

# AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

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## HOT TOPIC: RANKING SCHOOLS

### Gillard dismisses school 'league table' anger

*Josh Gordon, Melissa Fyfe & Deborah Gough, The Age, 17 August 2008*

FEDERAL Education Minister Julia Gillard has defended her plan to publish detailed information on the performance of individual schools, claiming "we are kidding ourselves if we say we are living in a world without league tables".

In an interview with The Sunday Age, Ms Gillard dismissed warnings that her plan to make public statistics on the academic and socio-economic profile of individual schools would create "ghetto" schools with entrenched disadvantage.

She has weathered a week of flak since detailing her proposal at last Monday's Australian Council for Educational Research conference in Brisbane, where she explained the aim of gathering and publishing such data was to help governments better allocate resources and to give parents more information about schooling options for their children.

"It's naive to think that people don't compare schools," Ms Gillard said. "Most parents would be able to survey across their suburb and put a view in about whether the school is a good school or a bad school. Often they are doing that off incomplete information because it is not available."

Parent groups and the State Government are opposed to such information about individual schools being published.

Read more - including parent organisation comments - at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/gillard-dismisses-school-league-table-anger-20080816-3wrg.html>

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## **Fears rankings will lead to blame and shame game**

***Deborah Gough, The Age, 17 August 2008***

JULIA Gillard's grand plan to make Kevin Rudd's education revolution a reality has been met largely with the sort of enthusiasm reserved for a classroom prankster scraping her fingernails down a blackboard.

She wants to collect information on how each school in the country is performing, how its students compare to those at other schools with similar socio-economic backgrounds, and on each school's student population profile (how many children have disabilities, are indigenous or come from non-English speaking backgrounds).

As federal Education Minister, Ms Gillard plans to use this information to identify under-performing schools so they can be targeted for more funding and better resourcing and so that the best teaching methods can be introduced to help students.

No one is arguing with that. The sticking point is that Ms Gillard wants to make these details public - on the grounds that parents should have access to more information when making decisions about their children's schooling.

But most parent groups, along with educators and unionists, are baulking at the idea of publishing schools' performances for comparison. In fact, many have expressed shock at Ms Gillard's public-disclosure proposal, details of which she revealed last week.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/fears-rankings-will-lead-to-blame-and-shame-game-20080816-3wrh.html>

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## **Transparency**

***The Hon Julia Gillard, interviewed on Perth Radio 6PR by Howard Sattler, 12 August 2008***

"Well the system I am talking about, Howard, and the system I expressly spoke about when I talked yesterday at the Australian Council of Educational Research, is a system which would enable us to identify comparable school communities and compare those school communities.

So what I am saying is if we look at the moment at schools, there are a whole lot of things that we can't publicly know or publicly analyse about schooling.

We know that schools get different outcomes and if we're asked the question "Why is that happening?", well we don't know at the moment whether that's because there's a difference in the kids when they come to school or there's a difference in what's happening at school.

What I think would be great, if we could do it, is if we could get comparable schools, that is schools that are teaching similar student populations and you saw one school just going streets ahead and one school not, then you would be able to ask yourself the question "Why?"

Find out about the best practice that is making a difference for the kids in the first school and spread it to the second school."

Read more at <http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/Gillard/Releases/transparency.htm>

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## **Julia Gillard to follow New York on school ranks**

*Justine Ferrari and Natasha Bita, The Australian, August 12, 2008*

EDUCATION Minister Julia Gillard yesterday endorsed aspects of the New York system for ranking schools based on student performance and progress. As the teaching unions and state Labor governments railed against moves to rank schools, Ms Gillard called for a national system to compare the differences between schools and identify the most disadvantaged.

But the Acting Prime Minister stopped short of supporting the New York system for grading schools from A to F based on their performance, saying the goal was to compare similar schools to identify those in need of further assistance. "This is not about simplistic league tables. This is about rich performance information about our schools," she said.

Addressing the Australian Council for Educational Research conference in Brisbane, Ms Gillard pointed to the New York model as one from which Australia could learn and said she was inspired after meeting New York City's schools chancellor Joel Klein.

"We can learn from Klein's methodology of comparing like-schools with like-schools and then measuring the differences in school results in order to spread best practice," she said. "Something Joel Klein is personally and passionately committed to, is the identification of school need, the comparison of like-schools and the identification of best practice.

"The answer is not league tables and it's not A to F reporting, but it's making sure we have this rich performance information available, school by school."

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24165908-5013871,00.html>

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## **HOT TOPIC: VISUAL EDUCATION**

### **New Research Affirms Importance of Visual Education For All Children**

*National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA), 14 August 2008*

The release today of the federal government funded report of the National Review of Education is enthusiastically welcomed by the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA). NAVA has played a key role in lobbying for and providing expert advice to this review.

NAVA is the peak body representing the professional interests of the Australian visual arts, craft and design sector, and for many years has been a strong advocate for visual education to be a compulsory stand alone subject in the school curriculum from Kindergarten to year 10.

NAVA's Executive Director, Tamara Winikoff said today, "NAVA strongly endorses the findings of the NRVE report and will be looking to federal and state governments to take immediate practical steps to implement its four key recommendations."

"It is very concerning that at a time when Australia is trying to boost its capacity to compete in the global marketplace of ideas, the arts are not included in the development agenda of the Rudd government's newly formed National Curriculum Board."

"This would seem to run counter to the Arts and Education joint statement made only a few months ago by all the federal and state arts and education ministers who are members of the Cultural Ministers Council and the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs,"

NAVA today called for:

- visual education to be incorporated across the school curriculum from 2009;
- sequential, progressive training in visual art theory, history and practice as a compulsory subject in the curriculum to year 10, with smooth pathways in years 11 & 12 to tertiary art training;
- a commitment from the CMC and MCEETYA to facilitate the implementation of the NRVE recommendations as the logical means to realise the intentions of their joint statement on Arts and Education;
- new models for teacher training to be developed and regular subsidised continuing education professional development training for teachers throughout their careers;
- a commitment of funding from governments for the development of up to date curriculum resources and for provision of necessary equipment and materials in public schools;
- development of models for better collaboration between schools and 'informal' education providers like galleries and art, design and media organizations.

NAVA also called for the broad distribution of the NRVE report - including to all federal and state politicians and their departments, schools, parents, teacher training bodies, art organisations and networks.

Download the report at <http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/FEB8D661-C637-459C-90B6-350A545D80C4/23340/NRVEFinalReport.pdf>

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## Literacy, numeracy and now 'visuacy' for schools

*Justine Ferrari, The Australian, August 15, 2008*

A federal government report, released yesterday, argues for visual education, or "visuacy", to take its place alongside literacy and numeracy as a foundation skill in compulsory schooling.

The National Review of Visual Education calls for a rethinking of arts education in schools to end the distinction between art and other images and to overcome the idea that the purpose of visual arts is to train artists.

"One of the problems besetting visual education ... has been the perception that its role is to train artists rather than to educate all students visually," the report says. "In the compulsory years of schooling, its role is to achieve visuacy for all students in the same way that mathematics achieves numeracy and English achieves literacy."

The report says visual arts should follow the example of English, which transformed from a focus on literature to a study of all forms of communication including emails, websites, junk mail and television shows. "In much the same way that one might conceptualise a continuum of texts in the context of the English classroom, one might similarly do so in relation to a continuum of images from the most banal to the most aesthetically complex and challenging," it says.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,,24183638-13881,00.html>

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## Addled thinking

*The Australian - Editorial Comment, August 18, 2008*

A NATIONAL report advocating the study of Elle Macpherson's underwear alongside Picasso's pictures in schools highlights what a battle the Rudd Government faces with influential sections of the educational

establishment. To its credit, the Government has flagged a national school curriculum focused on core subjects such as English, maths, science and history.

But the National Review of Visual Education, commissioned by the previous government, wants a rethink of arts education to end the distinction between art and other images. In claiming "it is no longer either defensible or responsible for the visual arts educator to focus only at the traditional end of the spectrum", it is replicating the addled thinking that has blighted English. This has seen literature relegated in favour of text messages, websites, junk mail, cartoons, advertisements, reality television and even road signs.

As parents are looking to the long-awaited national curriculum to lift standards, it is indefensible and irresponsible for a national review to be promoting "visuacy" - aptly labelled a "horrible neologism" by The Australian national art critic, Christopher Allen, on Saturday.

Australia's long educational tail of under-achievement in basic literacy and numeracy is well documented. Test results show significant numbers of Year 3, 5 and 7 students, especially in disadvantaged areas, failing to reach national benchmarks that some educators suggest are set deliberately low to maximise attainment rates.

Distracting teachers and students from improving the all-important "basics" by adding "visuacy" to the mix would be counter-productive in the extreme, especially for indigenous, non-English speaking and other disadvantaged children who are less likely to receive help at home.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24196134-16382,00.html>

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## **'Visuacy' isn't dumbed down, say academics**

*Justine Ferrari, The Australian, August 16, 2008*

THE national organisation of university art schools yesterday defended a report calling for an overhaul of school art education to include "visuacy", denying it represented a dumbing down.

Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools chair Su Baker said images were words in a visual language that had to be taught in the same way as English or any other language.

"This report isn't about dumbing down, it isn't about trivialising things," she said. "It's about the breadth of visual imagery we are confronted with and engaging with in the world we live in, which is heavily saturated with images. It's about teaching kids to navigate, interpret and control those images."

The National Review of Visual Education, released on Thursday by the federal Government and the Australia Council, calls for visual literacy or "visuacy" to be given the same prominence as literacy and numeracy in schools, and taught as a basic skill.

The report calls for a rethinking of school art education to end the distinction between art and other images, and to overcome the idea that the purpose of teaching visual arts is to train artists. It cites the example of scrutinising the "conditions of value and meaning" in images as diverse as Elle Macpherson's bras and briefs on a billboard, a blood-strewn road safety advertisement on television, Picasso's Guernica, and television footage of the World Trade Centre collapsing.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,,24188435-12332,00.html>

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**HOT TOPIC: DIGITAL EDUCATION REVOLUTION**

## **There's more to the Digital Revolution ...**

*Australian Council for Educational Research, 18 August 2008*

"The Federal Government's investment in ICT will not, in itself, bring about a digital educational revolution," says Professor Michael Gaffney from the Australian Catholic University, and joint editor of soon to be released publication, *Leading a Digital School*.

"Unless the investment in the technology is accompanied by comprehensive and well resourced strategies that address the educational considerations needed to transform schooling and outcomes for students, the government is wasting their money."

"Education authorities and schools across Australia have an ideal opportunity, in fact a serious responsibility, to work with State/Territory and Federal Governments in making sure current investments in digital technologies are used to best effect" says Professor Gaffney.

"Now is the time for inspired educational leadership and informed strategic action to ensure students reap the benefits of new technologies. Australia's teachers need access to appropriate and on-going development and support,"

"One or two day PD sessions, by themselves, will not enable today's teachers get the most from emerging, more sophisticated digital technologies and networked teaching opportunities."

*Leading a Digital School*, published by the Australian Council for Educational Research Press (ACER Press) is a timely resource for educational leaders who need to make sensible, informed and strategic decisions about how to implement digital solutions in their school. Launched tomorrow at 10.00am at Rosary Primary School, Watson, this resource includes contributions from high profile educational leaders including: Allan Shaw, Chief Executive AHISA and Karen Bonanno, Executive Officer, ASLA.

It is time for Australia, and in particular those education authorities that have failed for the past decade to provide the needed direction, infrastructure and investment to stop playing politics with the latest instructional technologies, and to put in place well reasoned strategies that will assist the development of digital schools, enhance teaching and learning and help to lift national productivity.

Enquiries & Interviews: Mandy Stephens - ACER Press (03) 9277 5413 M: 0418126461  
<http://www.acer.edu.au>

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## **Kevin's computer con: no computers until next year**

*The Hon Tony Smith MP, Shadow Minister for Education, Apprenticeships and Training, 18 August 2008*

Students will be waiting for their promised laptops until well into next year while the states and Commonwealth squabble over who should pay for all the additional costs to make them work, the Shadow Minister for Education, Apprenticeships and Training, Tony Smith, said today.

Mr Smith said that with the Rudd Government and the states leaving it until October's COAG meeting to work out who was paying for all the on-costs, the computers are not expected to land on desks until well into next year.

"Revolutions are supposed to mean quick and sudden change - this digital revolution won't even begin until a year and a half after the election," Mr Smith said.

"And this is all because the Rudd Government failed to factor in all the costs of actually making the computers work - for things such as installation, maintenance, extra electricity, re-wiring and teacher training.

Read more at <http://www.liberal.org.au/news.php?Id=1418>

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## **NSW on the hunt for cheap laptops**

*Annabel Crabb, The Age, August 18, 2008*

Is it possible to buy a durable, sophisticated laptop for \$500? The NSW Government is about to find out; it's looking for a company prepared to provide 200,000 of them at the same bargain price.

The Commonwealth and State governments are still bickering about who will pay the wiring, installation and service costs of the Rudd Government's computers-for-schools program, which is the backbone of the promised "education revolution". In an attempt to mitigate those costs, the NSW Government is proposing to buy the cheapest possible machine; a one-size-fits-all laptop for an economical \$500.

It is also resigned to the "boisterous nature" of NSW secondary students and has prudently allowed for the likelihood that one in 10 of the machines will be lost, broken or stolen each year.

According to the NSW proposal, which the Government will open to expressions of interest as early as this week, only half of the budgeted \$1000 a head for students will be spent on buying the actual computer.

Even allowing for this austerity measure, the NSW director-general of education, Michael Coutts-Trotter, informed state principals several weeks ago that more Commonwealth money would be needed. "While our preferred approach is significantly cheaper than if we were to install desktop computers, we have estimated that to implement the National Secondary School Computer Fund in NSW, an additional \$245 million will be required over four years," he said.

The cost of the laptops - which students will treat as their own - is optimistically low.

"There remains a small risk that the market will not be able to provide a suitable device at this price point which meets the specific warranty and functional requirements," an earlier briefing paper to principals conceded.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/articles/on-the-hunt-for-cheap-laptops/2008/08/17/1218911511805.html>

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## **More teachers recognised for Smart Classrooms**

*QLD Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts The Honourable Rod Welford, August 18, 2008*

Queensland state school teachers using innovative Information Communication Technology (ICT) teaching practices were recognised tonight.

Education and Training Minister Rod Welford said the number and quality of nominations in this year's Smart Classrooms Teacher Awards reflected a significant step up in ICT practice.

"There were 172 nominations, resulting in 92 applications, with 12 teachers selected from throughout the state to share \$60,000 in industry-sponsored professional development," Mr Welford said.

"Nominated teachers had to apply for the award through a digital portfolio demonstrating how they made ICT integral to the classroom to improve student learning.

"The winning entries include individualised digital content for disabled students, soundscapes embedded in art imagery, a statewide online poetry competition, virtual performance for drama students and development of a software-based recording studio.

"The winning teachers work across all school levels from Prep to special and vocational education and in locations from south-east Queensland's new academies to Indigenous communities in far-north Queensland."

Read more at <http://www.cabinet.qld.gov.au/MMS/StatementDisplaySingle.aspx?id=59749>

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## **FAMILIES & SCHOOLS IN PARTNERSHIP**

### ***Engage e-magazine launched by TAS Department of Education***

Engage magazine focuses on helpful hints, upcoming activities, and practical information about how parents can help their children experience a complete and enriching education.

The first edition of Engage - a magazine for parents and carers of Tasmanian Government school students - will be released early August 2008.

This magazine is the result of a recommendation from the Engaging Our School Communities Taskforce which looked at ways of better linking schools, parents and the wider community. It aims to improve communication between the Department of Education and parents and carers.

The publication will be delivered to all Tasmanian Government schools and child care centres together with a cover letter from the Communications Services Unit. Schools and child care centres are requested to distribute the magazine 'one per family' - i.e. given to the oldest child.

If you'd like to receive future issues of Engage magazine, complete the subscription form. Download a copy of Engage magazine [PDF 3.6MB]

Read more at <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/school/parents/engage>

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## **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

### **New \$10m Melbourne Institute for Excellence in Schools**

***Media Release, 11 August 2008***

The Brumby Government will establish a new world-class \$10 million institute in North Melbourne to help develop the best principals and the next generation of educational leaders in Victoria.

Education Minister and Member for Melbourne Bronwyn Pike unveiled plans for the Victorian Institute of Educational Leadership (VIEL), which will open in North Melbourne on Queensberry Street in 2010.

"The Brumby Government is taking action on education which remains our number one priority for the state," Ms Pike said.

"This is why we are investing in the best resources for teachers and students so that ultimately, young Victorians can get the best learning opportunities and the best start in life.

"The VIEL will provide professional development for existing and aspiring principals and school leaders from across Victoria, all from a state-of-the-art learning hub complete with community facilities right here in Melbourne.

"Teachers, regional department staff, educational coaches, teaching support staff and members of the early childhood workforce will also benefit from the high-quality leadership programs offered at the institute."

Read more at [http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/minister-for-education/new-\\$10m-melbourne-institute-for-excellence-in-schools.html](http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/minister-for-education/new-$10m-melbourne-institute-for-excellence-in-schools.html)

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## **ENGAGEMENT WITH ASIA**

### **Strengthening education links with Korea**

*Media Release, 11 August 2008*

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd today welcomed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on education between Australia and the Republic of Korea.

This important signing will promote collaboration between the Australian and Korean governments to further strengthen education ties.

It will provide a framework for closer cooperation between Australia's Department of Education Employment and Workplace relations and Korea's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to exchange information on education challenges and identify priorities for practical cooperation.

Korea is Australia's third-largest source country for international students, with more than 34,000 Korean students enrolled at Australian institutions in 2007.

Read more at [http://www.pm.gov.au/media/release/2008/media\\_release\\_0411.cfm](http://www.pm.gov.au/media/release/2008/media_release_0411.cfm)

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### **Six Victorian Schools Form Closer Ties with Malaysia**

*Media Release, 11 July 2008*

The Malaysia Sister Schools initiative announced by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd yesterday during a visit to Kuala Lumpur will see six Victorian government schools as the first schools chosen to participate in the new pilot program.

Education Minister Bronwyn Pike congratulated Benalla College, Eumemmerring College, Hume Central Secondary College, Lalor Secondary College, Wallan Secondary College and Western Port Secondary College on their participation in the program.

"Sister school relationships are a great way to increase student and teacher understanding of another culture and language and their methods of teaching and learning," Ms Pike said.

"But they are also important as a means of increasing students' awareness of the global environment. "

Read more at <http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/minister-for-education/six-victorian-schools-form-closer-ties-with-malaysia.html>

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## **STUDENT RETENTION**

### **Federal Govt to address year 12 retention rates**

*The Age, August 11, 2008 (AAP)*

The number of young people not in full-time work or education is startling and worrying, Acting Prime Minister Julia Gillard says.

Up to 20 per cent of Australians aged between 15 and 24 are not in full time work or education, new statistics show.

Australia ranks 23 in a list of 35 OECD countries for the number of students who finish year 12 or equivalent.

"These are pretty startling and worrying statistics," Ms Gillard told ABC Radio.

"We need to be lifting retention to year twelve or equivalent.

"None of this is going to be easy... (but) we need to make sure that young people are staying in education and coming out with skills.

Australia could not afford to have young people lose their way into "some twilight world" between school and work."

Read more at <http://news.theage.com.au/national/govt-to-address-year-12-retention-rates-20080811-3t59.html>

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### **Public asked to comment on school leaving age**

*Andrew Barr MLA, ACT Minister for Education & Training*

Minister for Education and Training Andrew Barr today released a consultation paper outlining proposals for raising the ACT's school leaving age.

Pathways to the future - a consultation paper on increasing young people's engagement in education, training and work asks young people, their parents, carers, teachers and the wider ACT community about raising the school leaving age above 15 years and how this may be best done.

"The school leaving age was last raised in 1943 when ACT schools were part of the NSW system. Our society, economy and schools have changed dramatically since then," Mr. Barr said.

"Some research suggests that early school leavers are more likely to become long-term unemployed adults and to earn less when they are employed. Other research finds that productivity growth will be significantly raised by investments in school retention. So it's important we ensure students are better prepared for an economy that requires higher skill levels than in the past and research suggests raising the school leaving age could be an important part of this. "

Read more at <http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=7278>

The consultation period closes on 31 October 2008.

Read more at [http://www.det.act.gov.au/pathways\\_to\\_the\\_future](http://www.det.act.gov.au/pathways_to_the_future).

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## **OPINION**

### **Reading by the book? No thanks**

*Christopher Bantick, The Age, 18 August 2008*

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the death of Enid Blyton. For many school librarians, Blyton is a pariah.

All those golliwogs and lashings of ginger beer were easybeats for the politically correct stewards of children's reading. In the 1970s and '80s, Blyton was banished from library shelves.

But maybe over-zealous librarians, so intent on improving children, missed something obvious. This was the way Blyton's books served as a kind of comfort food.

Many children in their pre-school years - and, if they are lucky, later primary levels - are read to by parents or teachers. Books become associated with pleasure.

Mark Latham was on the money in 2004 with his Bookstart policy, when he declared: "I want children and families to feel at home in their library as they do in their own homes."

Mem Fox, author of 60 children's books, has underscored the importance of getting up close and personal with a book. "I know from my literacy work around the world, and from personal experience, that reading aloud to children makes them happier and smarter and sets them up for a much brighter future."

There is also mounting evidence that there is a significant link between familiarity with reading and books and positive health outcomes.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/education/opinion-reading-by-the-book-no-thanks-20080817-3wx2.html>

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## **RESEARCH**

### **Keeping young students interested in maths and science**

*Hon Julia Gillard MP, 12 August 2008*

Quality teaching is the key to maintaining students' interest in maths and science, according to a new report released today by the Minister for Education, Julia Gillard.

The Opening up pathways report examines the reasons young people's interest in maths and science subjects drops noticeably as they make the transition from primary to secondary school.

The report shows that young people often make key decisions about their life aspirations by the age of 14, and the quality of teaching and teachers are central to their ability to have rich and rewarding experiences in science and maths.

Opening up pathways was prepared by a high-profile team of international researchers, led by Professor Russell Tytler of Deakin University.

The report highlights the need for primary school teaching to motivate students to study maths and science, and for teachers to have a positive attitude to these subjects.

The Rudd Government wants to see more maths and science teachers teaching maths and science in our schools.

That's why the Government has reduced student contribution amounts to the lowest 'national priority' rate for higher education students studying maths and science.

Graduates who take up employment in occupations related to maths and science, including teaching these subjects in secondary schools, will also receive reductions in HECS-HELP repayments and debts.

In addition, the Rudd Government has directed \$400 000 into research to identify the best ways to reward quality teaching.

It is vital more students go on to study science and maths after school, so Australia can meet the demand for these skills, which are critical to Australia's future.

Read more at [www.deewr.gov.au/opening\\_up\\_pathways\\_report](http://www.deewr.gov.au/opening_up_pathways_report)

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## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

### **Early Years Learning, Education & Care Framework Consultation Forums**

In December 2007, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed that the Commonwealth Government and state and territory governments would work in partnership to develop a National Quality Standards Framework for early childhood education and care and an Early Years Learning Framework.

The aim of the new quality framework is to improve outcomes for children by improving the quality of early childhood education and care services. You are invited to contribute to the development of the new quality framework by taking part in consultations scheduled for August and September 2008.

The National Quality Standards Framework will include:

- new national standards for early childhood education and care that consider different care types, diversity of service delivery and the age and stage of development of children;
- an A-E quality rating system to help inform parents about the quality of care and to encourage continuous improvement;
- a streamlined licensing, regulatory and accreditation system; and
- a national Early Years Learning Framework.

An important part of the overall quality framework is the Early Years Learning Framework.

It will cover the period from birth to 5 years, although it also recognises the importance of transition to formal schooling, including the importance of the first few years of school.

It will be an important tool to help parents and professionals achieve the best learning and developmental outcomes for children.

It will also provide direction for quality preschool for children and will support the universal access to preschool initiative being progressed jointly with state and territory governments through COAG.

Consultations will take place in capital cities and regional centres in all states and territories.

The consultations will address the following topics:

- integrated quality standards in early childhood education and care;
- a quality ratings system;
- efficient and integrated regulatory arrangements and
- the Early Years Learning Framework.

You can contribute your views by:

- attending a consultation forum. More information, as well as dates and locations, is available at [www.deewr.gov.au/COAGforums](http://www.deewr.gov.au/COAGforums) . Please register for the forums by phoning 1800 220 425 or
- by sending an email to [ECCEQualityReformRegistrations@deewr.gov.au](mailto:ECCEQualityReformRegistrations@deewr.gov.au) .
- sending a written submission by visiting [www.deewr.gov.au/COAGdiscussionpaper](http://www.deewr.gov.au/COAGdiscussionpaper) or sending an email to [ECCEQualityReformSubmissions@deewr.gov.au](mailto:ECCEQualityReformSubmissions@deewr.gov.au) , by 19 September 2008.

Consultations will be guided by the discussion paper A national quality framework for early childhood education and care: a discussion paper, which is available at [www.deewr.gov.au/COAGdiscussionpaper](http://www.deewr.gov.au/COAGdiscussionpaper) .

We encourage you to take part in these important consultations - you will be able to contribute to improving the learning and development of Australian children.

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## **TERTIARY EDUCATION**

### **Government report shows how union fee change hits unis**

*Rachel Browne, Sydney Morning Herald, August 10, 2008*

THE introduction of voluntary student unionism has cost Australian universities \$161 million a year since it came into effect in 2006.

A Federal Government report has highlighted its devastating impact on campuses, where basic services have been cut due to lack of funding.

Higher education institutions in NSW have lost \$56.7 million in student union fees per year, although this has been offset by university contributions of \$24.5 million and approximately \$1.5 million in student contributions.

The findings are revealed in the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations's summary report on the impact of the voluntary scheme.

The report, which was compiled in March and April from 162 submissions from higher education stakeholders, cost taxpayers \$50,000. It paints a grim picture of campus life.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/union-fee-change-hits-unis/2008/08/09/1218139162876.html>

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## CONFERENCES & EVENTS

### School Marketing Conference

*8-9 October 2008, Perth*

This will be an innovative roving conference. That is, each day of the 2-day conference we will visit a different market-oriented school and hear from the marketing manager/principal about the strategies they use to manage marketing and community relations. We will have lunch at the school.

Then in the afternoon, still at the host school, invited speakers will talk on a range of hot topics and there will be discussion groups and instructional workshops.

During the day you will be able to go on an optional tour of the host school, conducted from a marketing perspective.

The conference is designed as professional development for people involved in school promotions and community relations - School Marketing Managers, Community Relations Officers/Directors, Development Directors, Enrolment/Admissions Officers and School Principals.

Read more at <http://www.marketingschools.net/>

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## REMINDERS

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

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

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

23-27 August - Association for Teacher Education in Europe Annual Conference - Brussels, Belgium - <http://www.atee2008.be/>

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

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

31 August-3 September - Australian Animal Welfare Strategy International Conference - Gold Coast - <http://aaws08.blogspot.com/>

1-7 September - National Literacy & Numeracy Week - <http://www.literacyandnumeracy.gov.au/>

5 September - Partnerships in Learning Conference - Brisbane - <http://education.qld.gov.au/community/events/nlnw/initiatives.html>

5-6 September - The Education Show - Brisbane - <http://www.educationshow.net.au>

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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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24-25 September - Scottish Learning Festival - Glasgow, Scotland -  
<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/slf/index.asp>

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29 September-2 October - 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.acef.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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1-3 October - Biennial National Conference, Association of Women Educators - Cairns -  
<http://www.awe.asn.au/conferences/cairns08/index.php>

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

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12-18 October - Anti-Poverty Week - <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au/>

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16-18 October - Learning Democracy by Doing - Toronto, Canada -  
<http://tlc.oise.utoronto.ca/wordpress/conferences/october2008>

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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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10-11 November - Curriculum Corporation Conference 2008 - Melbourne -  
<http://www.curriculum.edu.au/conference/2008/>

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17-19 November - International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation - Madrid, Spain -  
<http://www.iated.org/iceri2008/>

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24-26 November - International Conference on Distance Education - Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic -  
<http://www.icde.org/oslo/icde.nsf/id/05C3211E27B0737DC12573E100405E7F?OpenDocument>

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25-28 November - Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future - Geneva, Switzerland -  
<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/ice.html>

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30 November-4 December - Australian Association for Research in Education International Education  
Conference - Brisbane - <http://www.aare.edu.au/conf2008/index.htm>

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

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

### The Asia Scope and Sequence for The Arts

#### *Professional Learning Workshop and units of work*

The **Asia Scope and Sequence for The Arts** highlights key studies of Asia concepts and content that can be incorporated into the P-10 curriculum.

A professional Learning program focusing on how to make the most of this rich resource is now available free of charge for download on the AEF website.

[http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/public\\_html/downloadable\\_materials.htm](http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/public_html/downloadable_materials.htm)

Ten units of work have been written to support the use of the Asia Scope and Sequence for The Arts.

They provide teachers with a range of practical and exemplary activity types which teachers can use as is or build on. There are 5 Primary English units and 5 Secondary English units.

Find these at: [http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/public\\_html/scope\\_sequence.htm](http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/public_html/scope_sequence.htm)

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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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## **ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS**

- **Australian Education Digest** : <http://www.acsso.org.au/aed.htm> (weekly)
- **International News Roundup** : <http://www.acsso.org.au/roundup.htm> (monthly)
- **Values Education** : <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/news.htm> (monthly)
- **Languages Education** : <http://www.languageseducation.com/news.htm> (monthly)
- **Ensemble - Music Education** : <http://www.ensemble.org.au/news.htm> (monthly)
- **Public Education Voice** : <http://www.acsso.org.au/pev.htm> (quarterly)

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