

# AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

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## HOT TOPIC: FUNDING

### Boost public school funding

*Adam Rorris, Canberra Times, 24 June 2008*

Private schools received \$8billion dollars more than public schools for capital investment over 2002-05. This massive gap is the key finding of a recent report on school capital investment in Australia.

If public schools had received the same per student funding as the private sector, each and every public school would have received \$1.2million extra capital funding. Enough to make your local principal go weak at the knees, let alone the P&C fund-raising committee.

The Federal Government has stated its desire to settle the "public versus private" debate in schooling. This is a laudable objective. But is it realistic to expect parents with children in the public sector to quietly put up with such inequitable investment between school sectors?

An equal go for all is a cornerstone of our society. Shouldn't this be the case for our five-year-olds? They do not choose which school they go to any more than they choose their families. So how do we justify having more than two-thirds of our children in an under-capitalised public school system when private schools continue to receive large public subsidies?

This is even harder to justify when the Labor Government has just announced a \$21billion federal budget surplus.

But of course this is more than a moral issue. It is about our economy's ability to provide quality schooling for all so we can look after ourselves in the future.

Read more at <http://canberra.yourguide.com.au/news/opinion/editorial/general/boost-public-school-funding/795636.aspx>

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## **HOT TOPIC: CHAPLAINS IN SCHOOLS**

### **The Australian School Chaplaincy Program**

*Panel Discussion - "Australia Talks", ABC Radio National, 17 June 2008*

The National Schools Chaplaincy Program, a controversial initiative of the Howard government, has been under attack from a number of prominent parents and teachers organisations and is under review from the Rudd government.

What do you know about what chaplains are doing in our schools, and would school counsellors be a better investment of the \$25,000 available to every school under the plan? Indeed this is what the Rudd government intends to do when the current funding expires. Panel includes:

- Terry Aulich - Executive Director, Australian Council of State School Organisations
- Simon Wright - publisher of Stop the NSCP website
- Tim Mander - CEO Scripture Union Queensland
- Rev Dr Evonne Paddison - CEO Access Ministries (formerly Council for Christian Education in Schools)

Listen to the program and follow related links from the ABC website at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/australiatalks/stories/2008/2276096.htm>

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*Senator Lyn Allison - "The Religion Report" ABC Radio National 11 June 2008*

Ever since the Howard government introduced a program of school chaplains in public schools, there's been controversy, and that controversy shows no sign of abating. Last week in Senate Estimates, Democrat Senator Lyn Allison raised concerns that the chaplaincy program was being used to introduce a Hillsong project called 'Shine', aimed at teaching girls self esteem, through hair and make-up. The government has agreed to investigate. Here's Senator Lyn Allison.

Lyn Allison: Well first of all I'd say we're not opposed per se to chaplains in schools, I think if school communities wish to have them, if parents want them to be engaging with their children, I see no problem with that. But I do question \$165-million being spent on a program which is largely discriminatory. So you can only get access to the \$20,000 that's on offer to each school if you agree to have a religious chaplain. If that money was available to schools to engage a counsellor who might do similar pastoral work, then I would be in favour of it, but it's not.

Listen to the interview, read the transcript and follow related links at

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/religionreport/stories/2008/2271288.htm>

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### **Canberra's plan for chaplains comes under fire**

*David Rood and Chee Chee Leung, The Age, October 31, 2006*

Plans to fund chaplains for schools threatens secular education in the public system and favours private schools, teacher and school groups warn.

The Federal Government will spend \$90 million on the program, which will help employ chaplains in government and non-government schools. Schools will be able to apply for a \$20,000 subsidy for chaplains, who will be non-denominational.

Critics say the plan promotes the view that "values" are the province of religious faith only and that the money could be better spent on training student welfare workers.

But the Federal Government defended the plan, saying it provides choice and would not force religion on children. Taking on a chaplain would be voluntary, with a full-time chaplain estimated to cost more than \$55,000.

The Australian Education Union said the plan was divisive and the "overwhelming majority of schools" would not take up the offer. The union's Victorian branch president, Mary Bluett, said the scheme threatened secular education in public schools. "Despite what the Prime Minister might say about them (chaplains) not being denominational, this will be seen to be promoting religion," she said. "This is a funding windfall to non-government schools who will take it up willingly."

Ms Bluett said schools should be allowed to use the money for youth workers or welfare officers.

The Victorian Council of School Organisations said the plan undermined secular public schooling

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/chaplain-grant-for-all-schools/2006/10/29/1162056857670.html>

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## State-school chaplains push

*Jason Koutsoukis, The Age, June 11, 2006*

Full-time chaplains would be installed in government schools to lift religious standards and provide mentoring for students under a plan backed by the federal Education Minister. Four prominent Liberal MPs are behind the proposal, seen by the Prime Minister and to be discussed in a meeting of Coalition MPs on Tuesday.

Education Minister Julie Bishop strongly supports the idea, but the Victorian Education Union has described it as "sickening".

Ms Bishop said parents were "looking for choice in the education and values taught to their children".

"This proposal is consistent with the national framework for values education in the Australian schools program currently being implemented across the country and while some states do have chaplaincy programs in place, it is definitely worth considering a national approach," Ms Bishop said.

But Australian Education Union Victorian president Mary Bluett said values were not the sole province of religions.

"This goes to the very heart of our secular education system," Ms Bluett said. "It's also another backhanded swipe at the teaching profession in government schools as if we somehow don't have values."

Others supporters are Victorian Greg Hunt, the parliamentary secretary for environment and heritage, Queenslander Andrew Laming, South Australia's David Fawcett and NSW's Louise Markus. Mr Hunt slammed state school systems for being "anti-religious" and said it was time the Commonwealth intervened to give government-educated children a chance.

Federal Independent Education Union of Australia president Lynne Rolley said she was "sick of hearing this Government imply that government schools are some kind of wasteland without values. It's nonsense."

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/stateschool-chaplains-push/2006/06/10/1149815362141.html>

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## DIGITAL EDUCATION REVOLUTION

Digital Education Revolution symposia

Throughout May and June, the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and education.au supported by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), presented a series of symposia to explore and illuminate the possibilities and the realities of the implementation of the Digital Education Revolution.

These presentations were held in Melbourne, Perth, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide. Key speakers included Mark Pesce, Shelagh Whittlestone (DEEWR), Gerry White, Garry Putland (education.au), Julian Fraillion (ACER) and Michael Cowling.

If you missed out on the opportunity to attend, don't despair: presentations are now available for download.

Read more at <http://www.educationau.edu.au/jahia/Jahia/home/pid/631> or [http://www.acer.edu.au/edlivewire/0802\\_Digital\\_Revolution.html](http://www.acer.edu.au/edlivewire/0802_Digital_Revolution.html)

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## **Computers a 'distraction' in schools?**

*The Age June 19, 2008 (AAP)*

The federal opposition is urging a rethink of the government's computers-in-schools program in the wake of a report saying teachers find them distracting.

Coalition education spokesman Tony Smith says the October 2007 education department report proves the government's \$1.2 billion plan will be useless without proper teacher training and support.

The report, commissioned and received by the former Howard government, was posted on the department's website earlier this week.

"The report, which (Education Minister and Deputy Prime Minister) Julia Gillard has hidden for six months, showed teachers were avoiding using computers and viewed them as a distraction," Mr Smith said in a statement.

But Ms Gillard said the previous government had ignored the report on information and communication technology (ICT) in schools.

"The previous Liberal government not only failed to release a report it commissioned into ICT learning, it didn't take any notice of its findings," Ms Gillard said through a spokeswoman.

"This report made it clear that there was a desperate need for a digital education revolution, investment in ICT and professional development for our teachers.

"In contrast to the Liberal Party and Tony Smith, the Rudd Labor government has committed to investing \$1.2 billion in ICT for our schools."

In partnership with the states and territories, the federal government was also investing \$11.25 million in professional development in ICT for teachers, she said.

Read more at <http://news.theage.com.au/national/computers-a-distraction-in-schools-20080619-2tbq.html>

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## **Survey shows digital woes for teachers**

*The Age, June 19, 2008 (AAP)*

Teachers want more training, better technology and more support to take full advantage of the digital revolution sweeping through the education sector, a survey has found.

Conducted by education.au, a national agency set up to support the integration of technology in teaching, found most teachers were internet savvy and locked into the latest technology but that more investment was needed to transform classrooms for the 21st century.

The survey quizzed more than 1,100 educators, including teachers, tutors and principals and found that while 79 per cent said the internet was an essential part of their work only 36 per cent considered themselves proficient and confident.

An even smaller group (27 per cent) believed the internet was transforming the way they engaged their students within and beyond the classroom.

Educators cited a range of barriers to using online technologies including poor infrastructure and bandwidth, limited access to computers, limited confidence or expertise in computer technology and the increased blocking and filtering of internet content.

Education.au chief executive Greg Black said the survey showed the willingness of many teachers to embrace new technologies to enhance their teaching and professional development.

But he said it also revealed issues blocking the pathway to the future, including fears about cyber-bullying and data security and an old fashioned reluctance in some sectors to allow students to use what was seen as fun technology, including mobile phones.

Read more at <http://news.theage.com.au/national/survey-shows-digital-woes-for-teachers-20080619-2t7z.html>

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## **AROUND THE STATES AND TERRITORIES**

### **ACT: Communities Face Sell-Off of Green Space Around Closed Schools**

*Save our Schools Independent Advocacy Group, 23 June 2008*

Save Our Schools today released figures which show that over 70% of 'green space' of 8 closed school sites is being considered for sale by the ACT Government. SOS spokesman, Trevor Cobbold, said that the implications of the proposed sell-off should be canvassed at public meetings beginning this week on the future closed school sites.

"Our analysis of the site reports produced by Purdon Associates shows that well over half the green space of the closed schools was recommended for sale. In two cases 100% of school grounds are targeted to be sold off.

Mr Cobbold called on the consultant conducting the public meetings this week to ensure that communities have all the relevant information about the proposed sell-off of green space.

"The extent of the proposed sell-off will come as a shock to many residents. To date, the ACT Government and the consultant have failed to provide clear information about how much land is proposed for sale in each community affected.

Read more at <http://soscanberra.com/media-releases/media-release-23-june-2008-communities-face-sell-off-of-green-space-around-closed-schools>

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### **NSW: Education Department in disarray over drug pamphlet**

***Bruce McDougall, Daily Telegraph June 18, 2008***

NSW Health Minister Reba Meagher yesterday ordered the pulping of a controversial Government brochure that suggests young people can choose to use illegal drugs.

Ms Meagher banned the brochure headed "Choosing to use" after a storm of criticism that it promoted ecstasy, cannabis and methamphetamines to high school students.

The Daily Telegraph revealed yesterday that the teaching resource produced by Sydney West Area Health Service advised students on what to do if they "choose to experiment".

Ms Meagher said the material was "not a very sensible message to give to young people" and ordered a full review of all other drug education material targeted at teenagers.

The review will be guided by the Expert Advisory Group on Drugs, chaired by Professor Ian Webster and including clinical and community members along with Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/dailytelegraph/story/0,22049,23882140-5006009,00.html>

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**QLD: Queensland must do better**

***Sunday Mail, June 15, 2008***

Declining literacy and numeracy standards identified in Queensland Budget papers would seem to confirm many parents' worst suspicions. Students are comprehensively failing to meet national benchmarks for reading, writing and maths in the critical Years 2 to 7, with 11 and 12-year-olds on the cusp of secondary school suffering most. The results were hideously worse for indigenous students.

The report is doubly disturbing because the State Government had set relatively low targets for the number of students to reach the national benchmark.

Despite Education Minister Rod Welford's assertion that "we are setting higher benchmarks ... than 20 years ago", our targets are considerably below the national benchmark. Yet our children are unable to live up to even those fairly modest ambitions. We aimed for second best and couldn't make it.

The results for the formative Years 2 to 7 are depressing enough, and it could get worse when the targets are set for 2008-09.

We must aim higher if we are to approach the national benchmark and remain competitive. However, unless there is a dramatic improvement in classroom standards, it could be a case of educational over-reach. Teachers are suspicious of the validity of the national testing regime, but an undeniable pattern of under-achievement has emerged in Queensland.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,23863367-13360,00.html>

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**SA: Uni entry decision a vote of confidence in new SACE**

***Media Release 12 June 2008***

Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith has welcomed the agreement of universities about how school students will qualify for university entry from 2012 under a new SACE.

The three public universities in South Australia have jointly developed and agreed to the basis for university entry using the new SACE to give a Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER).

Dr Lomax-Smith says it's a vote of confidence in the new South Australian Certificate of Education, which will also be used in Northern Territory as the Northern Territory Certificate of Education.

Read more at <http://www.ministers.sa.gov.au/news.php?id=3256>

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## **TAS: Student dropout rates top 50%**

*Mark Worley, Hobart Mercury, 23 June 2008*

Less than 50 per cent of Tasmania's public school students finish Year 12.

Premier and Education Minister David Bartlett released the state's first "warts and all" public education performance report yesterday, which shows retention rates have dropped across three of the four school regions.

The South-East region was the worst performer with just 42.5 per cent of students who finished Year 10 in 2005 continuing on to Year 12 studies in 2007.

The Southern region was the only area to record more than a 50 per cent retention rate, with 55.4, while the North-West was the only area to improve on its results from the past three years, with 45.5 per cent.

Tasmanian State School Parents and Friends president Jenny Branch welcomed the new report being made public but said retention rates were "simply unacceptable".

"This is something that has to be addressed by the whole of government," she said.

"The State Government has to look at fixing problems across all areas of Tasmanian life, which will have a flow-on effect on learning outcomes.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/mercury/story/0,22884,23906572-5007221,00.html>

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## **VIC: On Track survey shows more students defer higher education**

*ACER, 20 June 2008*

A growing proportion of students are choosing to defer university studies or take up apprenticeships, according to new research from the Victorian government.

The research shows that a lower proportion of Year 12 completers are enrolling in university, with many young people, particularly those from rural areas, deferring studies to work for a year to become eligible for youth allowance and cover living costs.

The annual On Track survey, conducted by ACER for the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, surveyed more than 33,000 young people who completed the Victorian Certificate of Education, the International Baccalaureate, or the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (Intermediate or Senior).

The project also interviewed 4500 school non-completers about their post-school pathways. Their results will be published later this year.

The On Track survey found that 72 per cent of last year's school completers went on to further education or training. This figure is down three per cent on last year.

Of the 2007 class, 44 per cent enrolled in university and 18 per cent enrolled in TAFE. One in ten students deferred tertiary study.

But while study at university and TAFE decreased, the proportion of young people taking up apprenticeships and traineeships increased by two percentage points to 10 per cent of school completers.

Read more at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/sensecyouth/ontrack>

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## **WA: Strict records 'key' to school asbestos peril**

*Yasmine Phillips, West Australian 19th June 2008*

WA schools are littered with more than 21,000 asbestos-containing materials, according to a parliamentary report released yesterday, which has prompted fears for health and safety if a comprehensive database is not strictly observed.

The Upper House committee inquiry into the level of exposure to the deadly substance found that 769 schools had asbestos products in their fences, walls, sunshades and vinyl flooring.

"There is an extensive presence of ACM (asbestos-containing materials) in State schools," the report said. "The Asbestos Survey identified over 21,000 ACM components in 769 State schools."

The report found that stipulated procedures had failed Karrinyup's Deanmore Primary School when an electrician unknowingly worked on asbestos during school hours.

In its submission to the inquiry, the State School Teachers Union called for all ACMs to be removed from WA schools and colleges.

But WA Council of State School Organisations president Robert Fry said that task would be well beyond the economic means of any government. He urged people to be extra cautious when working with older buildings.

"I think the biggest concern is if the Government needs to replace them — they'll be looking at almost every school in the State," he said.

The committee recommended that information relating to the location and removal of ACMs be strictly recorded on a register and the Department of Education and Training maintain a record of all air monitoring.

Read more at <http://www.thewest.com.au/default.aspx?MenuID=77&ContentID=79688>

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## **HEALTH & WELL-BEING**

### **Report focuses on accidents, suicide and self-harm among youth**

*Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 4 June 2008*

Transport accidents and suicide are the two leading causes of injury death among young people, according to a report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). Transport accidents were responsible for 44% of injury deaths and 20% of injury hospitalisations in this age group. Suicides accounted for 32% of injury deaths.

Deanna Eldridge from the AIHW's Children, Youth and Families Unit said that among young people, injury remained the major cause of death despite a halving of injury death rates over the two decades

to 2005. 'This decline was almost entirely due to a 70% decrease in transport accident deaths in young people, but there has also been a modest fall in suicide deaths over the same period.

'But while the suicide death rate has fallen, hospitalisation rates for intentional self-harm among young people increased by 43% between 1996 and 2006. The increase was much greater for young women (a 51% increase) than for young men (a 27% increase),' Ms Eldridge said.

Hospitalisation rates for intentional self-harm were more than twice as high for young women than for young men, however young men have a suicide rate almost four times that of young women.

Download the report at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10500>

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## **TERTIARY EDUCATION**

### **Higher education changes pass the Senate**

*The Age June 19, 2008 (AAP)*

Universities will be unable to charge full fees for domestic students from next year, after parliament approved the start of the Rudd government's "education revolution".

The legislation also doubles Commonwealth undergraduate scholarships to 88,000 by 2012 and postgraduate scholarships to nearly 10,000 over the same period.

Other measures include additional places in areas of need like nursing and early childhood education, and reduced HECS fees for maths and science courses.

The measures are forecast to cost about \$2.26 billion over the next four years.

Read more at <http://news.theage.com.au/national/higher-education-changes-pass-the-senate-20080619-2tgw.html>

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### **Universities face up to double threat**

*Caroline Milburn The Age, June 23, 2008*

AN AGEING university workforce and fierce global competition for top academics pose some of the biggest threats to the prosperity of Australia's higher-education sector, according to a national discussion paper.

Nearly a quarter of university lecturers and tutors are over 55, making the academic workforce much older on average than the rest of the nation's labour force. The 85-page discussion paper, prepared for the Federal Government's review of higher education, says Australian universities will face a huge task to recruit enough academics over the next decade.

All institutions are already struggling to recruit and keep talented staff. But the paper says the task will be made harder by the growing competition from universities overseas vying to recruit staff capable of attracting research funding from national and international sources.

Professor Denise Bradley, chairwoman of the review, says other OECD nations and many Asian countries have invested heavily in higher education and the trend raises concerns about whether Australian universities can remain internationally competitive.

"This major investment in higher education means that potentially those universities will find it easier to attract and pay for the best people," says Professor Bradley, the former vice-chancellor of the University of South Australia. "The heads of higher institutions here can tell you stories about losing talented staff to other countries: losing out not only in terms of paying people more but also offering better conditions, better research facilities."

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/education/universities-face-up-to-double-threat-20080622-2uvz.html>

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## **Education exports score top marks**

*Tim Colebatch The Age, June 20, 2008*

Education is now a bigger export earner than tourism, with spending by foreign students overtaking spending by tourists to make education Australia's main services export.

The Reserve Bank says education exports — mostly via foreign students studying here in Australian universities — earned \$12.6 billion last year, whereas tourism earned \$11.8 billion.

Education is now Australia's third biggest export earner, after coal and iron ore.

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

### **Renewable energy 'will be cheapest in long run'**

*David McLennan, Canberra Times 17 June 2008*

Rising fossil fuel prices mean renewable energy will provide cheaper electricity in the long run, according to a Greenpeace report.

The report, Energy [R]evolution, which was issued yesterday, uses modelling by Greenpeace and Canberra energy expert Dr Hugh Saddler, and also calls for coal-fired power stations to begin being phased out and for gas-powered electricity to be used as a transition to renewable resources.

Co-author Julien Vincent said burning fossil fuels left Australia vulnerable to their increasing prices as well as "choking the atmosphere with greenhouse gases".

"Unlike fossil fuels, the cost of harnessing the power of the wind and the sun will never go up," he said. The report's modelling said electricity supply costs would triple from \$11.7billion a year to \$30.9billion a year in 2020 under "business as usual".

The Greenpeace plan, which involves cutting usage as well as shifting to renewable resources - and which takes into account costs imposed by an emissions trading scheme - would cost about \$15billion.

Read more at <http://canberra.yourguide.com.au/news/local/news/general/renewable-energy-will-be-cheapest-in-long-run/790466.aspx>

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## **Africa images show four decades of damage**

*Lewis Smith, The Australian June 12, 2008*

Glaciers, lakes and forests have disappeared from Africa at an alarming rate in the past 36 years, satellite images show. The changing face of the continent was brought home to African ministers yesterday when they were presented with an atlas charting the speed of environmental destruction.

The loss of ice on Mount Kilimanjaro and the vanishing waters of Lake Chad were among the best-known problems, but deforestation, urbanisation and the spread of agriculture have all taken a heavy toll.

Other major damage includes tree loss and land degradation caused by refugees in the Sudan, the virtual disappearance of Lake Ngami in Botswana, the expansion of the city of Bujumbura in Burundi, and the loss of Cameroon's rainforest to rubber and palm plantations. Hundreds of before-and-after satellite images offered a sobering assessment of the enormous damage done in less than four decades.

The images form part of Africa - Atlas of Our Changing Environment, launched yesterday after a two-year project by the UN Environment Program.

Some examples of where the landscape has been restored or improved include the re-establishment of trees in Niger and the creation of mangroves on the Eritrean coast, but most of the images highlight severe cases of environmental damage.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23848479-30417,00.html>

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## **Carbon emissions threaten acid seas**

*Mark Henderson, The Australian June 10, 2008*

Increasing carbon dioxide emissions could leave species such as coral and sea urchins struggling to survive by the end of the century because the gas is making the oceans more acidic, research led by British scientists suggests.

The study of how acidification affects marine ecosystems has revealed a striking impact on animal and plant life. The findings, from a team led by Jason Hall-Spencer, of the University of Plymouth, indicate that rising carbon emissions will alter the biodiversity of the seas profoundly, even before the effects of global warming are taken into account.

Greater concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere mean more of the gas becomes dissolved in seawater, increasing its acidity. This will have good consequences for some species, but it will be catastrophic for others.

Dr Hall-Spencer's team investigated the likely effects of acidification by studying natural underwater vents off the coast of Italy, where carbon dioxide bubbles up through the sea floor. This makes the water around the vents significantly more acidic than it is in surrounding areas.

The study, published in the journal Nature, shows that certain species are badly affected by rising acidity.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23837354-30417,00.html>

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## **Sea warming underestimated**

*Roslyn Beeby, Canberra Times, 19 June 2008*

The rate of ocean warming and sea level rise caused by climate change over the past 40 years has been underestimated by at least 50 per cent, according to new CSIRO research.

A study published today in the global science journal Nature reveals the bulk of ocean temperature data collected from 1961 and used by climate modelling to calculate the rate at which our oceans are warming are not accurate because of a manufacturing fault in the equipment used.

"The rate of ocean warming and sea level change as a result of climate change is significantly greater than was previously thought. We need to revise some of those earlier estimates," CSIRO's Wealth From Oceans principal research scientist Dr John Church said.

Simple probes known as expendable bathythermograph or XBTs were previously used by oceanographers to measure ocean temperatures. The probe was dropped from a research ship and two small wires measured temperature changes as it fell through the water, transmitting data to the ship.

The CSIRO study reveals these probes superseded since 2001 by robotic Argo floats which provide year-round data had manufacturing faults which led to "significant systematic biases" in data. These were chiefly errors in the estimated depths of ocean temperature observations.

Read more at <http://canberra.yourguide.com.au/news/local/news/general/sea-warming-underestimated/792557.aspx>

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## **Next steps to clean power**

*The Australian, June 09, 2008*

The power of the wind and the tide has been harnessed. Now the footfalls of trudging shoppers are to become the latest source of emission-free energy.

British-designed generators powered by "heel strike" may soon be installed beneath the floors in supermarkets and railway stations.

The technology could use the footsteps of pedestrians to power thousands of light bulbs at shopping centres.

It works by using the pressure of feet on the floor to compress pads, driving fluid through mini-turbines that then generate electricity, which is stored in a battery.

Engineers who have modelled the effects of the technology at an Underground station in central London have calculated that the 34,000 travellers passing through every hour could power 6500 light bulbs.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23832781-30417,00.html>

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## **AWARDS & PRIZES**

### **P&C Awards 2008**

*Prize Pool of More than \$60,000 to Honour Australia's Dedicated Parents Groups*

Paradise Foods and The Australian Women's Weekly are calling for entries for the 2008 P&C Awards to showcase this invaluable role of parents in schools.

In its second year, the national awards program celebrates the vital work of Parents and Citizens associations and their equivalents that help deliver quality education facilities and resources to students.

One award will be made to the best entry from each state and territory in Australia. Each of the eight winners will receive a crystal trophy, \$2000 prize money, \$1000 voucher from Rebel Sport, a Tefal Quick Cup and airfares for a representative to attend a special awards ceremony hosted by Paradise Foods and The Australian Women's Weekly and Paradise Foods at the Sydney Harbour Marriott on Tuesday January 27, 2009.

A national winner will be chosen from the state and territory winners and will receive The Australian Women's Weekly Paradise Foods P & C Award for 2007 plus a further \$10,000 and \$2000 voucher from Rebel Sport.

The first 100 entries will receive a Paradise Foods hamper filled with cookies, crackers, family favourite biscuits and other goodies. Valued at \$150, this basket makes a great prize for fundraising events and celebrations.

For information on how to enter the awards see the July issue of The Australian Women's Weekly.

Submissions must be received by 31 August 2008.

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## **CONFERENCES & EVENTS**

### **Working in Partnership Conference 2008**

*11-12 July 2008, Wrest Point, Hobart, Tasmania*

The Working in Partnerships Conference will give principals, staff, families, agencies and the broader community opportunities to interact and share current theory and practice in a number of the key priorities in Tasmanian education. Under the auspices of NEAT (Network of Educational Associations Tasmania) a number of associations and professional groups have joined together to offer an amazing group of speakers to lead the conference.

The conference will explore the opportunities, challenges and new developments for effective outcomes for students, school professionals and school communities.

The program includes relevant topics for educators, teachers, school leaders, professionals from the child care industry, early intervention teachers, parents and carers, disability workers, professionals from health and disability services and members of professional associations involved in education to attend.

There are over 35 confirmed workshop presenters who's topics and biographies are available for review on the conference website. They will be presenting in the following streams; Safe and Supportive Schools, Positive Behaviour Support, NEAT - Values, Health and Wellbeing, Australian Association of Special Education, Early Childhood Intervention Australia.

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

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### **NSW Federation of Parents & Citizens Associations Annual Conference**

*25-27 July 2008, Albury, NSW*

The NSW Annual Conference provides the opportunity for representatives of each P&C Association and their school community, to have direct input to the discussion about the priority needs of our young people and the setting of future policy directions on the important issues of education in our state.

Including some issues that have implications for the appropriate future directions of the national agenda...

Australian and international research clearly shows that where parents and school communities are actively engaged in supporting the processes of student learning and work in productive and sustainable partnerships with their schools, the learning potential and positive personal development of all young people is enhanced.

So come along, get involved and help make a difference for the future!

Read more at [http://www.pandc.org.au/ac08\\_intro.asp](http://www.pandc.org.au/ac08_intro.asp)

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## REMINDERS

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

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

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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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28 June - Early Childhood Teachers Association National Conference - Brisbane -  
[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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6-9 July - National Conference for Teachers of English Literacy - Adelaide -  
<http://www.englishliteracyconference.com.au>

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

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9-11 July - Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference - Melbourne -  
<http://www.aifsconference08.com/>

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

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10-12 July - Outdoor Education Association of Queensland State Conference - Rockhampton -  
<http://www.oeq.org.au/events.asp>

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

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

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

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18-20 August - Association of Childrens Welfare Agencies Conference - Sydney -  
<http://www.acwa08.com/>

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

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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>

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9 September-2 October - Australian Computers in Education Conference - Canberra -

<http://www.acec2008.info/default2.asp?orgid=1&suborgid=12>

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

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18-20 September - English Australia Conference - Canberra - <http://www.eaconference.com.au/>

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

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29 September-2 October 2008 - Australian Computers in Education Conference - Canberra -  
<http://www.acec2008.info/default2.asp?orgid=1&suborgid=12>

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30 September-2 October - ACEL International Conference - Melbourne -  
<http://www.ancel.org.au/index.php?id=225>

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

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1-3 October - VETnetwork Australia National Conference - Sydney -  
[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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7-10 October - Australian International Education Conference - Brisbane - <http://www.idp.com/aiec/>

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

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22-25 October - Frontiers in Education (FIE) Conference - Saratoga Springs, USA -  
<http://fie.engrng.pitt.edu/fie2008/>

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25-28 October - International Research Conference on Service-learning and Community Engagement -  
New Orleans, USA - <http://www.researchslce.org/2008conference.html>

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7-11 December - World Indigenous Peoples Conference: Education - Melbourne -  
<http://www.wipce2008.com/>

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8-12 December - International Consortium for Experiential Learning - Sydney -  
<http://www.education.uts.edu.au/icel/index.html>

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4-7 January - Hawaii International Conference on Education - Honolulu, USA -  
<http://www.hiceducation.org/>

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

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15-18 April - International Outdoor Education Research Conference - Beechworth, Vic -  
[http://www.latrobe.edu.au/oent/research\\_conf\\_2009.htm](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/oent/research_conf_2009.htm)

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## RESOURCES

### Learning for Leadership

Learning for Leadership by Michelle Anderson and Christine Cawsey, published by ACER Press was launched by ACER's chief executive Professor Geoff Masters on 12 May.

Part of the Educational Leadership Dialogues series, Learning for Leadership explores how school principals can initiate and maintain programs and practices to develop the leadership potential of teachers in their school.

It explains the theory behind the concept of educational leadership and then it tells the story of a school much admired for its leadership development. Together, the research and the case study present a strong argument for the introduction of similar programs in schools throughout Australia.

The book can be purchased through ACER Press online at [www.acerpress.com.au](http://www.acerpress.com.au) or contact customer service on 1800 338 402 or via email on [sales@acer.edu.au](mailto:sales@acer.edu.au)

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## Educational Experience

Educational Experience began its operations in Newcastle NSW in 1977 and today is Australia's leading supplier of educational resources and equipment to child care centres, preschools, OOSHs and primary schools. We remain dedicated to the supply of creative and practical ideas to help children learn and develop and are the Teacher's choice for variety, quality and customer service.

At present Educational Experience's product range consists of over 8,500 product lines showcased in our annual Teachers Catalogue. Our speedy delivery is recognised as being the most efficient and reliable service offered in the industry. The products sold by Educational Experience are sourced from Australian suppliers where possible or imported from reputable international suppliers. To ensure all our products are of the highest quality and meet safety standards, our suppliers must show product compliance testing to Australian standards.

To view our product range please visit [www.edex.com.au](http://www.edex.com.au)

Educational Experience initiated our generous Toys and More fundraiser to help Australian children's education. Early childhood centres and schools who participate in this fundraiser, are rewarded with a credit voucher valued at 20% of the total value ordered by parents and friends and may qualify for additional resources. For more information please visit [www.toysandmore.com.au](http://www.toysandmore.com.au)

Educational Experience remains committed to the educational needs of all Australian children.

Educational Experience, PO Box 860, Newcastle NSW 2300

Telephone 02 4923 8222 Fax 02 4942 1991 Toll free 1300 134 211 Email [hotline@edex.com.au](mailto:hotline@edex.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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