



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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COMPARING SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Ken Boston urges principals: embrace "rich" school performance reports

Justine Ferrari, the Australian, August 10, 2009

LEADING Australian education policymaker Ken Boston today called on primary school principals to embrace "rich" school performance reports, arguing better schools were worth the "greater external scrutiny".

Dr Boston, the former head of England's curriculum authority, said league tables ranking schools according to the performance of students in national tests were not a transparent means of reporting results to parents.

They left off contextual information needed to make sense of test scores, Dr Boston told a forum hosted by the Australian Primary Principals Association.

Dr Boston, a former director general of education in NSW and South Australia, urged his former colleagues to accept the extra scrutiny that comes with national testing and reporting as a way of improving the school system.

"If it's a choice between parents believing what there is on a scoreboard, or a league table, or believing material produced by a school, which has very good reason to be self-serving, the public will run with the league table," he said.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/ml6ph2>

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Julia Gillard backs school-by-school report cards

Jamie Walker & Milanda Rout, the Australian, August 10, 2009

JULIA Gillard has strongly backed the move by Queensland to release a school-by-school report card on literacy and numeracy, saying it was "time we stopped averting our eyes from poor performance" in the classroom.

The Deputy Prime Minister and architect of Kevin Rudd's education reforms spoke out yesterday after Queensland made public what was trumpeted as the most comprehensive list of national test data to be released by a state government. The move will ramp up pressure on the other states to give parents greater detail on how individual schools stack up on national benchmarking of literacy and numeracy.

"I understand there are still some people that remain opposed to greater transparency in our schools," Ms Gillard said in a statement to The Australian.

"The Rudd government believes it is time we stopped averting our eyes from poor performance and ensure every Australian child is receiving a world-class education.

"I think there are some schools out there, both government and non-government, that are doing some fantastic things with their students but we are only going to find that best practice through greater transparency."

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/kvv4hm>

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Teaching for tests rejected as stultifying the learning process

Tanya Chilcott, Courier Mail, 10 August 2009

PRINCIPALS of some of Queensland's top-performing schools in last year's national exams have lambasted a push to teach students the tests to help lift literacy and numeracy standards.

Some of the top-performing schools don't even believe in testing.

At Somerville House, one of only two Queensland schools to lift all their Year 3, 5 and 7 students above the national minimum standard in last year's NAPLAN (National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy) exams, principal Ness Goodwin said test preparation stultified learning.

It follows a State Government push earlier this year for schools to teach the 2008 NAPLAN exams after Queensland students came second-last nationally last year. The 2008 school-by-school exam results were revealed for the first time in The Courier-Mail on the weekend.

"We absolutely resist that approach. We believe that stultifies teaching, it certainly stultifies the learning process," Dr Goodwin said.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/m6dy9a>

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CYBER-BULLYING

The internet is not a friendly place

Fleur Bicton, Herald-Sun, 2 August 2009

In Britain, the US and Canada, 40 to 50 per cent of children and teens say they've been bullied on the net. In Australia, the Federal Government's bullying researcher, Prof Donna Cross,

estimates up to 10 per cent of children or teenagers have been bullied online.

Sure, it's not a big problem here yet, however, experts believe it's only a matter of time.

The internet has been blamed for the shocking suicides of four teenagers from a Geelong school this year, but technology cannot be blamed for a problem that's part of the human condition.

Bullies are everywhere and so is the internet. Some schools have cyber bullying policies, but though schools are the most common place for computer use, children use the internet mostly at home.

Like it or not, parents must become cyber-savvy and enter what, for many, is an alien world.

Psychologist Dr Michael Carr-Gregg warns: "Members of this generation are born with a mouse in their hands. We need to teach them the fundamentals of how to surf the net safely. Very few parents understand the dangers."

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/n96ouy>

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Cyber Bullying Stories

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

This website presents the voices of students, parents, teachers and school staff with a view to informing, supporting and assisting school communities' understanding of covert and cyber bullying.

A key element of improving student learning outcomes is providing a safe school environment that is free from all forms of bullying, harassment, violence, abuse and neglect.

Research shows that whilst many children enjoy positive school experiences, approximately one in six Australian students report being bullied in school at least once a week.

This website was funded by the Australian Government and developed under the leadership of Dr Barbara Spears University of South Australia and colleagues with support from the Coalition to decrease bullying harassment and violence in SA schools and the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services.

Dr Barbara Spears is the team leader for this project, a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education, University of South Australia and is recognised nationally and internationally for her work on girls' peer relationships and bullying behaviours.

Read more: <http://tinyurl.com/me7wrn>

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OPINION

Is the Education Revolution a triumph of rhetoric over substance?

Ross Fitzgerald, The Australian, August 10, 2009

JULIA Gillard is the darling of the Canberra press gallery. This makes some sense: she is erudite and sometimes funny in question time, a welcome break from the tedium of our Prime Minister's mangled bureaucratese.

But ...on last week's Q&A program on ABC1... as climate change activist Sara Haghdoosti pointed out, a revolution implies "seismic, enormous change. This isn't it". Quite right. Most of the education revolution has involved nothing more than the abolition of old programs and their reintroduction with new names.

Hence the Howard government's \$700 tuition voucher program for students who fail to meet national benchmarks in their literacy and numeracy tests was cancelled, and that money was instead spent on the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy.

Rather than giving the money to parents, Gillard is giving the money to state governments. Apparently she feels they are better at managing it. As someone who has been observing the Queensland and NSW education departments for some time this is a remarkable leap of faith.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/no44gm>

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INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Education industry vulnerable without review: Baird

ABC News, 8 August 2009

The head of a new Federal Government review into international education hopes the review will ensure a secure future for the sector.

Education Minister Julia Gillard announced the review, headed by former Liberal backbencher Bruce Baird, after allegations of corruption within the industry surfaced this week.

There have also been violent attacks against some international students which have damaged the image of the sector.

Mr Baird says the review will particularly address accreditation, the role of recruitment agents and the curriculum taught.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/laaqk6>

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International education review a long time coming: Opposition

ABC News, 8 August 2009

The Opposition's spokesman for training, Andrew Southcott, says he has been calling for an independent inquiry for some time.

"It's very important that families in India and also in China can see that we're doing everything possible to make sure that their children have a very positive experience while they're studying

in Australia," he said.

"It's important that we demonstrate to those students that they make sure to look after their own safety but they also are in a safe environment.

"We had a big review of the overall framework in 2000 and we do believe that it's now time for another review.

"Because there are so many different providers, there are a lot of things that can be done better, in terms of the accreditation of providers, quality assurance mechanisms and also to address the safety of overseas students."

Source: <http://tinyurl.com/lx7wp8>

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Australia India Institute to strengthen international ties

Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 7 August 2009

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today announced the Australian Government will provide more than \$8 million to fund a new Australia India Institute at the University of Melbourne.

The centre will aim to strengthen and sustain bilateral relationships between Australia and India and will be a joint project of the University of Melbourne, La Trobe University and the University of New South Wales.

Funding of \$8.106 million will be provided under the Diversity and Structural Adjustment Fund. The universities will invest around \$2 million in the institute bringing the total cost of the project to more than \$10 million over 3 years.

As the world's largest democracy and a key emerging economy, India is redefining its role in international affairs and its influence in our region and globally is growing.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/mvbdhv>

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Rising costs threaten to deter Chinese students

Michael Sainsbury, the Australian, August 05, 2009

THE relaxation of US entry rules for graduate students as well as rising costs in Australia stand as the biggest threat to the nation's \$4 billion a year education income from China.

The Minister-Counsel for Education at Australia's Beijing Embassy, Ian Watt, said Chinese student visa applications rose by about 20 per cent last year but were only expected to rise by 5-10 per cent this year.

Some of this was due to a rise in university fees of about 20 per cent over the past two years, he added.

But demand for student places has not been hurt at all by the global recession.

A spokesman for the University of NSW said Chinese student demand was up significantly in 2009, particularly in fields such as engineering and design.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/m2rdm7>

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Students offered inducements to recruit for Queensland university

Guy Healy, the Australian, August 05, 2009

CENTRAL Queensland University students are being offered inducements including iPods, laptops and even airfare and accommodation packages valued up to \$4000 for recruiting fellow students from overseas.

Documents obtained by The Australian reveal students at CQU, a Rockhampton-based university whose Sydney and Melbourne campuses are targeted at the international market, earn increasingly more valuable rewards the more students they successfully recruit.

Felicity Fallon, president of the peak overseas student welfare and advocacy association ISANA, said she had worked in the industry for seven years and was "flabbergasted" to learn of the practice, which uses students as recruiting agents.

"They are recruiting; that's what agents do," she said.

Melbourne University's professor of higher education, Simon Marginson, an expert on the overseas student industry, said he had heard of students earning "pocket money" for marketing before, but nothing as systematic as a student-based recruitment scheme.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/nsoh3e>

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India retreats from Australian study

Matt Wade, the Age, July 31, 2009

AUSTRALIA'S elite universities are set to pay a high price for the foreign student crisis, as middle-class Indian parents concerned for the safety of their children opt for universities in Britain, New Zealand and North America instead of Australia.

Two months of media reports about attacks on young Indians and allegations of racism in Australian suburbs are having a serious impact, say Indian education agents.

The agents have experienced falls of up to 50 per cent in inquiries by students wanting to study at Australia's top tertiary institutions since the controversy began.

Much of the negative publicity has centred on students who attend private vocational training colleges rather than big universities.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/lakrjs>

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SEX EDUCATION

WA sex education site shunned

Anthony Deceglie, Perth Now, August 08, 2009

CATHOLIC schools will shun a new sex-education website created by the WA Government.

Concerned parents of Catholic students contacted The Sunday Times complaining that the website would encourage indecent behaviour.

The Health Department website says sexual activity can be "awesome", but also warns about the risks involved. It includes information on a variety of sexual acts and contraceptive devices, including the morning after pill.

The director of Catholic Education in WA, Ron Dullard, said his schools would not even mention the website to students for fear of encouraging its use. He said the website did not promote the values taught in Catholic schools.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/nzbznx>

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National survey of student sexual health shows unwanted teen sex on the rise

Bronwyn Herbert, ABC's AM Program, 4 August 2009

More teenagers are having more sex with more partners, but the amount of unwanted encounters is also on the rise.

The latest snapshot of teenage sexual behaviour has revealed that more than a third of high school students have experienced unwanted sex, particularly women.

The fourth National Survey of Students Sexual Health heard from almost 3,000 students in years 10 and 12, from state, Catholic and independent schools.

Associate Professor Anne Mitchell from the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society at La Trobe University says there are some worrying behavioural changes and also some surprising knowledge gaps, including on cervical cancer.

Read entire article and download audio: <http://tinyurl.com/l9dnl6>

Read report summary: <http://tinyurl.com/l2ptyf>

Read full report: <http://tinyurl.com/kofy4t>

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INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Research shows intercultural training vital for Indigenous education

Adrienne Francis, ABC News, Aug 10, 2009

New research has found the performance of Indigenous students could be significantly improved by ensuring all teachers, teaching assistants and principals receive thorough intercultural training.

The inter-cultural training being suggested aims to ensure all parties understand and respect the differences between cultures.

Associate Professor Lyn Fasolof the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education led a four year collaborative study that has produced a report titled, "Linking Worlds - Strengthening the Leadership Capacity of Indigenous Educational Leaders."

"Nearly 40 per cent of our kids are Indigenous and many of them are in those remote

communities.

"And yet we have a fairly mainstream leadership approach.

"We basically said a different form of leadership is needed to address the cultural differences and the cultural contexts of these remote Indigenous schools."

Read more: <http://tinyurl.com/l7jhn6>

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RURAL & REGIONAL EDUCATION

Youth Allowance changes to 'affect rural students'

ABC News, 7 August 2009

The federal Member for Gilmore, Joanna Gash, says a report into Youth Allowance acknowledges changes will impact on rural and regional students.

Under the changes, young people will have to work for 18 months to qualify for the independent rate of youth allowance from January 1 next year.

The Education and Training Committee has found the specific circumstances of rural and regional young people have not been adequately addressed.

Ms Gash says she is in favour of reducing the independence age and parental income threshold, but unfair demands are being placed on young people.

"They're expecting young adults from regions like ours [South Coast NSW], where there are limited employment opportunities and transport, to live at home, study, work 30 hours a week and travel between the three," she said.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/m3ar9m>

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Child care vacancies to go online for the first time

Hon Kate Ellis MP, Minister for Early Childhood Education & Care, 6 August 2009

The Minister for Early Childhood Education and Child Care, Kate Ellis, today announced that child care vacancy information will be available to parents online for the first time, under new changes to child care reporting requirements.

Under the changes all child care services from next week will be required to report the number of vacant places for each day of the week - based on a new standard definition.

This improved vacancy information will be made available to families via the Child Care Access Hotline as soon as services report the new data and in an Australian first will also be available on the mychild website in the coming months.

The inclusion of this information on 'mychild' will make it easier for parents to compare services and select appropriate care for the particular needs of their family.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/nykx5c>

mychild website: <http://www.mychild.gov.au/>

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Helping disadvantaged families to get their kids school-ready

Hon Kate Ellis MP, Minister for Early Childhood Education & Care, 07 Aug 2009

The Minister for Early Childhood Education and Child Care, Kate Ellis has announced 14 new locations for the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters, an important initiative that helps parents to prepare their kids for school.

"Successful learning in the early years is a key part of the Government's Education Revolution and this program specifically offers support to disadvantaged Australian families to improve their child's readiness for the transition to school.

The Home Interaction Program offers home tutoring, books and educational resources to children between the ages of three and five years old.

"The great thing about this initiative is that it works directly with parents and their children to give them a helping hand in preparing for one of the most critical transition periods in a child life.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/kshwfd>

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HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden National Program

The Australian Government has committed \$12.8 million to fund kitchen and garden infrastructure for the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden National Program in up to 190 government primary schools across Australia. Infrastructure grants of up to \$60,000 per school will be allocated in grant rounds over a four year period.

The National Program commenced in 2008, with Round 1 of funding, and the Round 2 funding application process is scheduled to open on 1 September 2009.

ROUND 2 GRANTS – TIMELINE

Now: All interested schools invited to commence preparations for Round 2 grant applications

Wednesday 16 September: Tour 2 of Melbourne Kitchen Garden Schools

17 August-02 September: Information Sessions in all major capital cities plus Alice Springs

Tuesday 01 September: Round 2 grant applications open

Tuesday 20 October: Round 2 grant applications close

Full schedule of Tours and Information Sessions: <http://tinyurl.com/lmo7xi>

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COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Historic funding boost to community training and education sector

Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 5 August 2009

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today announced the recipients of a \$96 million investment across 150 projects to improve teaching and learning across the community education and training sector.

The funding will help support training and jobs by providing up to \$1.5 million per project for community education organisations to build new training infrastructure and upgrade their existing facilities.

The new and upgraded infrastructure will support and improve training in employability, literacy and numeracy skills and help 'second chance' learners to get work or further training.

Projects funded in the program will include, for example:

- Construction of a kitchen to provide accredited training to disadvantaged young job seekers in South Melbourne costing \$290,000.
- Construction of a training centre in Biloela, Queensland to provide trade training for local businesses and the mining sector costing \$1.5 million.
- A mobile classroom and equipment trailer in Rivervale, WA, to support on the job training for apprentices in the motor trade costing \$170,000.

Read entire release: <http://tinyurl.com/laqa4m>

A list of the successful projects is available at <http://tinyurl.com/nlp5qp>

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AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES

ACT: Childcare support for children and families in the ACT

Hon Kate Ellis MP & Andrew Barr MLA, 5 August 2009

The Minister for Early Childhood Education, Childcare and Youth, Kate Ellis, and the ACT Minister for Children and Young People, Andrew Barr, today announced a new Children and Family Centre to improve the quality of life for children and their families in the ACT, particularly Indigenous families.

Announced on National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day, the new centre will be located in West Belconnen and will offer a range of quality early learning and care programs, as well as activities to assist parents and families.

Mr Barr welcomed the Australian Government's support for the Centre, saying it was extremely positive news for the community of West Belconnen.

Australian Government funding of about \$8 million will be delivered over six years under the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership Agreement.

For information on Rudd Government's Child and Family Centres initiative:
<http://tinyurl.com/l9o6mb>

For more information about the ACT Child and Family Centres: <http://tinyurl.com/lud7wm>

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NSW: Proposal for schools to go fully solar

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, August 9, 2009

EVERY NSW primary school could eliminate its carbon footprint with a \$40-million annual investment over three years, a leading Australian education economist has found.

Adam Rorris, a fellow of the Centre for Policy Development, said the Federal Government had made \$50,000 grants available to schools for solar panels. But he said the average primary school of 300 students would need about \$120,000 to make a full conversion to solar power.

Mr. Rorris urged the NSW Government to consider investing about \$40 million each year over three years to convert its public primary schools to solar power.

"With this modest allocation, the NSW Government will co-ordinate and deliver 100 per cent scalable solar energy capacity to each and every one of its 1600 public primary schools that [would] make it one of the largest school systems in the world," he said.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/nu9xhe>

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NSW: Premier accused of giving up on state goals

Lisa Carty, Sydney Morning Herald, August 9, 2009

THE NSW Government has been accused of giving up on making the state a better, smarter, safer place by abandoning or rewriting its targets for cutting crime, providing better education and improving service.

In the same way it redefined "on time" to include trains that were up to five minutes late, the Government has taken the axe to the State Plan to abolish or amend targets that were hard to meet.

A draft of the new plan shows the aim of achieving "increased satisfaction with government services" has disappeared, as have the targets of reducing child abuse and neglect, increasing vocational education and training, and increasing business investment in rural and regional NSW.

Goals of increasing literacy and numeracy have been watered down. By 2016, there will be a 20 per cent reduction in the number of poor-performing students, compared with the original

goal of a 30 per cent reduction.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/mjnwn6>

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NSW: Fury over drug sale near primary school

The Australian, August 04, 2009

PARENTS are furious about plans to install a vending machine to sell syringes to drug-takers less than 100 metres from a primary school.

Families fearing for the safety of their children have signed a petition against the plan by the South East Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service, claiming the vending machine would be dangerously close to the school.

Parents told yesterday how used druggies' syringes had been found in and around Crown Street Public School, putting young children at serious risk.

A development application for the needle machine, outside the Albion Street Centre in Crown St, was considered by a City of Sydney committee last night but had yet to be approved by the complete council.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/mbaqbd>

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NSW: Supporting children and families in Campbelltown, Blacktown and Ballina

Hon Kate Ellis MP, Minister for Early Childhood Education & Care, 4 August 2009

The Minister for Early Childhood Education, Child Care and Youth, Kate Ellis, and the New South Wales Minister for Community Services, Linda Burney, today announced three new Children and Family Centres for NSW to improve the quality of life for Indigenous children and their families.

Announced on National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day, the new centres will be located in Campbelltown, Blacktown and Ballina and will offer a range of quality early learning and care programs, as well as activities to assist parents and families.

"The Australian Government recognises the importance of the early years of a child's life and is committed to supporting Australian children and families," Ms Ellis said.

"The Children and Family Centres in Campbelltown, Blacktown and Ballina will bring together a range of services aimed at ensuring children have the best possible start in life," she added.

The three new centres are the first of nine to be established in New South Wales under the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership Agreement with the Australian Government.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/mt5rfr>

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NT: \$1.5 Million For Families As First Teachers

Gerry McCarthy, Minister Assisting the Chief Minister on Education, 10 August 2009

The NT Government has committed \$1.5 million towards a program aimed at giving remote Indigenous children the best start in life by involving families in learning and development.

Minister Assisting the Chief Minister on Education, Gerry McCarthy, today said applications for grants under the first of its kind program would be open until the end of the month.

"This Government is committed to delivering for Territory families and turning around Indigenous disadvantage – and education is a fundamental part of tackling this," Mr McCarthy said.

"Early childhood development and school attendance is an important component of the program, which is consistent with the Government's Transforming Indigenous Education reform."

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/lshoq9>

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QLD: 'Suggestive' school chaplain dumped

Mark Bode, Sunshine Coast Daily, 28 July 2009

The female chaplain of Golden Beach State School has today been removed from her job over her suggestive online chats with a 12-year-old boy.

Jocelyn Hook's employer, Scripture Union Queensland, announced this afternoon that the married mother of three would not be allowed to work at any school "for the time being".

The move followed revelations by the Daily about the chaplain's behaviour, in which the father of the boy said he was disgusted that Mrs Hook had kept job despite the SU ruling she had behaved inappropriately.

"We have decided to remove Jocelyn Hook from school chaplaincy duties," SU chief executive Tim Mander said.

"The recent publicity and the publication of her name, her photo and the name of her school have made her chaplaincy role untenable at this time."

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/mvos9j>

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QLD: Trial for Toowoomba principal accused of not reporting abuse claim

Fidelis Rego, ABC News, Aug 4, 2009

A southern Queensland principal accused of failing to report a child sex abuse allegation to police will face trial next month.

The 49-year-old man from Toowoomba, on the Darling Downs, is believed to be the first person in Queensland to be charged with failing to comply with his mandatory reporting obligation as a school staff member.

Police allege a girl and her family made a complaint to the principal in 2007.

A former teacher has been charged with 46 offences against a number of children at the

school.

The principal's trial will start on September 17 in the Toowoomba Magistrates Court.

Source: <http://tinyurl.com/mc55yg>

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QLD: Public schools outperformed by non-government students

ABC News, 8 August 2009

Queensland's private schools outperformed their public counterparts in national literacy and numeracy testing last year.

Parents are able to access the NAPLAN results for every school in Queensland for the first time today.

Education Minister Geoff Wilson has made the information available, saying it signals a new era of transparency.

The 2009 national test results are due out later this year.

Source: <http://tinyurl.com/lw7dum>

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SA: SA teachers lowest paid in nation: AEU

Australian Teacher Magazine (AAP), 03 August 2009

South Australia's public school teachers say they're the lowest paid in the nation as their union starts an arbitration hearing over a pay claim.

Teachers and the state government have been at loggerheads over a new enterprise agreement for more than a year.

After a series of offers and compromises, negotiations broke down late last year, leaving the matter to be determined by arbitration, which started on Monday in the Industrial Relations Commission.

The arbitration follows the commission awarding teachers an interim 3.75 per cent rise in February.

In their full claim, teachers have asked for a 21 per cent pay rise over three years, against the government's best offer of 14.2 per cent over the same period.

The Australian Education Union's South Australian president, Correna Haythorpe, said the state's teachers were "by far the lowest paid in Australia".

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/lutlk4>

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SA: Forum to highlight cyber dangers

Hon Jane Lomax-Smith MP, Education Minister, 2 August 2009

South Australian parents can learn how to help their children to stay safe in the cyber world at a major forum to be staged in Adelaide in August.

Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith today announced details of the forum, which will be held at the Adelaide Festival Centre Banquet Room from 6pm on Monday 24 August.

Dr Lomax-Smith says a range of renowned cyber safety and anti-bullying experts will present at the forum – and an invitation is being extended to parents and community members to attend.

The initiative is part of the Rann Government's ongoing efforts over the past five years to address emerging issues around cyber bullying and e-crime.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/nalkkv>

Register: <http://www.decs.sa.gov.au>

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TAS: School funding still in the pipeline

ABC News, Aug 6, 2009

The Tasmanian Premier says the government is committed to distributing federal funding to Tasmanian primary schools.

The schools will share in a national pool of \$635 million with an extra \$100 going towards each child.

The State Government received Tasmania's allocation in May and school principals say the money is flowing already in other states.

David Bartlett says the money will go to schools acknowledged by the Commonwealth as having a shortfall.

"I do want to see this money go where it's needed and equitably as well," he said.

"We're working through the school review, school resource package review at the moment with school principals and the full balance of that money will go into schools as we work through that."

Source: <http://tinyurl.com/kw9hlq>

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TAS: Teachers and parents push for league table ban

ABC News 8 August 2009

Tasmanian teachers are pushing for a ban on school league tables because they think they destroy morale and do not improve a child's education.

The Premier David Bartlett also thinks league tables are bad for education, but he will not ban them because he believes in freedom of speech.

Teachers are moving to stop league tables by refusing to give students the national test that creates the raw data to rank schools.

Launceston teacher Rob Soward says league tables publicly label students and schools as failures.

"If you open the paper up and you see that your school has ranked badly, it does, it destroys morale, to see that there in black and white for the whole world to see, it's really negative," he said.

Parents in Tasmania have backed the push by teachers.

Jenny Branch from Parents and Friends says overseas, league tables have led to parents lining up outside highly-ranked schools to get their child a place.

"League tables can be so simplistic they don't really reflect what is going on inside the walls of a school," said Ms Branch.

"We have no problems with transparency but a simple ranking of schools can mislead parents into making decisions that don't really turn out to be the best for their child."

Source: <http://tinyurl.com/l2xqzq>

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TAS: No director shortage for Education Foundation: Scobie

ABC News, Wed Aug 5, 2009

The chairman of the troubled Education Foundation Andrew Scobie says there is a long list of people wanting to become directors.

The foundation was set up with a \$250,000 public grant to promote higher learning but Mr Scobie is the only remaining member.

The Auditor General is currently investigating the foundation's use of public money but Mr Scobie has told ABC Local Radio that had not stopped people wanting to join the board.

"It hasn't been the Education Foundation seeking directors just to make that clear," he said.

"It's been the long list of people contacting the Education Foundation who agree that this is the most significant social and economic issue in Tasmania, and them wanting to throw their support behind the Education Foundation."

Source: <http://tinyurl.com/mzwc9x>

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VIC: Seven children hurt in school ceiling collapse

The Australian, August 05, 2009 (AAP)

SEVEN children have been taken to hospital with minor injuries after a ceiling collapsed at Melbourne's Mill Park Heights Primary School this morning.

A quirk of fate saved the children from serious injury.

The 24 Grade Five children were sitting on the floor near the front of the classroom - rather than at their usual tables - when suddenly a piece of the ceiling near the windows broke off on Tuesday morning.

Mill Park Heights Primary School principal Deborah Patterson said the youngsters were fortunate the ceiling hadn't crashed on to them.

"During one of the classes just before morning recess, the girls were on the floor and part of the ceiling actually fell on to the table," Ms Patterson said.

"But because they weren't there, they were working on the ground, the bits that broke off landed a bit on their backs."

Three of the injured were taken to the Royal Children's Hospital wearing precautionary neck braces while another four were taken to the Northern Hospital with minor bumps and scratches.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/mbmlhx>

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WA: Mid-West School of the Air to be rebuilt

Liz Constable, Minister for Education, 3 August 2009

The Meekatharra School of the Air that was destroyed by fires in 2006 and relocated to Geraldton is to be rebuilt.

Premier Colin Barnett said the new \$3.7million facility would be built at the Geraldton Camp School and be completed in time for the 2011 school year.

"This is a tremendous decision for the students, teachers and parents who have been looking for a permanent home for the school since 2006," Mr Barnett said.

"The new custom-built facility will ensure students continue to receive a quality education at home and have access to excellent resources when they visit Geraldton to meet their teachers and peers."

The School of the Air in Meekatharra was destroyed in two separate fires in 2006 and was temporarily relocated to Beachlands Primary School in Geraldton in 2007. It currently has 67 students, seven teachers and three support staff.

Read entire article: <http://tinyurl.com/mfjvlh>

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Symposium: Building school partnerships with commerce & industry

"Business Class – How can corporate Australia support our schools?"

20 October 2009, Melbourne

Deputy Prime Minister Gillard has said that "Clearly, we [The Rudd Government] believe the engagement of corporate Australia with schools has to be on the basis of making a genuine difference, not on the basis of product promotion...But I do believe that corporate Australia can play a role in supporting our schools..."

The Rudd Government obviously sees an increased role for corporate Australia in supporting our schools in the near future. But how exactly can this be achieved in practice?

Business Class is currently the ONLY event to be held to SPECIFICALLY address that

question.

Spheres of Influence International is delighted to present a panel of leading figures from some of Australian education's most influential bodies, all with a different perspective on how corporate Australia can best support our schools. Together we aim to discuss the key points and produce tangible outcomes with which to move forward and ensure Australia is a world leader in the responsible and mutually beneficial engagement of the corporate world with schools.

Don't miss the most significant one-off education event to take place in Australia this year – tickets are now on sale!

Website: <http://tinyurl.com/m6r5mb>

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REMINDERS

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

14 August - Schools First applications close - <http://tinyurl.com/lv9vzj>

14 August - Education with Muslims: Moving Forward and Engaging Communities - Sydney, NSW - <http://tinyurl.com/nxug7p>

15-23 August - National Science Week - <http://tinyurl.com/nm4f5f>

16 August - Australian Museum Eureka Prizes People's Choice Award nominations close - <http://tinyurl.com/npt3ls>

16-18 August - ACER Research Conference - Perth, WA - <http://tinyurl.com/leo54l>

18-19 August - Parents Victoria Annual State Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://tinyurl.com/mw5faq>

22 August - Tasmanian Parents & Friends Association State Annual Conference - <http://tinyurl.com/lzqrpn>

29-30 August - Western Australian Council of State School Organisations Annual State Conference - Burswood, WA - <http://tinyurl.com/nydplr>

31 August-6 September - National Literacy & Numeracy Week - <http://tinyurl.com/mzesro>

31 August-6 September - Reach for the Stars - <http://tinyurl.com/l3zh3e>

2-4 September - ARACY Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://tinyurl.com/qljgzw>

3-4 September - CHERI Annual Conference - Sydney, NSW - <http://tinyurl.com/n3wg4y>

11 September - Education with Muslims: Moving Forward and Engaging Communities - Shepparton, VIC - <http://tinyurl.com/nxug7p>

11-12 September - Future Directions in Literacy Conference - Sydney, NSW - <http://tinyurl.com/n8ldcx>

16-18 September - flexible.learning@schools - Adelaide, SA - <http://tinyurl.com/lregl2>

26-28 September - ACEL International Conference - Darwin, NT - <http://tinyurl.com/pgf6cc>

2-4 October - Australian Curriculum Studies Association Biennial Conference - Canberra, ACT - <http://tinyurl.com/pcslmo>

12-13 October - ACSSO National Conference - Hobart, TAS - <http://tinyurl.com/q8njl3>

24-25 October - Asian Conference on Education - Osaka, Japan - <http://tinyurl.com/lahwja>

9-12 November - London International Conference on Education - London, UK - <http://tinyurl.com/ckcrmp>

18-21 November - NAEYC Annual Conference & Expo - Washington DC, USA
<http://tinyurl.com/muhe24>

24-26 November - Family Relationship Services Australia National Conference - Sydney, NSW - <http://tinyurl.com/lz433t>

25-27 November - International Conference on Primary Education 2009 - Hong Kong - <http://tinyurl.com/lqt8rm>

9-10 April - National Coalition against Bullying Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://tinyurl.com/m78qyt>

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ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

- Australian Education Digest : <http://tinyurl.com/d2o8zu> (weekly)
- International News Roundup : <http://tinyurl.com/cswpka> (monthly)
- Values Education : <http://tinyurl.com/dls7rv> (monthly)
- Languages Education : <http://tinyurl.com/c59eda> (monthly)
- Ensemble - Music Education : <http://tinyurl.com/dedyz4> (monthly)
- Family School Partners : <http://tinyurl.com/qvleza> (monthly)
- Public Education Voice : <http://tinyurl.com/cy7s78> (quarterly)

Do you know of an event or resource that schools should know about? Email us at letters@acssso.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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