



Weekly Briefing For Member Schools

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[Opposition Calls for Review of Capital Funding Programs](#)

The Coalition has called for the Australian Government to refer the administration of the *Building the Education Revolution Program* to the Auditor General.

[MCEETYA Releases Guiding Principles for Reporting on School Performance](#)

A report outlining proposed principle and protocols for the collection and release of school performance information has been published.

[OECD Report Calls for Greater Incentives for Teachers](#)

A report has claimed that teachers across the world lack incentives to improve their teaching.

[Parliamentary News](#)

Forthcoming sitting dates for the Victorian and Australian Parliaments.

[Australian Government Releases Online Security Resource](#)

A resource that teaches students how to be safe online has been released.

[Australian Bureau of Statistics Releases Indigenous Resource](#)

An online resource that provides centralised access to data on Indigenous Australia has been launched.

[Seminars for the week beginning 22 June 2009](#)

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Opposition Calls for Review of Capital Funding Programs

Media Release, The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, 12/06/09; The Age, Farrah Tomazin & Dan Harrison, 13/06/09; The Australian, Justine Ferrari, 13/06/09; The Australian, Natasha Bitá, 13/06/09; The Australian, Pia Akerman, Natasha Bitá & Matthew Franklin, 13/06/09; The Age, Cameron Houston & Josh Gordon, 14/06/09; The Australian, Natasha Robinson, 15/06/09; The Australian, Nicola Berkovic, 15/06/09; The Australian, Matthew Franklin & Pia Akerman, 16/06/09; The Australian, Nicholas Perpetch, 18/06/09

The Australian Shadow Minister for Education, The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, has called for the Australian Government to refer the administration of the *Building the Education Revolution* program (BER) to the Auditor-General over claims that the funding is being misused. Mr Pyne claimed that:

- in some jurisdictions, schools that wished to build new classrooms had been told that they have to build a 'stock-standard...Mc-school hall', irrespective of the needs of the school and the wishes of the school community
- many schools were being forced to use contractors from further away, or even interstate, at a greater cost than using local builders and suppliers
- some schools that had been slated for closure were recipients of funding for refurbishments
- state governments and state government-approved contractors were appropriating millions of dollars in funding as costs to schools for their buildings escalated.
- distance education and multi-campus schools were missing out on funding while the most exclusive schools in Australia were receiving millions, and that more than \$3 million was being spent on the plaques 'to commemorate Julia Gillard's largesse'
- schools wishing to spend funds on energy-efficient air conditioning had been refused
- school representatives have not been able to speak publicly about their concerns for fear of losing funding for their schools.

The Australian and *The Age* have also run a series of articles criticising the administration of the BER. Both newspapers have claimed that government schools were disadvantaged by the BER because they were required to use centrally-allocated project templates and contractors, while non-government schools were free to 'build facilities as they see fit'. *The Age* also has repeated complaints that 'stimulus funding should have been targeted at poorly resourced government schools rather than private schools that had modern facilities'. In response to the various criticisms of the BER, the Australian Government Minister for Education, The Hon Julia Gillard MP, indicated that the program guidelines were clear and stated that the government understood that, in a program the size of the BER, 'there will be complaints and concerns'.

MCEETYA Releases Guiding Principles for Reporting on School Performance

Canberra Times, Emma Macdonald, 13/06/09; Sydney Morning Herald, Anna Patty, 13/06/09

At a meeting in Hobart, the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) adopted a new set of principles for reporting on school performance. The *Principles and Protocols for Reporting on Schooling in Australia* document has been designed 'to guide and inform the use and publication of data generated in the process of measuring the performance of schooling in Australia', and aims to ensure that publicly reported data 'supports improving performance and school outcomes, is both locally and nationally relevant and is timely, consistent and comparable'. The document argued that the community should have access to information about the performance of schools in order to ensure that they are accountable for taxpayer funding. The document indicated that ministers were 'aware that under Australia's new school reporting framework, a greater range of data on individual schools will be publicly released' and were committed to reporting protocols that are 'fair and accurate'. These include provisions for:

- information approved for publication on schools to contain accurate and verified data, contextual information and a range of indicators to provide a more reliable and complete view of performance
- the protection of privacy for individual students
- the prevention of the publication of 'simplistic league tables or rankings', and a strategy to manage 'the risk that third parties may seek to produce such tables or rankings'.

Finally, it indicated that the Australian Curriculum and Assessment Reporting Authority (ACARA) would 'actively work with the media and other parties to explain the information published and how to properly interpret it'. However, critics of the statement argued that a previous principle had been omitted which had called for 'the avoidance of harm to members of the community; this could occur where the privacy of individuals would be compromised or where the reputation of an institution or group of people would be damaged through the publication of misleading information or stereotyping'. Instead, the new statement indicated that data would not be published in a form that compares the performance of individual schools 'without contextual information'. The Australian Education Union has claimed that this decision indicates that MCEETYA Ministers 'have conceded there will be harm to individuals and schools as a result of publication of league tables'. Go to www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/_resources/Principles_and_Protocols_2009.pdf to access a copy of the statement.

OECD Report Calls for Greater Incentives for Teachers

Media Release, The Hon Julia Gillard MP, 16/06/09; The Australian, Justine Ferrari, 17/06/09; The Age, Dan Harrison, 18/06/09

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has released a report that has claimed that teachers are not given enough incentives to innovate or improve their teaching strategies. The *Creating Effective Teaching and Learning Environments: First Results from TALIS* report based on the OECD's *Teaching and Learning International Survey* sought to obtain internationally comparable data on the conditions affecting teachers in schools. The survey included responses from 70,000 principals and lower-secondary school teachers in 23 countries, and focused on school leadership and management, the appraisal and professional development of teachers, and the impact of these issues on learning environments. The report found

that, in Australia, over 90 per cent of respondents did not expect to be rewarded for improving the quality of their teaching, while three quarters of respondents from the 23 participating countries lacked such incentives. Over 90 per cent of Australian respondents also indicated that they believed that the best teachers did not receive the greatest reward for their work and that little action was taken against teachers who performed poorly over a long period. The report argued that most countries made no link between the appraisal of student performance and the rewards and recognition that teachers received, and where these links did exist, they were tenuous at best. The report concluded that education authorities in all countries needed to provide more effective incentives for teachers. It also concluded that education planners needed to do more to support teachers and to improve student performance by focusing less on resources control and educational content and more on learning outcomes. The OECD Secretary-General, Mr Angel Gurría stated that school authorities needed to 'develop a more scientific approach to policies based on best practice and universal high standards.' Go to www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/51/43023606.pdf to access a pre-print copy of the report.

Parliamentary News

The Victorian Parliament (Assembly and Council) rose on Thursday 11 June 2009. Both Houses will next sit from Tuesday 23 June 2009 until Thursday 25 June 2009. The Australian Parliament (House of Representatives and Senate) sat on Monday 15 June 2009 and will rise on Thursday 25 June 2009.

Australian Government Releases Online Security Resource

Media Release, Senator The Hon Stephen Conroy, 05/06/09

As part of National E-security Awareness Week, the Australian Government Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Senator The Hon Stephen Conroy, has released a suite of e-security resources for school students to be safe online. The *Budd:e E-security Education Modules* have been targeted towards students in years 3 and 9 and aim to highlight the steps that children can take to increase their online security. Go to www.staysmartonline.gov.au to download the education modules or to order a copy of the CD-ROM.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Releases Indigenous Resource

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has developed a new, free online resource to provide teachers and students with access to data on indigenous Australia. The *Indigenous Statistics for Schools (ISS)* resource provides a single location for data in areas including indigenous population, education, health, housing and work, as well as links to more detailed online data sources. It also discusses issues around the collection of indigenous statistics and their importance, as well as encouraging students to rigorously analyse numerical data. The resources will become available on Thursday 9 July 2009 as part of celebrations for National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week. Schools should visit www.abs.gov.au/students or www.abs.gov.au/teachers to access the resources. Go to www.naidoc.org.au for further information about NAIDOC Week celebrations.

Seminars for the week beginning 22 June 2009

Day	Seminar Name	Time	Venue
Monday 22/06	Anaphylaxis Management Training Package	9.00 am – 5.00 pm	Seminar Room
Tuesday 23/06	Students with Disabilities - Funding Briefings 2010	9.30 am – 11.30 am	Training Centre
Wednesday 24/06	Giving Voice to Learners – Podcasting for the Classroom Students with Disabilities - Funding Briefings 2010	9.00 am – 3.30 pm 10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Seminar Room Drouin
Thursday 25/06	Students with Disabilities - Funding Briefings 2010	1.30 pm – 3.30 pm	Training Centre
Friday 26/06			

The Seminar Room is located at 20 Garden Street. The Training Centre and Board Room are located at 30 Garden Street. The Drouin Briefing will take place at Chair Christian School, Balfour Road Drouin.

Note: The AISV Weekly Briefing is also available on the AISV web site, including back issues. The AISV web site is at <http://www.ais.vic.edu.au>.

To obtain further information on any of the above matters, please contact AISV

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