LEA thanks

LEA staff would like to sincerely thank and acknowledge all Lutheran ECS directors and school principals for your Christian commitment, leadership and action during the 2015 school year. We see your leadership every time we receive your feedback and input, every time we see you in your ECSs and schools and every time you lead your community. Thank you for the spiritual leadership you provide.

For the past two years, LEA and the regions have asked many of you to co-contribute to the development of Growing deep – the LEA leadership and formation framework. Thank you for your valued suggestions, trialling and feedback. In terms 1 and 2 2016, Growing deep will be rolled out by LEA and the regions sharing with various school leadership team forums. We look forward to spending this time together with you and your co-leaders as we learn and grow together.

LEA News

This is the second last edition of LEA News for this year. The final LEA News for 2015 will be sent to you in two week’s time. Many thanks for distributing LEA News to your co-leaders in your community.

Use of national and regional logos

At a recent NLT meeting, and as a result of several queries raised by Lutheran schools, BLEA and GCC, directors agreed that the use of national and regional logos by schools and early childhood services be simplified with the following recommended branding:

A school of the Lutheran Church of Australia

An early childhood service of the Lutheran Church of Australia

Schools and early childhood services are asked to consider using this LCA branding on all advertising, signage, letterhead and brochures (rather than use LEA or regional branding). It is understood that some of these changes will take time before they are fully phased in. Early in 2016 LEA will personally write to all directors, principals and council chairs to request each ECS and school to consider this request in their context.

National ICT Literacy on the decline

[provided by Derek Bartels, LEQ Director of Innovation and Technology]

The title of this article was reflected in many media statements this week after the release of the NAP-ICT Public Report. I attended the pre-release on Monday at ACARA on behalf of Lutheran Education Australia. The report showed a significant decline in the mean performance of Year 6 students in 2014, compared to the last assessment in 2011. Similarly, the mean performance of Year 10 students was significantly lower than the mean performance in all previous NAP – ICT testing. Access to the official report is at http://www.acara.edu.au/news_media/acara_news/acara_news_2015_11.html#20151117.
Like any national sample testing this finding might not be representative of your school as you may have not participated in the testing and it also may not be accurately reflective of the Lutheran System/Sector of schools however it definitely is a wake up call for us to health check the state of ICT learning within and across our institutions. The media unfortunately are latching onto the fact that because students are seemingly good consumers of technology then schools are incorrectly believing they are effective learners through such technologies. I believe this ludicrous assumption is an unfair indictment on the quality, intelligence and experience of our teachers and the teaching profession who generally don’t make such unwarranted assumptions.

Let us first be clear about language and interpretation of the curriculum offerings to support this area as unfortunately the media and some politicians are simply referring to a single new Australian Curriculum subject Digital Technologies (which focusses on Computational Thinking not just Coding) as being the saviour of this dilemma. Digital Technologies has been introduced into the Australian Curriculum recently in comparison to the NAP-ICT Testing which has been conducted since 2005. The ICT General Capability within the Australian Curriculum which is another component of digital learning has been around longer.

Meaningful planning and engagement by all schools in Australia is needed in both the ICT Capability as well as the Digital Technologies subject to help effectively address this decline. I know we have many Lutheran schools around the country that go above and beyond in these areas. Lutheran schools are regarded in some circles to be at the forefront of addressing this challenge in preparing our students for the digital and information economies in which they are entering. One of our schools were interviewed this week by the ABC after noting that Hon Kate Jones (Chair of Education Committee COAG) was unavailable to comment about the report. Here is a sound bite of that interview [https://soundcloud.com/612abcbrisbane/why-qld-kids-are-doing-so-poorly-in-ict](https://soundcloud.com/612abcbrisbane/why-qld-kids-are-doing-so-poorly-in-ict)

As I met in a timely national forum this week with all education jurisdictions from around the country at an Education Services Australia ICT Learning Strategic Forum some common messages in relation to this issue were quite clear:
- We strongly believe that this has to be addressed for us as a nation participating in the 21st Century
- Clear messages need to be understood by government about the differences in ICT and Digital Technologies
- Smart Professional Learning needs to be at the forefront of addressing this
- Greater co-operation and sharing of resources between jurisdictions needs to be enabled
- Coding is not Digital Technologies and a reminder of the intent of Computational Thinking

As we move forward let’s continue to work as a system to continue to shine in this area but be always mindful that there is greater diversity across classrooms than across schools. In saying this, we should continue to try and lift the bar in consistency of effectiveness across all classrooms and subjects in relation to digital learning and integration. Let’s continue to plan for and provide rich and meaningful ways to embed digital learning which allows our students to become mindful and masterful learners.

The next generation of education leaders

The Educator magazine is turning the spotlight onto the leaders of the future for the upcoming Rising Stars issue. Entries are open to principals, deputy principals or department heads under 40 years of age who have demonstrated effective leadership and innovation in their career to date. If someone in your school leadership team deserves to be recognised, take a moment to nominate them today. Or if you think you fit the criteria, why not put yourself forward? Being featured on the Rising Stars list will provide valuable recognition on a national scale as one of the country’s best up-and-coming education leaders. Nominations close Friday 4 December
Quality Schools
All principals should have received information about Quality Schools within the last two weeks. You are encouraged to respond to the following action point outlined in the documentation asap:

School specific topics to be included in the survey: After reading the descriptors associated with the Vocational Practices, determine if there are other topics for which you would require data. You can indicate these topics via this URL.

http://educationalintelligence.cloudapp.net/surveys/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=n2K2n6lK You may also wish to provide a brief statement on what data you are seeking in regards to this particular topic. RADII will develop the items and confirm these with you. If you require school specific topics you must inform RADII no later than 27th November, 2015.

Valuing Safe Communities
The materials for VSC continue to be finalised. All modules and training resources will be available for the start of the new school year. If you wish to watch the training session for existing trainers it can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ok HegOVZ04&feature=youtu.be. It is strongly recommended that principals watch this session so that an understanding of the new process is gained.

2016 National Lutherans Principals Conference
All principals will have received a conference brochure for next year’s conference, via LPAnet on Thursday 12th November. If you have not received this please contact shane.paterson@lutheran.edu.au The conference is also open to other members of your leadership team and partners.

Leadership Development Program
LDP participants have completed their final assessment task for the Education and Theology in Dialogue (ALC unit) and are now receiving their results for the unit. Participants are entitled to a 50% rebate on their tuition costs from LEA and 25% ($515) from the school upon successful completion of the unit. Participants are to approach the school with evidence of successful completion before reimbursement is to be made.

LEA Transfer Fund
Last opportunity to access the LEA Transfer Fund for teachers commencing Term 1, 2016
If your school is a member of the Transfer Fund and have appointed staff who will need to move to take up their position, please contact the LEA national office by Friday, 4 December 2015 to ensure their removal is arranged in a timely manner.

LEA Sick Leave Emergency Fund (SLEF)
School business managers and bursars please note:
The payout rate has been declared for claims for schools that are members of the Sick Leave Emergency Fund. Claims for 2015 will be paid at $355 per day. The claim for is now available on the LEA website. Click here to access.

ACARA: My School website updates
[18 November 2015]
Overnight, the My School website will be updated with school student attendance rates for Semester 1 (Term 1 and 2) of 2015. Attendance data are provided for: all students; Indigenous students; and non-Indigenous students. Data are suppressed where student numbers are fewer than, or equal to, five. In this update, a new student attendance measure has been introduced: the proportion of students attending school 90 per cent or more of the time across the semester (Terms 1 & 2).
On 17 December 2015, a further update will be undertaken of the student attendance rate for Term 3. Attendance data reporting is a COAG (Council of Australian Government) initiative to help improve learning outcomes for Indigenous students by monitoring attendance. Data are reported twice a year, for Terms 1 and 2, and for Term 3.

**ACARA Update Extra:**

2014 NAP – ICT literacy report shows a decline in ICT literacy
[17 November 2015]

The 2014 National Assessment Program (NAP) – information and communication technology (ICT) literacy report has been released today by the Education Council. The NAP – ICT literacy test assesses student ICT knowledge, understanding and skills, as well as students’ ability to use ICT creatively, critically and responsibly.

In October and November 2014, around 10,500 Year 6 and Year 10 students participated in the NAP – ICT literacy online test. Samples of students were randomly selected from over 650 government, Catholic and independent schools in metropolitan, rural and remote areas around the country. The report shows a significant decline in the mean performance of Year 6 students in 2014, compared to the last assessment in 2011. Similarly, the mean performance of Year 10 students is significantly lower than the mean performance in all previous NAP – ICT literacy assessments (2005, 2008 and 2011). The report also shows that in each year level, there has been a reduction in the percentage of students meeting the NAP – ICT literacy proficient standards. Read the full media release

International Student Survey 2016 - Schools
[10 November 2015]

The Department of Education and Training has recently written seeking support for, and assistance in, conducting the International Student Survey 2016 for the schools sector in Australia. As in the previous surveys, the 2016 survey will seek participation of international school students across government and non-government schools. The student population from which a survey sample will be drawn comprises international school students studying in year 11 or 12 and who are 16 or above years of age. International students of 16 and 17 years of age will be able to participate in the survey only if they have written consent from a parent/guardian to participate in the survey.

This survey is the fourth iteration of previous surveys undertaken in 2010, 2012 and 2014. The International Student Survey 2016 will investigate students’ satisfaction with the experience of studying and living in Australia and identify any changes from previous surveys. It is proposed to conduct the field work component of the survey in March - May 2016. The survey findings will be made available to relevant state and territory government agencies and private sector organisations.

As in the previous surveys, participation in the survey is completely voluntary. All responses will be handled under the appropriate privacy conditions. The outcome of the survey will be incorporated into a national report. Neither the schools nor participating students will be identified in that report. A brief institution specific report will be provided to each participating school with 5 or more completed responses by the survey contractor and without being shared with the department.

Ernst & Young (trading as EY Sweeney) on behalf of the department will be conducting the survey and will contact schools with international student enrolments to discuss the process for the conduct of the survey in the near future. Your support in encouraging all schools with international students to participate in the survey would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions about the survey, please email: steve.nerlich@education.gov.au or contact Adeline Ong on 03 9288 8651 or email: Adeline.Ong@au.ey.com.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
[November 2015]

Click here to access the submissions made for Issues Paper 9 including the submission made by the Lutheran Church of Australia.