



Weekly Briefing For Member Schools

A9210 ABN 44 711 074 857

20 Garden Street, South Yarra VIC 3141

PO Box 2138, Prahran VIC 3181

Phone: 03 9825 7200 Fax: 03 9826 6066

Email: aisv@ais.vic.edu.au

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[Newspaper Criticises Funding for Non-Government Schools](#)

On the back of estimates and incomplete data, *The Age* newspaper has argued that the Australian Government should reduce the funding that it provides to non-government schools.

[Senate to Investigate Economic Stimulus Funding](#)

Two Senate Committees will consider aspects of the Australian Government's economic stimulus funding, to determine whether it has provided taxpayers with value for money.

[New Chief Executive Officer of ACARA Announced](#)

Dr Peter Hill has been named as the inaugural Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

[OECD Releases 2009 Education at a Glance Report](#)

The 2009 edition of the OECD's *Education at a Glance* report provides comparative data on a range of education performance indicators.

[Victorian Government Releases Education Resource on Disabilities](#)

The Victorian Government will provide all Victorian schools with a new resource kit on students with disabilities.

[Parliamentary News](#)

Forthcoming sitting dates for the Australian and Victorian Parliaments.

[New South Wales Government Fails to Overturn Ban on League Tables](#)

The Upper House of the New South Wales Parliament has voted to maintain a ban on the publication of school performance information.

[Seminars for the week beginning 14 September 2009](#)

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Newspaper Criticises Funding for Non-Government Schools

The Age, Farrah Tomazin, 09/09/09; The Age, The Editor, 10/09/09

The Age has criticised the Australian Government's Socioeconomic Status (SES) funding model. Based on anticipated enrolment and supplementation rates provided by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations to Senate Estimates Committee, *The Age* attempted to quantify the total funding that some independent schools might receive over the 2009-2012 funding quadrennium and claimed that the results demonstrated 'smouldering class enmity'. The Australian Education Union argued that the Australian Government should 'meet its primary obligation to adequately fund government schools'. In response, the Chief Executive of AISV, Ms Michelle Green, was critical of the newspaper's failure to portray the full story of the SES funding model and the full funding story for independent schools. Ms Green indicated that she refuted *The Age* and the AEU's claims and argued that the first obligation of Australian Government was to ensure that all students received appropriately funded educational opportunities. Ms Green also stated that she 'welcomes the opportunity to participate in an evidence-based policy discussion for funding of all Australian students'.

Senate to Investigate Economic Stimulus Funding

Media Release, The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, MP, 08/09/09; Media Release, Senator The Hon. Nick Minchin, 08/09/09; The Advertiser, Mark Kenny, 08/09/09; Courier Mail, Stefanie Balogh, 08/09/09; Canberra Times, Danielle Cronin, 09/09/09; Hobart Mercury, Kate Hannon, 09/09/09

The Australian Greens Senator Bob Brown has called for a Senate inquiry to be conducted into the Australian Government's economic stimulus funding. Amid claims that the administration of the funding was inefficient and that money was being wasted, Senator Brown indicated that he wanted the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr Ken Henry, to explain the funding package and its impact on the Australian economy. The Coalition and the Family First Senator Steve Fielding supported the Senate Estimates Committee inquiry, but amended the motion to expand the role of the inquiry to include evidence 'from other economists who may provide a more independent account of the impact of spending measures'. The Coalition also introduced a motion in the Senate for the administration of the *Primary Schools in the 21st Century* element of the stimulus package to be referred to the Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations References Committee. The Leader of the Opposition, The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, MP, indicated that the Committee's role would be to identify 'any waste or mismanagement in the scheme' and argued that 'there has been no rigorous or any cost benefit analysis of these programs'. The Australian Government Minister for Education, The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, indicated that the Australian Government would cooperate with a hearing, but emphasised that the Australian Government did not intend to withdraw any economic stimulus funding.

New Chief Executive Officer of ACARA Announced

Media Release, The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, 09/09/09; The Australian, Justine Ferrari, 10/09/09; Sydney Morning Herald, Dan Harrison, 10/09/09

Minister Gillard has announced that Dr Peter Hill has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). Dr Hill is currently a Senior Adviser and the former Secretary General of the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority. He has also previously been the Director of Research and Development at the National Centre on Education and the Economy in the United States, as well as the former Chairman and Chief Executive of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board and Chief General Manager of the Victorian Department of School Education. Dr Hill argued that schools needed to move away from the reporting of student test results to a measurement of the progress and improvement that students underwent at school. He stated that 'we can learn from the systems that have made mistakes in making the stakes too high and reporting in ways that tend to lead to over-interpreting the data...there's a danger of over-relying on one type of data rather than a complete profile. Schools have different strengths and do different things for students, and this should come through.'

OECD Releases 2009 Education at a Glance Report

Media Release, The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, 09/09/09; The Age, Dan Harrison, 09/09/09; Sydney Morning Herald, Dan Harrison, 09/09/09; The West Australian, Andrew Tillett, 09/09/09

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has released the 2009 edition of its annual *Education at a Glance* report. The report provides comparative data from 2007 for a range of indicators on the performance of education systems in OECD nations, and attempts to establish an international consensus on how to measure the state of education internationally. It investigates who participates in all levels of education, what is spent on education, how education systems operate and what results have been achieved. The report found that Australian primary schools spent significantly less classroom time on literacy and numeracy teaching, with Australian students aged between 9 and 11 years spending an average of 13 per cent of their instruction time on reading, writing and literature, compared to an OECD average of 23 per cent. The same students also spent an average of 9 per cent of their time on mathematics, compared to an average of 16 per cent. However, the report also noted that these results were a reflection of the flexible nature of the Australian curriculum, which has less time allocated to particular subjects. The report also noted that Australian students aged between 7 and 14 received almost 8000 hours of compulsory education, the fourth highest of the reported countries. The report also found that:

- Australia had the highest rate of entry to tertiary education in the OECD
- the proportion of education funding from private sources was comparatively high in Australia
- Australian teachers faced teaching loads well above the OECD average.
- starting salaries for Australian teachers were relatively high, but that they declined at more senior levels compared to other countries. The report warned that Australian teachers may become disenfranchised when they discovered that relatively high starting salaries were not maintained during their careers.

Go to www.oecd.org/document/24/0,3343,en_2649_39263238_43586328_1_1_1_37455,00.html to access a copy of the report.

Victorian Government Releases Education Resource on Disabilities

Media Release, The Hon. Lisa Neville, MLA & The Hon. Bronwyn Pike, MLA, 10/09/09

The Victorian Minister for Community Services, The Hon. Lisa Neville, MLA, and the Minister for Education, The Hon. Bronwyn Pike, MLA, have released a new resource kit for schools to help to educate students about students with a disability. The *Bar None Community Awareness Kit* is aimed at 'breaking down any fears or barriers towards people with a disability' and 'welcoming and better supporting students to their school community'. It includes curriculum units linked to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards for students in years Prep to 8 as well as teacher professional development modules. Copies of the kit will shortly be distributed to all Victorian schools and government-funded kindergartens. Go to www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au for further information or to obtain additional copies of the kit.

Parliamentary News

The Australian Parliament (House of Representatives and Senate) sat on Monday 7 September 2009 and will rise on Thursday 17 September 2009. The Victorian Parliament (Assembly and Council) rose on Thursday 3 September 2009. Both Houses will next sit from Tuesday 15 September 2009 until Thursday 17 September 2009.

New South Wales Government Fails to Overturn Ban on League Tables

The Australian, Justine Ferrari, 11/09/09; The Australian, Angus Hohenboken & Justine Ferrari, 11/09/09

The New South Wales Government has failed in its attempts to overturn recent legislation that bans the publication of league tables of school performance information. The Coalition, the Australian Greens and the Shooters Party voted against proposal in the New South Wales Upper House, confirming the legislation that they had previously introduced. Under the legislation, it is illegal for school performance information to be printed in a newspaper or magazine in New South Wales, but it is not illegal for the information to be published on the internet or for information printed in other states and territories of Australia to be distributed within New South Wales. The Premier of New South Wales, The Hon. Nathan Rees, MP, indicated that he would seek legal advice as to whether the legislation breached the Australian Constitution. The former leader of the New South Wales Liberal Party, The Hon. Peetr Debnam, MP, called for the government to broker a voluntary code of conduct with newspapers to ensure that the publication of school performance information was appropriate.

Seminars for the week beginning 14 September 2009

Day	Seminar Name	Time	Venue
Monday 14/09	Financial Health Assessment Framework Briefing	10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Warragul
Tuesday 15/09	How to Differentiate the Curriculum to Cater for All of the Students in Your Class (Day 4 of 4)	9.30 am – 3.30 pm	Training Centre
Wednesday 16/09	TAA 40104 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (Day 4 of 4) Bushfire Recovery Strategy Forum	8.30 am – 5.00 pm 11.00 am – 12.30 pm	Seminar Room Training Centre
Thursday 17/09			
Friday 18/09			

The Seminar Room is located at 20 Garden Street South Yarra. The Training Centre and Board Room are located at 30 Garden Street South Yarra. The Warragul briefing will take place at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School, 150 Bowen Street, Warragul.

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

Ph: (03) 9825 7200 Fax: (03) 9826 6066

Email: aisv@ais.vic.edu.au