



Australian Council of State School Organisations

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

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

Volume 3 Number 45, 8 December 2009

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OPINION

Stop bagging public education

Michael Kirby, The Age, 2 December 2009

I am here to applaud public education and the central ideas that accompanied its spread throughout Australia in the 1870s and '80s.

What a debt Australia owes to the founders of public education.

They had to face strong opposition at the time, mainly from churches and private investors that had earlier enjoyed predominance in colonial schooling.

Public education had to negotiate compromises by which limited classes for "scripture" were permitted as a trade off for non-denominational education.

It had to endure the scoffing of those who thought that education was properly a privilege only for the wealthy and that public schools were the dire results of "socialism".

But in the late 19th century, a great movement swept Australia to establish the public education system.

It was a movement that coincided with our advances to federation. It was anchored in three great principles stated in the early public education acts.

It would be free, compulsory and secular.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/politics/stop-bagging-public-education-20091202-k4y4.html>

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PRIZES & AWARDS

Clean Up Australia Day Green Teacher Award

The annual Green Teacher Award sponsored by SANYO Eneloop, seeks to celebrate and recognise teachers who have been a positive influence on students by carrying out environmental projects within their school community.

Do you know a Green Teacher? If you do, then nominate them for the 2010 Green Teacher of the Year - and they will be in the running to win a trip to Japan.

Thanks to our sponsor, Sanyo, the prizes for the 2010 Green Teacher Award are better than ever. Each state / territory winner will win a 3 day trip to Japan to view the world's largest solar structure: Sanyo's Solar Ark!

Nominations open 4 January 2010 and close on 19 March 2010 with winners announced on 16 April 2010. Nominations are to be made online.

State/territory winners will also receive a Sanyo Eneloop family pack containing a selection of rechargeable batteries and battery charger. A national winner will be selected from the state/territory winners and will also receive a widescreen interactive whiteboard and projector for their school.

More information about the Awards: <http://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/about/competitions/green-teacher-award>

More information about Clean up Australia Day(s) 2010: <http://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/about/about-the-event>

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SCIENTOLOGY IN SCHOOLS

Schools linked to Scientology will get \$1.6m of public money

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, December 2, 2009

FEWER than 100 children will benefit from more than \$1.6 million in Federal Government subsidies over four years to two schools strongly linked to the Scientology movement.

The Athena School in Newtown will receive \$751,519 in recurrent funding from the Federal Government for the 2009 to 2012 funding period. It has also been allocated \$135,287 for a new library, \$114,713 for primary classroom refurbishments and \$50,000 for other refurbishments under the Rudd Government's Building the Education Revolution program.

The Athena School is licensed by Applied Scholastics International, which has strong links to Scientology. The school's website says it teaches from the booklet *The Way to Happiness*, written by Scientology's founder, L. Ron Hubbard.

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/schools-linked-to-scientology-will-get-16m-20091201-k3y3.html>

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Government uses our taxes for scientology-linked school

John Masanauskas, Herald-Sun, 3 December 2009

A MELBOURNE school linked to the controversial Church of Scientology received \$300,000 in funding from the federal stimulus package.

Yarralinda, in Mooroolbark, is one of two schools in Australia that uses the teaching methods of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard.

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd recently expressed concerns about the Church of Scientology after independent senator Nick Xenophon made serious claims against the organisation under parliamentary privilege.

Last week, the State Government told its schools not to distribute materials by a Scientology-funded group called Youth for Human Rights after it was revealed it organised a year 9 art prize.

Yarralinda, which boasts it is a "no homework school", says on its website it uses the Applied Scholastics method developed by Hubbard. The private school's patron is Scientologist Kate Ceberano.

Read entire article: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/melbourne-school-linked-to-scientology-received-300000-in-federal-stimulus-money/story-e6frf7jo-1225806364542>

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RESEARCH

School system from the past won't prepare young Australians for the future

ACER, 2 December 2009

To prepare for the future young Australians need an education that is holistic, flexible and encompasses a commitment to both work and life a new review of research concludes.

But, according to Australian Education Review 55, released today by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), there is emerging consensus that a school system designed to meet the needs of Australia in the past cannot prepare today's youth adequately for future challenges.

The review by Johanna Wyn of the University of Melbourne was prompted by papers delivered at last year's ACER Research Conference held in Brisbane on the theme of Touching the Future: Building skills for life and work. The review draws on contemporary research to explore the goals of Australian education and how schools should prepare young people for work and life in the 21st century.

"Secondary schools that were built all over Australia in the 1950s still stand as a reminder of the thinking that informed educational design at that time," Wyn writes. "Although some have had a lick of paint, and others have had new wings and administrative blocks added, their basic design reflects the past."

Read entire release: <http://www.acer.edu.au/1/index.php/media-releases/detail/school-system-designed-for-past-wont-prepare-australians-for-the-future>

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Our education system too old-school for a new generation of students

Miki Perkins, Sydney Morning Herald, December 3, 2009

AUSTRALIA'S education system is outmoded and old-fashioned, with a growing gap between the skills young people learn at school and those they need in a fast-changing, contemporary world, a review has found.

Core aspects of our education system were designed to meet the needs of students growing up in the 1950s, but have changed little and are ill-suited to young people who live in an era of uncertainty, the Melbourne University's Professor Johanna Wyn argues in a report for the Australian Council for Educational Research.

"Social justice is not given priority and a level playing field is needed to make it harder for parents to purchase success for their children through cash or cultural capital," Professor Wyn says.

"We know that young people ... who are indigenous, and those in rural areas are the most likely to do badly at school, so the older ways of dealing with this has to be tossed out.

"There's a sense of frustration that we keep documenting the gaps - now is the time to say that whatever we're doing isn't working," Professor Wyn says.

Read article: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education-system-too-oldschool-for-a-new-generation-of-students-20091202-k6et.html>

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Childcare isn't the problem, nor the panacea

Carol Nader, The Age, December 3, 2009

PARENTS need not feel guilty about placing their children in childcare - youngsters are unlikely to be scarred by the experience. But nor will childcare have a dramatically positive effect on a child's life.

This is the message from a keynote speech to be given at a conference in Melbourne today, as the Council of Australian Governments is set to decide next week how to improve the quality of childcare.

An analysis of 2500 children has found that children generally are no better or worse off in childcare than they are at home with a parent.

"Parents shouldn't worry that they're hurting their kids and policymakers shouldn't think that childcare is a panacea. We don't find any big positive effects of childcare," said Andrew Leigh, professor of economics at the Australian National University, who will deliver the keynote address at the Growing Up in Australia conference.

"Day care is not child abuse, and day care is not the solution to Australia's problems," he said.

Read entire article: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/childcare-isnt-the-problem-nor-the-panacea-20091202-k6bb.html>

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New Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care across Australia

Hon Kate Ellis MP, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd & Hon Julia Gillard MP, 7 December 2009

The Council of Australian Governments meeting has agreed on new compulsory national standards for child care and early childhood education services. This reform will deliver a higher standard of care for children, and clearer and more comprehensive information for parents.

This new National Quality Framework will be phased in from 1 July 2010 and will ensure national consistency in early childhood education and child care services including outside school hours care.

The new framework will include requirements for:

- lower staff-to-child ratios under the National Quality Standard
- new qualifications requirements for all early childhood education workers under the National Quality Standard
- a transparent quality ratings system, which will allow parents to easily compare the quality on offer at different child care services
- streamlined regulatory arrangements, which will mean less paperwork for services, so they have more time to spend providing high quality care
- a new jointly-governed national body between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories to oversee the new standards.

The Australian Government is providing approximately \$61 million between 2010-11 and 2013-14 to the States and Territories to support the new framework. This is on top of the support the Australian Government provides to families through the Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate.

Read entire release: http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Ellis/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_091207_171835.aspx

For more information about the Australian Government's early childhood education and child care initiatives, please visit <http://www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood> or <http://www.mychild.gov.au>.

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Better Childcare Standards Need Better Government Funding

Senator Sarah Hanson-Young, Media Release, 8 December 2009

The Greens welcome the Council of Australian Governments' decision to lift childcare standards, but warn that the Prime Minister now has to back the agreement with more Government support for Australian children.

COAG's decision to raise minimum staff ratios to 1:4 for children aged under two, and 1:5 for children aged three to five is a good first step, but that much more needs to be done.

"Reports suggest the new ratios would add \$50 a week to childcare bills, but our goal should be to ease costs for parents and families, not add to them," she said.

"In particular, we need to find a way to link funding for providers to standards of care and educational outcomes - in other words, we need to make the Government's money work to the advantage of our children."

Read entire release: <http://sarah-hanson-young.greensmps.org.au/content/media-release/better-childcare-standards-need-better-government-funding>

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STUDENT INCOME SUPPORT

Youth allowance deadlock 'leaves students in the lurch'

ABC News, Dec 2, 2009

The National Union of Students (NUS) says the deadlock in the Senate over the Federal Government's planned changes to the youth allowance is the worst possible outcome for students.

The legislation for the Government's planned changes to youth allowance is deadlocked in the Senate as it adjourns for the year.

It means that the old guidelines for youth allowance will apply at the start of the next academic year and there will be no Commonwealth scholarships.

NUS president David Barrow says students have been left in the lurch. "The blame for that lies squarely at the feet of Senator Fielding and the Opposition," he said.

But Opposition's education spokesman Christopher Pyne says Education Minister Julia Gillard is at fault. "The Minister's vanity and conceit and arrogance has meant that she's not been able to admit the flaws in the legislation," he said.

Ms Gillard says the Government will reintroduce the legislation to Parliament in February next year.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/12/02/2760117.htm?section=justin>

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INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

International student review - interim report released

Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, 4 December 2009

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today welcomed the release of the Baird Review interim report on the legislation that governs international education in Australia and thanked Mr Baird for his work so far.

The interim report of the review of the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 highlights more effective consumer protection and stronger, simpler regulation as two essential reforms needed to strengthen international education.

Key observations in the report include the need to toughen the gateway for organisations to register as international education providers, support students' access to better information, improve students' tuition protection arrangements and enhance student complaints handling and support mechanisms.

The report also discussed the links between education and migration, and the long-term sustainability of the international education sector.

Mr Baird is also considering the recommendations of the International Student Roundtable and is taking into account other work occurring across governments to enhance the sector and protect international students.

The interim report is available at: <http://www.aei.gov.au>

Read entire release: http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_091203_121848.aspx

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AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES

ACT: Canberra's Islamic school relocating and expanding

ABC News, 8 December 2009

Canberra's Islamic School will be relocated to southern Canberra. The ACT Government has given the green light to move the school from Watson to the former CIT site in Weston.

The Government will sell about 6 hectares of the site - including all the buildings - to the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils.

Chief Minister Jon Stanhope says public consultation identified broad support for the relocation. "There was general agreement the site be retained for community use and a strong preference from the community that it be used as a school rather than redeveloped for medium-density housing," he said.

The new school will cater for kindergarten through to year 12 and hopes to be up and running for the first term of next year.

Islamic School of Canberra board chairman Ikebal Patel says demand for the school is growing.

"It's a new phase for this school. But at the same time I'd like to think that the ACT community in general would be supportive of a new establishment so that we can all work together towards a much more harmonious Canberra," he said.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/12/08/2764687.htm>

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NSW: Mum is increasingly off the menu in school canteens & tuck shops

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, November 29, 2009

THE death knell has sounded for volunteer-run school tuck shops because busy parents no longer have enough time to staff them. The trend has caused the return of the meat pie and sausage roll in some schools where canteens have been forced to close. Sushi has been introduced to other canteens that have to be run by contractors.

Crown Street Public School in Surry Hills is among those that have been forced to call in the contractors. School community group secretary Amanda Lintott said this was the first time in her three years at the school that no parents had been available to volunteer for canteen duty.

Ms Lintott said many parents were working full-time. Another reason for the reluctance was because the job no longer provided contact with children. "A lot of canteen ordering is done online," she said.

The charity Healthy Kids School Canteen Association is running the Crown Street Public School canteen on a non-profit basis. Association general manager Jo Gardner said the lack of volunteers had become a major issue for school tuck shops across NSW. The changing nature of families and work had contributed to the problem.

Ms Gardner said that in 2007 319 NSW public schools chose to lease out their canteens, generating \$3.77 million in income. Last year the number increased to 323 schools that generated \$3.96 million.

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/mum-taken-off-the-menu-20091128-jxw1.html>

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NSW: Kinderstart Kids getting excited for 'big school'

The Ridge News, 03 Dec, 2009

The young children from Little Diggers and the Lightning Ridge Preschool, who are making the transition into 'big school', had their graduation on Tuesday and Wednesday after having spent one day a week for the past month at the Lightning Ridge Central School in preparation for the coming year. The program, aptly named Kinderstart, provides the children with the opportunity to adapt to the new world of education that awaits them.

Primary deputy principal Helena Hodson was thrilled by the reports and the maturity shown by next year's Kindergarten students. "Parents have been telling me that they never thought their kids would be as excited about starting school as they are."

Families NSW, as part of their family strategy, kindly donated backpacks for the children, which contained a lunchbox, pencils and support information.

Mr Tome was so impressed by the development of each child in the program that after finding out that the current source of funding would be cut he said new avenues for grants would be looked into and securing the future of the Kinderstart program in Lightning Ridge would be high on the agenda.

Read entire article: <http://www.theridgenews.com.au/news/local/news/general/kids-getting-excited-for-big-school/1695346.aspx>

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NSW: Ethics pilot program alternative to "scripture" in NSW trial schools 2010

Heath Gilmore, The Land/Sydney Morning Herald, 7 Dec, 2009

JUST how ethical is it, in the mind of the average primary school student, to hunt elephants for their tusks? What about exterminating rabbits, racing horses or testing cosmetics on animals, for that matter?

Students will wrestle with these and similar dilemmas as part of ethics classes to be offered as an alternative to special religious education studies in NSW. As a consequence, the students will unwittingly encounter the higher thoughts of philosophers such as John Stuart Mill and Immanuel Kant, whose works underpin the classroom exercise.

Ten state primary schools will begin a 10-week ethics class trial as an alternative for students whose parents choose not to let them attend scripture classes.

Each lesson for year 5 and 6 students focuses on an ethical topic such as the use and abuse of animals, bullying, care and compassion, friendship, graffiti and stealing. It was one of the last acts of the former premier Nathan Rees to introduce the classes into primary schools, much to the disappointment of the Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools.

Read entire article: <http://theland.farmonline.com.au/news/nationalrural/agribusiness-and-general/general/killing-of-animals-to-confront-children-in-classrooms/1697448.aspx?storypage=0>

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NSW: Fight continues to maintain Dalwood learning disabilities centre

ABC News, 8 December 2009

Parents from across the western New South Wales region are writing letters to the new Premier urging her to stop the relocation of a centre for rural children with learning disabilities.

The Dalwood Assessment Centre at Seaforth will close next Friday while plans are developed to move the service to the Westmead Children's Hospital.

Parents, who have formed an action group, have already presented a petition with about 1,000 signatures to the State Government opposing the closure.

Coonabarabran parent Michelle Bolte says they hope Kristina Keneally will reverse the controversial decision. "I think this is the Premier's chance to help redeem the troubles of the NSW Government and try and win back some trust from parents all over NSW who are very disheartened by some very bad decisions that have gone on recently," she said.

She is urging the Premier to keep the centre open for at least 12 months while a review is done.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/12/08/2764981.htm>

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NT: Report on NT child health checks shows need for follow-up services

Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 4 December 2009

Many children have benefited from health services following health checks in the Northern Territory, but not all children have received follow-up services for their health problems, according to a report released today by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

The report, Progress of the Northern Territory Emergency Response Child Health Check Initiative: final report on results from the Child Health Check and follow-up data collections shows that more than 10,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged between 0 and 15 years received a Child Health Check (CHC) under the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER) between July 2007 and June 2009.

About 97% had at least one health condition or risk factor identified during their check, and 99% received some form of management for a health condition during the CHC including tests (91%), referrals (70%), health advice (69%), medication (53%), vaccinations (7%) and other tests and medical procedures (9%).

The most common health conditions were oral health problems (43%), skin conditions (30%), ear disease (30%) and anaemia (16%).

About 3,500 children received an audiology check, and 44% of those referred for follow-up received subsequent services by an audiologist.

Around 3,350 children received a dental check and 38% of those referred for follow-up received subsequent services by a dentist.

Nearly 80% of all children were followed-up on their health conditions and the care they received. Of these, 36% needed further health care for a health problem.

Read entire release: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2009/mr20091204.cfm>

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QLD: Longer school days trialled in northern Indigenous schools

Sydney Morning Herald, December 3, 2009 (AAP)

A new curriculum with longer school days and compulsory health, sport and culture programs will be trialled in two far north Queensland indigenous schools.

Coen State School and the Aurukun campus of Western Cape College will next year trial the Class, Culture and Club curriculum, proposed by the Cape York Leadership Institute.

Students will take part in at least 14 hours per week of reading, writing and spelling, and a minimum of six hours of maths a week.

A further six hours a week will be devoted to music and physical education.

Education Minister Geoff Wilson said parts of the plan would be controversial but the government was working closely with teachers and community members, who would play a key role in the program.

"Their input and participation is critical to the success of this plan," Mr. Wilson said in a statement.

"Education Queensland will be closely monitoring the outcomes and if there's early success, similar reforms will be considered for other indigenous communities."

The state government will invest an extra \$7.72 million over three years in the pilot program, which will see 10 extra staff on the ground in Aurukun and Coen.

Source: <http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/longer-school-days-trialled-in-north-qld-20091203-k7qh.html>

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QLD: Brisbane Catholic Education schools have high asbestos risk

Tanya Chilcott, Courier Mail, December 06, 2009

FOUR out of five Brisbane Catholic Education schools have asbestos, it can be revealed.

A master asbestos register obtained for the first time by The Courier-Mail shows 105 of the 133 BCE schools, which extend from the Gold Coast north to Childers and west to the Lockyer Valley and Gayndah, have some level of asbestos in them.

Of those, 21 have slightly-to-severely damaged, deteriorated or unstable asbestos.

But investigators have listed all of the damaged or unstable sites as having a low or very low health risk to current students and staff.

Some of the most deteriorated asbestos has been found in resurfaced building debris buried in playgrounds and ovals, a problem mirrored in state schools.

Read entire article: <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,,26449007-3102,00.html>

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SA: Plan to start university units in Year 12

Mario Moscaritolo, Herald Sun, December 07, 2009

YEAR 12 students will be able to fast-track their way into university and have it count towards their tertiary entrance score, or possibly a degree.

While there are extension programs in place to give exceptional students a head start at university, models under consideration would allow any capable student to undertake units of university study and earn course credits.

Department of Education and Children's Services chief executive Chris Robinson raised the prospect of students commencing a semester of university study while at school at a recent principals' summit.

The South Australian Secondary Principals Association president Jim Davies said a number of models were being considered.

He said the move would help broaden the entry pathways to tertiary education, as advocated in the Bradley Review of Higher Education.

Flinders University has been invited by DECS to workshop the idea.

Read entire article: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/plan-to-start-uni-in-year-12-in-south-australia/story-e6frf716-1225807545525>

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SA: Hot school bus unsafe for kids

Eugene Boisvert. West coast Sentinel, 3 Dec, 2009

"It was bloody more than hot" in Miltaburra Area School's un-air conditioned school bus two weeks ago, according to student Dylan Woods. The temperature inside the Toyota Coaster apparently reached 60 degrees Celsius on November 24 when it was 46.5 in Ceduna and higher inland.

The bus is the only one without air conditioning that serves Miltaburra Area School. Its run starts at Haslam and continues for 32km along mainly dirt roads.

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold has written to Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith urgently requesting an air-conditioned bus be appointed to Miltaburra Area School.

Mrs Penfold says a SafeWork SA media release issued November 9 stated that "employers are legally obliged to provide a safe working environment" as it "is a necessary part of that duty of care". "I fail to see how the same does not apply to children who have to attend school," Mrs Penfold said.

The government warning advised the "symptoms of heat stress can lead to serious illness and in extreme cases, death" and describes symptoms that include headaches, fatigue, dizziness or fainting, increased sweating; mood changes such as irritability or confusion, and possibly an upset stomach or vomiting.

Mrs Penfold said she had been advised that one child had an epileptic fit after a journey home on a very hot bus and she is very concerned for the health and safety of the driver and all passengers should there be another incident.

"In a ridiculous twist, rather than return the un-air-conditioned bus, the department in their wisdom took back an air-conditioned bus."

Read entire article: <http://www.westcoastsentinel.com.au/news/local/news/general/hot-bus-unsafe-for-kids/1693981.aspx>

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TAS: Catholic schools seek funding top up

ABC News, 8 December 2009

Catholic schools have demanded extra funding from the Tasmanian Government after confusion over the funding agreement.

In an open letter to parents last month, the Catholic Education Commission said Tasmanian schools did not receive agreed funding this year.

The Commission said it was still negotiating with the Education Department but it expected schools would receive extra funding in the next few weeks.

The Commission's Chair Rod Scurrah said the discovery was made in February through a Freedom of Information request to the department.

"Given that the commitment of the funding was to a percentage of the cost of funding a student in the Government schools, we couldn't recognise the calculation of the funding that we were getting and we were concerned that there were anomalies," he said.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/12/08/2764880.htm>

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VIC: State seeks virtual answer to teacher crisis

Farrah Tomazin, the Age, November 30, 2009

VIRTUAL classrooms that allow country schools to share teachers over the internet could be set up as part of a State Government plan to tackle staff shortages and bridge the gaps between rural and metropolitan students.

With many country schools finding it hard to attract and retain new teachers, the Government is rethinking the way education is provided to rural and regional students.

In a broad-ranging interview to discuss the Government's education priorities over the next 12 months, Education Minister Bronwyn Pike said the expansion of virtual classrooms in country schools was being considered.

Under this model, which is expected to form part of a new rural education strategy to be released next year, groups of neighbouring schools would be able to use the same teachers by conducting interactive lessons over the web. A physics teacher, for instance, could broadcast lessons to children at another remote school.

Read entire article: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/state-seeks-virtual-answer-to-teacher-crisis-20091129-jywa.html>

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VIC: Some private schools telling parents they must increase fees to ensure federal funding

John Masanauskas, Herald Sun, 3 December 2009

SOME private schools are telling parents they must increase fees to ensure federal government funding. Private school fees will rise by about 5 per cent in 2010, following this year's huge increase after a new wage deal for teachers. Most elite schools now charge at least \$20,000 a year.

Some principals believe that new federal guidelines on the viability of private schools require them to lift fees by at least 4 per cent next year. A federal Education Department financial health assessment mentioned that figure when saying schools needed to maintain increasing income per student to meet rising costs.

A spokeswoman for Education Minister Julia Gillard confirmed a new system to assess the financial viability of private schools was being tested.

"Schools were not required to increase fees by 4 per cent a year to be classified as viable under the framework," the spokeswoman said. "But schools are required to show that they are financially viable to avoid causing disruption to students and their families and ensure effective use of taxpayers' money."

Independent Schools Victoria chief executive Michelle Green said recurrent expenditure for independent schools was up by 8.3 per cent. "Teacher salaries have gone up by 7.8 per cent following an increase in salaries paid to government school teachers," she said. "Teacher salaries are the major item facing independent schools."

Read entire article: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/some-private-schools-telling-parents-they-must-increase-fees-to-ensure-federal-funding/story-e6frf7jo-1225806364887>

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VIC: College of the Arts & Music ignored and at risk

Miki Perkins, the Age, December 7, 2009

CONCERNED academics at Melbourne University's 115-year-old music school say the future of the prestigious institution is at risk and the importance of musical scholarship is being ignored.

In a letter to The Age, published today, 14 signatories, including former Victoria State Opera music director Richard Divall, say an investigation into the future of the Victorian College of the Arts and Music is focused on the VCA and ignores the "illustrious" contributions made by the former music faculty to Australian society.

"We are concerned that amid the clamour to 'save the VCA', this long tradition has been overlooked, placing the university's high reputation for music education and scholarship in jeopardy," it states.

The Faculty of Music - known affectionately as "The Con", or Conservatorium - officially amalgamated with the Victorian College of the Arts in April this year.

Following a public furore over the future of practical arts training at the VCA, the university recently launched a review of the merged faculty, led by former Telstra head Ziggy Switkowski.

Music academics told The Age they were "entirely sympathetic" to the concerns of VCA staff and students but were worried the former music faculty's voice was being lost in the debate. They say the school's strong performance in research is not represented in the discussion paper, which they believe is skewed towards performance.

Read entire article: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/music-schools-voice-unheard-20091206-kcw7.html>

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WA: Name, shame plan for juvenile offenders called "mediaeval"

WA Today, December 2, 2009 (AAP)

A proposal by the State Government to name and shame repeat juvenile offenders in an internet "rogues gallery" has been labelled medieval by an academic.

WA Attorney-General Christian Porter announced a hard line on young, anti-social recidivists under a bill tabled in State Parliament yesterday.

Similar publication orders could also be made against repeat adult offenders under the bill.

State cabinet has backed the introduction of the Prohibited Behaviour Orders Bill, which would give courts the power to make civil orders when dealing with repeat offenders aged over 14.

Under the legislation, the court would have the discretion to publish offenders' details on a government website. This includes their name, their photograph, the suburb in which they live and the terms of the order.

Associate Professor Julian Bondy, a specialist in juvenile justice at RMIT in Melbourne, said shaming was counter-productive and "a little bit medieval".

"It's basically the modern-day equivalent of putting people in the stocks."

Read entire article: <http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/name-shame-plan-medieval-in-relation-to-juveniles-academic-20091202-k60i.html>

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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>

7 March 2010 - Clean Up Australia Day - <http://www.cleanup.org.au/au/>

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

6-9 April - Digital Diversity Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://acc2010.info/>

7-9 April - Career Development Association of Australia Annual Conference - Adelaide, SA -

<http://www.onqconferences.com.au/pages/CDAA2010.php>

8-11 April - Global Language Convention - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.wesleycollege.net/convention.cfm>

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/>

19-21 April - Language Education: An Essential for a Global Economy - Singapore -

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

29-30 April - 8th Annual Higher Education Summit - Adelaide, SA - <http://www.highereducationsummit.com.au/>

25-28 May - Inclusive Learning Technologies Conference 2010 - Gold Coast, QLD -

<http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/conference/>

4-5 June - Early childhood education conference 2010 Melbourne, VIC -

<http://www.togetherwegrow.com.au/2010registration.html>

4-7 July - National Conference for Teachers of English & Literacy - Perth, WA -

<http://www.englishliteracyconference.com.au/index.php?id=46&year=10>

6-9 July - 17th International Conference on Learning - Hong Kong - <http://thelearner.com/Conference-2010/>

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ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

- Australian Education Digest : <http://www.acsso.org.au/aed.htm> (weekly)
- International News Roundup : <http://www.acsso.org.au/roundup.htm> (monthly)
- Values Education : <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/news.htm> (monthly)
- Languages Education : <http://www.languageseducation.com/news.htm> (monthly)
- Ensemble - Music Education : <http://www.ensemble.org.au/news.htm> (monthly)
- Family School Partners : <http://www.familyschool.org.au/news/> (monthly)
- Public Education Voice : <http://www.acsso.org.au/pev.htm> (quarterly)

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