



Australian
College of
Educators

professional

EDUCATOR

2018
Edition 1
Volume 18



21st
CENTURY
EDUCATION

THE SMART BOARD® WE INVENTED. REINVENTED.

Introducing SMART Board 6000 series with iQ

5-years peace of mind

All-Inclusive Bundles have everything schools need

For a limited time, save up to **\$1,210** on a new SMART Board 6000 with iQ

+ 5-year subscription to SMART Learning Suite + 5-year warranty



SMART Board 6000 series

75" SMART Board 6275

Regular price: AU\$ ~~\$9,100~~

Bundle price: AU\$ **\$7,890***

SAVE \$1,210

65" SMART Board 6265

Regular price: AU\$ ~~\$7,200~~

Bundle price: AU\$ **\$6,285***

SAVE \$1,005

*Suggested promotion price. Prices in AU\$ excluding GST. Conditions apply. Offer excludes delivery, installation and mounting brackets. Reseller may sell for less. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other SMART promotions. Offer valid until June 28, 2018.

Contact your reseller now or find a reseller in your area home.smarttech.com/where-to-buy

SMART Technologies
 Telephone: 1300 165 312
 Email: ANZenquiries@smarttech.com
smarttech.com

Contents

REGULARS

Editorial	4
ACE President's column	8

FEATURES

"Curriculum" reform: Policy to practice	12
Evolving national assessment to support improving educational outcomes	16
Educating for the future: Now	20
Our future demands transformative teaching practices	22
Finding that touchstone in developing school culture and intercultural leadership	24

BOOK REVIEW

Evidence-based learning and teaching. A look into Australian classrooms	27
---	----

OPINION PAPERS

Civic agency and its positive impact to student learning in the 21st century classroom	28
Thinking to learn	32
It's time to give our children a voice in the digital revolution	34
Opportunities and challenges in twenty-first century Holocaust education	36
Religion and spirituality in the curriculum	40
Ceremonies for change	44
General capabilities: Rhetoric, realities and relevance in the Australian curriculum	46

TECH COLUMN

The agile educator	48
--------------------	----

IN MEMORY

Fr John Williams AM	51
---------------------	----



Editorial

The 21st Century Educator

Dr Julie Rimes, Chair Professional Educator Working Group

When the Publishing Working Group posed the question what do we mean by 21st Century education we put our mind to what sort of responses we might receive and how others might frame their responses. This edition will give you a broad ranging set of views on the issues that contemporary educators believe are important to them. They all have a degree of commonality in that they all look at ways to re-design the school curriculum to better prepare students for life and work in the 21st century.

We are all familiar with what have almost become cliques: accelerating change, increased access to information, knowledge explosion, communications and social networking, social change and environmental issues. And yet it is these very issues that our contributors have chosen to focus on. We know that our curricula must attempt to equip students for significant change and a changing world environment. We know too that we need to promote flexible learning arrangements that are focussed on growth. Flexibility means considering ways to personalise teaching and learning, using technology to better target an individual's learning needs, and defining success in terms of growth that individuals make over time. I hope this set of articles will go some way towards increasing understanding about the Australian education scene.

College President, Dr Phil Lambert writes of the central challenge of education as moving from intent to actual practice, that is, achieving the successful translation of curriculum policy into practice in classrooms. Regarding the current reality of where we are as a nation he notes that there has been a noticeable policy response of 'stepping up' and stepping out' aimed at repurposing and rethinking education and schooling for a changed and changing world. Phil Lambert provides a commentary on the range of responses to the key Gonski 2.0 recommendations following their 28 March 2018 publication. Predictably these fell into three main groups: it is just what we have been calling for, and

now it is time to act on these recommendations; there is nothing exceptional outlined here because largely we are doing this already and, there is little rationale for changing well-established regimes and arrangements. It is Dr Lambert's contention that: 'The recent announcements about reform in Australia signal an advancement (intellectually, pragmatically and logically) at the national and local levels in terms of getting the balance right between:

- honouring disciplines while also emphasising the need for students to acquire new and essential competencies
- recognising that monitoring individual progress is fundamental to improvement while at the same time maintaining a capacity to identify where value is being added and where improvements and targeted resourcing is needed
- settlement regarding the need for evidence as the basis for change paired with the need for innovation and the opportunity to better understand what achievement and progress looks like in areas of new and increasing importance.

What is now needed is a commitment from governments at all levels to ensure the overdue vision for "curriculum" reform in Australia is realised – from policy intent to actual practice.'

Tony MacKay AM writes on 'Educating for the Future: Now.' He believes that 10 years on from the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for



Young Australians that the goals are as powerful and relevant as they were in 2008. And yet, achieving these goals remains unfinished business and if anything, achieving them is more challenging than ever. The purposes of education will see an increasing focus on equipping learners to be the authors of their own human evolution and living in sustainable civilisations. Leading school systems are focused on human quality - graduating young people with the knowledge, skills, dispositions and values that ensure that we can, individually and collectively thrive, not just survive. Tony Mackay notes that the central debate in Australia across all areas of education demands a collective shifts towards a new paradigm. If we are to meet the purpose of becoming more human he argues, we need a learning system that will create the conditions for a learning society where individual and collective well-being are made manifest.

Dr Patrick Howlett FMS also references Professor Gonski's report and defines the need for transformative teaching practices. He evidences the need to discover and implement a more engaging school experience for students who are not engaged or challenged by their school experience.

Calling on his experience as a high school principal, Br Howlett comments on a perceptible improvement in school culture when he introduced program-based learning. Br Howlett notes that once introduced the staff's approach to teaching changed significantly. He goes on to note the three intertwined facets that facilitated the effective implementation of PBL. While he uses this innovation as an exemplar of improving practice, he calls on Australian policy makers to investigate global educational best-practice classroom initiatives. His experience suggests that when we talk about creativity or innovation

GRANTS ON OFFER

Getting creative with tax and super

Australian kids can get creative and win big with the ATO's Tax, Super + You Competition

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has launched the 2018 Tax, Super +You competition, which aims to encourage high school students to think outside the box and develop creative ideas on how they think tax and/or super contributes to the community.

There are two categories - Junior Secondary (Years 7-9) and Senior Secondary (Years 10-12) with a total cash prize pool of \$6,200 to be won. Students have until 2 November 2018 to enter the competition, with the top 10 finalists to be announced in November 2018.

	Junior Secondary Category Year 7 to 9 students	Senior Secondary Category Year 10 to 12 students
1st prize winner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$400 cash prize• \$600 for their school or community organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$400 cash prize• One-week work placement within the ATO's Marketing & Communications team• \$600 for their school or community organisation
2nd prize winner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$250 cash prize• \$400 for their school or community organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$250 cash prize• \$400 for their school or community organisation
3rd Prize winner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$150 cash prize• \$300 for their school or community organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$150 cash prize• \$300 for their school or community organisation
People's Choice Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$400 cash prize• \$600 for their school or community organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$400 cash prize• \$600 for their school or community organisation

To help students learn about tax and super, the ATO has also published teaching resources in line with the Australian curriculum, which school teachers can incorporate into their lesson plans. The materials are available for download at <https://www.taxsuperandyou.gov.au>

ATO Assistant Commissioner Sally Bektas, who is part of the judging panel, said: "We were delighted with the creativity and quality of the competition entries from students in 2017 and we are looking forward to seeing what this year's entries have in store."

Other members of the judging panel include electronic house music duo and hosts of Triple J's popular *Friday Night Shuffle*, Vance Musgrove and Mikah Freeman, from the Aston Shuffle.

Short stories, animation videos and drawings are just some of the creative ideas from 2017. One of last year's winning entries was a tax rap from Year 10 students Jordan Donohue and Cabe Barrett from Singleton in New South Wales.

For more information about the 2018 Tax, Super +You competition, visit [taxsuperandyou.gov.au/competition-about](https://www.taxsuperandyou.gov.au/competition-about)



in education, we are talking less about doing new things and more about doing things in new ways

Dr Jill Abell brings perspectives on international education in her article, Finding that touchstone in developing school culture and intercultural leadership. She notes that the value of 21st-century global education is widely referenced in national curricula worldwide along with an intention to equip students to be lifelong learners able to operate with confidence in a complex, information-rich, globalised world. She provides some examples of how some Australian schools and teachers are achieving international-mindedness and authentic global education. A number of schools across the nation are undertaking internationally recognised accreditation processes and professional learning to enhance their curriculum design and demonstrate their commitment to interculturalism and global citizenship.

School and curriculum reform is also advocated by Chris Bradbury. He argues for a deeper and broader education and provides examples of using civics education as an important vehicle for this to happen. He suggests that civics education allows students to engage in deeper learning, requiring them to work collaboratively with peers, adults and organisations to diagnose and solve problems, to choose solutions, to implement strategies and to reflect on results. The richness of civic learning experiences allows students to build the skills and attributes to be confident citizens and develop the ability to set realistic goals and direct oneself to follow a path of civic agency. He sees civic agency in the 21st century classroom is one where students value democracy and one where students appreciate that the principles of justice, equality and freedom require constant vigilance and sustenance.

Brisbane teacher, Alison Dare, explores ways in which teachers can use multi-faceted communication between teacher and student, and among students themselves, to acquire shared understanding rather than a simple transactional passing of information from one to the other. Her piece entitled Thinking to Learn explores the classroom relationships, the messiness of thinking, and how teachers may create the environment where students are comfortable to be patient with their own development as they become thinkers and active learners.

Chris Panell explores the way the digital revolution has had an impact on young people's learning and our schools. He says that what it means to be literate is being redefined right in front of us daily. Writing on digital literacy he notes that the digital literacy that is emerging is one where there is a connectedness to words, facts, images, and ideas. To be digitally literate means that you are able to set out the words and symbols that reflect your thoughts, and then make them act in ways that you wish. The presentation of the words is imbued with meaning, as is the interaction of the user with the words. He argues that words are increasingly experiences. The digitally fluent find meaning not

just in the combination of words and letters, but also in the connections of those words to other words within a larger context, within an ongoing conversation that includes all of the interconnected portions of our digital lives. He concludes that the use of all forms of digital languages should be incorporated into every aspect of a well-rounded education, and no student should be denied the chance to participate.

Sue Beveridge asserts that educators need to be agile, and then describes agile teachers as those who are open to the changes around them and incorporate new ideas into their practices. These teachers are aware of industries such as the Video Game Industry which employs thousands of people worldwide across a range of disciplines and weave elements of this industry into their practice to engage their students. These are teachers who ask students to review games, to use their critical literacy skills to understand who is not represented in the game. It is these educators who use some of the gaming strategies, ask students to develop games, use levels of achievement and basically "make learning fun".

This edition is rounded off with some reflections on insights of religion and spirituality into practice. Firstly, Steve Hawkins considers the opportunities and challenges in 21st Century Holocaust education. He writes on the need for a strong underpinning philosophy as a guide to Holocaust teaching. He argues that teachers who understand and apply that philosophy to their planning, are well-placed to select and use the most appropriate resources for their teaching. He couples this with a strong discussion of why the Internet has been so thoroughly embraced by educators as a resource in history teaching.

Ian Keese FACE, now a retired history teacher, invites the question of whether religion and spirituality have a place in what has been called a post-metaphysical world. He points to a failure of the written curriculum and argues why this matters. His article, Religion and spirituality in the curriculum argues that there are no strategies in the curriculum documents to provide guidance on putting the insights of religion and spirituality into practice.

I trust that you will enjoy reading this edition of Professional Educator. Our next edition focusses on the Life Long Learner and what it means to participate in this ongoing, voluntary and self-motivated pursuits of knowledge. We invite all members to consider making a contribution or comment that will invite a dialogue and discussion.



President's Column

ACE Looking Forward

Prof. Diane Mayer

This is going to be a somewhat different type of President's Column for this edition of Professional Educator. That is because, as we all know, in the teaching profession things are constantly evolving and adapting to our changing social, cultural, political and personal landscapes. At the end of 2017, I made the decision to retire after working for over 40 plus years in a profession I know and love. Now, I realise there are many jokes about teachers retiring (some of them are even mildly amusing!) but with my retirement, I was excited about the opportunity of being able to immerse myself in my newly appointed role as President of the Australian College of Educators, write a book or two and enjoy time spent with family and friends. These grand plans lasted the sum total of approximately 4 weeks! Yes, like many of us, at retirement, I was a grand, well, failure!

On the one hand this is disappointing. On the other, as they say, when one door closes...

I am thrilled and very privileged to have been offered, and accepted, a once in a lifetime opportunity of a Statutory Chair in Education at the University of Oxford. So off to the sunny climes of England I am to go. Because of this decision, I was forced to make another, somewhat difficult one and that is to resign from my position as Chair and President of ACE only six months into my term.

This is not a decision I made lightly in large part due to the amazing work that has commenced over the course of the last two years. More than that, I was, and remain, committed to the incredible forward plan the ACE Board, State Presidents and Chief Executive Officer have set for the College for the coming years (but a little more about that later).

In resigning, I am comforted to know that the College will be under the extraordinary leadership and direction of the current President-elect, Dr Phil Lambert whom I have known and worked with for many years. Phil is a highly accomplished educator with an enviable track record in education leadership, research, management and teaching. I will remain on the ACE Board in the role of Immediate Past President for the coming 12 months to ensure continuity and a smooth transition and time zone differences aside with the joys

of technology that we all know, I will be able to continue to contribute to the ACE Board during this period.

Working with Phil are the dedicated volunteer State Presidents and Committee members as well as the ACE Board and Chief Executive Officer and I am truly confident that the path we have set for the College at our recent Forward Planning Day is going to drive the organisation to even greater success and positive outcomes for our profession.

As much as I would like to continue and tell you all about the forward planning day which we held on Saturday 8 June and which was generously facilitated by Anthony Mackay AM, CEO of the Centre for Strategic Education, I think it more appropriate to pass that task over to the new ACE President.



President's Column continued

Your Career our Profession

Dr Phil Lambert

When you accept a role such as President-elect of any organisation you recognise that sometimes sooner (rather than later) you will take on the Presidency and Chairmanship. Having been a dedicated and committed contributor and volunteer to ACE for many years and being incredibly proud to have been awarded an ACE Fellowship and the 2013 Sir Harold Wyndham Medal, stepping in to the Presidency now is truly exciting.

The College is at an interesting cross-road in its history. 2019 will be our 60th anniversary of serving the Australian Education profession nationally. ACE is and continues to be the only national education association that services and supports the entire profession across all sectors, systems, levels and subjects in a non-partisan, profession-led manner.

As with all organisations, 60 years is an amazing achievement, but it is also a long time and this was the focus of our recent forward planning session in Melbourne.

Being a truly profession-led association in such a diverse and complex profession as education is incredibly challenging. Ensuring across the profession representation at the local, state and national levels on our completely volunteer-based ACE Committees is at times, a struggle.

Developing and delivering the best possible services and support for this diverse profession in a constantly changing and highly competitive environment has also proven to be difficult. The College has done this for nearly 60 years purely through the dedication and amazing commitment of these groups of regional, state and national volunteers and a lean administration and management team in our National Office.

But as we are all aware, our profession has, over the course of the past six plus decades, changed, some might argue more so than many other professions, and the pressures and responsibilities of teachers in all sectors are at all-time highs. This has resulted in the College having to rely on many of the same volunteers for many years whose dedication to and

love of OUR Association is incredible.

These issues formed the basis of some of the confronting questions that were raised at our forward planning day:

- Given the changes to our profession and the pressures on teachers is there still a place for an association like ACE?
- What services and support does ACE need to deliver to ensure its relevance and to be an essential component of all educators' professional learning and career development?
- Is 60 an appropriate age for retirement, to allow new forms of professional groups driven at a more local or institutional / subject level to carry the mantle created by the ACE Founders way back in May 1959?

After nearly 8 hours of non-stop discussion, debate and healthy disagreement, I can only say that the group of talented and highly experienced educators that sat around the planning table amazed me with their energy and vigour to forge an exciting and innovative path for the next 60 years of the Australian College of Educators!

The Board Members, State Presidents and Chief Executive Officer settled on a simple yet extremely relevant mantra which succinctly and proudly sums up what the College stands for:

YOUR CAREER | OUR PROFESSION

We agreed on this as it encapsulate what the pioneering founders of the College wanted for Australian educators when they established the

GRANTS ON OFFER

Sydney Water opens 2018 community grants

Sydney Water is calling on grassroots community organisations working on initiatives or projects across Sydney, the Illawarra and the Blue Mountains to apply to their community grants program.

As Australia's largest water and wastewater service provider, Sydney Water has a commitment to supporting the local communities in which it works.

"Our grants program is designed to boost and enhance the community projects making a positive difference in our neighbourhoods," said spokesperson, Jennifer Whittle, Sydney Water.

Registered associations, incorporated bodies or non-profit organisations, and K-12 schools are encouraged to apply for one of the 65 \$1,000 to \$2,000 grants that are available.

"We encourage all eligible groups to apply, especially those with a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion, and those that support lower socio-economic communities..," said Whittle.

This year Sydney Water is making \$80,000 in total available to projects seeking funding across two program streams:

- The first; 50 grants of \$1,000 for Arts and Heritage, Safety, Health and Wellbeing, and Education initiatives
- The second; 15 grants of \$2,000 in funding, including equipment and promotional support for community action groups participating in Sydney Water's Beat the Bottle environment initiative.

"In the past year we have removed over one million plastic bottles from our waterways and see the effect this has on the environment," said Whittle.

With this at the forefront, Sydney Water is calling on those focusing exclusively on protecting Sydney's waterways and oceans to apply for a Beat the Bottle environment grant and bring it to life in their local area.

"We are committed to supporting community action groups increase the reach and participation in their activities and tackle this issue" concluded Whittle.

Applications close 27 July 2018. To find out more go to sydneywater.com.au/communitygrants.

Sydney
WATER

first ACE Board in May 1959 AND it remains the foundation of our purpose now and in to the future.

Another critical point that was agreed upon at the planning day is that in today's overcrowded and challenging education space, ACE is and will remain the ONLY profession driven, non-partisan, non-industrial professional association for the ENTIRE teaching profession.

As we are all aware, planning days (and we have all had to participate in them!) have a tendency to be great on the day and then everyone goes back to their extremely busy lives with work, family and other commitments and as they say, the best laid plans...

On behalf of the ACE Board, State Presidents and Chief Executive Officer and as the newly appointed National President and Chair of the ACE Board, I am here to make our members and the teaching profession a promise: over the coming 12 months, the ACE Board and Management along with the on-going support of our amazing Committee volunteers will see this forward plan and all its associated actions through.

Yes, 60 years serving the Australian teaching profession IS an amazing milestone, but I hope you can all agree with me when I say that now, maybe more than ever, there is a place for the Australian College of Educators to help lead in our incredibly complex and challenging profession; drive profession led changes to education policy and delivery; and provide leadership and mentorship to the next generation of great Australian educators.

The College is at a cross-road. We are transitioning, evolving and growing. And we are doing this based on the needs of our profession. But we can't achieve everything that we need to in the next 12 months without more members being willing to actively work with us and dedicate time and effort to making ACE everything it needs to be for our profession.

With this in mind, my first order of business as the President of the College is a call to action.

The College's course of action for the next twelve months has three key dimensions.

1 Increase and improve member services:

- **We will be needing volunteers** for a range of activities including the development of online content such as webinars and podcasts;
- We will be growing our publications offering to include online e-zines and expanding of Professional Educator and will be **looking for volunteers to take on roles such as peer reviewers and contributors;**
- We will be creating online ACE professional learning and networking hubs through social media platforms such as Facebook and **require volunteers to administer these at local and regional levels;**

2 Strengthen our public relations and marketing programs:

- We will be developing a strong database of ACE endorsed members who can work with the College to promote and disseminate the ACE message;
- **We are looking for ACE members with specific skills in graphic design, marketing and promotions** to volunteer their expertise for the development of online content and College material;

3 Ensure effective representation in the education policy arena is driven by the profession for the profession:

- We will be reinvigorating the ACE Policy Committee (a sub-committee of the ACE Board) and **seeking volunteers from across all sectors, systems and levels to work on developing position statements, research and write critical opinion pieces to drive discussion and debate on issues of importance to our profession.**

We are also welcoming suggestions for the development of other projects and activities that are specifically designed by our membership for our profession. I invite all members to throw their ideas in the ring and volunteer their skills and expertise on these and other projects over the course of the coming months.

So, as you can see, the College has a challenging and exciting twelve-month period ahead of us. We will all be working towards a grand celebration in May of next year to recognise the 60 amazing years ACE has had delivering professional representation, support and services to the Australian Teaching Profession. And this will also be a celebration of forging another 60 exciting years of service to Australian Education. We hope you will be able to support us and join us on the exciting journey ahead.

The Australian College of Educators is for

YOUR CAREER | OUR PROFESSION.

“Curriculum” Reform: Policy to Practice

Dr Phil Lambert, FACE, President Australian College of Educators

One of the most bedevilling aspects of education reform efforts is achieving the successful translation of curriculum policy into practice in classrooms: from intent to actual practice.

The implementation of a vision for change (if truly desired) is too often thwarted by compromise, passive resistance, push back and pacifying back-downs. The end result is too often a misalignment between well-conceived and overdue policy reform announcements and what ends up happening in schools.

More on this later.

On reform

The recent release and related announcements regarding the Gonski 2.0¹ review report, the review of curriculum (syllabuses) in NSW and directions being taken in the senior years of schooling in Tasmania all provide promise for change. Reforms being undertaken or having recently been undertaken in many other countries and jurisdictions across the Globe are not inconsistent with the language being used to argue the case for change in Australia.

This is not surprising. After decades of rhetoric about the changing nature of work, the complexities of life and various societal issues, added to the reality of us being almost two decades into the 21st Century, we are all too aware of current circumstances, for example:

- the rapid advancement and obsolescence of goods and services – a change duality
- the transition taking place from information-based to (new) knowledge-based economies - Industry 4.0
- ecological destabilisation, resource depletion and the loss of biodiversity

- advances in gene technology that continue to redefine relationships, biological evidence and production – presenting both benefits and ethical challenges
- revolutionary technological changes including new forms of communication, new opportunities and associated risks
- new kinds of competencies required in the workplace with technical expertise (the degree/certificate) simply a starting point and the high value now placed on what were once seen and described as “soft skills” (such as collaboration; using initiative; communication; persistence; responsiveness)
- the instability of norms and large scale value changes
- unplanned mass migration and renewed interest in “identity”
- rapidly declining and aging populations in some countries and the reverse in others
- substantial global inequalities and increasing gaps between the wealthy and the poor across the Globe as well as within many countries, and
- new forms of violence – unknown unknowns (Taleb, 2007).

The policy response is a noticeable “stepping up” and “stepping out” aimed at repurposing and rethinking education and schooling for a changed and changing world.

Though some defenders of the status quo (including those with an uncritical view of traditional approaches to teaching and learning) would want to portray it as such, this interest in policy reform cannot be dismissed or positioned as faddish



behaviour. Japan is not undertaking its “Zest for life” reform to be fashionable. Finland has not foregrounded seven competencies in its new curriculum to further bolster its popularity. The Canadian provinces haven’t changed their respective curricula to be noticed.

Further, the OECD, as the architect and manager of PISA has not broadened its investment, interest and reach to assessing student achievement to such areas as problem solving, global competency, creative thinking, and social and emotional skills because it craves attention.

This is also not a case of policy-borrowing (Ball, 1998; Halpin & Troyna, 1995; Phillips, 2015) a practice that at different times in Australia’s policy direction has resulted in the import of some failing or unremarkable policies or initiatives from overseas (with England and the USA the common sources).

Yes, there are countries that have predictably stuck their policy heels in, hoping this will all go away and the world order and social norms will return to a previous (preferred) state. And there are some countries where the education agenda is so captured by a dominant force that inaction is seen as a politician’s safest option.

However, the drive and direction for change is irreversible. The associated vision for education, regardless of the country or jurisdiction, invariably follows the same or similar themes:

- re-calibrating and prioritising for a knowledge-based economy (with STEM outcomes the means for achieving this)
- employability skills and dispositions (life-long learning; “soft” skills)
- citizenship and citizenry (participation; identity; sustainability)

- social cohesion (inclusion; unity; respect)
- personal/social characteristics (required for living a positive and productive life).

When taken together, the desired changes are about equipping young people with competencies that will contribute to the welfare of the individual, the country/jurisdiction, and the planet and its people: economic, social, environmental, personal and in some cases spiritual wellbeing. In essence countries/jurisdictions want their young people to be:

- **agile** – to have the flexibility of mind and the skills/capacity to respond to unknown or unexpected circumstances
- **compassionate and empathetic** – committed to reducing violence, respecting others, caring
- **innovative** – acquiring entrepreneurial and innovative skills and attitudes, creative
- **reflective, responsive and critical in one's response** – having social entrepreneurial behaviours as well as pro-social skills and behaviours
- **global in one's thinking** – considering both local and global impacts arising from actions and responses
- **digitally literate** – having the skills to adapt to new technologies, seizing opportunities and also understanding and managing risk
- **positive about one's own potential and contribution** – participating, persisting
- **fair and just** – sustainability (social, environmental, economic), ethical thinking
- **reliable** – having consideration for others, contributing, self-control, being trustworthy.

There is a (not surprising) consistency in vision statements – regardless of the political, religious or cultural hegemony. While there are some differences in the detail, relevant to local contextual challenges, there is, on the whole, a sameness.

Given the above, one might be excused for assuming that change will just happen. Sadly, lessons learnt from previous policy reform efforts suggest otherwise.... Here's why.

On Gonski

Three distinct responses were identifiable to the key Gonski 2.0 recommendations following the release of the review report on 28 March 2018.

There were those buoyed by the explicit references to equipping young people with the capabilities (skills, attitudes and values) previously downplayed or marginalised in some Australian jurisdictions. The response: "...a great step forward" and "...what we have been calling for."

There was another set of responses where the policy recommendations were seen as being unexceptional – with not unfamiliar claims such as: "...there is nothing new in this" and "...we are already doing this".

And a third group that predictably see any legitimised call for change as a threat to well-established regimes and interests (personal and commercial), and who seek to raise doubts regarding the need and basis for change: "...it ain't broke, so don't fix it" and "...this is a distraction from what is truly important".

So, we have the beginnings - a vision for change, for policy reform. We also have some clear positions being staked out. This is when firm, principled and focussed effort (Lambert, 2018) is needed if any real change is to actually take place.

The written curriculum² is one thing. If it is aligned with the vision for change then that is at least a major achievement. Yet all too often the development of curriculum to ministerial sign-off is subject to the influence of the above mix of viewpoints, sectional interests, lobbying and opinion masquerading as journalism.

Then there is the experienced curriculum – what students are taught in classrooms, (the actual curriculum), which can differ markedly both between schools and within schools. While there may be an acceptance of the written curriculum document as policy, what students experience in classrooms will be based on the preparedness of the teacher (Cronin-Jones, 1991; Handal, 2003; Roehrig, et al., 2007; Evers, et al., 2002). This preparedness in terms of how well-prepared a teacher is to teach and develop students' knowledge, skills, attitudes and values and whether the teacher believes they should teach and develop certain knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. For the policy reform objectives to be realised in classrooms, again firm, principled and focussed effort is needed through high quality professional learning and support and strong leadership.

Another, highly influential factor in what students experience in classrooms is how they are assessed and importantly, what is privileged when it comes to high stakes assessments (the assessed curriculum). Hargreaves (1989) has characterised the influence of the assessed curriculum on teaching and learning as "...the tail that wags the curriculum dog". More specifically, Muskin (2015) refers to system-level assessment and examinations as holding "all other educational initiatives hostage".

There is little point, therefore, in talking up reform at the written curriculum and classrooms levels without addressing the equally long overdue need for comprehensive and policy-aligned assessment reform. If we truly want students to acquire the kind of competencies articulated in reform announcements then we have to give teachers the strategies, training and tools to assess student progress and achievement in relation to them. We also need high stakes processes that support change rather than the balance being heavily favoured in assessing what is easy, relatively cheap and familiar.

On proposed policy intention to actual practice

The recent announcements about reform in Australia signal an advancement (intellectually, pragmatically and logically) at the national and local levels in terms of getting the balance right between:

- honouring disciplines while also emphasising the need for students to acquire new and essential competencies
- recognising that monitoring individual progress is fundamental to improvement while at the same time maintaining a capacity to identify where value is being added and where improvements and targeted resourcing is needed
- settlement regarding the need for evidence as the basis for change paired with the need for innovation and the opportunity to better understand what achievement and progress looks like in areas of new and increasing importance.

What is now needed is a commitment from governments at all levels to ensure the overdue vision for "curriculum" reform in Australia is realised – from policy intent to actual practice.

References

- Gonski 2.0 used by many in reference to the report commissioned by the Australian Government, *Through Growth to Achievement: Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools* (Gonski, 2018) produced by a review panel chaired by David Gonski AC.
 - "curriculum" is used and defined in the literature in different ways. For the purposes of this article, some common ways of defining curriculum are used: the written curriculum (the formal authorised curriculum – also referred to as the intended curriculum); the experienced curriculum (what students are actually taught or learn in classrooms); and the assessed curriculum (the content targeted in formal assessment programs).
- Stephen J. Ball (1998). Big Policies/Small World: An introduction to international perspectives in education policy, *Comparative Education*, 34:2, 119 - 130, DOI: 10.1080/03050069828225
- Berry, R., (2011). Assessment reforms around the world. In R. Berry & B Adamson (Eds.), *Assessment Reform in Education: Policy and Practice* (pp.89-102), Vol 14, Springer, Netherlands.
- Cronin-Jones, L. L. (1991). Science teacher beliefs and their influence on curriculum implementation: Two case studies. *J. Res. Sci. Teach.*, 28: 235-250. doi:10.1002/tea.3660280305
- Evers, W. J., Brouwers, A. and Tomic, W. (2002). Burnout and self-efficacy: A study on teachers' beliefs when implementing an innovative educational system in the Netherlands. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 72: 227-243. doi:10.1348/000709902158865
- Gonski, D. et al. (2018), *Through Growth to Achievement: Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools*. Department of Education and Training, Canberra, Australia.

David Halpin & Barry Troyna (1995), *The Politics of Education Policy Borrowing*, *Comparative Education*, 31:3,303-310, DOI: 10.1080/03050069528994

Handal, B. (2003) *Teachers' mathematical beliefs: A review*. *The Mathematics Educator*, Vol. 13, No. 2, pp 47-57.

Hargreaves, A. (1989). *Curriculum and Assessment Reform*. Open University Press. London, United Kingdom.

Lambert, P. (2018) *Reforming curriculum, teaching, assessment and reporting: The fourfold challenge for education*. Occasional paper 154. Centre for Strategic Education. Melbourne, Australia.

Muskin, J. (2015) *Student learning assessment and the curriculum: Issues and implications for policy, design and implementation*. UNESCO International Bureau of Education. Geneva, Switzerland.

Phillips, D. (2015) Policy borrowing in education: Frameworks for analysis. In *Second international handbook on globalisation, education and policy research*. Springer, Netherlands.

Roehrig, G. , Kruse, R. A. and Kern, A. (2007) *Teacher and school characteristics and their influence on curriculum implementation*. *J. Res. Sci. Teach.*, Vol. 44 pp 883–907.

Taleb, N. N. (2007) *The black swan: The impact of the highly improbable*. New York: Random House.

Biography

Dr Phil Lambert PSM FACE FACEL
Director, Phil Lambert Consulting Pty Ltd
Adjunct Professor, University of Sydney
Adjunct Professor, Nanjing Normal University

Former General Manager, Australian Curriculum at the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and Regional Director of Schools, Sydney

Dr Phil Lambert has extensive experience in education as a principal, inspector, Executive Director, Assistant Director-General, Regional Director, Sydney (including CEO Sydney Region Registered Training Authority) and General Manager, Australian Curriculum where he recently led the development of Australia's first national curriculum. He has authored books, presented a number of papers and keynotes at national and international conferences, had a number of articles published in journals and led statewide reviews and reforms.

Dr Lambert completed both his Masters and Doctorate at the University of Sydney where he continues to support the education faculty as Adjunct Professor and Chair of the Dean's Advisory Board. He is a member of the Dean's Advisory Board of Notre Dame University and Adjunct Professor at Nanjing Normal University. He is both a Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders and the Australian College of Educators (ACE). He is also State President of ACE, Chair of the ACE National Council and a member of the ACE Board. He has recently assumed the Presidency of ACE Nationally.

Dr Lambert has received a number of honours and awards. In 2011 he was acknowledged for his outstanding community work and leadership in a unanimous resolution in the Parliament of NSW. In the 2012 Queen's Birthday Honours he was awarded the Public Service Medal for his outstanding contribution to education. He was also the 2013 recipient of the prestigious Australian College of Educators' award, the Sir Harold Wyndham Medal

Evolving national assessment to support improving educational outcomes

Robert Randall, CEO, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

Improving educational outcomes for all young Australians is central to the nation's social and economic prosperity and will position young people to live fulfilling, productive and responsible lives.

So asserts the Melbourne Declaration, the driver for the work of the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (and other national collaborative work).

The Declaration and much of the work that has followed it, including work undertaken by ACARA, has built on national collaborative work over several prior decades. Such work continues because a high quality education for young Australians is in the national interest and in the interest of all Australians.

In the years since its establishment in 2008 ACARA, guided by education ministers and working in partnership with states and territories and a range of stakeholders has:

- developed and published a national curriculum,
- designed, published and annually updated the My School website,

- developed and overseen the delivery of the national assessment program (NAP).

The National Assessment Program (NAP) provides data which assists governments, education authorities, schools and the community to determine whether, or not, young Australians are meeting important educational outcomes. The origins of the National Assessment Program can be found in the 1999 ministerial agreement to the Adelaide Declaration on national goals for schooling in the 21st century. In this Declaration, ministers agreed to report on progress towards the achievement of the national goals comparable by state and territory, using national key performance measures as the basis for reporting.

In order to measure student achievement in relation to the national goals, ministers agreed to a program, called the National Assessment Program (NAP), to collect, analyse and report nationally comparable data on student achievement in literacy, numeracy,



science, ICT and civics and citizenship. The stated purposes of the NAP were, and continue to be, to help drive improvements in student outcomes and provide increased accountability for the community. The NAP encompasses both the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and three-yearly sample assessments in science literacy, civics and citizenship, and ICT literacy.

The literacy and numeracy assessment, NAPLAN, is managed and delivered by ACARA in collaboration with Test Administration Authorities (TAAs) in each state and territory in accordance with the Melbourne Declaration, which committed to providing:

- schools with reliable and rich data on the performance of their students in order to support their primary accountability for improving student outcomes,
- parents and families with information about the performance of individuals, schools and systems to help them make informed choices and to engage with their children's education and the school community,
- the community with access to information about the performance of their school compared to schools with similar characteristics,
- governments with sound information on school performance to support ongoing improvement for students, schools and school sectors.

All Australian schools can benefit from the outcomes of national testing. Schools receive information about how their students are performing in literacy and numeracy; information that supplements information they already have, with a national reference point. They can use this data to identify strengths and areas that may warrant further attention.

At the system level, the NAP provides education ministers with information about the success of their policies and resourcing in priority curriculum areas. The NAP also provides ministers with the capacity to monitor the success of policies aimed at improving the achievement of different student groups, such as Indigenous students and students from different socio-economic and language backgrounds.

NAP data provide nationally comparable data about student performance, thus enhancing the capacity for evidence-based decision making about policy, resourcing and systemic practices.

The NAP also performs an accountability function. It is the one source of information that can be used to reflect on and evaluate the outcomes of the multi-billion dollar enterprise that is school education in Australia.

However, the NAP is not fixed in stone, evolving over time to better meet the needs of all students.

NAPLAN is not the same as when first introduced. Most importantly, NAPLAN is moving online. This means moving NAPLAN from the current paper-based tests to, computer-based assessments. The transition to NAPLAN online has commenced. May 2018 marked the milestone first year of the move to online assessment for NAPLAN. Almost 200 000 students in 1285 schools across five states (NSW, Victoria, the ACT, South Australia, Queensland and Western Australia) undertook NAPLAN online during an extended assessment window from 15 to 25 May. Thanks to the considerable preparation and readiness activities of all partners, particularly the teachers and school leaders in the 1285 schools across six states and territories, the first year of transition went smoothly with 99.8% of online assessments successfully completed.

Education Ministers agreed that NAPLAN should evolve into an online assessment format because this format offered significant benefits. NAPLAN online offers a better, more tailored assessment delivering more precise, detailed, timely information on student performance. This is possible through the tailored or adaptive design of NAPLAN Online and the more detailed suite of online reporting that will be available to schools and education systems.

The 'multi-stage-adaptive' assessment automatically adapts to a student's performance while the student sits the test. Each student is presented with questions that match their achievement level, allowing the student to demonstrate their knowledge more precisely. This tailored testing makes it possible for high-achieving students to be 'branched' to more challenging test items. These items, grouped in 'testlets', assess more complex aspects of the curriculum from within the current year level, providing the content can be solved with logical reasoning (for numeracy) or textual evidence (for reading), and is not dependent on curriculum coverage of new concepts or metalanguage. Students who demonstrate lower achievement will be branched to testlets populated with less complex items assessing important aspects of the curriculum below their current year level. The testlets are constructed so that there is a considerable overlap in the range of item complexity between different testlets both within and across the three stages of the tailored test design.

While tailored testing provides an opportunity to broaden the scope of the assessments from a curriculum point of view, it will also, importantly, provide teachers and schools with more targeted and detailed information on students' performance on these national, standardised assessments.

In addition to individual student reports, more detailed information will be available to schools and teachers because online assessment includes a suite of reports:

- school item report displays data for all items presented to students within a school;
- class and cohort summary and test reports display

- the distribution of scaled student scores by band and the difficulty of items for a given group;
- student reports display results for each student, including the band and the test pathway. Student reports also show a student's results for a single test, presented in both table and graphic forms.

Teachers will be able to use these reports to see how a student responded to each item in the NAPLAN assessment and how each item is aligned to the Australian Curriculum.

As technology develops, ACARA aims to enhance and refine the tests to provide increasingly sophisticated assessments and increasingly valuable feedback to teachers, parents and education authorities.

The world is changing and evolving rapidly with technological change bringing challenges and disrupting old ways of thinking and operating as well as opportunities and new horizons. As with all other aspects of living, working and organising our world, education delivery and design must also evolve and adapt to meet the needs of young Australians.

NAPLAN too will continue to evolve and adapt. Once fully online in all Australian schools, the national assessment program may evolve even further. Could it be an assessment in future that is undertaken when schools or students choose, rather than a defined date in May? Could it be an assessment that allows for repeated attempts by students to focus on how much their understanding and skill grows over time?

As with all work ACARA undertakes, these decisions will ultimately be made by education ministers following extensive stakeholder consultation. The aim will remain – supporting improvement in educational outcomes for all young Australians and equipping young people with the knowledge, understanding, skills and values to take advantage of opportunities and to face the challenges of this era with confidence.

Biography

Robert Randall has been Chief Executive Officer of ACARA since November 2012. Robert brings significant experience and success in curriculum, assessment and reporting projects to this role. This experience has been gained at both state and national levels and has ranged from program design through to implementation.

He has worked at ACARA since 2009 and was previously Deputy CEO and General Manager, Curriculum, of ACARA. In the lead-up to the establishment of ACARA, Robert was General Manager of the Interim National Curriculum Board.

Robert began his career as a teacher of mathematics in Perth before holding a range of positions within and beyond schools in Western Australia. In 1996 Robert was appointed Director, Curriculum, with the NSW Board of Studies, and in 2001 took up the position of Director of Curriculum K-12 with the NSW Department of Education and Training.



From the Twittersphere

The new
@AustCollEd
website is looking
really good

www.austcolled.com.au



Thanks to **@AustCollEd** for a great early career teacher seminar this evening!
Lots to think about.

Congratulations to Brisbane Metro region **@AustCollEd** for hosting a great selection of panalists discussing Re-imagining our Professionalism.

Victorian **#teachers** to get 4 non-teaching days each **#school year**. The ASG-ACE Teachers Report Card reveals the demanding workloads and time pressures felt by **#classroom** teachers. **#worklifebalance**

bit.ly/2xi1mMD



Thank you
#australianeducators
for inspiring the next
generation.

This country wouldn't be
the same without you.

Educating for the Future: Now

Anthony Mackay AM | FACE, CEO | CSE, Centre for Strategic Education, Melbourne

2018 marks the 10-year anniversary of the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians. Australian educators have been committed to:

- Goal 1: Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence
- Goal 2: All young Australians become - successful learners; confident and creative individuals; and active and informed citizens.

These Goals remain as powerful and as relevant in 2018 as they were in 2008. They have been adopted by other jurisdictions in the intervening period, just as Australia was informed by a number of leading education systems in crafting these goals in 2008.

Achieving these Goals is unfinished business. We would all agree that we need to refocus our efforts, and our shared commitment, to advance these Goals in the interests of every young Australian and the public good.

Achieving these Goals has become even more challenging. We live in a VUCA world - volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. We need a learning system that ensures an "education worth having" - one that is fit for purpose enabling learning for all; one that is increasingly productive; one that allows all to "learn a living".

Those entering our early learning centres & schools this year, will be graduating in 15 years into a world of greater globalisation, digitisation, complexity and discontinuity. As we educate these young people for the future, the deeper **purpose** of learning will focus on equipping learners to be the authors of their own human evolution (in an environment of AI, robotics & augmented reality), living in sustainable civilisations. Leading school systems are focused on human quality - graduating young people with the knowledge, skills, dispositions and values that ensure that we can, individually and collectively thrive, not just survive.

High performing school systems commit to the fundamental **why** of learning, the **purpose** of learning - the development of the whole person for the whole world - learning that serves intrapersonal growth, interpersonal understanding and honours

the interdependency of all living things. This is an education that supports us to become more ethical humans; to be capable complex problem solvers for the common good, in the shared interest - and the imperative to create an inclusive, more equitable, sustainable world.

The current debate in Australia about early childhood learning, schooling and the interface between senior secondary and tertiary education is being challenged by the **what**, the **how**, the **who** & the **where** of learning.

The **what** of learning in The Fourth Industrial Age involves a shift from a content-based curriculum framework to a competency-based framework where there is a fusion of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values - ultimately directed towards wellbeing at both the individual and societal levels. The move to embrace a wider set of (more ambitious) learning outcomes (rather than viewing excellence within narrow parameters) is progressing rapidly internationally, reflected in the OECD's Education 2030 program of work and IBE UNESCO 's Competency Based Curriculum Framework. There is a new 'work order' emerging and our learning systems need to graduate ALL young people with the requisite skills and capabilities to be able to become productive citizens locally and globally.

The **how** of learning involves designing innovative learning environments, adopting powerful pedagogues, harnessing the power of technology - and forging new approaches to assessment, reporting, certifying and credentialing that reflect new measures of success. The old measures of success are not adequate for a rapidly changing operating environment.



We now face heightened levels of complexity in our personal and family lives & communities, in our economies, and in our local, national & global societies. Therefore educational leaders need to design personalised learning environments in which a broader set of measures that constitute 'new success' is promoted, recognised and accounted for with multiple pathways for ongoing learning - pathways without differential status and outdated head/hand dichotomies. Obviously, these changes will require significant changes in professional practices, an emphasis on problem and inquiry-based learning, increased use of blended learning, growth (progress on learning continua) based approaches to curriculum, assessment and reporting and therefore fundamental changes to certification, selection and qualifications. This learning transformation agenda will require a learning system where learner agency is genuinely central and where we redefine the roles of the teaching/learning profession.

The **who** and the **where** of learning within the 'schooling sector' and within the 'teaching profession' will experience significant shifts - the merging of formal and informal learning, 24/7 anytime/ anywhere learning and a more differentiated educator workforce. The challenge is to build professional capacity (more differentiated in the range of roles and responsibilities) through partnerships with stakeholders, while harnessing the agency of young people and enabling technology to mobile the necessary shifts, to spread, accelerate and amplify the necessary changes. This way of working involves a greater commitment to teacher leadership and strategic leadership at all levels of the 'system'. Collaborative professionalism becomes the life blood of the system and all leadership roles are an expression of system leadership.

It can be argued that collaborative professionalism takes the **who** and the **where** of learning into the territory of eco-systems. A learning eco-system is premised on the belief that "learning is everybody's business" - governments, unions, schools, universities, industry, communities, philanthropists, not for profit organisations and social entrepreneurs. A learning eco-system is receptive to new entrants/ new providers in the learning game, responsive to the demand-side of learning and embracing of a wider work force of learning professionals. The orchestration of this eco-system can be shared -

schools and universities are candidates. Clearly new forms of governance and leadership are required.

In this new educational environment, the fundamental concern for equity must be addressed. A shift in the role of government from provider and regulator to enabler and broker is called for - in ways that protect and ensure that the "public good" is secured. So, a healthy, complex, adaptive learning eco-system is a work in progress with issues of funding, regulation, accountability and governance being reconceptualized.

Anything less than the collective **shifts** outlined above towards a new paradigm for learning will be inadequate. If we are to meet the purpose of becoming more human, by learning a living with the capacity to be complex problem solvers, locally and globally, we need a learning system that will create the conditions for a learning society where individual and collective well-being are made manifest.

Biography

Anthony Mackay AM | BEc, BEd, MA, FACE, FACEL, FIPAAV, FRSA

Anthony Mackay is CEO of the Melbourne-based Centre for Strategic Education. The Centre focuses on Educational Leadership, Professional Practice, School Improvement, Curriculum and Assessment, and Innovation in Education at state, national and international levels - encompassing systems and schools and across Government and Independent Sectors.

He was Inaugural Chair Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership and Inaugural Deputy Chair of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (AITSL) (ACARA). Tony is Co-Chair of the Global Education Leaders Partnership (GELP), and a Director (Foundation Chair) Innovation Unit Ltd, England. Tony is Expert Advisor to OECD/CERI, and Consultant Advisor to the Asia Society's Global Cities Education Network. Anthony is Deputy Chair of the Education Council (EDUCANZ), New Zealand.

Anthony is Chair of the Advisory Board of the National Institute for School Leadership (NCEE), Washington DC, Senior Advisor to the National Centre on Education and the Economy, and a Member of the International Advisory Board for the Centre on International Benchmarking (NCEE). Tony was a Founding Member of the Council of the National College for School Leadership, England UK. Anthony is Chair, Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and Deputy Chancellor, Swinburne University, Melbourne, Australia.

Our future demands transformative teaching practices

Brother Patrick Howlett

Professor David Gonski's report on Australian education, *A Review to Achieve Educational Excellence, was delivered to the Federal Government on 28 March 2018*. The panel made recommendations on how school funding should be used to improve school performance and student outcomes. I appreciate funding plays a significant part in improving schools, but without change in classroom practices, education will continue to decline. Action is required now.

When the 2016 International Student Assessment (PISA) report was released, it not only showed that Australian students were again underperforming in Mathematics, Science and Reading, but continued to rank among the least well-behaved in the developed world. The report found Australia sat below the OECD average for classroom discipline. About one-third of the students in affluent schools and about half in disadvantaged schools reported that in most or every class there was noise and disorder, students didn't listen to the teacher, and students found it difficult to learn.

Dr Sue Thomson, who collected the Australian PISA data, said the local academic performance was in "absolute decline. The proportion of high achievers is decreasing and the proportion of low achievers is increasing", she said. "Basically what's happening there is everything's sliding backwards if you like - our strong kids aren't as strong as they were and our weak kids are actually weaker than they were."

This prompted the Australian Federal Education Minister, Simon Birmingham to say the country could not afford to "continue to slip behind. Our children are no longer learning at the same rates through their school education as they used to and that is obviously unacceptable to governments, as it would be to parents, teachers and everybody across Australia."

This is a disturbing report that needs to be urgently addressed. All parents are seeking an education that will secure their children's future as confident and

creative individuals and active and informed citizens. They would be alarmed by these statistics. However, a high PISA ranking is not the primary concern of students and their families. Parents certainly would be more concerned with discipline issues and the current classroom practices.

Experienced educators will testify that the classroom is a complex and challenging environment, however the most important element of school success is in creating a positive culture. You can walk into a school and sense a positive, laissez-faire or toxic school culture by observing how people treat each other. Regardless of what teaching and learning practices are used, if a positive school culture between staff and students does not exist, then the school will not be academically successful.

The 20th century didactic teaching approach used in most Australian schools focused mainly on the content taught, rather than on how student learning occurred. This method involved rote learning or memorising study materials, and developed students into surface learners, whose sole intention was to meet the course requirements, or pass the examinations. Hence most students were not prepared to perform well in PISA exams, as the focus was not on content knowledge, but rather on the ability to apply knowledge and skills to real-life problems and situations. The immediate challenge is how to discover and implement a more engaging school experience.

The Grattan report released in early 2017², argues that the traditional content driven instruction leaves many students feeling unmotivated, disengaged, bored and with little appreciation for the relevance of the content. However, despite these poor results some educators still believe that the traditional educational philosophy is how students learn best. I believe they are conditioned by how and when they were educated.

The immediate challenge is how to discover and implement a more engaging school experience. I believe, school communities will stagnate, if they fail to evaluate their current methods and ignore innovation - nothing short of a transformation in teaching practices will be sufficient to enhance student learning.

Also, employers want future employees who are able to think critically and solve complex problems, work collaboratively, communicate effectively and have technological expertise and interpersonal skills.

The best educational decision I made when working as a Principal, was to introduce project-based learning (PBL) into the school. The inspiration for school change came in 2005, when I visited a school in Napa, California. I observed immediately the positive school culture between staff and students, which as described by the students themselves was built on trust, respect and responsibility. Students worked in small groups in an open-plan learning environment, spent time working on diverse projects, participated in seminars, and presenting to fellow students. The school was more akin to an adult learning environment reflective of the real world. What I witnessed happening with students was dramatically different from simply earning good grades. Students were enthusiastic, had a sense of pride and sense of worth. This meeting presented me with a new challenge, did we need to change our current teaching practice?

After 18 months of consultation, planning and with central office approval, the school I led introduced PBL into Year 9. It was a great success. When we talk about creativity or innovation in education, we are talking less about doing new things and more about doing things in new ways. Our curriculum remained the same, but the way we went about teaching it was completely different.

Over time, I came to the realization that there were three facets to effectively implement PBL, and none would likely realise its potential in the absence of the other two. Firstly, the PBL pedagogy offers a framework for educators and schools and targets literacy, learning and life skills. Recent evidence suggests learning becomes more efficient - with faster and deeper retention - when material is personally relevant and subjects are integrated. Second, technology offers many advantages in educational settings including: efficient avenues for students to practice research, reflection, revision and improve communication. Failure to effectively integrate technology and recognise its role in educational evolution renders educators ill-equipped to relate to the modern student.

Thirdly, any physical change has the ability to communicate high expectations and also underline the school's operating style. Learning spaces should have the ability to be modulated to suit the needs of individuals and teams, as well as being varied for function. One of the most critical elements to successful implementation of project-based learning is the time, support and training given to all teachers to develop strategies and plan for change. Teachers will cling to their ingrained core beliefs if they are not given adequate time, support and training. Professional learning communities enable teachers to integrate curricula, to re-examine their practices and consider fresh approaches with time built into their daily schedules.

I believe that Australian policy makers should investigate global educational best-practice classroom initiatives. International models of best teaching practice at creative schools and educational institutions including: Singapore (Republic Polytechnic), Spain (Ca.legi Montserrat Barcelona), the Netherlands (Erasmus and Maastricht Universities) and US-based organisations including New Technology Network California, High Tech High schools in San Diego, and the Buck Institute of Education in Novato, California.

My experience tells me that when we talk about creativity or innovation in education, we are talking less about doing new things and more about doing things in new ways. One such approach is student-based learning, a shift from an emphasis on content-knowledge to a focus on metacognitive strategies and critical thinking; and from, teacher-centered to learner-centered facilitation styles. Transformation will only happen if Principals and schools are committed to the hard work of change. In order to implement change school leaders need to have: i) a clear vision; ii) be capable of inspiring and engaging those around them in developing and realising this vision; and iii) have a mindset that no problem is too great to overcome.

References

1. Hunjan, R., & Blumer, C. 2016. Australian Schools are in 'absolute decline' globally, says PISA report. ABC News 7 December 2016. Retrieved <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-12-06/australian-school-performance-in-absolute-decline-globally/8098028>
2. Goss, P., & Sonnemann, J., 2017. Engaging students: creating classrooms that improve learning. Retrieved <https://grattan.edu.au/report/engaging-students-creating-classrooms-that-improve-learning/>

Biography

Brother Patrick Howlett's outstanding contribution to education has been recognised with the award of the Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice from Pope Benedict XVI and the Master Teacher of Honour Award from the Kappa Delta Pi International Honour Society in Education - the only educator in the world to be bestowed this award in 2014. Further accolades include receiving a 'Champion of the West' Award as a significant leader in Western Sydney His contribution has been further honoured with the award of a Doctor of Education by the University of Notre Dame Australia in 2017.

Finding that touchstone in developing school culture and intercultural leadership

Dr Jill Abell EdD, M.Ed.Studies, BA, Grad.Dip.Lib., AALIA, MACE, FACEL

The dual dilemmas of quality, international mindedness and global education delivered in, and through, an authentic, integrated curriculum continues to be a goal for Australian schools. Like schools globally, Australian schools recognise the challenges associated with globalisation and resurgence of nationalism and are seeking to adopt new approaches to ensure student well-being and child safety in addition to maintaining the effective governance of their schools.

A 2016 global report published by *The International School Consultancy* (ISC) Research indicates that the number of K-12 schools, where English is the chief medium of curriculum delivery, has increased by 41.5% in the past five years. More than 4.3 million students are presently educated in 8,257 international schools worldwide. It is anticipated that 8.75 million students will attend such schools by 2026, partly because Asia is experiencing such phenomenal growth in the provision of this style of education. In fact, it accounts for more than half of the schools and 60% of all students. In many countries in Asia, more families are selecting fee-paying international schools, in preference to national schools or sending students abroad to obtain globally-recognised qualifications. Growth is such that one of the most significant concerns

related to this growth is the sourcing and hiring of quality teachers, including qualified special educators to support children with learning differences, and importantly the sourcing of visionary school leaders. ISC Research (2016) predicted that the number of teachers required within ten years would be 780,000; twice the current number of full-time staff employed in the sector.

The value of 21st-century global education is widely referenced in national curricula worldwide. Our own Australian Curriculum proclaims that one of its intentions is to equip students to be lifelong learners able to operate with confidence in a complex, information-rich, globalised world. The Australian Curriculum's general capabilities are particularly relevant to global education. Moreover,



central to global education is the development of students' international-mindedness. Carolyn Savage (2017) identifies 'seven signs' that, in their totality, can describe international-mindedness. These are:

1. knowledge and appreciation of different cultures
2. increased empathy
3. increased self-awareness
4. ability to collaborate with peers
5. understanding of global issues
6. ability to see themselves as global citizens
7. possessing language skills.

However, how do Australian schools and teachers achieve international-mindedness and authentic global education? Is it necessary and relevant or is the curriculum already too 'crowded' and teachers over-taxed with other social demands such as sustainability? According to the OECD, these global attributes are vital and critical skills that rank up there with literacy, numeracy and science and accordingly they have placed them into their testing regime.

Andreas Schleicher (2018) the Director for Education and Skills at the OECD described the seventeen sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the UN as the 'shared vision of humanity that provides the missing piece of the globalisation puzzle.' He maintains educators hold the key to ensuring that the SDGs become a real social contract and this has inspired the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) to include global competence in its metrics for quality, equity and effectiveness in education. PISA will assess global competence as a multidimensional lifelong learning goal in 2018 with a two-part assessment consisting of a cognitive test and background questionnaire. Schleicher asserts 'globally competent individuals can examine local, global and intercultural issues, understand and appreciate different perspectives and worldviews, interact successfully and respectfully with others, and take responsible action toward sustainability and collective wellbeing'. When thinking about how this new demand is reconciled with all existing responsibilities in schools, Schleicher argues that schools may be the first place that children encounter diversity and therefore schools need to play a crucial role in fostering this

and ensuring that it appears to be a natural and desirable phenomenon. The new component relating to global competence in the PISA assessment tool will also provide a comprehensive picture of how education systems and nations are integrating international and intercultural perspectives as well as taking action to build cohesive and sustainable communities.

How else might schools work to achieve the goal of preparing students for life in a globally linked society? Many schools worldwide, including schools in Australia, have banded together to work collaboratively to achieve this aim. Along the way, the endeavour has grown from collegial support and dialogue to include an accreditation and validation process. The accreditation of international schools in Australia and worldwide has come to be recognised as both a rigorous validation and sustainable step to quality assurance. Many of the global agencies for awarding school accreditation work co-operatively in Europe, Asia, Australia and the USA using agreed standards and peer review. Such agencies are catering to the increasing demand for global education and internationally-minded teachers.

No doubt the International Baccalaureate is the most readily identifiable agency promoting international mindedness and high-quality schooling. In Australia, the global, not-for-profit organisation, the Council of International Schools (CIS) is gaining traction and providing schools with an external quality assurance process where enhancing student learning is the most critical element of the high-quality international education they seek to provide. The complete accreditation process consisting of a whole of faculty self-study, the creation of a plan for continuous improvement, an on-site school evaluation by peers, and annual reports and a cycle of ongoing re-evaluations and these composite features may well provide the touchstone for quality assurance that all schools seek.

While not as large as the International Baccalaureate organisation with its 4000 schools and one million students worldwide, as an international and independent accrediting agency, the Council of International Schools (CIS) includes more than

1300 institutions comprising 738 schools and 583 colleges and universities with a member community representing 116 countries.

But is the cost of membership and the process of undertaking an external accreditation worth giving priority to the procedure? Why not apply something created for the Australian school market that focuses on school effectiveness? The National School Improvement Tool (NSIT) developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) has some similar and inter-related domains with its focus on practices that contribute to the effective school improvement agenda. After all, the ultimate goal of any continuous school improvement process is to enhance student achievement and wellbeing.

And yet, the dual dilemmas of quality, international mindedness and global education delivered in, and through, an authentic, integrated curriculum continues to be a goal for Australian schools. Like schools globally, Australian schools recognise the challenges associated with globalisation and resurgence of nationalism and are seeking to adopt new approaches to ensure student wellbeing and child safety in addition to maintaining the effective governance of their schools. All schools strive to deliver the very best approaches to innovative curriculum design, assessment of learning, teaching and technology but commitments to bilingualism and interculturalism provide those schools identifying as 'international schools' with an essential point of difference. They demonstrate the value of cultural diversity and global citizenship as well as understanding the affordances of a quality assurance process. Increasingly, professional learning communities in Australian schools and colleges are thriving on this intercultural leadership model.

Yong Zhao (2012) highlighted the tension between confidence in what we have valued in the past, what we might view as our, 'academic traditions' and our 'hunch' that the future depends on entrepreneurial education and the need to foster the attributes of compassion, resilience, perseverance, open-mindedness, adaptability, curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. In schools focussed on providing an international education, the culturally diverse communities, intercultural learning and active teaching staff contribute to creative leadership and open professional learning communities of educational entrepreneurs who see the value of school improvement agendas. Although only some schools use the International Baccalaureate curricula, the prologue to the International Baccalaureate (2018) IB Learner Profile captures these hunches and insights in its representation of 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools for helping individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

Whichever regional or national curriculum is adopted, in government, independent or faith-based schools, the intentional development of creating an internationally minded school can provide a school

community with coherence and alignment with an underpinning of a globally sustainable professional learning community. The quality and rigour of undertaking the process of accreditation of any of the international school membership organisations are recognised globally by state and national departments of education as a demonstration of a touchstone of high quality and highly reliable international education.

References

- Australian Council for Educational Research (2016) National School Improvement Tool, viewed at <http://www.acer.edu.au/nsit>
- Council of International Schools. Viewed 8 June 2018 at <https://www.cois.org/index.cfm>
- International Baccalaureate (2018) Learner profile for IB students, viewed at 8 June 2018 <http://www.ibo.org/benefits/learner-profile>
- ISC Research: Schools (2016) ISC Global Report, viewed at 8 June, 2018 <https://www.iscresearch.com/services/global-report/>
- Keeling, A., (2016) Huge global demand for English-medium K-12 education. Informed chat. <http://www.informedchat.com/huge-global-demand-for-english-medium-k-12-education/> Sep 21, 2016
- Savage, C., (2017) International mindedness – teachers are talking about it, but what exactly is it? IB Community blog viewed at 8 June 2018 at <http://blogs.ibo.org/blog/2017/09/01/international-mindedness-teachers-are-talking-about-it-but-what-exactly-is-it/>
- Savage, C (2018) "The importance of mother tongue language in education," International Teacher Magazine, viewed 8 June 2018 at <https://consiliumeducation.com/itm/2017/08/20/mother-tongue-learning/>
- Schleicher, A. (2018) Assessing global competence Teacher Magazine, 16 April, viewed 8 June 2018 at <https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/columnists/andreas-schleicher/assessing-global-competence>
- Yong Zhao (2012) World class learners: educating creative and entrepreneurial students. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press for SAGE Publishers, a Joint Publication with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP).

Biography

Dr Jill Abell EDD, M.Ed.Studies, BA, Grad.Dip.Lib., AALIA, MACE, FACEL is the State President, ACE Tasmania and State President of the Network of Education Associations of Tasmania.

Jill is the former Director of Information Services & ICT, The Hutchins School, Hobart, 1999 – 2016 with a background in teaching, teacher librarianship, systems and software project management. She has worked in government schools, colleges and curriculum and ICT consultancies at resource manager and a/assist principalship levels.

Jill currently advises on school accreditation teams with the Council of International Schools (CIS) as an accredited team evaluator and with the Tas. Dept. of Education as a registration officer for international schools and non-government schools respectively for continuous school improvement.

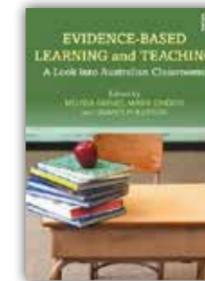
Book Review

Evidence-Based Learning and Teaching. A look into Australian Classrooms

Published by Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group. US. 1 May 2018.

Edited by Melissa Barnes, Maria Gindidis and Sivanes Phillipson

Julie Rimes FACE



This 270 page volume provides practical and theoretical insights into learning and teaching in Australian schools and tertiary education. The book provides a snapshot of the types of evidence and data relating to learning outcomes that are being collected in our classrooms around the nation. The 21 chapters seek to interrogate current views of learning and teaching, beyond what is measured in external assessments.

The chapters are divided into three unifying themes or sections: Understanding learning and learners; Encouraging learning through pedagogy; and Navigating structures and tools. Within this structure there are descriptions of the fundamental aspects of teaching and the links to learning. What the book explores is pedagogy – the relationship between teaching and learning - and how a richer understanding of pedagogy enhances opportunities for quality learning. The chapters share evidence gathered in Australian classrooms across different contexts, year levels and subject matter in order to better understand classroom practice whether that be in schools or teacher education programs.

The range of areas is comprehensive from early childhood through to tertiary. It includes learning environments that encourage mathematical thinking, encouraging language development through online communities, social media and pedagogy, whole brain teaching methodology, career counselling, parent school partnerships, and listening to the voices of young children.

The contributors demonstrate repeatedly that teachers matter in any discussion about evidence, but importantly, so too do the students. In order to understand the significance of pedagogy as a relationship between teaching and learning, what students do, how and why, matters in informing views of quality and shaping the nature of the evidence gathered to support these interpretations and conclusions. Significantly, this book provides a window into the world of teaching through the eyes of practitioners who are working in their respective fields. Each chapter highlights and provides understanding into the different forms of evidence that is used to inform quality teaching and learning.

With increasing pressure from international testing and comparisons between Australian schools and students and those elsewhere in the world, the importance of expert pedagogy based on existing research becomes more pertinent. This book marries theory and practice through authentic classroom research and by exploring research on learning and teaching in the Australian context. The chapters articulate a range of practices that present fundamental elements needed for successful pedagogy. The editors conclude the book with an excellent summary and conclusion which they subtitle – unlocking successful pedagogy. They conclude that these fundamental elements are reflective practice, professional learning, giving students more voice and allowing for new and varied pedagogies. Together what Barnes, Gindidis and Phillipson have achieved is a notable snapshot of what is happening in contemporary, commendable Australian classrooms.

Civic Agency and its positive impact to student learning in the 21st century classroom

Chris Badbury, Director of Teaching and Learning, The King's School, Parramatta

Civic education has an important role to play in this movement to pursue deeper approaches to education in Australia. It allows students to engage in deeper learning, requiring them to work collaboratively with peers, adults and organisations to diagnose and solve problems, to choose solutions, to implement strategies and to reflect on results.

The most recent wave of school reforms and public debate has heralded a stronger focus on the need for education to better prepare our students in meeting the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Australians appear to be tiring of a narrow curricula and simplistic assessments, and growing numbers are advocating for a deeper and broader approach to education. By “deeper” we mean an investment to not just master the core academic content (which is highly important in providing the infrastructure to develop core competencies) but also to develop effective communication, problem solving, critical thinking, entrepreneurship and the development of an academic mindset. By “broader”, we mean continuing to develop reading, mathematics and science but also fields like the humanities, languages and arts, as well as exploring the richness of interdisciplinary inquiry.

Civic education has an important role to play in this movement to pursue deeper approaches to education in Australia. It allows students to engage in deeper learning, requiring them to work collaboratively with peers, adults and organisations to diagnose and solve problems, to choose solutions, to implement strategies and to reflect on results. The richness of civic learning experiences allows students to build the skills and attributes

to be confident citizens and develop the ability to set realistic goals and direct oneself to follow a plan towards its ultimate goal. These are skills that are quite often grouped together under the term “agency” (Larson & Argus 2011). It is for these reasons that civic education will better prepare our students for success in work and life as well as for active citizenship. Schools need to be committed in developing better pedagogies, curricular, and assessment for civics which will benefit education generally because civics is intrinsically interdisciplinary. As a result, schools need to encourage their teachers to explore rich and exciting professional development opportunities in fostering deeper learning to address ‘civil readiness’.

Aims of civic and citizenship education

Civic and citizenship education plays an important role in developing the key 21st century competencies such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and communication for our students. The three most important aims of civic and citizenship education are outlined below:



1. Civic and political knowledge and skills
 - Promoting knowledge of social, political and civic institutions
 - Developing students' skills and competencies in conflict resolution
 - Promoting knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities
 - Promotes students' critical and independent thinking
2. Sense of responsibility
 - Promoting respect for and safeguard of the environment
 - Promoting the capacity to defend one's own point of view
 - Supporting effective strategies to reduce racism
3. Active participation
 - Promoting students' participation in the local community
 - Promoting students' participation in school life
 - Preparing students for future political engagement

Teaching civic agency is a way of helping young people develop a sophisticated understanding of the

humanities and civics content, while also developing them into competent citizens who possess a range of skills through deeper learning (Feith, 2011). The impact of quality civic education means students will have the capacity to collaborate and communicate effectively to respectfully debate different political viewpoints. They will develop the necessary skills to question one's own assumptions and make sense of their own thinking. Finally, deeper learning is truly preparation for civic life and having the ability to persist in the face of complicated real-world problems in confronting contemporary civic dilemmas.

Level of autonomy in planning civic and citizenship in schools

Schools have the autonomy to effectively plan and organise curricular, teaching, and learning activities that encourage civic and citizenship education. Our curriculum has the capacity to inspire the potential

to influence the delivery of civic and citizenship education in schools and to affect the successes of efforts directed toward improving student learning in this area of education. There are a number of ways schools can influence civic and citizenship education including:

- Choice of textbooks
- Assessment and evaluation
- Curriculum planning
- Teachers professional development specific to civic and citizenship education
- Organisation of extracurricular activities such as Model United Nations, Mock Trial, overseas study tours, etc.
- Participating in projects with other schools and organisations

The critical challenge for schools is that civic learning should not just take place in the Social Sciences, but can occur in all subject areas. When designed and implemented thoughtfully, civic learning allows students to engage in contemporary debates and is a way to make any subject more authentic (Levine, 2013). Professional development needs to develop to enhance the teaching and learning experience for our students in challenging them to be better critical thinkers and in developing positive online digital citizenship habits.

Discussion and debate in developing civic agency

Good arguments are critical in fostering a healthy Australian civic life. They provide a means to solve complex problems and engage in public debate. We want our classrooms to inspire thoughtful debate that is expressed through different perspectives and viewpoints because a thriving democracy needs good arguments. Some examples of healthy debate on Australian civic life in the classroom include exploring issues such as; republicanism in Australia, the validity of the current date of Australia Day, the impact of multiculturalism on Australian society and the effectiveness of government policy in achieving equal opportunity for all. We need to cultivate a robust environment where students are constantly encouraged to argue over what's on their minds and develop the necessary interpersonal skills to gracefully listen to other perspectives.

Civil agency in the 21st century classroom is one where students value that democracy is one of the most fragile of human enterprises; it is a work in progress and its vitality relies on the thoughtful, active and responsible participation of its citizens. Our students need to appreciate that the principles of justice, equality and freedom require constant vigilance and sustenance. Great arguments provide an essential measure of both.

Professional development for teachers needs to be focused on how effective discussions and debates can be facilitated within the class environment. Teachers as activators of learning need to constantly ask themselves the question: *What are some of the conditions that enable a good discussion to occur in any of our classrooms?* Most obvious is that students have to be speaking and listening to each other. But the real key to knowing whether real discussion is going on is that students are responding to each other's arguments, responding to each other's ideas, and building on what their classmates have said. The skills to develop are for students to use each other's contributions in order to improve their own thinking.

In generating effective classroom discussion and debate, the teacher will take an active role as the activator of learning. It's important to recognise that discussions often include an active role for the teacher, particularly in the beginning of the school year before the students have internalised the norms and the participation rights. However, teachers need to regularly ask their students to explain their thinking and to revoice students' unclear statements in order to provide clarity in the discussion. Critical thinking can be stimulated by the teacher taking a devil's advocate position to push students' understanding as well.

Discussion is an opportunity for students to develop civic agency and talk about topics of high interest and importance to them and an opportunity for them to develop their thinking by hearing and processing their classmates' points of view. Discussion is not just teachers and students talking to one another. And it is, of course, not always a full-fledged or lengthy debate. Sometimes there are just two or three minutes of highly effective discussion in the middle of a classroom activity, most of which is not classic discussion. If there isn't a sense that the purpose of the discussion is to move forward in one's thinking, to understand each other's arguments, then it's a conversation. And it can be a pleasant interval in a classroom, but it does not qualify as a real discussion. Real discussions require accountability to the notion that the student's thinking will progress and students will have the opportunity to learn from one another and to respond to each other's ideas.

Discussions involve disagreement, but they don't involve direct interpersonal disputes. They involve working on a claim or a dilemma or a question in a way that moves from less knowledge about it to more knowledge about it. Certainly, discussion is not the only activity we need in classrooms. It wouldn't be optimal to suggest that students should be engaged in classroom discussions six hours a day, because there are many other activities that are also generative and productive and important. But some portion of the day devoted to classroom discussion can be very productive. Discussion is not, as many people tend to think, undermined by teacher involvement. In fact, the right kind of teacher involvement supports and promotes discussion.

And teachers might, by the end of the year, move a little bit to the side of the discussion group. Their contributions might be less crucial or less important, but that's because they will have been very active in modelling good discussion earlier in the year.

Evolving Contexts for Civil Learning: Social Media

Civic learning in the digital age is a compelling transition in our history and schools have a responsibility to develop human potential in the changing landscape of our world. One important area in this development is the focus on global competence and digital citizenship. Human learning needs to be understood within the context of the digital world and part of the education process is to provide students with the opportunity to make valuable contributions through the use of social media and engagement in online civic participation.

Citizenship is highly persuasive in terms of human potential and teachers and parents need to consider these questions:

- How do we engage in civics and government with young people?
- How do we consume that information and how can they engage with that information?

A starting point in developing global competence and civic agency with our students is by developing life-long learners. Content taught in schools is obviously important in meeting the requirements of the syllabus but of equal importance is providing opportunities for students to reflect on what they have learnt and to consider the following questions in developing global competence and civic agency:

- Why might this (topic, question) matter to me?
- Why might it matter to people around me (family, friends, nation)?
- Why might it matter to the world?

Good questions are the stimulus for a change in our world and there is enormous potential in learning and citizenship through our engagement with the digital world (Stoddard, 2014). However, at the same time there is also concern with the ways we may squander those opportunities. Good online civic engagement is essential in teaching young people to be digital citizens. There are a number of reasons why teachers need to work with their students in creating opportunities for students to engage in ethical thinking, digital and civic literacies and cultural sensitivity through online participation. These include:

- The need to address the social divide in using social media for civic purposes so those least advantaged students can take full advantage of the new media available
- The internet circulates a wealth of misleading

and false information, therefore teachers need to encourage students to seek out new ideas and teach them to distinguish reliable and unreliable information

- For our students to make an outstanding contribution to society and change the world for the better, they need to have the capacity to influence formal political institutions
- Deeper civic learning through digital tools allows students to collaborate with others globally and provides opportunities to engage with organisations.

Part of the challenge is developing conscientious habits of connectivity and educating students to be mindful that the things we share do have implications near and far. Social media has its obvious pitfalls but conscientious, respectful and meaningful digital citizenship is a powerful form of communication in making a valuable contribution in our world. Preparing our youth to engage in respectful, thoughtful, and insightful cross-cultural exchange is not just the right thing to do; it is essential in preparing them for the complex globalised world.

References

- Finlay, A., Wray-Lake, L., & Flanagan, C. (2010). Civic Engagement during the Transition to Adulthood: Developmental Opportunities and Social Policies at a Critical Juncture. *Handbook of Research on Civic Engagement in Youth*, 277-305. doi:10.1002/9780470767603.ch11
- Hess, D. E., & McAvoy, P. (2015). *The political classroom: Evidence and ethics in democratic education*. New York: Routledge.
- Larson, Reed W. & Rachel M. Angus. 2011. "Adolescents' Development of Skills for Agency in Youth Programs: Learning to Think Strategically." *Child Development*. Vol. 82, No. 1.
- Levine, Peter. (2013). What the NAEP civics assessment measures and how students perform. Medford, MA: Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Accessed on April 19, 2013.
- Stoddard, J. (2014). The Need for Media Education in Democratic Education. *Democracy and Education*, 22 (1), Article 4.

Biography

Chris Bradbury is the Director of Teaching and Learning at The King's School, Parramatta. He is responsible for leading key strategic priorities including innovative professional learning, pioneering educational research, teacher accreditation and teacher leadership development. Chris is currently involved in the AIS Leadership Centre Flagship Program which is a rigorous, holistic program for experienced school leaders in schools. He was awarded a NSW Quality Teaching Excellence Award in recognition of outstanding teaching practice by the NSW State Government and was a recipient of the Gandel Holocaust Studies Program for Australian Educators Scholarship and the NSW Premiers Westfield's History Teacher's Scholarship. He has recently co-written the Cambridge HSC 'Modern History Transformed' text book for the Stage 6 Modern History syllabus and has completed a Graduate Certificate in Advanced Educational Leadership from Harvard University.

Thinking to Learn

Alison Dare

Knowing is how to make community with the unavailable other, with realities that would elude us without the connective tissue of knowledge. Knowing is a human way to seek relationship, and, in the process, to have encounters and exchanges that will inevitably alter us. At its deepest reaches, knowing is always communal.

In my conversations with parents, the most common diagnosis of their child's performance I find myself making is in relation to their thinking. I hear myself making the same kinds of suggestions: approach texts more critically; look for implicit (not just explicit meanings); go beneath the surface; and be creative in synthesising ideas. Inevitably, the question that I am almost always asked in response to such statements is 'how might this be achieved?'

Why are some students better at this than others? Is it just a question of age and maturity levels, in which case they will inevitably improve over time? What am I, as their teacher, doing to assist the student to become deeper, more critical in their thinking?

Unlike acquiring facts, (an aspect of learning that is still crucial of course), learning to think, and indeed thinking in order to learn, is not something that can be packaged neatly and delivered in a straight line of transmission. While this may have been the case in former times, the way in which students learn has never been completely straightforward. I am often amused when I encounter past students who tell me what it is they remember of my classes – it seems that the content areas of the subject are infused with the incidental, off-topic stories told by the teacher, and the various relationship dynamics in the class. If I think back to my own schools days, I can say that this is also true of my own experience.

In the early 20th century, American philosopher and educator, John Dewey, explored the way in which students learn to think. In the context of the relationship between democracy and education he asserted, "society not only continues to exist by transmission by communication, but it may fairly be said to exist in transmission, in communication" (1916). In a classroom setting, it is the multi-faceted communication between teacher and student (and among students themselves) that leads to a shared understanding rather than a simple transactional passing of information from one to the other. This shared understanding, Dewey posits,

"cannot be passed physically from one to another like bricks; [it] cannot be shared as persons would share a pie by dividing it into physical pieces. The communication, which ensures participation in a common understanding, is one that secures similar emotional and intellectual dispositions – like ways of responding to expectations and requirements" (1916).

In essence, Dewey was suggesting that learning is an inherently social activity. It is in that mysterious space **between** teacher and students, as opposed to from teacher to student, where deep thinking and learning is developed. Because learning and thinking arise from that transactional space, the relationship between the teacher and the student is obviously vital to robust learning. Ron Ritchard, Senior Research Associate at Harvard Project Zero, identifies the notion of interaction between the teacher and student as one of eight cultural forces in the classroom that help to nurture the development of students as thinkers. According to Ritchard, "attention to building strong teacher-student relationships plays an important role in supporting student achievement and in particular the development of critical thinking" (2015).

Why is this relationship so important and how is that space between teacher and student defined?

In the context of a 1986 study by Mary Budd Rowe, an American science education researcher, into the relationship between the 'teacher time' given to student responses in class discussions and thinking, Budd Rowe concluded, "to grow a complex thought system requires a great deal of shared experience and conversation. It is in talking about what we have done and observed, and in arguing about what we make of our experiences, that ideas multiply, become refined, and, finally produce new questions and further explorations" (in Ritchard, 2015). The ideal space between teacher and student is then predominantly a conversational one; thinking is developed in that dynamic two-way relationship



where ideas are challenged and refined. Intellectual engagement is thus also social engagement.

While teachers understand that a truly interactive approach is conducive to the development of critical thinking, sometimes students do not. It is tempting for them to assume, especially when they feel stressed, that classroom discussions are extraneous to 'core' learning. Students feel that in order to be successful, all they should need to do is learn from a neatly contained set of facts and objectives, provided by their teacher. However, critical thinking is not something that can be crammed in the lead up to an exam in the same way that learning a set of facts can be. Thinking sometimes becomes convoluted as it draws on outside stimuli and the inner world of a student's imagination. It throws up surprises and does not always go in the direction we originally anticipate. Its expansiveness can create some degree of anxiety because the knowledge it produces is not always binary, and does not always make sense. The renowned educator and author Parker Palmer suggests that the teaching and learning space is a paradoxical one. One aspect of this paradox is that it invites the voice of the individual as well as that of the group. "Learning does not happen", asserts Palmer, "when students are unable to express their ideas, emotions, confusions, ignorance, and prejudices. In fact, only when people

can speak their minds does education have a chance to happen" (2007).

Students need to learn to feel comfortable with the messiness of thinking, because this is where the brain starts to do its work, unravelling the mess and creating structure and the potential for new connections. They need to be patient with their own development and know that the more they can engage, the better they will become as thinkers and learners.

References

- Dewey, J., (2004). *Democracy and Education. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Palmer, P., (2007). *The Courage to Teach. Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.
- Ritchard, R., (2015). *Creating Cultures of Thinking. The 8 Forces We Must Master to Truly Transform our Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Biography

Alison Dare is the Director of Humanities at Brisbane Girls' Grammar School, Queensland.

It's Time to Give Our Children a Voice in the Digital Revolution

Chris Panell

Kids today are triggered, click-baited, and love to meme and repeat. As a member of an older generation, I often have little idea what they are talking about; maybe you don't either.

But we are going to have to figure it out. Our young people are participating in a digital world which is completely upending the basic assumptions that have gained global dominance since the time of Gutenberg and the printing press.

The fact that Gutenberg's technology is becoming obsolete is already apparent to those of us who spend time around young people. Parents complain that their kids need constant 'screen time'. It's unusual when a parent needs to scold, "Stop reading that book when I'm trying to talk to you!" Much more probable it is, "Put your phone away!"

The latter also happens to be what my colleagues complain—often—in the classrooms of the schools I've worked at over the past couple of decades. There has been a battle waged against electronic devices for at least as long as I've been a teacher. If you've been in any '21st Century School' where they are distributing 'one-to-one' devices, you already know how this story ends: The electronics have won.

Ask a student to research and they head to the laptop, not the library. Tell them to send a note home to their parents and they start thumbing on a virtual keyboard on their mobile phone—without ever considering a pen and paper. Tell them to find out what an expert has said on a chosen topic and they'll head to YouTube.

What it means to be literate is being redefined right in front of our very eyes. Consider that for a second. The definition of the 'literate' class is something which has been fairly stable for thousands of years, even as it has applied to shifting numbers of the given population in places as diverse as Sumer, China, India, or Greece. That is the legacy that the kids today are

overthrowing—to be more apt, *have* overthrown. It turns out that the revolution was not televised.

Thinkers like Marshall McLuhan and Neil Postman saw it coming from miles away. They recognised that the emerging technology of the 20th Century was pushing aside the printed word; they believed this was to the advantage of the image.

What might surprise these soothsayers, were they still with us, is the sheer abundance of words that frame the landscape of this new literacy. As of 11 January 2016 there were 100 trillion words on the Internet, according to the calculations of one ValdemarSt on Reddit.com. By comparison, Djorde V. —who seems to be very knowledgeable in his post on Quora.com—reported on 31 August 2016 that there were *only* 657 billion photos being uploaded per year. Despite my hazy grasp of how to do the proper comparison calculation, I'm able to conclude that a picture is still worth a 1000 words.

The term 'digital literacy' has become trendy. If you examine what most people mean when they throw this phrase around, you find that it usually has to do with either basic computer use skills or thinking critically about Internet sources. Such definitions simply don't hold the depth or breadth of the digital revolution that is sweeping across our globe.

The digital literacy that is emerging is one where there is a connectedness to words, facts, images, and ideas. To be digitally literate means that you are able to set out the words and symbols that reflect your thoughts, and then make them act in ways that you wish. The presentation of the words is imbued with meaning, as is the interaction of the user with the words.

Words are increasingly experiences. The digitally fluent find meaning not just in the combination of words and letters, but also in the connections of those words to other words within a larger context, within an ongoing conversation that includes all of the interconnected portions of our digital lives.

Those who are fully digitally literate in the future will be able not only to read the surface of the text, but also the programming that makes it appear and behave as it does. Digital coding languages are an extension of the spoken languages we already use, as I contended back in 2003, in an essay entitled "Teaching Computer Programming as a Language" (2003). I wrote then that, "In the end, it is language that we are teaching, and that should guide the activities used in our programming courses."

Since then, much evidence in favor of my argument has accumulated. In one study (presented by Siegmund et al. at the 2014 International Conference on Software Engineering), researchers imaged the brains of students learning to program and found that, as they wrote in code, the portions of the brain "related to different facets of language processing" were activated. Another group of researchers, led by Matthew Pierce, tested the use of SLA, or second language acquisition techniques, in the teaching of entry-level computer programming classes and concluded that "the results from this project show great promise for the utilization of SLA in introductory programming course content delivery". I was gratified to see that the team from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University who carried out this latter study cited my original 2003 essay when they presented their final results last year.

The recognition that coding languages are an extension of all other spoken and written language has significant implications for how we approach literacy in our schools. The use of all forms of digital languages should be incorporated into every aspect of a well-rounded education, and no student should be denied the chance to participate.

Some easy entry points to this digital conversation could involve activities like letting students create YouTube videos that debate topics; this allows them to incorporate a wide variety of technologies and digital languages, potentially, at a pace of their own choosing. Students could also create animated story boards to gain more knowledge of how to integrate words and images.

As they advance, the creation of games would likely be of interest; they could be used to simulate hunter and prey behaviour, for example, for the science class. In literature, students could be encouraged to analyse both the story and programming of existing game apps with the intention to include such elements in their own creations.

In these ways technology and coding languages could be incorporated across the curriculum, turning school into a digital playground where kids are

free to explore. Couldn't students in mathematics classes program their own calculating apps? Couldn't students in a science class build programs where they care for a simulated population of microorganisms? Couldn't history students explore alternate endings to famous events by programming them into a game?

We should provide our students with a collaborative environment where the language of technology is integrated into everything that they do—as will be the case for the remainder of their lives outside of school. Young people in schools should be able to speak digitally within the core topics of the curriculum. Children should be given the chance not just to use provided digital texts but to *create texts of their own*.

To do otherwise is to consign significant numbers of our population to simply responding to the prompts created by those who know how to tell our technology what to do. It is not just to relegate the majority of our young people to the role of listeners in our emerging digital conversation, to condemn them to eternal silence. I might not always understand what they say, but I want our young people to have the chance to say it.

References

Panell, Chris. "Teaching Computer Programming as a Language." Tech Directions; Ann Arbor Vol. 62, Iss. 8, (Mar 2003): 26.

Siegmund, Janet, et al. "Understanding Understanding Source Code with Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging." Proceedings of the 36th International Conference on Software Engineering - ICSE 2014, 2014, doi:10.1145/2568225.2568252.

Pierce, Matthew, et al. "Evaluating Student Perceptions and Learning Outcomes: Differences Between SLA-Able and Non-SLA-Able Introductory Programming Courses." International Journal of Management and Applied Science, vol. 3, no. 9, ser. 2394-7926, Sept. 2017, pp. 92-95. 2394-7926.

Frederick, C., Pierce, M. B., Griggs, A. C., Sun, L., & Ding, L. (2017). Get Rid of Your Student's Fear and Intimidation of learning a Programming Language. (). Retrieved from <http://commons.erau.edu/publication/573>

Biography

Chris Panell currently teaches web and app design courses at Yew Chung International School in Hong Kong. He has taught both technology and English courses at the middle school and college levels. His current position is the Middle School English Subject Lead and Technology Teacher at the Yew Chung International School of Hong Kong. Correspondence to cccpanell@juno.com

Opportunities and challenges in twenty-first century Holocaust education

Steve Hawkins

The ultimate aim of Holocaust education is ‘never again’ and while the emphasis of Holocaust education must be on the Jewish victims, students need to consider the roles and beliefs of the perpetrators, bystanders and rescuers, to better understand how the Holocaust occurred, how it was allowed to occur, and what can be learned from the actions of the minority of people who stood up to persecution.

My teaching career began as the Internet was finding its way into Australian schools. At my first school, the single computer attached to the web was little more than a novelty, so when it came to teaching resources I had to rely on whatever resources happened to be in the library and my own ideas as to what to do with them. I taught the Second World War in that year, relying on an existing program that allocated a few lessons to the Holocaust. I remember trying to wow them with numbers – it’s like filling the MCG to capacity 60 times! – and played an ageing VHS documentary heavy on post-liberation footage of emaciated survivors and bodies bulldozed into pits. It was enough, I thought. They were stunned into silence and I felt showing them the worst of it was enough to make a point. Even then, common sense should have told me that it was far from enough, and that what I had done was likely ineffective, probably counterproductive and quite possibly traumatic. But I was young, naïve, isolated and struggling to stay afloat, so I can be forgiven my early mistakes.

Online resources and the importance of an underpinning philosophy

My own early experiences of teaching in an offline world shows why the Internet has been so thoroughly embraced by educators. We are no longer restricted to textbooks or the faded photocopies in old binders and can now instantly access highly credible materials from museums, universities, advocacy organisations and others from across the world. According to Alexa rankings, the three most visited Holocaust-related museum or reference webpages are the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM, and the fourth most visited museum site in any category overall), Anne Frank House in the Netherlands and Yad Vashem in Israel (Alexa, 2018), and all three have dedicated educator sections with extensive resources backed by the

latest research in effective teaching and learning about the Holocaust.

Holocaust resources created by teachers are also readily available through sites such as Teachers Pay Teachers, which currently lists 2,544 resources on the Holocaust, and the Times Education Supplement, with 1,880 available for download. Some of this content is developed by classroom teachers who may not have the requisite knowledge to create the most appropriate resources. To my knowledge, no specific research has been done to review the appropriateness of teacher-generated Holocaust resources, but a brief look of some available resources shows that some teaching tools no longer considered effective or appropriate, such as role plays and simulations, are still readily available for download.

Teachers need to have a strong underpinning philosophy for teaching the Holocaust to better critique the abundance of available resources and to choose what is most appropriate. The mandate of the USHMM is not to tell teachers how to teach the Holocaust (although they do provide clear, relevant and very helpful guidelines to support teachers) and Anne Frank House similarly does not promote any explicit philosophical base for teachers. Yad Vashem is most direct in promoting and supporting a strong, underpinning educational philosophy to guide Holocaust teaching. Teachers who understand and apply that philosophy to their planning, are well-placed to select and use the most appropriate resources for their teaching.

The Jewish victim is central to the educational philosophy of Yad Vashem, a focus similarly supported in the resources and guidelines of the USHMM and Anne Frank House. Emphasising the experiences of the individual is necessary to counter the difficulty students face in grasping the enormity of the Holocaust. As Shani Lourie (2017), Head of Pedagogy at the International School of Holocaust Education says, as students relate more easily to human beings than to numbers, we are better able to promote empathy by seeing the Holocaust not as “the murder of six million anonymous Jews, but rather that six million times an individual Jew was murdered.”

Of course, the horrors of the Holocaust cannot be avoided, but the potential trauma associated with death must be addressed as part of a teaching philosophy. As Shulamit Imber (2013) states, “the Holocaust is a trauma, and the question for the teacher is how do you teach the trauma without traumatising your students?” The International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem promotes a simply worded maxim to address this—‘safely in, safely out’. Focussing on the richness and diversity of Jewish lives before the Holocaust, the ways in which Jews attempted to survive during the Holocaust including how they resisted both actively and spiritually, and the survivor’s return to life, frequently without malice, to rebuild Jewish

lives and culture, provides a solid base upon which students can safely and effectively engage in what is frequently a highly traumatic subject.

The philosophy of Yad Vashem is in ‘rescuing the victims from anonymity.’ With entire families and communities murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators, it is essential to give voice to that which was lost. This can be achieved by focussing on the lives and experiences of Jews in three key areas: pre-war Jewish life, life in the world of chaos during the Holocaust, and the survivor’s return to life.

The universal impact of the Holocaust

The ultimate aim of Holocaust education is ‘never again’ and while the emphasis of Holocaust education must be on the Jewish victims, students need to consider the roles and beliefs of the perpetrators, bystanders and rescuers, to better understand how the Holocaust occurred, how it was allowed to occur, and what can be learned from the actions of the minority of people who stood up to persecution.

Dr. Na’ama Shik from Yad Vashem recommends beginning with the bystander. As most non-Jews during the Holocaust were not perpetrators or rescuers, the bystander represents the ‘humanistic, universal impact of the Holocaust’ and thus ‘should be relevant to everyone.’ Developing an understanding of the views and actions of perpetrators is necessary so students understand that they were people who lived regular lives before the Holocaust. Learning why doctors, office workers, nurses and others were so amenable to the building antisemitism of the Nazis provides some insight into how the Holocaust was humanly possible. Knowledge of how regular people became complicit in mass murder is essential to minimise the threat that such events could occur again. In addition, by considering the choices made by rescuers, students may be inspired to stand up to up to contemporary or future persecution, although it is important to make clear that the decision to help was made by a very small number of people. The positive and frequently uplifting stories of rescuers means their role in the Holocaust can be overstated.

The challenge of online denial

The value of the Internet as a resource for Holocaust educators is well established, but it also poses new challenges for teachers. The anonymity of the Internet and the difficulty in monitoring and tracing online communication provides a platform for antisemitism and aspects of denial or Holocaust minimisation are becoming increasingly common online (OHPI, 2015). Such views are becoming more

common in the offline world, too (Oboler, 2016). After presenting a workshop recently on Holocaust education, a teacher spoke to me about how to deal with a student who wanted to research 'the good things Hitler did' and how she was concerned the child was being exposed to extremist ideology at home. Far-right nationalist movements are becoming more common across the globe, evidenced in the 'Alt-Right' movement in the United States, the Antipodean Resistance in Australia and the political influence of nationalist political parties across Europe. This year, universities and synagogues across Australia have been targeted with antisemitic posters and pamphlets which deny the Holocaust and promote neo-Nazi ideology (Zhou, 2017). Sadly, reports of antisemitism continue to increase both in Australia and across the globe.

In light of this worrying trend, teachers must consider how to address Holocaust denial when teaching the Holocaust, in order to protect them from the denial they will encounter and, ideally, prompt them to speak out when they encounter antisemitism. When exploring Holocaust denial, it is important to consider that antisemitic ideology drives much contemporary denial, and to place this in the broader context of antisemitism in history. Careful examination of historical sources is also important. History teachers in particular will be adept at helping students to critique denial sources, and to see how the personal hatred of the author negatively influences the accuracy and reliability of denial material. Ephraim Kaye states that denial can be challenged by the convergence of evidence – where all the evidence is examined and pieced together in the same way a police investigator would consider a crime scene. As with other educational resources, support for teachers in tackling the issue of Holocaust denial and distortion is available online. The USHMM in particular, has an extensive section on the issue of denial and a range of resources that can be used to address it.

The need for Holocaust education in a crowded curriculum

The prevalence of online Holocaust denial and antisemitism is not the only factor that is worrying for contemporary Holocaust educators. Some recent studies on the decline in Holocaust understanding also give some cause for concern. A study released earlier this year found that one-in-five American millennials had never heard of the Holocaust or were unsure if they had heard of it. Over two-thirds of the same demographic had never heard of Auschwitz (Claims Conference, 2018). In addition, an extensive 2014 study by the Centre for Holocaust Education in the United Kingdom found that over one-in-three British students could not define antisemitism, and over half of younger students

believed that the Holocaust was solely attributed to Hitler (Foster et al, 2014). The study is at pains to point out that gaps in student knowledge are not necessarily the result of poor teaching, but the research does reinforce the need for appropriate Holocaust education delivered by knowledgeable teachers, using the best available resources backed by an appropriate educational philosophy.

Holocaust educators must also consider the curriculum pressures that have reduced the amount of time many teachers can devote to the topic. To counter this, it is essential that 21st century Holocaust education takes a multidisciplinary approach so students can be exposed to this vital learning in art, music, English, religion, civics and citizenship programs in addition to its traditional place in the history classroom. In English, teachers can select poetry written by Holocaust victims or survivors or explore the richness of pre-war Jewish literature. Art teachers can engage with Holocaust art, such as the moving works of the teenage artist Petr Ginz who did not survive the Holocaust. In psychology classes, students can explore the impact of war-crimes trials on some of the twentieth century's most influential research on obedience and conformity, and legal studies students can similarly explore the impact of the Holocaust on international law. This multidisciplinary approach not only ensures Holocaust education can survive, even thrive, in a crowded curriculum, but the variety of learning also creates a richer experience for students, and greatly enhances their ability to empathise with the experiences of the victims and survivors (Roshkovsky, n.d.).

The value of offline collaboration in an online world

While technological advances open up significant opportunities to access professional learning around the world, attending professional development events in person remains the preferred option for many educators. Professional teaching associations frequently present workshops on Holocaust education, and events for teachers are regularly scheduled by the Sydney Jewish Museum.

Perhaps the most rewarding face-to-face professional learning for teachers across Australia is the annual Gandel Holocaust Studies Program for Australian Educators, where 35 teachers are sponsored to attend the International School of Holocaust Education at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel. The program is extensive and intense – one of the longer programs offered by Yad Vashem to international educators – but the opportunities for professional learning are unmatched, with teachers able to access the most up-to-date research on effective and appropriate pedagogy for Holocaust

education. To the great credit of Gandel Philanthropy, the program actively seeks applicants from across Australia, ensuring that the geographical isolation common to many Australian educators is not an impediment in accessing one of the finest Holocaust educator programs in the world. The program also strongly supports a multidisciplinary approach to Holocaust education by seeking applicants from teachers across a range of subject areas. The program has significant local impact. Already this year, over 300 teachers across the country have directly benefited from workshops delivered by alumni from the 2018 program, and many more events are scheduled.

A future without survivors

As the 21st century proceeds, the number of those who remain to bear witness to the experiences of the Holocaust continue to decline. Soon, their stories will exist only in letters, diaries and video recordings. We are fortunate that the technology of the 21st century allows for these stories to exist forever, so that the students of tomorrow can continue to learn about the diversity and richness of Jewish lives and cultures that the Nazis tried in vain to extinguish, and how these lives and cultures continue to thrive in communities across the globe. We are indeed fortunate that in the face of modern challenges to Holocaust education, the opportunities afforded to us in our interconnected world will help us all work together to achieve what is our ultimate goal: 'never again'.

References

- Alexa rankings. (2018) *The top 500 sites on the web: references, museums*. [online] Alexa. Available at: <https://www.alexa.com/topsites/category/Reference/Museums> [Accessed 5 Jun. 2018].
- Anne Frank House. (2018). *Anne Frank House - Teachers' Portal*. [online] Available at: <http://www.annefrank.org/en/Education/Teachers-portal/> [Accessed 22 May 2018].
- The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (2018). *New Survey by Claims Conference Finds Significant Lack of Holocaust Knowledge in the United States - Claims Conference*. [online] Claims Conference. Available at: <http://www.claimscon.org/study> [Accessed 3 Jun. 2018].
- Foster, S., Pettigrew, A., Pearce, A., Hale, R., Burgess, A., Salmons, P. and Lenga, R. (2014). *What do students know and understand about the Holocaust?* London: Centre for Holocaust Education.
- Imber, Shulamit. (2013). *Yad Vashem's Educational Philosophy Part 1/3: Introduction*. [Online Video]. 31 December 2013. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=44W2EuSYWhQ>. [Accessed: 22 May 2018].
- Kaye, Ephraim. (2010). *Confronting Holocaust Denial: A Strategy*. [Online Video]. 11 May 2010. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CLKptQmUR8>. [Accessed: 3 Jun. 2018].

Lourie, Shani. (2017). *Teaching the Holocaust in Today's World*. [Online Video]. 6 April 2017. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1f_xs9UGoR8. [Accessed: 24 May 2018].

Oboler, A. (2016). *Measuring the Hate: The State of Antisemitism in Social Media*. Melbourne: Global Forum for Combating Antisemitism. Available from: <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/AntiSemitism/Documents/Measuring-the-Hate.pdf>. [Accessed: 1 Jun. 2018].

Online Hate Prevention Institute. (2018). *Holocaust Denial & Social Media*. [online] Available at: <http://ohpi.org.au/holocaust-denial-social-media/> [Accessed 4 Jun. 2018].

Roshkovsky, L. (n.d) *Teaching Holocaust History: Principles of the Educational Philosophy at Yad Vashem*. [PowerPoint presentation]. Available from: <http://www.nj.gov/education/holocaust/pres/Philosophy.pdf>. [Accessed: 31 May 2018].

Shik, Na'ama. (2013). *Yad Vashem's Educational Philosophy Part 3/3: Murderers, Bystanders, and Rescuers*. [Online Video]. 31 December 2013. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEHQRew8H4>. [Accessed: 22 May 2018].

Teachers Pay Teachers. 2018. *Teachers Pay Teachers: keyword search 'holocaust'*. [online] Available at: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Browse/Search:holocaust>. [Accessed 4 Jun. 2018].

TES Online. (2018). *TES Online Resources: keyword search 'holocaust'*. [online] Available at: <https://www.tes.com/resources/search/?&q=holocaust>. [Accessed 4 Jun. 2018].

Ushmm.org. (2018). *Resources for Educators - US Holocaust Memorial Museum*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ushmm.org/educators> [Accessed 22 May. 2018].

Yadvashem.org. (2018). *Education & E-Learning | www.yadvashem.org*. [online] Available at: <http://www.yadvashem.org/education.html> [Accessed 20 May 2018].

Zhou, N. (2018). *Holocaust denial leaflets at Australian universities spark confrontation*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/apr/27/holocaust-denial-leaflets-at-australian-universities-spark-confrontation> [Accessed 2 Jun. 2018].

Biography

Originally from Adelaide, Steve began his career teaching history in the South Australian Riverland, before venturing north to Darwin in 2006 to work as a consultant in English and Humanities for the Northern Territory Department of Education, where he helped facilitate the introduction of the current Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training. After working in the East Arnhem region supporting senior secondary programs in remote Indigenous schools, Steve returned to Darwin to continue working as a consultant. Being drawn back into the classroom, Steve currently teaches history at Casuarina Senior College in the northern suburbs of Darwin.



Religion and Spirituality in the Curriculum

Ian Keese FACE

Do religion and spirituality have a place in what has been called a post-metaphysical world? As our knowledge of evolution, the human mind and the origins of the universe has expanded, is there any space left for God?

Spiritual and Religious

Traditionally religion has been the structure that supports the spiritual. While religion maintains this role for a few, for many it has become an empty ritual. Mysticism in Christianity and Islam has provided a path to spiritual understanding but because it focuses to such an extent on the individual's spiritual experiences it can be seen by the more orthodox as a threat to organised religion.

A working definition of spiritual development was presented in a handbook of the United Kingdom's Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in 1994:

Spiritual development relates to that aspect of inner life through which pupils acquire insights into their personal existence, which are of enduring worth. It is characterised by reflection, the attribution of meaning to experience, valuing a non-material dimension to life and intimations of an enduring reality. 'Spiritual' is not synonymous with 'religious'; all areas of the curriculum may contribute to pupil's spiritual development.

Religion and spirituality in the Australian Curriculum

Overarching the subject areas of the Australian Curriculum are seven "general capabilities" which, according to the syllabus, "encompass knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that ... will enable students to live and work successfully in the 21st century". Of these seven, the three that might relate to a religious or spiritual dimension are:

- personal and social capability
- ethical understanding
- intercultural understanding

However, within the elaborations of these capabilities there are only two passing mentions of 'spiritual' or 'religious'. In the "Personal and Social Capability" section there is a quote from the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008) referring to producing "individuals who have a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing". In the "Intercultural Understanding Capability" section students are required "to develop intercultural understanding as they learn to value their own cultures, languages and beliefs, and those of others."

There is no mention of religion or spirituality in the "Ethical Understanding Capability" section. Here certain ethical positions are taken as self-evident and there is specific mention of some: "human rights and responsibilities, animal rights, environmental issue and global justice". Later there

Response to the Australian Census over fifty years indicate this change. In 1966, 88 per cent of respondents identified as Christian. Fifty years later this has dropped to 52 per cent per cent. This space has not been taken by other religions as adherents of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism made up less than 6 per cent combined. Of those in the 18 to 34 age group 39 per cent ticked the 'No Religion' box.

However, this picture of declining belief is modified when one brings in the term 'Spiritual'. McCrindle Research do a regular survey of belief on behalf of Christian churches, with the latest conducted in 2017. The number of respondents in that survey who identified as Christian is comparable with the Census, but the survey introduces an additional category called 'Spiritual but not religious' which received a response from 14 per cent of those surveyed.

To what extent is religion and or spirituality addressed in the Australian Curriculum? Three main objectives of this article are:

- To demonstrate the lack of guidance in spirituality provided by the Australian Curriculum
- To explore the negative consequences of this shortcoming
- To indicate ways in which this may be addressed

But before doing so it is necessary to remove some potential obstacles to discussion by clarifying the use of the words 'secular' and 'faith'; and by distinguishing between 'religion' and 'spirituality'.

Some argue that in a 'secular society' any mention of religion should be avoided. But in Britain and the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries secular had quite a different meaning. It was actually introduced by Christians in order to create a space to follow one's personal religious beliefs and to preserve Christianity from Government interference. It was a recognition of the right to follow one's conscience and an awareness of human fallibility, an awareness that no one person had a monopoly on truth. This has now developed into freedom to practise any religion as long as it does not impact on the basic human rights of others.

When the Australian colonies introduced their systems of universal and secular public education in the 1880s it was understood that there would be a broad Christian approach within the curriculum, including readings and stories from the Bible and visits from Ministers of Religion. The Catholic decision to set up their own schools was not based on government schools being anti-Religion. Rather it was because they considered the religion taught as being too 'Protestant'.

'Faith' is also a word that needs clarification. Whatever religious or philosophical position one holds there is always an element of faith — a belief based on reason and one's personal experience but lacking ultimate proof. This is true whether it is Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Humanism or Atheism.

is another list: global warming, sustainable living and socioeconomic disparity. All of these deal with issues external to the individual and have little relationship to what it means for an individual to act ethically. Unfortunately, the recent behaviour of banks, cricketers and some politicians show that ethical behaviour is not always self-evident.

Failures of the written curriculum and why they matter

There are no strategies in the curriculum documents to provide guidance on putting the insights of religion and spirituality into practice. They provide no understanding of why some people are 'Climate Change deniers' or why at the Federal level both sides of Parliament have not been held accountable for their treatment of the plight of refugees on Manus Island.

To understand actions such as these, young people need to be aware of the propensity of humans to do evil, the reasons why hate can seem to be more powerful than love and to think about fate — why terrible things appear to happen to the moral and immoral indiscriminately.

Nor does the syllabus help comprehend a world where different religious faiths have to live together. The majority of those responsible for anti-Islam hysteria show little understanding of spirituality but are motivated more by the need to find some sense of identity in arousing hatred for others. On the other hand, it is among those Christians and Jews who have a sense of spirituality in which inter faith dialogues with Muslims can take place through finding shared values.

For adolescents there are also pressing immediate concerns. As they break free of their parent's influence they must rediscover their own identities. It can be a very difficult time when peer pressure comes into play and there is no shortage of those who want to provide false solutions, whether it is through material possessions, having a certain body image, participating in drug use, or even finding self-identification through bullying others.

Preliminary considerations

It is important that young people are enabled to have individual experiences that will open up the unique relationship of their self — or soul if you like — with that of the external world and to provide an intimation of transcendence. This is providing the first steps towards what C G Jung called Individuation, a lifelong process of discovering one's role in the universe.

Some schools offer time for practices such as meditation, but if we are truly concerned about education in the sense that Dewey saw it, as the growth of the individual, it is important that in whatever subject a student is involved they have an opportunity to reflect on their own understanding of the world, always questioning what may be treated as accepted wisdom.

Because spirituality is not explicit in the content of the Australian Curriculum, to explore these issues requires specific planning. Many religious schools do promote a broader definition of spirituality, but in some cases, religion can be seen by some students as something separate from the curriculum and in opposition to individual spirituality. In government schools conscious integration into the curriculum becomes even more important.

One needs to also consider that the formal curriculum is only experienced through the part played by individual teachers. What students experience at school is far more than the stated curriculum. Spirituality is often learnt not through hearing what someone says but through what one discovers in her or his relationships with others.

Around 2005 to 2008 I was involved with the Quality Teacher Awards program in NSW schools, run by the Australian College of Educators in co-operation with the state government. I was a member of a team assessing secondary school teachers. Assessing a teacher involved sitting in on lessons, personal interview of the teacher and discussions with their line managers. The process also involved discussions with students who had volunteered to be interviewed and with parents who were willing to come to the school. These sessions were often the most revealing. Three classroom teachers, all in government schools, come to mind: one was in English/History, another Home Economics and the third in Social Science faculties. Two schools were co-ed and one was a girls school with a significant Muslim population.

Students were enthusiastic to tell an adult how much their teacher meant to them. Their most common response was a recognition of how much their teacher cared for them and their desire to reciprocate this: "I had to do my best because I wanted to achieve what she expected of me and not let her down". I saw a single mother in tears as she told of her despair when her adolescent son had been moved from school to school, but his life turned around when this teacher took him under her wing. Looking back now I wish I had taken some time to explore how these teachers had developed these qualities. When there is a caring classroom, a caring faculty or a caring school developing spirituality becomes far easier.

Developing spirituality through classroom subjects

Many subjects offer opportunities to explore issues around spirituality. One that might not come to mind immediately is science. Amazing technological achievements have been achieved through following the scientific method, but at its heart there are mysteries: behind every answer lies another question. We can, for example, by imaging show the neurones in the brain that light up when we fear something — but this cannot distinguish between the instinctive fear of an antelope when it is being pursued by a lion, and the moral fear of having a crime one committed being discovered.

Or how can we explain that after "the Big Bang" and through the process of evolution a human mind was created that can actually look back over billions of years and uncover this process? As Einstein wrote in a U.S. science journal in 1936. "The eternal mystery of the world is its comprehensibility ... The fact that it is comprehensible is a miracle."

History also provides many opportunities. Once it becomes more than just a sequence of dates it can provide living accounts of the human potential for both good and evil. But dealing with its complexity requires knowledge, skill and sensitivity on the part of the teacher. History can be easy to teach badly, as satirised in '1066 and all that' with its "good" and "bad" kings.

Much of the anti-Islam propaganda relies on a very selective view of history. The rapid spread of Islam following the death of Mahomet was largely because it met a spiritual need among the Arabic speaking population of northern Africa and the Middle East following the decline of the rule of the Eastern Roman Empire.

History also reveals that religious faiths can live together. In the tenth century, Christians, Jews and Muslims studied together in Spain. Classical Greek and Roman writings only survived because it was here that they were translated into Arabic and then re-introduced to Europe prior to the Renaissance. When the Catholic rulers of Spain expelled Jews in 1492, the Jews were invited by the Islamic Ottoman Emperor to settle in Thessalonica, where a Jewish civilisation flourished for over 400 years. This was ended with Nazi invasion of Greece, when almost 60,000 were deported and most died in concentration camps.

The Holocaust also raises the question of how a nominally Christian nation — Germany — could participate in such atrocities. There are studies of the period that reveal German Christians who stood against Nazism at the cost of prison or, in the case of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, their life.

For an example closer to home we can look at the way post European Indigenous history is treated.

While it is important that the history of massacres be faced, it is also important to be aware of those Europeans who opposed this from earliest times and even more important to recognise that from the start Indigenous men and women refused to be victims and took control of their lives whenever opportunities arose.

Despair should be replaced by hope — another spiritual virtue.

This would mirror the approach of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Archbishop Desmond Tutu in post-Apartheid South Africa, where trying to be honest about the past was seen as the way to move forward. 'Differences' said the Archbishop, 'are not intended to separate, to alienate. We are different precisely in order to realise our need of one another.'

Literature, whether religious or secular, has always provided the opportunity to imagine other people's lives and in doing so to reflect on our own. The author Rebecca Mead has written a whole book — "My Life in Middlemarch" — in which she reflected on the influence that reading and re-reading George Eliot's novel had on her at various stages in her life.

All great religions have their literature: Parables of Jesus, stories from the Judaic Midrash, the writing of Islamic Mystics such as Rumi, the story of Arjuna going into battle from the beginning of the Bhagavad Gita or the stories of Zen Buddhism.

Year 12 students in all states are examined on a set of texts that are a mixture of classical and contemporary works, but the real challenge of the teacher is twofold: to provide an understanding of the texts themselves but also to establish a lifelong love of reading.

The Visual and Performing Arts can, by appealing the senses, provide the most direct path into the spiritual. In the contemporary world re-discovering the skills of concentration, seeing and listening must be developed. Imagine how a classroom could be transformed if all mobile phones were locked up and Arvo Pärt's *Spiegel im Spiegel* was played?

Further reading

These and other issues are explored in great depth in a 2010 publication by the College: *Meaning and Connectedness: Australian perspectives on education and spirituality* edited by Marian de Souza and Julie Rimes. It has had a major influence on the writing of this essay.

Biography

Ian Keese has degrees in Science (UNSW) and History (USYD) and has taught, predominantly in government schools, for 37 years, including 30 as head of History faculties. He has also been a major contributor to a series of textbooks on the Australian Curriculum. He has been Secretary of the NSW Branch of ACE and is a Fellow of the College.

Ceremonies for Change

Nicole Scott

It is important to expose students to information and experiences that they would otherwise not choose themselves.

My name is Nicole Scott and I am a secondary teacher of Humanities and Personal development Skills at Alkira Secondary College, which is a school in the outer South-Eastern Suburbs of Melbourne. In 2012 to 2013, I received a study-scholarship to Yad Vashem in Israel and I was honoured to have this opportunity. In 2018 to 2019 this same opportunity is available to thirty-five teachers from across Australia and I encourage all teachers to apply for this opportunity. Studying at Yad Vashem has changed my life, enabled life-long friendships and transformed the way that I view my role as an educator. It is important to expose students to information and experiences that they would otherwise not choose themselves. As a humanities teacher of the Year 7 to 10 curriculum, my students must investigate many atrocities from the past. My goal is to transform this violence and cruelty into an opportunity to learn from the past and resolve to work towards a more humane world. The project that I developed as a part of my time at Yad Vashem was to create a Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony so that students are more than investigators. The aims of the ceremony include not only remembering our heritage, but also celebrating the diversity experienced in our multi-cultural school and society, expressing gratitude that we live in a lucky country and finally empowering our students to take action; actions do make a difference.

In 2018, there will be the sixth Annual Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony. This will be run by the students of Alkira Secondary College and attended by special guests that will include local members of Parliament, the Mayor or representatives from the City of Casey, students from Mount Scopus Memorial College, volunteers from the organisation, Courage to Care and members of the Jewish Community. The Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony has become a part of our school culture and there is the expectation that it will be run by students every year.

This ceremony provides leadership opportunities for students from our school community. However, what is gained by our school and wider community from the annual running of the Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony is much greater. We are a part of a multi-cultural society where there is a range of differences between people, both economically and culturally.

The City of Casey, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, has eighty-five different languages spoken in an area of 407 square kilometres. ('City of Casey Community Profile', Available via <https://profile.id.com.au/casey>). We need to honour this diversity, eliminate prejudice and promote tolerance of all nationalities which the annual Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony aims to do or as Jorden noted "so we remember that we are all equal".

The aims of the Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony:

- To commemorate the victims who died.
- To annually run a ceremony remembering the Holocaust, for our school and community. As former School Captain Gul said, "today we stand in solidarity, not to just remember, but raise a collective voice against all injustice."
- Leaving students with a positive and lasting message.
- Inviting a survivor of genocide to speak as a part of the ceremony.
- Demonstrating respect for and even embracing differences – in beliefs, backgrounds or abilities. As an Alkira Secondary College student from 2014 wrote in reflection "Whoever you are, we can all make a difference as we are all human".

Why use a ceremony?

- Students will remember a ceremony that they have been actively involved in long after they have left school. If students don't have the opportunity to apply the knowledge that they have learned by passing it onto others, then there is a greater risk that it will be lost.
- After the ceremony, students feel empowered and motivated to take action.
- The special guests from the Jewish Community and local MPs add to the importance of the event for students.
- To break down stereotypes.
- To make the ceremony a part of the school culture with the expectation that it is run by students every year.
- To honour the memory of the six million Jewish people who perished in the period of the Holocaust by creating a remembrance event.
- To share our Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony with other schools and to connect with schools in the wider community.



Photographs taken during the ceremonies in 2015 and 2016

Format of the ceremony

INTRODUCTION:

Explain the importance of this ceremony and the significance of the date, read by the Master of Ceremonies.

BODY:

Start with a prayer, poem (can be written by one of the students) and guest speakers.

This is followed by the 'Reading of the Names'. Most of the six million Jews who were murdered during the Holocaust have not yet been identified. It is important to give these victims of the Holocaust a name and therefore an identity. In this part of the ceremony, the students light a candle from the person next to them and as the candle is lit, they say the name of the person that they have researched and are remembering from the Holocaust. A short period of silence is then observed.

CONCLUSION:

Students read out a personal reflection during this time or an excerpt from Anne Frank or Elie Wiesel. The Master of Ceremonies states 'We Will Remember Them' followed by the audience repeating this statement. All candles are then blown out, signifying the end of the ceremony. Guests then are welcome to write reflections in a special book that is kept for this event.

References

1. Courage to Care Victoria, Retrieved from <http://couragetocare.org.au>.
2. Courage to Care Vic Inc., 'Alkira College Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony 2015', Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHI2B533iXo>.
3. Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, 'For Educators', Retrieved from <http://www.hmd.org.uk/content/for-educators>.
4. ID Community, 'City of Casey Community Profile', Retrieved from <https://profile.id.com.au/casey>.
5. Jewish Holocaust Centre (2018), Retrieved from <http://www.jhc.org.au>.
6. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 'More Ways to Remember', Retrieved from <https://www.ushmm.org/remember/days-of-remembrance/more>.
7. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 'Names List Of Victims Of The Holocaust', Retrieved from <http://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20100114-dor-nameslist.pdf>.
8. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 'Organizing a Remembrance Event', Retrieved from <https://www.ushmm.org/remember/days-of-remembrance/organizing-a-remembrance-event>.
9. Yad Vashem, 'Ceremonies' (2018), The World Holocaust Remembrance Center, Retrieved from <http://www.yadvashem.org/education/educational-materials/ceremonies.html>.
10. Yad Vashem, 'Gandel Holocaust Studies Program For Australian Educators', The International School for Holocaust Studies, Retrieved from https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/international_projects/australian_educators/index.asp.
11. Yad Vashem, 'Shoah Victims' Names' (2018), The World Holocaust Remembrance Center, Retrieved from <http://www.yadvashem.org/archive/hall-of-names/shoah-victims-names.html>.

Biography

Nicole Scott teaches Humanities and VCAL at Alkira Secondary College. She has received a VCAL Program Development Award and two study grants to Gallipoli/Western Front in 2011 and Israel in 2013. Nicole regularly presents at VALA (Victorian Association of Applied Learning) and HTAV (History Teachers Association of Victoria) Conferences.

Ethan was involved in the Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony in 2015. Until his involvement in the ceremony, Ethan did not see himself as a leader. His involvement in the ceremony enabled Ethan and others, students and teachers alike to see Ethan as a leader. In 2016, Ethan was voted as the Vice-Captain of his school. This is part of Ethan's speech in 2016.

"When asked the question – How did taking part in this ceremony affect you? My answer is this. It has given me the chance to take all the opportunities that have opened up before me, cherish everything I have in life, no matter how big or small. It has made me realise, the problems we face today are miniscule in comparison to those faced by Jews seventy years ago and that I should never take anything for granted. We have to avoid becoming bystanders and stand up for injustice, no matter how distant these conflicts are from us."

The Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony has brought so much to the Alkira Secondary College community. My hope is for all schools throughout Australia and the World to spend time running ceremonies or other events annually to remember the Holocaust where injustice prevailed. Such an event does impart an important message – to encourage students to take a stand in their own lives against racism, bullying, discrimination and injustice.

General capabilities: Rhetoric, realities and relevance in the Australian Curriculum

Erin Canavan, Learning Support Teacher

In spite of the apparent 'lifelong and lifewide' role of the General Capabilities, the realities of professional knowledge, understanding and implementation in classrooms and schools have created a barrier to realising the richness of the rhetoric.

The political rationale for a '3 dimensional' national curriculum in Australia (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2012) focused heavily on the need for an educational framework that reflected the dynamic, complex and ever-changing nature of a globalised world. Despite the compelling argument for this curriculum at its inception, the realities of implementing the content dimension has left the General Capabilities and Cross Curriculum Priorities clouded in conceptual and practical uncertainty. This article explores the rationale behind the inclusion of the General Capabilities, their nebulous role within the Australian Curriculum and their current relevance within the broader, performative culture of national education.

Intrinsically significant in the construction of this multidimensional curriculum was the need for a 'future focus'. A recurring theme within the broader policy context of the national curriculum is the positioning of the General Capabilities as the mechanism to actualise this future orientation (Atweh & Singh, 2011). Perhaps most significantly, the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA, 2008] conceptualised the General Capabilities as an essential repertoire of skills required to navigate

both higher education and the world of work. In spite of the apparent 'lifelong and lifewide' role of the General Capabilities, the realities of professional knowledge, understanding and implementation in classrooms and schools have created a barrier to realising the richness of the rhetoric.

Indeed, the substantial differences between the General Capabilities in theory and practice raises significant questions around the reality of their role in teaching and learning. In a qualitative study of secondary school teachers' interpretation and implementation of the General Capabilities, Skourdoumbis (2016) concluded that, despite an awareness of the General Capabilities, teachers didn't consistently integrate them into their planning and teaching. Menzies and Willis (2013) reached a similar conclusion in their exploration of strategies to implement the General Capabilities in middle years English classrooms, arguing the importance of professional development surrounding the General Capabilities as a tool to build teachers' capacity, and ultimately enhance student learning. However, the economic and temporal restrictions that can impede access to professional development create a significant hurdle to ensuring that the General Capabilities can fulfil their substantive and "significant" (ACARA, n.d.) role within the curriculum.



Lastly, the disparity between the assumptions and actualisation of the General Capabilities raises questions not only in regards to their relevance to teaching and learning, but their contribution to the climate of education more broadly. Indeed, the skills and dispositions underlying the General Capabilities – none of which are strictly 'assessable' – are being overshadowed by the sharp and narrow focus on performativity (Lyotard, 1984) that is dominating political discourse on Australian education. In a critical analysis of the Rudd government's educational agenda, Lingard (2010) identified a correlation between an educational climate that is predicated on student performance and reaching benchmarks in standardised tests, and the restrictions this regime could impose upon curriculum and pedagogy. The gaps or absences in teacher knowledge about the General Capabilities illustrates the increasing parochiality of Australian education, reframing the supposedly 'holistic' curriculum into a narrow and unidimensional construct. Ultimately, these contradictions and differences beg the question: What role do the General Capabilities play within planning, teaching and the curriculum more broadly, other than to substantiate political claims of a "world-class" (MCEETYA, 2008 p.10) education system?

The narrative of a cohesive, interactive and holistic framework for an Australian curriculum that was once woven in political rhetoric is unravelling. The General Capabilities, theorised as a critical skill set needed to navigate and contribute to a 'brave new world' of vocational, technological and social change, have been subsumed by more pressing, data-driven systemic imperatives. As a result, the General Capabilities rest on the periphery of the curriculum, a paradox of assumptions and actuality that might not be reconciled.

References

- Atweh, B., & Singh, P. (2011). The Australian curriculum: Continuing the national conversation. *Australian Journal of Education*, 55(3), 189-196. doi: 10.1177/000494411105500302
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA]. (2012). *The shape of the Australian curriculum: Version 4.0* Retrieved from http://docs.acara.edu.au/resources/The_Shape_of_the_Australian_Curriculum_v4.pdf
- Lyotard, J.F. (1984). *The postmodern condition: a report on knowledge*. Retrieved 10 January, 2018 from <http://www.scholar.google.com>
- Menzie, K., & Willis, L. (2013). A practical approach to developing the general capabilities in middle-years English. *Literacy Learning: the middle years*, 21(2), 21-24. Retrieved from <http://www.scholar.google.com>
- Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA]. (2008). *Melbourne declaration of educational goals for young Australians*. Retrieved 8 January, 2018 from http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/National_Declaration_on_the_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf
- Skourdoumbis, A. (2016). Articulations of teaching practice: A case study of teachers and "general capabilities". *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 17(4), 545-554. doi: 10.1007/s12564-016-9460-7

Biography

Erin Canavan is a Learning Support Teacher based in Stanthorpe, Queensland. She has teaching experience in mainstream and special education contexts, and is currently studying her Masters' degree in Special Education.

Tech Column

The Agile Educator

Sue Beveridge MACE and SMART ANZ Education Advisor

Community expectations on educators are increasing and accelerated by the pace of technological change. It is becoming obvious that educators need to become agile in responding to change, focusing on preparing their students for a future which we can only begin to imagine.

In the software world agile software development describes an approach under which requirements and solutions evolve through the collaborative effort of self-organizing and cross-functional teams and their end users. It advocates adaptive planning, evolutionary development, early delivery, and continual improvement, and it encourages rapid and flexible response to change. These processes at the school level may assist educators to be effective in addressing the needs of their students.

Futurists and agencies such as The World Bank and Deloitte point to the fact that work as we know it will be disrupted by artificial intelligence and robotics and most professions will be impacted. Preparing students for a future world that cannot even be imagined means that we will need to prepare students differently.

The OECD recently released paper, "The Future of Education and Skills Education 2030" <http://www.oecd.org/education/2030/oecd-education-2030-position-paper.pdf> described the skills and learning that students will need for 2030.

"Education has a vital role to play in developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable people to contribute to and benefit from an inclusive and sustainable future. Learning to form clear and purposeful goals, work with others with different perspectives, find untapped opportunities and identify multiple solutions to big problems will be essential in the coming years. Education needs to aim to do more than prepare young people for the world of work; it needs to equip students with the skills they need to become active, responsible and engaged citizens."

The USA's Office of Educational Technology's Future Ready Learning document states that

"All learners will have engaging and empowering



learning experiences in both formal and informal settings that prepare them to be active, creative, knowledgeable, and ethical participants in our globally connected society."

"To be successful in our daily lives and in a global workforce, Americans need pathways to acquire expertise and form meaningful connections to peers and mentors. This journey begins with a base of knowledge and abilities that can be augmented and enhanced throughout our lives. Fortunately, advances in learning sciences have provided new insights into how people learn.¹ Technology can be a powerful tool to reimagine learning experiences on the basis of those insights."

In Australia, The Gonski 2.0 Report (2018) states that "Australian students are living in a world of profound change. New revolutionary technologies, including automation and artificial intelligence, are reshaping our economy and society, changing the way students will live, work, and interact. Schooling in Australia needs to be responsive to these shifts."

"By the end of schooling, every Australian child needs to emerge as a connected and engaged

learner, prepared to succeed in and contribute to a rapidly changing world. This means students must have acquired the basic building blocks of learning, in particular literacy and numeracy skills. They must also have a range of skills providing the job resilience required to be able to adapt and respond to fast-shifting education and workforce needs."

"The Australian economy is relying more and more on skilled workers. This is being driven by a decline in the share of routine jobs, both manual and cognitive, as a proportion of all jobs since the mid-1980s. A key driver of this trend is the increasing capacity of technology to automate routine work. This work is found in industries across the economy. It can be predominantly cognitive in nature with a high proportion of repetitive administrative tasks, such as bookkeeping, clerical work, or manual work that features a high component of precise, well-understood procedures or 'routines', such as a production worker in a manufacturing plant. Non-routine jobs, on the other hand, involve abstract problem solving, organisational and managerial activities or activities that involve physical adaptability and social interactions, which are less able to be replicated by technology. Advances in automation technology will continue to drive this trend away from routine tasks and towards interactive, highly skilled work, which in turn will have an impact on the type of skills a worker needs to increase the chance of employment."

Our students will need SEL skills according to the OECD, STEM skills and many argue creativity to be able to solve the problems that the world will face. We currently can't imagine a world where students entering school today may not even need a driver's licence.

However, it is apparent that people will need to be able to work collaboratively, to be flexible and to deal with increasing change, creatively. We also know that technology will play a key role in the future as it has in disrupting the world in the last decade. Who would have imagined YouTube, SMART Phones, Facebook, Airbnb, Uber or the policy fall out from these disrupters including "fake news", loss of privacy and misuse of personal data?

Because the pace of change is so great it is important for educators to be agile. We know through research such as the Quality Teaching Model that effective pedagogy includes "significance". In other words, a way for teachers to link the formal learning specified in the curriculum to the informal world of students' learning and interests. For instance, teachers can set assignments for students to do collaboratively at home using the social networking tools they use. Teachers can use flipped learning strategies using YouTube to enable students to learn at home and use their classrooms or learning spaces for deep learning, performances and collaborative projects.

Agile teachers will also be open to the changes around them and incorporate new ideas into their



practices. They will be aware of industries such as the Video Game Industry which employs thousands of people worldwide across a range of disciplines and weave elements of this industry into their practice to engage their students. They will for instance ask students to review games, to use their critical literacy skills to understand who is not represented in the game. They may use some of the gaming strategies ask students to develop games, use levels of achievement and basically "make learning fun".

As SEL skills will be what employers are looking for it will be important for teachers to find creative ways to inspire students to use their social and emotional skills. To solve real world problems, to understand the dynamics of human relationships Hattie's research emphasizes the importance of teacher feedback and making learning visible. Technology can enable this in ways that were previously not possible.

At a professional development event at Queensland's Sheldon College, awarded as one of the most innovative schools in Australia in 2017, two teachers from the College presented examples of their classroom practice. The teachers described how they were using technology in their classrooms, and importantly its impacts. They described differentiating learning and using classroom software applications that enabled them to continuously diagnose the students' learning needs.

Mrs. Rebecca Woolnough demonstrated how, as a Digital Pedagogy Coach within the College, she used the SMART Learning Suite On line as an enabling tool for working within and across classes. Mrs. Woolnough was able to walk into any classroom and share her units of work with any teacher across the school. A unit of work that she had developed on "Time" for her students illustrated the benefits of the software for providing feedback and effectively differentiating the curriculum.

Using SMART Response, Mrs. Woolnough was able to assess her students' understanding of digital and analogue time and immediately group them according to ability. Once she had grouped the students, she was able to differentiate the curriculum for them, pushing appropriate activities



to their iPads to suit their learning needs. She highlighted the speed in which she could gather data about her students' understanding and in terms of the SMART model she saw this as transforming her practice.

Miss Anita Fitzpatrick described her lesson sequence in the following way. She wanted her students to improve the introductions to their narrative writing. She used the following process with amazing results. Miss Fitzpatrick selected game-based activity to display on her SMART Board where story titles could be generated. She organized her students into small groups using the SMART class.lab software to push content to their iPads.

The students worked in three teams enhancing the quality of their introductions. As they shared these to the SMART Board, the three teams could transparently see how the other teams were using more complex, accurate, descriptive words and applied them or added them to their own sentences quickly learning from each other.

They had three rotations of this process and Miss Fitzpatrick said the improvements in their syntax and semantic choices were immediately visible. Using the screenshot function of their iPads, the students then shared their narrative introductions using their Seesaw accounts with their parents.

During this group activity Miss Fitzpatrick was able to mentor the teams, assist with clarification of word meanings, and view the rapid development of their writing. The speed and efficiency with which this occurred was surprising. In a pen and paper world the same activity would have taken weeks. The students would have laboriously written sentences that she would have had to edit at home and then return to them to rewrite and improve. The time between the assessment and feedback from the set task has often disconnected the learner from the learning purpose. Miss Fitzpatrick would also have been the single source for the editing. However, with the digital task, all students were reading the sentences and collaborating to improve their work, thereby understanding immediately how descriptive words could make their introductions richer. These examples of highly effective teaching practice illustrate a focus on achievement through learning

growth for all students, tailored teaching based on ongoing formative assessment and feedback enabling students to progress to higher levels of achievement whilst engaging parents in their children's learning.

Sheldon College has created the conditions and culture to enable their teachers to be agile, giving teachers time to collaborate and plan, encouraging rapid and flexible response to change.

Teachers need support to be agile! They need effective and ongoing professional development to see and cope with the rapid change. Teachers across Australia are therefore invited to the Inspire Greatness Conference October 11 and 12, 2018 at Abbotsleigh School.

Reference list

U.S. Department of Education. (2013). U.S. Department of Education strategic plan for fiscal years 2014–2018. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/strat/plan2014-18/strategic-plan.pdf>.

OECD (2015), Skills for Social Progress: The Power of Social and Emotional Skills, OECD Skills Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264226159-en>.

OECD (2017), "PISA 2015 Collaborative Problem-Solving Framework", <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/Draft%20PISA%202015%20Collaborative%20Problem%20Solving%20Framework%20.pdf> (accessed on 14 December 2017).

Australian Government (2018), Through Growth to Achievement Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools March 2018.

This regular column is sponsored by SMART



In Memory

Fr John Williams AM

Written by **Dr Pru Francis** FACE

The death on May 9, 2018 of College Fellow Fr John Williams AM marks the loss of a significant contributor to the educational story in Australia.

John Williams was a Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Hobart and from 1972 until 1994 was Director of Catholic Education in Tasmania. His considerable talent was recognized early on the national scene and from 1974 until his retirement as Director he was a member of the National Catholic Education Commission. He was Chairman of the NCEC from 1979 until 1985. He contributed to the wider educational endeavour through membership of the Australian Catholic Commission for Industrial Relations, the Commonwealth Committee on Facilities for non-Government Schools, was a long time Chair and member of the Teachers and Schools Registration Board of Tasmania and a member of the Faculty of Education, University Centre for Education (now UTAS). Fr Williams was elected a Fellow of ACE in 1985.

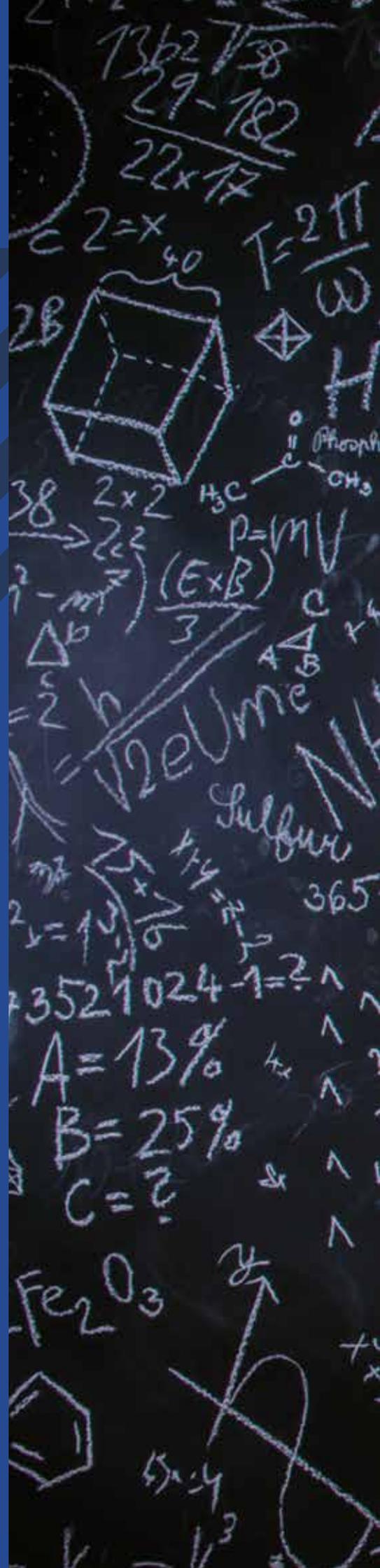
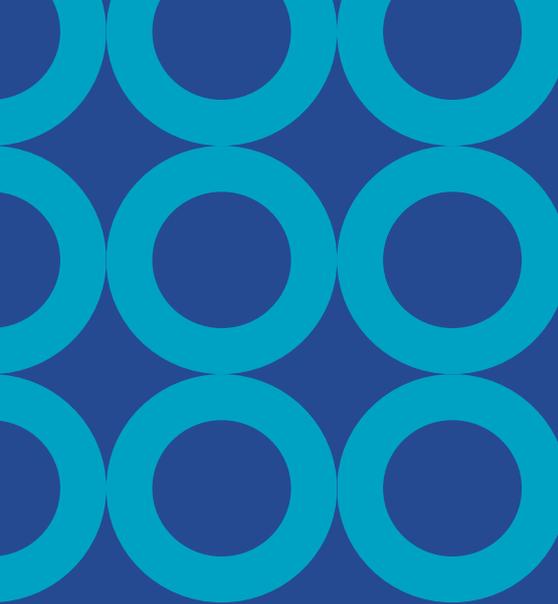
The establishment of the Commonwealth (later Australian) Schools Commission in 1973 was a punctuation point in the history of Australian Education. Commissioners were drawn from all sectors and all parts of the country and John's appointment in 1980 was defining for him. The interests of a particular sector had to be laid aside in favour of an 'eyes open' approach to educational provision. He travelled to all parts of the country talking with teachers, students and administrators and these experiences cemented his commitment to educational equality. Former College President Dr Lyndsay Connors AM was a member of the Commission at the same time and says of him "John Williams had that connection with how policies actually play out in schools, in a very direct way- it makes your views far more ethical and rational as well as being grounded in reality". Being a member of the Schools Commission and the NCEC called for a particular response. He was one of those people who was able to influence political stances because he had the attitude that he could work with government, not just fight government, and as a result a different sort of political advocacy resulted. John Williams was able to recognize that confrontation would not lead to change. He understood that finding common ground was the means to progress. He maintained a focus on quality education provision for all Australian students, not just students in the Catholic sector. It was this guiding principle that marked the significance of his contribution.

John Williams was intellectually strong with a very good quantitative brain, able to grasp the technical complexities around funding models and he was able to engage with high-level officials as an equal. John Williams had the capacity to articulate what a particular funding model would mean for a student in a classroom. The issues around Commonwealth and State funding for all students changed significantly during his period as both Director in Tasmania and Chair of the NCEC.

In Tasmania he oversaw a period of significant changes, most notably the systemization of Catholic schools. The impetus for systemization came from the need to distribute Commonwealth and eventually State recurrent grants. John Williams knew that it was in the best interests of Catholic education employees to be able to bargain to reach agreed conditions of service that were just for both schools and their staff members and he encouraged lay staff to investigate and form their own association. This group then expanded independently of the Catholic Education Office. The restructuring of Catholic Secondary Education in Tasmania was first initiated in the 1970's and continued until the 1990's with the establishment of a Catholic Senior Secondary College in Hobart.

The Hon John Carrick, former Minister for Education (who also died recently) said of John Williams "During my time as Commonwealth Minister for Education (1975-79), I had close contact with Father Williams and came to know and respect his skills and dedication.. his was no easy task. The challenge to achieve social justice in the funding of non-government schools has been a heavy one, indeed, one with which I have been happily associated over four decades and still remain so. John Williams combined an attractive personality with a keen intellect, and a quiet persistence which signalled his sincerity." (1993)

In 1995 he returned to Parish life. These years were rich for him and his pastoral approach was one of enabling and care. He continued his involvement in College activities through membership of the Tasmanian Executive and Fellowship Committee as well as attendance at College functions. He will be remembered as a good man with an acute mind. Vale Fr John Williams AM FACE



National Board

Chair & National President

Dr Phil Lambert MACE

Immediate Past President

Professor Diane Mayer MACE

Board Members

Dr Jill Abell MACE (TAS)

Dr Anne Coffey MACE (WA)

Mr Luke Ralph (QLD) – Co-Opted

Associate Professor David Paterson FACE (ACT)

Associate Professor John Quay MACE

National Council

Chair

Dr Phil Lambert MACE (NSW)

Council Members

Dr Jill Abell MACE (TAS)

Dr Joan Conway MACE (QLD)

Dr Anne Coffey MACE (WA)

Associate Professor David Paterson FACE (ACT)

Mr Jason Locke MACE (SA)

Associate Professor John Quay MACE (VIC)

Chief Executive Officer

Ms Helen Jentz

National Office

Level 5, 100 Leicester Street, Carlton, VIC
PO Box 12014 A'Beckett Street, VIC 8006

03 9035 5473

ace@austcolled.com.au

www.austcolled.com.au

Publisher's disclaimer

Copyright: No part of this publication can be used or reproduced in any format without express permission in writing from the Australian College of Educators. The mention of a product or service, person or company in this publication, does not mean endorsement. The views expressed in all articles in this publication are not necessarily those of the Australian College of Educators (ACE), they are published in this journal in the spirit of open discussion on educational issues.

Professional Educator is produced by the Australian College of Educators with the assistance of the ACE Publications Working Group:

ACE Publications Working Group

Working Group Chair

Dr Julie Rimes FACE

Working Group Deputy Chair

Associate Professor Judith Dinham MACE

Working Group Members

Dr Bruce Addison MACE

Dr Lynda MacLeod MACE

Dr Matthew D Norris MACE

Mr Alex Wharton MACE

Letters to the Editor should be directed to profed@austcolled.com.au

Comments for DebatED should be directed to debatED@austcolled.com.au

ACE reserves the right to include comments received in ACE publications and promotional materials at their discretion.

ACE's preferred printing and distribution partner Greenridge Press, Toowoomba, Queensland