

Friday 25 October 2019

Education Updates

Victoria invests in brightest students

The Victorian Government has announced that it is investing \$60 million to challenge and extend high-achieving students in government schools. [Click here to read more...](#)

New governance model being developed for Catholic schools

Melbourne Archbishop Peter Comensoli's office has confirmed that it is working with parishes to change the way Catholic schools in the archdiocese are governed. [Click here to read more...](#)

Maths to be compulsory to Year 12 in New South Wales schools

The New South Wales Government has announced that mathematics will be compulsory 'from Kindergarten to Year 12' to ensure that students have the 'numeracy skills required to succeed in today's society'. [Click here to read more...](#)

Student voice added to VCAA board

Victorian Education Minister James Merlino says appointing a recent school graduate to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority board has put the perspectives of young people 'at the heart of decision making about the VCE curriculum'. [Click here to read more...](#)

Applications open for study tour of Greece

Years 9, 10 and 11 students at all Victorian schools can now apply to take part in the Premier's Spirit of Democracy Prize, to 'deepen their understanding of civics and citizenship'. [Click here to read more...](#)

Parents group calls for views on how schools communicate

The Australian Parents Council is asking parents of school-aged children to take part in a nationwide survey on education issues. [Click here to read more...](#)

The Final Quarter given to schools to raise awareness about the impact of racism

Shark Island Productions, the Australian Human Rights Commission and Reconciliation Australia are making a documentary about the last three years of Sydney AFL player Adam Goodes's footballing career freely available to all schools. [Click here to read more...](#)

Please visit the Independent Schools Victoria website for seminars for [Term 4, 2019](#).

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Victoria invests in brightest students

The Victorian Government has announced that it is investing \$60 million to challenge and extend high-achieving students in all government schools.

Victorian Education Minister [James Merlino said](#) that the Student Excellence Program would challenge the students to stop them from disengaging from their education and help them reach their potential.

Mr Merlino said that up to 100,000 students will have access to a series of extension opportunities at universities, tech schools, art galleries, zoos and organisations such as the CSIRO. Up to 48,000 students in the middle years will be able to take part in a 10-week intensive course through Virtual School Victoria.

A teacher at each school will be offered a leading role, coordinating the program in the school. Teachers will also be able to access online professional learning and evidence-based teaching resources.

- \$60m Smart Class. Ashley Argoon, *Herald Sun*, 24 October 2019
- Reach for full potential. Editorial, *Herald Sun*, 25 October 2019

New governance model being developed for Catholic schools

Melbourne [Archbishop Peter Comensoli's office has confirmed](#) it is working with parishes to change the way Catholic schools in the archdiocese are governed.

The Age reported that the church was looking to take responsibility for Catholic schools from parish priests, which includes the appointment of principals and hiring of staff, and give it to a new not-for-profit organisation to be led by the archbishop.

The Victorian Government's response to the [Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse](#) has changed the legal and compliance landscape for schools and religious organisations in the state. In June 2018, [it closed a legal loophole known as the 'Ellis defence'](#) that had prevented child abuse survivors from suing some organisations for their abuse.

Archbishop Comensoli said that clergy and principals had been working together on a new governance model for Catholic schools since early October and that the new governance model would be in place by January 2021.

The president of the Victorian Association of Catholic Primary School Principals, Michael Gray, told *The Age* the change would increase public confidence in Catholic schools.

He said that schools were increasingly complex and that examining governance would help ensure that 'schools are great places of learning and teaching and also accountable to the general community'.

- Parishes stripped of school control. Adam Carey, *The Age*, 24 October 2019

Maths to be compulsory to Year 12 in New South Wales schools

The [New South Wales \(NSW\) Government has announced](#) that mathematics will be compulsory 'from Kindergarten to Year 12 to ensure that students have the 'numeracy skills required to succeed in today's society'.

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian said that her government had promised to take the state's curriculum 'back to basics' and the first step was prioritising maths. She said:

My vision is for every child in NSW to have the necessary maths skills to succeed in life, whether that's managing home budgets or preparing them for the jobs of the future in science, technology and engineering.

The announcement follows the release of the [Interim Report into the NSW Curriculum Review](#), which NSW Education Minister [Sarah Mitchell said](#) was the first 'to be done in 30 years'.

- Maths to be mandatory in senior years. Jordan Baker, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 October 2019
- Maths set to be compulsory to end of school. Rebecca Urban, *The Australian*, 24 October 2019

Student voice added to VCAA board

Victorian Education Minister [James Merlino says](#) appointing a recent school graduate to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) board has put the perspectives of young people 'at the heart of decision making about the VCE curriculum'.

Mr Merlino said that the former MacRobertson Girls' High School student, Ms Aayushi Khillan, was 'aware of the issues facing students both at school and in their transition to further education and work'.

He said:

If we want to get the most out of our students, we need to listen to them. Young people are in the best position to understand the pressures they experience and the opportunities they want.

– Student voice on study board. Adam Carey, *The Age*, 21 October 2019

Applications open for study tour of Greece

Years 9, 10 and 11 students at all Victorian schools can apply to take part in the Premier's Spirit of Democracy Prize, to 'deepen their understanding of civics and citizenship'.

Up to 22 successful applicants will travel to Greece during the Term 1 school holidays in 2020 to take part in a 'curriculum immersion program'.

Applicants are asked to write about democracy, drawing on the work of classical Greek thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle, and exploring 'the role, history and evolution of democracy and how it has shaped Australia and Victoria'.

Victorian Education Minister James Merlino said: 'Understanding the origin and evolution of democracy will help our students better understand the way contemporary Australia and Victoria operate.'

Applications close on Thursday 12 December 2019.

For more information, or to apply, visit the [Spirit of Democracy Prize webpage](#).

Parents group calls for views on how schools communicate

The Australian Parents Council (APC) is asking parents of school-aged children to take part in a nationwide survey on education issues.

APC says that it is an apolitical organisation representing parents with children at non-government schools. It says its 2019 survey, about the ways schools and teachers communicate and share information with families, gives parents a great opportunity to 'have a say and help improve the way parents and schools work together'.

APC says that Australian Education Minister Dan Tehan supports the survey, and that he said 'parents know their children better than anyone, so their feedback is vitally important to help further improve our education system'.

The survey takes just a few minutes to complete, and closes at the end of November. [You can take part in the survey here](#).

The Final Quarter donated to schools

Shark Island Productions the Australian Human Rights Commission and Reconciliation Australia are making a documentary about the last three years of Sydney AFL player Adam Goodes's footballing career freely available to all schools.

The documentary, *The Final Quarter*, explores the national debate in the final period of the footballer's career, showing 'what was seen and what was heard' in newspapers, on television, and online.

The film's director, Ian Darling, said the film would be accompanied by free education resources aligned to the Australian Curriculum.

'We've focused our free education campaign on schools and sporting clubs, so the next generation of young Australians has a greater awareness about racism and its impact,' he said.

The film, along with the educational material, can be downloaded at [The Final Quarter website](#).