



Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents and Friends Federation

STATE COUNCIL
MEETING

Sunday, 25 May 2008
IEU - Tas Meeting Rooms
Hobart

11:30 – 3:30

MINUTES

1. Welcome and OPENING PRAYER – 11:15 am
2. ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

PRESENT		APOLOGY	
NAME	REGION	NAME	REGION
		Brian Watson	Special Member
		Cathryn Watson	Past EO
D. von Samorzewski	State Secretary	Jeff Clifford	Special Member
Anthea Griffin	Special Member	Gordanna Crowe	
Michael Hangan	EO & Southern Region VP	Martin Laverack	Nth Region President
Angela Briant	IEU -Tas	Garth Cornelius	South Region President
Mary Excel	Life member	State President	Bill Button
Linda Smith	Treasurer		

Acceptance of apologies

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES – dated 16 March 2008, tabled and moved as true record of meeting.
Moved, Linda Smith, Seconded Anthea Griffin, carried.

ACTION – EO upload to the Federation [website](#)

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Action List Reviewed as follows:

ACTION – DVS to send guide notes on spending P&F funds to BB and then BB will write letter to all school P&F Presidents (and attach newspaper).

Bullying forums - **Linda Smith** Family Matters Money – Re Stella Maris project to check.

ACTION – DVS Letter to CEO – Letter of support to principals need for business managers
To principals as well.

ACTION – DVS Send letter to Stuart Ellis asking about report from SRB meeting held on 13 May 2008 and to also send us regular report.

IEU – Tas meeting – Letters in the Media about school funding....IEU seeking support from key Catholic bodies in relation to media communication in response to inaccurate letters etc about Catholic education.

5. CORRESPONDENCE –

In (attached at end of minutes)

ACTION - MH - Letter to Archbishop – Request to have TCEC membership policy changed to include a member from the Federation. (chase up DVS March letter

APC – Letter from APC to, The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Deputy Prime Minister, Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600 - 26 March, 2008
Letter from CEO on Sustainability
Letter from TCEC about TCEC policies for TCSPFF
Letter from CEO, CEO policies for TCSPFF and to be placed on the CEO distribution list
Letter from CEO in relation to Volunteer in Schools Policy
IEU – Tas – minutes from SRB meeting
The Royal Automobile Club of Tasmania Limited – Driver Ed in Schools
Invite to QLD P&F conference 2-4 May
Equity policy
ICT in Schools – Meeting on next round of funding – DVS
Pathways Foundation Letter
Dr Everyn Field
DoE Parent Opinion Survey
TASP&F letter to Hon David Bartlett – Re – Engaging our schools taskforce

Out

Conference thankyou's and 2008 conference reports sent to Archbishop, Sue Napier, Jenny Branch, Brendan Kelly, Ian Dalton, St Peter Chanel, Danielle Cronin, Carmel Nash,
Conference Report, including lanyard and conference handouts sent to all P&F presidents.

Motion

*That the correspondence in and out be accepted outwards be confirmed.
Moved – Linda Smith, seconded – Mary Excel, carried*

6 REPORTS

- PRESIDENT REPORT - see apologies

7 - TREASURERS REPORT

St James College paid 2007 outstanding
\$3, 265 conference income

Reconciliation **YTD \$13,237.62** (23.5.08) see attachment

Motion – Conference Payment

That the contribution to St Peter Chanel shall not exceed \$5000.00
Moved Mary Excell, Seconded Michael Hangan, carried.

Motion – Treasurer's Report

That this meeting's Treasurer's Report be accepted as a true record of the financial position of the Federation.

Moved Linda Smith, Seconded Michael Hagan, carried

Note – APC outstanding account. EO is in discussion with APC to rectify arrears payments.

SECRETARY –

Executive Officer Position has been filled by Michael Hangan (Hobart). He is also Southern Region Secretary and Vice President.

ADMINISTRATION – EO

Michael wrote to all school principals advising them of his appointment, contact details, the role of the Federation, Partnership, 2008 Conference and request to join the school's newsletter email distribution list. **Please note new postal address** for Federation **PO Box 40 Moonah Tas 7009**

- REGIONS

Southern – see minutes (12 December 2007)

North – see minutes (5 May2008)

North West – Nil

ACTION – EO What does the P&F do letter.....for Linda

2009 Conference update Golden Jubilee

The Archbishop has been pencilled in for 14-16 August 2009. Discussed proposed conference agenda.

ACTION – MH organise meeting with St Pats asap.

Conference theme – Look up old conference -

- Guest speakers
- Great, Grand, Parent, Child perspective of Tasmanian Catholic Education.

ACTION – EO Ask Judy Lancaster to be involved in planning

- STUG – **ACTION – DVS** Ask for 2008 meeting dates
-
- TCEC – Nil report – **ACTION – DVS** ask Rod Scurrah
- NCEC – NCEC www.wyd2008.org/index.php/en/links
- CEO – **ACTION – EO** meeting to be arranged – MoU plan,

Regional Listening assemblies – (Devonport) Development of central Systemic, system wide support for poor, special needs – support for staff, supply of staff to regional area, ceo to visit NW, regional office, (Hobart) ICT – more equipment, student teacher ratio, parent – school partnerships, pastoral & specialist support, faith building)

- APC - Nil
- DEEWR – Nil report
- SRB – NIL report
- TRB – Provisional registration to full register will required significant paper work for provisional teachers and mentors. Unsure how this will be implemented.
- PARENT PROJECTS – Nil report
- ICPA – **ACTION - EO** will seek affiliation fee costs
- Parent Liaison Officer – **ACTION – DVS** make up questionnaire for school.
- BGA (school visits around Tassie. Will allocate funding at next meeting (June?))
- ReEvangelisation Project – awaiting update and ongoing.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

- **AB-** provided meeting with information about Student Teacher payment by UTas, in relation to student teacher placements.
- **ACTION - DVS** develop acronym follow chart
- **ACTION – DVS – Develop 2020 Catholic Parent & Student Summit. Regional Bases.**
- Mental Health First Aid kit – TJ (**ACTION - DVS**)
- www.pathwaysfoundation.com.au parenting evenings DVS to chase up.
- New TCSPFF website url www.tascatholicparentsandfriends.net
- New TCSPFF forum website

- <http://tasmaniancatholicsschoolparents.freeforums.org/>

11. NEXT MEETING - August TBA

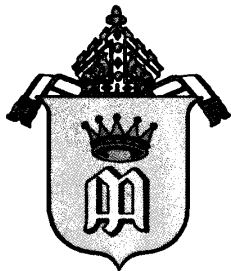
12. Meeting closed - 4:30 pm

Damian von Samorzewski
State Secretary
Tasmanian Catholic Schools
Parents and Friends Federation

tcspf.secretary@gmail.com

0438 639374

DRAFT



Archdiocese of Hobart

Office of the Archbishop

35 Tower Rd, New Town 7008
GPO Box 62, Hobart, Tasmania 7001
Ph: (03) 6208 6222 Fax (03) 6208 6292

8 February 2008

Cathryn Watson
Executive Officer
Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Federation
PO Box 429
Lenah Valley 7008

Dear Cathy,

I am writing to confirm Archbishop Doyle's presence at the Opening of the TCSP&FF 49th Annual Conference, on Saturday 12 April 2008 at St Peter Chanel, Smithton commencing at 9.00 am. Archbishop Doyle will also celebrate Mass on Saturday evening and attend the conference dinner at the Smithton Country Club. Due to commitments in Rosebery he is unable to stay for the completion of the conference on Sunday.

All Liturgical queries regarding the Conference Mass should be directed to the Liturgy Co-ordinator, Mrs Cathy Murrowood on 6208 6257, fax 6208 6299 or email cathy.murrowood@aohtas.org.au.

If the Archbishop is to give an address, would you please advise me on 62086223, fax 62086293 or email archbishop.assistant@aohtas.org.au on how long he would be expected to speak, any particular issues or people that you may wish him to mention and any background material that would assist in the preparation of his speech notes.

To enable the necessary preparations to be made in sufficient time, it is important that you provide this information, **at least two weeks before the event.**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Danielle Previdi'.

Danielle Previdi
Personal Assistant to the Archbishop
Archdiocese of Hobart

Attachment 2

From: Peter Cuttance [<mailto:cuttance@radii.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, 5 March 2008 7:34 PM
To: Sa
Subject: Invitation to Participate in National Parent Program re Bullying

The Research Australia Development and Innovation Institute (www.radii.org) is running a series of conferences in capital cities on key aspects of the education of boys.

The conferences are being managed by Professor Peter Cuttance and have a major focus this year on issues of bullying & cyber-bullying.

We are planning to conduct a public evening presentation for parents associated with each of the five state conferences.

radii.org seeks to work with a range of community organisations, and in this case I would like to invite your organisation to participate in supporting these parent evenings.

radii.org will be able to manage the national series of parent evenings, but would like to discuss with you how you may be able to support the program by advising parents of this opportunity through your networks.

I have attached a 1-page overview for schools of the national program and plan to develop strategies for disseminating similar information to parent communities in March.

Please get in touch by return email if your organisation would like to be involved in this program.

Further information about the teacher professional learning program is available at <https://aben.conference.com.au/>

We plan to develop a page on the website that parent organisations may also wish to link to.

Regards
Prof Peter Cuttance
Director
radii.org
A Non-Profit Education Foundation Supporting Schools



PRESS RELEASE



6 February 2008

IEUA SUPPORTS FUNDING CERTAINTY, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

“The recent report by Andrew Dowling from ACER argues that the arrangements for the funding of schools in Australia require urgent reform” said Chris Watt, Federal Secretary of the Independent Education Union of Australia.

“The IEUA has long supported the need to reform the current federal government SES funding model,” he said.

“The previous federal government’s approach to the funding of schools was not transparent and has produced a system which is seen by most as unfair and inequitable” said Mr Watt “and it is a tragedy that a proper and open review was not conducted by the Howard government in 2007”.

“Consequently, we are left in the situation where schools need certainty for the next funding period, our members deserve security in their employment and there is simply no time available to review and develop a better model of funding before the next funding period” he said

“Forty two billion dollars is on the table for school education for the 4 year period 2009 to 2012, and there is a sensible and appropriate commitment that no school will lose funding under a the new federal government.”

“Additionally Labor’s statement prior to the election made the important commitment that Federal Labor ‘will only make additions to schools funding not subtractions’ “

“There is opportunity to address areas of significant need in education such as rural and remote, indigenous and low SES background students, all identified in the recent benchmark results, through targeted funding programs in the next couple of years” said Mr Watt.

“The IEUA will lobby strongly to support resources for the most needy students in our communities”

“Because the current SES funding model has produced significant discrepancies in funding outcomes, the IEUA calls on the Federal Minister Julia Gillard to commit to a major review of the funding of schools during the 2009-2012 quadrennium – a review which is open and transparent and which involves all education stakeholders” said Mr Watt

“The goal of such a review should be to ensure that Australia’s education systems are comprehensive and properly resourced to ensure that the MCEETYA Goals of Schooling are met, no matter where students live or which school they go to.”

“While teachers and students are being required to demonstrate they are meeting high benchmark standards of teaching and learning, governments must be able to demonstrate that the level of resources going to schools meet international benchmarks. We look forward to Labor establishing a transparent review of Commonwealth funding in order to give clarity as to whether this is happening,” said Mr Watt

Contact:

Chris Watt
Federal Secretary Independent Education Union
Ph (03) 9254 1830 0419 259 143

Attachment 4

Dear All

Just a note for you and any one you know who would be eligible for Assistance for Isolated Children
To claim AIC please phone 13 2318 for direct help with Centrelink
If you are 56 km away from your nearest school or more than 4.7 km to the local bus and 19 km to your nearest school you are eligible for AIC.

As a guide line for term payments

:

Payment per term is \$2,158.82 (non income or asset test)
Plus Additional boarding allowance or \$384.82 (income tested or drought declared areas)
also available if in a drought declared area and extra \$230.00 per term

Please don't forget the Student accommodation allowance for children in Years 11 and 12, we fought hard for this increase last year from \$1020.00 to \$1400.00 per child (for living away from home for full time students) some short term
This is a State Govt of Tas grant, please phone 62 337014 for a form before the end of February.

Tertiary Living away from home allowance :

If your child is studying away from home for University on the mainland as they are unable to do the course here in Tasmania, or if they are in Tas studying but have to move to town there is a Tasmanian Govt Grant of \$1020.00 or accommodation allowance. Please phone 62 337014 for information and forms.

I hope you have had an enjoyable holiday, please email on to anyone you think it may help, please check on website of www.icpa.com.au for more information

Attachment 5

Hello everyone

Rob Christmas has forwarded the following request (from John Halsey at REFA) to me and asked that I distribute it around the APC network for any feedback. Essentially it says that John is assisting a research project that is looking at what factors might encourage teachers to stay in rural areas for longer periods. He is seeking details of any rural schools that have demonstrated the capacity to retain teachers for reasonable amounts of time. John says:

“Last week I attended a meeting of the research team led by Prof Jo-Anne Reid (who is the ACDE rep on REFA) and comprising Prof Bill Green, Dr Simone White, A/Prof Maxine Cooper, Dr Graeme Lock and Ms Wendy Hastings, as an external consultant to the team's project. The team has won funding to investigate the nature of successful teacher education and recruitment strategies that make rural teaching an attractive long-term career option for new teachers. I am working with the research team essentially because of the research REFA has done into rural pre-service teacher placements and our national network.

”An important aspect of the research will be the identification of rural and regional schools where teachers seem to stay- in essence, what is happening to 'produce stayers'? As is widely known, teacher turnover is a big issue for many rural schools- before the kids get a chance to develop a relationship, their teacher is off to somewhere else.

”REQUEST

”**What I would really like to know are the names and contact details of schools or clusters of schools where it is generally considered teachers stay awhile.** What does 'awhile' mean you may well be asking? And, I realise that for some places, 3 months may be considered 'awhile'. Without wanting to be too prescriptive, think about 3-5 years as 'awhile'. If in doubt, nominate a school in and let the research team make the final decision.

”My thinking is that the networks associated with members of REFA like the CWA, APC, ICPA, ISCA, Frontier Services, ACSSO, NARSA, SPERA, RREAC, CEP and NRHA in particular may be able to help with the request I have put out. Any other member of REFA- please pitch in; the list is illustrative not exclusive!

”ACTION

”**Think about what I have been asked to do on behalf of REFA.**

”**Send me the following when you can asap and by 30 April if at all possible:**

- **Name of School/School Cluster**
- **Name of Contact**
- **Email and Phone Contacts**
- **Website if known”**

If you are aware of any rural schools that might fit the bill, could you please provide feedback to John Halsey through Rob Christmas at r_e_christmas@yahoo.com

Attachment 6

Dear Colleagues

Just to let you know that the winners of the 2008 National awards for Quality Schooling awards will be announced by the Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, on Tuesday 3 June at a presentation ceremony to be held in the Great Hall, Parliament House, Canberra. I will provide more information about the presentation ceremony and professional exchange at which our award winners have the opportunity to present their work and achievements.

Best regards Peter

Peter Weddell
Coordinator **Freecall 1800 131 323**
Australian Government's 2008 National Awards for Quality Schooling
PO Box 323 Deakin West ACT 2600
Tel: (02) 6281 1677 Fax: (02) 6285 1262
peter.weddell@austcolled.com.au

Information about the 2008 National Awards for Quality Schooling is accessed via the **Teaching Australia** website www.teachingaustralia.edu.au

Attachment 7

From the Minister for Education and Skills,
David Bartlett:

Dear colleagues

At the end of last year I released the response to the consultation for the Tasmania Tomorrow initiative. This outlined a staged way forward for the participation of our senior secondary colleges commencing with Hobart College. I am pleased to announce today that an additional three colleges – The Don, Hellyer, and Newstead - and their communities have indicated that they will also be making the change to the new organisations in 2009. The academy and polytechnic will therefore have campuses state-wide from 2009 and students from all regions will be able to access the full range of options from the beginning. All of the former college sites will initially have campuses of both the academy and the polytechnic. Elizabeth and Rosny Colleges and their communities have indicated they will be making the change in 2010. Claremont and Launceston colleges are currently in discussion with their communities about the best time to move forward.

Reducing barriers to learning is a key element of Tasmania Tomorrow. A shared services entity will therefore be established to coordinate services for both students and staff across the three new organisations.

This means there will be one entity responsible for enrolment and support services for students instead of nine. It also means staff will have one entity to deal with for HR and administrative issues, including ICT and facilities. Last week I announced the appointment of the chairs of the boards of Training Tasmania, the Tasmanian Academy and the Tasmanian Polytechnic as the first major step in setting up the new organisations. The CEO positions for the Tasmanian Academy and the Tasmanian Polytechnic were advertised in the Government Gazette yesterday (visit www.jobs.tas.gov.au) and will be advertised in the local and national papers on Saturday.

The current CEO of TAFE Tasmania, Malcolm White, will transfer to the position of CEO of Training Tasmania. Mr White has done an outstanding job as head of TAFE Tasmania and I know that he will continue to bring fresh ideas to Training Tasmania.

Once appointed, the CEOs will work with their chairs to lead the transition teams and commence the important task of establishing the new organisations from the ground up.

Regards
David

School Summits

The Australian Government has invited Australian primary and secondary schools to participate in a series of **School Summits** in the lead-up to the Australia 2020 summit on 19 and 20 April.

The aim of the Australia 2020 summit is to look at Australia's future challenges and find innovative solutions by harnessing the best ideas across the nation from Australians with experience, accepted standing, credibility and authority.

The Australian Government wishes to involve the whole Australian community in addressing these challenges. So, as the future adults of 2020, the Government is very interested to hear the ideas of all Australian school children. The outcomes from these discussions will be fed into Australia 2020 and the Youth Summit.

Schools Summits will be held by individual schools over a three week period, starting on the 17th of March 2008.

More information on the Schools Summits is available at www.australia2020.gov.au

DRAFT

Agenda

Meeting with Education Minister Hon. David Bartlett Tuesday 26 February 2006 at 4:00 pm

- Parent Representation on Teachers Registration Board
- Funding assistance increase for the TCSPFF
- The Funding submission from the Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission
- National Curriculum
- Shared Resources
- Family School Partnership
- Capital Funding
- Investing in our schools Programme (ISOP)
- COAG
- IT (Digital Education/Web Portals)
- Early Childhood Education
- Students with Disabilities Funding
- Trade Training centres in schools
- Summer school
- Reporting School results
- overall funding for education in relation to GDP
- alternative schooling for non academic students

**DEEWR-ACSSO/APC PARENTS FORUM
MONDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2008**

AGENDA

Venue:

House of Representatives Alcove
Parliament House

TIME	TOPIC	
8.45am-9.15am	Introductory Remarks: DEEWR, ACSSO, APC	Marg McKinnon President ACSSO President APC
9.15am -10.00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous education especially a briefing on the NT intervention and early results • Social inclusion and Indigenous students 	Tony Greer
10.00	The Hon Julia Gillard MP (actual time TBA)	
10.30am-10.45am	Morning Tea	
10.45am-12.30pm	<p><u>Updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next quadrennium (2009-2012) • Capital/IOSP • 50% Education Tax Refund • Tuition vouchers • Social inclusion and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ students with disability ○ rural and remote students ○ students from low SES backgrounds • Early Childhood Education • Summer Schools 	Suzanne Northcott Adrian White Louise Hanlon Helen McDevitt Robyn Cooper Daniel Owen
12.30pm-1.00pm	LUNCH	
1.00pm-1.30pm	Reporting school results	Tony Zanderigo Liz Dowd, Mike Turner
1.30pm-2.00pm	National Secondary School Computer Fund	Shelagh Whittleston
2.00pm-2.30pm	Trade Training Centres in Schools	Katy Balmaks Carolyn Stanistreet (ATC's)
2.30pm-3.00pm	Family-School Partnerships	ACSSO Helen McDevitt
from 3.00pm	Afternoon Tea available	
3.00pm-3.20pm	<p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ moves to a national curriculum ○ "core" curriculum and its relationship to other enriching subjects such as languages, art, music, physical education 	Marie Hird Madonna Morton
3.20pm-3.45pm	Wrap up	President APC President ACSSO DEEWR

Margaret McKinnon	Group Manager Schools Funding Group
Tony Greer	Group Manager Indigenous Education Group
Barry Sandison	Group Manager Working Age Policy Group
Deb Rollings	Branch Manager Policy, Grants and Reporting Branch
Katy Balmaks	Branch Manager Trade Training Centres Taskforce
Robyn Cooper	Executive Director Early Childhood Education Centre
Louise Hanlon	Branch Manager Literacy and Numeracy Branch
Marie Hird	Branch Manager Curriculum Branch
Helen McDevitt	Branch Manager Access and Equity Branch
Suzanne Northcott	Branch Manager Quadrennium Funding Agreement Taskforce
Daniel Owen	Branch Manager Quality Teaching Branch
Adrian White	A/g Branch Manager Schools Capital and Infrastructure Branch
Shelagh Whittleston	Branch Manager Digital Education Revolution Taskforce
Tony Zanderigo	Branch Manager Benchmarks and Reporting Branch

DEEWR-ACSSO/APC FORUM

MONDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2008

Attendees	Australian Council of State School Organisations
Jenny Branch	President
Steve Carter	Senior Vice President
Janeen Giddings	Treasurer
Judith Bundy	Vice President
Rob Fry	Vice President
Jenny Grossmith	Vice President
Mark O'Neill	Vice President
Margaret Pledger	Vice President
Di Giblin	
Jane Gorrie	
Di Loddon	
Rob Silva	
Hon Terry Aulich	Executive Director
Rupert Macgregor	National Projects Manager

GUIDELINES FOR DIRECT CONTACT VOLUNTEERS

9. All **direct contact** volunteers must be registered with the Catholic Education Office (CEO) and fully screened for child protection purposes. Except in exceptional circumstances, volunteers who are not officially registered should not be allowed to work directly with students or to assume responsibility for their welfare.
10. The CEO will develop and maintain an updated registration database of the volunteers who are approved to have **direct contact** with and supervision of students. Such volunteers will be issued with an approved *volunteer's card*. In accordance with Archdiocesan policy the volunteer's card may also be recognised by other Catholic Church agencies.
11. In accordance also with Archdiocesan and TCEC policies, **direct contact** volunteers will be required to undertake an appropriate police check and sign a statutory declaration relating to any pending or spent convictions or charges relating to children. These, of themselves, are not necessarily a comprehensive 'good character' check and additional references re good character may be required (eg. in the case of volunteers assuming responsibility for students in an unsupervised manner for an extended period).
12. Volunteers assisting in activities that require **direct contact** with children, are required to:
 - 12.1 obtain a satisfactory Police check prior to their participation. Schools will pay the costs for volunteers to undergo such police checks.
 - 12.2 sign a statutory declaration relating to any pending or spent convictions or charges relating to children.
 - 12.3 attend a formal workshop, organised by each school or organisation, to be advised of their responsibilities with regards to Child Protection and Protective Behaviour protocols (especially with regards to the obligations and processes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect), the Catholic Education *Code of Conduct* and any other expectations and policy protocols of the school.
 - 12.4 if direct contact volunteers are unable to attend the formal workshops organised at the school level as outlined in 12.3 above, information packs will be given to them, containing material on their rights and responsibilities, including Child Protection and Protective Behaviour protocols. Each volunteer will then be required to sign a form to the effect that they have read, understood and will adhere to the responsibilities as outlined.
13. In order to obtain a volunteer's card, direct contact volunteers will be required to satisfy the requirements of guideline 12. In some circumstances, for instance where there is a delay in a police check being completed, the school Principal may grant provisional approval for volunteers who are not officially registered to work directly with children for an agreed period of time. This provisional approval will only be granted upon receipt of the statutory declaration (12.2) and an appropriate briefing re Child Protection and Protective Behaviour protocols (12.3 or 12.4).

ACER eNews

An excellent teacher for every child

The Rudd government was elected with the promise of a 'revolution' to provide Australia with a world-class education system. Why is an education revolution required, and what forms could it take? In this recent opinion article, published in The Canberra Times, ACER chief executive Professor Geoff Masters looks at Australia's education priorities.

According to a recent OECD report, 13% of Australian 15-year-olds are at risk of not having the basic skills necessary for work and future citizenship. The situation is worse among Indigenous students (40%), in remote parts of Australia (27%) and for the lowest socioeconomic quartile (23%).

Although these percentages are not unusual by international standards, they highlight an important element in Australia's current skills shortage: too many young people are leaving our schools inadequately prepared for the workforce and adult life. The personal, societal and economic costs of this problem have been extensively documented and present governments with a challenge that may well require a revolution.

But which of the levers available to government are likely to be most effective in raising standards among our lowest achievers? The factors leading to low achievement are complex. Often they are related to broader social and health issues beyond the control of the education system. Government initiatives in education have included improved testing and identification of children with low levels of literacy and numeracy, clearer reporting to parents, the provision of additional tutoring for at-risk students, and the better preparation of teachers to teach fundamental skills such as reading. At a general level, educational science suggests that the most effective lever for improving the performance of underachievers is to improve the quality of classroom teaching: to get all teachers doing what our best teachers already do.

While excellent teachers are not identical, they do have some characteristics in common. For example, they create classroom environments in which there is a belief that all students can learn successfully, where students are motivated by curiosity, value learning for its own sake, and feel supported and safe to take risks. Learning cultures of this kind are more effective in the long term than 'performance' cultures in which learning is driven by external demands, competition and the threat of failure.

Outstanding teachers also monitor the progress and learning needs of individual learners. They take time to understand children's interests and motivations and to diagnose individual difficulties and misunderstandings. This is a challenge in the average classroom in which some children can be five or six years ahead of other children of the same age. But excellent teachers understand that teaching is more than delivering a fixed curriculum to a class of students. They appreciate the importance of catching learning problems early and know that, unless educational needs are identified and addressed, some children will fall further behind over time.

Having identified students' learning needs, outstanding teachers use evidence-based strategies and interventions to target those needs. They draw on a body of professional knowledge about effective methods of teaching: what works, for whom and under what conditions. They are eager to learn from research and practice, to experiment and to share successes and failures with colleagues. They know that becoming a better teacher requires ongoing learning and that teaching expertise, like other forms of expertise, requires years of work. The emphasis for these teachers is on seeing every child make substantial progress. They recognise and celebrate such progress, even if a child is still performing below most children of the same age.

So what can governments do to get all teachers doing what our best already do? Part of the answer is to attract the best possible people to take up teaching as a career. This, in turn, will depend on making teaching more attractive. One way for governments to enhance the status of teaching is to work with the profession itself to clarify what it means to be an excellent teacher, to support the development of a national system for certifying teachers of excellence (perhaps similar to the CPA for accountants), and

to pay more to teachers who meet these high standards. If the Business Council of Australia had its way, our best teachers would be paid substantially more – up to \$130 000 a year.

In parallel, there needs to be an investment in the professional development of teachers and school leaders specifically focused on the attainment of advanced standards of practice. The focus should be on developing skills in diagnosing learning needs and implementing targeted, evidenced-based teaching methods.

To support teachers and school leaders in addressing the needs of all students, most schools would benefit from increased technical and paraprofessional support. A common complaint among teachers is that they spend too much time on external demands and non-teaching activities. Increased incentives also are required to ensure that our best teachers teach in schools where they are most needed – particularly in rural and remote schools and schools in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas.

Providing every Australian child with excellent teaching certainly will require an education revolution. But can we afford anything less?

[Professor Geoff Masters](#) is CEO of the Australian Council for Educational Research.

This article was published in *The Canberra Times* ('Back to the classroom to improve education system,' by Geoff Masters, *The Canberra Times*, 11 January 2008, page 11) and [online](#).

http://www.acer.edu.au/enews/0801_Masters.html

ACER eNews

Education the key to overcoming disadvantage

It's an article of faith that education is the key to overcoming disadvantage and opening the door of opportunity. However young people don't commence their education from the same starting line as Professor Stephen Dinham explains in this opinion article.

Some beginning primary students are already ahead of the pack. They come from families where English literacy is part of day-to-day life. They've been read to from an early age, received a variety of intellectual stimulation, attended preschool and have begun to acquire essential literacy skills. They have had their emotional and physical needs met. These students are ready for schooling and will receive on-going parental encouragement, support and direction. Providing they receive quality teaching in supportive and challenging schools, they will be well set to succeed.

Others enter primary education well behind their peers. Their parents may lack English literacy skills and many won't have had the benefits of preschool. Their development and achievement will be compromised by poverty, disadvantage and health issues. Parental support may be limited, particularly when parents themselves under-achieved at school.

Once schooling commences, it's not a level playing field. For some students, school is an uphill obstacle race while for others it is straightforward. Initial and continuing advantage and disadvantage can widen achievement over time.

Struggling students are loaded up with handicaps and encounter new obstacles which hinder progress. Some experience a series of false starts as they move from school to school, each transition undermining achievement. By the end of primary schooling the achievement gap can be five years or more.

A key factor in student success is the quality of teaching each child receives, particularly in literacy, given that literacy underpins every aspect of schooling. School welfare programs and support for students are also important. Unfortunately, students from certain backgrounds and whole schools can be categorised and stigmatised, resulting in low expectations and a self-fulfilling prophecy of underachievement. When this inevitably occurs it reinforces prevailing attitudes and stereotypes – "You can't expect much of children from ---".

Once students commence high school, previous achievement powerfully predicts future accomplishment. Some students are well equipped academically and socially for secondary schooling. Others quickly lose momentum. Their inadequate skills, especially in literacy and numeracy, see them falter while their peers move ahead. Parental support and guidance often falls away. Lack of progress can result in disengagement and behavioural problems, further undermining achievement.

By the second and third years of secondary school, some students actually go backwards in academic capability, such deskilling leaving them up to seven years behind some of their peers. They 'hit the wall' and have little chance of completing high school. Their life options, and those of their children are severely limited.

There are a number of imperatives from this situation that any 'education revolution' must address.

All young Australians need access to quality preschool education. This is especially so in poorer, rural and remote areas, where parents have a non-English speaking background and parents have poor literacy. Poor literacy is debilitating and the illiteracy cycle must be broken. Those least able to assist their children need help. Parents and community members need access to quality adult literacy programs.

Health is crucial. Health problems compromise initial and on-going academic achievement. Diagnosis, intervention and support are required. State and federal health, education and welfare portfolios and programs need closer alignment.

Teaching, especially in literacy, is key. The quality of the classroom teacher is the largest in-school influence on student achievement. School leadership and teachers' professional learning are major influences on the quality of classroom teaching students receive. Both need attention, investment and development. High and realistic standards and expectations in schooling are also important. Settling for second best must not be an option.

A fully supported national curriculum is overdue. Effective student assessment and reporting are needed to target intervention and investment.

Parents should have choice in the school their children attend. However this choice should not be dictated by family circumstances or the relative impoverishment of one school or sector. We need a more level, equitable playing field in educational funding and provision.

Across Australia in the coming weeks another group of students commence their primary schooling. If education is going to be the means to personal fulfilment and opportunity, we need to ensure that all these young people and their families are given the support they need to succeed. If not, then the education process will reinforce disadvantage, not overcome it, to the detriment of us all.

[Professor Stephen Dinham](#)

Research Director, Teaching and Leadership, ACER.

Versions of this opinion article were published in:

The Advertiser ('Family support the key to education,' by Stephen Dinham, *The Advertiser*, 18 January 2008, page 20)

The Courier-Mail ('Every child deserves the best,' by Stephen Dinham, *The Courier-Mail*, 24 January 2008, page 38).

14th March 2008

Damian von Samorzewski
State Secretary
Tasmanian Catholic Schools
Parents and Friends Federation

RE: Pathways Foundation School Talks

Dear Damian,

Firstly, thank you for your enquiry regarding the Pathways Foundation School Talks Program for Tasmanian Catholic Schools. We are very excited at the prospect of speaking with your parents about our programs as well as tools and tips for Raising Teenagers.

We believe that through our award winning programs we can assist parents in ensuring their teenagers have a safe, happy and healthy future. The Pathways Foundation runs a series of contemporary camp based programs to assist parents and teenagers in the important transition from boy or girl to healthy adult psychology. We build self esteem and improve life outcomes for Australian boys and girls.

To help grow these programs and their positive impacts on young people, as well as provide parent with the education to help them parent their teenagers positively, we developed our very popular **Raising Teenager Talks**.

The Pathways Foundation has been successfully conducting our free **Raising Teenagers Talks** in school throughout Australia for many years. In fact last year The Pathways Foundation gave this talk to over 1,000 families. In the **Raising Teenager Talks** pack with this letter you will find testimonials from parents and schools who have experienced our programs. (See page 5) One of our founding trustees has been running these camps in the Hobart area since 1995.

No parent or child need miss out on one of our programs for financial reasons. Thanks to our generous supporters we offer full or part scholarships based on individual circumstances.

Dr Arne Rubinstein, our CEO is often in Tasmania and I would like propose that you meet him face to face. He would then be able to answer the many practical questions you may have and be able to discuss the best way to execute the Raising Teenager Talks throughout your schools. The feedback from these talks has been fantastic with schools inviting us back and parents holding the content in high regard.

Below is a quick summary of the talk benefits. Our website www.pathwaysfoundation.org.au has in depth information about the organisation.

Thank you for considering one of our **Raising Teenager Talks** at your school. I will contact you early next week to discuss this further with you and hopefully agree on a date for you to meet Arne.

Should you wish to contact me over the weekend for more details, please do not hesitate to call me on 02 45 809 115 or 0419 44 77 06.

Regards

Tara King
National Regions Manager
PATHWAYS FOUNDATION

PATHWAYS FOUNDATION RAISING TEENAGER TALKS

What Does The Raising Teenagers Talk Cover?

The Talk generally takes place on an evening and runs for approx 2 hours. It covers the theory and ends with a Question and Answer Session.

Topics covered in the talk include;

- ✓ The changing needs of boys and/or girls as they approach adulthood
- ✓ Boundary setting
- ✓ How to keep them safe
- ✓ How to discipline teenagers
- ✓ Practical parenting tips
- ✓ Building capacity to succeed
- ✓ Avoiding communication breakdown
- ✓ Traps to avoid
- ✓ Rites of Passage in a contemporary society
- ✓ Information regarding our programs and the opportunity to attend our programs

While the talks are directed at parents of boys and/or girls between the ages of 13 to 15 the information provided in the talk is relevant to all parents and carers in the wider community.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS TALK IS NOT FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE TO ATTEND.

Why Conduct A Pathways Foundation Raising Teenager Talk At Your School?

Many parents (and teachers) today are concerned about their children as they reach the teenage years. Our talks address these concerns, such as self esteem, underachievement, drug and alcohol abuse, and peer pressure, as well as providing practical parenting tips. The talks also discuss the award-winning Pathways programs, and provide information about attending (which includes information about scholarships). We also provide parents with a question and answer time to address any specific concerns they may have.

We see this talk as a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge that parenting teenagers can be a tricky business. We want to provide parents and carers within your school community with some practical tips for preventing communication breakdown, and for understanding the changing needs of boys as they approach adulthood. This talk can be a stepping stone in building and maintaining your school's reputation as a progressive caring school that seeks the best educational and social outcomes for their community.

Results of the Pathways Foundation Research Project

Independent research undertaken by Stancombe Research and Planning in March 2007 showed that when a group of Pathways past attendees (between 1 to 3 years since attending a camp) were measured against a control group of boys the same age who had not attended Pathways, there was a statistically significant improvement in the Pathways attendees following areas:

- ✓ Stronger father relationships - respect and supportive
- ✓ More confident communication and social skills
- ✓ Greater respect for women
- ✓ Are more motivated to set goals
- ✓ Have an improved attitude towards finishing school

- ✓ Greater desire to participate and give back to the community

What Are The Benefits Of Providing The Talk To Your School?

There are four FEATURES of our Talk to your school :

1. Parental Education and Assurance

The talks really focus in on practical tips and tools for parents with their teenagers. For those who are struggling this talk often gives them some direction and outlets for support. For those who are not, it is often a great assurance they are on the right track and gets them prepared for the coming years. All parents benefits from the education on the importance of Rites Of Passage for Teenagers

2. Benefits for families for sending students to our programs

Our programs work and change lives. The majority of families who attend our programs see major benefits from attending. See our testimonial section in the information on our programs.

3. It's free.

There is no charge to your school to hold this talk.

4 We do all the work

We provide the resources and the support to make this happen. All we ask of you is to provide the venue (with whiteboard, data projector and laptop), and supper refreshments.

PATHWAYS FOUNDATION

Raising Teenager Talks



ABOUT THE PATHWAYS FOUNDATION AND ITS PROGRAMS

Helping boys and girls reach their full potential as they move into adulthood

Growing up – moving from childhood to adulthood - is one of life's most difficult transitions, where it should be one of the most exciting and positive times of a child's life. But, for many, the shift from teen to adult is too big to do alone.

The Pathways Foundation runs a series of contemporary programs designed to bolster self esteem and improve life outcomes for Australian boys and girls.

Pathways' flagship program, *Pathways to Manhood*, involves a five-day camp providing an opportunity for dads or other significant male mentors to get together – with the help of facilitators – to honour the beginning of a boy's journey to manhood. The boys (aged 13 to 15) get to hear their father's stories, are challenged physically, mentally and emotionally and are publically honoured by their fathers.

The program aims to create strong and open relationships between boys and their dads; to set up ongoing mentor and support systems for young men; and to encourage healthy attitudes of respect towards mothers and women generally. Ultimately, the program works to bring out the potential in boys and have them inspired and full of hope as they look to the future. It gives them a deeper understanding of what it means to live a balanced life in today's world with the knowledge that ongoing support is there in times of need.

Each year in Australia, more than 100,000 young people suffer from depression. Four to six commit suicide daily, and drug and alcohol-related abuse is on the rise. These figures are perhaps exacerbated by the fact that the average time Australian fathers are spending with their children individually is eight minutes per day.

Pathways believes it can improve the lives of every Australian boy and girl by providing them with a fundamental process they are missing but which they need – a ritual in the form of a Rite of Passage.

Participants have consistently left the programs reporting feelings of confidence, stronger relationships with their fathers, an increased respect for women and the motivation to set goals and finish school.

Other Pathways programs include:

Pathways into Womanhood: trialed in late 2006, this mother-daughter program has run two programs in 2007 with great success and is based on similar philosophies of the boys program in strengthening the mother-daughter relationship and aiming to instill in young women confidence and self-worth.

Youngstars: an adventure-filled weekend bush camp for boys (aged 6 to 10) and their dads that celebrates fatherhood and encourages fathers to be more active rather than absent in their boy's life.

Leadership Development: a four-day residential training program which gives men – including corporate leaders - an opportunity to critically assess their lives in order to become better leaders on a personal, family, work and community level. Participants can continue with Pathways as mentors to the boys who take part in other Pathways programs.

RESEARCH RESULTS ON PATHWAYS TO MANHOOD PROGRAM

Independent research has shown that when a group of Pathways past attendees (between one to three years since attending a camp) were measured against a control group of boys the same age who had not attended Pathways, there was a statistically significant improvement in the Pathways attendees in the following areas:

- Stronger father relationships
- Increase in confident communication and social skills
- Increased respect for women
- Increased motivation to set goals
- Improved attitude towards finishing school
- Improved motivation to participate and give back to the community

Raising Teenager Talks

Last year the **Pathways Foundation** gave public talks on **Raising Teenage Boys** to over one thousand families. A major component of the talk focuses on solutions, and preventative models that empower young people to reach their full potential, as well as providing parents with valuable tools that they can implement immediately. The talks are directed at parents of boys and/or girls between the ages of 13 and 15, but information provided in the talk is relevant to the wider community. The talks are **not** for the children themselves to attend.

We continue to receive positive feedback on the experience of attending our talks, and the value of hearing a presentation in person.

We have a number of qualified speakers presenting our talks, who have long been involved with the program.

One of these speakers will give a presentation on **Raising Teenage Boys** in your school. The talk explores the issues facing parents as well as the challenges that young people face in today's world.

The talks aim to raise community awareness and encourage open dialogue on issues affecting young men. We will also discuss the award winning **Pathways Programs** and provide parents with a question and answer time.

The presentation will be free of cost.

Specific topics covered in the talk include;

- ✓ The changing needs of boys and/or girls as they approach adulthood
- ✓ Boundary setting
- ✓ How to keep them safe
- ✓ How to Discipline teenagers
- ✓ Practical parenting tips
- ✓ Building boys and girls capacity to succeed
- ✓ Avoiding communication breakdown
- ✓ Traps to avoid
- ✓ Rites of Passage in a contemporary society

WHAT DO PEOPLE SAY ABOUT PATHWAYS?

We continue to receive positive feedback on the experience of attending our programs and talks; the value of hearing a presentation in person, with parents holding the content in high regard, and schools inviting us back to give more talks. In many schools our talk is seen as a stepping stone in building and maintaining their reputation as a progressive caring school that seeks the best educational and social outcomes for their community. We have been giving talks in many high profile schools including Saint Ignatius College (Sydney), Brisbane Boys College (Brisbane), Barker College (Sydney), St Patrick's College (Ballarat), Wesley College (Perth).

Here's what some of our talk and camp attendees have had to say...

From Parents and Guardians

"I found the Pathways talk to be absolutely inspiring. It was obvious that there was a great understanding of the needs of adolescent boys and that much research has gone into working out a process to enhance the development of young men."

Margaret, Mother of 6

"With my grandson, I attended a Pathways Camp and it was, and remains in my memory as, the most enjoyable, most profound and concentrated learning experience of my 74 years of varied and active life. My grandson enjoyed it too and wants to return one day as an assistant facilitator. His mother and sisters comment positively from time to time on aspects of his behaviour probably resulting from his Pathways experience. His scholastic achievements have improved markedly. Our previously good relationship is now closer, more loving and mutually respectful."

Bob, Grandfather.

"The experience of attending the Pathways program provided my son and I with an opportunity to spend time together, to listen to each other and more importantly to other men and teenagers. Being able to hear from both his peers and other men about the strengths and values that others saw in him provided my son with a great boost and a renewed vision of himself. ...my son came back from the Pathways Camp with a 'fire-in-his-belly' about the rest of his life. He had discovered what he wanted to do and who could help him on his journey. I am so pleased that one day, purely by accident, I discovered the Pathways Foundation website, it has made such a difference to my son, to my family and to me. The power of the Pathways to Manhood program is amazing, it offers a great deal of hope to our world, to our teenagers and to the future men and fathers."

Peter, Father

From Schools

"The Pathways to Manhood program provides a unique experience where boys spend time with their fathers. The feedback I have received from participants is fantastic but it is important for fathers to enter this program with "their eyes open". The confronting and challenging nature of this program means the experience is not for everyone. This is a once in a life time experience, invaluable and very influential in the lives of its participants".

Peter Miller, Head of Middle School, Barker College, Hornsby

"...I believe that the emphasis placed on respect within family relationships is an important feature of the [Pathways] program. The young men who spoke to me after attending the camps spoke highly of the experience and felt their relationship with father (and mother) was significantly improved. Pathways' communications with the school and in parent information meetings have been very competent and professional. I find them to be receptive and responsive to any concerns or suggestions we have posed. Although this reference is brief, I am happy to speak further by phone regarding the Pathways Program at Riverview.

I feel the Pathways Program has made a significant improvement to what Riverview is able to provide for our Year 8 students and their families, and I am very pleased to recommend the Pathways to Manhood program to you."

Fr Robert Davoren SJ, Formerly St Ignatius College, Riverview

DRAFT

Report from the NCEC Meeting of 21 February 2008

1. Early Childhood Education

The sixth draft of the Early Childhood Education Stimulus paper was presented to the NCEC. The final version has captured the major ideas, reduced the repetition that had resulted from multiple authors and organised the material into a coherent style.

In discussion about the paper the following points were made:

- The Commonwealth has targeted early childhood education as a priority area and the Catholic education sector needs a clear strategic position on where it stands.
- There needs to be a clear rationale for providing early childhood education programs within Catholic schools
- The importance of faith development in early childhood needs to be recognised.
- There is a strong demand from Catholic parents for early childhood facilities that provide for faith based play.
- Currently there is a major gap between baptism and school. *a → why take sacraments from schools?*
- Children learn through emersion and the lack of Catholic childcare means families and the Church lose the opportunity to capitalise on early faith development in a structured learning environment. }
- Pragmatically, if the Catholic sector does not act now in relation to the provision of early childhood education, it may find that ABC and other providers have stolen the market. }
- Currently there is no national position and no coherent approaches across the country. *
- There is division within the Catholic sector between those who wish to engage in early childcare and those who are adamantly against involvement.
- Early childhood education must be seen as core business, not as a separate program. *
- The Catholic sector will not be able to meet all the need and therefore developing partnerships/relationships with other providers is important.
- Sharing working models across Dioceses would be most useful.
- The paper to be used in further discussions with the Deputy Prime Minister (Julia Gillard) and the Parliamentary Secretary (Maxine McKew) }

Development in the early childhood area is already a political reality – it is happening and the NCEC recognises this as a good thing and therefore the Catholic sector should be involved.

