NAPLAN

Last week’s edition of The Weekend Australian (20-21 August 2015) contained a lift-out section titled Your school. This 16 page supplement contained detailed reporting on the 2014 NAPLAN results (www.theaustralian.com.au/yourschool). It endeavours to list the nation’s top primary, secondary, co-ed, boys, girls and other divisions of schools. It even suggests the top schools by state/territory.

John Hattie, prominent education researcher, suggests current education policies aren’t improving our place in world education rankings because we are appealing to what parents want rather than doing what we know works in education. He identifies five distractions we tend to focus on that have little or no effect on improving education outcomes:

1. Appeasing the parents
2. Fixing the infrastructure
3. Fixing the students
4. Fixing the schools, and,
5. Fixing the teachers

Rather than label these quick fixes as distractions, it may be better to reform the debate and examine why, and indeed if, parents are concerned about Australia’s place in world rankings.

While Lutheran schools will inevitably have to participate in NAPLAN, how can we use this activity for the good of our schools and system? How can LEA and the regions better support each of our 85 Lutheran schools improve the quality of teaching and learning, engagement of students / parents / teachers and provide opportunities for deep learning in our Lutheran setting?

LEA and the regions have not gone down the road of analysing, publicising and comparing NAPLAN results. Clearly, with both the Coalition and Labor committed to continuing NAPLAN and the MySchool website, the College of Directors will be discussing the Lutheran education view of NAPLAN at its next meeting in August.

Interestingly, the only time LEA has gathered all Australian Lutheran school NAPLAN results, the following national data emerged:

Additionally, LEA has been offered, via both the federal Department of Education and also ACARA, an opportunity for all of our 85 Lutheran schools to be involved in the 2016 NAPLAN Online Pilot Program. This matter has also been referred to the August 2015 CoD meeting. It is planned that NAPLAN online will be the norm as from 2017. If CoD and Lutheran schools agree to participate in 2016, it would provide for us, as well as the Department of Education and ACARA, data on the areas of strength and also areas of need in running NAPLAN online in relation to people, internet connection, ICT resources.
and infrastructure resources. It will also give LEA an opportunity to apply for financial support to ensure all Lutheran schools are adequately prepared for 2017 NALPAN online.

Both the Department of Education and ACARA have assured LERA that their interest is school and system resource readiness and adequacy for NAPLAN online and that ANAPLAN results, schools and systems, will remain the business of these entities.

If you have a view on these matters, please contact me (leadirector@lutheran.edu.au) to assist CoD with its consideration of:
- Lutheran school annual national NAPLAN results cf. all Australian schools
- 2016 NAPLAN Online Pilot Program participation by all 85 Australian Lutheran schools

**ALWS Nepal Appeal**

Some weeks ago LEA News promoted the ALWS Nepal Earthquake Appeal. ALWS informed us this week that $24,177.45 was raised by 16 Lutheran schools (and one Qld Lutheran college outdoor education centre). Thank you, on behalf of ALWS, for your positive willingness to take up this urgent and significant cause.

ALWS sent me an email from a Lutheran school parent to her child’s teacher. What it says is powerful:

> Hi Eloise,

> Just wanted to thank you for arranging this day for the students, and to let you know, that the message is being heard, even in the younger grades.

> I had a chat to Tia the other day, about Awareness Day, and tried to explain to her about Refugee camps, and how difficult life was for the people living in these camps. She was a bit upset about only eating porridge and rice for the day, as these are foods she doesn't particularly like.

> I believe Susanne Cook, also had a chat with her class yesterday, and explained further the life of a refugee, which I really think, helped Tia further understand.

> Then this morning, after she had put on her dark pink/red shirt (sorry, that is all I had, very unorganised Mum!!!) I found her going through the contents of her money box. I told her that she only needed to take one gold coin. She then looked at me, and said, "No Mummy, I need to find more coins for the refugee's because, it's really sad, and I want them to be able to buy better food, than just rice and porridge".

> So a big thank you, to you and all your staff, for providing this awareness to our children.

> Kind Regards, Kerry

Thank you, Lutheran school people, for your compassion and support to those in need and for changing your students’ thinking and lives.

**You’re welcome**

By now, schools will have received a quantity of the LCA’s *You’re welcome* publication in sufficient quantities to distribute to all staff (teaching and non-teaching) and all school families.

The LCA Communications department and Lutheran Education Australia have agreed on a communication strategy for 2015 which will pave the way for members of the LCA to grow in their understanding of the mission and ministry conducted within the school context, and also for Lutheran school staff and families to deepen their understanding of the work of the church.

During 2015 all subscribers of *The Lutheran* will receive a copy of the two issues of SchooLink published this year. In addition, all schools will receive copies of the LCA’s *You’re welcome* publication twice this year. Would you please ensure that *You’re welcome* is distributed to all staff and school families.

If you would prefer that SchooLink and *You’re welcome* be distributed electronically in the future, please let us know (email lea@lutheran.edu.au).
Bystanders by Valerie Volk

Wakefield Press have recently launched Valerie Volk’s latest book Bystanders: Echoes of stories past. In Bystanders, Valerie Volk has created fifteen absorbing characters on the edges of familiar biblical events. With psychological insight and compassion, she gives a new perspective on stories we thought we knew. Suitable for use by church Bible study groups or senior high school classes, Bystanders each story is accompanied by a set of questions which will enable readers to go further than general interest reading.


LEA Assistant Director: Leadership
[Shane Paterson]

Leadership and Formation framework

Now that the data received through the validation process has been synthesised and incorporated into the framework where relevant, we have entered a trialling phase. With the cooperation and support of the regions, several schools and groups of principals have volunteered to be a part of this process. The feedback received from this trial will help shape the final document which is expected to be printed by the end of this year.

If you are interested in being a part of the trialling process could you please contact Shane Paterson shane.paterson@lutheran.edu.au or Anne Dohnt anne.dohnt@lutheran.edu.au and we can discuss it further with you. Any schools / clusters / principals who participate in this trial will need to send their feedback to LEA by the end of term 3.

LEA Assistant Director: Formation
[Anne Dohnt]

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 Grieger 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. Please let me know you are interested as there a limited number of places available. anne.dohnt@lutheran.edu.au

LEA Business Manager
[Stephen Kroker]

Business Manager and Finance Officer Survey

Thank you to all who participated in this survey. The following are some of the results of the data analysis:

- Average age 51
- Average age at date of commencement in the Lutheran system 42
- Female 46% / Male 54%
- Service profile – average 8.7 years, 39.5% have served for less than 5 years, 20.9% have served for 5 to 10 years, 19.8% have served for 10 to 15 years, 12.8% have served for 15 to 20 years and 7.0% have served for more than 20 years.
- Current age profile – 30 to 40 years of age 11.8%, 41 to 50 years of age 32.9%, 51 to 60 years of age 34.1% and 61 and over years of age 21.2%

LEA federal news

New Chair for ACARA
[24 June 2015]

Minister for Education and Training, the Hon Christopher Pyne MP, today welcomed the appointment of Emeritus Professor Steven Schwartz AM as the new Chair of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). Professor Schwartz comes to the role at a particularly busy time for ACARA and is uniquely qualified to take on this challenging role. “Professor Schwartz will provide an ‘experienced pair of hands’ as ACARA’s work enters its next phase,” Mr Pyne said.

Read the full media release
Webcast with Asia Education Foundation
[24 June 2015]
The latest from the Australian Parents Council web series for parents features Kathe Kirby, Executive Director of Asia Education Foundation (AEF) and Eegbal Hassim discussing AEF’s work and how parents can support their child’s Asian capabilities, including culture and language learning.

VIEW THE WEBCAST NOW

AEF works in partnership with a broad range of school education stakeholders to build and expand programs, curriculum resources and networks for school leaders, teachers and schools to support the achievement of Asia literacy for all students in Australian schools.

ACEL National Award Nominations open
[18 June 2015]
A highlight of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) Annual Conference is the National Awards Ceremony. At this ceremony ACEL honours educational leaders who have made a significant contribution to the improvement of student and organisational outcomes. This contribution will be reviewed against set criteria, which have been based on the AITSL Australian Professional Standards. Evidence provided must demonstrate impact at a system, state and/or national level. Research that has influenced significant change is highly valued.

Members are invited to nominate an individual or team who have made such a contribution. To assist members with this process the ACEL Awards Committee has provided information in regards to confidentiality of process, responsibilities of Branch and National Awards Committees, nomination requirements and a description and criteria for Fellowships and Awards.

The 2015 National Awards will be presented at the ACEL President’s Reception and Awards Ceremony on the evening of Thursday 1st October 2015 at the Hilton Sydney (as part of the 2015 ACEL National Conference). Click here to download the ACEL National Award Criteria. Click here to download the ACEL National Award Nomination form. Click here to learn more about the awards and their past recipients.

Independent schools welcome simplified student visa processing
[17 June 2015]
The Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) has welcomed the announcement of a new industry-wide simplified international student visa framework (SSVF). The new framework was announced yesterday by the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon Christopher Pyne MP, and Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash. We look forward to the new framework providing all sectors of education access to simplified student visa processing. We anticipate that this will facilitate an ongoing return to growth in the Independent schools sector, commented ISCA Executive Director Dr Yvonne Luxford. Read the full media release.

Innovative Schools 2015
Is your school leading change in education?
The next issue of The Educator magazine will showcase the schools around the country at the forefront of change and innovation.

To help ensure we don’t miss any schools worthy of recognition, we are asking you to submit your suggestions. From new learning spaces to curriculum design, use of technology and more, this issue of The Educator will profile the schools that are moving the education industry forward. To nominate a school, please click here to provide some brief information on why it deserves to be included, and look out for the Innovative Schools 2015 feature in the next issue of The Educator magazine – the business of education. Entries close Friday 17 July.

The Educator
[16 June 2015]
The latest issue of The Educator includes:
Principals ill-prepared for job, survey reveals
A new AITSL report reveals a startling fact: the majority of new principals are not prepared for the crucial role they are about to undertake. READ MORE

Stop extremism through religious education, says academic
To prevent extremism from taking shape, it should be compulsory for students to learn about all religions, says an international academic. READ MORE

The two-way mirror of student surveillance
*The Educator* looks at why one new app is being hailed as a school-parent breakthrough by some and part of an “extremely worrying trend” by others. READ MORE

A collaborative working space...for teachers
Many schools offer collaborative spaces for their students to enhance their learning experience, but what about such a facility for teachers? READ MORE

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**The PAIge** [Principals Australia Institute eNewsletter]
[June 2015]
The latest issue of PAIge is now available and includes articles on:
- 300 student principals for a day
- KidsMatter Primary reaches over 2600 schools
- Spotlight on NSW child development
- Principal Certification Prototype Trial commences
- Focus on staff health and wellbeing

Read more