



THIS WEEK'S THOUGHT – Di Giblin

Building the Education Revolution (BER)

Yesterday the Federation was part of the stakeholder group that met with Alastair Hunter, Hugo Harmstorf and John Deeble from the Department's BER Program Office. We were provided with an update and feedback on the Project Nomination process which is now well underway. Summary points from the discussions are as follows:

- * Memo requesting BER project nominations for Primary Schools for the 21st Century and National School Pride sent to all schools on Tuesday 24 February. The memo and general details of the BER program can be accessed from the DET Intranet homepage at - <https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/deptresources/majorprojects/ber/>
- * Project nomination MUST be returned online nomination form available at - <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/survey.zgi?p=WEB228UJK369ET> by 16 March. Many schools have already submitted their project nominations. DET had received 1149 BER nominations from 450 schools by last Friday morning.
- * Schools can nominate multiple projects to ensure that DET has a complete picture of the school identified needs (an individual nomination form is required for each project). DET will assess compliance with Commonwealth guidelines if necessary. There will be **NO SECOND ROUND** of nominations for Primary Schools for the 21st Century and National School Pride.
- * Schools should nominate projects that can be completed quickly as all BER projects must be completed by March 2011.
- * Project nominations do not need to be fully scoped and costed. This will occur later in consultation with Principals.
- * A separate memo detailing the nomination process for Science and Language Centres for 21st Century Secondary Schools will be sent to all eligible schools in the near future.
- * DET have established a Question and Answer site to address issues and questions from schools. These are updated daily wherever possible. Schools can email questions to ber@det.nsw.edu.au.
- * The Commonwealth's BER Guidelines can be accessed on the DEEWR website at - <http://www.deewr.gov.au/schooling/buildingtheeducationrevolution/Pages/default.aspx>
- * Program \$ allocations are indicative and will allow some flexibility.
- * As part of the Economic Stimulus, the Commonwealth is asking NSW to expend \$220 Million by 30 June 2009. In response to this request DET is currently planning for a program of early works informed by the 2008 Condition Assessment, the Principals Priority Building Program nominations collected in late 2007 and Existing Information held by Asset Management. Schools will be advised as early as possible regarding early packages of work.
- * DET has established a BER Program Office to manage project nominations and implementation of the BER works.

- * The three Directors from the Asset Management area will co-ordinate planning and delivery of BER projects.
- * The NSW Premier has established a Task Force to oversee the BER program. The Task Force will be headed by Bob Leece. Michael Taylor from the Task Force is already working closely with DET to ensure the best possible program outcomes.
- * Commonwealth funds will be managed by DET in conjunction with the Task Force.
- * AMUs are receiving regular briefings and updates to ensure that they can offer the best advice to schools.
- * Work is already underway to establish a panel of Managing Contractors to implement BER projects.

P&C Day

Last Wednesday, P&C Associations across New South Wales celebrated their work in a variety of ways on P&C Day

We received many messages of congratulations for the work you do – even mention in NSW Parliament. For those of you who have not taken the opportunity check out the message from Michael Coutts-Trotter, Director –General of Education and Training, Managing Director of TAFE. http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/a-z/vodcast/michael_pnc_gt.htm

Take care
Di Giblin 2009.

BULLYING FACE-OFF PLAN REJECTED BY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Education bosses have stymied a ground-breaking plan to bring bullies and victims together to work out their problems face-to-face. Bullying victim Kristie Vasili wants the scheme launched across NSW in a bid to break the vicious cycle of aggression that has crushed thousands of lives. But the program widely used in the United States hit a bureaucratic roadblock when Ms Vasili, 21, took it to state and federal education departments. The NSW Department of Education and Training told her it already had strong anti-bullying policies covering 2240 primary and secondary schools.

<http://www.news.com.au/dailytelegraph/story/0,22049,25145526-5001021,00.html>

GILLARD REVEALS MASSIVE SHAKE-UP OF HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING FOR PLACES

In what would be the biggest structural shake-up of the university sector since the Dawkins reforms of the late 1980s, the federal Government is planning to link funding for tertiary places to student demand. The reform, aimed at significantly boosting participation rates in higher education, would scrap the current practice where the Government allocates commonwealth-supported places. Addressing the Universities Australia conference in Canberra this morning, Education Minister Julia Gillard said the changes would create a “new student-centred, demand-driven higher education system”. The Government plans to release further details at the time of the May budget.

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25137334-12332,00.html>

PUPILS LEFT EXPOSED AS SPEED CAMS GO

In 2006 the then NSW minister for roads, Eric Roozendaal, promised that a combination of 50 fixed and mobile speed cameras would be installed and rotated through NSW schools, and he warned that "any school could have a camera in it". He later backed away from the pledge, and about 25 vehicle-mounted cameras were gradually decommissioned by police as they broke down. The last cameras were shelved last October. However, the mobile cameras have proven to be an effective deterrent in Victoria and Queensland, and the State Government never told the public that they would be phased out.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/pupils-left-exposed-as-speed-cams-go-20090308-8sgl.html>

AUSTRALIA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM IS FAILING DISADVANTAGED

Australia's education system is failing to help enough disadvantaged people access higher education and all sectors must work together to improve the balance, Professor Denise Bradley says.

In Adelaide yesterday to speak on student equity for the first time since releasing the Bradley Review of Higher Education in December last year, Professor Bradley outlined what must be done by universities, the vocational education and training (VET) sector and schools, to ensure more Australians attain higher education qualifications. http://www.pcworld.com/businesscenter/article/160737/virtual_schools_rapidly_building_online_education_foothold.html

International News

EDUCATION - AUSTRALIA'S COMMITMENT TO FIJI EDUCATION REMAINS STRONG

Address on the occasion of the signing of the MOU and handover of school rehabilitation funds to the Ministry of Education, Friday, February 27, 2009. This assistance comes out of the A\$3 million that was committed by Australia after the January floods. Out of the total, around FJ\$390,000 is being provided to assist with repairs, and with equipment such as water tanks, furniture, library resources and stationery for 25 schools which suffered damage or served as evacuation centres during the floods. 14 of these schools are located in the West, seven in the North and four are in the Central Division. 21 of them are primary schools and four are secondary schools.

<http://fjiddaily.com/feature.php?date=20090303&index=740>

AUSSIE CREATIVITY TO HELP CURB YOUTH BINGE DRINKING

Four Australians aged under 25 years old die due to alcohol related injuries in an average week, and one in two 15 to 17 year olds who get drunk will do something they regret. Just launched, a new national short film competition is calling upon young aspiring film-makers – and anyone with a camera – to join the effort in tackling the binge drinking epidemic among young Australians. Entrants must simply produce a 90-second film that puts the spotlight on this social issue, and helps warn young Australians about the dangers of binge drinking. For further information on *The Drinking Nightmare Short Film Competition* including how to enter, visit www.drinkingnightmarefilms.com.au

EAT IT TO BEAT IT - HELP CANCER COUNCIL AND YOUR FAMILY, ALL AT NO COST!

Cancer Council NSW invites parents and carers of primary school children in the Hunter region to participate in a groundbreaking new trial aimed at increasing consumption of fruit and vegetables. Free 'Fruit 'n' Veg Sense' sessions will run from April to July 2009, in local schools and community centres across the Hunter region addressing issues such as fussy eaters, stretching your food dollar further, menu modification and planning. Sessions are free to attend and you will receive handy resources and new recipe ideas to use at home. The trial requires you to complete two short questionnaires and attend one session. To enrol and participate, please contact the Cancer Council (Hunter) Research Hotline on: 4923 0710 and leave your name, postcode & best contact phone number. Alternatively send an email to: eatittobeatit@nswcc.org.au .

FAQS

What is the Annual Conference and what happens there?

The annual conference is an event where delegates of the P&C across New South Wales come together to bring forth issues that are seen as important to public education such as curriculum, transport to school, the state of school buildings which form the agenda items for the Annual conference to be address at a state level. The agenda items are debated at the conference and the determined items will become part of Federation's policy.

Federation's policy is used to determine how Federation represents its affiliates in discussions with politicians and departmental officers, at the committees on which Federation is represented, and with all media interaction.

On the receipt of the minutes of the Annual Conference, the successful agenda items will be printed in the next handbook.

Federation's Annual General Meeting is held at Annual Conference, giving delegates from across the state the opportunity to decide who will represent them as officers of Federation. As well, a number of speakers and workshops are offered to share information relevant to public education.

When and where is it?

The **2009 Annual Conference will be held on the 31st of July, 1st and 2nd of August at Penrith Rugby League Club (Panthers)**. Registration packs and nomination forms will be issued to all affiliated P&C Associations. If you do not received your registration pack or have any enquiries please contact the Federation Office on 1300 885 982.

Who goes?

P&C associations which are affiliated with Federation are encouraged to nominate up to three delegates to represent the association at the Annual conference during their annual general meeting. These delegates will receive the appropriate papers for the conference, including the agenda. It is recommended that associations go through the agenda and advise their delegate how they should vote on those issues which are important to their particular school community.

The Federation of Parents and Citizens Association would like to thank the following sponsors for their ongoing support of Parents and citizens and public education in NSW.



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