

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

Volume 2 Number 13, 6 May 2008

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HOT TOPIC: THE DRIFT TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Public schools 'risk being safety net'

AAP, April 22, 2008

A leading education academic says Australia's public schools are at risk of becoming a residual system catering only to those who can't afford private fees.

Professor Bob Meyenn, who oversees Charles Sturt University's Canadian campus in Ontario, says if current trends continue the public system will become little more than a safety net for disadvantaged students.

Prof Meyenn said the movement from public to private schools over the last decade was most evident at secondary level, with more than one-third of all students now attending non-government schools.

"Public schools are expected to take anybody whereas private schools can choose who they take," Prof Meyenn told AAP. "So if we're not careful it will be a safety net and a residual system ... catering for those who can't afford fees. That would be disastrous for Australia."

Prof Meyenn, a former dean of CSU's education faculty, blamed the shift to private schools on a 1996 decision to deregulate the system "and allow private schools to set up anywhere".

But he was hopeful Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's promised "education revolution" would result in a complete overhaul of the "inequitable" funding regime.

He said while it would be "stupid" to argue for private schools to be abolished altogether, schools should be funded according to their needs.

"Schools in the most difficult, most depressed, most disadvantaged areas should be getting the most funding, not the elite private schools," he said.

Former Labor leader Mark Latham drew up a hit list of private schools before the 2004 election and promised to slash their funding. But the move was politically disastrous as he was attacked by some of the country's most powerful schools.

However, Prof Meyenn said where there was a will there was a way.

Read more at <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=451429>

Prof Meyenn discussed the economic, political and educational implications of the increasing shift to private schooling at Charles Sturt University's first Bob Meyenn Annual Education Lecture in Albury on Wednesday 23 April 2008.

Listen online at <http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/educat/murrayed/>

Call to deregulate education

Marissa Calligeros Brisbane Times May 2, 2008

The Federal Government's plan for a national education curriculum will not avert a "looming crisis" in Queensland's education system, according to a new report for the state's independent schools.

The author of the report, policy analyst Dr Scott Prasser, said a country "as diverse and regionally based as Australia" is not suited to a one-size-fits-all approach to education.

"I much prefer a more regionally-based education system where local parents, local groups (and) local communities have a say and are not dictated to by bureaucrats in Canberra," Dr Prasser said.

"If you have a national curriculum, you're putting all your eggs in one basket, but what if that goes wrong?"

Dr Prasser said diversity and competition among schools is necessary to prevent a crisis in education, generated by the demands of rapid population growth in the south-east corner and an ageing teaching workforce.

"Let's try and avoid another policy crisis in Queensland," Dr Prasser said.

"Last minute, top-down, over-the-top, expensive reactions neglect and fail to respond in time to policy problems."

The accreditation and regulation of private schools has long fallen under state government policy, but Dr Prasser has said that will not work for much longer with one in three children in Queensland in non-government schools.

He has therefore proposed a new, deregulated approach to education in Queensland which takes more notice of the private sector.

Read more at <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/news/queensland/qld-education-facing-crisis/2008/05/01/1209235035663.html>

Download Dr Prasser's report at

<http://www.aisq.qld.edu.au/files/files/Communications/docs/Independent%20Schools%20in%20Queensland%20-%20A%20Discussion%20Paper%20-%20issues%20and%20challenges%20in%20the%20context%20of%20the%20Smart%20State%20education%20system.pdf>

HOT TOPIC: 2020 SUMMIT

A vision from the past?

Brian Caldwell, April 28, 2008

Now that the dust has settled, what can schools expect from the Australia 2020 Summit? I did not apply to attend but was pleased to receive an invitation, given my interest in the transformation of schools.

I had previously questioned whether Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and his deputy, Julia Gillard, understood the significance of an "education revolution", which got off to a modest start with the promise of computer access for all secondary students. Smart schools began this switch more than a decade ago.

I was placed in the productivity stream that was given the task of forming "big ideas" on education, skills, training, science and innovation. I have been concerned for some time that there are weak linkages between education, economy and society, and the productivity stream provided an opportunity to make proposals to achieve an alignment.

So how did the process and the outcomes stack up against expectations for an education revolution? On the positive side, the "big ideas" are both coherent and comprehensive. It was a rare opportunity for people from education, business and a range of community-based organisations to share their ideas.

On the negative side, I cannot identify a single significant idea that has not been canvassed in the past decade, including those put forward by the prime minister, premiers and ministers.

Ms Gillard's proposal for partnerships between the top 100 companies and secondary schools is a re-statement of a more expansive proposal by her predecessor, Julie Bishop. Queensland Premier Anna Bligh's call for a national curriculum has already been embraced. The same proposal by Ms Bishop had been rejected by most of her state counterparts.

Mr Rudd's proposal for one-stop early learning support is consistent with the long-standing call for a "full-service" approach.

There was endorsement of the existing consensus on attracting the best people to the profession, and a renewed call to improve science and maths education by connecting scientists to teachers.

Mr Rudd joined our discussions at the moment I was highlighting Finland's success in ensuring that every child who falls behind is given immediate expert support to catch up quickly. It is a strategy that should be adopted here to ensure that the gap between high and low-performing students is as narrow as it is in Finland.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/education-news/a-vision-from-the-past/2008/04/26/1208743265909.html>

Professor Brian Caldwell, previously Dean of Education and now professorial fellow at Melbourne University, currently leads "Educational Transformations".

2020 plans for school education: summit good, summit bad

Chris Bonnor, Online Opinion, 1 May 2008

Now that the dust and the bulldust is starting to settle it is getting easier to see what came out of the 2020 Summit - but as far as education is concerned, scanning the Summit report is a bit like a hungry dog scouring a rubbish tip looking for something recognisable to eat.

Most of the morsels were found in the productivity agenda - with participants facing questions to which we already know the answer, along with push-polling type questions which would steer discussion towards the achievable, while tip-toeing around the hard-to-solve issues.

I don't want to be "holier-than-thou" about this - as a school principal in a former life I would always make sure that each annual school plan included stuff that was going to happen anyway. And I don't want to bad-mouth the summiteers because many exciting ideas did emerge across the topic areas.

But even allowing for all that, the education ideas coming out of the Summit were a bit underwhelming. There were some good ideas, but others addressed superficial concerns, gave jobs for someone else (schools) to do and restated much of the bleeding obvious. Some ideas were in potential conflict and others, almost certainly a good idea at the time, might have a mercifully short life span.

The biggest category was "lofty-ideas-which-need-a-dose-of-reality". The constant references to inclusion, even in the productivity group, were very refreshing. But the mere presence of fee-charging schools alongside free schools guarantees that it is exclusion, not inclusion, which has a firm grip in Australian schooling. The productivity group may wish to overcome the "public-private divide in education", but they'll need to demolish a herd of sacred cows.

Let's take just one example: the productivity group wants to fund students according to need. The students' parents say you should fund their choice of schools according to some entitlement that comes from the mere paying of taxes. The principles of need and entitlement don't make good bedfellows.

Read more <http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=7299&page=0>

Chris Bonnor is joint author of "Australia the Stupid Country".

And a quick summation by three education summiteers:

Angelo Gavrielatos, federal president, Australian Education Union:

"Any exercise aimed at broadening participation and community engagement in public policy formation is by definition very positive and worthwhile. In that respect the summit gets a tick. The one idea that came into focus emerged in the economy stream, which called for a dramatic investment of additional funding into education. If that can be fulfilled, there will be without a doubt an improvement in educational outcomes in this nation."

Professor Geoff Masters, chief executive officer, Australian Council for Educational Research:

"For me, the most significant theme was the need to reform the Australian federation. Running through all discussions was a recognition that unnecessary differences and duplication across the states are now impeding national progress. The summit sub-stream discussing early childhood and school education identified the need for more seamless, national approaches to our most pressing educational challenges. Among the new ideas that I liked was the suggestion that a person be able to reduce their HECS debt through community service."

Professor Elizabeth Harman, vice-chancellor, Victoria University:

"The summit had value on many levels. The messages for education in the productivity section are a licence for the Deputy PM, federal and state governments to shape an education system that works better for everyone. I was part of the group that discussed the post-school system of universities, TAFEs and private colleges. There was a shared view that the system is not joined up. It needs to let people 'dip in and out'. Too many people are missing out altogether. And importantly, employers and educators do not work well together. The big message for me was that work will go on and has been made easier by the networking we were all able to do."

The initial Summit Report is at <http://www.australia2020.gov.au/report/index.cfm>

A final Summit report will be published on that website by end of May 2008

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HOT TOPIC: SCHOOL SIZE

Size matters on the school front - report

David Killick, Hobart Mercury April 24, 2008

Small schools are not cost-effective and not good at providing comprehensive educational programs, says a new government report.

A discussion paper to be released today by the Demographic Change Advisory Council says the closure of half-empty schools is inevitable but draws community opposition.

About 35 government schools are expected to be closed over the next decade as population change slashes student numbers by up to 10,000.

The report finds many Tasmanian schools are too small to offer a broad education for students.

The average Tasmanian school has just 285 students and 57 of the state's 139 primary schools have fewer than 200 students -- well short of the 300 considered optimal.

"In order to ensure that Tasmanian students have continued access to quality educational facilities and opportunities, difficult decisions will have to be made by the Government and the community in relation to the viability of some schools," the paper says.

"It would appear inevitable that school closures and amalgamations will need to occur in Tasmania in the future in order to maintain high-quality education provision in a financially sustainable way.

"It is also inevitable that closures and amalgamation will draw a degree of community opposition because of the educational, social and financial impacts the closures will have on students, families and school communities."

Education Minister David Bartlett is expected to use the report to find a way to build consensus on how to close 35 mainly inner-city primary schools in the next 10 years.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/mercury/story/0,22884,23590752-5007221,00.html>

RESEARCH

Does Leaving School Early Really Matter?

School completion is viewed as a major policy issue in Australia. Early school leavers are more likely to become unemployed, stay unemployed for longer, have lower earnings, and accumulate less wealth over their lifetime.

Policy makers are particularly concerned with the role of schools in early school leaving, with a view to policy intervention.

If individual schools have important effects on school leaving, then policies could be introduced in particular schools to reduce early school leaving. However, such policy interventions would be less appropriate if schools or school factors do not make substantive independent contributions to school leaving.

School completion in Australia has increased substantially from around one third of secondary school students in 1980 to about three quarters in 2005. More recently, policies implemented to increase participation include broadening the curriculum, restricting unemployment assistance for school leavers, expanding vocational education in secondary schools and increasing the minimum school leaving age.

However, despite these policy interventions, school retention has increased only marginally by about 3 percentage points since the mid 1990s. One explanation is that non-academically inclined students are choosing to enter the labour market or participate in post-school education rather than complete school.

Read more at http://www.acer.edu.au/enews/0804_marks.html

Better focus required on principals' career paths and roles

Building communities of professional learners is the key to meeting Australia's school leadership challenge a new review of research has concluded.

The Australian Education review 53: The Leadership Challenge: Improving learning in schools, written by University of Tasmania researcher Professor Bill Mulford, draws on papers from ACER's 2007 Research Conference and many other contemporary sources within the leadership research literature to address and provide a focus for the issues facing Australian school leadership.

"It is clear from the research that the task of leading a school is now too complex and demanding a job for one person," Professor Mulford said. "Improving schooling over time requires the enhanced capacity, not just of one person, but of many."

Advances in science and technology, changes in demography, increased globalisation and pressures on the environment are causing education organisations to broaden and personalise curriculum and to rethink school structures and the role of the principal within them.

"The old but continuing attempts to improve schools in a small number of areas by top down political and bureaucratic means, has failed. On the other hand, research evidence is clear in its support for the advantages of building social capital within schools, among and between schools as well as between the school and its community,"

Read more at http://www.acer.edu.au/enews/0804_AER53.html

Australian & NZ University students less engaged than US counterparts

Australian and New Zealand tertiary students are less engaged with their universities than their North American counterparts according to results from the first administration of the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE). More than 9000 students from 25 Australian and New Zealand universities participated in the survey in 2007. The public report was released by ACER in April

Results reveal that, on average, Australian and New Zealand students find their study slightly less academically challenging than students in the US. They report lower levels of contact with teaching staff and are less likely to have participated in activities described as 'enriching educational experiences.' For instance, while 53 per cent of later-year US students had participated in a practicum, internship, fieldwork or clinical placement, only 28 per cent of Australasian students had taken part in such an experience.

Generally, the responses of Australian and New Zealand students became more positive between first year and later years of study. However, students believed they received less support from their universities over time.

Students in Education and Health fields reported the highest levels of engagement and students in the Information Technology field reported the lowest.

Read more at: http://www.acer.edu.au/enews/0804_AUSSE.html

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INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Aboriginal literacy plan is working

Paige Taylor The Australian May 01, 2008

A simple edict that Aboriginal children read and write for two hours every morning is finally reducing appalling levels of literacy in remote parts of Australia.

The literacy of children at Kiwirrkurra in the Gibson Desert, 700km west of Alice Springs, was so poor four years ago that only a handful had the reading and writing skills to attempt the West Australian Government's annual written literacy exam for all students in Years 3, 5 and 7. Of those who sat the test, not one met the national benchmarks.

In the remote township of 150 people, only 15 adults can read and write English.

But the students are now making small but significant gains after the West Australian Government's Aboriginal literacy strategy, rolled out to 42 remote schools in 2006, made it compulsory for teachers to devote the first two hours of every school day to guided reading, guided writing and word games.

The school's students have begun borrowing regularly from the library, and all are ready for the new national literacy and numeracy tests this month. "Their progress really has been incredible," said principal Mitchell Drage, a Pinikura-Thudgara man and one of the few indigenous school principals in Australia. "I call this common sense."

The state Department of Education and Training's analysis of the literacy strategy shows that, since its introduction, 70 per cent of Aboriginal students in remote West Australian schools have demonstrated moderate to very high improvement in their reading standards.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23625835-2702,00.html>

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UNIVERSITY FUNDING

New fund to strengthen higher education

Hon Julia Gillard MP, 23 April 2008

Today the Minister for Education, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, invited universities to apply for the first round of funding under the new Diversity and Structural Adjustment Fund.

This fund promotes greater specialisation among providers, better responsiveness to labour markets and diversification in the higher education sector.

The Australian Government has allocated \$206 million to encourage greater diversity in the higher education sector by encouraging universities to develop strategies to support their unique missions and areas of strength.

Key priority areas for 2008 include:

- building capacity to meet student and employer demand, and labour market needs;
- supporting diversity and specialisation, dual sector activities and learning and teaching performance;
- higher education provides in regional and smaller metropolitan areas for structural reform with relevance to labour markets and teaching and learning; and
- community service projects.

Proposals that will enhance outcomes in graduate employability skills are particularly invited under learning and teaching performance.

Community service projects that facilitate, develop or enhance philanthropic effort, or which facilitate social inclusion through activities to raise student aspiration, or which support student skill development through community engagement are also encouraged.

Applications for expressions of interest close at 5.00pm Australian Eastern Standard Time on 12 May 2008.

Read more at <http://www.dest.gov.au/highered/dsa>

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PARENT TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

Problems When Parents Lose the Plot

Elisabeth Tarica, The Age April 28, 2008

NOTHING in her 38 years as a teacher, most of it at "difficult" schools, prepared Toni Sharkey for that moment: not her long experience of making peace with troublesome students, not her skill at persuading quarrelsome parents to see reason.

Sitting in her office as principal of Newcomb Secondary College in Geelong, she was faced with a student's mother known for her short fuse and angry rants. In the past Ms Sharkey had been able to calm her. Not this time.

"After screaming and carrying on at me, she grabbed me by the top of the arm and around my neck with the other hand and threw me on the ground," she recalls of that moment in 2006. "I didn't know what was happening,"

It was thanks to the intervention of an assistant principal, who, from his office, had heard the swearing and abuse escalate, that the physical damage was limited to severe bruising and a neck injury.

What had Ms Sharkey done to deserve such an attack? She had suspended the woman's son after he arrived at school one day with baseball bats and two other boys, neither of them a student at the school, looking to settle a score with another student.

The assault brought Ms Sharkey's years of hard work to an abrupt end, the physical injuries paling against the mental and emotional impact. She hasn't worked since the incident, suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and is unlikely to return to work.

"I find that unbelievably challenging," she says. "I have never thought about retiring or resigning from teaching."

While Ms Sharkey's case is an extreme example of how quickly and badly things can go wrong with the parent-teacher relationship, it isn't unique. Many teachers and principals have been attacked, bullied or stalked by parents - and probably all in the profession come to experience that other beast, the relentlessly intrusive mum or dad.

While new teachers enter the classroom ready to deal with a range of difficult students, teachers' colleges seldom prepare them for overbearing, aggressive, overprotective and know-all parents - those who decide their child's failure to flourish is due entirely to some failing of the teacher; or believe the teacher has taken a set against their progeny; or hold that their child should be exempt from the usual sanctions and rules of school life.

Parents, in short, who fail to recognise the line between healthy engagement with teachers and something more disturbing.

Teachers' unions say the increasingly violent nature of attacks is forcing educators to take time off to deal with stress. Some have resorted to intervention orders. Some young teachers simply abandon the profession.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/education-news/the-parent-trap/2008/04/26/1208743265926.html>

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HUMANE EDUCATION

Jane Goodall Institute Australia's Special Event - "Out of Africa"

Thursday 5 June 2008 at 6.30 pm - Adelaide Zoo

The Jane Goodall Institute works with school communities via their "Roots & Shoots" program, contributing to young people's personal development through teamwork and community engagement - values education in action.

This World Environment Day, you are invited to an intimate dinner hosted by celebrated chef Simon Bryant, with keynote speaker animal behaviourist Dr Carla Litchfield. Proceeds will support the further development of their work with young people and school communities

Read more at <http://acsso.org.au/goodall080605.pdf>

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy International Conference 2008

31 August - 3 September: Gold Coast, Queensland

ACSSO represents all parent and families on the Education & Training Working Group for the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) - jointly convened by Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and Department Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry (DAFF) - to develop national education, training and information resources to inform humane education in schools as an essential element of values education.

The AAWS International Animal Welfare Conference 2008 is this year's flagship event in the implementation of AAWS - a national blueprint to improve animal welfare for all Australian animals and across the entire community.

The Conference will bring together national and international leaders in animal welfare science, practice and policy.

Read more at <http://aaws08.blogspot.com/>

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INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANET EARTH 2008

Clean energy to avert disaster

Geoff Davies, Canberra Times 30 April 2008

The views of global warming denialists have been given prominence recently, one even claiming we are heading into an ice age, on the basis of a one-year dip in global temperatures accompanying the current La Nina phenomenon.

On the other hand, economist Sir Nicholas Stern said recently he underestimated the magnitude and pace of global warming in his 2006 report on the costs of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Who is the ordinary punter to believe?

A basic perspective on this debate, which gets obscured by the denialist smokescreen, is that climate scientists' projections from decades ago have been broadly vindicated. Thus measurements of the temperature rise and sea level rise began to emerge from the statistical fluctuations early in this century, extreme weather events have increased, mountain glaciers are in widespread retreat, polar regions are warming more rapidly than the equatorial zone, and rates of melting and break-up of polar ice are accelerating.

If climate scientists have erred it is in failing to anticipate disturbing signs of rapid acceleration of global warming over the past two or three years. The summer Arctic sea ice is decreasing far more rapidly than anticipated, which is concerning in itself. More seriously, as the ice disappears the exposed ocean absorbs much more of the sun's heat, so polar warming is accelerated.

There is a serious concern that the loss of summer Arctic sea ice is the first in a series of climate dominoes whose fall could become unstoppable, taking us irreversibly into a very different climate regime. Other dominoes are the release of carbon dioxide and methane (another potent greenhouse gas) from warming polar permafrost and soils, acidification and warming of the ocean surface, which reduce its ability to absorb carbon dioxide, and increasing frequencies of megafires.

Read more at <http://canberra.yourguide.com.au/news/opinion/opinion/clean-energy-to-avert-disaster/1233970.html>

Carbon agreement takes off

Mathew Murphy The Age April 24, 2008

AVIATION'S chief industry body has signed a declaration pledging "carbon-neutral growth" of the sector but has not committed to greenhouse gas emissions targets.

International Air Transport Association director-general Giovanni Bisignani, whose group represents more than 240 airlines, said the agreement was a "historic commitment to tackle climate change".

The declaration will make IATA's four-pillar strategy of investing in technology, building and using efficient infrastructure, effective flying and economic measures, an industry commitment.

The strategy also contains a goal to improve fuel efficiency by 25% by 2020.

But there was no target to reduce the aviation sector's greenhouse gas emissions, which account for about 2% of global emissions.

Despite the omission, IATA has started to tackle recommendations in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's report. The report said that increased competition in air travel could increase efficiency by 12%.

Read more at <http://business.theage.com.au/carbon-agreement-takes-off/20080423-286a.html>

State puts greenhouse money on 'clean coal'

David Rood and Adam Morton, The Age, May 1, 2008

ALLOCATING almost \$130 million for experimental "clean coal" technology is at the centre of the Victorian State Government's efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Signalling a commitment to Victoria's 500-year supply of brown coal, Energy Minister Peter Batchelor said yesterday that it would be irresponsible of the Government to turn its back on the state's vast coal reserves.

But Mr Batchelor said coal must be used in a more environmentally friendly way and clean coal technologies, such as burying carbon emissions underground and drying coal, offered the potential for zero emissions from coal-fired power stations. "The future of coal relies on it becoming greener," he said.

Next week's state budget will contain \$110 million for an industrial-scale project investigating the capture and storage of carbon produced by power plants.

The Government will also fund a new body, Clean Coal Victoria, based in the Latrobe Valley, and commit \$5 million to search for carbon storage sites, such as used oil and gas reservoirs in Bass Strait.

Mr Batchelor said that capturing carbon, by returning and storing it underground in a safe and environmentally friendly way, "mimicked nature". But environment groups and climate scientists criticised the Government for investing more in clean coal than renewable energy.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/environment/state-puts-greenhouse-money-on-clean-coal/2008/04/30/1209234958413.html>

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Frontiers in Education (FIE) Conference

22-25 October, Saratoga Springs, New York, USA

The 38th Annual Frontiers in Education (FIE) Conference is a major international conference devoted to improvements in computer science, engineering, and technology (CSET) education.

FIE 2008 continues a long tradition of disseminating educational research results and innovative practices in CSET education. It is an ideal forum for sharing ideas, learning about developments in CSET education, and interacting with colleagues.

Globalisation calls for engineers and other professionals who are innovative. Engineering education must meet this challenge innovatively with new pedagogies; new approaches that improve student learning of technical and cultural skills; integrative approaches to problem solving; study-abroad; curricular reform; and partnerships among academia, industry, government, and K-12 educators.

Recent FIE conferences have addressed the impact of global hiring and the educational changes needed for students to master the essential technical, cultural, and learning skills required of graduates entering the global workplace.

This year, in Saratoga Springs - a city that fosters innovation and creativity while maintaining a sense of history - the FIE conference planners are especially interested in continuing the dialogue about globalisation with contributions that address models of innovation in CSET education while preserving the best practices of the past.

Read more at <http://fie.engrng.pitt.edu/fie2008/>

World Indigenous Peoples Conference: Education 2008

7-11 December 2008, Melbourne

WIPC:E is a triennial conference of international significance that attracts peoples from around the globe to celebrate and share diverse cultures, traditions and knowledge with a focus on world Indigenous education.

The purpose of WIPC:E is to provide a forum to come together, share and learn and promote best practice in Indigenous education policies, programs and practice.

To be hosted by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association on the traditional lands of the Kulin Nation, Melbourne, Australia from 7th-11th December 2008, WIPC:E 2008 will be a celebration of our diverse cultures, traditions and knowledge.

It will provide us with the opportunity to showcase our efforts to provide educational experiences suitable to our individual and unique communities and will be a time to rejoice in our strengths and capacity to uphold our traditions and knowledge systems.

It will also be a chance to consider how we, as Indigenous people, would like to see education shaped into the future to meet our needs.

Read more at <http://www.wipce2008.com/>

Hawaii International Conference on Education

4-7 January 2009, Hilton Hawaiian Village Beach Resort & Spa in Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

The main goal of the 2009 Hawaii International Conference on Education is to provide an opportunity for academicians and professionals from various education related fields from all over the world to come together and learn from each other.

An additional goal of the conference is to provide a place for academicians and professionals with cross-disciplinary interests related to education to meet and interact with members inside and outside their own particular disciplines.

Submission deadline for papers: August 15th, 2008

The 2008 conference was a great success, attended by more than 1200 participants representing more than 40 countries.

Read more at <http://www.hiceducation.org/>

Back to School 2008

Now in its 6th successful year of operation, the Education Foundation's "Back to School" initiative is the nation's biggest celebration of public schools and the inclusive values-driven learning and development experiences they provide for today's young people and tomorrow's citizens.

Everyone who has gone on to a fulfilling career knows that our public schools are well worth celebrating and supporting. A fantastic way to show your appreciation is to go back to your school, spend the time to tell your story and share your insights with staff, students and parents.

Back to School also encourages schools and teachers to keep in touch with their alumni, and let them know that their achievements are valued and celebrated by their school and its community.

Students and teachers love to hear from people who went to their school. Graduates of the public school system, can add real value by sharing their reminiscences, career choices and experiences. This gives young students a living perspective on life beyond the school, helping to fuel their ambitions and give them the confidence to find their own way forward at a crucial time of their lives.

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

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REMINDERS

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

2, 9, 16 May - Marketing Seminars for Schools - Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney - <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/schoolsseminar>

10 May - Open Day - Australian Parliament House - Canberra - <http://www.aph.gov.au/Openday/index.htm>

14-15 May - National Conference on Children & Young People with Disability and their Families - Melbourne - <http://www.nds.org.au/conferences/CYF2008/home.htm>

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

30-31 May - Early Childhood Education Conference - Melbourne - <http://www.togetherwegrow.com.au/index.shtml>

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

2 June - entries close for Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards - <http://www.dorothea.com.au/>

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

11-12 June - National Conference on Climate Change - Canberra - <http://www.manningclark.org.au/events/conference2008/index.html>

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>

6-9 July - Annual Conference of the Australian Science Teachers Association - <http://www.asta.edu.au>

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

17-19 July - International Conference on Education, Economy & Society - Paris, France - <http://education-conferences.org/default.aspx>

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

31 July-1 August - Isolated Children's Parents Association Annual Conference - Hobart - <http://www.icpa.com.au/Conference.asp>

16-24 August - National Science Week - <http://www.asta.edu.au>

18-31 August - ANTSEL Video Online Conference - <http://www.cybertext.net.au/antssel2008.htm>

27-29 August - Society for Provision of Education in Rural Australia Conference - Melbourne - <http://www.spera.edu.au>

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28-29 August - Professional Development Network 12th Annual School Leaders' Conference - Gold Coast - <http://www.griffith.edu.au/education/centre-leadership-management-education/events/leadership-conference-2008>

9 September-2 October - Australian Computers in Education Conference - Canberra - <http://www.acec2008.info/default2.asp?orgid=1&suborgid=12>

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

7-10 October - Australian International Education Conference - Brisbane - <http://www.idp.com/aiec/>

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, USA - <http://www.researchslce.org/2008conference.html>

18-21 January 2009 - Summer School For Australian Teachers - Canberra - <http://www.anu.edu.au/hrc/freilich/>

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RESOURCES

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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