$100 million Sporting Grants
Schools across the country can now apply for funding grants as a part of the Federal government's $100 million Sporting Schools program aimed to get more children fit, healthy and involved in sport earlier in life.

Minister for Health and Sport, Sussan Ley, has announced that over 2000 primary schools have registered for the program and could now apply for funding to provide before, during and after school hours sporting programs.

More information can be found at: https://www.sportingschools.gov.au/

Bystanders by Valerie Volk

Last week I had the opportunity to attend the Adelaide book launch for Valerie Volk’s latest book Bystanders. This book takes the readers into the observations and thoughts of biblical bystanders – fifteen absorbing characters on the edges of familiar biblical events.

At the 2015 LCA General Synod in Brisbane, this book will receive a Brisbane launch. I look forward to speaking at this event and acknowledging Valerie’s deep insights and engaging writing in Bystanders.

I encourage you to purchase a copy/ies for your library and also for your local ministry team members, as Bystanders presents an excellent resource for staff Bible studies and discussions.

LLL Interest Rate change
The LLL recently advised that the interest rate on Savings Accounts will be 3.00% per annum from 1 June 2015. This interest rate applies to all LLL interest bearing Savings Accounts.

This interest rate change is due to an extended period of historically low interest rates in the current economic environment.

LLL depositors provide substantial benefits to the LCA via their Savings Accounts, and this interest rate reduction will enable the LLL to continue to maximise support to the LCA, its congregations, schools, aged care facilities etc, while also returning a reasonable rate of interest to depositors.

If you would like more information about how LLL accounts support the Church, please read our Together in mission and Annual report publications, which are available on the LLL website (www.lll.org.au) or by contacting the LLL office.

We sincerely thank all depositors for their continued support of the Church via their LLL Savings Accounts. We thank God for the many blessings that He provides, and for continuing to bless the work of the LLL as we support the mission of the Church.

For more information contact the LLL office 08 8360 7200 or visit our website www.lll.org.au

LEA Retirement Service Awards
LEA Service Awards are now known as LEA Retirement Service Awards to avoid any confusion with regional awards which recognise significant service milestones. Schools are strongly encouraged to nominate staff who will retire this year for an LEA Retirement Service Award. Eligible staff will have served in Lutheran schools for 20 years or more. The nomination form and further information is available on the LEA website at http://www.lutheran.edu.au/assets/Uploads/pr/policies/Awards%20Scholarships/ServiceAward.pdf

LEA Service Learning
The recent LEA service learning study tour to Melbourne provided deep and rich learning experiences for the twelve participants. The tour included: developing understandings about Service learning with Br Damien Price, a justice walk to raise awareness on issues such as gambling, people trafficking and homelessness, biblical perspectives on service with Neville Griege and a visit to Star of the Sea school to learn about a whole school approach to justice and service. If there was significant interest another study tour could be offered late in term 3. If you are interested please let me know, anne.dohnt@lutheran.edu.au

Directors and Officers insurance cover
The following is an extract from an email received from AON, insurance brokers for the Lutheran Insurance Fund.

AHISA (Association of Heads of Independent Schools in Australia) has sent information to members alerting them to potential lack of support and/or insurance once a Principal leaves their employment. AHISA recommends members ensure their current Directors & Officers insurance covers them, and to also ensure they have protection and/or insurance coverage once they leave their employment.

The email from AHISA provides legal opinion and advises College Principals to take the following actions:
1. Ensure that your Directors’ and Officers’ Liability Insurance is current and includes reference to former Heads in its coverage as well as the current Head and Directors.
2. Put in place (on behalf of your Directors and yourself) a Deed of Indemnity, Insurance and Access. This will protect you once you have left the school should an issue arise.

In short, the LCA Insurance Fund D&O policy protects all past, present (& future) Directors & Officers within Lutheran Education. It does not matter whether a Deed of Indemnity is in place between the College and former Director/Officer. It will continue to protect such Directors and Officers, as long as the LCA renews this policy every year.

LEA Federal News
ACARA Update
[3 June 2015]
The June 2015 issue includes:
• First step to uncrowd the Australian Curriculum
• Public consultation: Turkish and Hindi language curricula
Since when has NAPLAN been a house price guide?

David Zyngier [recently] provided a curious contribution to a discussion about schools and education. It was curious on several levels, not least because it's unusual for a university lecturer in education to offer advice on house prices and financial investments......

Zyngier’s starting point was an article published by the financial advice service finder.com. He said the article showed that "living in the zone of an excellent public school was not necessarily out of the reach of even lower earning families". He judged these schools to be "excellent" based on their NAPLAN literacy and numeracy test results. He then compared these results to those of "elite" independent schools, and advised "lower earning families" that they would make a better financial and educational investment if they bought or rented housing in the catchment zones of "high achieving" public schools.

His argument concluded with an arid ideological point - that any money spent on independent schools is wasted......

I'm not an expert on the property market, so I won't presume to give advice on real estate......

I take issue with him, however, when he advises parents to use NAPLAN as the measure of a school's excellence and as the basis for deciding which school they should send their children to......

His argument is evidence of a worrying trend in commentary about schools and the value of education, which reduces the rich range of experiences children receive every day at every school to a single consideration - how they perform in NAPLAN. This tendency often involves compiling simplistic league tables of NAPLAN results.

These comparisons fail to grasp two fundamental points, that NAPLAN is designed to help teachers identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual students, so teachers can work to improve the outcomes for those students; and that education is about much more than NAPLAN results.

[Extracts from article by Michelle Green, chief executive. Independent Schools Victoria].

Read the full article

New research confirms value of independent schooling

Australian research analysing the tertiary entrance performance of over 40,000 Victorian students, published yesterday by the Australian Journal of Education, has confirmed that independent schools substantially add value to their students' academic performance, even after allowing for students' socio-economic background and prior achievement.

'Recent claims that there is no academic benefit for students in attending an independent school are wrong,' said Mr Geoff Ryan, the Chief Executive of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia. "The analysis undertaken by Dr Gary Marks found that, on average, attendance at an independent school adds eight points to a student’s ATAR score, even after allowing for their SES and Year 9 achievement," said Mr Ryan. ‘This is consistent with the findings of every study of Year 12 results against Year 9 or Year 10 test results undertaken since 1999.'

Read the full media release

Commitment to Education Act compliance protects students

The Australian Government today reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring all schools that receive Commonwealth funding operate in the best interests of their students. Minister for Education and Training, the Hon Christopher Pyne MP, said his department has been monitoring for some time the activities of the six non-government schools affiliated with the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC). “We have been liaising with state education authorities since a number of concerns were identified relating to financial management and governance at the schools, as well as the role of AFIC in administration of the schools,” Mr Pyne said.

Read the full media release

New AITSL board appointed

The Minister for Education and Training, the Hon Christopher Pyne MP, has welcomed new appointments to the Board of the Australian Institute of Teaching and School
Leadership (AITSL). “The Australian Government is absolutely committed to improving the quality of teacher training - the most important factor affecting student performance,” Mr Pyne said. “AITSL plays a pivotal role in implementing the Government's response to the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group report Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers.”

Read the full media release