



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 4 Number 8, 23 March 2010

- [SCHOOL LIBRARIES: Parliamentary Inquiry established](#)
- [TOWARDS AN AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: \(6 items\)](#)
- [DISABILITY EDUCATION: \(2 items\)](#)
- [FUNDING: \(2 items\)](#)
- [LITERACY & NUMERACY: \(3 items\)](#)
- [RESEARCH: \(2 items\)](#)
- [INDIGENOUS EDUCATION: Young Indigenous leaders to study at Oxford](#)
- [RURAL & REGIONAL EDUCATION: Youth Allowance](#)
- [AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES: \(21 items\)](#)
- [CONFERENCES: \(2 items\)](#)
- [REMINDERS](#)
- [ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS](#)

SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Parliamentary Committee to examine school libraries and teacher librarians in Australian schools

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training has been asked by the Federal Minister for Education to inquire into and report on the role, adequacy and resourcing of school libraries and teacher librarians in Australia's public and private schools.

The Terms of Reference require that the committee specifically focus on:

- the impact of recent policies and investments on school libraries and their activities
- the future potential of school libraries and librarians to contribute to improved educational and community outcomes, especially literacy
- the factors influencing recruitment and development of school librarians
- the role of different levels of government and local communities and other institutions in partnering with and supporting school librarians
- the impact and potential of digital technologies to enhance and support the roles of school libraries and librarians

Announcing the inquiry, committee chair Ms Sharon Bird, MP, stated "Teacher librarians make a significant contribution to the school community in a number of ways, including teaching information, literacy skills and providing access to information and resources to facilitate learning. The committee looks forward to hearing the views of interested stakeholders from around the country."

The committee invites interested organisations and individuals to make written submissions to the inquiry, addressing the terms of reference, by 16 April 2010.

Further information: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/edt/schoollibraries/index.htm>

[< top >](#)

Parliamentary Inquiry is a vitally important first step forward

Georgia Phillips, The Hub Campaign for Quality School Libraries, 18 March 2010

Today the House Standing Committee on Education and Training, chaired by local MP Sharon Bird, initiated the first inquiry into school libraries in Australia since the 1970s.

- How have we progressed since then?
- How do 21st century school libraries support teaching and learning?
- How equitable is school library staffing and funding across Australia and across sectors?
- Are our tertiary institutions meeting the needs of Australian schools for qualified teacher librarians?
- What support services and advisory services exist in state departments of education to support principals and teacher librarians in developing excellence?
- Are pre-service teacher training programs capitalizing on the information literacy research, standards and programs available in the teacher librarianship profession?

These are just some of the questions which concern teachers, principals, parents and teacher librarians in today's digital information age. So far, 1846 of those concerned have signed a petition asking the federal government to ensure that all Australian primary and secondary students have access to "A Qualified Teacher Librarian in Every School."

More information about The Hub Campaign: <http://hubinfo.wordpress.com/>

[< top >](#)

TOWARDS AN AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

A national curriculum requires national teaching standards

Dr Lawrence Ingvarson, ACER E-News, 19 March 2010

The content of the national curriculum statements about English, history, mathematics and science released this month, while not particularly new, is inspiring. They also illustrate the complexity of what we expect our teachers to know and be able to do.

There has never been a problem writing inspiring reasons for teaching these subjects. Such statements abound, nationally and internationally. Yet research shows that curriculum statements, in themselves, rarely lead teachers to make significant changes in the quality of their teaching.

The real educational challenge in implementing Australia's National Curriculum is capacity building in every teacher and setting strong and clear standards to articulate what teachers need to know and be able to do to bring the curriculum vision to life.

Implementation of the national curriculum will be more successful if complementary roles are developed between the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority and the new body responsible for teaching and teacher education standards, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). The success of each will depend in large part on the success of the other.

Read entire article: http://www.acer.edu.au/enews/1003_IngvarsonOpinion.html

[< top >](#)

Battle looms over cuts to history curriculum

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, March 20, 2010

WRITERS drafting the national curriculum need to reduce the amount of Australian history taught - raising the spectre of another fight over what is cut when the document is finalised later this year.

The chairman of the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, Barry McGaw, told the Herald that he was open to reducing the history content in response to concerns that it contains too much for teachers to cover.

The president of the Australian History Teachers Association, Paul Kiem, said feedback from around the country confirmed the draft curriculum was too content-heavy, particularly in years 9 and 10 when the bulk of Australian history was taught.

"There has to be some culling," he said. "There needs to be a pause and discussion about what is significant knowledge in Australian history and what we expect people to know by year 10.

...Mr. Kiem said his and other teacher organisations were frustrated at the silence of state and territory Labor governments. "It is a very significant problem," he said. "There is no transparency. No one is saying how many hours we will have to work with."

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/battle-looms-over-cuts-to-history-curriculum-20100319-gmal.html>

[< top >](#)

Is the national curriculum overdue, or spoiled by political correctness?

Brett Mason, Sydney Morning Herald, 22 March 2010

A necessary and long overdue step in education reform in Australia or the further entrenchment of a politically correct agenda in our primary and secondary schools?

Or, indeed, both?

These will be some of the questions that parents and others interested in the education of our children will be asking when considering the draft National Curriculum in English, Mathematics, History and Science, recently released for public consultation by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority.

The idea that all Australian primary and secondary students, regardless of which state or territory they attend school in, should be studying the same things, at the same time in their academic progression, and according to the same standards, has been bandied around for years.

It is no longer seen as controversial, and now enjoys broad public support.

Read more at: <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/politics/is-the-national-curriculum-overdue-or-spoiled-by-political-correctness-20100319-qjmw.html>

[< top >](#)

The challenges for history in the new curriculum

Professor Stuart Macintyre, EQ Summer Edition

...History shares the problem of mathematics and science in that it is often entrusted to teachers without training in the discipline. But unlike those subjects, there is no shortage of qualified graduates ready to fill the breach.

The problem is rather that education faculties and schools outside NSW give limited attention to history teaching, and the hiring practices of educational systems place a low premium on expertise in history. It is commonly assumed that anyone can take a history class.

This is a problem of both demand and supply. The Commonwealth is responsible for teacher training, the states are the largest employer, and together they are in a position to ensure that history teachers are trained and employed.

I am sure I am not alone in wondering about the heavy emphasis of the Education Revolution on bricks and mortar, and the urgent need to lift the status, rewards and capacity of the teaching profession.

Hard hats and safety jackets have a remarkable appeal to government ministers, and we know that the construction industry is favoured because of its multiplier effect on economic activity and employment.

But teachers hardly hoard their earnings. Rather than insist on stimulus projects in education being shovel-ready, it might be better to ask that they be student-ready.

Read entire article: <http://www.ega.edu.au/site/thechallengesforhistoryinthenewcurriculum.html>

Professor Stuart Macintyre is the leader of the team developing the Australian Curriculum in History

[< top >](#)

An Australian curriculum to promote 21st century learning

Dr Peter Hill, EQ Summer Edition

Over the next few years, teachers and school leaders will be engrossed in realising a significant milestone in our nation's educational history—the development and implementation of a world-class Australian curriculum that will prepare young people for life in the 21st century.

Curriculum is always complicated and stirs the passions.

Leading international education expert Joseph P. McDonald, professor of Teaching and Learning in the School of Education at New York University, wryly observed how he would sometimes leave a room rather than get caught in a conversation about curriculum. Most of the people who stayed in the room thought curriculum was the thing teachers taught to students, whereas McDonald and others heading for the door of course thought that this was a delusion.

Ted Sizer (1999) said of curriculum that '...only matters of student discipline bring out equivalent controversy, confrontation, self-righteousness, angry voices and quivering lower lips.'

What is curriculum? Using Rogers' discussion (1999) of the sources of authority for curriculum decisions as a basis, I would divide curriculum into four parts:

- the core curriculum, comprising those general capabilities that all people need, use and develop throughout their life and the big issues of the day that all need to know about
- the formal curriculum, based on disciplinary rules, understandings and methods
- the chosen curriculum, that individual students and teachers create through the choices they make
- the meta-curriculum, comprising those activities, events and traditions that all good schools arrange to promote personal development, character and a community of learners.

Read entire article: <http://www.eqa.edu.au/site/anaustraliancurriculumtopromote21stcentury.html>

Dr Peter Hill is Executive Director of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority (ACARA)

[< top >](#)

Consultation on the draft Australian Curriculum

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

The draft Australian Curriculum for English, mathematics, science and history (K-10) will be available for consultation from 1 March 2010 to the end of May 2010. The draft curriculum for these learning areas will be available online through the Australian Curriculum Consultation Portal, and will include content descriptions, achievement standards, content elaborations and some annotated work samples.

The consultation website will be available for everyone to read, review, download or print the draft K-10 curriculum. It will also be the place where individuals and groups can provide feedback and where the online feedback survey can be completed.

The K-10 consultation process and the K-10 part of the website will be open until 23 May 2010.

Work on the senior secondary years' curriculum for English, mathematics, science and history is proceeding according to the agreed timeframe. From April 2010 to June 2010, the senior secondary curriculum will be available online for consultation.

Read more at: <http://www.acara.edu.au/consultation.html>

[< top >](#)



[< top >](#)

DISABILITY EDUCATION

Students and teachers protest disability cuts

ABC News, Mar 18, 2010

Special needs students and teachers are rallying at Parliament House in Canberra today in protest against funding cuts to disability education.

The group will present their concerns in a meeting with Education Minister Julia Gillard.

Principal of St Lucy's School in Wahroonga, Jo Karaolis, says funding for special needs schools is inadequate.

But she says the problem is even worse for non-government schools serving those students.

"Our deficit is \$600,000 each year," she said.

"For other schools it is \$200,000 to \$700,000 and to meet that through fundraising each year is really not sustainable."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/18/2849361.htm>

[< top >](#)

Australia's disability laws need critical review

Nicholas Patrick, the Age, 12 March 2010

People with disabilities in Australia live on a lower socio-economic rung than most.

People with a disability have poorer educational qualifications, have a higher rate of unemployment, earn lower wages on average, have a reduced life expectancy of up to 20 years, are three-times more likely to be a victim of violent crime and, are far more likely to be the victim of a sexual assault than the rest of the population.

It reads like life in a third world ghetto, yet it is here, and our laws do little to address these critical issues.

Much newsprint and digital space has been devoted to such issues as wheelchair access on domestic and international flights, mental health in the Northern Territory, and, on Four Corners recently, the dire state of government support for parents of children with disabilities.

Other cases, gaining less media attention, such as access to education and electoral rights for voters, are progressing through the courts.

Yet, for all the very real pain and injustice these stories draw on, they are only mountain peaks of public awareness. The state of legal rights for people with disability are, in fact, far worse than even these very serious cases might suggest.

Read entire article: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/australias-disability-laws-need-critical-review-20100312-q2vv.html>

Nicolas Patrick is Pro Bono Partner at DLA Phillips Fox and lead author of the formal response to the federal government's report on Australia's compliance with the CRPD

[< top >](#)

FUNDING

Principals propose single plan in primary school funding

Anna Patty, Sydney Morning Herald, 19 March 2010

PRIMARY school principals across the country are asking for a single national model of school funding allocated according to the need of each student regardless of whether he or she is in the private or public sector.

The principals from government, Catholic and independent schools have called for the new funding model to replace the existing system, which is "failing students". The Australian Primary Principals Association, representing all education sectors, yesterday proposed a new model to override disjointed state and federal funding arrangements.

They suggest combining money from state and federal governments for distribution to all schools regardless of whether they are public or private. Under the existing system, public schools are primarily funded by the states, while private schools receive federal assistance.

The association's president, Leonie Trimper, described the collaboration as groundbreaking. "For the first time, all three education sectors have come together in support of a funding model that operates transparently and on the basis of need," she said. "The current school funding system is broken."

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/single-plan-in-primary-school-funding-20100318-gilm.html>

Read the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA) Media Release: <http://www.appa.asn.au/index.php/appa-business/news-items/923-media-release-all-school-sectors-agree-on-funding-principles>

Read the APPA Discussion Paper: <http://www.appa.asn.au/images/drivers/designingfundingmodel20100318.pdf>

[< top >](#)

Red-tape costs top school handouts

Justine Ferrari, The Australian, March 22, 2010

National Catholic Education Commission deputy chairman Brian Croke yesterday told The Australian that the Education Revolution would be more appropriately named the Administration Revolution.

"The whole of 2009, the first scheduled year of most national partnerships, was entirely consumed in organising them," he said. "Now with funded projects barely under way, the management of accountabilities and evaluation has the potential to displace a proper focus on teaching and learning in schools."

He said the agreements were more accurately bilateral agreements and "a series of nationally unco-ordinated state-based initiatives".

The Australian understands the independent schools sector in NSW has received more money to evaluate its programs than it did to implement them.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/in-depth/schools-watch/red-tape-costs-top-school-handouts/story-fn56ulhe-1225843502015>

[< top >](#)

LITERACY & NUMERACY

Declining numeracy is shaping our future

Guy Healy, the Australian, 17 March 2010

AUSTRALIA was heading back to the Lucky Country days when it did not have to innovate and could rely on earnings from the soil, one of the country's leading statisticians has warned.

In the wake of last week's Group of Eight report on the maths crisis, Australian Research Council Federation fellow Peter Hall said he feared Australia was "going backwards" on maths education and the disciplines it supported.

"In 1964 Donald Horne wrote that Australia showed less enterprise than almost any other prosperous industrial society," said Professor Hall, an adviser for the maths report. "The concern of my colleagues and I is that we are actually heading back there to some extent."

Read entire article: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/declining-numeracy-is-shaping-our-future/story-e6frgcjx-1225841552704>

[< top >](#)

"Making the most difference for every student"

Hon Julia Gillard MP, Speech to National Literacy & Numeracy Forum, 18 March 2010

You are here because you're committed to developing approaches to helping kids with literacy and numeracy that work – approaches that will make the most difference.

We want to make sure that every student in every community can achieve their potential.

Teaching and learning is at the core of this goal and we need to work together to ensure we have the data and resources to make it happen. When it really comes to the crunch the Education Revolution is about more than record investments – it's about improving the quality of what goes on inside the classroom.

A key outcome of the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy will be to build a national understanding of what works in literacy and numeracy. The building of such an evidence base will help drive changes in teaching practice and assist states and territories to make better informed decisions in supporting all students' literacy and numeracy development.

Edited extracts – read entire speech:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Speeches/Pages/Article_100318_150832.aspx

[< top >](#)

New philosophy to make up for the syntax of the past

Neroli Colvin, Sydney Morning Herald, 21 March 2010

THE problem is huge: low levels of literacy among up to half of Australians. The solution: a new national school curriculum, literacy for the 21st century and, gasp, grammar.

Some say dropping grammar in the 1970s began the slide to today's textese - "yng peeps cant rite proply".

But many older Australians live with literacy levels lower than young people. The issue is the needs of people and the economy are changing and so is the curriculum.

Is boring old grammar the answer? Well, not really. It's a modern approach to grammar that's being introduced. And the ambitions are broad: lift children who slip through cracks in the education system to a level of reading and writing that reflects Australia's wealth.

Almost half of adult Australians have literacy skills lower than those needed to meet the demands of everyday life and work in a knowledge-based economy, Bureau of Statistics figures show.

Read more at: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/new-philosophy-to-make-up-for-the-syntax-of-the-past-20100320-qn7m.html>

[< top >](#)

RESEARCH

Social networking provides new opportunities for learning

ACER E-News, 19 March 2010

Information Communication technologies (ICT) including social networking and games provide new opportunities for education a review of research released by ACER earlier this month argues. But, according to Australian Education Review 56, the 'off the shelf' mentality which currently underpins the provision of computers in Australian schools may be stifling rather than enhancing innovation.

The review *Building Innovation: Learning with technologies* by University of Canberra academic Kathryn Moyle explores national and international policy priorities for building students' innovation capabilities through information and communication technologies (ICT).

Releasing the review ACER's chief executive Professor Geoff Masters noted that the importance of ICT literacy is now widely recognised in education policies across the world.

"ICT literacy is increasingly being given the policy status previously allocated only to literacy and numeracy," he said. "We need to use the research to make the necessary changes to enhance the capabilities of students and teachers in this vital area of learning."

The review's author Kathryn Moyle said when used well technologies such as Web 2.0 social networking sites can help to develop literacy skills, critical thinking, teamwork and problem-solving skills.

Read entire release: http://www.acer.edu.au/enews/1003_AER56.html

[< top >](#)

Digital Education Research Network launched by ACER

Researchers with an interest in digital learning are now able to debate issues and share ideas following the launch today of the Digital Education Research Network (DERN).

DERN has been established by ACER as a communications, discussion, networking and storage service for researchers in the area of digital learning. The vision for DERN is to develop a place to aggregate Australian research into the use of ICT in education and to stimulate discussion among researchers in this area.

The launch of DERN coincides with the release earlier this month of Australian Education Review 56, *Building Innovation: Learning with technologies*, by Kathryn Moyle, Associate Professor of Education at the University of Canberra.

Researchers are invited to access and comment on the review through DERN.

[< top >](#)

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Young Indigenous leaders to study at Oxford University

Hon Jenny Macklin MP, Media Release, 16/03/2010

Two young Indigenous scholars will travel to Britain to study at Oxford University as the inaugural winners of scholarships established in memory of the life and contribution of Aboriginal leader and activist, Charles Perkins.

Paul Gray, a Wiradjuri man from New South Wales, and Christian Thompson, a Bidjara man from south west Queensland, will further their studies at Oxford as recipients of post graduate scholarships supported by the Charlie Perkins Trust for Children and Students.

These two remarkable young men have already achieved so much in their chosen fields of study and will now have the opportunity to continue their studies overseas.

Through his scholarship, Paul will develop research on the neurobiological processes in children as a result of traumatic events early in life and explore how best to support children at risk of developing mental health problems.

Christian will undertake doctoral studies in Fine Arts, including research into Indigenous Australian artefacts, as well as furthering his interest in museum curatorship and contemporary research.

These scholarships honour the contribution of Dr Charles Perkins - the first Indigenous Australian to graduate from university. Dr Perkins dedicated his considerable abilities and great energy to achieve justice for Indigenous people.

Read entire release:

http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/indig_leaders_to_study_at_oxford_16mar2010.htm

[< top >](#)



[< top >](#)

RURAL & REGIONAL EDUCATION

Government delivers on Youth Allowance

Hon Julia Gillard MP, Media Release, 16 March 2010

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, today welcomed the agreement of the Opposition to secure the passage of the Youth Allowance bill in the Senate which will see more than 150,000 students across Australia start to receive new scholarships from April 1.

More than 100,000 students will be better off under the changes by receiving more Youth Allowance or Youth Allowance for the first time. New parental income test arrangements will come into force from July 1.

The Liberal and National Parties agreed to the bill after the Government made changes that will mean students who live away from our major cities and regional centres who have to move will be eligible under the existing independence test.

The existing test will be restricted to those who leave home to study, whose parents earn less than \$150,000 a year and who live in "Very Remote", "Remote" or "Outer Regional" areas as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Read entire release for key elements of the changes:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_100316_175824.aspx

[< top >](#)

Group attacks 'discriminatory' Youth Allowance changes

ABC News, Mar 18, 2010

Central Victorians have been excluded from a compromise deal to allow some regional students to qualify for Youth Allowance under the old system.

The Senate has passed the Federal Government's changes which will allow rural and outer regional students to receive the student income support under the old criteria.

But central Victorians, including students from Bendigo, Rushworth, Rochester and Echuca, will have to meet the new tougher rules to get the payment.

Brigid Evans from the Bendigo Youth Allowance Action Group says the new system discriminates against many country students, who will now face tougher barriers to access assistance.

"I think it is still quite discriminatory against regional students," she said. "We've been lumped in the same category as city students but we don't have access to nearly as much as they do."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/18/2849585.htm>

[< top >](#)

AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES

NSW: NSW fails to end cramming of students into classrooms

Bruce McDougall & Nic Christensen, Daily Telegraph, 18 March 2010

NSW primary schools have the largest class sizes in Australia, despite a \$700 million program to improve student-to-teacher ratios.

Figures released yesterday by the Australian Bureau of Statistics showed NSW public primary schools had one teacher for 15.9 students.

The Australian average was 15.5 students per teacher.

Opposition education spokesman Adrian Piccoli said NSW parents would be "horrified".

"Cramming more children into already overcrowded classrooms will mean teachers have less time to spend one-on-one with students," he said.

Read entire article: <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw-fails-to-end-cramming-of-students-into-classrooms/story-e6freuy9-1225842093830>

[< top >](#)

NSW: Plans to sell agricultural school land dropped

ABC News, Mar 18, 2010

The New South Wales Government has abandoned plans to sell off farm land around Hurlstone Agricultural High School, after an independent review recommended against the sale.

The Government wanted to sell off 140 hectares of land at south-western Sydney school, with half the proceeds returned to fund additional capital works at the school.

Parents and students at the school disagreed with the sell-off and campaigned to stop the sale, which they say was announced without consultation in 2008.

Last May, the former President of the New South Wales Farmers Federation, Mal Peters, was appointed to head an independent inquiry into the sale. The Government now says it will adopt his recommendation that 10 hectares at the western edge of the site be put up for sale, with all profits used to revitalise the school.

Read entire article: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/18/2849254.htm>

[< top >](#)

NSW MP slams 'dog's breakfast' Youth Allowance changes

ABC News, Mar 18, 2010

The federal Member for Parkes, Mark Coulton, says the Commonwealth's Youth Allowance changes are unfair for regional students who live in larger centres.

The legislation passed through Parliament yesterday after the Government and Opposition reached a deal to keep the same criteria for an independence allowance for rural and outer regional students.

However, those who live in towns like Dubbo, Orange and Mudgee will have to work for 18 months instead of one year to qualify for the assistance.

Mr Coulton says the guidelines are discriminatory. "There's billions of dollars going everywhere but regional students seem to have to be fiscally responsible.

"You know while we have got concessions to what it was going to be last year, this is still a dog's breakfast and it needs to be fixed up."

Read entire article: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/18/2849663.htm>

[< top >](#)

NSW: Quotas planned for Sydney Uni students

Heath Gilmore, Sydney Morning Herald, March 19, 2010

THE importance of HSC results will be downgraded at one of Australia's most prestigious universities under plans to recruit undergraduates for their leadership qualities and general academic aptitude.

The University of Sydney wants to introduce US-style quota systems with set targets to increase the number of disadvantaged and regional students, and make greater use of aptitude tests, references and general interviews when admitting students.

In a green paper on its future, the university says it is considering "radical reform" of its undergraduate recruitment program.

Other possible changes include awarding students from designated disadvantaged schools a five-point bonus to their Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank for entry into undergraduate courses.

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/quotas-planned-for-uni-students-20100318-qiff.html>

[< top >](#)

NT: NT youth 'afraid to walk streets'

ABC News, Mar 20, 2010

A survey has found that young people in the Northern Territory are afraid of going out on the streets, to school or even home because of violence.

Around 14 per cent of the nearly 500 people surveyed said violence was their top concern, while nearly half said they were worried about violence combined with drug and alcohol abuse.

The findings were reported to a federal parliamentary committee this week by a roundtable of young Territorians, including 16-year-old Joshua May from Humpty Doo.

"One thing that particularly shocked us was the amount of 12-year-olds girls ... from Alice Springs who said they were afraid to go out on the streets after about 3:00pm because they said they'd be subjected to random sexual assault," he said.

"We did recommend however that there should be an education program instilled from earliest school age and possibly more support in the home for these people, because we decided it was a number one concern that these people learn how to effectively deal with anger and violence."

The roundtable says the internet is playing a role in bullying at school, with Mr May saying those concerned about bullying felt not enough was being done to stop it.

Read entire article: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/20/2851347.htm>

[< top >](#)

NT: Nominations Open for NT Training Awards

Dr Chris Burns, Minister for Education and Training, 23 March

Nominations are now open for the 2010 Northern Territory Training Awards that recognise high standards of training and personal achievement in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

Minister for Education and Training Chris Burns encouraged people to nominate for the awards.

"The Territory Government is building the workforce for the future and VET is vital to delivering more skilled workers," Dr Burns said.

"The NT Training Awards recognise the businesses, training organisations and trainers doing a good job helping to develop trainees and apprentices.

"The awards also recognise high achieving trainees, apprentices and students undergoing VET.

Read more at <http://newsroom.nt.gov.au/index.cfm?fuseaction=viewRelease&id=6700&d=5>

[< top >](#)

QLD: No strike at vast majority of Catholic schools

Media Release, Brisbane Catholic Education, 18 March 2010

There will be NO strike action by teachers next week at the vast majority of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

Of the 150 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese (which stretches from Coolangatta to Childers, just south of Bundaberg), 133 are operated by Brisbane Catholic Education. There will be NO strike in these schools as only 18.9% of teachers in BCE schools voted in favour of strike action.

This means that ALL Catholic primary schools will remain open and fully staffed, as will the majority of secondary schools.

Only the 17 schools run by religious orders (and listed in the media release issued by the Queensland Independent Education Union) will potentially be affected by the strike.

Read more at:

<http://www.cathnews.com/uploads/doc/2010/03/Catholic%20Education%20Archdiocese%20of%20Brisbane%20-%20No%20strike%20in%20BCE%20schools.doc>

[< top >](#)

QLD: The [QUTeach@Redcliffe](#) program

Curriculum Leadership, 19 March 2010

The [QUTeach@Redcliffe](#) program enables senior secondary students from a disadvantaged region of Queensland to commence teacher education degrees while completing school. Introduced in mid-2008, QUTeach is a collaboration between Queensland University of Technology and Queensland's Bays Cluster of State High Schools. It is currently in pilot form.

The program emerged as the result of equity concerns in relation to students who face barriers to university entrance, in terms of social, racial or financial disadvantage. It was also motivated by a desire to generate a stream of new teachers who come from the region and understand its circumstances, and who can relate well to the school students they teach.

Rather than learning as individuals on a university campus, students in the program are taught as a class so that they can learn from one another as well as from their instructors. The classes are conducted two evenings per week on the premises of Redcliffe State High School, which is more familiar and easier to access than the university campus. However, the students also attend the QUT's Kelvin Grove campus one or two days each semester to familiarise themselves with the university environment and participate in lectures on campus.

Read entire article: <http://cmslive.curriculum.edu.au/leader/default.asp?id=30741&issueID=12086>

[< top >](#)

QLD: 22 schools stay closed in Mackay region for cyclone clean-up

ABC News, 22 March 2010

The Queensland Department of Education and Training (DET) has advised it will close 22 schools today in the Mackay region while the clean-up continues in north Queensland from ex-Tropical Cyclone Ului.

Power supply remains the major problem in north Queensland in the wake of the cyclone.

The DET says fallen trees have caused hazardous conditions and some schools have been affected by water inundation and power failure.

Premier Anna Bligh says 19 state schools and three Catholic schools will be closed today because of cyclone damage.

"A number of schools across the region will not be able to be open because in some parts because there's debris covering school entrances and it's not safe for children," she said. "For others the power is not back on those schools and because they're not able to secure water supplies because they're not able to pump water."

Read entire article: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/22/2852263.htm>

[< top >](#)

QLD: Gold Coast wins million dollar international education forum

Media Release, Gold Coast Tourism, 22 March 2010

Gold Coast Tourism (GCT) in partnership with ICEF have secured the Australia and New Zealand Agents (ANZA) 2011 Workshop which will bring around 500 delegates and inject more than one million dollars into the city economy.

Director for Bond College and Bond University English Language Institute Administration, Mr Rowan Hinton said bringing the agents to the Gold Coast was an essential part of growing international student numbers.

"It is the agents that ultimately help students make decisions about their study preferences. "

"International education is a competitive market; agents are vital to our growth and the success of the industry. Bringing the agents to the ANZA workshop, who make up more than half of the total delegation and are based from all parts of the globe, is a tremendous boost for the Gold Coast education sector."

Read more at

<http://businessgc.com.au/index.php?mact=News,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01articleid=321&cntnt01returnid=509>

[< top >](#)

SA: Dark horse claims big scalp

Pia Akerman, The Australian, March 22, 2010

THE 15 per cent swing against one of South Australian Labor's brightest stars, Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith, stunned even the modelling agency owner who unseated her.

Liberal Rachel Sanderson yesterday modestly accepted her leader's congratulations for claiming the biggest scalp on Saturday night.

Dr Lomax-Smith, who also held the tourism, mental health and City of Adelaide portfolios, was one of Premier Mike Rann's closest colleagues, featuring prominently in party advertisements and campaigning.

She did not return calls yesterday, but the new MP for Adelaide, Ms Sanderson, said the colossal swing to the Liberals surprised even her.

"A lot of things helped, but I think education probably pushed us over the line," Ms Sanderson said.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/dark-horse-claims-big-scalp/story-e6frg6nf-1225843486192>

[< top >](#)



[< top >](#)

TAS: Teachers & parents renew attack on MySchool site

ABC News, Mar 19, 2010

Education bodies in Tasmania have joined forces to oppose the Federal Government's MySchool website.

Two education unions, two parents and friends groups and Tasmania's principals' association have formed a united front to criticise the website.

The Education Union's President, Leanne Wright, says the information does not give parents a complete set of values for respective schools.

"It is very simplistic, it doesn't show the complexity of schools at all, or what schools can do for particular children," she said.

"It doesn't show how well they teach children social skills or leadership skills."

Ms Wright says the data on the site can be misused and the information should not be presented in a way that allows comparison between schools.

Read entire article: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/19/2850979.htm>

[< top >](#)

TAS: After three years of talks, department moves to prosecute parents who fear for son's life

Libby Bingham, The Advocate, 20 March 2010

THE Department of Education has moved to prosecute a Devonport couple who have kept their son out of school for three years for fear he could die.

Bubbly Devonport boy Alan Tabain, 7, has a severe allergy to common foods such as nuts, milk, egg and sesame seeds.

At the school in which Alan was enrolled, safeguards are in place for five other pupils with severe allergies, according to the North-West general manager of learning services, Malcolm Wells.

But that's not comfort enough for parents Geoff and Hannah Tabain, who say they have been denied access to Alan's teachers to check their level of understanding and their standard of training in regard to the allergy.

When Alan last attended Nixon Street Primary for four weeks in 2007 his parents found out his teacher missed a training session to use an EpiPen, a life-saving device that needs to be administered as soon as an allergic reaction becomes apparent.

Read more at <http://www.theadvocate.com.au/news/local/news/general/after-three-years-of-talks-department-moves-to-prosecute-parents-who-fear-for-sons-life/1781512.aspx?src=rss>

[< top >](#)

TAS: ALP given clear message to shape up after weekend election battles

Amanda Gome, Smartcompany, 22 March 2010

In Tasmania, Labor suffered a 12% swing against it, with 7% to the Liberals and 5% to the Greens.

The Liberal leader, Will Hodgman claimed a mandate to become Premier but will be forced to form a minority government with the hostile Labor and Greens.

The Greens vote, at 21%, is the highest for that party in any state or territory election. It is the response of a deliberate campaign by leader Nick McKim to avoid the typical doomsday scenarios that the Greens have pedalled and replacing that with a focus on a more mainstream pitch on health and education mixed with visions of a positive future.

Read more at: <http://www.smartcompany.com.au/politics/20100322-alp-given-clear-message-to-shape-up-after-weekend-election-battles.html>

[< top >](#)

VIC: Students charged for take-home computers

Natasha Bitá, the Australian, 19 March 2010

A SCHOOL handed \$465,000 in taxpayers' money to buy computers is charging its students \$1410 to take laptops home.

A charity has stepped in to pay the "computer levy" for four low-income students attending Lilydale High School, a working-class suburb on Melbourne's eastern fringe.

The federal government awarded the school \$465,000 to buy 465 computers under its \$2.1 billion Digital Education Revolution program.

But disability pensioner Russell Fraser yesterday said he was among parents having trouble paying the school's computer levy.

"For disadvantaged and one-income families, it's a lot of money in a year, especially if you've got a couple of kids going to high school," he said. "Mr Rudd promised during the election that every kid would have a computer."

Read entire article: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/students-charged-for-take-home-computers/story-e6frg6nf-1225842553463>

[< top >](#)

VIC: School robbed of bushfire donations for second time

March 18, 2010

Goods donated to victims of the Black Saturday bushfires have been stolen from a Melbourne primary school for the second time in as many weeks.

Items including laptops, still cameras and video cameras had been collected for children affected by the fires on February 7, 2009, and stored at Wattle Glen Primary School in Melbourne's outer north-east, police said.

Classrooms containing the items were burgled on the weekend of March 6-7.

A media campaign helped charity workers replace the items, but they were stolen from the same classrooms on Tuesday night, police said.

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/national/school-robbed-of-bushfire-donations-for-second-time-20100318-qfyb.html?autostart=1>

[< top >](#)

VIC: Stawell Students clean up their school

Stawell Times News, 19 Mar, 2010

Students at Stawell West Primary School were busy cleaning up their school grounds last Friday. The school was unable to take part in National Schools Clean Up Day the previous week due to heavy rain, but decided to reschedule the cleanup.

Tying it in with Crazy Hair Day, students donned their gloves and hats and were busy throughout the morning picking up rubbish and placing it in the bins.

Some of the rubbish collected on the day included chip and other food wrappers, broken pieces of garden pipe, fallen tree branches and leaves and icy pole sticks.

All the students enjoyed getting involved with the teachers to clean up the school grounds and ensure the rubbish went where it belongs - in the bin and not on the ground.

Source: <http://www.stawelltimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/students-clean-up-their-school/1780776.aspx>

[< top >](#)

WA: Four new primary schools to be built in time for 2012 school year

Education Minister Liz Constable, 18 March 2010

The State Government will today announce that four new primary schools will be built at an estimated total cost of \$56million - in time to open for the 2012 school year.

These new schools are part of the State Government's record \$1.1billion investment in new schools and building, refurbishment and improvement work across the State this year.

Education Minister Liz Constable said the new schools in Aveley, Malvern Springs (Ellenbrook), Meadow Springs (north of Mandurah) and Piara Waters (north of Forrestdale) will be built to meet the educational needs of some of Perth's fastest growing suburbs and are expected to cost \$14million each.

"This represents a major investment by the State Government in the education and social needs and the future of each of these growing communities," the Minister said.

Read more at: <http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Lists/Statements/DispForm.aspx?ID=133243>

[< top >](#)

WA: MP to push for more Youth Allowance changes

ABC News, Mar 18, 2010

The federal Member for the South West, Nola Marino, has vowed to continue pushing for changes to the criteria governing Youth Allowance payments.

The Federal Government has agreed to allow students from areas classified as outer regional and remote to apply for assistance under the existing criteria.

Students from inner-regional areas will still be required to work 30 hours per week unless their parents earn less than \$150,000 per year.

Ms Marino says she is pleased some students will benefit but more needs to be done.

Read more at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/18/2849628.htm>

[< top >](#)

WA: Geraldton Yr 12s keen on science: survey

ABC News, 22 March 2010

The Geraldton Universities Centre says more science-based courses will be offered in the region as interest in the area grows.

A survey of Year 12 students in Geraldton has found nearly a third of those wanting to pursue higher education are interested in a science course.

The survey found nearly half the students wanting to go to university or TAFE would prefer to study in Geraldton.

The centre's director, Meredith Wills, says the region's tertiary education providers are keen to meet the growing demand for science-based courses.

"We've been very encouraged by the strong interest in science and that was really brought about by the WA chief scientist, Lyn Beazley, working in our region with school students and with the Durack Institute and the Geraldton Universities Centre over the past two years," she said. "We're now working closely with Curtin and Durack to offer new science options in Geraldton next year."

Read entire article: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/22/2852581.htm>

[< top >](#)

WA: Teacher criticised on website

ABC News, 22 March 2010

A dozen students from Leeming Senior High School have been suspended after they contributed to a website that targeted a female maths teacher.

Principal Judy Semple says 600 people signed up to the site that was created to denigrate and bully the teacher.

The site has been shut down but it is understood another similar one has been set up.

Ms Semple says there's a limit to what the school can do to prevent such technology being used inappropriately.

Read more at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/22/2852595.htm>

[< top >](#)

CONFERENCES

Early Career Teachers' Conference

17 April, Victorian Association for the Teaching of English, Melbourne VIC

This conference offers early career teachers (preservice-3 years) an opportunity to engage in some important reflection about their work. Sessions include:

- Groovy Grammar
- Teaching Writing
- Rich Reading
- Teaching Issues
- Copyright - The correct way to succeed in English
- Connect with your class

Read more at [http://www.vate.org.au/vate.nsf/file/2010%20Early%20Career%20Teachers%20Day/\\$file/ECTC-2010.pdf](http://www.vate.org.au/vate.nsf/file/2010%20Early%20Career%20Teachers%20Day/$file/ECTC-2010.pdf)

[< top >](#)

The Tender Bridge

17 May, St Aloysius College, Adelaide, SA

ACER's Tender Bridge™ brings schools and funds together. Education organisations have access to a wide range of significant funds. In this not to be missed seminar you will learn how:

- to secure more funds
- to improve submissions for success
- to make effective decisions when applying to a philanthropic fund.

At this one day seminar education organisations will have the rare opportunity to join national expert in this field Catherine Brown (Catherine Brown & Associates Pty Ltd); along with Austin Paterson (CEO, the R.E. Ross Trust); the Myer Foundation successful applicants, 'Yarrabah School' (Vic); and Dr Michelle Anderson (Project Director of the Tender Bridge™) to discuss issues on this topic that matter most to you.

Read more at: <http://www.acer.edu.au/1/index.php/seminar/the-tender-bridge/>

[< top >](#)

REMINDERS

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

6-9 April - Digital Diversity Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://acec2010.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>

26-28 April - Canada International Conference on Education - Toronto, Canada - <http://www.ciceducation.org/>

27-29 May - Council of Educational Facility Planners International Conference - Perth, WA - <http://australasia.cefpi.org/>

22 April - 21st Century Learning Spaces Networking Event - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.educationau.edu.au/21st-century-learning-event>

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

7 May - National Walk Safely to School Day - <http://www.walk.com.au>

14 May - Modern Language Teachers' Association of Victoria Annual Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.mltav.asn.au>

17 May - Tackling Underachievement: Engaging Boys and Girls - Sydney, NSW - <http://conferences2010.schoolevent.org>

18 May - Tackling Underachievement: Engaging Boys and Girls - Melbourne, VIC - <http://conferences2010.schoolevent.org>

25-28 May - Inclusive Learning Technologies Conference - Gold Coast, QLD - <http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/conference/>

4-5 June - Early Childhood Education Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.togetherwegrow.com.au/2010registration.html>

17-18 June - National Conference of Australian Special Education Principals' Association & Australian Association of Special Education - Darwin, NT - <http://www.gemsevents.com.au/aase2010/>

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/>

7-9 July - Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.aifs.gov.au/conference>

21-24 July - Second Paris International Conference on Education, Economy & Society - Paris, France - <http://education-conferences.org/default.aspx>

26-27 August - Annual School Leaders' Conference - Gold Coast, QLD - <http://www.griffith.edu.au/pdn-leadership-conference-2010>

6-8 September - London International Conference on Education - London, UK - <http://www.liceducation.org/>

27-30 September - National Australian Association for Environmental Education Conference - Canberra, ACT - <https://www.conferenceco.com.au/aaee>

[< top >](#)

ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

- Australian Education Digest : <http://www.acsso.org.au/australian-education-digest/> (weekly)
- International News Roundup : <http://www.acsso.org.au/roundup/> (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/public-education-voice> (quarterly)

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