

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

Volume 2 Number 7, 18 March 2008

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Welcome to the seventh edition of the Digest for 2008. Featured in this edition:

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HOT TOPIC: FUNDING

Gillard to end school inequality

Paul Kelly, The Australian, March 15, 2008

Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard wants to extend the model of funding private schools on a socio-economic basis to public schools in a move to confront disadvantage across both sectors.

The proposal, expected to be addressed at the next Council of Australian Governments meeting, would involve extending the contentious SES funding model designed by the former Howard government to all Australian schools.

In an interview with The Weekend Australian, Ms Gillard said it was a "great frustration" that she was able to determine the socio-economic status of private schools but not public ones.

"As a policy-maker, I cannot look across the nation now and identify within the public and private systems those schools teaching children from households most likely to face educational disadvantage," she said.

"What I'd like to see is data that tells us, 'These are the kids that are at risk unless government absolutely makes sure they have a great school'. These are the kids who come to school today for the prep year perhaps never having opened a book.

"I would put this under the banner of education and social inclusion. The schools I am talking about can be public or private schools in those communities. These kids can have great educational outcomes, but we have to make a concerted effort to achieve this."

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23378391-601,00.html>

Rudd to review private school funding

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, February 12, 2008

The Federal Government will review the controversial funding model for private schools it inherited from the Howard government, following revelations that at least half of the nation's 2000 non-government schools will receive \$2.7 billion in overpayments over the next four years.

However, the Government says it will have to keep the system until 2012 before it introduces any changes.

A secret Department of Education document, obtained by the Herald, says the system "entrenches purely historical inequities".

The federal Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, yesterday said the Government would conduct a public review of the socio-economic status funding system.

"The Rudd Government will conduct an open, transparent review of [the] SES funding model over the next quadrennium to see what if any improvements can be made to the model for funding arrangements beyond the 2009-2012 quadrennium," she said. "Attempting to change the existing funding model at this stage in the funding cycle would cause a delay in the funding determinations for schools in 2009."

However, the president of the Australian Education Union, Angelo Gavrielatos, said revelations in the Herald about the department's review had provided "compelling new evidence that warranted at least an immediate review of the Government's commitment to a flawed, discredited and corrupt funding model".

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/rudd-to-review-school-funding/2008/02/11/1202578694526.html>

How private schools owe taxpayer \$2b

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, February 9, 2008

Private schools have been over-funded by more than \$2 billion over four years and some will be overpaid by as much as \$23 million each in the next funding cycle, the federal Department of Education reveals in a secret review.

Its review of federal funding of Catholic and independent schools, leaked to the Herald, criticises arrangements that entrench "inequities" in the distribution of private school funding for "purely historical" reasons.

If they are allowed to continue, private schools will get up to \$2.7 billion more than they are strictly entitled to under the next four-year funding agreement starting next year.

The department recommends gradually stripping back schools' extra funding to give them time to adjust. It has also rejected the private school lobby's argument that the extra funding helps keep a lid on the fees parents pay. It points out that fees have continued to rise significantly.

The findings put pressure on Kevin Rudd to retreat from his pre-election commitment to maintain the funding arrangements. Under them, 60 per cent of mainstream Catholic schools and 25 per cent of independent schools are funded above their entitlement under the federal formula, which measures a school's need according to the socioeconomic status (SES) of the families who attend.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/how-private-schools-owe-taxpayer-2b/2008/02/08/1202234175001.html>

Loophole keeps schools in clover

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, February 11, 2008

Private schools identified as receiving an already too-generous share of government funding are exploiting a loophole to claim even more money from taxpayers - simply by building more campuses.

Among the biggest winners is the Exclusive Brethren, a controversial sect which has established 16 campuses around NSW, a secret review by the federal Education Department, leaked to the Herald, reveals.

The review singles out the MET School at Meadowbank, run by the Brethren, as an example of what it sees as schools getting an unfair advantage. It is the parent school for the other 15 campuses. Only one of these, at Kellyville, is within 50 kilometres of the parent school. One, Lavington, is 600 kilometres away in Albury.

If they were called new schools, they would not qualify for the same generous funding. But as "campuses", they keep it.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/loophole-keeps-schools-in-clover/2008/02/10/1202578600919.html>

Parents bear pain for private schools

Sarah Price, Sydney Morning Herald, January 27, 2008

Half the Australian parents who send their children to private school are finding it a financial strain, and one in 10 families spend more than half their take-home pay on their children's education.

Research has also found that about a third of parents who send their children to independent (private) and Catholic schools allocate more than 15percent of their household income to their children's education.

Close to 12percent of parents with children at independent schools, and 1.3percent of Catholic school parents, reserve up to half their income for school fees, the report, commissioned by BankWest, found.

Some parents - Catholic school (4percent) and private (1.3percent) - dedicate between 50 and 75percent of their household income to school fees.

The report said that 53percent of independent school parents and 47percent of Catholic school parents found paying for their children's education was financially tough.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/parents-bear-pain-for-private-schools/2008/01/26/1201157739708.html>

Funds formula benefits private schools: report

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, January 25, 2008

Private schools are becoming more advantaged and receiving greater amounts of Commonwealth funding because public schools are taking on a greater load of disadvantaged students, a national report has found.

The report by the Australian Council for Educational Research has identified a nexus between Commonwealth funding for private schools and state funding for public schools that delivers a disproportionate benefit to private schools.

Federal government funding for private schools is based on the average cost to state governments of educating a child in a public school. It also takes into account the socio-economic status of the area in which students live.

The report, Australia's School Funding System, by Andrew Dowling, indicates that public schools are losing their share of students who are the least expensive to teach and increasing their share of the most disadvantaged students, who are the costliest to educate.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/funds-formula-benefits-private-schools-report/2008/01/24/1201157559976.html>

Kiss of life for unis in decline

Harriet Alexander, Sydney Morning Herald, March 14, 2008

Australia's 38 universities face their biggest shake-up in more than a decade as the Federal Government moves to overhaul funding for higher education and repair their battered image.

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, announced a tertiary education review yesterday in a signal that Labor's promised "education revolution" would deliver long-awaited funding for cash-starved universities.

But universities are likely to have to wait for next year's budget before their coffers are replenished. The review panel is due to deliver a priority action plan by October, and a full report by the end of the year.

The review will be chaired by Denise Bradley, a former long-serving vice-chancellor of the University of South Australia, who has lobbied and advised successive governments on education policy.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/kiss-of-life-for-unis-in-decline/2008/03/13/1205126112208.html>

AROUND THE STATES AND TERRITORIES

SA: School safety must be the priority

Adelaide Advertiser Editorial, March 10, 2008

The lack of repair work carried out in government schools in South Australia, as identified in an Advertiser investigation, is unacceptable.

Individual school principals are understandably reluctant to publicly criticise deficiencies in the maintenance program.

But it is clear children are being exposed to the danger of accident or injury which would not be tolerated in a supervised work environment.

To blame a lack of federal and state resources is simply not good enough.

The Federal Government has reallocated the \$1.2 billion Investing in Our Schools funding, which targeted maintenance, to finance a \$1 billion pledge to ensure all students have access to computers.

Last year more than \$8 million from this fund was spent in South Australian schools.

But school maintenance is not solely a federal responsibility. The State Government, which runs the South Australian education system, must share the blame for maintenance deficiencies.

The Government has repeatedly said funding will be cut from other programs to help boost education and health.

To be fair, improvements have been introduced by Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith and the proposed construction of a series of super schools in and around Adelaide will eradicate at least some of the maintenance problems.

Fading paint and minor wall cracking, particularly in schools which will ultimately be phased out, can be tolerated. But broken windows, loose paving stones and asbestos-ridden toilet blocks represent serious safety issues which must be addressed urgently.

The Federal and State Labor governments cannot claim to be the champions of the public education system without correcting the obvious shortcomings of school infrastructure.

Clearly, the first priority must be the safety and wellbeing of the children.

VIC: Victoria The Cheapest State

A report showing Victoria spends the least amount of money per student in public education is a damning indictment on the State Government, the opposition says.

But Education Minister Bronwyn Pike says Victoria should be judged on its academic results.

The Report on Government Services — prepared by a committee of officials from the Commonwealth, state and territory governments and released on January 31 — found total recurrent expenditure on schools was \$32.4 billion in 2005-06.

Victoria had the lowest government funding for public schools in 2005-06 at about \$10,000 per student, followed in ascending order by Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales and Tasmania.

Nationally, governments spend \$9699 on each primary school student and \$12,148 per secondary school pupil.

Victorian Opposition education spokesman Martin Dixon said the figures were damning for the Brumby Government, which said education was its No. 1 priority.

“Victorian students and teachers hold the dubious distinction of being the most poorly funded and most poorly paid respectively of any state or territory in Australia,” Dixon said.

"The Brumby Government has an \$800 million surplus but stubbornly refuses to increase recurrent expenditure per student and reward and retain the best teachers."

Pike's spokesman Matt Nurse said Victoria's education system was among the best.

"We should be judged on our academic results, not just the dollars we put into the system," Nurse said. "Victorian students achieve very good results and are meeting, and in many cases exceeding, all national benchmarks for literacy and numeracy."

New South Wales Education Minister John Della Bosca, meanwhile, said the report highlighted that the state's literacy and numeracy skills are "well above the national benchmark" and "out-of-school administration costs were the lowest in the nation".

This means we've got the balance right, the vast majority of our funding is directed to quality teaching and learning facilities." and learning facilities."

NSW: NSW Moves to Raise Leaving Age

A New South Wales Government move to keep students at school until at least the age of 16 has received widespread support, but education groups insist it must be met with additional resources.

Premier Morris Iemma used the first school day of 2008 to announce that legislation would be introduced this year to lift the minimum leaving age from 15 years. The change is set to come into effect for the start of the 2009 school year, but the public would be consulted before the leaving age was finalised.

"There are kids falling through the cracks and we have an obligation to protect vulnerable children, to give them more hope for a brighter, more secure future," Iemma said.

The minimum school-leaving age was last increased in 1943, when it was lifted from 14 to 15. About 5500 children leave school at that age each year. The change means only the ACT and the Northern Territory will have a leaving age of 15 years.

President of the Federation of Parents' and Citizens' Associations Dianne Giblin said the step was only part of ensuring students had bright futures and schools must now be backed with additional resources.

NSW Teachers' Federation deputy president Bob Lipscombe said raising the school-leaving age had merit but "must not be done on the cheap" and students needed support.

NSW: Nervous start to a selective future

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald March 14, 2008

IT WAS hard to tell who was more nervous - the parents or their children. Yesterday 13,278 year six students sat the selective high schools entry test for 3522 year seven places, available next year.

Among them was Halina Hussein's son Simon, who attends Canterbury South Primary School. Simon sat his test with 100 other hopefuls at his first choice of schools, Tempe High, which is partly selective.

His mother, who completed a mathematics degree in Poland, said she would send Simon to Trinity Grammar School if he did not gain entry into a selective high school.

"I think selective schools are good, but they are very academic," she said.

"My son is involved in sport."

Mrs Hussein said it would be up to her son to determine whether he would work hard at school and go to university.

"If they don't want to do it, regardless of how many tutors you get, it won't work out," she said.

"When I went to university I went because it was what I wanted to do and not because I was pushed."

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/nervous-start-to-a-selective-future/2008/03/13/1205126112314.html>

NSW: Hundreds cast out as college closes

Harriet Alexander, Sydney Morning Herald, February 16, 2008

Almost 1000 international students face losing thousands of dollars and being forced home on Monday because the private college they attended has been shut by the NSW Government.

Global College, which is well known for offering courses that help international students get permanent visas, will lock its doors to students in its business, hairdressing and commercial cookery courses after failing to renew its registration with the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board.

It is alleged to have significantly overenrolled its classes and failed to provide enough stoves per student in its kitchen.

The training accreditation board told the college last week that it would not be allowed to resume classes when it re-opens from the summer break on Monday until its registration has been renewed, which will take between three and 18 months.

With commercial cookery and hairdressing classes across the city at full capacity, government and industry authorities will face a logistical nightmare trying to accommodate the large number of outcast students.

The scandal comes a week after the higher education recruitment body, IDP Australia, boasted that education had replaced tourism as Australia's third biggest services export for the first time, with a total value of \$12.5 billion, trailing only coal and iron ore.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/hundreds-cast-out-as-college-closes/2008/02/15/1202760599522.html>

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

"Parenting in Practice" – Joseph Degeling & Christine Langridge

Review by Rupert Macgregor, ACSSO National Projects Manager

Children – notoriously – are not delivered with a User Manual: an oversight in the scheme of things which this very useful booklet seeks to address.

To quote from the Introduction: Some people think that just having a child makes one a parent. This is as absurd a proposition as that owning a piano makes one a musician. This booklet has been written for those who believe that parenting is a process: life-long, difficult, challenging – and yet potentially enormously satisfying and productive. Parents provide the context and “building blocks” of their child’s life, and therefore of our future society.

So, while being a perfect parent is unattainable because there isn’t any such being (and most of us would more humbly tend to rate ourselves as barely competent on a good day) this booklet presents parenting as an achievable process of reflective learning and critical practice in action, in ways that will benefit and sustain every parent, and contribute to their children’s progressive and positive development.

The content and strategies outlined in this booklet are firmly anchored in the learnings from a hands-on parenting program and extensive experience in working with parents. The skills and strategies which it presents can be applied in every parent’s daily life, starting from the very early years.

It has a basic focus on building a positive relationship between parents and children – a sustainable relationship that can then evolve and expand to encompass and support each subsequent stage of a child’s development. At each stage, the emphasis is on moving forward together to achieve positive and appropriate outcomes in terms of aspirations, attitudes and behaviours.

While it certainly does not ignore the risk factors and negative influences that can impact adversely on the well-being and behaviours of a young person’s development, it’s emphasis is on the ways of embedding protective factors and positive habits into the parenting process from the beginning, in terms of:

- Establishing realistic boundaries and expectations appropriate to the child’s age and stage of development;
- Focusing on the consequences of behaviours – with an emphasis on the positive consequences and recognition of positive behaviours and achievements;
- Looking after yourself and your own supportive relationships, so you can maintain your focus and balance as a reflective, positive and nurturing parent.

This booklet packs a vast quantity of very practical wisdom, experience and good advice into its 60 pages, and is highly recommended to parents at any stage of their shared journey as the primary educators and role models for their child. It retails at \$11.00 (inclusive of GST) - and proceeds go to support the Berne Education Centre for young people at risk.

For more details: <http://www.berneeducation.org/Resources/Publications.html>

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AWARDS & PRIZES

Dare to Lead - Making the Difference, 2008 Indigenous Education Awards

Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today announced outstanding leadership awards in Indigenous education for 16 schools from across Australia.

These 16 schools are making a real difference creating strong ties between the schools and their communities.

The achievements of these schools include improving attendance for year 10 to year 12 students, school enrolments and graduation rates have increased, a reflection of the schools’ hard work and dedication.

The Dare to Lead: Excellence in Leadership in Indigenous Education Awards, is a national project that helps to improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students.

The program acknowledges schools that:

- excel in leadership;
- engage with their local Aboriginal community;
- have shown improvements in education targets.

The Minister congratulated the five High Achievement Award winning schools who will receive a plaque, certificate and a cash prize of \$6000, and the 11 Achievement Award schools who will be sent a Certificate and a cash prize of \$1000.

The Rudd Government has made a commitment to halving the gap in literacy, numeracy and employment outcomes and opportunities for Aboriginal children within the decade.

Four in ten Aboriginal students stay at school until year 12, 35 per cent lower than for non-Aboriginal students.

The Rudd Government is working to close the gap and ensure more Aboriginal children get a better education.

Read more at <http://www.alp.org.au/media/0308/msed141.php>

Premiers' Reading Challenges

For several years now, various State Premiers (and Chief Ministers of the Territories) have funded, endorsed and actively promoted Reading Challenges for students in government, independent, Catholic and home schools. Participation by schools and students is voluntary.

This, from the NSW Premier's Reading Challenge website, echoes the sentiments of the other heads of the states, "The Challenge aims to encourage in students a love of reading for leisure and pleasure, and to enable students to experience quality literature. It is not a competition but a challenge to each student to read, to read more and to read more widely."

Current Premier's Reading Challenges:

NSW: <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/premiersreadingchallenge>

Victoria: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/prc/>

Queensland: <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/readingchallenge/>

SA: <http://www.premiersreadingchallenge.sa.edu.au/prc/>

The winners of the WA Premier's Summer Reading Challenge have just been announced, see http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/events/readingchallenge/kids_winners.html

In Tasmania, "The Premier's Reading Challenge will commence soon with the specific aim of encouraging parents and family members to read with children in the home." See http://www.premier.tas.gov.au/government_priorities/literacy

MS Readathon

1-30 June

MS Australia is encouraging children to have fun reading to change the lives of people living with multiple sclerosis (MS) by taking part in the annual MS Readathon.

Each working day five people are diagnosed with MS, a disease that affects the body's central nervous system producing symptoms such as blurred vision, loss of balance, pins and needles and speech difficulties. With no known cause or cure for MS, this annual event has become one of the largest fundraisers for MS Australia.

Each year the MS Readathon inspires children to help people living with MS by collecting sponsorship from family and friends for the books they read in the month of June. All participants who complete receive a Certificate and reading rewards.

Children are encouraged to race to register either via the MS Readathon website or a registration form from their local school or library. For more information, visit www.msreadathon.org.au or call the State/Territory office on 1300 677 323.

Parent groups in schools can

- Encourage members who enjoy public speaking to become a Community Representative and visit schools in their local area. See information below for details on how to apply.
- Encourage the school's families to register for the 2008 MS Readathon.
- Circulate MS Readathon information in your newsletters and electronic bulletins.

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

Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards 2008

Closing 2 June 2008

Primary and secondary students across Australia are being urged to go outdoors to find inspiration for the 2008 Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards.

"Forests, Feathers, Fins and Fur" is this year's theme for country's largest poetry writing competition for students, which celebrates the work of well-known Australian poet Dorothea Mackellar.

Supported by the Australian Government, the poetry awards, now in their 28th year, are an activity associated with National Literacy and Numeracy Week (NLNW).

"The Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards is a valued National Literacy and Numeracy Week event. It helps students discover a passion for poetry, while ensuring our children develop effective literacy skills," said Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard.

"These important awards provide a unique voice for our youth. I encourage all schools to participate and write about our precious environment."

Last year, more than 15,000 poems were written by students from nearly 1000 schools nationally.

Students and schools can share in more than \$5000 worth of prizes including cash, trophies, books and a trip to Gunnedah in north-west NSW – home of the awards and where Dorothea Mackellar's family owned several properties.

Entries in the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards close 2 June 2008. Authors Sue Gough and Prue Mason are the judges, and winners will be notified during NLNW (1-7 September).

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

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANET EARTH 2008

“Heat: How to Stop the Planet from Burning” by George Monbiot

Review by Rupert Macgregor, ACSSO National Projects Manager

En attendant Garnaut – While awaiting the final Garnaut Report, this important book provides a powerful and scientifically informed account not only of the causes and implications of global warming, plus the reasons why it has been so contested an issue – but also, more importantly, how we can usefully address the challenges it presents to the future of life on earth.

Monbiot firmly establishes up front, with a detailed review of the scientific evidence, that “to doubt today that man-made climate change is happening, you must abandon science and revert to some other means of understanding the world: alchemy perhaps, or magic.”

Monbiot specifically intends “Heat” to be a manifesto for action. He seeks to show not only the urgent need for effective action, but how a modern economy can be de-carbonised while still remaining a modern economy. He explores a range of methods and technologies on the basis that their successful implementation in one economy can be adapted and replicated in all others.

His admitted primary focus is on the rich nations, not only as having the resources and technologies for change more readily available, but also because “until we have demonstrated that we are serious about cutting our own emissions, we are in no position to preach restraint to poorer countries... A citizen of China produces on average 2.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year, a citizen of the United States [or Australia] around 20.00 tonnes.”

He states firmly that “I have one purpose on writing this book: to persuade you that climate change is worth fighting. I hope I have been able to demonstrate that it is not – as some people have claimed – too late. In doing so, I hope to prompt you not to lament our governments’ failures to introduce the measures required to tackle it, but to force them to reverse their policies, by joining what must become the world’s most powerful political movement.”

This is required reading, as the positive alternative to “becoming so depressed about the state of the planet [you] stay in bed all day, thereby reducing your consumption of fossil fuels....”

Review copy published by South End Press, Cambridge Massachusetts USA, rrp c AUS \$29.00

Also see as a compact introduction to the issues, George Monbiot’s 2005 paper to the UK Environmental Lawyers Foundation, “Climate Change, A Crisis of Collective Denial” – now accessible on the ACSSO Values in Education Website at <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/pdf/monbiot050504.pdf>

CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) Conference 2008

Taking steps for a fair go for all - social inclusion policies and practices

Wednesday 9th and Thursday 10th April 2008 Sebel Albert Park, Melbourne

The Conference will examine taking steps for a fair go for all social inclusion policies and practices. You will hear from Federal and State Governments, the community services and welfare sector perspective, corporates and philanthropic organisations about the emerging social inclusion agenda of Australia. The Conference will also look at the meaning and scope of social inclusion and poverty.

The second day of the Conference will be a series of concurrent practical workshops in a number of specific areas.

One of the outcomes of the workshops would be to identify medium and longer term targets in each specific area which would, if met, reduce social exclusion. The workshops will also examine who is excluded in each of these areas, the effects of this exclusion and the broad strategies which would help achieve social inclusion targets.

This conference is essential for service providers, advocacy groups, corporates, academics, federal government officials, state government officials, local government officials, trusts and philanthropic groups and non government organisations.

Read more at <http://www.acoss.org.au/Events.aspx?displayID=1>

National Walk to School Day

2 May 2008

Australia's childhood obesity epidemic has two principal causes: lack of physical activity and poor diet. Regular walking is the best and easiest way for children and parents and carers to have an active and healthy lifestyle.

National Walk Safely To School Day (WSTSD) aims to promote better health and cleaner air. It is sponsored by the Commonwealth Government and supported by all State and Territory Governments, the national public school parents and citizens council (ACSSO) and the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA).

All primary schools throughout Australia will receive a kit of posters, stickers and further information shortly after Easter. This year we are asking all Councils and school P&Cs to get together to help fund and host healthy breakfasts at their local primary schools to help promote WSTSD.

Dr Rosemary Stanton OAM, Australia's leading nutritionist, has recommended a wide range of items which would best comprise a healthy breakfast. We estimate an average breakfast will cost about \$3 per child; for example, an apple and/or a pear, a cheese stick, a pack of sultanas, a bottle of water and a pack of Up and Go.

Woolworths Supermarkets will supply participating schools with apples and pears at a price well below the regular price. They will also be promoting the event nationally in their catalogues, in-store radio advertisements and on their check-out screens.

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

REMINDEERS

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

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

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

16-18 April - Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) Curriculum Conference - Brisbane - <http://www.qcec.qld.catholic.edu.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=10763>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

28 June - Early Childhood Teachers Association National Conference - Brisbane - http://www.ecta.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=17

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

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

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

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

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

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

30 September-3 October - National History Teachers' Conference - Brisbane - <http://www.qhta.com.au/conferences.htm>

1-3 October - VETnetwork Australia National Conference - Sydney - http://www.vetnetwork.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=47

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

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/>

Fundraising Directory - www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au Also: www.fetesandfestivals.com.au

Drug Awareness Website - www.drugawareness.com.au/

Australian Schools Directory - www.australianschoolsdirectory.com.au

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