



NEWS IN BRIEF

www.pandf.org.au

The Federation of
Parents and Friends
Associations of
Catholic Schools QLD

Volume 28, No. 3
May 2009

REPORT ON LIFTING STANDARDS RELEASED

Professor Geoff Masters' report *A Shared Challenge: Improving Literacy, Numeracy and Science Learning in Queensland Primary Schools* with recommendations for lifting education standards in Queensland's primary schools was released on May 1.

In his final report, Professor Masters recommends:

1. That all aspiring primary teachers be required to demonstrate through test performances that they must meet threshold levels of knowledge about the teaching of literacy, numeracy and science and have sound levels of content knowledge in these areas.
2. That the Queensland Government introduce a new structure and program of advanced professional learning in literacy, numeracy and science for primary school teachers.
3. That additional funding be made available for the advanced training and employment of a number of 'specialist' literacy, numeracy and science teachers to work in schools most in need of support.
4. That standard science tests be introduced at Years 4,6,8 & 10 for school use in identifying students who are not meeting year-level expectations and for monitoring student progress over time.
5. That the Queensland Government initiate an expert review of international best practice in school leadership development with a view to introducing a new structure and program of advanced professional learning for primary school leaders focused on effective strategies for driving improved school performances in literacy, numeracy and science

The Education Minister Mr Geoff Wilson said stakeholders and members of the public would be invited to submit their views on this report over the next four weeks. Parents are encouraged to comment on the recommendations and further information is available at <http://education.qld.gov.au/mastersreview>



Inside this issue:

<i>In Memoriam</i>	2
<i>How Do You Compare?</i>	2
<i>Building Peace—Bringing Hope</i>	2
<i>Character</i>	2
<i>Catholic Education Week—Proud Tradition, Spirited Future</i>	3
<i>'Leveling the Playing Field' - The Ministers View</i>	3
<i>21st Centenary Learning Spaces</i>	3
<i>Predicting the Future</i>	3
<i>State Committee Happenings</i>	4
<i>Queensland Week 6-13 June</i>	4
<i>Child Protection Week</i>	4
<i>Australian Awards for Teaching Excellence 2009</i>	4
<i>Carmel's Corner</i>	4

Issues On The Boil

- **Masters Report**
- **Building the Education Revolution (BER)**
- **National curriculum**
- **Early Years' education**



THE AUSTRALIAN EARLY DEVELOPMENT INDEX (AEDI)

The Australian Early Development Index is a national population progress measure of early childhood development. The purpose of the AEDI is to measure the health and development of populations of children to help communities assess how well they are doing in supporting young children and their families. The AEDI provides information about how communities have raised their children before school and pinpoints strengths in communities as well as what can be improved.

Class teachers complete an AEDI checklist for every child in their first year of full-time school based on their knowledge and observations of each child. The AEDI is based on the scores from a teacher-completed checklist consisting of over 100 questions in five developmental domains that are closely linked to predictors of good adult health, education and social outcomes.

Based on the scores from the teacher-completed checklist, the AEDI measures five areas of early childhood development:

- Physical health and well-being
- Social competence
- Emotional maturity
- Language and cognitive skills
- Communication skills and general knowledge

Teachers complete the AEDI Checklists on the secure web-based data entry site developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research. The names of individual children and any identifying information are NOT recorded in the data sent to the AEDI National Support Centre. The AEDI will be implemented nationally from 1 May – 20 July

For further information, fact sheets and resources go to: National AEDI website www.aedi.org.au, the National Support Centre help desk (1300 558 422) or contact the Queensland State Coordinator: Kathy Treichel 3237 0838 or kathy.treichel@deta.qld.edu.au



COMING EVENTS

May 9	Cairns Diocesan P&F Council Meeting (St Augustine's School, Mossman)
May 24	State Committee Meeting (Brisbane)
May 25	State Committee/ QCEC Meeting (Brisbane)
May 28	Brisbane Archdiocesan P&F Council Meeting
May 30	Rockhampton Diocesan P&F Council Meeting
June 21	Townsville Diocesan P&F Council Meeting
June 25	Brisbane Archdiocesan P&F Council /BCE Leadership Team Meeting

IN MEMORIAM

The Federation wishes to extend its sympathy to the Toowoomba communities at Downlands and St Mary's Colleges who were shattered recently with the tragic deaths of a number of students in a car accident. The prayers of all parents throughout the state are with the communities at this time of great sadness.



HOW DO YOU COMPARE?

Do you ever compare your child's behaviour or progress with other children of the same age? If so, you are causing stress for yourself and your child, says parent educator Michael Grose.

But it's hard to resist as we tend to assess our progress in any area of life by checking out how we compare with our peers. When you were a child in school you probably compared yourself to your schoolmates. Now that you have children of your own do you still keep an eye on your peers? This is okay, as long as we don't lose sight of three important aspects:

1. Children develop at different rates.

There are early developers, slow bloomers and steady-as-you-go children in every group so comparing your child's results or performance can be completely unrealistic.

What this means for you: Focus on your child's improvement and effort and use your child's results as the benchmark for his or her progress and development.

2. Children have different talents, interests and strengths.

Okay, your eight-year-old may not be able to hit a tennis ball like Raphael Nadal even though your neighbour's child can. Avoid comparing the two as your child may not care about tennis anyway.

What this means for you: Help your child identify his or her own talents and interests. Recognise that strengths and interests may be completely different than those of his or her peers and siblings.

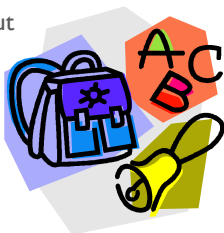
3. Parents can have unrealistic expectations for their children.

We all have hopes and dreams for our families but they may not be in line with the children's interests and talents.

What this means for you: Keep your expectations for success in line with their abilities and interests. If expectations are too high they will give up. If they are too low, they will usually meet them! Parents rightfully should take pride in their children's performance and should also celebrate their achievements and milestones.

However, you shouldn't have too much personal stake in your children's success as this close association makes it hard to separate yourself from them.

"You are not your child" is a challenging but essential parental concept to live by. Doing so takes real maturity and altruism, but it is the absolute foundation of that powerful thing known as 'unconditional love'.



BUILDING PEACE—BRINGING HOPE

'Peace is not built by treaties or acquiring armaments but through formation. Peace is not achieved through nuclear weapons and shows of power but through the education of young people who will build the society of the twenty first century.'

Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez of Honduras

Loving God

You teach us that the truth will set us free.

But speaking the truth is not always easy, especially under repressive regimes.

We are inspired by those, who, despite the cost to themselves, are a voice for the voiceless.

Grant us the courage that we may also speak out strongly against injustices in our world.

May God bless us with eyes that see suffering in the world.

May God bless us with courage to seek

justice and peace.

May God bless us with generosity to share what we have.

May God bless us with love to see Christ in each other.

Amen.



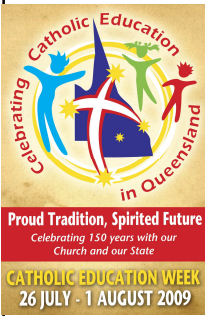
CHARACTER

There are many different thoughts about character, says Father Chris Gleeson SJ. Some say sport develops character; others say it reveals character. Father Gleeson takes a definition from the book, *When No One Sees - the Importance of Character in an Age of Image*, where character is described as 'what we are when no one sees but God'. He tells the story of some children lining up for lunch in the cafeteria of a Catholic primary school. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The supervising nun made a note and posted it on the apple tray: 'Take only ONE. God is watching.' Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip biscuits. A child had written a note: 'Take all you want. God is watching the apples.'

'Character lies deeper than our values and far deeper than our philosophies, allegiances, memberships, or accomplishments. Our character is the deepest expression of what constitutes us as unique individuals. Character is our personal seal, our indelible imprint. Well before Jesus, Aristotle was teaching that moral virtues, like crafts, are acquired by practice and habit. We become builders by building and lyre-players by playing the lyre. We become virtuous, strong of character, by doing virtuous acts. In the 13th century that great Dominican theologian, Thomas Aquinas, said that "most of what we do primarily affects us; if done poorly, it worsens us. For example, a good run makes the runner run better. A poised dance makes the dancer dance better...in effect, 'we become what we do'. In his excellent book, *An Intelligent Life*, Sydney psychiatrist Jonathan Short argues that, if you want to feel good, you must act well, with kindness and dignity - 'the ultimate measures of human worth'.

Fr Chris Gleeson SJ who recently conducted a formation weekend with the State Committee writes regular reflections which can be found on the Toowong Parish website www.parishes.bne.catholic.net.au/toowong in the [Madonna magazine](#).

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK—PROUD TRADITION, SPIRITED FUTURE



Catholic Education Week in Queensland from July 26 to August 1 is a special opportunity to celebrate our distinctive mission and share the great things that are happening in our schools, parishes and in wider communities.

This theme was chosen to recognize and share in the Sesquicentenary celebrations to mark the 150th anniversary of the separation of Queensland from New South Wales and the formal establishment of the Archdiocese of Brisbane, which at that time covered the whole state. As an integral part of the mission of the Church, Catholic education has been a key partner in the stories of both Church and State over these past 150 years and beyond.

The first Catholic school in Queensland was established in the colony of Moreton Bay in 1845. From that humble beginning, Catholic education expanded to most cities and many townships throughout the state. Its expansion was largely due to the efforts of religious congregations who, in those early years, often conducted classes in difficult conditions and with few resources.

Catholic education has made a significant contribution to the fabric of life in Queensland. Hundreds of thousands Queenslanders have been educated in Catholic schools and gone on to make positive, and in many cases, outstanding contributions in all spheres of Queensland life.

For further information about Catholic Education Week 2009 celebrations, please contact Margaret Knox at QCEC on Ph (07) 3336 9430 or email: margaretk@qcec.qld.catholic.edu.au.

Updates and resources are available on the Catholic Education Week website at: www.catholiceducationweek.com.au.

Catholic Education Week 2009 is a time for the Catholic education community, as part of our Church and our State, to celebrate our proud tradition and together look to an exciting, Spirit-filled future. So let's all join in the celebrations and make it a week to remember.

**'LEVELLING THE PLAYING FIELD'
THE MINISTER'S VIEW**

'When Kevin Rudd and I said in our election campaign that our interest was in schools, not in school systems, we meant it. Parents don't send their children to a system – they send them to a school. By adopting common goals for every school, I want to use education to bring the nation together.



That means focusing on what really is possible and using transparency and hard data to inform expert judgement. It means making investments across the board, in a way that reflects real need across the community. All these programs are for public, independent and Catholic schools alike.

And it means building the framework of governance, accountability and transparency so that Governments treat schools and students fairly and consistently for the future and we are all accountable to students and the community for delivering the outcomes they are entitled to expect.'

Hon Julia Gillard MP 2 April 2009

21st CENTURY LEARNING SPACES

"Spaces shape and change practice. Engaging, adaptable spaces energise students, teachers and the community. Well-designed learning spaces inspire creative, productive and efficient learning."

MCEETYA Learning Spaces Framework

A new environment of schooling has been emerging over several decades, stimulated by a new economy, new technologies and new understanding about learning. In today's interconnected, technology driven world, learning typically takes place in physical, virtual and remote places. It is an integrated, highly technical environment in which learners learn. The new learning spaces incorporate technologies, engage the learner, creating new learning possibilities, enhancing achievements and extending interactions with local and global communities.

Characteristics of new learning

- A shift from instruction to active learning and an increased attention to personalised learning.
- An emphasis on collaborative learning and greater attention to human relationships
- A growing commitment to project-based learning involving problem solving, investigation and trial and error.
- Emphasis on skills needed for the 21st Century
- Emergence of collaborative networks that support professional learning
- Globalisation of education – national and international partnerships

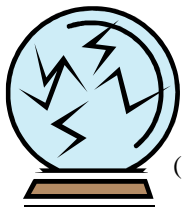
For more information on this topic go to our website at: www.pandf.org.au and look under Resources – Information Technology.

You might get together a group in the community to discuss how your school can adapt to the changing needs of teachers and students.



PREDICTING THE FUTURE

"We are preparing our students for jobs that don't exist, using technologies that have not been invented, to solve problems that we haven't even considered yet."



Richard Riley, US Secretary of Education (1999)



The Federation of Parents and Friends Associations of Catholic Schools Qld

5th Floor, June Dally-Watkins Centre
150 Edward Street

GPO Box 2410
BRISBANE QLD 4001

ABN 93 983 545 832

Staff: Paul Dickie
Carmel Nash
Jane Reed

Phone: 07 3336 9242

Fax: 07 3210 0136

Email: info@pandf.org.au

We're on the Web!
www.pandf.org.au

STATE COMMITTEE HAPPENINGS

The State Committee Chair Trish Nash and the Executive Officer met with the new Minister for Education and Training, Mr Geoff Wilson and the Director General of the Department, Ms Julie Grantham. The Minister expressed his desire to meet regularly and for the Federation to be actively involved in the education debate.

The State Committee will meet in Brisbane on the weekend of 23-24 May and will have its annual joint meeting with members of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission on Monday 25 May.

Planning is well under way for the next conference of the Federation which will be held in Toowoomba next year on the May long weekend April 30 – May 2 2010.

QUEENSLAND WEEK 6-13 JUNE

There are dozens of ways to celebrate Queensland Week in your school and community. If you intend holding an event to celebrate Queensland's 150th anniversary, register your event on the free [online events calendar](#).

For further information visit the [Queensland Week website](#) or Telephone (07) 3405 5215.



CHILD PROTECTION WEEK



CHILD PROTECTION WEEK

2009 ACTIVITY GRANTS

Child Protection Week is coordinated by the Queensland Child Protection Week Committee.

In September, a national campaign will be launched to encourage all Australians to take part in the largest ever survey of community attitudes about keeping children safe. Thus if you intend applying for a grant, your local activity will:-

- Promote participation in the survey – thus engaging the general public in the issue of prevention of child abuse and neglect (affirming that it is everybody's business)
- Explain how the survey will help gather extensive data on community attitudes and inform future strategies to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Provide people with an opportunity for ongoing involvement in helping prevent abuse and neglect.

Grants of up to \$1000 (inclusive of GST) are available. Successful applicants may receive full or partial grants. The event/activity must be completed within National Child Protection Week 6-12 September 2009. Applications must be completed in full and returned by close of business on Friday 29th May 2009.

For further information and application forms access the website at: http://peakcare.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=214&Itemid=1 or contact the Child Protection Week Project Officer, Caitlin King on 07 3844 6414.

AUSTRALIAN AWARDS FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE 2009

The awards this year will be made in the following six categories, with an additional Minister's Award for Excellence in ICT:

- Excellence by a Teacher
- Excellence in Teacher Leadership
- Excellence by a Principal
- Excellence by a Beginning Teacher
- Excellence by a Support Staff Member
- Excellence by a School and its Community.

Teaching Australia is managing the awards nomination and selection process, in partnership with the Australian College of Educators.

The closing date for nominations is 19 June 2009.

This is an opportunity to recognize the outstanding contribution the school and its community make to the lives of our students.

Perhaps you might nominate someone in your community. To find

out more go to: <http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au>



CARMEL'S CORNER

What does P & F do?

Now that many schools have introduced a P & F Levy to take the pressure off fundraising some parents are now asking what does P & F do? We also need to remind these parents that every parent, when they enrol their student, is a member of P & F.

The old mentality of P & F is only about fundraising needs to be changed.

One of the ways to do this is to sit down and look at the many areas in your school that parents contribute to. This may be anything from parents who come to the classroom to assist with activities that may include reading, art, Physical Education and many other things. Parents also often assist with sport activities from coaching to washing football gear. They also help in Tuckshops, Uniform shops and sometimes book shops.

These are some of the things but there are also the organised P & F activities. These can often be put into groups of activities. These might be Social – including welcome BBQs, wine and cheese nights, state of origin nights, class dinners etc. – anything that brings parents together for a fun time and to get to know other parents and form community.

Another might be Pastoral activities – a very important part of community – these might include a casserole bank to assist families with disruptions eg Births, deaths, illness etc., lifts to school in some cases, sending sympathy cards where appropriate etc.

Three areas which overlap are resourcing, financing and fundraising. Whilst they go together there are some separate activities which could be spelt out eg resourcing – providing 'things' for classrooms or the whole school generally (books, art supplies, desks, shade sails, music equipment etc), Financing – Pay for buses to take students to activities or camps etc., fund extra music or choir lessons etc., Fundraising – fetes, art shows, Mothers' or Fathers' day stalls etc. The Environment of your school is also an area where parents often contribute eg Working bees, Painting, Sandpits etc.

The most important activities are those that involve parents in the curriculum and learning and teaching at the school. This might involve participation in discussions about these areas but also providing parent information or education evening where parents can spend time learning about what their children are doing at school and having some input into the decisions that are made. These might also include some evening with a speaker on parenting issues – everyone wants tips on how to be a better parent and learn more skills in handling situations as they occur.

This is now quite a list that you can share with the whole school community and you can then build on this by asking those parents who have little or no involvement to get involved in one of these areas and thereby building a school community that is active and involved.

Contact: Carmel Nash 0421 633915
Email: carmel@pandf.org.au