



# 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

Volume 3 Number 34, 15 September 2009

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### ASSESSING LITERACY & NUMERACY

#### 2009 NAPLAN results released

*The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 11 September, 2009*

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today welcomed the release of the summary results from the 2009 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

The 2009 NAPLAN National Summary Report was released today by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA).

The Report shows that more than 90 per cent of Australian students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are performing at or above the national minimum standard in reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and numeracy.

However, the results also indicate that there are still some students who have not attained the literacy and numeracy skills expected of students in their year level.

The first truly national assessments were conducted in May 2008 with students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across the country, undertaking the same assessments in reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and numeracy.

The Report released today presents the NAPLAN results for years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students in each State and Territory for reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and numeracy as well as a comparison with results from the 2008 NAPLAN.

Read more at

[http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article\\_090911\\_120047.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090911_120047.aspx)

Read the Summary Report at  
[http://www.naplan.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/2009\\_NAPLAN\\_Summary\\_Report.pdf](http://www.naplan.edu.au/verve/_resources/2009_NAPLAN_Summary_Report.pdf)

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## **One in 10 students 'falling through cracks'**

*Melissa Jenkins and Sandra O'Malley, news.com.au (AAP), 11 September 2009*

THE Federal Government has vowed to lift education standards after national benchmarking showed 10 per cent of school students were still falling through cracks in the system. One in 10 school children are failing to meet minimum standards for reading, writing and numeracy, according to the 2009 National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) report.

The report, released today, shows test results for students in years three, five, seven and nine.

Children in the Northern Territory continued to lag far behind the rest of the nation.

NT Chief Minister Paul Henderson admitted work was needed to address the weak outcomes but said it was unfair to compare all territory students with the rest of the nation.

Read more at [http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,26059518-29277,00.html?from=public\\_rss](http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,26059518-29277,00.html?from=public_rss)

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## **Parents will receive individual student reports from today**

*The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 14 September 2009*

From today, parents of students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 that sat the 2009 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) will receive a report on their child's individual performance.

Parents will receive a Student Report (format attached below) which will outline their child's performance on an achievement scale for each assessment area of reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and numeracy.

Results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understanding demonstrated in the assessments.

The scale clearly identifies the national average for the grade and in a number of States, the scale also shows the school average for the grade and subject.

Of course, the information contained in the Student Report should be considered together with school-based assessments and reports.

Before the start of the next school year, the new Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) will publish school profiles online for the very first time.

Read more at  
[http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article\\_090914\\_172345.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090914_172345.aspx)

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## Test shows public schools score higher

*Dean Gould and Matthew Killoran, Gold Coast News, 15 September 2009*

THE divide between public and private schools on the Gold Coast has been blown apart by the results of the national education tests released yesterday.

Strong showings by many state schools in the controversial National Assessment Program -- Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests have challenged the myth that private schools deliver better academic results for students.

Many private schools such as AB Paterson College and All Saints College achieved outstanding results for the years 3, 5, 7 and 9 tests for reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar, and numeracy.

But there were equally as impressive scores by state school students.

Read more at [http://www.goldcoast.com.au/article/2009/09/15/137461\\_gold-coast-news.html](http://www.goldcoast.com.au/article/2009/09/15/137461_gold-coast-news.html)

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## TOWARDS A NATIONAL CURRICULUM

### CEO Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority

*The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 9 September, 2009*

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today announced the appointment of Dr Peter Hill as Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA).

Dr Hill, currently Senior Advisor to the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, has more than 20 years experience in the fields of curriculum and assessment. He is expected to begin his new role on 28 September 2009.

Dr Hill has a profound knowledge of education, starting his career as a classroom teacher and building an extensive record of leadership and management in Australia, the USA and Asia.

He played a key role in reforms in Hong Kong, which changed the region's approach to curriculum, assessment and certification.

Read more at [http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article\\_090909\\_121255.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090909_121255.aspx)

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## COMPARING SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

## **Progress 'key test of good school'**

*Justine Ferrari, The Australian, September 10, 2009*

FEARS about league tables ranking schools based on student results will be short-lived and Australia can avoid mistakes made in other countries.

The predictions come from the incoming chief executive of the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, Peter Hill, who is charged with driving the national curriculum and school reporting system. Dr Hill said yesterday the assessment of school performance had to move away from simply reporting test results to measuring the progress and improvement students made at school.

In an interview with The Australian, he said comparing schools on the basis of absolute performance, such as test marks, was insufficient by itself, but measuring student improvement put every school on the same level.

"I believe there will be difficulties in the early days and there may be mistakes -- we don't know," he said.

"But I think we can become educated over time, become more spirited and discerning users of data in ways that don't need us to make inappropriate choices and damn schools that are doing a good job but are serving more disadvantaged communities."

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,26051910-26040,00.html>

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## **Parents Support Ban on League Tables**

*Australian Education Union, 14 September 2009*

Almost two thirds of parents with children at school want the Federal Government to pass new laws preventing the creation of damaging league tables that rank schools based on raw test scores, a new national poll has found.

Australian Education Union Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos said 63 per cent of parents with school age children said the government should pass laws and 30 per cent said they should not. A clear majority of all respondents in the telephone poll of 1,000 people also supported new laws (59 per cent in favour, 34 per cent against).

"Parents understand that naming and shaming schools in league tables is damaging to students and school communities and therefore must be prevented," Mr Gavrielatos said.

"Already people can access a wealth of information about school performance. What must be stopped is the misuse of national test scores to publicly rank schools in league tables."

Read more at <http://www.aefederal.org.au/Media/MediaReleases/2009/1409.pdf>

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## **TEACHER EDUCATION**

### **Teach for Australia to kick off**

*John Masanauskas, Herald Sun, September 09, 2009*

A PLAN to fast-track bright young graduates into teaching will go ahead amid resistance from education unions.

About 50 so-called associates will be sent to disadvantaged metropolitan and rural schools throughout Victoria from next year.

Based on similar schemes in the US and UK, the Teach for Australia program involves graduates undergoing a six-week intensive teaching course and two years of further study while working in schools.

They will be paid about \$45,000 a year.

Read more at <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/teach-for-australia-to-kick-off/story-e6frf716-1225770792596>

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## **A residency approach to teacher education**

*Tim McDonald, Curriculum Leadership, 11 September 2009*

Next year the School of Education at Edith Cowan University (ECU) will pilot a Teacher Residency Program for graduate teacher education students, as an innovative means to recruit, prepare and retain quality teachers.

The Teacher Residency Program is based on a medical model that pairs university coursework with extended periods of school placement or 'clinical' experience. As such it aligns with the Western Australian Department of Education and Training's (DET) move toward the development of Training Schools, as partnerships between systems, schools and universities.

The pilot will be supported by \$930,000 in funding from the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

There has been much public concern about the quality of teacher education in Australia. The 2007 Top of the Class report notes that there have been 101 reviews into teacher education since 1979.

While these reviews highlight the importance of teacher education to the community and economy, they also document the declining numbers entering teaching and the scepticism of many practising teachers regarding the impact of their own teacher education experience.

The Teacher Residency Program is a response to these challenges, designed to appeal to prospective teachers and to help overcome the shortfall in teacher numbers widely predicted to emerge over the next few years.

Read more at <http://cmslive.curriculum.edu.au/leader/default.asp?id=28745&issueID=11915>

*Associate Professor Tim McDonald is Director of the Teacher Residency Program at Edith Cowan University.*

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## **OPINION**

### **Prepared Remarks**

*President Barack Obama, Arlington, USA, September 8, 2009*

Now I've given a lot of speeches about education. And I've talked a lot about responsibility.

I've talked about your teachers' responsibility for inspiring you, and pushing you to learn.

I've talked about your parents' responsibility for making sure you stay on track, and get your homework done, and don't spend every waking hour in front of the TV or with that Xbox.

I've talked a lot about your government's responsibility for setting high standards, supporting teachers and principals, and turning around schools that aren't working where students aren't getting the opportunities they deserve.

But at the end of the day, we can have the most dedicated teachers, the most supportive parents, and the best schools in the world – and none of it will matter unless all of you fulfill your responsibilities. Unless you show up to those schools; pay attention to those teachers; listen to your parents, grandparents and other adults; and put in the hard work it takes to succeed.

And that's what I want to focus on today: the responsibility each of you has for your education. I want to start with the responsibility you have to yourself.

Read more at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/MediaResources/PreparedSchoolRemarks/>

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### **Mimicry offers outsiders inside running at power**

*Tanveer Ahmed, Sydney Morning Herald, 14 September 2009*

As someone who attended an elite private school, I have long heard the accusation that such schools are the home of the privileged, and as a consequence, offer a narrow social education. I realised this was true whenever I returned home to mix with the children of working-class families or newly arrived immigrants.

Members of the Great Public Schools, in particular, foster what sections of the establishment in many former British colonies do - being "more English than the English". The sight of children of Chinese or Indian backgrounds taking part in a regatta, singing hymns or baking scones for the tea break of a school cricket match was common.

But increasingly in Sydney, the schools with the narrowest social and ethnic student bodies are the selective public schools.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/mimicry-offers-outsiders-inside-running-at-power-20090913-fm4u.html>

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### **Public priority**

*Angelo Gavrielatos, AEU Federal President, Australian Educator, Spring 2009*

The federal government's review of school funding—that starts next year—will determine the system and levels of schools funding for years to come.

It is one of the most important chapters in the history of school funding in Australia.

It provides the opportunity for the federal government to get rid of the Howard government's discredited funding regime and fulfil its primary obligation to properly and adequately fund government schools.

Unsurprisingly, opponents of public education are seeking to resurrect funding proposals aimed at further undermining the right of parents and students to a public school of the highest quality in their local community.

Read more at <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/AE/Spr09p06.pdf>

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## RESEARCH

### OECD Education at a Glance Report

*The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 8 September, 2009*

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today welcomed the release of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) 2009 Education at a Glance report.

The report shows that there is a desperate need for an Education Revolution in this nation following more than a decade of neglect under the previous Liberal government.

The OECD Education at a Glance report shows that in the past we have invested too little in rewarding quality teaching, too little in the basics of literacy and numeracy, too little in higher education and far too little in early childhood education.

The OECD report is an annual publication that compares the education systems of all 30 countries which are members of the OECD and six partner countries through the analysis of quantitative internationally comparable indicators.

Read more at [http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article\\_090909\\_085539.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090909_085539.aspx)

Read highlights of the report at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/35/11/43619343.pdf>

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### Developing successful learners in the technologies in primary schools

*HM Inspectorate of Education, Scotland, September 2009*

This report is the outcome of a task which focused on attainment in the technologies in primary schools.

Inspectors visited a sample of primary schools across Scottish education authorities in 2008.

The sample classes included children at the early, middle and upper stages. Schools reported that they had benefited from the constructive oral feedback and pointers for improvement during the visits.

In the primary school, the technologies span a broad area of study that covers technological developments in society, science, ICT to enhance learning, business, computing science, food and textiles, and craft, design, engineering and graphics.

Read more at <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/Technologies.pdf>

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## **BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION**

### **Issues with BER**

*Radio Interview, ABC 702, 10 September 2009*

JULIA GILLARD: What I would say to people at local schools, to teachers, to parents if they have any concerns is we are obviously keen to work with people to resolve problems, but if I can just get into the conversation of how big this is.

There are around 9,500 schools in all parts of the country – cities, tiny little country towns. We are engaged in rolling out more than 24,000 projects in those 9,500 schools and in any human endeavour, whether it's broadcasting a radio show or whether it's doing something as big as that, it is inevitable that there will be challenges and bumps and problems.

And when that happens, people are asked in the first instance to work with their education authority, so a state school would work with its state department, a Catholic school with its Catholic education office and so on. If they can't resolve the problems at that level, then we have a dedicated email address that people can log a concern and we will work our way through it.

A program this size - 9,500 schools, more than 24,000 projects - yesterday I got the tally of how many complaints we've had all up for the whole program and it was 49.

Read more at

[http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Transcripts/Pages/Article\\_090910\\_100551.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Transcripts/Pages/Article_090910_100551.aspx)

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### **Always Someone Else's Fault**

*The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, Shadow Minister for Education, 14 September 2009*

Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard has again failed to address serious concerns raised by the Opposition in Question Time today about waste and mismanagement in her portfolio, according to Shadow Education Minister Christopher Pyne.

"For five days in a row and for some months now the Opposition has raised serious concerns with Minister Gillard's schools stimulus debacle, and for five days in a row she has refused to respond to our concerns," said Mr Pyne.

"Our concerns are shared by school communities across Australia, who have brought a legion of examples of Government waste to our attention.

"Our concerns are shared by the Auditor General, who is conducting a full investigation into the program.

"And our concerns are shared by the Australian Education Union, education academics, media representatives and scores of country tradies and builders who have missed out on contracts in favour of city based firms."

Read more at <http://www.liberal.org.au/news.php?id=3784>

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## FUNDING

### All eyes on funding review

*Steve Packer, Australian Educator, Spring 2009*

The Rudd government has a universal obligation to adequately fund the provision of quality public schools in every community and for all children, says Julius Roe, national president of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union.

The AMWU sees public school education in the same light as postschool education for adult workers, he says.

Roe has had a leadership role in vocational skills and training for more than 20 years, including as a member of the Australian National Training Authority board and the National Training Quality Council.

"It is a fundamental issue of democracy and an essential precondition for the development of a more equitable and just society," he says. "Australia can't participate in what is loosely called the knowledge economy, and it can't have a high productivity future, if it doesn't address the fundamental issues around education."

Read more at <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/AE/Spr09pp04-05.pdf>

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### Teachers say private schools get too much

*Lauren Novak, Adelaide Advertiser, 14 September 2009*

FEDERAL funding to some private schools will increase by almost 40 per cent despite low enrolments, prompting calls from the teachers' union to overhaul the way it is allocated.

The Australian Education Union claims private schools are given too much federal money at the expense of public schools, under the current funding model.

Figures provided by the AEU show Commonwealth funding to one Adelaide private school is

projected to increase by 35.9 per cent by 2012, despite a predicted increase in enrolments of just four students over the same period.

A recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report reveals Australia is one of the lowest spenders on public education in the world but directs the second-highest amount to private schools.

Belgium and Britain are the only countries to spend less on public education than Australia, out of 28 countries, while Belgium was the only country to spend more than Australia on private education.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,22606,26073186-2682,00.html>

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## **DIGITAL EDUCATION REVOLUTION**

### **Too boring: girls miss the IT boat**

*Ashleigh Dollin, Brisbane Times, 14 September 2009*

As new media technologies continue to intertwine into our everyday lives and careers, there are fears girls are being left behind, with many finding computer subjects boring or irrelevant.

A study of attitudes to technology and career skills conducted by the Victorian Government in 2001 showed that 36 per cent of girls, compared with 16 per cent of boys, found information and communication technologies boring.

Almost 10 years later, little has changed, believes the educator Dannielle Miller. She says she has picked up on an alarming trend during her work with girls in primary and high schools across Australia and New Zealand, dealing with things like self-esteem and body confidence.

Miller, the chief executive of Enlighten Education, a company she helped found to foster education and self-esteem among young girls, says a big proportion of future job opportunities will be involved in the IT field.

Read more at <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/technology/too-boring-girls-miss-the-it-boat-20090913-fma7.html>

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## **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

### **NT dunces for spelling and maths**

*Sara Everingham, ABC Radio AM, 12 September 2009*

**SARA EVERINGHAM:** The Northern Territory and Federal Governments say they're committed to closing the gap for Indigenous students. The results of the national literacy and numeracy tests show just how wide that gap is.

The head of the Northern Territory Education Department, Gary Barns, says this year's results provide a good snapshot of how the Territory's students are performing.

**GARY BARNES:** Students in our most very remote areas, right through to students in Darwin and Palmerston have participated in vast numbers. That really allows us for the first time to get baseline data that we can truly see as reliable.

SARA EVERINGHAM: Overall, the report card from the tests is good; 90 per cent of nation's students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 who sat the tests met the minimum standards.

But for Indigenous students in very remote schools in the Northern Territory, it's the opposite result. Figures show more than 90 per cent in Year 9 fell below the national minimum standard for writing.

Read more at <http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2009/s2683993.htm>

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## **Inaction means we must say sorry again**

*Christopher Bantick, The Australian, 12 September 2009*

We are shamed by failure to follow up on the apology to Aboriginal Australia

FORTY-five years ago I sat cross-legged in a Melbourne school playground. We had assembled to hear a visiting speaker. A man appeared wearing a white laboratory coat. He spoke to us, as we squirmed on hot asphalt, of the plight of Aboriginal children.

There were no Aboriginal children at the school. Most city children had never seen one so the man held up photographs and spoke about ear and eye disease.

Fast forward to 2009. I now have a 16-year-old son. The problems with Aboriginal health, education and housing today are precisely the same.

What is plain is that Australian governments have failed repeatedly to address the abject poverty, Third-World health, education and housing standards that characterise many remote Aboriginal communities.

I have no answer when my son asks me why this hasn't been fixed.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,26056206-7583,00.html>

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## **INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION**

### **Good Practice Guide to assist international colleges**

*The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 14 September, 2009*

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today said that details of the best performing international college providers will be made available so that all colleges can learn from best practice.

Ms Gillard was speaking at the opening of the two-day International Student Roundtable which began at Parliament House in Canberra this morning.

The Roundtable will give 31 International Students studying around Australia an opportunity to bring their concerns directly to the attention of the Government. Students will meet with Ministers, receive briefings and work together to provide suggestions to the Government on international student issues.

At the end of the conference the students will present a communiqué outlining the next steps. A number of representatives from the Roundtable will then present the findings to the Ministerial

Council on Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE) at its first meeting later this month.

Read more at

[http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article\\_090914\\_161619.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090914_161619.aspx)

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## **Greens call for Education Commission**

*Sarah Hanson-Young, 14 September 2009*

Greens Senator Sarah Hanson-Young has reiterated the Greens' call for an independent Education Commission to be established, as the Federal Government is forced to face up to the realities of the international education sector this week.

A roundtable of 31 international students, handpicked from 1300 applicants, is being convened by Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard in Canberra today and tomorrow. Meanwhile, the Greens-established Senate Inquiry into the welfare of international students continues.

"An independent Education Commission is needed to safeguard the quality and integrity of Australia's education sector, for both domestic students and those from overseas," said Senator Hanson-Young, Greens spokesperson for Education.

Read more at <http://greensmps.org.au/content/media-release/greens-call-education-commission-govt-faces-international-student-realities>

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## **Government welcomes Roundtable results**

*The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 15 September, 2009*

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today thanked the 31 international students who have participated in the two-day Roundtable at Parliament House and said she looks forward to their representatives accompanying her to the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE) later this month.

Ms Gillard acknowledged the students' hard work and thoughtful response to the issues facing international students. The various levels of government will now consider the actions suggested by the students.

The Roundtable assessed the challenges facing International Students and their experience in Australia, including pre-arrival information and visas, the quality of education, access to services, social integration, fair treatment and the cost of education.

The students recommended a number of actions, in particular the establishment of International Student Information Centres as one-stop shops for international students to access services vital to their education and welfare while in Australia.

Read more at

[http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article\\_090915\\_185042.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090915_185042.aspx)

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## **CENSORSHIP IN SCHOOLS**

## 'Racy' Twilight books banned from primary schools

*Lauren Dickson, The Daily Telegraph, September 12, 2009*

PRIMARY school students have been banned from reading the teen cult classic Twilight books because they are too racy.

Librarians have stripped the books from shelves in some junior schools because they believe the content is too sexual and goes against religious beliefs, The Daily Telegraph reports.

They even have asked parents not to let kids bring their own copies of Stephenie Meyer's smash hit novels - which explore the stormy love affair between a teenage girl and a vampire - to school.

Santa Sabina College at Strathfield was so concerned about the Twilight craze that teachers ran a seminar for Year 6 students to discuss sexual and supernatural themes in the books.

The school's head librarian Helen Schutz said: "We don't have a policy of censorship but the issues in the Twilight series are quite different from the Harry Potter classics.

"It is not available in our junior library for these reasons."

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,26062002-421,00.html>

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## AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES

### NSW: NSW Students Leading the Nation

*Nathan Rees, Premier, 11 September 2009*

Premier Nathan Rees today welcomed the latest national test results which confirm NSW students lead the nation in spelling, writing and numeracy.

The Premier congratulated school teachers and students across the State on their outstanding results in the 2009 national literacy and numeracy tests (NAPLAN).

"NSW students, teachers, principals and parents should feel proud of these strong results, with students performing well above the national average," Mr Rees said.

"This is proof we have a strong curriculum focused on literacy and numeracy and students benefit from a world class education.

"These results would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of teachers and principals in more than 3,000 schools across the state.

Read more at

<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/aboutus/ministerial/yr2009/sep/testresults.pdf>

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## **NSW: Schools let down: Constance**

*Bega District News, 11 September 2009*

MEMBER for Bega Andrew Constance has labelled the NSW Minister for Education Verity Firth "incompetent" for failing to meet with representatives of the Bega and Bega West Public School communities to discuss merger plans.

"I have now requested on a number of occasions for the past two months a meeting between the minister and representatives from the school communities to discuss the need for her to approve the merging of the two schools," he said.

"As the State Member it disappoints me that the scandal plagued government has become so paralysed that ministers cannot even meet the most basic of duties such as meeting with school communities on a critical issue like this.

"The government has lost the plot and this is a clear example of how they are failing to govern for the people of NSW.

Mr Constance said the government was putting factional and political self interest above and beyond the interests of school children.

Read more at <http://www.begadistrictnews.com.au/news/local/news/general/schools-let-down-constance/1621010.aspx?src=rss>

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## **NT: 2009 NT Training Awards**

*Paul Henderson, Minister for Employment, Education and Training, 12 September 2009*

The Northern Territory's best students and training organisations have been honoured in the 2009 NT Training Awards.

The Education and Training Minister Paul Henderson attended the awards ceremony at the Darwin Convention Centre this evening.

"A skilled workforce is essential to maintaining economic and social growth in the Territory," Mr Henderson said.

"The Vocational Education and Training sector plays an integral role in skilling and training our workforce, and gives more students the chance to make the most of the opportunities the Territory has to offer."

Read more at <http://newsroom.nt.gov.au/index.cfm?fuseaction=viewRelease&id=6006&d=5>

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## **QLD: Flying squads to diagnose problems in sick schools**

*Australian Teacher Magazine, 8 September 2009*

Queensland's worst performing schools will have their problems diagnosed by flying squads of the state's best educators.

Premier Anna Bligh on Tuesday announced the Turnaround Teams would start work in 300 schools next year.

They would spend about a week in each school, addressing teaching defects that had led to poor performance in national literacy and numeracy tests, as well as behaviour problems and truancy, Ms Bligh said.

The \$9 million initiative comes after the Masters report on the Queensland education system, which lags behind other states in national exams.

Ms Bligh said the schools should show improvement as soon as next year's tests.

Read more at

[http://www.ozteacher.com.au/html/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=319:flyng-squads-to-diagnose-problems-in-sick-schools&catid=16:performance-issues](http://www.ozteacher.com.au/html/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=319:flyng-squads-to-diagnose-problems-in-sick-schools&catid=16:performance-issues)

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### **QLD: Queensland fails education tests**

*Sarah Elks, The Australian, September 11, 2009*

DESPITE hiring an education expert to review Queensland's ailing primary schools, the state has remained close to the bottom of national literacy and numeracy results released this morning.

The Bligh government hired Professor Geoff Masters, of the Australian Council for Education Research, after last year's poor results which saw Queensland placed second-last overall in the national literacy and numeracy tests for Years 3, 5 and 7.

Read more at [http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,,26057954-2702,00.html?from=public\\_rss](http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,,26057954-2702,00.html?from=public_rss)

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### **QLD: 'Flying squad not my idea'**

*Darrell Giles, Courier Mail, September 13 2009*

EDUCATION guru Professor Geoff Masters has denied he was the mastermind behind the State Government's plan for specialist teacher flying squads.

Prof Masters, hired by the Government to help lift poor literacy and numeracy levels in Queensland schools, said he did not recommend the "Turnaround Teams" in his report, despite government claims to the contrary.

Premier Anna Bligh said the team of highly-trained teachers would go into about 300 schools next year to boost the literacy and numeracy of disadvantaged students.

She said the audits – part of a \$9 million initiative – would "identify gaps in learning or social issues at low performing schools".

A government media release last week quoted Prof Masters, of the Australian Council for Educational Research, as saying the flying squads had the potential to lift achievement levels in state schools.

Read more at [http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,20797,26063482-3102,00.html?from=public\\_rss](http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,20797,26063482-3102,00.html?from=public_rss)

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## **SA: Plan to regulate education and child care**

*Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith and Early Childhood Development Minister Jay Weatherill, September 8 2009*

All providers of education and child care services to young South Australians will be required to comply with new mandated requirements under legislative changes, outlined today.

A new independent authority will have powers to investigate and act on breaches of registration requirements, and will work with schools and services to ensure quality and continuous improvements in the best interests of the State's children.

Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith and Early Childhood Development Minister Jay Weatherill today announced the Rann Government's plan for a new system of regulation.

Currently, all State schools, Out of School Hours Care, preschools, crèches and occasional care services are not required under legislation to be formally regulated.

Read more at <http://www.premier.sa.gov.au/news.php?id=5322>

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## **SA: Major literacy drive in SA schools**

*Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith, September 11 2009*

A new Literacy Secretariat will spearhead the State's biggest ever push to improve the literacy achievements of South Australia's school children.

Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith says the secretariat brings together literacy expertise from across the State education department to focus on literacy improvement.

The State and Federal Labor Governments are investing more than \$105m to make literacy, mathematics and science the top three priorities for all South Australian public primary schools.

Dr Lomax-Smith today outlined the literacy initiative to coincide with the nation-wide release of the national literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN) test results.

The 80,000 South Australian students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 generally ranked fourth in Australia in terms of the number of students at or above the national minimum standard.

Read more at <http://www.premier.sa.gov.au/news.php?id=5354>

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## **TAS: Tasmania keeping pace on literacy and numeracy**

*Lisa Singh MP, Acting Minister for Education, 11 September 2009*

The 2009 national literacy and numeracy test results released today show Tasmania is keeping pace with other states.

Acting Minister for Education and Skills, Lisa Singh, said that overall the results showed Tasmania is performing in the middle of the pack, compared with other states and territories.

"We are performing well in some age groups, but there is still room for improvement," Ms Singh said.

"We don't expect overnight changes and our results have remained stable in all but two measures.

"We have significantly improved in Year 5 reading compared with 2008.

"Our Year 7 results are disappointing and are an area for future focus, especially in reading and numeracy."

Read more at <http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=27800>

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## **TAS: Tenders for Science Centre and Gymnasium at Bridgewater**

*Lisa Singh MP, Acting Minister for Education and Skills, 13 September 2009*

Tenders are being called for the construction of a new science centre and a new gymnasium for students at Bridgewater.

Acting Minister for Education and Skills, Lisa Singh said the new buildings, would form part of the new Bridgewater and Southern Midlands Learning Federation as announced last year.

"The Learning Federation is a significant and innovative program that aims to increase education and training opportunities for everyone in the Bridgewater area from babies through to adults," Ms Singh said.

"It will include three kindergarten to grade 4 sites, a redeveloped grades 5 to 8 site, a new facility for grades 9 to 12 and adult learning, a Trade Training Centre, a Children and Family Centre and a Learning and Information Network Centre.

Read more at <http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=27816>

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## **VIC: Top University Graduates to Teach Our Future**

*Education Minister Bronwyn Pike, 9 September 2009*

Around 600 bright young university graduates have applied to teach in educationally disadvantaged schools under the first ever Teach For Australia recruitment program.

The Education Minister, Bronwyn Pike, today announced a milestone deadline for the inaugural program being run by non-profit organisation Teach For Australia. The final round of applications for the Teach For Australia program for 2010 closes on the 18th September.

"The Brumby Labor Government is thrilled to receive applications from all over Australia in response to this program," Ms Pike said.

"The program will take up to 75 high-calibre graduates and send them into Victorian schools over the next two years."

"Victoria is very proud to be leading the nation in being the first to offer this program. "

Read more at <http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/minister-for-education/top-university-graduates-to-teach-our-future.html>

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## **VIC: Breaking Down Barriers in Victorian Schools**

*Community Services Minister Lisa Neville and Education Minister Bronwyn Pike, 10 September 2009*

Schools across Victoria will be even more welcoming to people with a disability thanks to a new Brumby Labor Government resource kit launched today.

Community Services Minister Lisa Neville and Education Minister Bronwyn Pike launched the Bar None Community Awareness Kit at North Melbourne Primary School today. The kit aims to assist in breaking down any fears or barriers towards people with a disability.

Ms Neville said the Brumby Labor Government was standing up for people with a disability by breaking down barriers whether they be physical, mental or attitudinal.

"We are working in partnership with the community to support stronger families," Ms Neville said.

"More than 90 per cent of Victorian Government school communities include students with a disability and this resource kit will provide practical measures to assist teachers in welcoming and better supporting students to their school community."

Read more at <http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/minister-for-education/breaking-down-barriers-in-victorian-schools.html>

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## **VIC: Victorian Students Top of the Class in National Test**

*Education Minister Bronwyn Pike, 11 September 2009*

Education Minister Bronwyn Pike today announced new national data which shows Victorian students are at the top of the class in literacy and numeracy for the second year running.

Ms Pike revealed that Victoria ranked among the highest performing states and territories in the second annual National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests.

"These new results confirm the Brumby Labor Government's initiatives to improve literacy and numeracy are generating real results," Ms Pike said.

"We agree with parents that nothing is more important than their children's education. That is why our government has invested more than \$80 million in schools with dedicated literacy specialists and maths and science coaches to ensure that every student is given every opportunity to reach their full potential, and clearly initiatives such as these are working."

Read more at <http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/minister-for-education/victorian-students-top-of-the-class-in-national-test.html>

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## **WA: Big show of support for Independent Public Schools**

*Education Minister Liz Constable, 8 September 2009*

The Liberal-National Government's move to empower schools through the creation of

Independent Public Schools has received strong support, with 102 school communities across Western Australia putting their hands up to be considered for independence.

Education Minister Liz Constable said schools from across the State had expressed interest in having greater autonomy and flexibility to set their own direction.

"Giving greater autonomy to public schools was a key platform on which the Government was elected almost 12 months ago, and this initiative is now on its way to helping shape public education in WA for the future," Dr Constable said.

"Schools have been looking forward to this opportunity for many years and I am very pleased that they and their communities have responded so quickly and decisively."

Read more at

<http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Lists/Statements/DispForm.aspx?ID=132455>

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## **WA: Positive results for WA students in national literacy and numeracy tests**

*Education Minister Liz Constable, 11 September 2009*

Results of the 2009 national literacy and numeracy tests released today showed Western Australian students improved in 18 of the 20 assessments.

Education Minister Liz Constable said she was pleased with the results of the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests but there was still significant work to be done.

"It is really pleasing to see that, since the first tests last year, WA's results improved in 18 of the 20 NAPLAN assessments and our students held their ground in one of the two remaining tests," Dr Constable said.

"While these results are encouraging and show the gap between the States is closing, we must strive for continued improvement in literacy and numeracy."

Read more at

<http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Lists/Statements/DispForm.aspx?ID=132472>

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## **WA: Call to overhaul education system**

*ABC News, 11 September 2009*

Western Australia's peak business lobby has released a discussion paper calling for an overhaul of the state's education system.

The paper by the WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry calls for children to be tested before they start child care and for international rather than national benchmark testing in later years.

It also recommends teaching graduates undergo literacy and numeracy tests.

The Chamber's Chief Executive James Pearson says it is vital WA students are equipped to get jobs on projects including the 50 billion dollar Gorgon gas development on Barrow Island off Western Australia's north west coast.

"We have to make sure that our kids are ready and able to compete for the best jobs going in the state," he said.

Read more at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/09/11/2683619.htm?section=business>

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## **CONFERENCES & EVENTS**

### **AEV Annual Conference 2009: Why Asia?**

*23-24 October 2009, South Oakleigh Secondary College, Melbourne, VIC*

Art Education Victoria in collaboration with the Asia Education Foundation and the support of the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development invites you to the AEV Annual Conference 2009 Why Asia?

Be energised and inspired by the Visual Arts of, or influenced by, Asia. Explore rich and diverse contemporary and traditional cultures.

This conference will provide inspirations and approaches to the visual arts of Asia. Teachers will have the opportunity to develop understandings of Asia and the contexts within which art is made.

- Hear from artists influenced by Asian art practice as well as artists from Asia.
- Experience hands-on practical workshops, watch demonstrations and listen to presentations about the visual arts of Asia.
- Engage with teachers and schools involved with studies of Asia.
- Explore resources and materials available for teachers.

Teachers will leave this conference with confidence, ideas, understandings, approaches and inspiration to incorporate the visual arts of Asia into their teaching programs.

Read more at <http://www.aev.vic.edu.au/pd/conference/2009/index.html>

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### **Going Global 4**

*24-26 March 2010, Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London, UK*

Going Global conferences attracted over 1000 delegates from more than 70 countries, making it the largest international education conference in the UK.

We recommend attendance from across all education sectors, government, corporations, representative bodies, NGOs, development assistance organisations and media.

Our conferences provide the opportunity for delegates to debate the drivers and motivations for international education, at both national and institutional level.

They consider how strategic approaches at both levels might integrate, and how they might support elements such as research, curriculum development, teaching, the student experience and staff development.

The conference also provides great networking opportunities.

Read more at <http://www.britishcouncil.org/goingglobal.htm>

## REMINDERS

16-18 September - [flexible.learning@schools](mailto:flexible.learning@schools) - Adelaide, SA - <http://www.plevin.com.au/aades2009/>

26-27 September - NSW Computer Education Group State Conference - Stanhope Gardens, NSW - <http://www.nswceg.org.au/>

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

29-30 September - Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity - Wollongong, NSW - [http://www.uow.edu.au/conferences/4APCEI\\_2009/home.html](http://www.uow.edu.au/conferences/4APCEI_2009/home.html)

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

6 October - Ed Directions - Sydney, NSW - <http://south09.webdirections.org/workshops#ed-directions>

11-17 October - Anti-Poverty Week - <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au/>

12-13 October - ACSO National Conference - Hobart, TAS - <http://www.acso.org.au/natconf09/>

20 October - Symposium: Building school partnerships with commerce & industry - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.spheresofinfluence.com.au/>

24-25 October - Asian Conference on Education - Osaka, Japan - <http://ace.iafor.org/>

9 November - Innovation in Education One-Day Conference - London, UK - <http://www.guardian.co.uk/innovation-education>

9-12 November - London International Conference on Education - London, UK - <http://www.liceducation.org/>

18-21 November - NAEYC Annual Conference & Expo - Washington DC, USA <http://www.naeyc.org/conference/>

24-26 November - Family Relationship Services Australia National Conference - Sydney, NSW - <http://www.frsa.org.au/site/>

25-27 November - International Conference on Primary Education 2009 - Hong Kong - <http://www.ied.edu.hk/primaryed/>

9-10 April - National Coalition against Bullying Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.amf.org.au/NCABConference/>

4-7 July - National Conference for Teachers of English & Literacy - Perth, WA - <http://www.englishliteracyconference.com.au/index.php?id=46&year=10>



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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/news/> (monthly)
- Public Education Voice : <http://www.acsso.org.au/pev.htm> (quarterly)

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Do you know of an event or resource that schools should know about? Email us at [letters@acsso.org.au](mailto: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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