



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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AWARDS & PRIZES

The Australian Awards for Teaching Excellence 2009

The Australian Awards for Teaching Excellence celebrate teaching and its contribution to our nation. They recognise the pivotal role of the teaching profession in delivering high quality education for young Australians.

The Awards honour exceptional teachers, including teacher leaders and beginning teachers, principals and support staff who work creatively and tirelessly to make a difference to the lives and opportunities of young people.

Members of the school and its wider community, including colleagues, students and parents, nominate people they know who make an outstanding contribution to their school and outcomes for students.

Read the speech by Gregor Ramsey, Chair of Teaching Australia: <http://www.acsso.org.au/ed091029.pdf>

Details and citations of award recipients: <http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go/home/op/edit/pid/651>

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ASG'S National Excellence in Teaching Awards 2009

NEiTA (National Excellence in Teaching Awards) and the Australian Scholarships Group have announced the names of the 60 Australian teachers to receive NEiTA 2009 ASG Inspirational Teaching State and Territory Awards. Of these 60 teachers, 80 per cent teach within government early childhood centres or schools, 12 per cent within independent, and eight per cent teach within Catholic education environments.

NEiTA's Chairman, Mr Terry O'Connell congratulated all the award recipients who were nominated for the awards by the real consumers of education – parents, schools and early childhood communities.

"These teachers have made a vital contribution to their communities through their teaching. They often give much of their personal time to help ensure their students receive every opportunity to experience the gift of learning and knowledge in stimulating and welcoming environments.

"The NEiTA teaching awards program offers communities a way of showing their heart-felt thanks and appreciation for those special teachers who make a profound impact on their students, parents, wider communities, and their profession."

Full details of all award recipients:

<http://www.neita.com.au/index.asp?menu1=aus2&menu2=3&content1=regionals09.htm>

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Global competition honors 14 teachers.

Money.com, 6 November 2009

After three days of seminars, teacher exhibitions and judging by an internationally renowned panel of education experts, today Microsoft Partners in Learning announced the winners of the 2009 Worldwide Innovative Teacher Awards at the Worldwide Innovative Education Forum.

Partners in Learning recognizes and rewards teachers who demonstrate exemplary use of technology in the classroom to improve student learning. The 14 winning teachers -- awarded first, second and third place in four categories -- were chosen from among the 250 at the Forum representing more than 60 countries.

The Best Practice winners in the four main competition categories are Mandeep Atwal of England, Innovation in Community; Mark Sparvell of Australia, Innovation in Collaboration; Autumn Streeval and Harriet Armstrong of the United States, Innovation in Content; and Moliehi Sekese of Lesotho, Educators Choice.

The 2009 Worldwide IEF award ceremony, held tonight in Salvador, Brazil, was attended by 400 educators, school leaders, government officials and others from more than 60 countries.

Read more at

http://money.cnn.com/news/newsfeeds/articles/prnewswire/200911062245PR_NEWS_USPR_SF07329.htm

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MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

New Reforms In Australia To Improve Quality Of Education

Government Monitor, 8th November 2009

Meeting today in Adelaide, Ministers have agreed to take forward reforms that will provide better information to governments, parents and the wider community; improve the quality of early childhood, school and Indigenous education; and contribute to the development, wellbeing and educational outcomes of all Australia's young people from their earliest age.

Ministers today agreed on a draft Indigenous Education Action Plan that will be circulated first to Indigenous education leaders and Indigenous education consultative committees. The draft plan will then be released publicly for further consultation. The Action Plan will guide the national effort towards closing the gaps in early childhood and school education outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

Ministers considered the preliminary results from the 2009 Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) data collection. The AEDI is a population measure designed to provide community-level data to help communities and governments understand how children are developing by the time they reach school. Ministers were pleased with the progress made by all jurisdictions on the reform of early childhood education and care through the National Quality Agenda.

Ministers today also agreed to the location and Chair of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership. The AITSL will be located in Brisbane and Melbourne, following a joint proposal by Victoria and Queensland to co-host a national institute dedicated to achieving new levels of excellence in teaching standards and in support of effective

school leadership. Its Chair, nominated by the Deputy Prime Minister and agreed by Education Ministers, will be Tony Mackay, Executive Director of the Centre for Strategic Education and currently Deputy Chair of ACARA.

Read more at http://thegovmonitor.com/education_and_skills/new-reforms-in-australia-to-improve-quality-of-education-14264.html

Read more about the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs at <http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/>

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SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Leading 21st Century Schools: Engage with Asia Program (Round 2)

Applications close on Friday 20 November 2009.

Applications for Round 2 of the Leading 21st Century Schools: Engage with Asia (L21CS) Program are now open to principals, deputy/vice principals and heads of schools.

Based on the successful 2008-09 L21CS program, Principals Australia, in partnership with the Asia Education Foundation, is conducting Round 2 from February to June 2010. The Program builds school leaders' capacity to equip and empower their students for informed and active participation in the 21st century where Asia plays a central role.

This Program is being conducted in all states and territories except Victoria and is comprised of 3 Stages: an initial professional learning workshop; a school-based implementation phase; and a final sharing of practice session.

Read more at http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/for_school_leaders/for_school_leaders.html

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COMPARING SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Report cards on Victorian schools a first

Miki Perkins, The Age, November 6, 2009

EVERY Victorian school will have its performance data published on a new website, allowing parents to compare information on national testing results, VCE results and student wellbeing with other schools.

The progress reports, the first of their kind in Australia, will provide data about a school's socio-economic profile, student attendance rates and parent satisfaction surveys.

But the data does not include the funding available to schools through fee income or fund-raising revenue, raising concerns they will not offer a true measure of the impact of wealth on school performance.

Education Minister Bronwyn Pike said this was irrelevant in the Government system - where students receive the same amount of money - and that independent schools were required to publish details of their funding in annual reports.

"We are working with the non-government schools about the issues around financial data, and it's my view we should be in a position where those things are comparable," Ms Pike said.

Victorian Government school summaries will be available online to school principals from today, and to the public in late November. The Government will release data from private schools in January.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/report-cards-on-victorian-schools-a-first-20091105-i08j.html>

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School reports welcome but room for improvement

Editorial, The Age, November 9, 2009

WHAT is a good or bad school report?

It's a deceptively simple question. Just as parents interpret reports on a student's performance in the knowledge of their child's ability and work rate, help received and hurdles encountered, reports on every Victorian school's performance require a context to be meaningful.

The state is the first to publish such progress reports and, to its credit, aims to avoid simplistic "league tables" based on raw literacy and numeracy test results.

The Victorian approach is an improvement on national "report cards". State-published online data will allow parents to compare national test results, VCE results and measures of student wellbeing and parent satisfaction.

Critically, schools' socio-economic profiles, which affect results, will be included. The missing context is school resources.

Education Minister Bronwyn Pike argues that this is irrelevant for state schools, since all students are funded equally. However, not all school communities are equal, so schools' needs vary.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/editorial/school-reports-welcome-but-room-for-improvement-20091108-i3gw.html>

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League Tables Campaign

Australian Education Union, 10 November 2009

League tables which rank schools based on raw test scores are bad for students, schools and education.

Naming and shaming schools that don't get high marks in the tests is devastating for those school communities and makes it much harder for students and teachers.

That is why teachers, parents and principals are calling for urgent action to stop the creation of league tables in Australia.

We need the Federal Government to act before every schools' results in national tests are made public on a new website at the end of 2009.

That information is not protected and media organisations looking to make a profit will be able to take the test results and create league tables in which schools are named and shamed.

Read more at <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/LT/index2.html>

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OPINION

Reformed to the hilt:

Doubts about New York's educational reforms as the desirable or inevitable future

Chris Bonnor, 5 November 2009

SCRATCH any would-be education reformer among our political leaders and you'll find someone who is easily excited by student test results.

If the numbers go up then they prove the effectiveness of this or that innovation. If they go down then teachers aren't making the effort or are accepting excuses for poor performance. And if one set of test results doesn't provide the evidence you want, just search for another.

The stakes are always high where tests like these are involved, and also at stake are the reputations of education-reformer politicians.

Nowhere is this more obvious than in New York, where optimistic and ever-improving results in the state's own tests have been increasingly contradicted by national test results for the same students. The New York Times reported on the latest figures last month, and the tabloid media – which has generally supported reforms driven by the current mayor, Michael Bloomberg – is starting to echo the doubts.

Australia's deputy prime minister, Julia Gillard, has visited New York several times, and she has always come home – in the style of Bernard Shaw after his 1930s visits to the Soviet Union – proclaiming that she has seen the future.

She is particularly enamoured of the New York City's schools chancellor, Joel Klein, and recently joined a forum at the invitation of none other than Jeb Bush, former governor of Florida, to discuss education reform.

A few months ago I visited some schools in New York City, where I found a school system too big and complex to boil down to a few sentences. It has been through pendulum swings, from central to local control in the 1970s, and back to central control in this decade under Mayor Bloomberg, aided by Klein and his education department.

There has always been a diversity of schools – and now even more so, with many of the larger schools broken up into smaller schools with identities built around specific programs.

But there are critical elements of the education system in NYC that just don't seem to stack up, leaving many educators flummoxed by the efforts of Julia Gillard to import much of it into Australia.

Read entire article: <http://inside.org.au/reformed-to-the-hilt/>

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OPINION

Rudd Labor wants schools to implement its cultural-left political and social agenda

Kevin Donnelly, Australian Conservative, November 8 2009

WHILE there is much to celebrate and to support about Australia's education system, there is much that still needs to be done to strengthen schools and to ensure all young Australians have the enriching and rigorous educational experience they deserve.

One way forward, epitomised by Kevin Rudd's education revolution, is to increase government control over schools, for example, by forcing schools to accept the government's policies and programs by linking implementation to continued funding.

Rudd's agenda is also very much about micro-management and defining educational success in terms of measurable outcomes.

The danger in imposing a centralised, one-size-fits-all approach is that if the politicians, bureaucrats and so-called education experts get it wrong, then all schools will suffer.

Much of the ALP's educational agenda is based on the need to increase productivity, make Australia more globally competitive and to prepare citizens for an ever-changing, information and communications technology-rich and uncertain world.

Such a view of education is narrow and utilitarian.

Read more at <http://australianconservative.com/main-site/2009/11/rudd-labor-wants-schools-to-implement-its-cultural-left-political-and-social-agenda/>

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BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION

School buildings on track to meet deadline

Justine Ferrari, the Australian, 4 November 2009

MOST school infrastructure projects are expected to meet the original deadline of March 2011 despite the federal government offering schools a 12-month extension to complete their buildings.

In the mid-year economic forecast released on Monday, the government announced more flexible deadlines for the Building the Education Revolution, which could allow up to \$500 million to be spent 12 months later, extending the effect of the economic stimulus package.

The BER, worth \$16 billion, was the biggest plank of the stimulus package, with \$14bn allocated to primary schools to build halls, libraries and classrooms.

The government said the extension was expected to mostly affect schools granted money in the final round of funding for primary schools announced in August, worth up to \$3m for each school depending on the number of students enrolled.

Read entire article: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/school-buildings-to-hit-deadline/story-e6frg6no-1225794110401>

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SCIENCE EDUCATION

Science education for global citizenship

David Geelan, Curriculum Leadership, 6 November 2009

Students need an understanding of the nature of science – what it means to make a scientific claim, what evidence is relevant to supporting such a claim and how to critically evaluate that evidence – and of the relationships between science, technology and society.

Such understanding will help science education to pursue its traditional role of training and educating the scientists and engineers of the future. Australia is currently struggling in this area, with fewer students choosing to study science in senior high school and at university.

However, an understanding of the nature of science will also help to prepare students as citizens for many of the biggest issues that Australia will face in the next few decades.

These challenges share two characteristics: firstly, they are global rather than national in scope, and secondly, science is important in finding solutions to them.

Facing issues such as climate change, pollution, pandemics and the management of water and energy, all students need to leave our schools with an understanding of science that prepares them to take an active role in making political decisions for the future.

Read entire article: <http://cmslive.curriculum.edu.au/leader/default.asp?id=28985&issueID=11969>

Dr Geelan is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Queensland's School of Education

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RURAL & REGIONAL EDUCATION

Changes will help the bush

Julia Gillard, the Australian, 29 October 2009

THE Senate is looking closely at the Rudd government's youth allowance changes, as well it should. Any reasonable assessment of the present system would see that valuable government assistance is poorly targeted and has seen a decline in participation at university by students from the bush.

We simply can't continue with a system that has seen a drop in the number of country kids going to university over the past decade.

We can't continue with a system that delivers money to students who are classed as independent but who are actually living at home in households with incomes of \$200,000 or \$300,000 a year.

And we can't continue to punish students and universities by cutting funding, as we saw time and time again by the previous government.

Read entire article: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/opinion-analysis/changes-will-help-the-bush/story-e6frgclo-1225792231190>

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Proposed new funding support for rural students

Guy Healy, the Australian, 4 November 2009

POTENTIAL cross-party support for a special rural students' tertiary access fund has emerged from a Senate report into the government's contentious youth allowance reforms amid concerns the scholarship system is failing students.

The surprise Labor Party support for a new tertiary access fund follows serious declines in the number of rural and regional students attending university, reported by last year's Bradley review.

The inquiry committee, which comprised two ALP senators, three Coalition senators and one Green, recommended the new fund to counter "the inequity of access" suffered by rural and regional students compared with city students.

"Moving to the city to study is costly, disruptive and challenging," the government senators say in their otherwise dissenting report.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/new-relief-for-rural-students/story-e6frgcjx-1225794050302>

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HIGHER EDUCATION

Private providers cry foul over loan fee hike

Andrew Trounson, the Australian, 4 November 2009

THE private higher education industry has slammed the federal government for raising the loan fee paid by private sector undergraduates on their FEE-HELP income contingent loans from 20 per cent to 25 per cent.

"This is a \$42 million slug on top of the existing fee and singles out fee-paying undergraduates enrolling with private providers," Adrian McComb, executive officer of the Council of Private Higher Education, told the HES.

"If this fee was directed at students in public universities there would be outrage," he said.

Mr McComb said the government had gone back on its budget commitment not to raise the fee.

But the government defended the increase as being in line with last year's Bradley review recommendations.

Read entire article: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/private-providers-cry-foul-over-loan-fee-hike/story-e6frgcjx-1225794051617>

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INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

College collapses tarnish Australia's reputation

Yahoo Finance, November 6, 2009

The sudden closing of four more private education colleges has further weakened Australia's claim to be a provider of first class education for international students.

The collapse of the Global Campus Management Group could affect up to 3,000 students in Melbourne and Sydney. The company is now in the hands of administrators.

State and federal governments have been quick to promise that affected students will be looked after, but there are no guarantees there will not be more closures.

The Meridian International Hotel School in central Melbourne, one of the four that closed, was supposed to be hosting exams this morning. Instead, it was the venue for an angry protest.

"We have given two years to this place, this college. We're expecting a degree; we were expecting that we'll have a degree ceremony here. What is our future? We don't know," one student said.

Read more at <http://au.biz.yahoo.com/091106/31/29maj.html>

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Lots of questions, no answers for angry students

Sushi Das, The Age, 10 November 2009

THEY came searching for answers but found only uncertainty. Hundreds of foreign students, mainly Indian and Chinese, packed into Melbourne Town Hall hoping the Federal Government, which had called the meeting, would explain why their colleges had collapsed and what the future now held.

But there were no such explanations and no certainty about the future. It took barely 90 minutes for immigration and education officials to explain students' rights and the forms that had to be completed - about the same time it took for the students' fury to rise.

With their English sometimes tatty and broken, they subjected the officials to a torrent of questions, some of them virtually screaming with rage into the roving microphone.

Would they get their fees refunded? How could they apply for a new student visa if they were not actually attending a college? And even if the Government did find them other colleges to attend, what's to say those wouldn't collapse too?

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/lots-of-questions-no-answers-for-angry-students-20091109-i5dd.html>

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HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Physical education key to improving health in low-income adolescents

University of California, 5 Nov 2009

School-based physical education plays a key role in curbing obesity and improving fitness among adolescents from low-income communities, according to a new study led by researchers at the University of California, San Francisco and UC Berkeley.

The study, which identifies opportunities for adolescents to improve their health based on routine daily activities, finds that regular participation in PE class is significantly associated with greater cardiovascular fitness and lower body mass index.

"We took an incredibly comprehensive look at all of the opportunities kids have throughout their day to engage in physical activity and determined which are the most strongly linked to fitness and weight status," said first author Kristine Madsen, MD, MPH, an assistant professor of pediatrics at UCSF Children's Hospital. "Obesity continues to be a major public health concern, particularly in low-income communities, so it is imperative that we develop targeted interventions to improve the health of at-risk youth."

"This research will help support moving physical education policy forward. Clearly, physical education in schools is an underutilized tool in our efforts to reduce pediatric obesity," said Patricia Crawford, DrPH, RD, the study's senior author and director of the Dr. Robert C. and Veronica Atkins Center for Weight and Health at UC Berkeley.

The study appears in the November 2009 issue of the journal "Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine" and is available online at <http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/>.

Read more at http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2009-11/uoc--pek110509.php

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SOCIAL INCLUSION

HEAT for young people at risk

Find out about the program – and purchase their Cook-book!

HEAT is a Melbourne-based 14 week re-engagement program for young people who are not engaged in education or employment due to issues such as homelessness, mental health, drug and alcohol misuse. The program was developed and managed by the St Kilda Youth Service.

HEAT offers an innovative program giving students accredited training qualifications in the hospitality industry and work experience with local business.

The program offers a high level of youth support, with practical training designed to lead to a new direction in employment or further study.

Find out more at: <http://www.heat.org.au/>

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AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES

ACT: Assembly to consider new extended proposal on student suspensions

ABC News, Mon Nov 9

The debate on greater suspension powers for principals will be revived this week when the Liberals introduce a new bill in the ACT Legislative Assembly.

Earlier this year the Government tabled a bill to give principals the power to suspend students for up to 10 days without approval from the Education Department or the Catholic Education Office. But last month the Liberals and Greens combined to defeat the proposal.

The Greens preferred to keep the current system while the Liberals wanted to allow principals to suspend students for more than 10 days.

Liberals education spokesman Steve Doszpot says the new bill would allow principals to suspend students for up to 20 days.

He says it would not require mandatory counselling sessions for students when they return to school.

Education Minister Andrew Barr says the Liberals are offering nothing new and the Government is unlikely to support the bill. "The Liberal Party are really engaging in what would appear to be some sort of law and order auction in relation to school suspensions."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/09/2736738.htm>

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ACT: Public school students urged to adopt and wear uniforms

ABC News, 10 November 2009

ACT Education Minister Andrew Barr says he hopes more public school students will start wearing school uniforms.

Several public schools have joined a Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) program that lets students design new school uniforms.

Mr Barr says uniforms build a good culture inside schools and help to make them safer places.

"I'm not advocating that they become compulsory," he said.

"But I think our public schools can look to the example that is set in the Catholic and Independent sectors that comes with having uniforms, that comes with having a greater sense of school identity."

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/10/2738033.htm>

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NSW: Blacktown TAFE to discontinue HSC equivalent

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, November 6, 2009

A WESTERN Sydney TAFE institute will no longer offer students a second chance at completing the equivalent to the Year 12 Higher School Certificate from next year, following a state government decision to discontinue the course.

A spokeswoman for NSW Minister for Education, Verity Firth, yesterday confirmed the course would no longer be available to new students from next year.

She said students who had started the course this year would be allowed to complete it at the Blacktown campus next year.

Amber Flohm, western Sydney TAFE organiser for the NSW Teachers Federation, said enrolments at Blacktown TAFE had fallen since 2007 when the college had stopped advertising the course.

"They have always had around 100 students and had 80 students wanting to go in 2009 despite the fact the courses were not advertised," Ms Flohm said.

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/blacktown-tafe-to-discontinue-hsc-equivalent-20091105-i0a0.html>

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NSW: Firth kills second chance HSC at TAFE for Western Sydney

John Kaye MP, 6 November 2009

The Greens warned that moves by NSW Education Minister Verity Firth to close Higher School Certificate programs at Blacktown TAFE will devastate opportunities for Western Sydney residents seeking another go at education.

"Verity Firth is crippling the learning aspirations of hundreds of Western Sydney adults wanting a second chance. If these cuts are replicated at other colleges, thousands of NSW residents will be denied the chance to improve their education.

"The Minister is hiding behind changes to the school leaving age to argue that the courses will no longer be needed. This is nonsense."

Read more at: <http://www.johnkaye.org.au>

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NT: Expanding Education Links

Paul Henderson, Chief Minister, 6 November 2009

The Northern Territory Chief Minister and Education Minister Paul Henderson visited a school in Tokyo today as part of efforts to encourage students to become digital pen-pals and foster closer educational ties with Japan.

Mr Henderson visited Akabane Primary School, which is interested in setting up a sister-school relationship with a primary school in the Territory.

"We already have 2511 students learning Japanese at varying levels across the Territory," he said.

"The majority of these – 1445 – are primary school students ranging from Transition to Year 6.

"While many of our middle and senior schools have sister-school relationships with schools in Japan, as yet we have no such relationships with our primary schools.

Read more at <http://newsroom.nt.gov.au/index.cfm?fuseaction=viewRelease&id=6239&d=5>

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NT: Opposition claims students with disabilities lack good facilities

Anna Henderson, ABC News, 10 November 2009

The Northern Territory Opposition says the Henderson Government is failing to provide adequate facilities for disabled students.

The Opposition Leader, Terry Mills, says he is still chasing a Government review of special education services that was promised before the last election.

He visited the Acacia Hill School in Alice Springs today and says even the basics are being neglected.

"It is very poor when it comes to Acacia Hill," he said. "In this case kids are not being able to get through doors adequately.

"There's a whole range of occupational health and safety issues."

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/10/2738540.htm>

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QLD: Closing the gap for Indigenous families

Hon Kate Ellis MP & Queensland Premier Anna Bligh, 4 November 2009

The Federal Minister for Early Childhood Education and Child Care Kate Ellis and Queensland's Premier Anna Bligh today announced ten new Children and Family Centres for Queensland.

The Australian Government is investing \$75.18 million in centres at Mt Isa, Cairns, Mareeba, Ipswich, Mackay, Rockhampton, Mornington Island, Doomadgee, Marsden and Palm Island.

"The first years of a child's life set them on a road to adulthood - we want that journey to take them to good health, education and social development," Ms Ellis said. "We want Indigenous children to get the best start in life. Experts tell us that quality early education has the power to break the cycle of disadvantage and that's vital to closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people."

The ten centres will target the needs of Indigenous families and their young children, but all families will be able to use the centres. Children and Family Centres are a hub for services that help children and their families develop in terms of health, education and social interaction.

Read more at: http://www.deewr.gov.au/ministers/ellis/media/releases/pages/article_091104_134949.aspx

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QLD: Aviation High School soars to new heights with \$6 million revamp

Hon Geoff Wilson, Qld Education & Training Minister, 6 November 2009

Brisbane's Aviation High today celebrated the official opening of its \$6 million redeveloped facilities. Education and Training Minister Geoff Wilson said the school would produce the next generation of air traffic controllers, pilots and aviation experts.

"The Bligh Government is partnering with industry to meet future training needs," Mr Wilson said. "Aviation High is the hub for Queensland's 17 Aerospace Project Gateway Schools.

"We're working hard with industry partners to make sure curriculum is relevant and students gain the skills they need to pursue their chosen careers."

Mr Wilson said the Bligh Government was investing in infrastructure and the redevelopment had generated about 46 jobs.

Read more at <http://www.mysunshinecoast.com.au/articles/article-display/aviation-high-soars-to-new-heights-with-6-million-revamp,15328>

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QLD: Top marks for state's best school initiatives

Hon Geoff Wilson, Qld Minister for Education & Training, 6 November 2009

Eight Queensland state schools received top marks last night as Education and Training Minister Geoff Wilson announced this year's Showcase Awards for Excellence in Schools.

Mr. Wilson said the awards recognised outstanding programs that boosted student learning.

"There are innovative teaching programs and initiatives being created in Queensland classrooms every day. These awards recognise the best of the best - those strategies that are having a strong impact on students and their achievements.

"These worthy winners will each receive a \$20 000 development grant to continue their hard work."

Mr. Wilson said some of the winning programs aimed to improve literacy and numeracy, find new ways to use technology in the classroom and to provoke in students a passion for science.

Read entire article: <http://www.mysunshinecoast.com.au/articles/article-display/top-marks-for-queenslands-best-school-initiatives,15314>

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QLD: Qld teachers win top pay rise

The Age (AAP), November 8, 2009

Queensland's public sector teachers have settled a bitter dispute with the Bligh government, accepting a deal that will make some the highest paid in the country.

The Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) council on Saturday accepted across-the-board wage increases of 12.5 per cent over three years and will urge members to accept the offer.

The compromise follows a protracted campaign that included strike action and advertising critical of the Labor government.

The deal targets prospective teachers across Australia, offering graduates the highest base salary in Australia and an enhanced induction program.

A new senior teacher classification will take salaries to \$83,308 a year by 2011, and principals and other classified officers will receive a further 2.5 per cent pay rise from July 2011.

"Our teachers are at the front line of better education for our kids and this deal recognises their value," said Premier Anna Bligh, who led the last series of negotiations.

"I hope teachers will give it the tick."

Read more at <http://news.theage.com.au/breaking-news-national/qld-teachers-win-top-pay-rise-20091108-i36w.html>

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SA: Regional kids to learn about dangers of cyber bullying

ABC News, 10 November 2009

The South Australian Government is spending \$100,000 to combat cyber bullying and e-crime.

Forums on the dangers of cyber activity will be held in Mount Gambier on November 18 and in Murray Bridge on December 3.

Regional teacher Lauren Foster says it is important that children in country areas understand the dangers of the internet.

"Regional kids sometimes think that it only happens overseas or only happens in the city when they do hear about events where kids have been bullied, but it is a real and present danger and I think that sometimes regional kids need to be educated and exposed to what can actually happen," she said.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/10/2738420.htm>

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TAS: More community groups using school facilities

David Bartlett MP, Premier, Saturday, 7 November 2009

More Tasmanian community and sporting groups are accessing education facilities, Premier and Minister for Education and Skills, David Bartlett, said today.

Mr Bartlett said that community use of school facilities had increased by 7619 hours – to 115,980 hours in 2008–09 from 108,361 hours in 2007–08.

"Schools are encouraged to support community activities through enabling access to existing public facilities for community education and recreation pursuits," Mr Bartlett said.

"However, the issue of public liability insurance has in the past deterred some community groups from using departmental facilities for fear of being liable if someone was injured.

"That's why the State Government introduced in July this year a two year trial where community, not for profit organisations and sporting groups which aren't already insured using Education Department facilities are protected by third party insurance."

Read more at <http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=28303>

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TAS: Meeting to discuss concerns with post Year 10 proposed changes

ABC News, Nov 9, 2009

Anger about changes to post year 10 education in Tasmania has intensified, with claims students will not have access to all subjects.

Union officials and parents from Elizabeth College are meeting at the union's headquarters in Hobart tomorrow.

60 per cent of teachers from Elizabeth College have voted against joining the Tasmania Tomorrow system next year.

The union's Greg Brown says angry parents have been contacting the college.

"They have not been informed of the ramifications of Tasmania Tomorrow throughout the two years that it's been on the drawing board," he said.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/09/2736648.htm>

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TAS: Teachers ignore Premier's plea to abandon industrial action

ABC News, 10 November 2009

Tasmanian teachers begin industrial action this morning to protest against the Premier's post year 10 system.

David Bartlett has urged teachers to call off the stop-work meetings. Yesterday he produced new figures showing 72 per cent of Elizabeth College staff now support the transition, 66 per cent of them teachers.

"They chose to tick the box, sign the form and go to the new Tasmania Tomorrow organisations," he said.

The Government had given teachers the option of joining Tasmania Tomorrow or moving to the education department.

The Education Union's Greg Brown says the figures are illegitimate and the matter has been referred to the Industrial Commission.

Read entire article: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/10/2737932.htm>

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VIC: Victoria uni applications surge 6%

Andrew Trounson, the Australian, 4 November 2009

A WEAKER jobs market is continuing to push people into tertiary education, with student applications in Victoria up six per cent, matching last year's strong growth.

Demand was driven by rising numbers of mature age students, offsetting a slight fall in school leaver applications that reflected a 1 per cent smaller Year 12 class.

"This year we have put more effort into reaching the mature age group, but the increase more likely reflects the usual inverse relationship between demand for higher education and job opportunities," said Elaine Wenn, director of the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre, which released the figures.

Science subjects reversed a decline in popularity last year with demand up 54 per cent, while demand for graduate teaching jumped 27 per cent.

Demand for agriculture and environmental studies dropped by 43.6 per cent, while demand for management and commerce subjects fell 12.4 per cent.

Society and Culture remained the single most popular subject area, followed by health and creative arts.

Read entire article: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/victoria-uni-applications-surge-6pc/story-e6frgcjx-1225794372402>

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VIC: Weeroona primary school phase-out ire

Richard Willingham, Bendigo Advertiser, 7 Nov, 2009

DISILLUSIONED parents at Weeroona College have vowed to fight the school council's decision to phase out primary education.

The Victorian Opposition has weighed into the debate, accusing the Government of not acknowledging Bendigo's population boom and closing schools by stealth.

Angry parents reiterated claims that the Education Department used sneaky tactics in pushing through a motion to close the primary section of the school.

"We will fight this without a doubt," Kerrie Murley said.

"I just believe this was done in a very underhanded way. We are the parents of the students - where is our say?"

Read more at <http://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/news/local/news/general/weeroona-primary-school-phaseout-ire/1670344.aspx?src=rss>

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WA: State government funds Pilbara College to boost Indigenous jobs

ABC News, 10 November 2009

The Pilbara Australian Technical College says it is looking forward to providing training and job opportunities for Aboriginal people now the Western Australian Government has offered to support the facility.

Last week, the Government announced it would take over responsibility for operating the college after the Commonwealth decided not to continue providing funding.

The college offers training to year 11 and 12 students in construction, engineering, commercial cooking and electro technology.

CEO Nancy Reeves says the college is looking forward to working with local Indigenous students across the three campuses.

"We have a very focused learning program that is very in tune with the way in which they learn and it provides us an opportunity to work with them really closely to achieve outcomes they may not have achieved in mainstream education," she said.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/10/2738681.htm>

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

"The Education Revolution - Two Years On!"

ANSN 4th Annual National Forum 2009

Tuesday 17 November 2009 – Old Parliament House, Canberra ACT

The Australian National Schools Network (ANSN) is hosting a national forum to discuss the Federal Government's Education Revolution two years into its term in office, and its impact on school education. The Deputy Prime Minister the Hon. Julia Gillard will launch the forum and précis on the Governments progress to date.

Since the election of the Rudd Labor Government, the education community has been excited by the opportunities for new and imaginative work to begin again. New schools are being built, existing schools are being renovated, computers and other new technologies are being rolled out to schools and large scale partnerships either have been or are being negotiated between the state and federal governments with the specific goals of improving student learning and lives and teacher quality and learning. These partnerships are designed to challenge us all to think differently about how we do our work in schools.

There is a welcome focus on those young people in poorer communities who traditionally do not do as well as their more affluent peers. Partnerships to improve literacy and numeracy have been negotiated, a new national curriculum and assessment and reporting regime with a high level board that has begun its work.

This forum is designed to give the broad education community the opportunity to explore these new agendas in a collaborative and critical way. We invite the systems, the unions, other agencies and associations, and probably most importantly those folk in the schools who have the ultimate responsibility to make this work, to join us as we focus on these issues of national significance.

Full information and Program at:

[http://www.ansn.edu.au/4th annual national forum 2009 the education revolution two years on](http://www.ansn.edu.au/4th_annual_national_forum_2009_the_education_revolution_two_years_on)

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'The Nature of Play' - Kidsafe Playground Conference

19-20 April 2010 UWA Club, Perth, W.A.

We have some fantastic international and Australian speakers. We have also received some fantastic Abstracts from Australia and across the Tasman, which we are working through now.

Topics that will be covered include child-centred design; learning opportunities in the playground; nature based play; promoting children's emotional wellbeing; risk issues - challenges and benefits; consultation - giving children a voice; inclusive, playable public open spaces; and art in children's playspaces.

We will be opening registrations soon, with generous discounts for not-for-profit groups and early bird bookings. However, we have just found out the Red Bull Air Race has been rescheduled from November this year to 17-18 April 2010. This is a peak tourism event for Perth and we are encouraging everyone who is thinking of coming to Perth from outside the Perth metro area to organise their accommodation soon.

Details at: <http://www.kidsafewa.com.au/>

Or email kerry@kidsafewa.com.au for more information or to join our mailing list for regular updates.

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REMINDERS

17 November - Forum of Australian National Schools Network - Canberra, ACT -

[http://www.ansn.edu.au/4th annual national forum 2009 the education revolution two years on](http://www.ansn.edu.au/4th_annual_national_forum_2009_the_education_revolution_two_years_on)

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/>

27 November - Literacy in Education Conference, Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.childrenscharity.com.au/>

17-18 December - Behaviour Schools Conference - Brighton-le-Sands, NSW -

<http://www.gemsevents.com.au/behaviourschoolsconference/>

24-26 March - Going Global 4 - London, UK - <http://www.britishcouncil.org/goingglobal.htm>

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)

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

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