



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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EDUCATION REVOLUTION

Shows promise - rating the revolution

Caroline Milburn, The Age, November 30, 2009

Every school, tertiary institution and preschool in Australia is about to be hit by radical change. This year's federal budget and the economic stimulus packages have cranked the Government's education reform agenda into life.

The Education Revolution may be a snappy marketing phrase but it is apt in one respect: audacity. No federal government in recent times has grabbed control of education reform from the states and territories like this one has.

No other recent administration has tried to simultaneously, in its first term of office, overhaul all the nation's early childhood services, the schooling system and universities.

Schools

THE Government's decision to introduce Australia's first national curriculum for schools is the boldest step of all.

After a few public squabbles between experts about what should be left in or out, the process of devising the prep-to-year-12 curriculum has been relatively smooth. Much of that success is due to a comprehensive series of consultations and the eminence of those academics in charge of refining each curriculum document.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/shows-promise--rating-the-revolution-20091127-jvun.html>

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IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY

We must invest in our teachers

Martin Buoncristiani, Daily Press (USA), 29 November 2009

After 35 years as a teacher educator, classroom teacher and administrator, I have now taken on another persona — artist.

President Barack Obama, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and our local school districts all want to know how to improve the educational achievements of our young people.

I hear almost nothing about the need to make sure the teachers who are helping to create the next generation have both the talent and the training to do it well.

It takes more than a university degree to be a good teacher. It takes more than the ability to relate to kids.

Good teachers have talent and knowledge. Our teachers need to be well educated in both the subjects they will teach and in the art and science of teaching.

They need to understand the intricacies of child development, the conditions that ensure successful learning and the strategies that enable successful behavior management.

They also need the talent for human interaction and communication that helps make great classrooms buzz with the excitement of learning.

Read more at http://www.dailypress.com/news/opinion/dp-op_teachers_1129nov29.0,1602966.story

Buoncristiani has worked as a teacher and principal and is now an educational consultant working with "lifelong learning" groups and schools in both the United States and Australia.

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Investing in the best graduates to boost quality teaching

Hon Julia Gillard MP & Hon Bronwyn Pike MP, Victorian Minister for Education, 30 November 2009

Today 45 graduates will begin their intensive 6-week training program at the University of Melbourne, before taking up posts in educationally disadvantaged schools throughout Victoria.

Teach for Australia is an initiative that has been developed to attract the best and brightest university graduates into the nation's classrooms.

Teach for Australia provides a new employment-based pathway into teaching, by getting top university graduates from non-teaching fields such as law, accounting, sciences, and management to work as teachers for two years, while they continue studying towards a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching.

This is the start of an exciting new social entrepreneurial approach that will see top graduates from around the nation taking on the challenges and rewards of educating our young people. Pathway programs for top graduates such as Teach First in the UK and Teach for America in the US have been shown to deliver better student outcomes and importantly, help raise the status of the profession.

Read entire release: http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_091130_074920.aspx

Further information on Teach for Australia is available at <http://www.teachforaustralia.org>

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INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Charter for a brighter future

Noel Pearson, The Australian, November 28, 2009

THERE are two things everyone agrees on when it comes to the plight of indigenous Australians.

First, that along with everything else that needs to be done, education is central: the children will be the better future.

Second, that indigenous education is a shameful failure.

Let me qualify these two points. Developments in health, housing and employment are also critical, and they affect educational progress. Education will not succeed alone, but it is ultimately the ticket to social justice.

Also, Maria Lane, the Aboriginal researcher from South Australia, points to the important progress being made by the lower and not-so-lower Aboriginal middle classes. Year 12 completions have risen and university participation by children from those Aboriginal families comprising what Lane calls the open society population is a real success story.

The failure is occurring in what Lane calls the embedded population, that is families living in the passive welfare world.

This latter population includes all discrete Aboriginal communities in regional and rural Australia. It includes all of the Aboriginal communities in Cape York Peninsula and those remote communities where traditional languages and cultures are still strong.

In these places education is an utter and recurring failure.

And no, I won't qualify the last statement.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/charter-for-a-brighter-future/story-e6frg6zo-1225804731679>

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SCIENCE EDUCATION

New UK curriculum includes evolution classes for primary pupils

Richard Garner, Independent, 20 November 2009

Children at primary school are to be given compulsory lessons on evolution for the first time under a shake-up of the curriculum unveiled yesterday.

The move follows protests from scientists that there had been no mention of the topic in a previous consultation document published earlier. Some said the topic, to be introduced in science lessons, was necessary to combat growing attempts to bring creationism into the curriculum.

Announcing the move, Schools minister, Vernon Coaker, said: "Lots of teachers came forward and said it should be part of the compulsory program of study."

Under the proposals, children would start to learn about Darwin's theory on the origins of species during their later years in primary school. The new change would be brought in from September 2011.

Read entire article: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/evolution-classes-for-primary-pupils-1824123.html>

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Progressive Achievement Tests in Science (PATScience) launched

Australian Council for Educational Research, E-News, 27 November 2009

The Progressive Achievement Tests in Science (PATScience) was officially launched at a function held at Melbourne's Scienceworks Museum on 23 November. The launch follows more than two years of development and trial testing.

PATScience is the latest addition to ACER's suite of academic tests. It consists of a series of nationally normed tests to assess the level of achievement in scientific understanding for students in Years 3 to 10.

The test questions are designed to assess science knowledge, scientific literacy and the understanding and application of scientific principles.

For more information please visit <http://www.acer.edu.au/pat>.

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SCRIPTURE & ETHICS

Non-religious ethics classes for NSW schools

ABC News, Nov 25, 2009

Ethics classes will soon be taught in New South Wales primary schools as a secular alternative to scripture classes.

Religious groups have argued against a change to the government's policy which prevents children who do not go to scripture classes from having other formal tuition during that time.

But the Premier Nathan Rees has announced that the government will now allow a trial of an ethics course in 10 primary schools over two terms next year.

"This will provide students with an opportunity to examine ethics that underline their own values and reflect the choices that they make in everyday life and that is a good thing," he said.

Read more at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/25/2752688.htm>

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Anglican Church wants school trial of ethics classes scrapped

Bishop says using secular organisations "sets dangerous precedent"...

Nick Ralston, News com au, 25 November 2009 (AAP)

THE Anglican Church wants New South Wales Premier Nathan Rees to abandon a trial of ethics classes for students who do not want to attend scripture in schools.

Chairman of the NSW Anglican Education Commission, Bishop Glen Davis, said allowing a secular organisation to deliver its program at the same time as the current religious teachings set a "dangerous precedent" if other groups wanted access to students.

"Is there such an ethical hole in the current system?" Bishop Davis said.

"If so, then teach it as a part of the curriculum rather than allowing a non-religious group to enter the realm of the special religious education system."

Bishop Davis said scripture had been taught in NSW schools for more than 120 years and provided a valuable link with local religious institutions.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/story/0,27574,26399454-29277,00.html>

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HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Childhood bullying affects adult life

Connie Agius, ABC News, Nov 20, 2009

Children who have been bullied tend to carry their battle scars throughout adulthood and become bullies themselves. That is what a Wesley Mission report, Give Kids a Chance: No-one Deserves to Be Left Out, has found. The organisation is calling on the Australian community and governments to put a stop to bullying.

The research found seven out of 10 adults have been affected by school bullying.

Wesley Mission CEO Keith Garner says the impacts of bullying flow into daily life.

"You've got no self esteem because you've undergone bullying experiences," he said. "You're fearful of others, you can't make meaningful relationships. This is the stuff of life. This is what makes us who we are."

Mr Garner says those involved in bullying can also have difficulty trusting people and controlling their anger. Others lack assertiveness and withdraw from society.

Read entire article: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/20/2749424.htm>

For further information about the research and the Report:
<http://www.wesleymission.org.au/News/Research/Kids/Report.asp>

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Survey: Drugs, suicide and body image of most concern to young Australians

Mission Australia, 25 November 2009

The national survey, conducted by Mission Australia, tested the views of close to 48,000 young people – its biggest group since the survey began in 2002 – between the ages of 11-24 (97.9 per cent aged 11-19).

When asked to rank their concern about 15 issues drugs was ranked most frequently in the top three by 26.8 per cent of respondents, closely followed by suicide at 26.3 per cent and body image at 25.5 per cent.

The survey also detected decreases across all activities involving young people – particularly arts/cultural activities, and to a lesser extent, spectator sports and youth groups – which the charity suggests is an impact of the global financial crisis on Australian families over the past 12 months.

Mission Australia's spokesperson, Anne Hampshire, said this year's survey detected important differences between age groups and gender on some concerns.

Drugs were the primary concern for 11-14 year olds with 31 per cent including it in their top three – almost twice the proportion of 20-24 year olds. For 15-19 year olds, body image was the major issue at 27.4 per cent, while for 20-24 year olds depression (30.5) and coping with stress (30.2) were at the top of the list.

For girls and young women, physical/sexual abuse topped the list of concerns with 27.5 per cent considering it a top three issue – compared to only 17 per cent of boys. Conversely, alcohol was the second biggest worry for young males at 27.6 per cent while only 19 per cent of girls considered it the same.

Read entire release: <http://www.missionaustralia.com.au/news/media-releases/1462-drugs-suicide-and-body-image-the-issues-of-most-concern-to-young-australians>

To view the reports: http://www.missionaustralia.com.au/document-downloads/cat_view/132-annual-mission-australia-youth-survey

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Don't Let Your Teenager Become a 'Schoolies' Statistic

Health Insite, 26 November 2009

As Schoolies Week activities begin around the country, parents are urged to talk to their teenagers about the risks of binge drinking.

With the Government's 'Don't Turn a Night Out Into a Nightmare' National Binge Drinking Campaign entering its second phase, it is a timely reminder to parents to educate their teens about the affects of alcohol and drinking to excess.

"Parents play a crucial role in education teenagers about alcohol and helping them to develop a responsible attitude towards drinking," said Nicola Roxon, Minister for Health and Ageing.

The Government has developed a guide 'Alcohol and young people: A guide for parents' that offers parents practical advice and information when speaking to their teens.

This guide is available from the Government's National Binge Drinking Campaign website <http://www.drinkingnightmare.gov.au>.

Read more at [http://www.healthinsite.gov.au/news/Don t Let Your Teenager Become a Schoolies Statistic](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au/news/Don_t_Let_Your_Teenager_Become_a_Schoolies_Statistic)

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The playtime's the thing:

The value of make-believe and other games in preschool classes

Emma Brown, Washington Post, November 21, 2009

On a recent Thursday, 5-year-old Estefani Lovo Rivera took charge of a make-believe hair salon in her preschool classroom at Oakridge Elementary in Arlington County. Wielding a plastic fork as a hairbrush, dispatching customer after customer with a certain cool efficiency, she looked around the room for more classmates to entice. "You have to come today," the budding stylist said. "Tomorrow we're closed!"

To the untrained eye, such play appears to be nothing more than a distraction from the real letters-and-numbers work of school. But research shows that it might be an essential part in determining these children's social and emotional makeup as adults.

As Estefani and the children buzzing around her - one taking hair appointments over a telephone, another pretending to curl a client's hair with an eggbeater - spun their scenario, they were developing the roots of empathy and the capacity to take turns, negotiate with peers and understand how their behaviour affects people.

"Play is problem-solving," said Judy Apostolico-Buck, Arlington's early childhood education coordinator. "It's really critical life skills."

Read entire article: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/20/AR2009112002391_pf.html

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Senate Report damns profit-driven child care in wake of ABC empire's fall

Jane Chudleigh, *Courier-Mail*, November 24, 2009

CHILDCARE regulation should be overhauled to remove the profit-driven problems leading to the massive collapse of the ABC Learning empire, a senate committee has found.

A 12-month inquiry into child care tabled in the Senate last night recommended the formation of a new national statutory body as part of an overhaul of the multibillion-dollar industry. The report was damning of the business approach taken by ABC Learning, whose collapse last year sparked the inquiry.

"That an organisation catering for up to 25 per cent of the long-day care market should fail so rapidly following its rise to market dominance says as much about the deficiencies in childcare policy and regulation as it does about highly questionable business practices of the company," the report found.

It recommended small-scale or individual independent operators and not-for-profit and community-based organisations as the best to provide services.

"Childcare centres are not just a business - they must be in the services of the common good," the report said.

A boost to funding was also highly recommended by the senate committee, especially to services for disadvantaged children and those in rural, remote or poorer areas.

Read entire article: <http://www.news.com.au/business/story/0,27753,26392888-462,00.html>

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GENDER EQUITY IN EDUCATION

Advocating for Girls' Sports With a Sharp Tongue

Katie Thomas, *New York Times*, November 29, 2009

Few girls who play sports in suburban Philadelphia would recognize Robert H. Landau, but many coaches and athletic directors know that spotting him in the bleachers could spell trouble.

With a sharp tongue, a refusal to compromise and a well-honed sense of injustice, Landau is that familiar breed of community activist with a knack for pushing public officials over the edge. His specialty is girls' sports, and his targets are usually wealthy public schools from the Main Line suburbs that pride themselves on being progressive and fair in offering a rich array of opportunities.

No slight to girls is too small for Landau to take on. His victories range from the momentous to the less obvious, like forcing his daughters' school district to provide more athletic choices, pressuring leagues to showcase their title games and getting a school mascot to perform at their games.

Landau's complaint against Haverford High School — over issues like publicity for and scheduling of boys' and girls' basketball games — has upset even those who would otherwise support him.

Read more at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/30/sports/30advocate.html?_r=1&emc=eta1

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AWARDS & PRIZES

2009 National History Challenge Winners Announced

Hon Julia Gillard MP & Hon Alan Griffin MP, Media Release, 25 November 2009

The National History Challenge is a competition that encourages students in Years 5–12 to discover more about Australia and its past whilst developing skills in historical research and inquiry. Students can present their research in a variety of ways, including essays, museum displays, performances and multimedia presentations.

The theme of this year's Challenge was Triumph over Adversity and project topics ranged from Australia's involvement in World War I, migrant experiences of Polish Jews and the lives of characters such as John Curtin, John Monash and Ned Kelly.

Minister Griffin presented the Year Level awards for years 5/6, 7/8, 9/10, 11/12, as well as the Young Historian Award for each State and Territory.

Minister Griffin also announced the overall 2009 National Young Historian of the Year Award, which went to Alix Biggs of Canberra Girls' Grammar School for her essay entitled The Obstacles overcome by Australia's Japanese war brides.

Read entire release: http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_091124_151535.aspx

Read more about the National History Challenge at <http://www.historychallenge.com.au>

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Canberra College wins \$750K - Schools First National Impact award winner

Canberra College has received the highest possible acknowledgement possible from Schools First as the inaugural National Impact winner and recipient of \$750,000 in total. The award recognises their partnership with the Child Youth and Women's Health Program of ACT Department of Health and their ground-breaking 'CCCaes' unit developed to address the educational and health needs of young parents. Read more

Over the last few months, cake and big cheques were enjoyed around the country with 88 school and community partnerships celebrating their win of a Schools First Award. 20 schools received \$25,000 to develop their school-community partnership as Seed Funding Award winners and 68 existing school-community partnerships received \$50,000 as Impact Award winners. One Impact Award partnership in each state and territory had double the reason to celebrate as they won an additional \$50,000 each as the state or territory winner.

The eight state and territory Schools First Impact Award winners were:

- ACT: Canberra College and Child Youth and Women's Health Program of ACT Department of Health
- NSW: Leeton's St Francis de Sales College and Leeton Narrandera
- NT: Karama Primary School and The Smith Family
- QLD: Maroochydore State School and SunnyKids
- SA: Windsor Gardens Vocational College and Bianco Construction Supplies
- TAS: Claremont College and Housing Industry Association
- VIC: Santa Maria College and The University of Melbourne ARC Centre for Coherent X-ray Science
- WA: Redcliffe Primary School and The Partnership Group

Read Hon Julia Gillard MP speech at the national awards ceremony 27 November:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Speeches/Pages/Article_091130_073443.aspx

For more information: <http://www.schoolsfirst.edu.au/>

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AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES

ACT: Non-government colleges settle multiple sex abuse cases

ABC News, 1 December 2009

More than 20 cases of alleged sexual abuse at two Canberra schools have now been settled. The cases involved students at Marist and Daramalan colleges who were allegedly molested by staff in the 1970s, '80s and '90s.

Many of the cases at Marist College relate to Brother John William Chute - also known as Brother Kostka - who was convicted and jailed last year for molesting six boys. Most of the Daramalan College cases are linked to teacher Paul Lyons who committed suicide shortly after he was charged with sexual assault in 2000.

Lawyer Jason Parkinson represented many of the victims and says negotiations and litigations have been going on for more than two years.

Read entire article: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/12/01/2758197.htm>

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NSW: Counsellor abused molested boy, court told

Sydney Morning Herald, December 1, 2009 - 2:23PM

A Catholic brother is accused of sexually assaulting a boy he had been counselling after the youngster was molested by another man. The court was told Mr. Irwin was arrested last week and had since been stood down from his teaching job at St Aloysius' College at Milsons Point on Sydney's lower north shore.

Mr. Irwin is the 10th man to be charged with sexually assaulting boys at a central western NSW boarding school.

Some of the offences allegedly occurred at the prestigious boys' boarding school, St Stanislaus' College.

According to a statement by police handed to magistrate Jane Culver, Mr. Irwin was based at St Stanislaus' between 1980 and 1983 and between 1987 and 1989.

He was a "spiritual director" of the Catholic youth group Antioch and provided counselling to youths aged between 15 and 18.

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/counsellor-abused-molested-boy-court-told-20091201-k2yw.html>

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NT: Educators say cut to bilingual teaching won't help students

Lindsay Murdoch in Yirrkala, November 27, 2009

LEON WHITE was shocked when the Northern Territory Government announced it was slashing bilingual education in remote indigenous schools. "Thirty years' work developing a two-ways curriculum was being thrown out the door without consultation," he says.

For 40 years White has been involved in teaching Aboriginal children, mostly in the Arnhem Land community of Yirrkala, where English is a second, third or even fourth language. He says the people deciding education policy in Darwin have no idea how to teach indigenous children who come from homes where English is not spoken at all.

From the start of the 2010 school year, it will be mandatory for lessons to be taught in English for the first four hours of every school day.

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/cut-to-bilingual-teaching-wont-help-students-educators-20091126-juqs.html>

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QLD: School's stubbie cooler graduation gifts 'inappropriate'

Christine Kellett, Brisbane Times, November 25, 2009

Education Queensland has admitted a decision to give out stubbie coolers to Year 12 students as a graduation gift at a north Queensland high school was "inappropriate." Kirwan State High School's class of 2009 was given the beer holders, featuring the Townsville school's emblem and motto, at their end of year formal on Friday night.

The parting gift to teenagers, the day before the start of the week-long Schoolies festival, has been slammed by parents, who say it encourages alcohol consumption.

Education Queensland's North Queensland Regional Executive Director Vicki Baylis conceded this morning the "drinks cooler" was a bad choice of gift but denied the school sanctioned binge drinking.

It comes in the wake of a State Government inquiry into alcohol-fuelled violence and police pleading for young people to be careful with booze at Schoolies Week.

Queensland Parents and Citizens Association president Margaret Black said the gifts sent "entirely the wrong message" to young school leavers stepping into adulthood.

"I was very surprised to hear about [the stubbie cooler gifts] this morning. They could well be perceived as beer coolers and we certainly don't support these types of farewell gifts for students."

"It is a perfect example - and why we advocate so strongly - for schools and the P and C to work more closely together to avoid this sort of thing occurring."

Read entire article: <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/schools-stubbie-cooler-graduation-gifts-inappropriate-20091125-jpca.html>

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QLD: 'Smart State' Queenslanders among least tertiary educated

Margaret Wenham, Courier Mail, November 30, 2009

FEWER Queenslanders have a tertiary education than their counterparts in most other states and territories, making a mockery of the Smart State mantra.

Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows that while the proportion of Australians with a bachelor degree or above has increased over the past eight years from 17 per cent of the population to 23 per cent, Queensland is lagging well behind the national average.

The Education and Work report released last week showed the ACT has the most tertiary qualified residents at 39.3 per cent of its population, followed by Victoria and NSW with 26.1 and 24.7 per cent respectively.

Queensland, with 18.4 per cent, ranks second last, ahead of Tasmania.

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,20797,26417437-952,00.html>

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SA: School retention news is even better than first appeared

Hon Jane Lomax-Smith, Education Minister, 25 November 2009

South Australia's State school retention rate is even higher than first calculated, with nearly eight in every 10 State school students being retained to Year 12.

The revised apparent school retention rate for 2009 is 79.5% – the highest in 15 years. This result is 12.3 percentage points higher than the low point of 67.2% in 1999 under the Liberals.

Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith says the education department identified a technical error in the calculation of the apparent retention rate of 77.5%, released last week.

"While it's unfortunate that this error occurred, we are absolutely delighted that the news is even better than we first thought," Dr Lomax-Smith says.

"The Rann Government also raised the school leaving age to 16 from 2003 and, from the start of this year, made it mandatory for young people to be learning or earning until they turn 17."

Read entire release: <http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/mediacentre/>

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SA: Private operators to be paid \$27m a year for super schools

Lauren Novak, the Advertiser, November 27, 2009

The State Government is in a \$323 million public/private partnership to build six "super" schools, including maintenance and management over 30 years.

Consortium Pinnacle Education will build the schools at Playford North, Blair Athol, Woodville Gardens, Regency Park, Munno Para West and Gepps Cross. Opposition finance spokesman Rob Lucas said there had been a "massive blowout" in the annual payment from an original estimate of \$13 million per year in the 2006-07 Budget to \$27 million per year.

"The fact that the actual annual payment for six schools is more than double the original estimate is a clear demonstration of the financial incompetence of Treasurer Foley and the Rann Government," he said.

Mr. Lucas said it was "clearly in the public interest that taxpayers know how much of their money is being paid to private companies to build so-called super schools".

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,22606,26405888-2682,00.html>

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TAS: Tasmania Tomorrow Reforms

David Bartlett MP, Premier and Minister for Education and Skills, 16 November 2009

The Premier and Minister for Education and Skills, David Bartlett, said today that he recognised that there was staff dissatisfaction with the implementation of the Tasmania Tomorrow reforms.

"We have heard the concerns raised by staff and that is why I put in place an action plan to address the issues," Mr Bartlett said.

"I can assure staff that every effort is being made to ensure a smooth transition for their Elizabeth College colleagues to our new organisations.

"I want to return the focus to students, their learning and lifting retention in post-year 10 education."

Read more at <http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=28427>

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TAS: Bottom of the class on retention rates

Damien Brown, Mercury, November 25, 2009

ONE in three working Tasmanians have completed only year 10 education - and the Education Department admits the new figures are nothing to be proud of.

A total of 34.8 per cent of people aged between 15 and 64 had reached year 10 or below before entering the workforce, the Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show.

That is well over the national average of 23.1 per cent.

Tasmania also has the lowest number of people with a university qualification with just 12.3 per cent, below the national average of 16.4 per cent and the Australian Capital Territory which reported 25 per cent of all working people gaining a bachelor degree.

Only 13 per cent of Tasmanians have completed year 12, also the lowest in the nation.

Read more at http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2009/11/25/111731_tasmania-news.html

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VIC: Boys face compulsory feminism programs in state schools

John Masanauskas, Herald-Sun, 26 November 2009

BOYS face compulsory feminism programs in state schools across Victoria in a major push to prevent violence against females. Possible classroom activities include students acting out scenes of sexual coercion after which students would suggest more appropriate behaviour.

A VicHealth report for the state Education Department calls for teachers to be trained in gender, violence and sexual health issues so they would be comfortable discussing "taboo" issues. But it would help if teachers could "make the program fun", the authors said.

The report says programs for all students should start at primary level and be reinforced across all year levels in subjects including drama, English, science and sport.

Education Minister Bronwyn Pike said four schools would run anti-violence pilot programs from early next year.

Read entire article: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/boys-face-compulsory-feminism-programs-in-state-schools-across-victoria/story-e6frf7jo-1225803918910>

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VIC: State faces shortage of teacher graduates

ABC News, 1 December 2009

Primary schools in Victoria are expected to be the hardest hit by a shortage of graduate teachers in the next three years.

An education department report has found the state will face a shortfall of almost 300 graduates a year, until 2012.

But the report has also found the global financial crisis could lead to more enrolments in teaching courses.

The Education Minister, Bronwyn Pike, says the Government already has plans to lure teachers back to the classroom to cope with the projected shortfall.

Read entire article: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/12/01/2758225.htm>

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WA: Wheatbelt agricultural school wins prestigious national award

Education Minister Liz Constable, 23 November 2009

Cunderdin's agricultural college has won the prestigious VET in Schools Excellence at the Australian Training Awards.

Congratulating the Western Australian College of Agriculture - Cunderdin, Education Minister Liz Constable, who attended the awards in Canberra, said the prize recognised excellence in the provision of vocational education and training in schools.

"For the Cunderdin agricultural college to be recognised in this way is a huge honour and a pat on the back for the staff and students at the school," she said.

"The college has a proven record in delivering training and structured courses, giving students time in the classroom and practical experience in trade areas on the work farm.

"In 2008, 100 per cent of Year 12 graduates went on to employment or further education and training after completing the minimum Certificate II in Agriculture.

Read more at <http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Lists/Statements/DispForm.aspx?ID=132814>

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WA: Massive school modernisation unveiled

Education Minister Liz Constable, 26 November 2009

Students at Western Australia's only academically-selective public school should benefit from a massive school upgrade.

Education Minister Liz Constable today officially opened new facilities worth \$31.5million at Perth Modern School in Subiaco.

Dr Constable said the upgrade was the result of the biggest injection of capital funding the school had ever received.

Under the project, the school received five new buildings including a performing arts centre, library, cafeteria, and design and technology workshops.

The new facilities also included media, arts and photography studios.

The Minister said the new facilities meant staff could provide an outstanding education in vastly improved surroundings for some of the State's brightest students.

Read more at <http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Lists/Statements/DispForm.aspx?ID=132834>

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WA: 280 assaults on school staff in two terms

Yasmine Phillips, Perth Now, 26 November 2009

According to statistics obtained by the Opposition, school staff, including teachers, principals and cleaners, had been physically assaulted 275 times by students and eight times by parents during terms two and three this year.

Opposition education spokeswoman Michelle Roberts said staff were also verbally assaulted or threatened 37 times by parents in the same time frame.

"The staggering number of assaults on teachers is unacceptable," she said.

"If there were 280 assaults reported for just two terms, it is likely there will be more than 500 for the year in total, and even more that haven't been reported.

"An assault rate of almost 300 assaults in just two school terms is despicable. It is alarming that the Education Department has no record of police prosecutions for assaults against teachers."

Read entire article: http://www.news.com.au/perthnow/story/0,21498,26403068-2761,00.html?from=public_rss

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WA: Federal Govt provides additional \$4 million for literacy and numeracy

Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 27 November 2009

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, has today announced that the Rudd Government will provide \$4 million in additional funding to support effective literacy and numeracy projects in Western Australia.

Funding of over \$1.9 million will be provided to the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia to continue the National Accelerated Literacy Project in Independent Aboriginal Community Schools.

The National Accelerated Literacy project aims to improve educational outcomes for students, with a particular focus on Indigenous students.

A pilot of the project conducted from 2005 to 2008, provided teachers with access to high quality professional development resources and support. An evaluation of the project showed good results were achieved for Indigenous students.

The Rudd Government will also support the Resilient Professional Numeracy Network in Western Australia.

Further funding of over \$1.9 million will be provided to the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia to support the network of Independent Aboriginal Community Schools.

The network aims to boost numeracy skills for targeted students by connecting school leaders, teachers, parents and the community.

Read entire release, with details of schools involved, at:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_091127_084825.aspx

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Clean Up Australia Day

7 March 2010

2010 marks the 20th Anniversary of Clean Up Australia Day. If every Australian picks up JUST 1 piece of rubbish, together we could remove more than 20 million pieces from our environment...

Schools Clean Up Day – Friday 5th March 2010

Schools Clean Up Day inspires the next generation to learn about their environment.

Business Clean Up Day – Tuesday 2nd March 2010

Business Clean Up Day is a great opportunity for businesses to help improve the quality of the environment and work towards reducing waste.

Full details, useful information, resources and registration: <http://www.cleanup.org.au/au/>

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ACEC 2010: Digital Diversity Conference

Australia's ICT education conference for all educators

6-9 April 2010, Melbourne Convention Centre, Melbourne, Victoria

Registration is open and final program will be published shortly at: <http://acec2010.info/>

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Career Development Association of Australia Annual Conference

7-9 April 2010, Hilton Hotel, Adelaide SA

The 19th annual conference for the Career Development Association of Australia (CDAA) focuses on how career practitioners could be making a difference to the world they live in as well as the world future generations will experience.

Keynotes and guest speakers will provide insights into current career development theory and practices and workshop presentations will explore processes and strategies but they will relate these to the environment in which they will be applied.

This conference will enable delegates to develop new skills and consider new insights as well as refine existing knowledge and hone existing skills.

For details and registration: <http://www.onqconferences.com.au/pages/CDAA2010.php>

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Global language Convention

8-11 April 2010, Wesley College, Melbourne, VIC

The 2010 Global Language Convention 'Many Cultures, One Community: Language, Knowing and Power' brings together language experts, educators, practitioners and policy makers from around the world in dialogue and critical engagement with the ever growing body of knowledge in the area of language and learning.

Topics include:

- From text to message - literature, media & communication cultures for C21 learning;
- Language loss and reclamation;
- Taking responsibility for the 2nd language learner in the mainstream language environment;
- The brain, learning and language; Multilingual matters - beyond making the case for learning more than one language;
- Defining, developing, refining, maintaining the mother tongue;
- 'Every teacher is a language teacher' - critical issues in managing language and learning in schools.

Full details and registration: <http://www.wesleycollege.net/convention.cfm>

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“Language Education: An Essential for a Global Economy”

Jointly presented by APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) Forum & SEAMEO (South East Asia Minister of Education Organisation)

19-21 April 2010, SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, Singapore

As the links between people across the world grow, there is an increasing need for us to learn to communicate in multilingual and multicultural situations. Knowing one or more of the world languages, such as English, becomes an increasingly important skill for an individual who wants to do well in today's global market. Moreover, there is evidence that corporations that encourage staff to have multiple language skills are more likely to compete successfully. This is a two-way process. The global market encourages the development and spread of global languages. At the same time, the spread of such languages facilitates the development of a global market.

For details: <http://www.relc.org.sg/seminar.html>

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8th Annual Higher Education Summit

29-30 April 2010, National Wine Centre, Adelaide SA

In 2010, Australia's original and most established higher education policy and planning conference will be about "Questioning Australian higher education policy & planning in the 21st century."

We believe it is essential to question how well the Bradley Review has gone and how policy and planning is addressing other important issues, such as the big ticket issue of the century - climate change.

Read more at <http://www.highereducationsummit.com.au/>

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Inclusive Learning Technologies Conference 2010

25-28 May 2010, Gold Coast, Queensland

Hosted by Spectronics, the conference focuses specifically on “inclusive learning technologies” – technologies designed to advance independent achievement for people with disabilities and/or students with learning difficulties.

It includes sessions looking at these technologies in the following three interest streams.

- Struggling Students
- People with Complex Communication Needs
- People with Disabilities

For details see: <http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/conference/>

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“Together we grow: building partnerships”

Early childhood education conference 2010: Kindergarten Parents Victoria & Gowrie Victoria

4-5 June 2010, Caulfield Racecourse, Melbourne, Victoria

A conference for early childhood teachers, early years professionals and staff, volunteer committees, employers and parents.

Further information will be published at: <http://www.togetherwegrow.com.au/2010registration.html>

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“Creative and imaginative futures for schooling”

17th International Conference on Learning

6-9 July 2010, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong

The International Conference on Learning is for any person with an interest in, and concern for, education at any of its levels - from early childhood, to schools, to higher education - and lifelong learning in any of its sites, from home to school to university to the workplace.

The Conference will address a range of critically important themes relating to education today. Plenary speakers will include some of the world's leading thinkers in the field of education.

Details at: <http://thelearner.com/Conference-2010/>

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Second Paris International Conference on Education, Economy & Society

21-24 July 2010, Hotel Concorde Lafayette, Paris, France

The first edition of the Paris International Conference on Education, Economy and Society was held from July 17 to July 19, 2008. More than 500 academics and practitioners from 50 countries attended the meeting. More than 450 contributions were presented, covering all major themes of Education.

Following the same design, the 2010 conference is intended to be a forum, discussion and networking place for academics, researchers, professionals, administrators, educational leaders, policy makers and industry representatives interested in Education.

All areas of Education are invited, as are economic, political, cultural and social themes relating to Education. The languages of the conference will be English and French.

For further information: <http://education-conferences.org/default.aspx>

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REMINDERS

17-18 December - Behaviour Schools Conference - Brighton-le-Sands, NSW - <http://www.gemsevents.com.au/behaviourschoolsconference/>

19-21 February - SEAA / SASOSE Conference - Hindmarsh, SA - <http://www.seaa.org.au/2010conference/>

22-23 February - Green Universities - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.informa.com.au/conferences/education/green-universities>

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/>

19-20 April - Kidsafe Playground Conference - Perth, WA - <http://www.kidsafewa.com.au/>

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

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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