

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

Volume 2 Number 39, 28 October 2008

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HOT TOPIC: EDUCATION REVOLUTION

Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority Bill 2008

Abridged from the Second Reading Speech by Deputy Prime Minister Gillard, 23 October 2008

This Bill, by creating a new national authority responsible for curriculum, assessment and reporting, introduces a new era of transparency and quality in Australian schools.

Mr. Speaker, in the past education policy in Australia has been dogged by a lack of transparency. Information about what happens in schools and what difference it is making has been seriously lacking.

In a world where education is central to prosperity and to social inclusion, being limited to such an opaque picture is not acceptable.

A National Education Agreement will be concluded through COAG before the end of this year. This agreement will establish for the first time the shared national targets, outcomes and policy directions that we need to achieve a world class school system serving the needs of every Australian student.

The National Education Agreement will provide the framework for ongoing, collaborative reform. Its priorities include proposals for National Partnerships to lift teacher quality, boost literacy and numeracy and raise achievement in disadvantaged school communities.

Our ambition is to deliver a world class education for every Australian student in every community. To achieve that goal, we need curriculum, assessment and reporting systems that are up to the task.

Accurate information on how students and schools are performing tells teachers, principals, parents and governments what needs to be done.

This means publishing the performance of individual schools, along with information that puts that data in its proper context. That context includes information about the range of student backgrounds served by a school and its performance when compared against other 'like schools' serving similar student populations.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/AllReleases/2008/October/AustralianCurriculumAssessmentAndReportingAuthorityBill2008.htm>

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Education revolution on track: Gillard

The Age, October 22, 2008 (AAP)

The education revolution is on track, Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard says, despite claims by a member of her own party that it's a sham.

NSW Labor MP Julia Irwin told parliament on Tuesday the phrase "education revolution" was a misnomer because the Rudd government was locking-in the coalition's favouritism of private schools through its funding legislation.

"It seems to me that the national reform agenda has been put on hold for four years and the real education revolution is a long, long way off," Ms Irwin said.

But Ms Gillard, who is also education minister, says Ms Irwin's criticism is wide of the mark and Labor has invested millions in its computers-in-schools program and early childhood education.

The government wanted to lift standards "in every Australian school", she said.

Read more at <http://news.theage.com.au/national/education-revolution-on-track-gillard-20081022-569e.html>

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'Hardly a revolution' says Labor MP on education

The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, Shadow Minister for Education, Apprenticeships and Training, 22 October 2008

The Labor Member for Fowler, Julia Irwin, has slammed the Rudd Government's Education Revolution saying it is on hold for four years and 'hardly a revolution'.

"In a speech to the House of Representatives last night, Ms Irwin criticised the Rudd Government's education policies and slammed the education revolution as being 'a long long way off'," Christopher Pyne, Shadow Minister for Education said today.

"Ms Irwin has confirmed that the Rudd Government is all spin and no substance on education. The Education Revolution is a news grab, a farce and a fraud. Even Labor MPs agree," he said.

"Ms Gillard confirmed last night that non-government schools would be required to disclose for publication all funding sources, from cake tables to chocolate sales - information that is entirely superfluous to the funding model."

Read more at <http://www.liberal.org.au/news.php?id=1882>

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Avoid school league tables, says expert

Gerard Noonan, Sydney Morning Herald, October 27, 2008

A LEADING British education academic has warned Australia not to copy the obsession in Britain and the United States with league tables and report cards for schools.

Peter Mortimore, a former director of the British Institute of Education, says rather than adopt Britain's "failed" policies, Australia's Education Minister, Julia Gillard, should look at countries such as Finland, which support high-level teaching.

"In England, a market approach to schools has created a bewildering hierarchy of institutions, from the elite private schools for the most powerful and advantaged families to the 'bog standard' comprehensive for the most disadvantaged and least powerful," Professor Mortimore said in Sydney yesterday. "Is this what Australia needs?"

He is visiting Australia to stimulate debate on the effects which "accountability" measures, such as constant testing of students and the production of league tables, have on student well-being and performance. The visit is sponsored by five Australian universities, including the University of Western Sydney, and the Australian Education Union.

The Prime Minister and Ms Gillard have been pushing a competitive agenda for schools, arguing that federal funding should be linked to teachers' and principals' performance, and each school should be forced to produce report cards so parents can choose.

Professor Mortimore said a study of schools in Britain showed students could expect to be formally tested at least 100 times during their school years. Pupils became labelled as "failures", teachers were blamed and schools threatened with closure.

But in the latest OECD survey of 15-year-old student performance, Britain's average scores in reading, mathematics and science had seriously declined since 2000.

Inequality - demonstrated by the number of students who "failed" the tests - remained worryingly high compared with other countries. He contrasted this with Finland, where teaching is the country's most popular job. All teachers received formal training for at least five years. Finnish students topped the OECD tests in 2000, 2003 and 2006.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/avoid-school-league-tables-says-expert/2008/10/26/1224955854986.html>

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Coalition calls for submissions from non-government schools

The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, Shadow Minister for Education, Apprenticeships and Training, 24 October 2008

The Coalition today called on all non-government schools concerned about the changes to the Schools Assistance Bill 2008 to make submissions to the Senate Committee on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

"It is crucial that non-government schools contribute to the debate and express their concerns about the changes," Mr Pyne said.

"The Coalition will be re-introducing our amendments for consideration by the Senate. We'd urge the Government to reconsider its position," he said.

"If Ms Gillard was being straight-up with non-government schools and genuinely supported private education, why would she want to leave ambiguity and doubt in this legislation, when it could be easily cleared up? "

Read more at <http://www.liberal.org.au/news.php?id=1917>

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RESEARCH

New School Ties: Networks for Success

October 2008

This report delivers the findings of a research project carried out from 2007 to 2008 by the Education Foundation Australia (now the Foundation for Young Australians) for the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The aim of the research was to identify examples and characteristics of collaboration amongst schools and between schools and other agencies in Australia and internationally that support better outcomes for students, particularly those who are underperforming in literacy and numeracy, at risk of leaving school early or less likely to enter university or to succeed in further or vocational education.

As well as conducting a search of the local and international literature, the project collected qualitative data through four forums and a number of interviews with policymakers, researchers and representatives of leading business, philanthropic, community and education sector organisations.

This qualitative data provides a strong base for the Victorian context.

The key finding of this research and consultation is that Victoria is already the focus of numerous collaborations operated by, with or for schools.

Some examples of these collaborations are provided in this report as well as examples from other Australian states and territories and international contexts.

Read more at <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/publ/research/publ/new-school-ties-report.pdf>

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RESOURCES

Rudd Government Launches Virtual Children's Hub

Hon Julia Gillard MP, 22 October 2008

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard together with the Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education and Child Care, Maxine McKew, the Minister for Families and Community Services, Jenny Macklin and Professor Fiona Stanley today launched mychild.gov.au

mychild.gov.au is a virtual children's hub for parents and carers which provides access to important health, early learning, child care and parenting support information in one convenient location.

The new online portal is part of the Rudd Government's \$2.4 billion early childhood education and child care plan to ensure every Australian child gets the best start in life.

In line with the Prime Minister's 2020 Summit vision, the mychild.gov.au website will be a place where families can go for information about Government initiatives and for assistance with their child care options.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/Gillard/Releases/RuddGovernmentLaunchesVirtualChildrensHub.htm>

Explore the website at <http://www.mychild.gov.au>

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No One Right Way: A Handbook for Parents

Rhodanthe Lipsett, Sea Change Publishing. 424pp. \$49.95

The internationally respected work of Dr Fraser Mustard firmly demonstrates the importance of the very early years in a child's development - starting from day one. The period from 0-2 years provides important stepping stones for the future.

Of course these early days are always a time of anxiety for new parents in particular. And in a real sense, parents become new parents for each child, as each child is different.

In her review of this book in the Canberra Times earlier this year, Kirsten Lawson writes that "thousands of Canberra mothers have crossed Rhodanthe Lipsett's doorstep dishevelled and distressed, even in despair. These new mothers are so confused by conflicting advice and the realities of motherhood that they cannot make head nor tail of their babies. They've lost confidence and desperately need the kind of help that Lipsett can provide..

"It's a common problem made worse by modern expectations that our lives will go according to plan. Babies of course never do that

"When she retired, Lipsett wrote a book about the first three months of a baby's life, the toughest time for mothers. The book was so much in demand that she's now release a new edition.

"The book is called 'No One Right Way' and that is the core of Lipsett's message to new mums: ignore the advice you don't like, trust yourself and go with your instinct. This might seem hazardous advice, but Lipsett says every baby is different and a mother knows her baby best."

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YourKidsEd.com.au

Launch of a new educational website by parents for parents

If you're a parent looking to find inspirational ideas for educating and enriching your children, there is a fresh new website which makes it easy for busy parents to find what they are looking for.

YourKidsEd.com.au was designed by parents for parents and is rich with information and resources for the education of children.

Your Kids Ed is the brainchild of Sophia Dimitropoulos, a parent of three young children. Sophia became frustrated with the time it took to trawl through the internet for resources for her kids, with searches not always providing comprehensive and relevant results.

After doing some further research, Sophia decided to fill this gap in the market by creating a central repository of websites for children, pre-screened for their suitability. "Our goal is to make it easier for parents to educate, inspire and enrich their children by offering information and resources in one comprehensive, relevant, and easy to navigate site".

Your Kids Ed is also about community and the sharing of ideas. Parents will be able to participate in discussion forums relating to their children's education. "From time to time, we intend to conduct surveys, vote on issues, and have competitions with educational prizes to be won", Sophia adds.

Read more at <http://yourkidsed.com.au/info/>

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Up Downs: A fun and practical way to introduce reading and writing to children aged 2-5

Michelle Neumann

Review by ACSSO National Projects Manager Rupert Macgregor

New parents exist in a state of well-meaning anxiety about the best things to do to promote and support their children's literacy skills development in positive and useful ways. The good news for parents is that if they follow through the sorts of activities outlined in "Up Downs" they cannot go very far wrong - and should indeed go very right!

They will not only reassuringly discover what works - but, even more reassuringly, why this simple fun activity-based approach works so effectively, backed up by research.

The internationally respected work of Dr Fraser Mustard demonstrates the ways in which the young brain is wired with the languages learning potential from very young age; and that "experience-based brain development in the early years - conception to age six - sets pathways in brain development that affect learning, health and behaviour through the life cycle." Positive interactive experiences that build up interest and confidence in reading, writing and reasoning - literacy skills development - are shaping up long term positive experiences and outcomes.

The celebrated Haringey study in London (1982) demonstrated the ways in which parental (and grand-parental) involvement achieves positive outcomes - children who read with and to their parents made significantly greater progress in reading than those who did not engage in this type of literacy sharing.

The results showed that the positive development of young children who worked with their parents in these ways, was far greater than results achieved by children working in small groups with a qualified professional tutor. Parents and families have an essentially important role as the first and continuing educators of their children - a role that they are uniquely well placed to carry out.

"Up Downs" is an accessible and valuable resource kit that will assist all parents of young children to carry out that vital role effectively and successfully.

Read more at

http://www.finch.com.au/html/s02_article/article_view.asp?art_id=260&nav_cat_id=220&nav_top_id=70

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Good news in NSW child care

Hon Maxine McKew MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education and Child Care, Maxine McKew, welcomed today's announcement by the New South Wales Minister for Community Services, Linda Burney MP, that New South Wales will increase the ratio of carers to young children in long day care.

From 2010, all centre-based and mobile child care services in New South Wales will be required to provide one carer for every four children under two years of age.

This is an improvement on current NSW licensing requirements which mandate one carer for every five children under two years of age.

"It's important that parents using child care services are confident their children are getting the best possible care and attention."

"I congratulate the Minister and the New South Wales Government for moving decisively to support families and improve the quality of care for very young children."

Read more at <http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/McKew/Releases/Goodnewsinchildcare.htm>

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Parents want a guarantee on ABC Learning, not lip service

Sophie Mirabella MP, Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education, Childcare, Women and Youth, 24 October 2008

Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education and Childcare, Sophie Mirabella has today slammed Federal Education Minister Julia Gillard for the appalling incompetence over the Rudd Government's so called contingency plans for ABC Learning Centres.

"The Minister for Education Julia Gillard has made it very clear the Rudd Government is 'working on contingency plans' and 'hoping that these contingencies will never be needed'. What are these contingencies? Why won't the Minister make public the Government's plan if ABC Learning collapses? These are questions Julia Gillard must answer," Mrs Mirabella said.

"It is simply not good enough for the parents of the more than 100,000 children who attend ABC Learning Centres around the country to be told upfront by the Labor Government: trust us we have a plan."

Read more at <http://www.liberal.org.au/news.php?id=1919>

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TERTIARY EDUCATION

Strengthening University Infrastructure Through Fast-tracked Investment

Hon Julia Gillard MP & Senator Hon Kim Carr, 22 October 2008

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, and Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Senator Kim Carr, are pleased to invite 14 universities to bring proposals with bids for government funding worth nearly \$700 million forward to the second stage of the 2009 funding round for strategic investments in capital and research facilities.

The timeframe for the second stage of the funding round is being accelerated in line with the Prime Minister's announcement to fast track the Australian Government's nation-building agenda.

This round focuses on capital expenditure and strengthening research facilities in Australian universities and the proposals selected highlight the diversity of the sector.

The proposals are across the teaching, learning and research spectrum, as well as a variety of disciplinary areas ranging from education and creative arts to medical research, engineering and science.

From a competitive field of 55, 14 expressions of interest have been invited to proceed to the second stage of 2009 funding round.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/Gillard/Releases/StrengtheningUniversityInfrastructureThroughFasttrackedInvestment.htm>

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Developing careers for Australia's future

Hon Julia Gillard MP, 24 October 2008

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today welcomed the release of the report Review of Career Development Services in Australian Tertiary Education Institutions, which seeks to help tertiary students reach their full potential.

The PhilipsKPA report provides 18 recommendations aimed at improving the range and quality of career development services in universities and Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions.

This report finds that career services in tertiary institutions can make a significant contribution to skill development and productivity, improving graduate outcomes, the international competitiveness of tertiary institutions, and national long-term economic development and growth.

It examines international best practice in policy frameworks, provides comparisons with Australian trends and activities, and identifies examples of good practice in Australian tertiary institutions.

Read more at <http://www.deewr.gov.au/careerdevelopmentreport>

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TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Australian Trade College for North Brisbane

Hon Julia Gillard MP 27 October 2008

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today announced that the Australian Technical College (ATC) - North Brisbane will expand its services and cater for up to 470 students in 2009.

The Federal Member for Petrie, Yvette D'Ath welcomed the announcement and emphasised the value of better integrating these facilities into the broader education and training effort in the local area.

The College will expand opportunities for students to enter the trades by offering a full apprenticeship pathway commencing in Years 11 and 12. Students will also gain the Queensland Certificate of Education.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/Gillard/Releases/AustralianTradeCollegeforNorthBrisbane.htmv>

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Future agreed for Hunter Australian Technical College

Hon Julia Gillard MP, 27 October 2008

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today announced that the Australian Technical College (ATC) - Hunter will consolidate operations at its purpose-built facility in Maitland.

The Federal Member for Hunter, Joel Fitzgibbon welcomed the announcement that the College will become an industry led centre of excellence in education and trade training to provide a skilled, work-ready resource of young people to service the Hunter Valley, NSW.

The College will continue to operate as an independent accredited senior school and Registered Training Organisation run by a not-for-profit company supported by the Hunter Valley Training Company and the Maitland/Newcastle Diocesan Catholic Schools Office.

It will specialise in an educational program with students engaged in the workplace whilst supported by pastoral care, workplace mentoring, and career counselling.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/Gillard/Releases/FutureagreedforHunterAustralianTechnicalCollege.htm>

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AROUND THE STATES AND TERRITORIES

NSW: Money fails to help rural, indigenous students' education

Brian Robins, Sydney Morning Herald, October 23, 2008

AS MANY as one in five children at state schools are at or below minimum literacy levels, a government report has found.

There has been little improvement in the numbers even though spending aimed at tackling the problem has trebled over the past 10 years, it says.

Children in country areas, especially indigenous children, are the most at risk. The best literacy and numeracy levels are found in Sydney's northern suburbs and the worst in western NSW.

"Compared to 10 years ago, the NSW Government has spent over three times more money on improving literacy and numeracy, yet there has been little real improvement," the NSW Auditor-General, Peter Achterstraat, said in the report.

It found that children at risk were not being identified and that they were difficult to track through the education system. The department should focus on the child at risk, not on the school in which he or she was enrolled, he said. Training for teachers needed to be improved. As well, more work should be undertaken with preschools and parents to have children ready for school.

Fourteen per cent of students in western NSW were below the minimum level for literacy. In New England the figure was 12.2 per cent, and in the Riverina and on the North Coast it was 11.4 per cent.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/money-fails-to-help-rural-indigenous-students-education/2008/10/22/1224351351144.html>

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NSW: Indigenous Coordinator funded for Mt Drutt

Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, 27 October 2008

A new Indigenous co-ordinator will work with 30 Indigenous families in the Mt Drutt region to help young people to participate in education and work.

The Minister for Employment Participation, Brendan O'Connor and Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, Senator Ursula Stephens, today announced Australian Government will provide \$125,000 to appoint an Indigenous co-ordinator to the local enabling project Learning Ground.

The funding is being provided through the Structured Training and Employment Project.

Mr. O'Connor said the program, known as Learning Ground is being provided by the Chain Reaction Foundation and is based on a cultural model developed in consultation with local elders. It aims to provide a pathway to education, participation in their local community and employment.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/Stephens/Releases/IndigenousCoordinatorfundedforMtDrutt.htm>

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NSW: Teachers protest over transfer changes

Sydney Morning Herald, October 23, 2008

Angry NSW teachers are continuing industrial action over changes to the staff transfer scheme, which Education Minister Verity Firth says will be reviewed.

About 2000 Sydney teachers rallied outside NSW Parliament on Thursday to support a teacher who was denied a transfer to an area of her choice after spending more than a decade building up transfer points in western Sydney schools.

Recent alterations to the scheme mean priority for appointments is no longer given to teachers with years of service in remote areas or regions where it is difficult to attract staff.

The state government is halfway through a year-long trial which also allows principals to directly employ staff, and not necessarily take them from the transfer list.

Education Minister Verity Firth says she is committed to reviewing the system after the trial is completed, but in the meantime, principals and school communities have a chance to choose the best teachers.

Read more at <http://news.smh.com.au/national/teachers-protest-over-transfer-changes-20081023-57a0.html>

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NT: Building Indigenous skills in the NT brick by brick

Hon Brendan O'Connor MP 28 October 2008

A new \$2.9 million innovative training program will build skills for Indigenous job seekers across 16 remote Northern Territory communities from the ground up.

During a visit to Darwin-based training provider, Industry Services Training, the Minister for Employment Participation, Brendan O'Connor, joined the Member for Solomon, Damian Hale to announce the Australian Government funding for the Towards Trade Skills program.

Towards Trade Skills will provide a two month accredited community-based training program for up to 220 Indigenous job seekers. Industries Services Training will provide the training in partnership with remote NT Indigenous communities.

The program gives job seekers the opportunity to learn technical trades skills such as bricklaying, concreting, carpentry and building from qualified tradespeople in their communities.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/OConnor/Releases/BuildingIndigenousskillsintheNTbrickbybrick.htm>

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QLD: Queensland Teachers Union 'disappointed' about private school funding shift

ABC News, Oct 23, 2008

The Queensland Teachers Union (QTU) says it is disappointed the State Government has committed to needs-based funding in the private school sector, but not in the public system.

Education Minister Rod Welford announced funding will be redistributed in non-state schools so that those with special needs will receive more money.

Mr. Welford visited St Brendan's Catholic School in Brisbane's south yesterday where he revealed details of the funding shift.

He says private schools will not receive any extra cash but the current pool of funding will be redistributed. That will benefit schools with large numbers of disabled, Indigenous or migrant students and those in isolated areas.

Mr. Welford says it is about improving the fairness of allocations. He says the State Government is considering the same policy for state schools.

"We've already allocated an additional \$1.5 million to our most needy state schools and I expect that before or at the next Budget we'll be working to allocate further resources to our most needy state schools," he said.

Independent Schools Queensland spokesman David Robertson says the change is welcome but it could lead to higher fees at schools that miss out.

Read more at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/10/23/2398902.htm>

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QLD: 22 kids a day kicked out of Brisbane school

James O'Loan, Courier Mail, October 21, 2008

UP to 22 students a day are suspended from a school in Brisbane's south which can't cope with soaring levels of violent and extreme behaviour.

The Queensland Teachers' Union made the shocking claim as 3000 of its members continued rolling strikes to highlight disadvantage at 54 Logan-Albert-Beaudesert schools.

The union said inadequate funding contributed to escalating violence at schools in the region where students regularly assaulted or threatened staff and their peers.

Smoking, drugs, truancy, abusive language and unsafe behaviours like tackling were other common triggers for suspension.

The Courier-Mail recently reported suspensions were up 25 per cent at Gold Coast and Ipswich schools, which includes those in Logan and Beaudesert, since 2005-06.

"A Logan high school has had up to 22 suspensions a day," former Logan teacher and QTU organiser Penny Spalding said.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,,24531012-3102,00.html>

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QLD: Tuckshops say grocery prices, busy parents hitting hard

Robyn Ironside, Courier Mail, October 21, 2008

SOARING grocery bills and the huge increase in working mothers are sending struggling school tuckshops to the wall, according to a new survey.

The survey commissioned by the Queensland Association of School Tuckshops found one in six, or 17 per cent, operate at a loss and possibly face closure.

Tuckshop conveners blame the ballooning cost of food - one school's grocery bill blew out 16 per cent in the past 12 months - and fewer volunteers.

Australian Bureau of Statistics research shows 60 per cent of mothers aged 25 to 44 work full or part-time. Increasingly tuckshops are relying on donations to survive and regularly appeal to parents to supply basic items such as baked beans, tinned fish, plastic spoons and ziplock bags.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,,24526523-3102,00.html>

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SA: Campaign: learn or earn until 17

Hon Jane Lomax-Smith MP, Minister for Education, 13 October 2008

School is back today and it signals the start of a major information campaign preparing for the introduction of compulsory learning or earning until the age of 17 from 2009.

During this school term, Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith will write to some 65,000 parents of students in Years 8, 9 and 10 to inform them about the changes.

The information campaign also includes fact sheets for young people and information for employers and registered training organisations.

"We want every young South Australian to have the best hope of achieving a bright future," Dr Lomax-Smith says.

Read more at <http://www.ministers.sa.gov.au/news.php?id=3781&page=1>

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TAS: Tasmania Tomorrow will help transform the economy

David Bartlett MP, Tasmanian Premier and Minister for Education and Skills, 16 October 2008

Legislation to formally establish Tasmania Tomorrow will be debated in Parliament today.

Premier and Minister for Education and Skills, David Bartlett, said that it was vital that the legislation was passed.

"While 86 per cent of jobs require a post-year 10 qualification less than 47 per cent of Tasmanian children are going on to do a post-year 10 qualification. This is a situation that is totally unacceptable and one this Government refuses to ignore."

Mr Bartlett said that all of these issues are reinforced in the report, 'How Young People are Faring '08', just released by the Foundation for Young Australians.

"It is a timely reminder of the importance of the Tasmania Tomorrow reforms to deliver better educational outcomes.

"It states that for Australians to reach the national targets of 90 per cent Year 12 completion or equivalent by 2020 we need to do more.

"Tasmania faces the greatest challenge of all states with more of our 19-year-olds in marginalised education and labour situations according to 2006 census data."

Read more at <http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=25023>

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VIC: Anger as Koori school shuts

Farrah Tomazin, The Age, October 23, 2008

THE State Government has been accused of closing Victoria's only Aboriginal public school without properly notifying parents and staff.

Leading welfare chiefs have warned that forcing the students into the mainstream education system could result in more indigenous children dropping out.

The Government recently announced that the Victorian College of Koorie Education - which has four campuses in Mildura, Swan Hill, Glenroy and Morwell - would shut next year and be replaced with four new "Koorie pathway schools".

Under the restructure, designed to boost flagging results, children from prep to grade 6 will go into local mainstream schools.

Those in years 7 to 10 will attend the pathway colleges, with intensive support to prepare them for an eventual shift into mainstream education.

But in a letter to Education Minister Bronwyn Pike, parents on the school council of the Mildura campus accuse her of not properly informing them about the change, and say the school was "gutted" by the decision.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/anger-as-koori-school-shuts-20081022-56f6.html>

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VIC: 12 assaults a week in state schools

The Age, October 27, 2008 (AAP)

It's been revealed that students, teachers and principals are reporting more than 12 assaults a week in Victorian state schools.

The Herald-Sun newspaper says Education Department records show 1,227 allegations of assault involving state school students and staff have been filed in just over two school years. A further 247 sex abuse cases were alleged.

Students have been removed from classes following harassment complaints, and threatening gangs and intruders have triggered emergency lockdowns.

And 11 departmental employees have been accused of assaulting students.

The paper says departmental records obtained under Freedom of Information reveal 890 reports of assaults on students at government schools, camps or excursions from 2006 to April this year.

Children as young as six were among the victims, and staff were on the receiving end 337 times.

The figures have spurred calls for upgraded protection, more parental control and extra welfare officers.

Read more at <http://news.theage.com.au/national/12-assaults-a-week-in-vic-state-schools-20081027-594w.html>

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VIC: Entire Year 12 class suspended - Dept advises schools to hire security

Karen Collier and Emily Power, Daily Telegraph, October 21, 2008

HUNDREDS of students at Melbourne's prestigious Xavier College have been suspended after running amok in what a witness described as a Lord of the Flies scene.

Furious school chiefs cancelled this week's classes ahead of crucial VCE exams.

The Xavier debacle came as other schools revealed a ban on muck-up day. Troublesome traditions such as egg, flour and water fights are being replaced with supervised barbecues and picnics.

Earlier, a group of Xavier students donned balaclavas and stormed Trinity Grammar.

A group of troublemakers has been blamed for the unruly behaviour, which included letting off firecrackers. It is believed some pupils sent home were later seen boozing at a nearby hotel.

Disgusted parents condemned the ringleaders for inciting other students and disrupting VCE classes.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,,24529488-16821,00.html>

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WA: Students speak out on cyber bullying

WA Education Minister Dr Liz Constable, 22 October 2008

More than 200 Western Australian secondary school students will help shape the future of cyberspace today, as part of a world-first study into cyber bullying.

Education Minister Dr Liz Constable said the Cyber Friendly Student Summit was part of a \$400,000 study into cyber bullying prevention funded by the State Government and conducted by the Child Health Promotion Research Centre (CHPRC) at Edith Cowan University.

Cyber bullying is the use of mobile phones or the internet to send abusive or degrading messages, photographs or videos.

"Cyber bullying is a global phenomenon and is not isolated to particular students or schools," Dr Constable said.

"Because it's often anonymous, and cyberspace is unregulated and active 24-hours a day, cyber bullying is particularly difficult to manage.

Read more at <http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Lists/Statements/DispForm.aspx?ID=130766>

Read more about the Cyber Friendly Student Summit at <http://www.cyberfriendlystudentsummit.com/documents/CFSS-Summit-brochure.pdf>

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AWARDS & PRIZES

NEiTA 2008 ASG Inspirational Teacher State and Territory Awards

Australian Scholarships Group, 27 October 2008

NEiTA (National Excellence in Teaching Awards) and the Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) have announced the names of the 60 Australian teachers to receive recognition through NEiTA's inaugural 2008 ASG Inspirational Teacher State and Territory Awards.

Showcasing the diversity of the teaching profession, these teachers work across the spectrum of education sectors from early childhood to secondary education, teaching students with varied learning needs, in specialised subject areas using teaching processes that get results.

Examples of the inspirational teachers' work include: taking their students and subjects into the wider community, contributing to the environment, re-engaging students, presenting real life learning experiences in the classroom, and connecting students to technological learning opportunities.

The 2008 ASG Inspirational Teacher State and Territory Award recipients will now be eligible to progress through to the next phase of the awards at the national level. Selected from the ASG Inspirational Teacher State and Territory Awards recipients, 10 teachers will receive National Awards commemorated with a specially crafted NEITA crystal apple award and a professional or project development grant of \$5,000.

Read more at <http://www.neita.com/2008STAwards.htm>

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REMI NDERS

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

17-19 November - In6ternational Conference of Education, Research and Innovation - Madrid, Spain -
<http://www.iated.org/iceri2008/>

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

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

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

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>

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

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

15-18 April - International Outdoor Education Research Conference - Beechworth, Vic -
http://www.latrobe.edu.au/oent/research_conf_2009.htm

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RESOURCE LISTINGS

Passport to Australia: The Australian Travel Game

Find out more about our amazing country the fun way:

Strap yourself in for a learning adventure like no other with Passport to Australia, the new board game from Brisbane based company Barker Boys (Australia) Pty Ltd

This is a fresh and exciting way for players of all ages to learn about Australia – the ultimate board game that takes players on a fantastic journey to every state and territory

The game is a brilliant way to improve your general knowledge on places that are in our own backyard. Though you hardly notice you're learning because it's so easy to get carried away with the thrill of the chase.

New questions will be added to later editions of the game and supplementary question packs will be available online and through recommended retail outlets.

"Best of all, with every purchase of a Passport to Australia buyers will be contributing to the establishment of a school camp to provide learning and recreational experiences for young people," said Managing Director Bruce Barker.

"Our intention is to continue to create opportunities to share knowledge and learn in fun and interesting ways."

Passport to Australia is available through ABC shops, selected retail stores and online at www.passporttoaustralia.com.

For more information: <http://www.passporttoaustralia.com>

LOTE@HOME – Learning languages at home from the early years

"Children who have grown up learning two or more different languages are better problem solvers"

[LOTE@HOME](http://www.lote-at-home.com.au) is an innovative way for parents to participate with their kids as they all learn a second language.

[LOTE@HOME](http://www.lote-at-home.com.au) packs are not intended to replace formal LOTE lessons, however they are intended to build an "in country environment" in the home that will support the formal learning of a second language.

Devised by a parent who was unable to identify an approach to learning a language other than English that focused on a home, family-based setting, these family-friendly kits are now available in five community languages (including Japanese and Mandarin) with others to follow shortly.

By using the cards, and reinforcing words around the house, kids will learn a new language in exactly the same way they learned English - by immersion and absorption.

Find out more: <http://www.lote-at-home.com.au>

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

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

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

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

Drug Awareness Website - 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)
- **Family School Partners** : http://www.familyschool.org.au/?page_id=6 (quarterly)

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