



ASPA

AUSTRALIAN SECONDARY
PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

*... advocating for public
secondary education
since 1969*



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President's Newsletter—June 2013

To Gonski or not to Gonski?

It is hard to believe that the education of this nation's most needy children has become a political football being tossed between state and federal governments and oppositions.

The Review of Funding of Schooling was quite explicit when it said that we need to address the gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged in our schools and in our community and yet, for over a year, and more specifically the last few months, we have seen argument after argument about who gets what and when. Education is a right and an entitlement, but it is not a right or entitlement at the expense of the school down the road or across the street.

It is worth remembering that 85% of the students in greatest need are in government schools, and many schools are inadequately equipped to redress that need. This is the reality, and this must be addressed. Principals need to look at what is required by their school community and then present a case, over and over again, until our voice is heard. There has been some wonderful work done in some parts of Australia where parents, School Councils and the broader community have joined to get a solution, an appropriate level of funding. Unfortunately there have been other principals and school councils feeling as though they have been left out in the cold, as they have no idea as to what they will receive should "Gonski" be accepted or indeed if "Gonski" is rejected. Schools need to know, and they need to know soon, so that they can plan for 2014.

The link between the School Funding Review and the National Plan for School Improvement is obvious, but it is perhaps worth reconsidering some of the reasons why the government is so focused on a National Plan. Australia's performance in national and international testing has been disappointing. Our TIMSS results have not improved since 1995, our PISA results have been falling steadily since 2000, and our NAPLAN data indicate that approximately 8% of students have not reached the minimum standards. These results are important; however, the really important part of the picture is the impact that these results have on an individual's capacity to be employed, to make a contribution and to live a happy, healthy productive life. That is what matters the most.

I urge all principals to visit www.betterschools.gov.au, as the explanations are there, and it is possible to work out approximately what students in your school community will receive. The only variable is how your state or territory will distribute the funds. This question can be answered only by your department; so ask the question, as this model is premised on a commitment to greater transparency.



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Talking Heads 2013 Forum

The ASPA annual Talking Heads Forum will be held in conjunction with the ICP Convention in Cairns 1st – 4th July. TH13 will be held on 1st July from 9:00am – 1:00pm, and the focus of this forum will be on **Quality Leadership – a Construct for the Future**. Last years’ participants generated the BIG IDEAS for education in the 21st century, and from the thinking frames used at the forum we have been able to identify what the profession believes needs to happen if schooling in the 21st century is to be viable, valid and valued by students, families and the communities. The key message was around leadership and the explicit role of the principal in the transformation of the school community or ensuring that the BIG IDEAS become embedded in our practice. At the forum we will share what we are calling “Next Steps Thinking”, and once again seek input from our members and invited guests to continue the process of shaping the dialogue that represents education this century. This document will only be available to TH13 participants.

If you have not received an invitation, and you are coming to Cairns and would like to be involved, please contact president@aspa.asn.au. We need the numbers for the venue and catering.

ASPA will also be sharing a new strategic plan that includes our strategic priorities for effective student learning, as well as the Implementation Plan for implementing ASPA Principles and Priorities for Australian Education. These documents can be found at www.aspa.asn.au

If you have not registered for ICP 2013, please visit the website www.icp2013.org and sign up. The program is outstanding, and the opportunity to learn from and meet colleagues from 30 other countries is unique.

Student Leaders International – A new and free resource for ASPA members



ASPA is one of many global members of the International Confederation of Principals, which is supporting the free distribution of the *Student Leaders International* e-zine. This resource is free and available for all secondary schools. It is endorsed by two United Nations youth-oriented organisations: the International Youth Council (youth assembly of the United Nations) and the Youth and United Nations Global Alliance.

The *Student Leaders International* e-zine is a resource that can be used by teachers to develop the leadership knowledge and skills of students, or as a stand-alone reading and library resource. A free Teacher Module with student activities and professional readings supplements the student e-zine.

Please consider making these resources available to teachers and students in your school.

Both resources can be downloaded for free from the Leaders in School website www.leadersinschool.com.au



	<p>In this issue of <i>Student Leaders International</i> e-zine there are student stories of leadership from Australia, England, Palestine, Japan and the United States. There are also profiles of well-known leaders and a variety feature articles that include a focus on thinking, manners, theory and a historical perspective. The concept of ‘student voice’ is also introduced. This concept is elaborated on in a feature article in the Teacher Module written by Professor Julia Flutter from Cambridge University.</p>
	<p>The Teacher Module includes student activities related to all student articles within the e-zine. It also includes an academic paper and three professional development activities related to that paper.</p>

Turning Work Experience into Work Inspirations: Industry and Education Policy Makers Forum

Work Inspiration is a hugely successful, business-led initiative, now in Australia, that helps make young people’s first experience of the world of work more meaning and inspiring. Originally developed in the UK by the employer group Business in the Community, Work Inspirations affirms the vital role of employers in schools and youth transitions in a globally competitive world. The program stimulates employers to ‘reimagine’ their approach to work experience and provides them with tools to motivate and inspire young people, and open their minds to the wealth of opportunities available.

This is a School / Business Community Partnership Brokers Program, supported by National Australia Bank, The Smith Family, Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) and the Federal government operating under the Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership. Over the past 14 months there have been a number of pilots around Australia, and I encourage you to visit Work Inspiration Pilot Program, McDonald’s YouTube to gain further insight.

Improving students’ outcomes is one of ASPA’s 3 priorities, and improving student attainment is a huge issue in a world where more than 300 million young people (equivalent to the total population of the USA) between the ages of 16 and 24 are unemployed.

The National launch is in Sydney on 8th August, and then the official rollout will begin. Work Inspirations is worth considering and may present many opportunities for the young people in your school or could be very powerful in the context of Trading Training Centres, Trade Cadetships and School Based Apprenticeships.



The Staff in Australia's Schools 2013 Survey: Now Underway

The *Staff in Australia's Schools* (SiAS) 2013 survey is now in schools. This is an important survey for the teaching profession.

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) is conducting the survey on behalf of DEEWR. The Advisory Committee includes government and non-government school employers, principals' associations, teacher unions, teacher education institutions, and the ABS.

ASP is represented on the Advisory Committee and fully supports the survey.

Its focus is information to improve teacher workforce planning. Topics covered include:

- teachers' background and qualifications
- professional learning activities
- workload
- career pathways
- future career intentions
- preparation for leadership roles
- school staffing issues

The survey involves samples of Primary and Secondary schools:

- in the Government, Catholic and Independent sectors; and
- in all States and Territories.

The survey is designed to be easy and quick to complete online. The data are confidential, and no school or teacher will be identified.

It is critical that the invited Principals and teachers take part so that high quality, representative data are collected.

For further information, including reports from earlier SiAS surveys, see: www.acer.edu.au/sias

ASP key messages and communication strategy

Everyone wants the attention of government: political parties, media, business and the broader community. Ensuring that the voice of educators is heard can be challenging, as education is a hotly contested space. Educators often use or over-use the language of the profession and in the process limit the power of our communications. Late last year ASPA made the decision to work with a communication expert, CPR, to ensure that we were very fo-



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cused in our work and in our messaging. We need to be sure that the voice of government secondary school leaders is heard in all contexts.

With members, and with CPR, we developed a number of key messages around our principles and priorities. The Key messages are below, and we have developed an implementation plan to share these messages. Although it is in its early days, the impact has been significant. and we have begun the process of developing new partnerships and relationships.

Key Messages

1. ASPA believes that public policy discussion around education should focus **on specific improvements and student learning outcomes**. Funding should support change, rather than be the focus.
2. All State and Federal education Ministers **agreed on simple, clear goals** for Australian education in 2008 (**Melbourne Declaration Goals**). These **should continue to guide education reform** that aims to achieve substantial individual, social and economic benefits.
3. **School leaders** are the drivers of all change in schools. Without recognition of this, change will not be effectively implemented in schools.
4. Improving and maintaining **quality teaching** will have the **greatest impact** on student learning.
5. Governments should have greater **consultation with education experts** when developing education policy and reform. ASPA is the leading body for Secondary Principals of government schools in Australia. It is well-placed to offer experienced advice.

Grime-Fighting School Children Sought for Vital Global Hygiene Initiative

Did you know that if a child washes his or her hands at least four times daily, that good habit will reduce gastroenteritis by 50% and the flu by 24%?

The Children's Global Hygiene Foundation is asking every school in Australia to nominate their own child ambassadors to the foundation to help in this important initiative.

The global face of the foundation will be your selected child ambassadors. The foundation will empower them with bacteria-fighting knowledge through sophisticated, exciting online games and storytelling. By joining the GrimeStoppers Club, they'll become community hygiene warriors.

As the campaign moves forward in Australia, the ambassadors will engage with local newspapers, radio stations, and local communities to gain support for both the foundation and GrimeStoppers. www.soapstream.com.au/grimestoppers/

GrimeStoppers are charged with the duty of saving the world from the Superbugs. Scientists are losing the battle against these antibiotic-resistant bacteria. By undertaking various community initiatives throughout the year, the children of GrimeStoppers will encourage their families and their communities to wash their hands with soap and water to prevent disease.



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The Global Initiative

Schools can also adopt a third world school in their quest to help communities around the globe. GrimeStoppers will raise funds to provide that school with hand-hygiene systems that attach to any plastic bottle. These systems will allow children to wash their hands four times a day for 20c per year. The children within the adopted school will also join the GrimeStoppers Club, becoming community hygiene warriors and receiving silicon GrimeStopper wristbands. By taking home a hand-hygiene system, they will also encourage their families to wash their hands. The mission of GrimeStoppers is to save lives. This initiative will raise awareness so that the level of vandalism will decrease and the incidence of hand washing will increase in our Australian schools' toilets. Over 5000 children around the world die each day from illnesses that are preventable by having access to soap and water.

GrimeStoppers' child ambassadors will learn valuable lessons by reaching out and helping other children around the world. Working together we can make a difference in sanitation practices around the world. Please go to <http://grimestoppershq.com/> to register your school.



ASPA President