



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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ELECTION 2010

Towards a more inclusive society, developing sustainably

ACSSO Editorial, 20 July 2010

Now that a date has been set for the vitally important federal election on Saturday 21 August 2010, the thoughts of every parent naturally focus on what the issues, outcomes and policy initiatives will mean for the learning and personal development of their children, how these will equip them more effectively for a fulfilling life in terms of the needs and dynamics of the 21st century as it unrolls through the years ahead, and what sort of society and world this next generation will inherit.

Every parent wants the best possible outcomes for their children – and is both keen and anxious about how to help schools provide their children with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and aspirations that will equip them for the journey ahead and enable them to pursue their choices and opportunities through the rapidly changing times and context of the modern world.

Every parent responds positively and intuitively to the nature of commitment given by the Education Minister of the previous government: “We want to make sure that every student – in every community – can achieve their potential”. That must be an essential driving goal and purpose for any incoming administration.

Read more, and comment: <http://www.acssso.org.au/2010/07/towards-a-more-inclusive-society-developing-sustainably/>

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SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Parents applaud Prime Minister's extension of education tax break

Peter Garrigan, ACSSO President, 13 July 2010

When this government was elected, they recognised the need to make it easier for those families finding it hard, with the tax break on some of the key tools of learning that every learner must have – books, stationery and computer items. That was a first big step forward in levelling the playing field for families in need of a helping hand.

Today's announcement sets in place a no less significant and resonant means of support and encouragement for those families and students. One that provides not just as a very important direct financial support - but also as a great deal more.

When schools set dress codes for their students, that certainly takes some pressure off parents in relation to unhealthy and divisive 'have and have not' fashion competitions among the students, and that is a positive for the families and the student community.

Then we note all the research which shows that when young people have a positive self image, sense of belonging, feel good about themselves and their appearance, then they are in a better position for effective learning and social interaction. This helps those families to ensure that their children look smart – and feel smart.

This also promotes community cohesion and social inclusion. So, we think it's a great initiative!

Read more, and comment: <http://www.acsso.org.au/2010/07/parents-applaud-extension-of-education-tax-break/>

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PM Julia Gillard weighs into debate over school uniforms

Phillip Hudson, Herald Sun, 14 July 2010

JULIA Gillard has kick-started a debate about school uniforms, saying they prevent fashion envy in the playground and give children discipline.

But the Prime Minister stopped short of saying uniforms should be compulsory, saying that decision should be made by school communities.

"I certainly believe in the value of school uniforms," she said as she announced an election pledge to give parents a tax break of up to \$779 a year per child against the cost of buying uniforms.

"I still have at the back of the wardrobe the prefect's tie that I proudly wore at Unley High School. I believe having a school uniform gives people a sense of self, a sense of discipline, a sense of how to present yourself to the world.

"I also believe having a school uniform helps undercut the kind of unhealthy competition we can see at schools to have the latest, most expensive, fashionable gear."

As revealed in the Herald Sun, Ms Gillard said the tax break would be delivered to parents receiving Family Tax Benefit part A if Labor won this year's election. It will cover 50 per cent of the cost of approved school uniforms bought after July next year, but parents won't get the money back until they lodge a 2012-13 tax return.

Read more: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/pm-julia-gillard-weighs-into-debate-over-school-uniforms/story-e6frf7l6-1225891378228>

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Fears tax break on uniforms will drive up prices

Milanda Rout, Stephen Lunn & Michael Delaney, the Australian, 17 July 2010

PARENTS have called on the Gillard government to monitor the tax rebate for school uniforms to ensure manufacturers do not inflate prices. Peak parent and school council groups say they want the federal Department of Education to put sufficient resources into playing watchdog over the new \$220 million rebate for families.

The scheme, announced by Julia Gillard this week, allows parents to claim up to \$390 for a primary school child and \$779 for a secondary school student through their tax return.

The means-tested rebate is an extension of tax breaks for school textbooks, computers, internet connection and stationery.

The government had budgeted for 2.1 million children to benefit from the scheme, but the parents of only 1.7 million children had made claims.

Victorian Council of School Organisations president Nicholas Abbey said the federal government had the responsibility to ensure no uniform manufacturer would take advantage of the rebate and increase prices. "One would hope there would be sufficient resources put aside for oversight from the federal government," he said.

Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW president Dianne Giblin said she doubted whether the rebate would be taken up by the families who really needed it.

Parents Victoria spokeswoman Gail McHardy said low-income families hit a bureaucratic minefield when trying to work out eligibility for education discounts and rebates. "What is claimable at a state level is complicated, and then when you add in the national level with the education tax refund, it can be extremely confusing for these families," she said.

Each state has different systems, with different eligibility requirements. In Queensland, for instance, there is a textbook and resource allowance for high school students, ranging from \$102 to \$225 a year.

Source: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/fears-tax-break-on-uniforms-will-drive-up-prices/story-e6frg6n6-1225892939908>

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Students enter school uniform debate

Stephen Lunn & Michael Delaney, the Australian, 17 July 2010

WHATEVER Julia Gillard might say about school uniforms instilling a sense of discipline, some students like to turn up to school in jeans.

Meg McCartney, 15, is in Year 10 at Melbourne's Princes Hill Secondary College which operates under a no-uniform policy. She said it was a critical part of her family's decision to send her to this school.

"I enjoy expressing myself, and clothes is just one way of doing this," Meg said.

When Ms Gillard announced on Wednesday the introduction of a tax rebate for school uniforms, she said her experience of wearing one was so positive she still kept her old school tie.

"I believe having a school uniform gives people a sense of self, a sense of discipline, a sense of how to present yourself to the world," the Prime Minister said. "I also think it undercuts some of those unhealthy things that can happen at schools when there's a competition for the latest, most fashionable item."

Meg is not so sure. "If discipline relies on everyone being a clone, that's a serious issue for a school," she said.

Most states leave it up to individual school communities to determine whether uniforms are compulsory, a position Ms Gillard endorsed. But school uniforms are compulsory in high school in Western Australia and the Northern Territory. NSW and Tasmania strongly encourage a school uniform, while Queensland, Victoria and South Australia are neutral on the issue.

Read more: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/students-enter-school-uniform-debate/story-e6frg6n6-1225892936438>

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BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION

Devolving Building the Education Revolution to Schools

Ross Fitzgerald, *the Australian*, 17 July 2010

The Coalition's proposal to allow schools to self-manage projects makes perfect sense

It is a bizarre irony that the former minister for education, Julia Gillard, succeeded Kevin Rudd as prime minister when it is the waste and mismanagement of a program she is entirely responsible for that seriously damaged the Rudd government's credibility and contributed to his downfall.

Given what we know about Gillard's abilities, it is not surprising that, during the first few weeks of her administration, the wheels have fallen off her solution to stop the influx of asylum-seekers, and that she is looking decidedly shaky on the mining tax deal.

Over the past 2 1/2 years there hasn't been an education policy that hasn't been partially or entirely bungled in some way, shape, or form by the former minister for education.

Putting that aside for the moment, it is worth considering the new Minister for Education and the possible reason he was chosen for the job. Gillard did not decide to go with a young up-and-comer or a firebrand visionary type who could reignite the portfolio of education, which is historically considered one of Labor's greatest strengths. Instead she opted to go with Simon Crean, trying to shore up problems and inoculate the huge deficiencies in the portfolio in the hope they can quietly sit out the election.

Despite Gillard's comments this week, Labor simply cannot afford to fight the election on education because of her record of failure in the portfolio. With the effective and energetic Christopher Pyne as shadow education minister, Gillard couldn't risk putting the portfolio in the hands of a novice.

Read more: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/politics/hardly-revolutionary-but-pynes-plan-could-build-a-better-future/story-e6frgczf-1225892691348>

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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

National Trade Cadetships – Providing career paths for students

Hon Simon Crean MP, 20 July 2010

As a nation, we've got to widen the opportunities, availability and access to education.

That's why, as part of our plan to move Australia forward through investment in education, Federal Labor will ensure school students wanting to pursue a career in the trades have a clearly defined pathway – equal in quality, value and rigour to traditional academic pursuits.

From 2012 students from Years 9 to 12 will be offered a new National Trade Cadetship as an option under the National Curriculum. This Cadetship will be delivered through their local Trades Training Centre.

There will be two streams of National Trade Cadetships available:

1. National Trade Cadetship – Foundation which will focus on essential work readiness skills and laying the foundation for further training; and
2. National Trade Cadetship – Pre-Apprentice which will focus on a specific trade or occupation area.

The National Curriculum provides clear pathways for students who want to pursue a traditional academic career, like becoming a lawyer or scientist.

Federal Labor realises a university education is not for everyone though. The new National Trade Cadetships will provide students who are interested in a career in the trades with an equivalent pathway. These students can be confident their efforts will be valued by employers and contribute towards higher qualifications, and eventually, their career.

The National Trade Cadetship is the next step in Federal Labor's plan to deliver a world class education system to give every young person the opportunity to succeed no matter where they live.

Read more: <http://www.alp.org.au/blogs/alp-blog/july-2010/national-trade-cadetships/>

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Proposed National Trade Cadetships build Australia's skills for the 21st Century

Peter Garrigan, ACSSO President, 20 July 2010

Today's proposal by Julia Gillard to establish a program of national trade cadetships is an important and valuable further contribution to building our nation's skills to meet the needs of our forward development and prosperity in the 21st Century.

Public school parents see this as another step towards Julia Gillard's fulfilment of her commitment to Australia's families: 'to make sure that every student – in every community – can achieve their potential'.

The whole purpose of our education system is ultimately to provide all students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and aspirations they will need to make their way successfully in the modern world, to gain a practical understanding of the career choices and opportunities for the future and to shape an informed choice about the sort of career they will personally find satisfying and fulfilling.

Trade cadetships provide a sound, practical means of enabling young people with an initial interest in those fields to build a structured and supported stairway into the work field of their choice.

Read more: <http://www.acsso.org.au/media/pdf/MR100720.pdf>

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Gillard's apprenticeships plan 'smoke and mirrors'

ABC News, 20 July 2010

The Federal Opposition says Labor's promise to help school students get a head start on apprenticeships cannot be believed.

Today Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced a \$3 million plan for students in years nine to 12 to have the option of studying a trade at a Trade Training Centre.

She unveiled the plan today at one of the operational centres in the Western Sydney marginal seat of Macquarie, which is held by retiring Labor MP Bob Debus on a margin of just 0.3 per cent.

She says students would be able to earn credits towards an apprenticeship through training undertaken at school.

The students will study at centres the Government promised to build at the last election.

But Opposition education spokesman Christopher Pyne says it is hard to believe the new policy when the Government has only built a fraction of the centres it promised.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/20/2959365.htm>

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RESEARCH

New Evidence of Massive Achievement Gaps Between Rich and Poor in Australia

Trevor Cobbold, Save our Schools, 19 July 2010

New studies published by academics at Murdoch University show massive achievement gaps between rich and poor in Australia's schools.

Students from low income families in low socio-economic status (SES) schools are nearly four years behind students from high income families in high SES schools in reading, mathematics and science.

The studies use test results from the Programme for International Student Assessments (PISA) conducted by the OECD in 2003 and 2006 for 15 year-old students to compare outcomes for students from different socio-economic backgrounds enrolled in schools with different socio-economic compositions. The results are summarized in the chart below.

Students from families in the lowest SES category and enrolled in the lowest SES schools scored 128 points below students in the highest SES family group enrolled in the highest SES schools in mathematics in 2006. This difference is the equivalent of about 3½ years of schooling on the PISA scale. In the case of science, the difference was 142 points, or nearly four years of learning.

The gap for reading in 2006 is not available, but the results from PISA 2003 show a difference of 143 points.

These are massive differences between rich and poor. They reflect the combined impact of family and school SES on student achievement.

Read more: <http://www.saveourschools.com.au/equity-in-education/new-evidence-of-massive-achievement-gaps-between-rich-and-poor-in-australia>

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NATIONAL REVIEW OF SCHOOL FUNDING

School funding's political realities need acknowledging

Jack Keating, the Age, 15 July 2010

The core issue behind the school funding stand-off is selectivity.

The extended process of the Commonwealth Government's review of school funding, which is to continue until the end of 2011, is an indication of the political sensitivity of the issue. That is equally true of the promise by former education minister Julia Gillard that a new funding model will have "no losers".

Public and private school lobbies have been arguing about public funding of non-government schools since the Whitlam government began to deliver funds in the 1970s. The arguments have not progressed much in the subsequent 30 or more years.

The stand-off between these camps has been concentrated on the issue of the autonomy of non-government schools. Some elements of the public school lobby object in principle to any government funds being given to private schools.

However, for most, the core issue is that non-government schools receive public funds yet also charge fees, and can decide which students can enrol in, and be asked to leave, their schools. It is left to government schools to carry the responsibility of educating all children.

Private schools are publicly funded in most developed countries. However, this funding typically comes with restrictions on fees and enrolment practices. Australia is pretty much unique in allowing publicly funded private schools to have autonomy in these practices.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/politics/school-fundings-political-realities-need-acknowledging-20100714-10azq.html>

Read Resourcing Schools in Australia: http://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/ResourcingSchoolsInAustralia_by_Prof_JackKeating1.pdf

Professor Jack Keating is Thought Leader for the Education Foundation, a division of the Foundation for Young Australians. <http://fya.org.au>

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Catholic schools 'under threat', bishops warn

Justine Ferrari, the Australian, 15 July 2010

THE Catholic bishops have warned the federal government that any freeze on school funding threatens Catholic schools.

Following assurances from the Coalition that in government it would "enhance" private school funding, the Bishops Commission for Catholic Education is seeking a similar commitment that a re-elected ALP government would maintain funding in real terms.

Commission chairman Greg O'Kelly said Ms Gillard and Education Minister Simon Crean have promised no school would lose "a dollar of funding" as a result of the review, but there is no commitment that funds would rise in real terms to cover growing costs.

"The outcome for some hundreds of Catholic parish and regional primary and secondary schools is that their funding may be frozen in real dollar terms for several years from 2013," he said.

"If this scenario came to pass, the viability of some Catholic schools would clearly be under threat. Basic school running costs increase by at least 5 per cent each year, but grants could be frozen at 2012 levels."

Under the funding model for non-government schools, money is allocated according to the socio-economic status of the school community and parents' capacity to pay. About 55 per cent of Catholic schools are funded at a level higher than their allocation deemed under the SES funding model and stand to lose money under a funding freeze.

Read more: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/politics/catholic-schools-under-threat-bishops-warn/story-e6frgczf-1225891820957>

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AWARDS & PRIZES

2010 National Disability Awards

Social Inclusion Awards to Schools, Communities, Business & Individuals

Nominations close 23 July 2010

Do you know a school that actively builds inclusion for children with disability? Do you know an inspirational teacher or student who is helping to improve the lives of people with disability? Why not nominate them for this year's National Disability Awards.

This year's awards are:

Social Inclusion Award: For schools that have actively built in inclusion and full participation of people with a disability working with students and/or members of community groups.

Young Disability Challenge Award – For people aged 12-25 years who have advanced the rights of people with disability.

Minister's Lifelong Achievement Award – For people over 25 years of age who have advanced the rights of people with disability.

There are three other award categories including the Accessible Housing Award, Business Award and Local Government Award.

Read more: <http://www.idpwd.com.au/Awards/Pages/default.aspx>

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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Drugs ignored in youth violence guidelines

Lucy Carter, ABC News, 15 July 2010

A Federal Government report into youth violence has made 13 recommendations; however none of them mentions drugs or alcohol.

The decision comes despite young people overwhelmingly telling the Federal Parliament inquiry in a survey that alcohol and drugs were the main causes of youth violence.

While it examined the link between illicit drug use, alcohol abuse and violence, there is nothing about them in the final recommendations.

For over a year a committee has been examining the prevalence, causes and impact of youth violence. The final report recommends that social development education and training be added to the national curriculum, that extra youth services be made available inside and outside schools and recommends the Government establish a national youth violence and rehabilitation strategy.

Substance abuse experts are at a loss to explain why their submissions were ignored.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/15/2954955.htm>

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New report calls for relationships education to curb youth violence

House of Reps Inquiry into Youth Violence, Media Release, 16 July 2010

Young Australians should be taught respect and how to deal with conflict while at school, according to a new report by the House of Representatives Family and Youth Committee.

At a time of growing concern over increasing violence among 12 to 24 year olds, the Federal Parliamentary Committee is calling for social development education to be a core component of Australia's new national curriculum.

"We need to teach our young people from a very early age how to develop and maintain respectful relationships, how to deal in a non-aggressive way with conflict and how to build resilience," Committee Chair, Annette Ellis said today.

"A consistent theme raised throughout the inquiry is that early intervention to prevent violence from happening in the first place is preferable."

Ms Ellis said engaging with young people had been a priority for the Committee and more than 1300 young Australians had responded to an online survey expressing their concerns. The majority of respondents said that they had witnessed violence in the last 12 months and over two thirds believe that the incidence and intensity of violence is increasing.

"Far from being the alcohol-fuelled, drug-crazed, knife wielding perpetrators of violence, the reality is that our young people are in fact, most likely to find themselves on the receiving end of violence," she said.

Read more: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/fchy/youthviolence/report.htm>

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REWARDING EXCELLENCE

British headmaster earns more than Prime Minister

Emma Alberici, ABC News, 15 July 2010

Parents in a London suburb have rallied to the defence of a primary school headmaster who gets paid more than the British prime minister.

Mark Elms is in charge of 400 students at Tidemill Primary School and earns about 270,000 pounds (\$465,000). Mr Elms's income includes a base wage of \$143,000, which was boosted significantly by \$176,000 for his work in helping other under-performing schools. He has also received overtime payments and a bonus of about \$50,000.

When the principal joined the school in 2001, the Department of Education had earmarked it for closure because it was failing students. The government's team of assessors says the school's achievements across a range of measures are now outstanding.

National Association of Head Teachers spokesman Mick Brookes says you cannot put a price on Mr Elms's achievements. "If his leadership is going to be instrumental in making sure that young people go into a world of work rather than a world of benefits, then there's immense benefit to society in that," he said.

Parents the ABC spoke to at the school gate agreed he was worth every penny.

"This is a child who's got behaviour problems," one parent said. "Every other school disowned him and they've actually taken him here and in 10 weeks they've changed his life."

"It is because he is passionate about his job," another parent said. "If you've got a leader that's passionate then you're going to be passionate."

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/15/2954639.htm>

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COMMUNITY GRANTS AWARDED TO SCHOOL PARENT ASSOCIATIONS

Volunteer Grants 2010 announced by Hon Jenny Macklin MP

The Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Hon Jenny Macklin MP, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, Senator the Hon Ursula Stephens, recently announced that over 253,000 volunteers in more than 6,000 organisations across Australia will benefit from funding of \$21 million for Volunteer Grants 2010.

Grants between \$1,000 and \$5,000 each will enable organisations to contribute towards the costs of training courses for volunteers, and to undertake background screening checks for their volunteers. Funding is also available to

purchase small equipment items to help volunteers, and to contribute towards fuel reimbursement for their volunteers, including those who use their cars to transport others to activities, deliver food and assist people in need.

Volunteers make a vital contribution to our local communities by donating their valuable time and skills to help others, and the Australian Government is committed to supporting them in their important work.

The announcement includes 244 P&C or P&F Associations. Applications for a grant in the next round will open in March 2011.

The full 6,000-plus organisations which received grants are listed alphabetically by State and Territory:
http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/volunteers/funding/Pages/volunteer_grants2010.aspx

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AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES

NSW: Garrett opens new research centre

ABC News, 13 July 2010

The University of Wollongong's new environmental research centre says it will have a wide-ranging brief to study the impact humans have on the environment.

Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett launched the Australian Centre for Cultural Environmental Research yesterday.

The centre's director, Professor Lesley Head, says she hopes work at the centre will help encourage cultural change in the way we react to our environment.

"Things like bushfire management, threatened species management, urban infrastructure and sustainability and food production ... all of these in the context of climate change," she said.

The research centre will examine land management, household sustainability and food production in the context of climate change.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/13/2952106.htm>

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NSW: Mining boom impacts on student retention

ABC News, 14 July 2010

The New South Wales western region's mining boom is contributing to its low rate of students staying in school.

The Department of Education and Training has released an analysis of government school retention rates between 2004 and last year.

Western NSW had the state's lowest percentage of students staying from year seven to 12 at just under 49 per cent - slightly down from 2004.

The Department's western regional director, Carole McDiarmid, says the figure is a concern and efforts are underway to improve retention rates, including a focus on those being lured away from school.

"With industry like the mining industry, which is quite extensive across this region for example, a lot of students are leaving school to undertake traineeships and apprenticeships," she said.

"Now that the Government has continued the school leaving age until students reach 17, what we're doing is providing a lot of alternatives to ensure you can undertake your traineeship and apprenticeship as school-based programs."

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/14/2953007.htm>

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NSW: Churches fund high school scripture classroom

Heath Gilmore, Sydney Morning Herald, 14 July 2010

A coalition of evangelical and pentecostal churches has struck a deal with the NSW Department of Education to fund construction of a classroom for scripture lessons at a public high school.

The seven churches, including Macquarie Life, an Assembly of God church with affiliations to Hillsong, approached the Warners Bay High School community with the \$40,000 gift.

Lyndon Keeley, the Warners Bay Christian Education Group chairman and a Baptist Church minister, said the donation included materials and labour.

The church groups are known for their opposition to homosexuality and support for creationism and the teaching of intelligent design in schools.

Mr. Keeley said the church groups met no opposition from the school community with regard to their offer and the principal had addressed the parents and citizens association. He said the building donation had been approved by the assets management unit at the Department of Education and Training.

"The building of the scripture room doesn't allow us to walk into social studies or science classes in a secular school," Mr. Keeley said. "Through the scripture classes we can give students more information, so they can make up their own minds.

"Students are taught evolution, which they assume and believe to be true. We give an alternative view."

Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/churches-fund-high-school-classroom-20100713-109ik.html>

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NSW: Tertiary fund set to help Dubbo students

ABC News, 15 July 2010

A charity to help students achieve their tertiary education dreams is being set up in central-west New South Wales.

The Country Education Foundation of Australia launched the Dubbo Education Fund last night to give high school students money towards furthering their schooling.

Executive director Jocellin Jansson says the grants range from \$500 to \$3,000. She says it depends on what a student's goal is as to how much money they are given.

"So it could be a student who needs some help with TAFE fees to study locally, while another student could need to move to Sydney in order to study at Sydney University or NSW University, so those students will have quite differing costs. Also their family situations might also be different," she said.

Ms Jansson says students will be able to apply for the grants in about three months. She says the local community has been enthusiastic about the project.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/15/2954230.htm>

Read more about the Country Education Foundation of Australia: <http://www.cef.org.au/>

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NSW: Premier Keneally urged to vary school hours

ABC News, 19 July 2010

The New South Wales Premier's office says it is up to individual high schools to decide whether to start morning classes an hour later, under a proposal to ease traffic congestion.

The Sydney Business Chamber has written to Premier Kristina Keneally suggesting a 10:00am start be trialed in a number of high schools in 2012.

It believes pushing the school day back by an hour would ease traffic congestion during peak times.

Chamber executive director Patricia Forsythe says it would help students, commuters and business.

"That critical period of 8:00am to 9:00am in the morning, we'd have fewer cars, we'd have a better use of our resources," she said.

The Premier's office says there are already examples across the state of high schools with varying opening hours.

It says it is up to individual high schools to change their routine, but it is willing to look at taking a broader approach and will begin talks with key stakeholders.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/19/2957738.htm>

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QLD: Government plans LOTE teacher boost

Melinda Howells, ABC News, 12 July 2010

Education Minister Geoff Wilson says between 70 and 80 extra teachers will be needed to reintroduce foreign language studies in Queensland schools.

The State Government says languages other than English (LOTE) will be compulsory for students in years six, seven and eight by 2012.

In an answer to an Opposition Question on Notice, Mr Wilson says 90 new LOTE teachers will graduate this year and 500 qualified teachers are working in different subject areas.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/12/2951074.htm>

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QLD: Panel of experts to guide state education direction

Hon Geoff Wilson MP, Education & Training Minister, Media Release, 15 July 2010

A panel of experts has been established to help guide the future directions for state education in Queensland over the next decade.

Education and Training Minister Geoff Wilson said the panel would provide independent advice on how state education could build on current reforms and address the challenges of the future.

"The academic experts have been selected for their diverse areas of expertise," Mr. Wilson said.

"Their specialist areas cover a range of topics from social and gender equity, early years research, middle schooling, teacher education, curriculum, assessment, school leadership, poverty and educational disadvantage, school reform, public sector policy and economics of education."

Mr. Wilson welcomed the nine panel members at their first meeting today and thanked them for their commitment to education in Queensland.

Read more: <http://statements.cabinet.qld.gov.au/MMS/StatementDisplaySingle.aspx?id=70661>

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QLD: Parents group appeals to keep schools open

Kylie Bartholomew, ABC News, 15 July 2010

A Parents and Citizens group at a school that may be mothballed in the Boyne Valley in central Queensland is putting a formal submission to the State Government to keep it open.

The Nagoorin, Gogango and Goovigen state schools are among 15 in the state that the Queensland Government has earmarked for review because of declining enrolments.

Nagoorin State School P and C vice-president Craig McLachlan says their submission will be put to the Government before the deadline on July 25.

"We believe we've got our own bright future and a lot of potential in Nagoorin and we're outraged at the fact that we're on the mothball list," he said.

"At the moment we've got 13 children enrolled, we've got six starting next year with two leaving, which will give us a total of 17.

"Up until 2015, we've got more prep students coming on. For the Gladstone region to grow and blossom, the region has to blossom as a whole, and not only Gladstone itself."

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/15/2954221.htm>

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QLD: school students to compete in US space challenge

Kallee Buchanan, ABC News, 15 July 2010

Two students from Bundaberg in southern Queensland are trying to solve an interstellar problem - building human settlements in space.

Damian Curry and Chelsea Phillips from Bundaberg State High School will travel to the United States in the next few weeks to compete in the International Space Design Challenge.

They will visit NASA and the Smithsonian Institute to hone their space engineering skills, before competing against students from around the world.

Teacher Keith Hollidge, who will join the students on their trip, says solving space problems is a big part of the future of engineering.

"We have limited resources in Bundaberg and we all know this, but travelling to places like Washington DC, Orlando, the Kennedy Space Centre - these students are interested in engineering so they're going to see the best in the world, and what engineering is all about," he said.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/15/2954458.htm>

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SA: International college gives up fight to stay

ABC News, 13 July 2010

The Adelaide Pacific International College has closed, affecting mainly Indian students. It had 450 students but the number fell to fewer than 100 after operations were suspended by the Federal Government in May, amid allegations of questionable bookkeeping.

College representatives failed to show up in court on Monday for an appeal against a State Government decision to cancel the college's registration.

A spokesman says it decided not to proceed due to a shortage of funds.

The SA Government says it has made arrangements for fees to be refunded and for alternative courses to be made available for the international students. SA's Training Advocate has been meeting affected students to advise them of their rights.

Opposition MP David Pisoni says the closure could harm SA's ability to attract international students.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/13/2951797.htm>

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TAS: Union presses wishlist for education boss

ABC News, 14 July 2010

Teachers are appealing for the next head of the education department to be someone who comes from an educational rather than an administrative background.

The department's secretary John Smyth is leaving to take up a national post later this year.

The education union's Leanne Wright says the position must be widely advertised to find someone who will have credibility with staff, be inclusive and consult when it comes to change.

"There needs to be someone who understands the teaching profession and the demands on that and the complexities of it," she said.

"There needs to be someone who understands how schools work and having been through or worked in the education system gives them the experience that will allow them to be much more effective."

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/14/2953153.htm>

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TAS: Teacher Safety defended

Blair Richards, Mercury, July 15 2010

THE Education Minister has defended her department's handling of student violence against teachers, saying there are plenty of guidelines for teachers to follow.

The Mercury yesterday reported a rise in the number of violent student attacks on teachers in Tasmanian schools.

Australian Education Union president Leanne Wright said many teachers found guidelines unclear and were scared to restrain students for fear of being penalised.

Opposition education spokesman Michael Ferguson said the problem of violence in schools had been simmering for many years because of a lack of clear leadership.

He said reasonably restraining a violent child was a "perfectly professional response" and teachers should be allowed to do so without fear of being disciplined.

He said while school leaders were reluctant to involve police, the "State Government needs to make it clear to senior school staff that they should contact police whenever a person is injured as a result of an assault, in order to protect the rights of everyone involved".

Education Minister Lin Thorp said her department had developed a strategy to help teachers deal with violent behaviour but it was up to schools to implement it.

Read more: http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2010/07/15/158915_tasmania-news.html

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VIC: Xavier College students avoid charges over shoplifting spree

ABC News, 19 July 2010

A group of students from a Melbourne private school have narrowly avoided criminal charges after an alleged shoplifting spree on a school trip to New Zealand.

The 16 boys from Xavier College at Kew in Melbourne's east were in Queenstown as part of a school skiing trip. It is alleged they stole ski clothing and souvenirs worth around \$5,000 from at least seven different shops in Queenstown. The boys, aged between 14 and 17, were let off with a warning by police, but their details have been passed on to immigration authorities.

Queenstown police sergeant Steve Watt has told the Jon Faine program a shop worker became suspicious and followed the boys to their bus. He says the boys spilt up in to smaller groups and it appears the thefts were premeditated. "It certainly appears that way, given what was taken and the amount of goods that were taken," he said.

"I don't think any punishment that we could dish out is going to be anything more than they get when they get back home to Melbourne and face the music from the school and their parents."

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/19/2957480.htm>

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WA: Group proposes extended school speed limit restriction

ABC News, 13 July 2010

A working party set up by the Road Safety Council of Western Australia has recommended speed limits in school zones be in force for the entire school day.

The party is chaired by a representative of the Education Department and includes members of WA Police and the Office of Road Safety.

The proposal is to extend the 40-kilometre-an-hour speed limit from 7:30am to 5:00pm.

At the moment, the restrictions are only in place for two periods surrounding school starting and finishing times.

The working group will present its proposal to the council on July 22.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/13/2951893.htm>

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WA: School wanted to cut student travel time

ABC News, 14 July 2010

Coral Bay residents are hoping to establish a local school so children do not have to travel up to two hours to attend class in Exmouth, in north-west Western Australia.

Around 12 students make the 150 kilometre journey by bus each school day and some students are being taught by School of the Air.

Local business owner Stuart McNaughton has called on the State Education Department to provide a transportable building to serve as a classroom. He says it is not fair children are making an exhausting trip to school and back each day.

"It's a long day for them. It's a dangerous road, in fact, there's a lot of trucks, there's a lot of caravans and there's also a lot of animals, so it's not an ideal situation," Mr McNaughton said. He says he has written to the Education Department requesting a transportable classroom but was unsuccessful.

The Education Department says it is mindful of the distance travelled by students and will investigate suitable schooling for the community.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/14/2953206.htm>

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Creative Innovation 2010

8-10 September 2010, Melbourne Recital Centre, Melbourne, Victoria

Our world faces incredible challenges. Each of us needs to find new ways to re-invent our future.

Imagine being part of a Conference that was out of the ordinary... that pushed the boundaries... Imagine sharing thoughts with amazing people, bringing the latest thinking on creativity and innovation... Imagine exhilarating exploration, innovation challenges and powerful connections....

Creative Innovation 2010 is the place to learn from world changing innovators, futurists, inspired thinkers and curious souls gathered together in an interactive community. It's a place to learn techniques and strategies, unlock and share ideas and gain empowering experiences. A place to imagine the future.

Creativity is of increasingly strategic value to nations, communities and individuals in making the transition to innovation and knowledge-based economies. Creativity and innovation are also vital for businesses exposed to globalisation, increasing competition, diversity among consumers and rapidly changing technology. Tomorrow's competitive success will be based on creative ideas. The development of people who can imagine and create innovative new solutions is the key to future success and sustainability.

Read more: <http://www.ci2010.com.au/>

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Powerful Learning: Australian Professional Teachers Association (APTA) Conference 2010

28 September 2010: Sydney NSW

The Australian Professional Teachers Association (APTA) will be conducting a one day conference on Tuesday 28 September 2010 with international and national keynote speakers including: Dr. Dennis Sparks, Prof Barry McGaw AO, Dr Ben Jensen, Patrick Lee and Susan Mann, who will present, explore and discuss the future directions of professional learning.

The conference will look at a range of elements of professional learning including; applying knowledge of ethnicity, class and culture to narrow the learning gap; look at ways to enhance teaching quality for student learning: leveraging technology as a resource for professional learning and will seek to develop policy and advocacy for professional learning.

Read more: http://www.apta.edu.au/component/docman/doc_view/36-aptaconference2010.html

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REMINDERS

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

27 July - The Reading Revolution! - Perth, WA - <http://www.worldliteracy.com.au>

29-31 July - International Conference on Teacher Education - Quezon City, Philippines - <http://www.ictedphilippines.org/>

4-5 August - Isolated Children's Parents Association Conference - Fremantle, WA - <http://www.icpa.com.au/Conference.asp>

12-14 August - National Interactive Teaching and Learning Conference - Gold Coast, QLD - <http://www.iwb.net.au/conferences/australian10/>

14-22 August - National Science Week - <http://www.scienceweek.gov.au/Pages/index.aspx>

15-17 August - ACER Research Conference - Melbourne, VIC - http://www.acer.edu.au/research_conferences/

19-27 August - International Conference of Mathematicians - Hyderabad, India - <http://www.icm2010.org.in/>

25-27 August - European Conference on Educational Research - Helsinki, Finland - <http://www.helsinki.fi/ecer2010/index.html>

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

3-4 September - Future Directions in Literacy Conference - Sydney, NSW - http://sydney.edu.au/education_social_work/professional_learning/teachers/2010/future_directions_literacy.shtml

6 September - International Middle Years of Schooling Conference - Adelaide, SA - <http://sapmea.asn.au/conventions/middleschool2010/>

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

15-17 September - SPERA Conference, University of Sunshine Coast, Queensland - http://www.spera.asn.au/articles.php?req=list&root_id=13&sub_id=65

22 September - Language and Culture and Social Connectedness in Our Diverse Landscape Symposium - Toowoomba, QLD - <http://www.usq.edu.au/lcd/>

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

27-30 September - Australian Mathematical Society 54th Meeting - Brisbane, QLD - <http://www.smp.uq.edu.au/austms2010/>

27 September-1 October - International Association of School Librarianship Conference - Brisbane QLD - <http://www.iasl-online.org/events/conf/2010/>

29 August-4 September - National Literacy & Numeracy Week - <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/Programs/NationalLiteracyandNumeracyWeek/Pages/default.aspx>

October - International School Library Month - <http://www.iasl-online.org/events/islm/>

12-15 October - EDGE 2010: e-Learning: The horizon and beyond - Toronto, Canada - <http://www.mun.ca/edge2010/>

17-23 October - Anti-Poverty Week 2010 - <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au>

13 November - Hands on Literacy Conference - Singapore - <http://www.handsonlit.com/>

2-5 December - Second Annual Asian Conference on Education - Osaka, Japan - <http://ace.iafor.org/>

11-12 March - Going Global 2011 - Hong Kong - <http://www.britishcouncil.org/goingglobal-gg5-general-information.htm>

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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)

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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