

Values News

Volume 2 Number 1, December 2007

Having trouble reading this email? Read it on the web at <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/valnews0712.pdf>

=====

EDITORIAL

Values in Education

This newsletter is published at a critical time for public education and our next generation of citizens.

ACSSO looks forward to a new Government and welcomes the Prime Minister's commitment to a new standard of values in public life.

No one is perfect but it sure helps if our political leaders not only talk about values but practice what they preach.

Just as important is the need for Governments to be inclusive, tolerant and open about what they do.

In future newsletters we will examine the progress of the new Government in its revamp of the Freedom of Information laws.

It is a commitment to openness and honesty that we welcome.

=====

KEVIN RUDD BECOMES PRIME MINISTER

Labor goes back to school

Herald-Sun 26 November 2007

All members of the in-coming Labor government have been ordered to visit a government school and a private school in their electorate in the next two days.

In his first meaningful policy move, Prime Minister-elect Kevin Rudd has told all caucus members they must outline the new government's education plans to each school they visit.

This includes the plan to provide computers to every high school student and the introduction of school-based workplace training centres.

"I expect, therefore, that when our parliamentary party meets in Canberra on Thursday that we will also nominate on the agenda for that meeting a discussion and debate on the implementation of these programs," Mr Rudd said.

"And I will expect members of the party to report back on what they've found in their communities."

The move is a clear signal that Mr Rudd will make education the foremost priority in the coming term of government.

He told reporters he had instructed the secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Peter Shergold, to prepare the Labor Party's education policies as the first submission to the new cabinet.

"It is important that we get to work on this straight away," Mr Rudd told reporters.

"Next year there will be a very extensive tendering process on behalf of the various school systems in Australia and therefore it is critical we get that planning work started straight away.

"That will be agenda item number one."

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,22822492-661,00.html>

=====

Rudd's warm Kyoto reception

Matthew Franklin and Siobhain Ryan | The Australian, December 04, 2007

Kevin Rudd has ratified the Kyoto Protocol as the first formal act of his Government, ending Australia's international isolation on climate change.

Within hours of being officially sworn in as the nation's 26th prime minister, Mr Rudd held his first executive council meeting with Governor-General Michael Jeffery, who agreed with his request that Australia ratify the decade-old protocol.

News of the ratification spread quickly, sparking a sustained burst of applause on the floor at the UN climate change conference in Bali, which Mr Rudd will attend next week on his first overseas trip as Prime Minister.

Many delegates rose to their feet to applaud the ratification, and senior Australian delegation member Howard Bamsey, from the Department for the Environment and Water Resources, was forced to wait about a minute before completing his statement to the assembly.

Australia had already been on target to deliver its obligation under the Kyoto pact, which will require it to limit growth in CO2 emissions to an 8 per cent increase above 1990 levels over the period from 2008-12.

But the ratification, which will become formal 90 days after the documents are lodged with the UN, will strengthen Mr Rudd's hand when he joins delegates from 189 nations at the Bali summit, which will hammer out emissions arrangements for the post-Kyoto period.

Mr Rudd will be joined in Bali by his new Climate Change Minister, Penny Wong, and Environment Minister, Peter Garrett.

Until yesterday, Australia and the US were the only major economies that had refused to ratify the protocol.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,22865700-601,00.html>

The following article is from last March but invites a timely reconsideration for those interested in how values and education intersect.

Rudd's delicate lesson

Paul Kelly, editor-at-large, The Australian, March 03, 2007

Education is the heart of Kevin Rudd's political revolution. In policy terms this is where his personal imprint is deepest and where his aspirations are highest.

Rudd grasps the conundrum that has plagued Labor since 1996: that education is Labor's issue yet it has generated no electoral punch or cut-through.

Even worse, John Howard has mobilised education against Labor on values and depicted Labor's private school hit list as evidence of its class envy.

Howard has used education to penetrate the Labor base vote.

Education is enshrined by Rudd as the strategic pivot to reposition Labor on the economy, values and federalism. It is a mighty challenge.

It goes under the title of Rudd's education revolution and this will be his mantra until voting day.

Its essence (though Rudd won't admit this truth) is that Labor must appeal more to the consumers, notably the parents and employers, and less to the producers, notably the teachers, their unions, academics and educational theorists.

The producers' hold on the Labor Party at state level has been political poison at the federal level.

It has given the Howard Liberal Party a new credence in education.

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,21314763-12250,00.html>

YOUR STORIES

A certain level of discussion continues about whether and how values are taught in Australian schools, often as a point of comparison between public and private education. What has emerged is that schools around Australia place a high importance on communicating values in education. ACSSO will continue to draw attention to those schools that explore new ways of teaching in the classroom, in the schoolyard, in their local communities and as Australians.

Deloraine Primary School, Deloraine, Tasmania

A winner of the Tasmania Learning Together Award for Educational Excellence for its VALUES Program, Deloraine Primary School "is building a community with a caring, supportive and exciting learning environment.

Our students will become inquiring and reflective thinkers, effective communicators, self directed and ethical people, responsible citizens and contributors to local and global environments."

In its Vision Statement, the school articulates how it is guided by a core set of eleven value statements.

One particular initiative developed by Deloraine Primary School addresses an area that is sometimes overlooked: letting the local community know what a school's values are and how those values inform the educational approach. In this case, the school has drafted a clear and well-designed pamphlet for this very purpose.

A simple, but very effective and positive way of ensuring the community understands a school's attitude to values.

Download Deloraine Primary School's "Values at Deloraine" pamphlet at <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/deloraineps.pdf>

Read more at <http://www.deloraineprimary.tased.edu.au/>

=====

TEACHER TRAINING

UNESCO APNIEVE Centre for Values Education, Peace and Ecology

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization established the Asia Pacific Network for International Education and Values Education in March 1995 in Seoul, Republic of Korea, on the initiative of seven founding member countries, including Australia.

The Australian Chapter of APNIEVE was established in 2000 and opened the Australian Centre for Values, Peace and Ecology in 2002 in the Adelaide Hills. The APNIEVE Centre has since moved to Mitcham to be more accessible.

The principal objectives of APNIEVE are to develop values education for peace, human rights and sustainable human-centered development. The Australian Chapter does this by conducting teacher training workshops, seminars and conferences throughout the Asia Pacific region and by developing teaching resources.

Topics of teacher workshops held in 2007 included:

- Embedding values in learning across the curriculum
- The impact of stillness on thinking, learning & behaviour
- Empowering learners to adapt to & create change through values
- Values and whole school change
- Developing emotional and spiritual intelligences for learner wellbeing
- The impact of simplicity on thinking & learning
- Values for developing wisdom and resilience for the whole child
- The spiritual dimension of learner wellbeing
- The impact of creativity on thinking & learning
- Developing emotional and spiritual intelligences for learner wellbeing
- Developing wisdom & resilience in learners
- Whole child development for wellbeing & reaching full potential
- Values and Critical Literacy
- Values and Systems Thinking

The workshop program for 2008 will be announced soon, under the broad focus: Service Learning, Wellbeing, Sustainability and Values in Science Education.

Read more at <http://www.unesco-apnieve.edu.au/>

=====

THE VIEW FROM ABROAD

First Hindu state school to open

BBC News, 11 September 2007

The first Hindu state school in Britain is set to open next year in west London.

Hindu group the I-Foundation plans to open a new £10m primary school for pupils in Edgware next September.

The local authority's approval for the plans follows the government's pledging of support for more religious schools where there is parental demand.

About a third of schools in England are faith schools - including Jewish, Sikh, Muslim and Christian denominations.

But so far there has not been a Hindu school - which has meant that Hindu parents do not have an option to send their children to a school based on their faith.

On Monday night, the London Borough of Harrow voted in favour of granting planning consent for the 236-place primary school, on Camrose Avenue, Edgware.

The I-Foundation says: "Parents are becoming increasingly concerned about their children losing touch with their culture and religion.

"Many feel the need for educating children not only with academics but also with firm grounding in their spiritual and cultural values."

Read more at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/6988844.stm

Values set Baltimore school apart

Greg Toppo, USA TODAY, 19 June 2007

It was an odd little idea that stuck in assistant principal Saeed Hill's head and wouldn't die: Two years after his tiny high school's founding, it needed something - he wasn't sure exactly what - to set it apart from the dozens of others in the city, even the small core of "innovation" schools to which Baltimore Talent Development High School belonged.

"I realized the school needed some kind of tradition," Hill says.

Before students arrive at Talent Development, many are on the path to dropping out. In a city where only one in three students are likely to earn a high school diploma, the school offers a gold-plated second chance. But that wasn't enough.

He began asking people: What does it mean to be a student here? Soon he had an idea.

He envisioned a sort of honor society whose members would wear enamel lapel pins painted with "words that meant something to me."

So Hill created five pins, each showing a star and a positive trait: respect, dedication, integrity, perseverance and leadership.

"Education should be more than just math, science and English," Hill says. "You have to build character."

Read more at http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2007-06-19-talent-value_N.htm

The values of the French school system

With national educational expenditure standing at 7% of its GDP, France is among the top OECD countries in terms of national support to education.

The government contributes the lion's share owing to the choices made by France over one century ago: to provide a democratic education that is available and free to all, from nursery school through to university.

Schooling has a key role in French society, even provoking, as of late (between September 2003 and March 2004), a major public debate. At the centre of this debate: the fundamental role of the école républicaine, or Republican school. Many others issues were raised: Can the school system still guarantee equal rights and promote social advancement? How can the school system continue to enforce the main principles on which it was built, in particular the notion of secularism? How relevant are its teaching methods and pedagogical content?

This vast quantity of issues regarding the educational system may seem surprising when viewed by outsiders. But in France, the French Republic and the school system are intimately linked. France's president, Jacques Chirac, evoked this fundamental notion at

a Council of Ministers in September 2003, stating: "The school system is the cement of our nation".

The French nation was forged through its educational system, which helped establish the French Republic.

Read more at http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/france_159/studying-in-france_2192/presentation_1988/main-features_5350/the-values-of-the-french-school-system_8387.html

=====

CONFERENCES & EVENTS

World Education Forum SA International Conference

"Being, Becoming and Belonging - the economic imperative in education"

26-28 June, Adelaide

Much is said and written by politicians and policy-makers in Australia and the Western World concerning the 'well-being' of children and young people in our education systems and other related services.

Do children have the right to 'be' as well as 'become'? Is 'well-being' just a convenient slogan, merely a 'buzzword', political spin?

What have been the results and what are we really doing?

How do we care for and educate children and young people for the world in which they live now and in which we hope they will flourish as citizens of tomorrow?

The World Education Forum, South Australia thinks that it is time to take stock of the effectiveness of the effort that has been made to date. Share your expertise and re-examine the values which underpin many of the assumptions that drive modern educational policy.

Keynote speakers are **Dr Ben Levin**, Research Chair in Education Leadership and Policy at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in Toronto, Canada; **Dr Richard Eckersley**, founding director of Australia 21, a non-profit, public-interest, research company, and visiting fellow at the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health at the Australian National University, Canberra; **Professor Christine Pascal** OBE, Director of the Centre for Research in Early Childhood, Birmingham; Co-Director of the Effective Learning (EEL) Project, and National Evaluator for the DfES Early Excellence Centre Programme in the United Kingdom.

Read more at <http://www.infront.com.au/evt/wef/>

=====

THE DARK SIDE

Pig head left on pikes - but no one seems shocked

Alex Tibbitts Sydney Morning Herald, November 29, 2007

CAMDEN residents Eileen and Kate O'Hara were not surprised that pigs' heads draped in an Australian flag were placed at the site of a proposed Islamic school yesterday.

"It's disgusting but I'm not surprised," said Kate, a year 11 student at Elderslie High School.

The Quranic Society plans to build Camden College on the outskirts of the town for 1200 primary and secondary students.

Public submissions on the plan closed on November 13. The council is expected to vote on the proposal in February.

The two heads were found rammed onto stakes, on the empty block earmarked for the school. Police took them away for examination and are looking for a man who went on CB radio to claim responsibility.

The NSW Community Relations Commission branded the act "a display of hatred".

That does not seem to have shocked the Camden residents the Herald spoke to yesterday. "I've never seen them so worked up," said Ms O'Hara, who attended a meeting this month about the development which drew up to 1000 people.

She had found the atmosphere "intimidating", and thought she and her daughter were the only two people to raise their hands in approval of the school. Kate said people had yelled at them to "go back to Bankstown".

Ms O'Hara said she had stopped her daughter from addressing the crowd. "I would not like to have got up there and then walk back through that crowd."

Said her daughter: "I don't think if it was a Christian school there would be half as much protest."

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/pigs-heads-left-on-pikes/2007/11/28/1196036983979.html>)

=====
To unsubscribe click here: <mailto:webmaster@acsso.org.au?subject=unsubscribeVal>