



Australian Council of State School Organisations

The National Voice of Parents of Children in Australia's Public Schools and Their School Communities

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

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Student demand to drive university funding:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090512_182600.aspx

Reaching out to help more students from disadvantaged backgrounds into higher education:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090512_182438.aspx

Investing in tertiary education and research infrastructure:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090512_182419.aspx

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A NATIONAL ISSUE: BULLYING

School teachers also the victims of bullying

Sydney Morning Herald, May 5, 2009 (AAP)

ALMOST all school teachers have been bullied in the workplace, often by senior staff or the principal, according to a national study.

The University of New England study of 800 school staff members from government, non-government primary and secondary schools found that 99.6 per cent of staff had experienced one or more of 44 types of bullying identified in the survey.

In the report, the research team said the results showed bullying of staff "does occur at Australian schools".

"The survey's findings are highly disturbing because zero tolerance to any form of bullying is the expected norm in Australian schools," said Dr Dan Riley of the University of New England, in northern NSW.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/national/school-teachers-the-victims-of-bullying-20090505-asrb.html>

Read full UNE Media Release at: <http://blog.une.edu.au/news/2009/05/04/bullying-of-staff-does-occur-in-schools-report-says/>

The Executive Summary of the research report (Investigation of Staff Bullying in Australian Schools, Riley D., Duncan D.J. and Edwards J., 2009) is available free at www.schoolbullies.org.au

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Claims Queensland school ignores bully reports

Melanie Maesele, Queensland Times, 8th May 2009

BULLYING is so out of control at a small rural school that parents are threatening to pull their children out while some have already done so.

One child was so badly terrorised at Mt Tarampa State School, about 40km north-west of Ipswich that, after years of bullying, his mother pulled him out of the school. Kathrine Rodgers said she was so concerned that she reported the incidents to the school repeatedly - but his ordeal continued for two years.

A teacher, who cannot be named, worked at the school for more than a year and described the classrooms as "out of control". The teacher said she left after a year because her concerns fell on "deaf ears".

Another parent, who asked not to be named, said her two sons aged 10 and 8 were constantly being bullied and victimised at the school.

"They are getting beaten up on a regular basis and they are absolutely petrified of going to school," she said. "They get their hair pulled, stomach punched and kicked and it doesn't matter how many times I tell the school nothing changes."

Read entire article: <http://www.qt.com.au/story/2009/05/08/parents-claim-school-ignores-bully-reports/>

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Toowoomba bullies dampen Blake's spirit

Madeleine Logan, Chronicle, 29th April 2009

BLAKE Hammond stares at the floor and tries to list, almost in a whisper, the times he has been "kicked and punched" by students at Wilsonton State School. The tiny seven-year-old says he has been beaten up four days a week for more than a year — too many times to count.

He has been held down and beaten while a hand held over his mouth muffled his screams. He has been pelted with rotten fruit. He has been bruised — a purple mark showing the fierce imprint of a hand.

"Sometimes I don't want to go to school because I might get bashed up," Blake said.

His mum Jodie Hammond says the bullies are not punished. Blake comes home so often with bruises and scratches that his father Luke Hawke has considered sitting in the school yard to ensure his child's safety.

Meanwhile, the Department of Education denies there is a bullying problem.

Read entire article: <http://www.thechronicle.com.au/story/2009/04/29/bullies-make-blakes-school-days-purgatory/>

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Report shows bullying puts young homosexuals at high risk

The Age, November 11, 2008 (AAP)

Lesbian, gay and bisexual young people are attempting suicide and harming themselves at an alarming rate because of bullying in Queensland schools, a report shows.

The Open Doors Action Research Report 2008 shows that over the past 12 months 37 per cent of affected young people had attempted suicide and 82 per cent had considered suicide.

It also showed that of the 164 participants who completed the anonymous online survey, 59 per cent had harmed themselves.

"Given that LGB (lesbian, gay and bisexual) young people reported extensive maltreatment and lack of support, it is unsurprising that they also reported high rates of self-harm, suicide ideation and suicide attempts," the report by the support organisation Open Doors says.

The report highlights schools as a significant source of distress for lesbian, gay and bisexual young people.

Read entire article: <http://news.theage.com.au/national/bullying-puts-young-homosexuals-at-risk-20081111-5mge.html>

Access the 2008 Open Door Report at: <http://www.opendoors.net.au/resources/documents/open-doors-action-research-report-2008-press-version.pdf>

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Daunting school taunts hit home

Emma O'Neill, Ballina Advocate, 5th December 2008

SARA BOND has an above-average IQ, plays the guitar and dreams of being a marine biologist. It's hard to imagine this quietly-spoken 14-year-old causing offence, but she has stayed home from school for at least 10 days this year in order to avoid the taunts of bullies. Sarah said she wished bullies knew how it felt to be on the other side.

Sarah's mum, Michelle Bond, said she worried about her daughter and wished the bullying would stop. But things got worse this week, she said.

"The bullying these kids are dealing with these days is a problem that doesn't just stop in the playground. Sarah has told me it's happened in the school bus and through her phone," she said.

"The text messages she received this week are really serious and there was one threat against her life. It's really scary."

Read entire article: <http://www.ballinaadvocate.com.au/story/2008/12/05/daunting-school-taunts-hit-home/>

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International research shows Australian kids in worst class of bullies

Erik Jensen & Rachel Browne, Sydney Morning Herald, December 14, 2008

BULLYING in Australian primary schools is in the worst category in the world, a new study of education standards has found. In the Trends In International Mathematics And Science Study, which surveyed schools in about 40 countries, more than a quarter of Australian year 4 students said they had suffered bullying.

Australian primary school students suffer bullying at a rate of almost 50 per cent above the international average, putting Australia in the worst category for bullying. Of the 36 countries sampled in the survey of year 4 students, only Kuwait, Qatar, Taiwan and New Zealand fared worse than Australia.

The research, which showed Australia lagging behind its neighbours and even Kazakhstan in maths and science education, found more than a quarter of Australian year 4 students had been bullied in at least three ways in the month before they were tested.

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/our-kids-in-worst-class-of-bullies/2008/12/13/1228585181498.html>

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Letter to the Editor

Angelo Gavrielatos, Federal President, Australian Education Union

Yesterday's Sydney Morning Herald (see below) reported that the NSW Government has admitted it may be forced to overturn legislation it introduced in 1997 preventing publication of school league tables.

The regulation, the only one of its kind in Australia, prevents the public release of student results "in a way that ranks or otherwise compares the results of particular schools".

This course of action arises as a result of the meeting of education ministers on 17 April 2009 where it was announced that, "...from 2009 the new Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) will be responsible for publishing relevant, nationally comparable information on all schools. This will include publication of the 2008 NAPLAN data and associated contextual information."

"The information available will enable comparison of each school with other schools serving similar student populations around the nation and with the best-performing school in each cohort of like schools."

At a press conference later that day, the Federal Education Minister declared "Education ministers have always said there's no point in reporting on raw scores, or having simplistic league tables." This continues in the same vein as the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians which states that "governments will not themselves devise simplistic league tables or rankings".

Not only have ministers failed to outline what action will be taken to stop their creation and publication, reports that legislation now may need to be amended expose how disingenuous and hollow previous statements made by ministers in opposition to simplistic league tables have been.

The damage to curriculum provision, students and entire school communities caused by league tables is well-documented in international research and evidence.

<http://www.aeufederal.org.au/>

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NSW school secrecy law faces change

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, May 6, 2009

PARENTS will have access to detailed information about the performance of NSW schools for the first time in more than a decade if strict secrecy rules are dropped by the State Government in exchange for extra Commonwealth funding.

The NSW Government has admitted it may be forced to overturn legislation it introduced in 1997 preventing publication of school league tables.

The legislation was introduced after a Sydney newspaper labelled Mount Druitt High School the "Class we failed" when all its Higher School Certificate students received tertiary entrance ranks below 45.

The regulation, the only one of its kind in Australia, prevents the public release of student results "in a way that ranks or otherwise compares the results of particular schools".

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/school-secrecy-law-faces-change-20090505-au1z.html>

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Hobart's Mercury leads the way with league tables

From article "School absentees increase" 6 May 2009:

Releasing the data yesterday, Premier and Education Minister David Bartlett..... cautioned against making direct comparisons between schools' performances. "One of the very key things about these reports is that they are not ranked. They shouldn't be ranked absolutely.

"Relative improvement is as important in one school or another, no matter where they may sit in a league table that people in the media might want to create -- mischievously I suspect."

The Education Department declined to produce aggregated or ranked data on any of the criteria in the reports.

The table [in the article cited below] reflects the Mercury's own analysis:
http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2009/05/06/71251_tasmania-news.html

From the article "Tassie High School Rankings" 6 May 2009

TASMANIAN high schools have been ranked by results in literacy and numeracy tests and in student attendance, as follows:

http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2009/05/06/71261_tasmania-news.html

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Teachers condemn 'league tables'

Australian Education Union, 6 May 2009

The Australian Education Union today condemned the publication of 'league tables' in Tasmania.

AEU Federal President, Angelo Gavrielatos said the refusal on the part of governments to take legislative action prohibiting the creation and publication of league tables made them inevitable.

"Premier David Bartlett's comments today that comparing schools is 'mischievous' is disingenuous and exposes the hollow nature of previous statements in opposition to simplistic league tables made by the federal and all state and territory education ministers.

"The Australian Education Union has repeatedly expressed concern about the publication of league tables. What we have witnessed today confirms our worst fears."

Read more at <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Media/MediaReleases/2009/0605.pdf>

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Transparency & Accountability

Interview with Hon Julia Gillard MP, 7 May 2009

JOURNALIST: Can I just ask you one question on the transparency agenda? The union has sort of raised concerns that the information that you put up on these websites will be abused; people will actually still construct league tables from that. How are you going to stop that information being abused and misused?

JULIA GILLARD: We've always said about the transparency agenda, that it wasn't about the production of league tables. It was about enabling parents to have better information about their own school, better information about schools in their local community and enabling parents and the public to compare like schools to see how they're going - schools with similar student populations. The reason we want to be able to compare like schools is if you see one going much better than another, then you want to share that best practice and you want to give a helping hand to the school that is struggling. We've been very clear about that. The Australian Education Union has had a number of discussions with the Government, where we've been very clear about our agenda and we're committed to it. It will be rolled out.

JOURNALIST: They're just concerned about the abuse of that information, not the fact that the information will be there so much as it'll be taken and misused.

JULIA GILLARD: We've been very clear about the format of the information. The format of the information will enable the comparison of like schools and it will enable parents to be able to look at their own school and schools in their local community.

Source:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Transcripts/Pages/Article_090507_154630.aspx

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Govt. Duplicity on League Tables Exposed

Trevor Cobbold, 7 May 2009

The national public education advocacy group, Save Our Schools (SOS), today accused the Federal Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, of deceiving the Australian public about the introduction of school league tables.

SOS National Convenor, Trevor Cobbold, said that publication of a league table of school results in the Hobart Mercury yesterday exposes government assurances about no league tables as worthless and duplicitous.

"League tables have officially arrived. They have been introduced by stealth and duplicity on the part of the Federal government, aided and abetted by state and territory governments.

"The assurances of Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard that 'simplistic' league tables would not be introduced in Australia are now exposed as false and disingenuous."

Read more at <http://soscanberra.com/media-releases/govt-duplicity-on-league-tables-exposed>

Trevor Cobbold is convenor of independent education advocacy group Save Our Schools.

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HOMEWORK

Canadian study shows homework only helps older students

Kristin Rushowy, Toronto Star, 4 May 2009

Homework is of little benefit to elementary school students but can be useful for older students as long as it is not simply rote learning, says a report examining 18 studies on the issue.

The report, by the Canadian Council on Learning, says in some cases homework can boost achievement and that older students - from Grade 8 and up - seem "most likely to benefit from doing homework," as do lower achieving students.

Homework is a hot topic among students, parents and educators and just last fall the Toronto public board introduced a groundbreaking homework policy after complaints about the amount and kind of work students were bringing home.

Among the new rules: Homework should only cover materials taught in class and consist of "clear, purposeful and engaging activities;" that a one-hour maximum be implement for Grades 7 and 8 students, and two hours for high schoolers; and that teachers assign homework in blocks so students can plan ahead.

It also said up to Grade 2, homework should mostly be playing games, having discussions or cooking at home.

Read more at <http://www.thestar.com/article/628873>

Report is available at: http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/SystematicReviews/SystematicReview_HomeworkApril27-2009.pdf

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CURRICULUM

Australian Curriculum Board announces four shaping papers

The National Curriculum Board held its final meeting on 28 April but will remain active until responsibility is passed to the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA).

With its final meeting, the Board reached a major milestone by completing the key foundational documents that will shape the national curriculum.

The Shape of the Australian Curriculum outlines an agreed set of guiding principles, structural elements and broad content directions consistent with the Board's remit and the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians.

Four accompanying documents- The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: English, Mathematics, Science and History – outline the curriculum structure for each of these learning areas from Kindergarten through to Year 12.

In addition, there are consultation reports on the original four framing papers.

These documents are now available for viewing on the website www.ncb.org.au along with a brief précis that summarises all of the publications, consultation processes and curriculum development work of the Board.

At this milestone point, the Board wishes to convey appreciation to all who have become partners in developing national curriculum and encourages your continued involvement.

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MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

The Music of Maths

Terrie Jones, 8 May 2009

The Fo-Show is a radio programme in St Paul, Minnesota and a group of students put together a radio programme about the music of math – it begins with a catchy rap song and the link

between amplitude and math and there are other songs with maths as a focus.

They are quite professional and although I am not much of a rap fan myself (!), plenty of students out there are - so follow the link and see the potential.

You might have a local radio station who might be interested in something like this or just a maths dept who is looking for ways to make maths relevant to disengaged students and this might help.

Check it out at: <http://www.thefoshow.com/index.php?s=37>

Terrie Jones is Director of Service Learning at Abbotsleigh School, Sydney.

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EARLY CHILDHOOD

Australia falls behind in early childhood: new international report

West Australian, 5th May 2009 (AAP)

Australia is falling behind most of the developed world in early childhood development, ranking third last of 25 in a new international report.

In its tenth annual State of the World's Mothers report, released this morning, the Save the Children Fund found that among developed nations Australia was ahead of only Canada and Ireland in an early childhood development report card.

Australia met only two of 10 nominated benchmarks, putting it among the lowest ranked countries considered to be losing ground.

The two benchmarks Australia met were to provide subsidised and regulated childcare services for a quarter of children aged under three and having 50 per cent of early education staff with relevant tertiary qualifications.

Benchmarks in which Australia failed included the provision of a year's parental leave at half-pay, having priority plans for disabled children, subsidising early education services and spending one per cent of GDP on childhood services.

Read more at <http://www.thewest.com.au/default.aspx?MenuId=28&ContentID=139834>

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New era in child care management

Hon Maxine McKew, Parliamentary Secretary, 7 May 2009

The Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education and Child Care, Maxine McKew, today welcomed a new era in child care management, announcing that all child care services currently required to transition to the Child Care Management System (CCMS) have now done so.

The CCMS offers a new and improved way for providers to manage the payment of the Child Care Benefit. Under family assistance legislation, all Child Care Benefit approved services are required to operate under the CCMS by 1 July 2009.

The new system will reduce the amount of paperwork for child care professionals, allowing them

to provide all the required data at once, in a streamlined electronic format. Parents will also be able to access an online statement containing details of their child care and payments.

The Australian Government will continue to offer assistance to child care providers once they have switched to the new system with the CCMS Helpdesk remaining operational.

For more information on the CCMS, visit <http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood>

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No reason to delay paid parental leave

Senator Sarah Hanson-Young, 10 May 2009

Greens Senator Sarah Hanson-Young today welcomed the Rudd Government's long overdue commitment to introduce paid maternity leave but rejected the delay until after the next election.

Senator Hanson-Young also called for an extension to 26 weeks and sought clarity on whether the scheme would apply to Dads as well as Mums.

"There can be absolutely no justification for delaying paid parental leave until beyond the next election," said Senator Hanson-Young.

"At a time when so many Mums and Dads are feeling the pinch, we need a government-funded paid parental leave scheme in place as soon as possible to give young parents the support they need."

Read more at <http://sarah-hanson-young.greensmps.org.au/content/media-release/no-reason-delay-paid-parental-leave>

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HEALTH & WELL-BEING

School canteens: an endangered species?

Sunday Telegraph, May 03, 2009

THE beloved tuck shop is under threat with fewer volunteers and higher running costs forcing schools to develop new ways to feed students.

At least two primary schools in Sydney have shut down their canteen and employed commercial kitchens to provide meals.

Another 40 schools have also introduced online ordering to help time-poor parents spend fewer hours behind the tuck shop counter sorting through orders and collecting money.

Di Giblin, president of the Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations, said most schools were struggling to keep their tuck shops operating.

Ms Giblin said dwindling numbers of parent volunteers had already led to dozens of schools reducing their operating hours.

"Smaller schools are finding it difficult to keep their canteen viable," she said.

"We do have in a number of schools a lot of enthusiastic parents who work hard to maintain some form of service, but where that's not able to happen, schools resort to closing it down."

Read entire article: <http://www.news.com.au/story/0,27574,25418509-421,00.html>

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Many school canteen kitchens not geared for healthier food

John Masanauskas, Herald Sun, March 02, 2009

Victorian School Canteens Association state coordinator Prue Cerin said yesterday that tuck-shops needed a funding boost. "Pie warmers are no longer adequate, they need an oven so they can actually cook things, not just reheat and serve," she said.

Ms Cerin said most school canteens lacked an oven, despite a community trend to more healthy eating. "Part and parcel of having a healthy school canteen policy is that canteens need to be properly equipped to prepare healthy foods," she said. "In the old days it used to be buying something reheated, putting it in a paper bag and sending it out. Now it's buy in raw foods and cook them up."

From this year, all Victorian government schools must not sell chocolates, lollies and other sugar-rich foods. At least 100 schools will be audited this year to check compliance with the ban.

Ms Cerin said it was crucial tuck-shops were not left behind in school upgrades. "Historically, the canteens have been seen as a source of raising money rather than something that requires resourcing and upgrading of facilities," she said.

Read entire article: <http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,,25123989-2862,00.html>

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AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES

NATIONAL: P21 Round One delivers \$2.8 billion for primary schools to support jobs

The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 7 May, 2009

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, has today released the full list of 1499 primary schools to receive \$2.8 billion for major new infrastructure projects under Round One of Primary Schools for the 21st Century (P21).

The Rudd Government is undertaking the largest school modernisation program in Australia's history to support local jobs, stimulate every local economy and invest in important long term infrastructure.

P21 is one of three elements of the Rudd Government's \$14.7 billion Building the Education Revolution. The \$12.4 billion P21 program will deliver much needed funding to every primary school for major infrastructure projects, including libraries, multipurpose halls and classrooms.

ACT: P21 delivers \$50 million for 22 ACT Primary Schools:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090507_090528.aspx

NSW: P21 delivers \$642 million to NSW primary schools:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090506_100835.aspx

NT: P21 delivers \$74 million to NT Primary Schools to support jobs:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090507_124916.aspx

QLD: P21 delivers \$650 million to QLD primary schools:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090505_101741.aspx

SA: P21 delivers \$315 million for SA Primary Schools to support jobs:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090507_110448.aspx

TAS: P21 delivers \$100 million to 51 Tasmanian primary schools:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090504_160035.aspx

VIC: P21 delivers \$686 million to 361 Victorian schools:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090504_102637.aspx

WA: P21 Delivers \$312 million to WA Primary Schools:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090506_172805.aspx

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QLD: Testing time in Queensland

Editorial Comment, The Australian, May 04, 2009

IT almost goes without saying that in order to teach literacy, numeracy and science, teachers need more than good classroom skills and rapport with their students.

They should be superbly competent in the subjects themselves. Parents often wonder on that score when they see their children's work returned with mistakes uncorrected - or worse, corrected wrongly.

Following the woeful performance of Queensland primary school children in national testing last year, the Bligh Government turned to an expert for help.

The state's children need it, after being ranked second-last in the nation. Only the Northern Territory, where absenteeism and social disadvantage are more prevalent, fared worse. For years, Queensland test results have shown that children fall further behind national benchmarks the longer they are at school.

Geoff Masters, chief executive officer of the Australian Council for Educational Research, has recommended that teachers should have to pass an exam testing literacy, numeracy and science to be eligible to practise in Queensland.

Read entire article: <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25423262-16382,00.html>

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QLD: Better pay lures teachers south

Jake Dew, Gold Coast.com, May 4th, 2009

TEACHERS were being lured away from Gold Coast classrooms by better-paying jobs in southern states, union members said yesterday.

QTU vice-president and former Helensvale Year 2 teacher Julie Brown said the procession sent a message that it was about time the Government lifted its game. Lifting the lid on teaching conditions, Ms Brown said the enterprise bargaining agreement expired on April 30 but negotiations with Premier Anna Bligh were being ignored, leaving the state's education providers behind.

"Our (Queensland) teachers are now the lowest paid in mainland Australia," said Ms Brown.

"But the problem with the pay rises in other states is that teachers are moving to take up those better wages and we know that people in the New South Wales and Western Australia public education system are up here poaching our teachers," she said.

Read entire article: http://www.goldcoast.com.au/article/2009/05/04/75511_gold-coast-top-story.html

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SA: Inspiring a first generation of university students

Hon Jane Lomax-Smith MP, SA Minister for Education, 6 May 2009

More than 40 Whyalla-region students are aiming to become the first in their family to go to University through a new First Generation program introduced in the district this year.

The program is part of the Rann Government's \$5.7m, three-year School to Work initiative and is run in partnership with the SA's three major universities, including the UniSA campus in Whyalla.

"There is certainly talent in our regional communities, and as part of the introduction of the new SACE we want to help all students reach their full potential," Dr Lomax-Smith says.

"The First Generation Program aims to break down pre-conceived ideas about university by introducing local school students to the University of South Australia's Whyalla campus and incorporating this experience with their SACE studies to set goals for the future."

The Year 10 students will use the compulsory new subject Personal Learning Plan to set goals and investigate post-school pathways aligned with their strengths, abilities and interests.

Attending the Whyalla campus one afternoon a week for six weeks (starting next week), the local students involved in the First Generation program will be introduced to a number of aspects of university life.

Read entire release: <http://www.premier.sa.gov.au/news.php?id=4735>

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SA: Education Department urges sick kids to stay at home

Tory Shepherd, Advertiser, May 02, 2009

THE Education Department has urged parents to keep sick children away from school because of the swine flu. Children should be kept at home if they show any flu-like symptoms, such as a runny nose or fever, the department says.

"It is important that the community is prepared but does not over-react," Education Department chief executive Chris Robinson wrote in a letter to parents.

He also recommends deferring travel "until more is known about the safety of international travel".

Swine flu, which originated in Mexico, is suspected to have killed about 170 people and infected almost 3000 worldwide, with 15 confirmed deaths and 328 infections in Mexico.

There are six suspected cases in SA, but the numbers are changing constantly as people are

cleared and other cases are identified.

The newly installed thermal scanners at Adelaide Airport did not detect any possible swine flu victims yesterday, but SA Health chief medical officer Professor Paddy Phillips said that could change at any time.

Read entire article: <http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,27574,25415989-2682,00.html>

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TAS: Absenteeism increasing in high schools

David Killick, Mercury, May 06, 2009

TASMANIA'S high schools are losing the absenteeism battle with rates growing on almost every campus, new figures show. An average of 13 per cent of high school students are missing from class on any given day and the problem is getting worse at the overwhelming majority of schools.

At 50 of the 56 government high schools, average attendance is falling.

The figures show a strong correlation between attendance and performance -- the high absentee rate appears to be a strong factor in the poor academic performance of some schools.

Liberal education spokeswoman Sue Napier said: "Principals say that in each region there are about 200 kids known to be regular absentees.

"Some are quite gifted children who are bored with what is offered, while most are underachievers and those with learning difficulties, who have not had the targeted assistance that they need."

Read entire article: http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2009/05/06/71251_tasmania-news.html

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VIC: Furore at Brumby Government use of school building funds

John Masanauskas, Herald Sun, May 04, 2009

THE Brumby Government has been accused of using federal stimulus money for schools to pay for projects it should be funding itself.

The claim comes as hundreds of Victorian state and private primary schools are set to get almost \$700 million for new facilities under Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's stimulus splurge.

Schools will receive up to \$3 million each for projects such as new classrooms, libraries and multi-purpose halls, under an announcement to be made Monday by Federal Education Minister Julia Gillard.

But some public schools are concerned they may miss out on extra cash that should be provided by the State Government.

Read entire article: <http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,27574,25422980-2862,00.html>

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Walk Safely to School Day

Healthy lessons

North West News, 04 May 09

State Minister for Education and Ferny Grove representative, Geoff Wilson, will join pupils from Ferny Grove, Ferny Hills and Newmarket state schools, along with students at St Ambrose's, Newmarket, in pounding the pavement on May 15.

The pupils are involved in Walk Safely to School Day, which is part of a plan to have children exercise at least 30 minutes a day.

Ferny Hills will offer pupils a healthy choice breakfast, which is being sponsored by Grove Fruit Juice, MyFruit.com.au and Moreton Bay Regional Council.

Harold Scruby, from Pedestrian Council of Australia, said the event taught "lessons about health and lessons about saving the environment".

"Research shows if parents continue to promote children's sedentary lifestyle by chauffeuring them everywhere and letting them play computer games instead of teaching them to get outside and exercise regularly then, by 2025, half of all young Australians will be overweight or obese," he said.

Schools around the nation will receive a Walk Safely to School Day kit, including stickers, posters and a how-to-participate guide.

Find out more: <http://www.walk.com.au>

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National Online Conference for Parents:

"What support do parents need to be active participants in their children's learning and development?"

18-24 May 2009

Parents of primary and secondary students, in all locations, are invited to take part in the third online conference, hosted by Parents Victoria. The conference will be held non-stop on the internet from 6am Monday 18 May to midnight Sunday 24 May. No special software is needed, other than an internet-connected computer and a browser. The online discussions will be very easy to join in, and guidelines about how to participate will be provided. Join in for all days, just some days, or even a few hours, depending on your lifestyle and other commitments.

Register online at no cost. The Parents Victoria Online Conference 2009 website will open from 6am on 18 May at: http://www.cybertext.net.au/pv1_09/ but please register yourself online first at <http://www.cybertext.net.au/pv09.htm>

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REMINDERS

March-May - Teaching Australia Workshops and Masterclasses - locations around Australia - <http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au>

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

15 May - MLTAV Annual Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.mltav.asn.au/content/view/200/>

18-24 May - National Online Conference for Parents - <http://www.parentsvictoria.asn.au>

21 May - Education 09 - London, UK - <http://www.govnet.co.uk/education/>

25 May - Boys & Learning Conference - Parramatta, NSW - <https://aben-2009.schoolevent.org>

26 May - Boys & Learning Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <https://aben-2009.schoolevent.org>

31 May - Australian Rural Education Awards nominations close - <http://www.spera.edu.au>

15-16 June - Communities in Control Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic2009>

19 June - Nominations close for Australian Awards for Teaching Excellence - <http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au>

4-7 July - Contasta Science Education Conference - Launceston, TAS - <http://www.cdesign.com.au/conasta58>

5-8 July - World Conference on Higher Education - Paris, France - http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=56642&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

5-10 July - Youth ANZAAS 2009 - Melbourne, Victoria - <http://www.anzaas.org.au/youth.html>

8-10 July - SPERA National Conference - Flinders University, SA - <http://www.spera.edu.au//conferences/callforpapers.pdf>

9 July - Registration closes for Environmental Song for Australia Contest - <http://www.imex.net.au/envsoncont.html>

13-16 July - Conference of the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers - Fremantle, WA - <http://www.aamt.edu.au/2009-conference>

31 July - Nominations close for ASG Inspirational Teacher Awards - <http://www.neita.com>

31 July-1 August - NSW Federation of Parents' & Citizens' Associations Annual Conference - Penrith, NSW - <http://www.pandc.org.au/annual-conference.seo>

6-7 August - Professional Development Network School Leaders' Conference - Gold Coast, QLD - <http://www.griffith.edu.au/conference/professional-development-network-leadership-conference-2009>

13-14 August - Isolated Children's Parents' Assoc. of Australia Federal Conference - Longreach, QLD - <http://www.icpa.com.au>

2-4 September - ARACY Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.aracyconference.org.au>

26-28 September - ACEL International Conference - Darwin, NT - <http://www.ancel.org.au/index.php?id=858>

2-4 October - Australian Curriculum Studies Association Biennial Conference - Canberra, ACT - <http://www.acsa.edu.au>

12-13 October - ACSSO National Conference - Hobart, Tasmania - <http://www.acsso.org.au/natconf09/>



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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)
- Family School Partners : http://www.familyschool.org.au/?page_id=6 (quarterly)
- Public Education Voice : <http://www.acsso.org.au/pev.htm> (quarterly)

Do you know of an event or resource that schools should know about? Email us at letters@acsso.org.au. Details of products, services, events, resources or points of view are provided for information only; publication does not imply endorsement or recommendation. No warranty is provided nor liability accepted by ACSSO, its members or employees.

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