FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AEU Media Campaign

The Australian Education Union (AEU) has launched a media and letter box campaign in support of additional funding for government schools. This campaign focuses solely on Commonwealth funding which does not give the full picture of public funding across government and non-government schools.

The AISSA continues to support increased public funding for education and training. However it is essential the community has access to information about both Commonwealth and State government contributions to recurrent and capital works funding.

I have written to all SA members of the Federal Parliament and the Shadow Minister (Mr Stephen Smith) outlining concerns raised by member schools about the AEU campaign.

The following statement has been distributed to member schools:

The Australian Education Union (AEU) has commenced a media campaign relating to public funding of schools which only provides one part of the overall picture. It is important that Independent school communities are aware of all the facts.

The whole picture must include Commonwealth and State funds.

On average, Australian governments (State and Commonwealth) spend around $10,756 a year per SA government school student compared to $5,786 per SA non-government school student. Almost $5,000 more is spent per SA government student.
In Independent schools, parents (and the wider school community) are a major source of funding, contributing, on average, approximately half their school’s income. In some schools this contribution is substantially higher. For Government schools, State Governments are the major source of funding. 94% of SA State Government funding goes to South Australian Government schools. Opponents of non-government schools tend to focus solely on Commonwealth sources, ignoring the role of State Governments.

Non-government schools educate over one-third of SA school students and make an important contribution to Australia’s future. Independent schools support increased investment in both non-government and government schools and welcome debate on government funding of schools. However, this debate should be based on all the facts and not misleading rhetoric.

This was also supported by Letter to the Editor published in The Advertiser on 23 April.

Your support is requested in distributing information on this matter provided by AISSA to your school community.

The AISSA will provide information to member schools on public funding of schools, both in printed form and on-line in the weeks leading up to the Federal election.

Garry Le Duff
Executive Director

NATIONAL TOPICS

ALP Schools Funding Policy

Over recent weeks the Federal ALP has released a number of statements outlining key elements of an emerging school funding policy. Key elements of these statements include:

- Commitment to greater investment in all levels of education, including schools
- All schools will be funded on the basis of need and fairness
- Funding will not be cut to any school, and
- No disruption to the current use of the Average Government School Recurrent Costs (AGSRC) indexation arrangements for school funding.

The AISSA has indicated support for these principles; however has requested the ALP provide details on the formula that will be used to distribute Federal funds to non-government schools.

A recent edition of The Australian Financial Review reported that “... Labor will consider non-government schools private resources in calculating their public funding.” Clarification of this statement has been sought from the Shadow Minister’s office via ISCA. Apparently there has been no change to the announcements made by Stephen Smith about maintaining current resourcing levels with indexation. It may be that the article is referring to any ‘additional’ funds that an ALP government might provide rather than the core general recurrent funding. It remains to be seen just how the ALP intends to measure resources; this may be covered as part of a more detailed statement from Stephen Smith to be issued, hopefully before the election.

The Federal ALP has also released a statement (The Australian Economy needs an education revolution) as the foundation for formulating more detailed policy statements. The paper makes a strong connection between investment in human capital and the third wave of economic reform. It is presented as a new vision to ensure Australia is able to compete in the global economy. The paper provides substantial detail (graphs), etc to justify the position and directions.
The release of the overall directions paper was followed by an announcement that the ALP would establish a universal right to access early play based learning and development programs delivered by degree-qualified teachers. This would be achieved through a Commonwealth Early Childhood Education Act.

The ALP has also made a commitment of $62.5 million to encourage Government, Independent and Catholic schools to share educational facilities such as science and language laboratories. AISSA media statements have supported the concept in principle but indicated that Independent schools must be able to retain their autonomy and ethos, receive a fair share of capital works funding within the shared facility and red tape barriers must be eliminated to facilitate such co-operative arrangements.

A further announcement has been made that the ALP would allocate $111 million to a New Directions for Maths and Science plan. In particular, it has been promised that the HECS rate for science and maths would be reduced from $7,118 to $3,998 to the same level of nursing and teaching. Graduates who were employed in maths and science fields (particularly teaching) would get a 50% HECS remission for up to five years after graduation.

The ALP has also indicated that trainee teachers would have to undertake literacy and numeracy tests before being employed in schools. Homework centres would also be established for children who needed extra help along with professional development for staff.

AISSA Meeting with Shadow Minister

Representatives of AISSA recently met with the Shadow Minister for Education and Training (Mr Stephen Smith) and the Federal member for Adelaide (Ms Kate Ellis). The meeting was positive.

The AISSA representatives (Russell Eley President, Garry Le Duff and Roger Anderson) made the following key points during the meeting:

- The changing socio-economic profile of the Independent sector in South Australia
- The significant differences in the level of recurrent and capital works funding made available to non-government schools by State governments across Australia
- The misleading AEU media campaign re: funding of schools
- The importance to Independent schools in knowing the actual funding formula that would be implemented by an ALP Federal Government
- The need for any Federal Government to provide significant advanced notice of any change in recurrent funding
- The significant gap in public funding to support students with disabilities
- Support for the ALP’s policy statement on funding early childhood education
- The positive contribution that Independent schools make to the community and education standards in Australia
- The importance of Commonwealth Targeted Programmes to the Independent sector and the benefits of the SA model for the management of the program and other externally funded projects.

The timing of the release of more detail about the funding policy for schools is a dilemma for the ALP; it is important that member schools continue to seek from their Federal ALP member and candidates greater clarity about the actual funding model to be used to allocate Commonwealth funds to non-government schools.

National Curriculum

In late 2006 and 2007 the debate about national curriculum became an integral part of national politics as the Federal Coalition Government and Australian Labour Party attempt to seek the support of the community for a national curriculum.

In October 2006 the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training (Julie Bishop) called for the development of national curriculum and the establishment of a National Board of
Studies comprised of educators from the "sensible centre".

The above arguments can be summarized in the following quote from the current Federal Minister:

"The community is demanding an end to fads and wants a return to a commonsense curriculum, with agreed core subjects, like Australian History and a renewed focus on literacy and numeracy. The curriculum must be challenging, aiming for high standards and not accepting the lowest common denominator...

We need to take school curriculum out of the hands of ideologues in the State and Territory education bureaucracies and give it to say a national board of studies, comprising the sensible centre of educators – with representatives of our States and Territories, bringing to the table the very best examples of all the States have to offer.

The Minister has indicated compliance to a national curriculum will be a condition of receiving funding from the Federal Government.

In February 2007 the ALP also announced its support for a national curriculum (New Directions for Our schools – Establishing a National Curriculum to improve our children’s educational outcomes) in a number of core areas (maths, English, sciences and history) from Kindergarten to Year 12. The policy statement also proposed a National Curriculum Board consisting of educational experts. The national curriculum would be developed in consultation with States and Territories with flexibility for local, regional and State variations.

Both major political parties have emphasized the need for rigor, national consistency and high standards to support a national integrated economy and mobile workforce. Both appear to be supporting a more traditional subject/discipline based approach to curriculum design and assessment and overall improvements in the quality of teaching. The establishment of a national organisation to possibly develop and accredit national curriculum is also a significant proposal.

Some academics have entered the debate accusing State/Territory school authorities of "dumbing down" the curriculum, neglecting the basics and allowing left wing ideologies to dominate the pedagogy supporting curriculum design and delivery.

The Council for the Australian Federation (meeting of all State/Territory premiers and chief ministers, separate from COAG) has supported the division of Society and the environment into the core subjects of history, geography and economics.

In addition the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Skills for a Nation – A Blueprint for Improving Education and Training 2007-2017) has also indicated its support for nationally consistent standards that are comparable to international standards and the development of an Australian National Curriculum and an Australian Certificate of Education.

The AISSA is preparing two discussion papers [(1) Trends in National Curriculum (2) Outcomes Based Education] for distribution to member schools in the near future. It is important that the Independent school sector engage in this important policy debate and consider the opportunities and possible weaknesses in any move to a national curriculum.

**Inquiry into Academic Standards of School Education**

The Senate has referred to the Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee ‘an inquiry into the quality of school education, with particular reference to processes and standards and attainments though progressive stages of schooling’. The Committee is also to ‘consider the adequacy of core curriculum and the standards of attainment required for higher education’.

It is expected that the Committee will visit all or most States and Territories for public hearings, depending on the source of submissions. It is further intended that the Committee will hold school visits for discussions with students and teachers.
The AISSA has been invited to make a submission to the Inquiry. The AISSA will seek feedback from member schools in preparation of its submission.


April MCEEYTA Meeting
A MCEEYTA meeting was held on 12-13 April 2007. The possible outcomes of this meeting are based on a range of media reports and discussions with staff from various agencies. As yet no formal publicly available information on the outcomes of the meetings is available.

National testing
States and Territories will cooperate to conduct a national testing program from 2008 to meeting the requirements of the Schools Assistance Act 2004. The Commonwealth is not supporting this approach. There may be significant implications for Independent schools as the position of AESOC (no representatives from the non-government sector) is now strengthened in the making of decisions about key policy and the implementation of emerging policy decisions.

National eligible school starting age
State and Territory Ministers did not support the implementation of a National School Starting Age on the grounds that its educational benefits had not been demonstrated and some authorities would incur significant cost increases.

National consistency in school curriculum
The Ministers agreed to work together to share curriculum materials and to work with the Catholic and Independent sectors to develop nationally consistent curriculum starting with English, mathematics and science. This will include the setting of core standards for national testing to measure student progress and the identification of a consistent scale for reporting student results. They also agreed to explore the establishment of a national collaborative body to implement the above.

Performance-based pay for teachers
This was rejected by the State and Territory Ministers; however they did recognise the importance of recognizing excellence in teaching. They have agreed to report to MCEEYTA on the progress of their approaches to recognizing and rewarding teachers.

School non-attendance
MCEEYTA agreed to progress work on the measurement of non-attendance at school, particularly among Indigenous students. South Australian, Western Australia and the Northern Territory have agreed to share enrolment information to address the issue of absenteeism in the aboriginal homelands.

Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Meeting
The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia. COAG comprises the Prime Minister, State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA). The role of COAG is to initiate, develop and monitor the implementation of policy reforms that are of national significance and which require cooperative action by Australian governments (for example, National Competition Policy, water reform, reform of Commonwealth and State/Territory roles in environmental regulation, the use of human embryos in medical research, counter-terrorism arrangements and restrictions on the availability of handguns).

COAG met on 13 April 2007. The Communiqué released from the meeting included the following points (among others).

Human capital
COAG agreed to a number of significant actions in the area of human capital. These actions cover type 2 diabetes, vocational education and training, literacy and numeracy, and early childhood and child care. All State and Territory
Governments presented their detailed action plans for each of early childhood education and care, literacy and numeracy, and type 2 diabetes. The Commonwealth agreed that these areas are high priorities and committed to producing its own action plans in these areas.

To assist Indigenous adults in regional and remote areas to access further education and training opportunities, COAG has agreed to the allocation of up to $40 million over four years on a cost-shared basis to support the take up of the Commonwealth’s Work Skills Vouchers in regional and remote communities in Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory.

To improve literacy and numeracy outcomes, COAG has agreed to develop:

a. a core set of nationally-consistent teacher standards for literacy and numeracy by the end of 2007,

b. accredit university teacher education courses and register or accredit teachers to meet these national standards by 2009,

c. implement on entry to school diagnostic assessment systems for children in their first year of school by 2010, and

d. develop a core set of nationally agreed skills, knowledge and attributes for school Principals by the end of 2007.

In relation to early childhood and child care, COAG also agreed to develop by 2008 an intergovernmental agreement on a national approach to quality assurance and regulations for early childhood education and care. This agreement aims to improve standards in early childhood services, remove overlaps and duplication between State and Commonwealth regulations and reduce red tape for service providers.

Inter-Jurisdictional exchange of criminal history information for people working with children
COAG agreed in-principle to a framework to improve access to a consistent and expanded range of inter-jurisdictional criminal history information by child related employment screening schemes to improve the safety and protection of children. Further work is to be done to develop an implementation plan (due to be considered by COAG in February 2008), identifying potential costs, financial arrangements, key stages and transitional arrangements to implement the framework across Australia.

Regulation reform
COAG agreed to a timetable for achieving national occupational health and safety (OHS) standards and harmonising elements in OHS Acts, subject to there being no reduction or compromise in standards for legitimate safety concerns in current OHS standards.

Human influenza pandemic prevention and preparedness
COAG agreed to a series of national desktop exercises commencing in 2007-08 to test further national preparedness to respond to an influenza pandemic.

Indigenous issues
COAG reaffirmed its commitment to closing the outcomes gap between Indigenous people and other Australians over a generation and resolved that the initial priority for joint action should be on ensuring that young Indigenous children get a good start in life. COAG requested that the Indigenous Generational Reform Working Group prepare a detailed set of specific, practical proposals for the first stage of cumulative generational reform for consideration by COAG as soon as practicable in December 2007. National initiatives will be supported by additional bi-lateral and jurisdiction specific initiatives as required to improve the life outcomes of young Indigenous Australians and their families. It also agreed that urgent action was required to address data gaps to enable reliable evaluation of progress and transparent national and jurisdictional reporting on outcomes. COAG also agreed to establish a jointly-funded clearing house for reliable evidence and information about best practice and success factors.
Investing in Our Schools Program

Additional funds for 2007 and 2008
The Prime Minister Mr Howard announced that there will be an additional allocation of funds to this program to both Government and Non-government schools.

The AISSA BGA will receive an additional $910,000 for each of 2007 and 2008.

The guidelines for the allocation of these additional funds will require that the grants must be given to schools that have received little or no IOSP funding to date and priority must be given to schools with the highest level of disadvantage and need.

The additional funds must also be directed to small projects under $75,000. Applications for 2008 projects closed on Friday 30th March.

The Le@rning Federation

Access to the Le@rning Objects
An updated DVD of the Le@rning Objects was distributed to all schools who have signed the licence agreement in the mail out of 28 March.

The AISSA is continuing to pursue options for online delivery of these valuable resource materials. We are having discussions with the Le@rning Federation through ISCA about a potential portal for Independent schools.

School that have entered into an agreement with Clickview to use their digital learning management software will be able to access the Le@rning Objects via Clickview.

STATE TOPICS

Integrated Childhood Services
The State Education Minister for Education and Children's Services has recently approved feasibility studies for new children's centres in Campbelltown, Marion, Woodcroft and Salisbury. Late last year a statewide process took place to look at the integrated early childhood services that were already available in government schools and preschool; results of this process have helped inform the final sites for the last five children's centres.

Public Health Message for Swimming Pool Operators, Instructors & Parents
In early March 2007, the Department of Health published a public health warning concerning an increase in Cryptosporidium infections (a cause of infectious gastroenteritis). Despite the warning, Cryptosporidium infections (cryptosporidiosis) continue to rise and are four times higher than at last year. A total of 228 cases of cryptosporidiosis have been reported this year, compared to 52 cases for the same period last year.

Whilst no single source of the increased infections can be identified, many of the cases have either used public pools or appear to have become infected through contact with infected family members.

As a significant proportion of the current cases are children, schools are considered a vital link in getting important information on preventing infection to children and their parents.

To achieve this, a series of posters have been designed to display at primary and secondary schools and any other relevant facility. The posters provide key messages for preventing infection and have been tailored for various age groups (parents and primary/secondary school students).

The Department of Health is seeking your assistance in distributing the posters (printed or electronically) to schools to emphasize the importance of simple hygiene measures to prevent not only Cryptosporidium infection, but also many other infectious gastrointestinal diseases.

Coalition to Decrease Bullying

Jenn Tranter (AISSA Behaviour Management Adviser) is a member of the Coalition to Decrease Bullying, Harassment and Violence in South Australian Schools. She is working alongside DECS and Catholic Education personnel to develop information and support for parents on Cyber-Bullying in line with National Safe Schools week 2007.

The Commonwealth Government has coordinated three National Forums this year for the various stakeholders – the teacher education event is being held on the Goldcoast on Monday 28 and Tuesday 29 May; the student forum is being held in Canberra on 31 May and 1 June and the parent forum is being held here in Adelaide on Sunday 27 May, 9am – 3:30pm at the Education Development Centre, Hindmarsh.

The parent forum will be hosted by the School Care Youth Council and facilitated by Mia Handshin. Key note speakers will include Dr Ken Rigby and Dr Barbara Spears. There will also be input from students, NetAlert, SAPol and others.

Parents will be able to attend the forum, with further information being available on the National Safe Schools website.

SA Water Permit for AISSA Schools

Exemption from Level 3 Water Restrictions

The AISSA has been able to successfully negotiate with SA Water to enable all member schools the right to continue to water school ovals twice a week for safety and health reasons.

The permit applies from 7 March to 30 June 2007.

This is the same arrangement for DECS schools. Details of the new permit and its limitations have been sent out to all schools.

Better Pathways Consultation Paper: ‘Improving the Pathways from School to Further Education, Training, Employment and Day Options for Young People with a Disability’

The State Government Social Inclusion Board released a discussion paper seeking comment on better transitions for students with disabilities from school to further education, employment and/or day options. The AISSA prepared a response to this paper.

In its response the AISSA noted that successful transitions for students with disabilities occur when the student is at the centre of the planning process and their strengths and interests drive the process. Programs such as the AISSA Workplace Learning Program are also a key benefit for students who require additional transition support.

The AISSA argued that currently the responsibility for ensuring successful transitions for students with disabilities, requiring additional support, falls inequitably on schools and families and that there will be on-going social and economic costs unless strategies are put in place to improve the transition for these students. The AISSA response outlined a range of strategies which could improve the transition process including improved resourcing, equitable access to a range of post-school pathways and support services to meet their long-term needs and the implementation of a strategic information strategy outlining the range of transition support services.

Copies of the AISSA Response are available from Bronwyn Donaghey (donagheyb@ais.sa.edu.au).
EDUCATION

State Government Book Initiative

The Minister Assisting in Early Childhood Development (Jennifer Rankine) has launched a $41 million initiative to purchase books for preschools and child care centres. The new books will be delivered to preschools and child care centres in May 2007. The AIISSA has been informed that the initiative is available to the non-government school sectors.

National Literacy and Numeracy Week 2007 Awards

Nominations are currently being sought by DEST for the National Literacy and Numeracy Week 2007 Minister’s Awards and Excellence Awards for Schools.

Individuals who have made outstanding contributions to improving literacy and/or numeracy are eligible for the Minister’s Awards of $10,000 each. Information and nomination packs are available at www.literacyandnumeracy.gov.au, and enquiries can be made to nlnw.miistersawards@dest.gov.au or to Janet Alston on (02) 6240 8925.

Australian schools which have achieved excellence in literacy or numeracy teaching practice are eligible for the Excellence Awards of $10,000 each, or for Highly Commended Awards of $5,000 each. Guidelines and the submission proforma are available from www.literacyandnumeracy.gov.au, and enquiries can be emailed to nlnw.schoolsawards@dest.gov.au.

Nominations for both awards closed on 27 April 2007.

StartSmart Schools Program for Secondary Schools

The Commonwealth Bank Foundation supports educators and students in teaching and learning for financial literacy. A new program – StartSmart Schools Program - is being offered to secondary schools nationally, in metropolitan areas. There are four workshops available:

- Earning an Income (Years 9/10)
- Bank Accounts (Years 9/10)
- Managing your Money (Years 9/10)
- Investing (Year 11).

There is no cost to schools or parents of students. The program does not promote bank products or services in any way. Schools can select the workshop that is best suited to the students.

For all enquiries please contact: Heather MacDonald, Project Manager, Commonwealth Bank Foundation, Tel: 0427 008 827 or Email: StartSmartSchools@bigpond.com.

Future SACE Update

On 22 November 2006 the Minister for Education and Children’s Services announced the State Government’s commitment to implement the recommendations of the SACE Review with amendments as approved by Cabinet. Part of this commitment is the provision of an additional year for implementation. This means the 2007 Year 8 cohort will be the first group to undertake the new Certificate.

Since the Minister’s announcement significant activity towards implementation has commenced. Some of the major initiatives include:

1. Establishment of the future SACE Office

Ms Wendy Engliss has been appointed as the Director of the future SACE Office. Initial staffing for Project Teams for Learning Unit Framework Design, Communication, and Professional Learning for School Leaders and teachers is currently underway. The future SACE office will manage the implementation of the new Certificate over the next 18 months until the establishment of the new SACE Authority.
2. Communication Strategy
Copies of the future SACE brochure have been distributed to all schools for teachers and Board Members. The brochure is intended to provide general information recognising that there are varying levels of familiarity with the main features of the future SACE, and that a significant schedule of development and implementation is underway.

3. Implementation Strategy
Implementation of the future SACE is based on the engagement of school leadership, teachers and other educational expertise. A Cross sector Principals’ Strategy Group has been formed to provide advice to the future SACE Office to inform the implementation of the key elements of the future SACE. The Group comprises representatives from Principals’ organisations, and Government, Independent and Catholic schools; Area and Special Schools; and the Northern Territory. Mr John Proeve, Principal Cornerstone College, and Ms Helen Trebilcock, Principal Walford College, are members of this Group.

4. Learning Framework Design Team
The future SACE has a number of new elements including capabilities, extended learning, personal learning plans, and literacy and numeracy as a cross-curriculum strategy.

A Learning Framework Design Team was established in February and is led by Dr Tony Mercurio who has been seconded from SSABSA. The team will be supported by an expert advisory group and a reference group. It has begun work on defining the theoretical base of future senior secondary studies and the learning unit frameworks that will be used as the templates for both the SACE Authority subjects and school-developed learning units. This work will underpin and guide pilot projects and assist in the development of the Personal Learning Plan (PLP), the Extended Learning Initiative (ELI), and literacy and numeracy strategies. Details of school-based pilot projects and innovation projects will be released early in Term 2 for implementation from Term 3 onwards.

5. Discussion Paper No 1 SSABSA Act: Education and Care Legislation Reform
The review of the SSABSA Act has been completed and comments received from the first Discussion Paper are currently being collated and analysed. The review of the SSABSA Act will give effect to the reforms outlined by the Minister in November. It will also enable the transition of the future SACE office and of SSABSA into the new SACE Authority and Board which will manage the new Certificate and the transition of students between existing and new arrangements.

6. Higher and Further Education SACE Implementation Task Group
This Group is currently being established to engage higher and further education stakeholders in the implementation phase of the future SACE. The proposed membership of the Group is: SA universities (3), DFEEST (2), three schooling sectors (3), SATAC (1) and SSABSA (1). The Group will have an independent Chair with a strong understanding of senior secondary and tertiary education. Ms Jane Danvers, Principal Wilderness College, will be the Independent school representative on this Group.

7. Professional Learning Team
Support for school leaders and teachers is a major commitment in the implementation of the future SACE. In the first part of 2007 professional learning will focus on support for principals and school leadership teams. Mr Peter Mader (DECS) and Ms Helen Whelan (AISSA) are responsible for the planning and oversight of the professional learning program. Regional conferences are planned for school leaders in Term 2, 2007 at a number of locations across the State.

8. Support for Students with Disabilities
A cross-sector group of educators has been established to ensure the future SACE serves the needs of learners with impairment and/or health conditions. Ms Nicole McDowell, AISSA Special Education Adviser, and Mr Colin Minke, Tatakilla College are members of this group.
INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

AEI Website Developments

The AEI website now contains information regarding ESOS. This information can be accessed via www.aei.dest.gov.au/ESOS.

AEI have stated that the ESOS section is a work in progress which will develop as material supporting the transition to the National Code 2007 is finalised. The Explanatory Guide Standards one to four, which cover the pre-enrolment engagement of students, are available now with the rest of the Guide to follow in the coming weeks. The National Code Explanatory Guide has been developed in consultation with peak bodies and their nominated representatives to ensure that the information is practical and useful. This information will assist providers in the transition to the National Code 2007 which comes into effect on 1 July 2007.

It should be noted that the original National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students remains in force until 30 June. Until that date visitors should also refer to the existing DEST website http://www.dest.gov.au/osos.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND LEGAL MATTERS

Performance Based Pay

Federal Education Minister Julie Bishop has stated that performance based pay for teachers will be a component of the next school funding agreement, at least for State Government schools. The Minister has stated that her preferred model would be developed with teachers and State education ministers.

The nature of the arrangements she will seek are unclear, but may become clearer at meetings between the Federal and State Governments in April.

The Minister has raised the possibility of "one-off bonuses to a quota of outstanding teachers over a year".

She has said that her model would take into account: "Classroom performance, references from colleagues and supervisors, views of parents and students, involvement in professional learning, mastering of subject and contribution to the development of other teachers and school wellbeing."

Formal performance pay arrangements are not in place in the Australian school sectors and are not widely used widely for teachers in other parts of the world.

Most Australian school systems have additional classification positions similar to the Advanced Skill Teacher (AST) arrangements in place in South Australia. It is unlikely that existing AST arrangements will satisfy the Minister.

Many Independent schools in New South Wales are moving to introduce a classification structure that incorporates some merit based progression, based on assessments against standards.

The Labor Party has also spoken about providing additional rewards for the top performing teachers.

The next funding agreement is due to commence in 2009. (See article on April MCEETYA meeting).

Criminal History Checks

The AISSA, Catholic Education and DECS are still discussing with Families SA draft standards and policy regarding criminal history checks.

The standards and policy follow changes to Government legislation that will require schools to conduct police checks of most staff and many volunteers.

The three school sectors are seeking recognition that compliance with the Screening and Criminal History Checks Policy Guidelines established by AISSA, DECS and Catholic Education will be sufficient for checking of volunteers.
Equal Opportunity
The AISSA has been lobbying members of State Parliament about a Government Bill to change current equal opportunity laws.

The AISSA has met with the Attorney-General, Michael Atkinson, the then Leader of the Opposition, Iain Evans and the Leader of the Family First Party, Dennis Hood. The AISSA has also communicated with other key members of parliament.

The Government has undertaken to make significant changes to the Bill.

OHS&W
The AISSA has been involved in consultations about a number of proposed changes to OHS&W legislation. These include increased liability for prosecution and penalties, unions' right of access and changes to the WorkCover bonus/penalty scheme.

Practicum
With high quality practicum placements remaining an issue for the universities, Professor Marie Brennan of the University of South Australia has advised AISSA that the University is keen to consider variations to the normal arrangements with university students supporting the promotion of research, innovation, evaluation, skills development etc which could be beneficial for individual schools.

Professor Brennan advised that options and approaches that have been tried but could be extended more significantly include:
- students co-located in larger groups to provide a service e.g. a curriculum
- student teacher and teachers working together to produce curriculum materials/resources that are then trialled in classes
- cluster of schools work on a common project e.g. Arts festival, Design & Technology construction, or ICT training where student teachers have serious expertise that might be lacking in a local school
- student teachers co-research with school/site teachers on school priorities and projects
- student teachers undertake key tasks for a school e.g. data gathering with parents, preparing digital portfolios for key students, designing school and community facilities
- student teachers working as co-researchers in schools on school priority projects
- student teachers undertaking investigations e.g. on early childhood community needs analyses, on Indigenous parent/community perceptions and expectations, on language or bi-lingual immersion, as community archivists, or ethnographers of local expertise
- student teachers working with students or professionals from other agencies on integrated services/projects
- student teachers mentoring selected groups of students e.g. in a particular subject, as student researchers, as cross-age tutors to facilitate transition across sites
- new employer initiatives: innovative.

ADMINISTRATION
Principal Mentoring Project
The principal mentoring project has commenced and will continue throughout the year with eighteen new and established or recent Principals working together.

Initial response from the participants has been very positive.

The project aims to:
- Research and discuss key information on a range of mentoring practices and principles with mentors and participants
- Establish professional development needs of the participants
- Develop links for participants with the AISSA Leadership Development program
- Provide ongoing liaison and support for the mentors and participants
- Facilitate the establishment of peer networking amongst participants.
Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme (AGQTP)

Four Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme (AGQTP) Projects will be available for schools in 2007. The Projects have been designed in response to suggestions and feedback provided by schools during the 2005 AGQTP consultation process and feedback from the participants in 2006 projects.

The AGQTP 2007 Project titles are:
1. Engaging Students in Intellectual Challenge: Gifted and Talented Education
2. General Pedagogy – Assessment and Reporting.
3. Innovative Use of ICTs in the Language Classroom
4. Science – Primary Connections Program

Project Briefs and Expressions of Interest for the four AGQTP Projects for 2007 were distributed to all schools with Expressions of Interest now received.

Three Briefing Sessions were held to assist Principals/Directors of Studies in making decisions about the most appropriate AGQTP Project/s for their school.

GOVERNOR’S CORNER
Expectations of Board Members and Getting Beyond the Bicycle Shed Issues
The January-February 2007 (Number 55) edition of Good Governance outlines the six basic expectations of Board members. They include:
- An understanding of the Board’s role
- Adequate preparation to ensure sound judgement
- Active and responsible participation
- Positive and constructive attitude
- Personal honesty and integrity
- Willingness to be held accountable.

The same edition provides some useful hints to ensure your Board focuses on strategic dialogue. These suggestions include:
- Developing an annual calendar that foreshadows a number of important strategic issues are to be included in meeting agendas
- Reversing the order of the agenda, placing compliance matters and monitoring reports at the rear end of the meeting
- Ensuring important issues are not buried in the CE’s report
- Using board committees or working parties to deal with the nuts and bolts issues
- Establishing a discipline of not discussing matters that require no discussion
- Not permitting staff to read or paraphrase their reports – indicate they should focus on the implications of the report content in relation to the board’s strategic directions
- Using a consent agenda to deal with issues that require the board’s sign-off.

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION
Yapaneyepuk
(Coming Together)

A conference to celebrate and accept the challenges of Indigenous Education
Worawa Aboriginal College is the only Independent Aboriginal College in Victoria. The college provides a "total education" co-educational boarding school for Aboriginal students from Years 7 – 12.

The Indigenous Education Conference Yapaneyepuk will be convened by Worawa Aboriginal College to celebrate 25 years of operation which also coincides with the 40th anniversary of the Referendum.

The conference will be held at the Crown Conference Centre, Crown Promenade, Southbank Precinct, Melbourne on Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 May 2007.
The conference will consist of four half day sessions and include pre and post conference workshops, youth forums and a celebration Referendum dinner on Saturday 27 May 2007.

Session 1 – Valuing Indigenous Perspectives presented by Elmer Ghiskkeeper – Order of the Metis Nation, Canada.

Session 2 – Rigorous Learning outcomes- The right of every student presented by Dr Chris Sarra – Director, Institute of Indigenous leadership, Queensland.

Session 3 – Story Language Arts – foundations for learning presented by Lois Peeler, Yorta Yorta woman, Vice President, Worawa Aboriginal College.

Session 4 – The Place of Culture and Tradition – skill for the knowledge society presented by Dr Mark Rose, Director, Centre for Indigenous Education, University of Melbourne.


Student Career Pathways Activities

In 2007 funding has become available for programs to support Indigenous students to identify vocational goals and pathways. The 2007 program is a series of five separate but linked events:

- An Orientation Event on Wednesday 9 May 2007
- A Goal-setting/Parents as Career Partners Evening on Wednesday 20 June
- A visit to Adelaide University/Uni SA on Tuesday 31 July 2007
- A visit to TAFE/Taoundi College on Thursday 23 August 2007
- A Celebration dinner on Friday 26 October 2007

The workshops and visits are open to Indigenous students, their parents/caregivers and teachers. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to attend and participate in the planning and information gathering components of the program. All costs will be met by the program, including reasonable travel costs.

TARGETED PROGRAMS

2007 Agreement for Commonwealth Grants

The 2007 Agreement in Relation to Projects Approved for Commonwealth Grants has been forwarded to all schools. This Agreement sets out the obligations of schools and the SA Independent Schools Targeted Programs Authority Inc for direct grants from the following programmes: Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs; Languages; ESL-New Arrivals; Country Areas and Vocational Education and Training. Principals are asked to sign the Agreement and return the original to AISSA. Grants to schools are contingent on the return of the Agreement.

Schedule of Direct Grant Allocations to Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Grant/s Allocated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TPVA07</td>
<td>VET in Schools</td>
<td>Aug (80%) Oct (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPAC07</td>
<td>Country Areas</td>
<td>May (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPRA07</td>
<td>ESL - New Arrivals</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPLNS07</td>
<td>Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs - Direct Grants</td>
<td>May (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPSD07</td>
<td>Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs - Disability Grants</td>
<td>May (100%) Aug (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPSG07</td>
<td>Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs - Capital Grants</td>
<td>Reimbursement to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPPD07</td>
<td>Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs - Direct Grants</td>
<td>Aug (80%) Oct (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPPC07</td>
<td>Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs - Per Capita</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPLC07</td>
<td>Languages</td>
<td>May (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUP07</td>
<td>Supplementation</td>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRA07</td>
<td>SRA Cluster (formerly TOPS)</td>
<td>May (50%) Oct (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITAS07</td>
<td>Indigenous Tuition Assistance Scheme Years 4, 6 and 8</td>
<td>April (50%) Aug (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITAS07</td>
<td>Indigenous Tuition Assistance Scheme Years 9, 10, 11 and 12</td>
<td>April (50%) Aug (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQUITP07</td>
<td>Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme</td>
<td>Sep (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial Accountability for Direct Grants
Schools are reminded that they are now required to complete a Financial Accountability Certificate for Targeted Programs direct grants in excess of $10,000 for the 2006 calendar year. This Certificate should be completed by a qualified accountant at the time of the school audit and returned to AISSA. Please contact Mrs Helen Lambert, Program Manager, 8179 1412, for further assistance and information.

LITERACY NUMERACY & SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS

LITERACY

Reading Assistance Voucher Programme Background
The Reading Assistance Voucher (RAV) programme is an Australian Government initiative that provides access to one-to-one reading tuition to the value of $700 for those children who did not reach the Year 3 national reading benchmark in 2006, or who were formally exempted from testing. The tuition will be delivered by tutors who have registered on the RAV website, and will be undertaken from April to September this year.

Program Administration
Curriculum Corporation has been contracted by the Australian Government to be the RAV National Programme Manager. Schools have received correspondence from the Curriculum Corporation outlining the administrative details of this program. A copy of the RAV Programme Implementation Booklet was also provided. Additional copies are available from the programme website at www.readingtuition.edu.au

In South Australia a Contact Liaison Officer (CLO) has been appointed to provide Program support to all school sectors. The CLO for South Australia is Ms Robin Dillon-Griffin, 8226 1474.

Schools, in collaboration with the student’s parent/s, have been requested to complete the initial online registration of their eligible students. Schools have also been contacted by the Curriculum Corporation to indicate whether they wish to act as Administrative Agent for the eligible students in their school. Schools that choose to act as Administrative Agents should carefully consider their responsibilities in fulfilling this role. If a school declines to act as the Administrative Agent for its student/s, the CLO will assume responsibility for implementing the RAV programme for the students registered.

Reading Assistance Kit
A Reading Assistance Kit, including teaching materials and assessment tools, has been developed for tutors to use in the RAV programme. Two copies of the kit have been sent to all schools.

For more detailed information about the RAV program please contact:
- Ms Robin Dillon-Griffin, CLO 8226 1474
- RAV Help desk on 1800 468 303, email helpdesk@readingtuition.edu.au
- RAV Website at www.readingtuition.edu.au

Agreed Key Performance Measures for 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Full cohort/Sample</th>
<th>Basis/Test-Inst.</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy - % achieving reading, spelling and writing benchmarks</td>
<td>Years 3, 5, 7</td>
<td>Full cohort</td>
<td>WALNA or LaN</td>
<td>WALNA 8-9 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy - % achieving reading, spelling and writing benchmarks</td>
<td>Years 3, 5, 7</td>
<td>Full cohort</td>
<td>WALNA or LaN</td>
<td>WALNA 6-10 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy - % achieving numeracy benchmark</td>
<td>Years 3, 5, 7</td>
<td>Full cohort</td>
<td>WALNA or LaN</td>
<td>LAN 8-9 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy - % achieving numeracy benchmark</td>
<td>Years 3, 5, 7</td>
<td>Full cohort</td>
<td>WALNA or LaN</td>
<td>LAN 6-10 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civics and Citizenship Education – % achieving standard</td>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>National sample</td>
<td>National Test</td>
<td>22 Oct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civics and Citizenship Education – % achieving standard</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>National sample</td>
<td>National Test</td>
<td>26 Oct.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
National Assessment Program

The National Assessment Program (NAP) monitors and reports on student achievement against the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century as agreed by the education ministers of the State, Territory and National governments in 1999. It comprises both whole cohort and sample assessments.

Full Cohort Literacy and Numeracy Assessments – WALNA / LaN

The 2007 registration process for students participating either the State LaN or WALNA assessments involved schools submitting additional data detailing parent background details. The due date for submission of data was 27 April 2007.

2007 Assessment Dates

State LaN (Term 3, Week 3)
The 2007 LaN Tests for Years 3, 5 and 7 students will be held on Wednesday 8 and Thursday 9 August. Literacy will be administered on the Wednesday and Numeracy on the Thursday. The catch-up day, for students absent on either of these two days, will be on Friday 10 August.

WALNA (Term 3, Week 3)
Students undertake the assessment during the week 6–10 August.

Sample Assessment – Civics and Citizenship

The 2007 NAP – Civics and Citizenship - will assess students’ knowledge and skills in Civics and Citizenship and will involve a sample of students in Years 6 and 10 in all States and Territories. The results will be used to report the performance of students in Years 6 and 10 nationally comparable by State and Territory, sex, Indigenous status and LBOTE against the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century. The Australian Council for Educational Research is managing this program.

The Civics and Citizenship main sample assessment will be held between 22 and 26 October 2007 and will involve 6,530 Year 6 and 5,310 Year 10 students across 352 primary and 274 secondary schools. It is expected that approximately 7 schools from the Independent sector will be selected for participation at both year levels. Schools should have been informed of their selection by the end of Term one.

Year 9 Literacy and Numeracy Test

From 2008 all Australian schools will take part in a Year 9 literacy and numeracy national test. In 2007 SA Independent schools have been invited to participate in a Year 9 Literacy and Numeracy (LaN) test, designed collaboratively between the SA Department of Education and Children’s Services (DECS) and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).

Seventeen SA Independent schools chose to participate in the tests which will be held on 8 and 9 May. The test results will not be used for National Reporting. Sector participation in the Year 9 LaN test provides:
- Experience in conducting a Year 9 test as a forerunner to the 2008 National Test; and
- Use of the diagnostic data to plan for future SACE requirements and for the development of intervention programs for targeted students.

National Literacy and Numeracy Week:

3 September – 9 September 2007

Making A Difference is the new theme for National Literacy and Numeracy Week (NLNW). This year’s theme aims to recognise and celebrate schools and individuals making a difference in literacy and numeracy education. Further information about this year’s awards, national events and local activities may be obtained from either: www.literacyandnumeracy.gov.au or www.nlnw.sa.edu.au
2007 NLNW Awards For Schools

The NLNW Awards for Schools recognise the outstanding work undertaken by schools and their communities to improve the literacy and numeracy outcomes of their students. The 2007 NLNW Awards for Schools are now open for nominations. Four national Excellence Awards of $10,000 each are available for non-government schools. Four Highly Commended Awards of $5,000 each are also available for South Australian government and non-government schools. A new initiative in 2007 is the Numeracy Category. Three Excellence Awards of $10,000 each will be available to government and non-government schools. These schools will be selected from submissions that address numeracy only, not literacy and numeracy combined. The submission proforma and National Guidelines were distributed to schools in February 2007 and is also available for downloading at:

www.literacyandnumeracy.gov.au or
www.nlnw.sa.edu.au

Nominations closed on 27 April 2007.

2007 NLNW Minister’s Awards

The NLNW Minister’s Awards are provided by the Australian Government, to recognise outstanding contributions made by individuals in the community to improving literacy and/or numeracy in a wide variety of settings – from early childhood through to adult education. Up to five individual Awards of $10,000 each are available. There are two categories for Award nominations:

- Category A for people employed as teachers, education leaders and researchers; and
- Category B for people acting in a voluntary capacity in literacy and/or numeracy education.

Nominations closed on 27 April 2007.

South Australia’s Literacy and Numeracy Week Expo

One of the features of South Australia’s celebrations is the Literacy and Numeracy Week Expo to be held on Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 September at the Education Development Centre, Milner Street, Hindmarsh. The purpose of the Expo is to share and celebrate current, successful literacy and numeracy practices in a range of contexts and settings. Further information will be distributed to schools in Term 2.

LANGUAGES

Direct Grants to Schools

All schools have received notification regarding the allocated amounts for Direct Grants to Schools. Application for this year’s Direct Grants to Schools, Languages Scholarships and Special Project Grants will shortly be considered by the Languages Advisory Committee. It is anticipated that funding will be available to schools during mid May.

Languages Survey

Thank you to the schools that have sent in the languages survey that was due 23 March 2007. The information provides data to assist in the delivery of services to teachers and schools and is the mechanism for grant allocations for the following year. The collection of student participation data for language study is funding requirement of the Australian Government.

National Projects

There are nine national projects funded by AGQTP and the Australian Government’s School Languages Programme to support the implementation of the National Statement and Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2005-08. Projects that have released information and support materials to the public included the following:

Intercultural Language Learning

This project is a major professional learning initiative. It aims to develop the collective understanding and work with intercultural language teaching and learning.

The website includes materials that form the basis for professional learning, and examples from teachers who have begun to work within an intercultural orientation. The FAQ and discussion papers make for interesting professional reading.
and encourage reflection on our teaching practices.
The website is: http://www.iltlp.unisa.edu.au/

**Leading Languages Education Project**

"In a world which is becoming smaller and more of a 'Global Community', understanding and tolerance are essential for a productive and peaceful future. The best way for students to gain an insight into another nation and its culture is through the study of its language and literature. For this reason all Principals must ensure that the study of Languages is an integral part of their school's curriculum."

Geoff Ryan (National Chair A.H.I.S.A.) Principal of Westbourne Grammar

The website is a resource and professional development site to support principals and school leaders in leading Languages education in Australian schools.

http://www.apapdc.edu.au/leadinglanguages/

Information on the National Projects is available on the following links.


**VET IN SCHOOLS**

**2007 Direct Grants to Schools**

Applications for funding for 2007 programs and projects are now due. Schools that have not yet submitted an application for funding should do so as soon as possible. Please contact Mrs Linda Hilditch, VET Adviser, for assistance or further information 8179 1428.

Schools will receive 80% of their grant in August, and the final 20% instalment in October. The 2006 Educational Accountability reports need to be completed and returned to AISSA prior to receipt of the 2007 grant.

**COMING EVENTS**

**Teaching ESL Students in Mainstream Classrooms – Language in Learning Across the Curriculum**

**Dates:** Friday 11 May, Monday 21 May, Friday 8 June, Monday 18 June

**Time:** 9.00am – 3.30pm

**Venue:** Glenelg Golf Club
James Melrose Road,
Novar Gardens

**Cost:** $140.00 per participant
for course materials

Morning tea provided – participants are requested to provide their own lunch.

This is a new 4 day course which builds on the success of the ESL in the mainstream and incorporates current theory on language and learning. It is an accredited 9 module program for teachers and educators working with students from language backgrounds other than English.

The course will be facilitated by Bronwyn Custance and aims to:

- Develop teachers’ awareness of the need to take into account the cultural and linguistic diversity and experiences of ESL students
- Develop teachers’ understandings of the central role that language plays in learning and to develop teaching practices which can be used across the curriculum to address the language-related needs of ESL students in an explicit manner
- Develop collaborative working relationships between all teachers by having a shared understanding of how to support ESL students
- Promote whole-school approaches to addressing the learning needs of ESL students

Teachers have an opportunity to implement practical strategies in their classrooms while maintaining a journal of reflections on classroom activities and responses to the readings accompanying the course.

**Please note that numbers will be limited – please register early to guarantee your place.**
### Languages – 2007 Professional Learning Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Workshop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues. 8 May</td>
<td>Language Teachers: Clay Animation for Beginners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. 14 May</td>
<td>Learning Objects/Cracking the Code - Chinese/ Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. 16 May</td>
<td>Language Coordinators’ Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri. 18 May</td>
<td>Language Teachers: ICT Support Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. 23 May</td>
<td>Indonesian Hub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. 28 May</td>
<td>French Immersion Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. 4 June</td>
<td>Language Teachers: Web Authoring (Day 1/2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. 5 June</td>
<td>Language Teachers: Web Authoring (Day 2/2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Language Teachers: Podcasting for Beginners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri. 15 June</td>
<td>Italian Immersion Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. 18 June</td>
<td>Chinese Immersion Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. 19 June</td>
<td>Language Teachers: Digital Story Telling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. 20 June</td>
<td>Japanese Immersion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. 25 June</td>
<td>Teaching Languages in the Primary School – Showcase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. 30 July</td>
<td>German Immersion Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. 2 July</td>
<td>Web Authoring with Dreamweaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. 3 July</td>
<td>Web Authoring with Dreamweaver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Details of workshops will be forwarded to all schools.

For further information on these workshops please contact Meredith Beck at AISSA on 8179 1420 email beckm@ais.sa.edu.au or check the website www.ais.sa.edu.au <http://www.ais.sa.edu.au> and go to the section under Targeted Programs/Diary Dates.

### Governance In Leadership: Professor Richard Chait

**Date:** Tuesday 14 August, 2007  
**Time:** 4:30pm – 6:30pm  
**Venue:** to be advised  
**Cost:** $50 (1st person), $30 (subsequent attendees per school)  
**RSVP:** AISSA Reception, office@ais.sa.edu.au

Governance as Leadership grew out of Richard Chait's research on the roles, responsibilities, and performance of corporate boards.

### AISSA Governance Conference

**Date:** Saturday 25 August, 2007  
**Time:** 9:30am – 3:30pm  
**Venue:** Concordia College  
**Cost:** $30  
**RSVP:** AISSA Reception, office@ais.sa.edu.au

Speakers and topics will be advised closer to the date.