current issues relating to nutrition and physical activity.

Schools are more than places for students to learn about the Three Rs; reading, 'riting' and 'rithmetic. The Australian school environment provides children with both an education and the tools for a healthy and active lifestyle.

Most school canteens now provide a variety of nutritious food and drink options, however many other school food environments fail to follow suit, which undermines the healthy eating messages from teachers and parents.

In February, The Parents Jury launched its 'Back to School with Healthy Food' campaign, with information, suggestions, contacts and resources for parents to create a food culture change in schools.

From the canteen, to excursions, classrooms and camps, healthy eating should be modelled at every opportunity to ensure that nutrition messages are consistent across the whole school environment, to promote the benefits of a balanced diet.

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

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## **HOT TOPIC: COMPUTERS IN SCHOOLS**

### **Disadvantaged Schools to Get First Round Priority**

*Senator Lyn Allison, Leader, Australian Democrats, February 28, 2008*

"Last week I had the opportunity to quiz the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations about the federal government's new \$1 billion school computer program.

I am happy to say that I was successful in securing a commitment from the federal government to oblige the states to properly disassemble and dispose of old computers made redundant under the package.

I also established that the first stage of the program would focus on equipping the most disadvantaged schools, including those in indigenous communities."

Read Estimates Hearing transcript at <http://www.acsso.org.au/allison080228.pdf>

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### **Schoolkids 'should be given own laptops'**

*Sarah Elks, The Australian February 28, 2008*

AN international education consultant says the Rudd Government's promised computer revolution in schools will not work unless each student is given a laptop - with wireless internet capability - they can take home.

Bruce Dixon, who has advised countries such as Singapore, Canada and Finland about similar programs, told The Australian that the average Australian student had only one hour a week in front of a computer at school.

"59 per cent of kids spend less than 59 minutes in front of a computer at school each week, where at home it is up to 10 times that number," Mr Dixon said. "You can't have a digital education revolution consigned to just the classroom."

At Labor's election campaign launch last year, Kevin Rudd pledged \$1 billion to provide a computer for every high school student in Year 9 to Year 12.

Last week, Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard said the Government would not be mandating the technology, "but we're mandating the outcome".

Her comments followed education department bureaucrats telling the Senate estimates committee that it was not the Government's intention to dictate how access to a computer would be delivered.

Mr Dixon said it was crucial students were given their own laptops to take home - rather than access to a desktop computer which stayed at school.

"Giving students 24/7 access to their own device will, by orders of magnitude, increase the impact the computer will have on the student," Mr Dixon said. "If this program is done the right way, a new era in education could begin."

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23287106-5013871,00.html>

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## **NATIONAL NEWS FOCUS**

### **Public school students missing out on uni**

*Milanda Rout The Australian February 27, 2008*

PUBLIC school students are those most likely to miss out on a university education as competition for places intensifies.

More applications for fewer tertiary spots at Melbourne's prestigious universities have led to government school leavers and poor students being pushed out of the second-tier universities.

A Monash University study found the proportion of Melbourne state school students who received a university offer dropped from 54 per cent in 1996-97 to 47 per cent in 2003-04.

Researchers found entrance scores to Melbourne's least popular or most accessible institutions, such as Victoria and La Trobe universities, had risen over the past decade and left many students from government schools and financially disadvantaged areas out in the cold.

Researcher Daniel Edwards found scores that had allowed students to scrape into La Trobe and Victoria now were not enough to get in because of increased competition for places at all universities.

He called on the federal Government to increase the number of HECS places at Victorian universities to cope with the added demand and to ease the educational disadvantage placed on struggling students.

"The continuing erosion of opportunity for disadvantaged students in school education may mean that a desire to compete in such a tight market may wane, thus creating additional crises in relation to Australia's relatively low education participation rate," Mr Edwards said.

"Until governments (both state and federal) address the core issue of declining opportunity, the educational prospects of many disadvantaged students will not improve."

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23283520-5006785,00.html>

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## **Universities must diversify: Carr**

*The Age February 20, 2008 (AAP)*

The Rudd government has renewed calls for universities to diversify, as part of its education revolution.

Universities "quite clearly" needed to focus on their strengths and specialties, rather than try to be all things to all students, Innovation, Science and Research Minister Kim Carr told a Senate estimates hearing on Wednesday.

Senator Carr's comments come amid increasing criticism of the 1980s Dawkins reforms to higher education.

The minister was responding to Liberal senator Mitch Fifield, who pressed him on whether he thought too many universities were opting to run a catch-all campus.

"There needs to be a higher level of concentration of research effort," Senator Carr told the upper house's education, employment and workplace relations committee.

"That does not mean that we're in the business of running teaching-only institutions or that we take the view that there aren't world-class areas of performance in each institution.

"Our intention is to encourage universities to have a world-class performance in their areas of strength."

While he believed all universities should do research, he accepted institutions such as the research-focused Australian National University (ANU) had a different profile to Central Queensland University, which concentrated more on teaching.

Under the Dawkins changes, many teachers' colleges and technical institutes were transformed into universities offering broad-scope courses.

Read more at <http://news.theage.com.au/universities-must-diversify-carr/20080220-1t7x.html>

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## **'God Squad' fails to add up**

*Jewel Topsfield The Age February 21, 2008*

JOHN Howard's "God Squad" has gone missing in action.

The former prime minister's \$165 million pet project to install chaplains in schools has stalled because of a skills shortage.

In 2006, Mr Howard announced schools could apply for up to \$20,000 to employ chaplains to provide pastoral care and support students' spiritual wellbeing.

But a Senate committee was told yesterday that up to 700 schools were struggling to find a chaplain under the scheme, which was dubbed John Howard's God Squad.

Chaplains were "few and far between — you might say there is a skills shortage", said Education Department secretary Lisa Paul. "We are working with the Scripture Union to try to identify chaplains."

Education Department official Chris Sheedy said 2630 schools had been approved for funding.

But the shortage of chaplains was so dire that if schools were unable to fill the position by July, they would be given the option of hiring a "secular worker" instead, the senate committee was told.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/god-squad-fails-to-add-up/2008/02/20/1203467183387.html>

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## **Kevin Rudd 'ignoring primary schools'**

*Lucy Hood, The Advertiser, February 11, 2008*

PRIMARY schools across the country are being left out of the Rudd Government's so-called Education Revolution, the national primary school peak body says.

Australian Primary Principals Association president Leonie Trimper said they had been "forgotten" by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, who had failed to deliver on his election promises.

"He promised he would close the funding gap between primary and secondary schools and increase resources for students with disabilities," she said.

"But so far his announcements, such as the \$1 billion plan for computers for Years 9 to 12, have focused on secondary schools.

"The Government believes the beginning and the end is important but it has totally ignored the middle."

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,23192262-2,00.html>

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## **AROUND THE STATES AND TERRITORIES**

### **SA: Sports Stars back Premier's BE ACTIVE Challenge**

*Hon JANE LOMAX-SMITH MP, SA Minister for Education & Children's Services, February 21, 2008*

Eight of the State's top sportspeople have thrown their weight behind the Rann Government's \$1.8 million Premier's be active Challenge to get school children active and healthy.

New Ambassadors include Port Adelaide Football Club captain Warren Tredrea, Australian netballer Natalie von Bertouch and AFL footballer-turned-media personality Ryan 'Fitzy' Fitzgerald.

Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith says the Ambassadors will help to inspire South Australian children to take up the challenge and be more physically active each day.

"These eight inspirational sporting identities will visit schools across the State throughout the year to talk to children about the benefits of being active," Dr Lomax-Smith says.

"The healthy habits we teach children when they are young can help to reduce their risk of many serious obesity-related health conditions in adulthood. We want children to turn off the television and computer games and turn on to physical activity. We know that children are reading more books as a result of the Premier's Reading Challenge and we hope that, over time, we will see positive results from this new challenge."

Read more at <http://www.ministers.sa.gov.au/news.php?id=2816>

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## **NSW: Teachers take bullying claim to commission**

*Harriet Alexander Sydney Morning Herald February 28, 2008*

STAFF at the Conservatorium High School claim the Department of Education has failed to protect them from bullying.

In the NSW Industrial Relations Commission yesterday, teachers said the department had failed to carry out a risk assessment of workplace bullying at the prestigious music school, which the Teachers Federation said had been promised as early as November 2005.

Two teachers have complained to their union of their treatment by the school's principal, Robert Curry. The federation said one of those allegations had come before the commission last year.

One of the complainants, Allan Scott-Rogers, was dismissed by Dr Curry on the final day of term last year.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/teachers-take-bullying-claim-to-commission/2008/02/27/1203788443650.html>

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## **NSW: One third of teachers to retire in five years**

*Bruce McDougall, Daily Telegraph, February 14, 2008*

NSW faces a potential shortage of maths and science teachers as thousands of educators are expected to retire in the next five years.

A report by Auditor-General Peter Achterstraat reveals more than 16,000 teachers, 33 per cent of the permanent school workforce, will reach retirement age by 2012.

By 2016, half of the NSW's permanent teachers will have reached retirement age, the Auditor-General found.

In a retirement intention survey almost half of teachers aged over 50 said they planned to retire within five years.

Mr Achterstraat said education department projections indicated there would be adequate supply of primary teachers except for a small number of positions in specific areas.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,23211305-421,00.html>

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## **Victoria: Top teachers lured to tough schools**

## ***AAP The Age 9 February 2008***

Top teachers would get pay bonuses to work in struggling schools under a review of Victoria's public education system.

Under the plan, it is proposed tighter controls would be placed on pupil-free training days, Fairfax newspapers report.

The Victorian government is believed to have decided to negotiate wages with the state's powerful teachers' union to push through reforms, to lift student performance.

The move comes as talks between the union and government reach crisis point, with up to 25,000 teachers expected to walk off the job on Thursday.

Read more at <http://news.brisbanetimes.com.au/top-teachers-lured-to-tough-schools/20080209-1r6o.html>

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## **ACT Schools First to Joint Reconciliation Program**

Students of Giralang, Ainslie, Fadden and Florey Primary Schools are among the first in Australia to sign up for the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Program for Schools developed by Reconciliation Australia.

Speaking at the launch of the program at Giralang Primary School on 27 February, Minister for Education and Training Andrew Barr congratulated the staff and students of the schools for signing up to the program which promotes understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

"Australia has a very proud history, of exploration, mateship and helping each other in hard times such as bushfires and floods," Mr Barr told students at the launch. "But like many countries, we also have parts of our history which do not make us feel so proud. The negative impact of European settlement on Indigenous Australians is an important part of our history which we must also recognise. Even 220 years after Europeans first settled in Australia, the impacts are being felt and Indigenous Australians still do not have the same opportunities as non-Indigenous Australians.

"We cannot change our history but we can decide our future," Mr Barr said. "While Australia is the fairest country in the world, there is still much to be done to ensure everybody gets a fair go."

Mr Barr told the students they have a great opportunity to build a fairer Australia.

Read more at <http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.asp?media=3460&section=56&title=media&id=56>

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## **Sex education lacking in Qld: forum**

***The Age February 25, 2008 (AAP)***

Queensland teenagers are at greater risk of abuse, infections and pregnancies due to an ad hoc approach to sex education, a forum has heard.

Research indicated less than five per cent of Queensland students received comprehensive sex education, Family Planning Queensland manager for research and development Holly Brennan told the forum in Brisbane on Monday.

"At the moment it is really up to the school's discretion of how they do it because there are no checks and balances in place," Ms Brennan told AAP outside the forum.

"So some schools will have a fantastic program that goes from grades one to 12 while others just give young people a five-minute talk before they go to schoolies at the end of Year 12."

Ms Brennan said parents were not talking to their children about sexual issues as they believed it was covered at school.

Read more at <http://news.theage.com.au/sex-education-lacking-in-qld-forum/20080225-1umu.html>

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## **TAS: School rating data refusal**

*David Killick, Hobart Mercury February 21, 2008*

THE Education Department has refused to release information ranking the performance of the state's schools.

State opposition parties say parents need more information about how their school compares with similar schools in their area.

The department collects figures for every school on student achievement, attendance and satisfaction; parent satisfaction and staff attendance, training, retention and satisfaction to satisfy federal funding requirements.

Some data on individual schools is given to parents in school annual reports or newsletters, but the department and Education Minister David Bartlett say they cannot release any more for fear of stigmatising worst-performing schools.

Mr Bartlett, who yesterday presented awards to literacy high achievers in the North, said comparisons between rich and poor areas or city and country areas were not fair.

"I am committed to sharing more and more meaningful data about school performance with the Tasmanian community but I do not want the simplistic league table concept used in pursuit of political point-scoring, or labelling particular schools," he said.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/mercury/story/0,22884,23250438-3462,00.html>

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## **INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANET EARTH 2008**

### **Bottled Water Isn't Healthier Than Tap, Report Reveals**

*James Owen National Geographic News February 24*

A bottle of spring or mineral water has become the lifestyle accessory of the health-conscious. No longer a luxury item, the beverage has become a common sight worldwide.

But according to campaigners, the planet's health may be suffering as a result.

A new report warns that people's thirst for bottled water is producing unnecessary garbage and consuming vast quantities of energy, even in areas where perfectly good drinking water is available on tap.

The report, released earlier this month by the Earth Policy Institute (EPI), says global consumption of bottled water doubled between 1999 and 2004, reaching 41 billion gallons (154 billion liters) annually.

Bottled water is often no healthier than tap water, but it can be 10,000 times more expensive, says Emily Arnold, a researcher with the Washington D.C.-based nonprofit.

"At as much as \$2.50 [U.S.] per liter [\$10 U.S. a gallon], bottled water costs more than gasoline," she said.

Most of this extra cost is driven by transportation and packaging.

Read more at [http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2006/02/0224\\_060224\\_bottled\\_water.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2006/02/0224_060224_bottled_water.html)

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## **Rann to lead way on plastic bag ban**

*Pia Akerman and Matthew Warren The Australian March 03, 2008*

RETAILERS in South Australia will soon be banned from giving away plastic bags under laws flagged yesterday by the Rann Government.

Premier Mike Rann defied independent research that such a ban - on 57 per cent of the state's plastic bag stream - would be inefficient and more expensive than the litter problem it is designed to solve.

Mr Rann's announcement on Clean Up Australia Day pre-empted any national approach to be considered by environment ministers next month.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23308452-30417,00.html>

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## **Noah's Ark of seeds opens in Arctic**

*The Australian February 28, 2008 (Reuters)*

NORWAY has launched a Noah's ark of the plant kingdom to protect crop seeds, among mankind's most valuable resources, from cataclysm inside an Arctic mountainside.

Blasted out of icy rock 1,000km from the North Pole, the air-locked vaults would stay frozen for 200 years even in the worst-case scenario of global warming and if mechanical refrigeration were to fail, officials said.

Initially 100 million seeds from more than 100 countries have been sent for safekeeping at the \$10 million facility which holds 268,000 seed samples, each from a different farm or field.

"Biological diversity is under threat from the forces of nature ... and from the actions of man," Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg said at the opening ceremony.

"The seed vault is our insurance policy" against threats such as war, natural disasters or climate change, he said.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23290122-30417,00.html>

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## Seed vault built on bizarre vision

*Gisela Kaplan Blog | February 28, 2008 |*

IN the Arctic archipelago of Svalbard, a Norwegian outpost, a very specific futuristic vision has begun.

A "doomsday vault" has been built at a cost of almost \$10 million to accommodate up to four million batches of agricultural seeds.

The hidden storage chambers in the permafrost are to be a guarantee for humankind that all grain crops will be available in the distant future, even after a cataclysmic world event.

Reassuring? Perhaps. But it leaves us wondering about the other plants and the animals in this bleak futuristic concern with safety.

Read more at

[http://blogs.theaustralian.news.com.au/giselakaplan/index.php/theaustralian/comments/seed\\_vault/](http://blogs.theaustralian.news.com.au/giselakaplan/index.php/theaustralian/comments/seed_vault/)

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## AWARDS AND PRIZES

### NEiTA Inspirational Teacher Awards Program 2008

NEiTA is calling on parents, schools, and early childhood communities to show their teacher appreciation with an award nomination in NEiTA's new awards, the ASG Inspirational Teacher Awards.

After 14 years celebrating teaching excellence, NEiTA has launched its new awards program that heralds a new direction for NEiTA within Australia.

NEiTA's 2008 teaching awards program celebrates the role inspirational teachers play within the education and wider communities.

"Next to a parent, teachers have the most influence in a young person's life. When a teacher connects with a student with enthusiasm, skill, and passion, magic can happen in the mind of that student," NEiTA's Chairman, Terry O'Connell said.

The recently released results of a 2007 survey in the UK found that 76 per cent of respondents believed that an inspirational teacher had helped them succeed. Of these, 91 per cent said that a teacher had encouraged them to aim high and to achieve the best they possibly could.

These findings support NEiTA's decision to change the focus of its awards to acknowledging the inspiration that great teachers provide to their students. The ASG Inspirational Teacher Awards and grants will be presented to the teachers who connect with their students and encourage them to achieve to the best of their abilities.

Read more at <http://www.neita.com.au>

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## CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

### Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) Curriculum Cconference

## ***Prophets of a future not our own***

***Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, 16-18 April 2008***

An impressive line-up of keynote speakers will provide input that is both 'leading edge' and targeted to the Catholic school context.

They will be supported by a number of expert workshop presenters from within Catholic education and elsewhere.

Read more at <http://www.qcec.qld.catholic.edu.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=10763>

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## **Early Childhood Teachers Association National Conference**

***28 June, Brisbane***

As always, the 2008 ECTA Conference will be held on the first Saturday of the June school holidays - Saturday 28 June.

John Joseph will present the Keynote address. Master classes will be conducted by Dr Louise Porter and Dr Kylie Smith.

Full details of all workshops and biographic information for presenters is now available.

Read more at [http://www.ecta.org.au/01\\_cms/details.asp?ID=17](http://www.ecta.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=17)

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## **National History Teachers' Conference**

***Looking Back, Looking Forward, Looking Out***

***30 September-3 October 2008, John Paul College, Brisbane***

The Queensland History Teachers' Association is presenting The Annual Conference of the History Teachers' Association of Australia.

Read more at <http://www.qhta.com.au/conferences.htm>

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## **VETnetwork Australia National Conference**

***Connections, Capacity and Collaboration***

***1-3 October 2008, Sydney Convention Centre***

VETnetwork Australia is the peak body supporting vocational education in schools.

The 2008 Conference will bring together VET practitioners from senior secondary schools and colleges, career and enterprise educators, training organisations, university academics, researchers, policy developers, consultants, community programs and industry.

The theme for the 2008 conference is Connections, Capacity and Collaboration.

The focus will be on pedagogy, strategies for real life learning, case studies and partnerships.

Read more at [http://www.vetnetwork.org.au/01\\_cms/details.asp?ID=47](http://www.vetnetwork.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=47)

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## REMINDEERS

15-17 March - ASCD Conference - New Orleans, USA - <http://www.ascd.org/annualconference>

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31 March HP Education website competition closes - <http://h20426.www2.hp.com/solutions/edu/au/en/>

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4-5 April - Switch to Green Conference & Expo - Canberra - <http://www.switchtogreen.unaa.org.au>

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14 April - entries close for National Youth Week National Talent Competitions -  
<http://www.youthweek.com>

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21 April-16 May - Boys, Engagement, Bullying, Cyber-Bullying & Learning - Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane, Sydney - <http://www.radii.org/aben>

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2 May - National Walk to School Day - <http://www.walk.com.au>

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2 May - entries close for Australian Museum Eureka Science Prizes -  
<http://www.australianmuseum.net.au/eureka>

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2 May - entries close for AEU Rosemary Richards Award -  
<http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Women/RRichards.html>

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28-30 May - Council of Education Facility Planners International Conference - Melbourne -  
<http://australasia.cefpi.org/>

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1-30 June - MS Readathon - <http://www.msreadathon.org.au>

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3-6 June - International Conference on Learning - Chicago, USA - <http://www.LearningConference.com>

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26-28 June - World Education Forum SA International Conference - Adelaide -  
<http://www.infront.com.au/evt/wef/>

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6-9 July - National Conference for Teachers of English Literacy - Adelaide -  
<http://www.englishliteracyconference.com.au>

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9-12 July - Environmental Education Up The Track - Darwin - <http://www.cdu.edu.au/ehs/AAEE/>

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25-27 July - NSW Federation of Parents & Citizens Associations State Conference - Albury -  
<http://www.pandc.org.au/>

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27-29 August - Society for Provision of Education in Rural Australia Conference - Melbourne

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10-12 September - World Conference on Mental Health Promotion - Melbourne -  
<http://www.margins2mainstream.com/>

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19-20 September - AASE/AJCPTA National Conference - Fremantle - <http://www.gemspl.com.au/aase/>

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20-21 October - ACSSO National Education Conference - Brisbane - <http://www.acsso.org.au>

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25-28 October - International Research Conference on Service-learning and Community Engagement -

New Orleans - <http://www.researchslce.org/2008conference.html>

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## RESOURCES

### Announcing a New Range of Free Student Diaries for 2009

A new range of free Student Diaries is being launched to assist secondary schools in their forward planning for 2009. The diaries are customised to your school, and will carry a personalised cover - designed by one of your students, who is then automatically entered into a nationwide cover artwork competition

These diary ranges are produced by Academy Publishing, who have been actively involved in the education sector in Australia for the past seven years, and have produced secondary and tertiary sector diaries in New Zealand for many more years.

For more information and contact details: <http://academypublishing.com.au/>

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Fundraising Directory - [www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au](http://www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au) Also: [www.fetesandfestivals.com.au](http://www.fetesandfestivals.com.au)

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Drug Awareness Website - [www.drugawareness.com.au/](http://www.drugawareness.com.au/)

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Australian Schools Directory - [www.australianschoolsdirectory.com.au](http://www.australianschoolsdirectory.com.au)

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