



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 26, 27 July 2010

- [ELECTION 2010: \(5 items\)](#)
- [FUNDING: Government Schools Lose from Government Funding of Private Schools](#)
- [AWARDS & PRIZES: Schools First Awards 2010](#)
- [INDIGENOUS EDUCATION: Catherine Freeman: A new challenge, one decade on](#)
- [TOWARDS A NATIONAL CURRICULUM: Teachers warn against cutting technology and design](#)
- [OPINION: Steady Work: Finland Builds a Strong Teaching and Learning System](#)
- [BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION: BER report out before election: Gillard](#)
- [RESEARCH: Interventions early in school for disadvantaged students](#)
- [AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES: \(16 items\)](#)
- [REMINDERS](#)
- [ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS](#)

ELECTION 2010

Real action to help families meet school costs

Hon Christopher Pyne MP, Media Release, 21 July 2010

A Coalition government will improve and expand the existing Education Tax Rebate to help families with the costs of their children's education and help ease pressure on family budgets. An additional \$760 million over the forward estimates will be committed to increasing the amount of the rebate for primary and secondary students and significantly expanding the type of expenses that can be claimed.

For primary students, we will increase the rebate to up to \$500 per year per child in primary school. Eligible families will be able to claim a 50 per cent rebate for up to \$1,000 of eligible education-related expenses for each child in primary school.

For secondary school students, we will increase the rebate to up to \$1,000 per year per child. Eligible families will be able to claim a 50 per cent rebate for up to \$2,000 of education-related expenses for each child in secondary school.

We will also expand the types of expenses to which the rebate will apply.

Read more: <http://www.liberal.org.au/Latest-News/2010/07/21/Real-action-to-help-families-meet-school-costs.aspx>

[< top >](#)

Coalition's skewed scattergun shot at education tax break extensions misses mark

Peter Garrigan, ACSSO President, 21 July 2010

The title of the Coalition's release, "Real action to help families meet school costs" is as misleading as the contents and proposals are misdirected and ill-conceived.

For a start this grab-bag of proposals will self-evidently do little or nothing to provide a much needed helping hand to those families who through no fault of their own are doing it very tough in their efforts to provide their children with the education opportunities that every child deserves.

For example, School Fees: In most of Australia's 7,000 public schools, rather than fees, a modest contribution is sought, mostly on a voluntary basis in terms of parent capacity – with well established arrangements in schools to adjust down or remit those contributions on an in-confidence basis where families have problems paying.

The list omits any mention of those Subject Levies which particularly secondary public schools find necessary to charge in respect of high-cost consumables in some elective courses – for example Photography. But again schools have arrangements to reduce or remit such charges where appropriate on a local in-confidence basis.

But in overall terms, the fatal cognitive flaw in the Coalition's proposal is that they are approaching the issues in the wrong way, from the wrong standpoint – and with totally wrong strategies.

Read more: <http://www.acsso.org.au/media-2/>

[< top >](#)

Nationals still oppose compulsory student union fees

ABC Rural News, 22 July 2010

The Nationals say they won't support Labor's plan to allow universities to charge students compulsory union fees. The Labor Party says if re-elected, it would reintroduce the law.

When the bill was first introduced two years ago, the Nationals threatened to split from the Coalition and support the bill because of concerns over funding to regional sporting grounds, but later voted with the Liberals to defeat it.

Nationals Senator Fiona Nash says this time around, any funding for regional universities will be covered under the party's education fund.

"The Nationals certainly don't agree with the compulsory fees," she says. "We have had concerns in the past about regional universities being able to provide sporting facilities and amenities, but now that we've announced our \$1 billion regional education fund, there certainly will be provision there for those universities to be able to access that funding."

Jim Barber, vice-chancellor of regional university - the University of New England, support Labor's plan to reintroduce student unionism.

"Well in short, it would re-invigorate the campus," he says. "With the demise of the student union fee . . . there's been a really adverse impact on the life of the campus."

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/201007/s2961108.htm>

[< top >](#)

Back to schools

Ben Eltham, Inside Story, 23 July 2010

Six years after many in the Labor Party blamed Mark Latham's schools policy for the loss of crucial Sydney seats in the 2004 election, schools are back as an election issue. Over the past week both Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott have promised parents tax breaks for education expenses. Labor's policy was relatively modest, allowing parents to claim for school uniforms on top of their current allowances for things like laptops and schoolbooks. The Coalition's announcement was more generous, allowing parents to claim for government and private school fees.

It is the tax break for private school fees that has generated much of the debate. Understandably, independent and religious schools welcomed the announcement. Public education advocates were aghast, seeing Abbott's policy as the beginning of a new Coalition attempt to privatise education or, even worse, as an attempt to introduce a type of voucher system for the public funding of schools.

Labor ministers, including Wayne Swan and Simon Crean, and independent analysts say that Abbott's tax break could prove very expensive as increasing numbers of parents become aware of it and claim accordingly. This won't worry

the opposition leader, who has shown a Howard-esque liking for policies that channel public subsidies to citizens and private providers in spheres such as health insurance and paid parental leave.

Meanwhile, conservative education commentator Kevin Donnelly has claimed that Labor will renege on its pledges to maintain support for private schools. Donnelly wants more Commonwealth funding for these schools, not less.

Read more: <http://inside.org.au/back-to-schools/>

[< top >](#)

Student services fee step in right direction

Sandra Parker, Western Advocate, 24 July 2010

A PROPOSAL to allow universities to charge students compulsory fees to pay for sporting facilities, health clinics and other non-academic amenities is a “tiny step toward what needs to be done”, according to the president of Bathurst CSU Student Representative Council, Jo-Anne Shiels.

Labor introduced legislation last year to allow universities to charge students up to \$250 a year to fund services such as childcare, counselling and career guidance, but it was blocked in the Senate by the Coalition and the Family First senator, Steve Fielding.

Education minister Simon Crean has promised a re-elected Labor government would try again to change the law.

Ms Shiels said the Howard Government’s axing of compulsory student unionism in 2005 led to almost \$170 million less in funding for student services nationally.

“Students have a great need for support that is more than academic and administrative, and this is where more money for student services would be used,” she said.

Read more: <http://www.westernadvocate.com.au/news/local/news/general/student-services-fee-step-in-right-direction/1894015.aspx>

[< top >](#)

FUNDING

Government Schools Lose from Government Funding of Private Schools

Trevor Cobbold, Save our Schools, 26 July 2010

A new study says that government schools are the clear “losers” from government funding of private schools over the past four decades. It shows that government funding of private schools in Australia has increased socio-economic segregation between government and private schools and allowed private schools to improve school quality rather than reduce their fees.

Government funding of private schools has led to much higher concentrations of lower SES students in government schools. This has widened the achievement gap between government and private schools and imposed much higher cost burdens on government schools. As a result, the study says, government schools should receive higher funding per student than private schools.

The study also says that private schools will continue to use government funding to improve school quality by reducing student/teacher ratios and attract higher SES students away from government schools unless their funding is made conditional on regulation of fees and selection of students.

The study is published in the latest issue of the Australian Journal of Education. The authors are Dr. Louise Watson from the University of Canberra and Dr. Chris Ryan from the Research School of Economics at the Australian National University.

The study shows that government recurrent funding for private schools increased in real terms (that is, adjusted for inflation) from about \$500 per Catholic secondary school student in the early 1970s to over \$6000 in 2007 and from less than \$1000 per Independent secondary student to about \$5000 in 2007.

Read more: <http://www.saveourschools.com.au/funding/government-schools-lose-from-government-funding-of-private-schools>

[< top >](#)

AWARDS & PRIZES

Schools First Awards 2010

Applications Close on 30 July 2010

Impact Awards: are for school-community partnerships that can demonstrate improved student outcomes as a result of their partnership. In 2010, there are:

- 68 Local Impact Awards of \$50,000 each
- 8 of these – one from each State and Territory - will be selected to receive a State/Territory Impact Award of a further \$50,000 each
- 1 of these will in turn be selected as the National Award winner, receiving a further \$400,000 (i.e. \$500,000 in total)

The National Award each year will be won by a truly exceptional school-community partnership that demonstrates outstanding performance against the award criteria. They will also have a compelling strategy for using the funds.

Seed Funding Awards: are for schools that are seeking funding to help their partnership develop further. They'll either be in the process of setting up a partnership or in the early stages of one. Due to the number of applications we received in 2009, this year we've doubled the number of awards in this category!

So, in 2010, there will be 40 Seed Funding Awards of \$25,000 each

Applications will only be accepted via the online form. All relevant documents relating to the application process can be found in the Application Pack.

Read more: <http://www.schoolsfirst.edu.au/sf-award-application-login/>

[< top >](#)



[< top >](#)

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Catherine Freeman: A new challenge, one decade on

Paul Kennedy, ABC News, 23 July 2010

When Catherine Freeman was 10 she put a sign on her bedroom wall that read: 'I am the World's Greatest Athlete'. Everything she did was aimed at her winning Olympic gold. When she achieved that in Sydney a decade ago

everyone was watching. The memory of that night continued to live with us all, untarnished. But Freeman suffered from the experience. She found it hard to resume living normally. Her golden moment became a heavy burden.

Now, approaching her first major anniversary of that famous night, she has finally regained her strength, energy and great, spontaneous laugh. The adored champion has a new goal. It is more complicated than her childhood prophecy, but no less challenging: "To focus on the children of Palm Island."

"In practical terms it's probably all about allowing the children of Palm Island to realise their potential through our educational and well-being programs," she said.

The emerging Catherine Freeman Foundation runs several programs on Palm. They include an initiative to curb truancy, after-school netball sessions, and boarding school scholarships for girls. A bold new literacy program - in collaboration with the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation - is her latest effort to assist children to become healthier and better educated.

Freeman's relationship with Palm has always been maternal. "I first came here as a little girl. I was six or seven, so 30 years ago, and my mother was born here 71 years ago," she said. She now lives in Melbourne with her husband, but flies to Palm Island regularly. She is busier now than ever before and wants to focus on the task ahead of her.

"It's sort of a merging with the past and the present ... and the future. I think it's always entwined. You can't have one without the other. It's what hope is made out of I think."

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/23/2961894.htm>

Read more about the Catherine Freeman Foundation: <http://www.catherinefreemanfoundation.com/index.htm>

[< top >](#)

TOWARDS A NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Teachers warn against cutting student hours for technology and design

Jessica Mahar, Sydney Morning Herald, 20 July 2010

AUSTRALIA risks losing future technologists, engineers and designers if the hours that students study design and technology at school are cut, teachers warn.

A draft timetable by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority devotes 80 hours to design and technology in years 7 and 8. But NSW technology teachers say this is a big reduction from the total of 200 hours now taught in years 7 and 8.

Paul Copeland, a member of the Institute of Industrial Arts Technology Education and the head teacher in industrial arts at Sydney Technical High School, said: "If you cut it by 60 per cent it's very hard to do meaningful practical projects.

"The rigour would go out of the course and we wouldn't be able to do such a wide variety of technologies. If you cut off a significant part of a course and we don't expose kids to as many different forms of technology, it limits what they are going to think about as a career."

Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/teachers-warn-against-cutting-student-hours-for-technology-and-design-20100719-10hzv.html>

[< top >](#)

OPINION

Steady Work: Finland Builds a Strong Teaching and Learning System

Linda Darling-Hammond, July 2010

One wonders what we might accomplish as a nation if we could finally set aside what appears to be our de facto commitment to inequality, so profoundly at odds with our rhetoric of equity, and put the millions of dollars spent continually arguing and litigating into building a high-quality education system for all children.

To imagine how that might be done, one can look at nations that started with very little and purposefully built highly productive and equitable systems, sometimes almost from scratch, in the space of only two to three decades. As an example, I am going to briefly describe how Finland built a strong educational system, nearly from the ground up.

Finland was not succeeding educationally in the 1970s, when the United States was the unquestioned education leader in the world. Yet this country created a productive teaching and learning system by expanding access while investing purposefully in ambitious educational goals using strategic approaches to build teaching capacity.

I use the term “teaching and learning system” advisedly to describe a set of elements that, when well designed and connected, reliably support all students in their learning. These elements ensure that students routinely encounter well-prepared teachers who are working in concert around a thoughtful, high-quality curriculum, supported by appropriate materials and assessments—and that these elements of the system help students, teachers, leaders, and the system as a whole continue to learn and improve.

Although no system from afar can be transported wholesale into another context, there is much to learn from the experiences of those who have addressed problems we also encounter.

Finland has been a poster child for school improvement since it rapidly climbed to the top of the international rankings after it emerged from the Soviet Union’s shadow. Once poorly ranked educationally, with a turgid bureaucratic system that produced low-quality education and large inequalities, it now ranks first among all the OECD nations on the PISA, an international test for 15-year-olds in language, math, and science literacy.

Read more: http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/24_04/24_04_finland.shtml

[< top >](#)



[< top >](#)

BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION

BER report out before election: Gillard

Joe Kelly, the Australian, 21 July 2010

JULIA Gillard promised today that a report into the Building the Education Revolution program will be released before the election. The Prime Minister made the commitment during a radio interview, despite the BER taskforce yesterday refusing to confirm that it would hand over its report to the government before August 21.

When asked by The Australian if the report would be released before the election, the taskforce - headed by Brad Orgill - said it was scheduled to provide its interim report to Education Minister Simon Crean "after three months of operation".

But on 2UE radio this morning Ms Gillard said: "We will be making it public before the election.

"As soon as we get it we will be making it public. It's due in August. There isn't a precise date. But (taskforce head) Brad Orgill has said he will deliver it in August and it will be made public before the election."

Read more: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/ber-report-out-before-election-gillard/story-fn59nlz9-1225894904572>

[< top >](#)

RESEARCH

“Interventions early in school as a means to improve higher education outcomes for disadvantaged (particularly low SES) students”

Trevor Gale et al, 19 July 2010

This research report performs two functions. It provides a synopsis or abridged version of the research in relation to interventions early in school as a means to improve higher education outcomes for disadvantaged (particularly low SES) students, with emphasis on reviewing its major findings.

It also provides an extension to the research, extrapolating from it through a meta-analysis of the data to conceive of a matrix for designing and evaluating early interventions.

The research was funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and undertaken from August 2008 to July 2009 by the Australian National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE).

The research was prompted by concerns about the long-term under-representation of some population groups (particularly those of low socioeconomic status) within Australian higher education and by a growing conviction that, if they are to be successful, interventions to redress this situation need to be implemented earlier in schooling rather than later.

Read more: <http://deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Publications/Documents/Synopsis.pdf>

[< top >](#)

AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES

NSW: Rocketing autism numbers met with education shortfall

Heath Gilmore, Sydney Morning Herald, 26 July 2010

AUTISTIC children are being forced into mainstream classes because of a lack of places in specialised learning groups in NSW schools, an inquiry has heard.

The families and teachers of autistic children have complained to the NSW parliamentary inquiry about the failure to provide an adequate number of places, despite a sharp increase in students diagnosed with learning problems.

The inquiry heard that one in 10 students in NSW public schools are disabled or have special learning needs. More than 7000 students were classified as autistic last year, a 165 per cent increase since 2003. These students are educated either in specialist schools, support classes in regular schools or mainstream classes with specialist support.

A mildly autistic child, Lachlan Deitz, has been part of a support class at Sherwood Ridge Public School in Sydney's north-west for most of his education.

These classes inside regular schools are staffed by a teacher and a full-time school learning support officer, catering only for children with learning needs or disabilities.

Next year, however, the 11-year-old will start high school in a mainstream class, despite the protests of his family and a Department of Education panel deeming him eligible for a support class placement.

Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/rocketing-autism-numbers-met-with-education-shortfall-20100725-10qoj.html>

[< top >](#)

NT: Skip school, die early - shock TV ads for truants

Iskhandar Razak, ABC News, 22 July 2010

A Northern Territory Government report has raised the option of using shock-style television advertisements to scare parents into sending their children to school.

The Territory Government plans to improve services in remote Aboriginal communities by funnelling funding to 20 so-called growth towns.

The second six-monthly report from the Northern Territory Coordinator General for Remote Services, Bob Beadman, says many initiatives are moving forward. But the report has also labelled the amount of Aboriginal children not going to school as a crisis. It says parents are not taking enough responsibility.

It recommends that fines for not sending children to school be increased and that short-term rewards are given for academic excellence.

It has also raised the idea of a hard-hitting anti-truancy television advertising campaign. "It may require shock therapy to get the point across," the report states. "Who could forget the Grim Reaper campaign on alerting Australians to the AIDS epidemic?" Perhaps we should be blunt and say, 'If you don't go to school you will be poor and die early'."

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/22/2961545.htm?section=justin>

[< top >](#)

NT: Minister rejects shock TV ads for truants

Rick Hind, ABC News, 23 July 2010

Minister for Indigenous Development Malarndirri McCarthy says scaring children into going to school will not help raise attendance at remote Indigenous schools.

In his second report, the Northern Territory Coordinator General for Remote Services, Bob Beadman, says penalties should be raised for parents who do not send their children to school. He also says a "shock therapy" television advertising campaign like the "Grim Reaper" HIV/AIDS ads in the 1980s should tell students that if they do not go to school they will be poor and die early.

But Ms McCarthy says that will not work for children just reaching school age. "We're talking about school-aged children as young as 4, 5," she said. "We do not want to scare children into going to school.

"We want to encourage children that learning is the most valued thing that they can do in their lives. And the best way to do that is to encourage them to go to school, not to scare them."

Ms McCarthy says parents have to take responsibility for their children.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/23/2961995.htm>

[< top >](#)

NT: Funding change forces school to axe teachers

Iskhandar Razak, ABC News, 23 July 2010

A Darwin school says it is \$600,000 in deficit because the Federal Government has changed the way it funds Indigenous education programs.

Kormilda College says the Government has rolled several Indigenous funding programs into one and the new formula does not take into account where an Indigenous student comes from.

The school says under the changes the same level of funding is given to an urban-based Indigenous student as a remote student.

It says because of that change the school is \$600,000 in deficit and has had to cut four staff.

Kormilda College says the decision severely disadvantages Indigenous students and the College is not the only school that is suffering because of the changes.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/23/2962228.htm>

[< top >](#)

QLD: Historic agreement between parents, citizens and state schools

Hon Geoff Wilson MP, Qld Minister for Education & Training, 20 July 2010

The partnership between Education Queensland and the peak parent body, Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens' Association (QCPCA), was strengthened today with the signing of an historic agreement.

In Brisbane last week, Education and Training Director-General Julie Grantham and QCPCA president Margaret Black signed the Agreement for a Work Interchange Arrangement.

Education and Training Minister Geoff Wilson said the department and the QCPCA have formally agreed to further their working relationship to support state school Parents and Citizens groups (P&Cs) by establishing a position to be based in the QCPCA offices and funded by Education Queensland.

"The client services manager will maintain positive relationships between the department and the QCPCA and will develop and maintain training materials for P&Cs and provide advice on their implementation," Mr. Wilson said. "The new manager took up the position last week and will be a great addition to the team. The new position is an extension of the department's parental engagement strategy in formalising a joint working arrangement with the QCPCA.

"We welcome the opportunity to work together in creating the necessary measures to ensure closer parent school relationships."

Read more: <http://statements.cabinet.qld.gov.au/MMS/StatementDisplaySingle.aspx?id=70715>

[< top >](#)

QLD: Queensland schools riddled with asbestos, inspections show

Courier Mail, 25 July 2010 (AAP)

MORE than a third of Queensland state schools inspected for a new asbestos threat have come back positive for the deadly substance. Called Asbestolux, the substance is also known as low-density board, and is generally made up of about 70 per cent asbestos.

Of the 289 schools inspected by the Education Department in 2009, the substance was detected in 115.

Liberal National Party education spokesman Dr Bruce Flegg today accused the State Government of trying to cover up the latest threat. "It is an extremely dangerous product and it was subject to a government report in 2007, and no action was taken until 2009," he said.

Questioned by Dr Flegg at a parliamentary estimates hearing last week, Education Department director general Julie Grantham confirmed the substance had been found in 6.9 per cent of school walls tested. But Dr Flegg says 1400 schools in Queensland remain to be checked.

Read more: <http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland-schools-riddled-with-asbestos-inspections-show/story-e6freon6-1225896657881>

[< top >](#)

SA: SA students well placed for National Trade Cadetships

Hon Jay Weatherill MP, SA Minister for Education, Media Release, 20 July 2010

South Australian students will be well placed to take on new National Trade Cadetships under a re-elected Gillard Labor Government, Education Minister Jay Weatherill says.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard today announced that from 2012, under a re-elected Federal Labor Government, Year 9 to 12 students looking for a trade career would be able to undertake Trade Cadetships under the National Curriculum.

Mr Weatherill welcomed the cadetships plan, which will mean school students who want a career in trades have a clearly defined pathway that is equal in quality, value and rigour to traditional academic pursuits.

"National Trade Cadetships will complement South Australia's raft of school to work initiatives already underway," Mr Weatherill said.

"South Australia has a network of Trade Schools for the Future and an Industry Pathways program to train young people for jobs in industries with recognised skills shortages. The changes to the South Australian Certificate of Education will mean students are better prepared for higher skilled jobs in emerging and revitalised industries, such as defence, mining, health and electronics."

Read more: <http://www.ministers.sa.gov.au/images/stories/mediareleasesJUL10/trade.pdf>

[< top >](#)

SA: More hours at kindy for more kids

Hon Jay Weatherill MP, SA Education Minister, Media Release, 21 July 2010

Extra kindy hours are commencing at 38 South Australian preschools in Term 3 as part of a joint Federal and State Government program to increase children's access to preschool.

Education and Early Childhood Development Minister Jay Weatherill said preschool was being boosted from a minimum of 11 hours to 15 hours a week under the Universal Access program, which is being progressively rolled out to preschools across the State.

"We know that the early years in children's lives are the most important, so access to modern, professional preschool education is critical," Mr Weatherill said.

"More than 4000 South Australian children have been given extra time at preschool. They are children at State Government preschools, as well as a number of non-government preschools and childcare services.

"Of the 38 preschools in this second round of extra preschool hours, 12 have high Aboriginal enrolments. This means we are now funding 15 hours of preschool for 75 percent of all four year old Aboriginal children enrolled in preschools. This is a significant investment in many Aboriginal communities and an important step forward in bridging the gap between the education of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children."

Under the Universal Access program, all South Australian children will have access to 15 hours of preschool a week, 40 weeks a year by 2013.

Read more: <http://www.ministers.sa.gov.au/images/stories/mediareleasesJUL10/kindy.pdf>

[< top >](#)

SA: Crows, Power & Thunderbirds sign up to challenge students

Hon Jay Weatherill MP, SA Education Minister, Media Release, 21 July 2010

Crows, Power and Thunderbirds players soon will be heading out to schools to motivate students to read more books and to do some physical activity every day.

Education Minister Jay Weatherill today said the Adelaide Football Club, Port Adelaide Football Club and Thunderbirds netball club have signed on as ambassador teams for both the highly successful Premier's Reading Challenge and Premier's be active Challenge.

"As ambassadors, some of our highest profile sports stars will be giving their time to visit schools and encourage students to both work on their literacy and knowledge as well as their physical health and well-being.

"Having these great new ambassadors on board will give a real boost to what are already very successful initiatives being run in our schools.

"We know that the presence of role models with whom young people identify can be a really powerful motivator. Being visited by sport stars they look up to will encourage more students to be active each day and to flick open a book for fun. We are very grateful for the contribution our new ambassadors will make in encouraging students to form these healthy habits early."

Read more: <http://www.ministers.sa.gov.au/images/stories/mediareleasesJUL10/teams.pdf>

More information about both Challenges is available at <http://www.prc.sa.edu.au> and <http://www.pbac.sa.edu.au>

[< top >](#)



[< top >](#)

SA: Push to step up science in schools

Hon Jay Weatherill MP, SA Education Minister, Media Release, 22 July 2010

South Australia's biggest ever push to improve the science knowledge of our primary school children has passed a major test with more than 5000 primary school teachers completing extra specialist science training courses.

Education Minister Jay Weatherill said science has been earmarked as a priority subject for all State primary schools as part of the \$105 million Primary School Skills for the Future program announced last year. "This year we started phasing in mandated lesson times for science, maths and English in all public primary schools," Mr Weatherill said.

"Last year students were studying science for an average 45 minutes each week. From the beginning of the next school year, Year 4 to Year 7 students will spend at least two hours per week learning science and Year 3 students will have a minimum of 90 minutes learning science. But to do this we needed to ensure our teachers have specialist science training."

Under the Australian and State Government Primary School Skills for the Future program, grants of more than \$13.6 million have been provided to schools to buy resources and send teachers to specialist training in science, mathematics and literacy.

The program aims to train about 7500 primary school teachers in South Australia in this new approach to science teaching by the end of next year. Other measures to build science skills include the Government's commitment to boosting science teaching in secondary schools and fostering interest in defence-related careers.

In a push to increase maths teaching time in the classroom, primary school teachers will begin specialist maths training from next year.

Read more: <http://premier.sa.gov.au/images/stories/mediareleasesJUL10/science.pdf>

[< top >](#)

SA: Raids follow international college closure

ABC News, 23 July 2010

Federal police and immigration officials have raided three Adelaide properties over the closure of the Adelaide Pacific International College.

The intentional students college in Currie Street in the city has also been searched, after earlier raids on a business at Welland and a house at Fulham Gardens.

An immigration official says charges may be laid over documentation and work practices.

The College closed recently after losing national and state registration.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/23/2962508.htm>

[< top >](#)

VIC: Which Victorian schools will get iPads?

Jenna Pitcher, ARN, 22 July, 2010

Victorian Education Minister, Bronwyn Pike, has revealed the full list of seven Victorian Government schools - five colleges and two primary schools - and one children's hospital that will participate in the state's iPads in education trial.

Pike distributed 20 iPads to children at the Royal Children's Hospital.

"Today is an exciting time for Victorian Government school students, including those battling illness and undergoing rehabilitation at the Royal Children's Hospital," said Pike in a statement.

"The iPad will take its place in the classroom alongside netbooks, interactive whiteboards and our revolutionary online learning portal -- Ultranet."

Read more: http://www.arnnet.com.au/article/354140/which_victorian_schools_will_get_ipads/

[< top >](#)

VIC: Victorian College of Arts & Music shake-up claims top scalp

ABC News, 23 July 2010

The Dean of the Victorian College of the Arts and Music, Sharman Pretty, has quit amid an overhaul of the institution's future direction.

The University of Melbourne says it endorses the recommendations to a review of the VCA, led by Ziggy Switkowski.

The review recommended the College delay the introduction of the so-called Melbourne Model.

Melbourne University's acting vice-chancellor, Professor John Dewar, says Professor Pretty will resign from the position in response to the review. He says the College is now taking a different direction.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/23/2962054.htm>

[< top >](#)

VIC: Government throws lifeline to Eaglehawk school

ABC News, 26 July 2010

The State Government has bowed to community pressure and decided to keep the Eaglehawk Primary School open.

Local residents were upset with the school council's decision to merge with two others, because of decreasing enrolments: Eaglehawk residents have been fighting to keep it open, and a working group put forward a plan to keep the site open as a campus of the new merged school.

The Government has agreed and says it will provide \$850,000 to refurbish the Eaglehawk site.

The Labor MP for Bendigo East, Jacinta Allan, says the site's long term future depends on community support.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/26/2964008.htm>

[< top >](#)

WA: Calls to take independent public schools national

Katherine Fenech, WA Today, 20 July 2010

As 64 more public schools were today given approval to take on "independent" status, there were calls for the program to go national, while others are concerned about its effect on country teachers.

Education Minister Liz Constable today announced 64 more public schools would be given the ability to make "local decisions that best suited their community's needs".

The Department of Education received 134 applications from schools that want more autonomy in this round, and 34 others have already been given the green light to go independent.

"These will have the flexibility and autonomy to make decisions on the ground that meet the specific needs of their students, including recruitment and selection of teachers, education programs and management of their own budgets," Dr Constable said.

The WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry's senior adviser on education policy Les Goh called for the template to be used in schools across Australia. "As managers of local schools, principals should have the power to develop school culture, manage performance, and be accountable for operational issues," Mr. Goh said. "School autonomy encourages greater innovation within our schools, enhances the status of WA's public education system and the teaching profession, and leads to better educational outcomes for students."

State School Teachers Union of WA general secretary David Kelly said he was concerned about the "potential impact on the whole system", especially on teachers who decide to spend time teaching in country WA. "If we end up with 100 schools now deciding that they don't want to take people from the bush back in their schools, you're going to have a problem," Mr. Kelly said. He said some teachers wouldn't consider taking jobs in rural areas if they thought they wouldn't be able to find metropolitan jobs later on.

Read more: <http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/calls-to-take-independent-public-schools-national-20100720-10j9t.html>

[< top >](#)

WA: Speeding in school zones on the rise

ABC News, 20 June 2010

WA police have revealed they stopped 25,000 motorists for speeding through school-zones last financial year.

Police figures released today show that is an increase of 4,000 on the previous year.

Police say, this morning alone, they recorded speeds of nearly 70 kilometres per hour in school zones and noted 17 speeding drivers in the suburb of Warwick.

Senior Constable Drew Clarke says police are concerned about the trend.

"Speeding through school zones is dangerous. Children have a poor perception of speed and distance and that can obviously have an impact on vehicles travelling in excess of the prescribed speed limit for those children, obviously at a risk of injury."

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/07/20/2959338.htm>

[< top >](#)

REMINDERS

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>

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

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/>

8-10 September - Creative Innovation - Melbourne, VIC - <http://www.ci2010.com.au/>

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/lcdl>

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/>

28 September - Australian Professional Teachers Association Conference - Sydney NSW - http://www.apta.edu.au/component/docman/doc_view/36-aptaconference2010.html

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>

[< 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)

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.

To unsubscribe from Australian Education Digest click here: <mailto:webmaster@acsso.org.au?subject=unsubscribeAED>

To unsubscribe from all ACSSO mailings click here: <mailto:webmaster@acsso.org.au?subject=unsubscribeALL>