Supporting each other

In writing for this week’s LEA News I wish to acknowledge and commend all Lutheran school principals for your ongoing leadership and service to your respective communities. The commitment, energy and focus to be a school leader is immense – please be encouraged in your daily challenges and know that you have the prayerful support of the NLT and LEA teams.

In recent days we have been inspired by:
- LEVNT principals (and council chairmen and business managers) who shared, listened and encouraged at the LEVNT Schools Assembly
- the LPA Executive, led by LPA Chairman Sharon Kotzur, who openly shared their thoughts and suggestions at a meeting with the BLEA Chairman, Dr Neville Hightett, and me, on the future mutual support LPA and LEA are planning
- a Lutheran principal who send an email via LPAnet titled ‘Spare a thought for a colleague’ – thank you

May God bless each one of you in your rewarding and challenging roles.

ACARA meeting

Earlier this week several Lutheran education leaders attended a meeting with the ACARA CEO, Mr Robert Randall, and the ACARA Director of Research and Development, Dr Goran Lazendic. Robert invited LEA to discuss three key matters:
- Lutheran school involvement in the 2016 NAPLAN online trial
- the Australian Curriculum
- My School – current and future

Please find attached the ACARA information tabled at this meeting.

In ensuring effective Lutheran education representation and dialogue, the following people attended:
Dr Meg Noack, Executive Officer, Curriculum, Lutheran Education Queensland
Mr Derek Bartels, Executive Officer, ICT, Lutheran Education Queensland
Mr David Bliss, Executive Director, Lutheran Education Queensland
Mr Paul Weinert, Director, Lutheran Education Vic/NSW/Tas
Mr Stephen Rudolph, Executive Director, Lutheran Education Australia
(Unfortunately LSA had a pre-arranged commitment and were unable to join us)

BLEA meeting

The Board for Lutheran Education Australia will meet at the LEQ offices on 28-29 September. Two key agenda items will be as follows:
- LEA strategic plan (2016-2018)
  The three strategic themes are:
  THEME 1: Strengthening Lutheran Identity
  THEME 2: Enhancing and Celebrating Thriving Learning Communities
  THEME 3: Ensuring Long-Term System Sustainability
  The Board and NLT have spent considerable time during 2015 to reach the point where a final draft of the LEA strategic plan will be presented to the Board. When adopted LEA will communicate its direction to regions and schools
- Growing deep
  The development of the LEA leadership and formation framework titled Growing deep has taken considerable time and the collective efforts of over 150 Lutheran educators. Thank you to those who have provided ideas, feedback, trialling and support. Anne Dohnt (Assistant Director: Formation) will take the Board through
a rollout process similar to those co-delivered to each of the regional offices in recent weeks. LEA and each of the regions looks forward to working together in term 1 2016 in rolling out Growing deep to all principals and school leadership teams

LCA General Synod
The 18th Synod of the LCA will be held at Redeemer Lutheran College, Brisbane, in two weeks. BLEA, together with the other agencies of the church, will report to the Synod.

The Lutheran education reporting sessions (3x) will contain relevant Lutheran education data and information; most importantly, the beginning and ending of the Lutheran education sessions will feature two videos provided by Redeemer Lutheran College, Biloela Qld. In the videos Mrs Jenni Krenske (Principal) and her community tell their story of mission and ministry in the Redeemer Biloela context.

On behalf of all Lutheran schools, LEA acknowledges the following people and communities for their positive and meaningful Synod support:
- Jenni Krenske and the Redeemer (Biloela) community
- David Radke and the Redeemer (Rochedale) community
- Dr Neville Highett (BLEA Chairman), BLEA Directors and the regional directors
- The six Lutheran principal synod delegates, namely:
  - Shane Jurecky (Good Shepherd College, Hamilton Vic)
  - Thomas Brennen (Sunshine Christian School, Sunshine Vic)
  - Heather Vogt (Endeavour College, Mawson Lakes SA)
  - Angela Branford (Calvary Lutheran Primary School, Morphett Vale SA)
  - Janelle Turner (Peace Lutheran Primary School, Gatton Qld)
  - Jodie Hoff (LORDS, Ormeau Qld)
- Our colleague LCA agencies:
  - Australian Lutheran College
  - Board for Archives
  - Commission on Worship
  - Board for International Mission
  - Board for Local Mission
  - Australian Lutheran World Service
  - Finke River Mission
  - Lutheran Laypeople’s League
  - Board for Child Youth and Family Ministry
  - Board for Lay Ministry
  - Board for Media Ministry

LEA News
Due to school holidays and the LCA General Synod, this will be the final issue of LEA News for term 3. The next issue will be distributed via regional newsletters on 14-15 October 2015.

LEA logo
As principals would already be aware, the new LEA branding and logo has been launched. Schools can access the logo (available in a variety of formats) from the LEA website at: http://www.lutheran.edu.au/about-lea/lea-logo/

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-Scholarships/ServiceAward.pdf
Work-Applied Learning for Change Conference
Global Centre for Work Applied Learning and our third Conference on Work-Applied Learning for Change will be held at the Hilton Adelaide on the 17-18 November 2015.

The conference will involve presentations and group discussions, providing participants with the opportunity to reflect on their own practices and organizational projects / programs with the concepts and practices introduced. It would be very relevant for Lutheran education leaders – directors, principals and leadership teams. The participant number for the conference is restricted to only 100 to ensure maximum benefits for all who attend.

For registration and further information please contact the conference coordinator – Email conference@wal.global, Tel 08 7325 1323

Valuing Safe Communities (VSC)
As you are aware VSC is currently being revised to include online components. It is expected that the new package will be ready for use by the beginning of the new school year. For your information the package is as follows.

- **Initial training** (for all staff new to Lutheran schools). Both modules will need to be completed:
  - An online module of about 90 minutes in length. This can be completed at the convenience of the staff member in a number of sittings.
  - A face-to-face workshop module of 60 minutes (still being finalised). Notes and activities for this (based on the current program) will be available for school trainers.

- **Refresher course**:
  - An online module of about 45 minutes for all staff who have completed the initial training. This module can be completed at the convenience of the staff member. No further workshop needs to be completed.

It is important to note that online access for staff will be determined by the accuracy of the data in LExICON. While further information will follow on this, all schools are encouraged to ensure their data on LExICON is current.

- **Volunteer and relief staff**:
  - All volunteers and relief staff will be able to complete training through an online module of about 30 - 45 minutes.

Quite a number of schools trialled the volunteer and relief staff module and you are sincerely thanked for this. The initial training online module is expected to be in trial mode by the end of next week and once again I am seeking some schools to trial this online module. If you have staff that need to compete VSC it may be a good opportunity for them to begin the process. The completion of the workshop module will also need to occur – but that can be held off until early next year.

Please let me (shane.paterson@lutheran.edu.au) know if you are able to assist in the trialling of this module. Early next term I will be seeking trial schools for the final refresher module.

Worship
Worship in Lutheran schools is central to the faith life of the community. It is a time for staff and students to hear about God’s amazing love for them and to celebrate and respond to this love as a community. We are currently developing resources for the eLibrary and would appreciate good quality videos and photos of worship in your school [http://elibrary.lutheran.edu.au/](http://elibrary.lutheran.edu.au/). We have included a new section in the eLibrary where you can submit resources or simply email LEA (lea@lutheran.edu.au) with videos and photos of whole school worship, staff and class worship or devotions so that we can celebrate the diversity of worship in Lutheran schools and resource principals and pastors as they develop and deepen understandings about worship with staff.
Service Learning
LEQ is offering a Service Learning study tour from 12-14 October 2015 at the Santa Teresa Spirituality Centre, Ormiston. They currently have 8-10 places available and are willing to open these up to LEVT and LSA. The program will include sessions with Damien Price, Jodie Hoff, Principal at LORDS, psychologist, Dr Jim Schirmer who works with refugees, and a street retreat. You can register online and access further information at: http://leq.lutheran.edu.au/calendar-of-events/service-learning-study-tour-brisbane-based/, or email Meg Noack (meg.noack@leq.lutheran.edu.au).

2015 School pastor and chaplain conference
The PowerPoints of the keynotes and elective sessions from the recent school pastor and chaplain conference have been placed on the Ministry personnel section of the e-Library. If you facilitated an elective session and haven’t yet forwarded your PPT or resources to the LEA office please do so lea@lutheran.edu.au.

Indigenous spirituality and culture
Christine Reid, a consultant in Indigenous education, has developed staff meeting resources to assist teachers explore Indigenous culture and spirituality and ways of incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures into the curriculum. The PPTs with accompanying notes have been placed in the Top Picks section of the eLibrary (http://elibrary.lutheran.edu.au/elibrary/our-top-picks/). Christine is also available to work with teachers and to support school executive teams in delivering sessions on Indigenous culture. Her contact details can be found at the end of the PPTs.

LEA federal news

Australian Education Act – School Improvement Plans
[9 September 2015]
The Australian Education Act 2013 and associated legislation required all Australian schools to have a school improvement plan in place by 1 January 2016. In late 2014, legislation was passed delaying the timeframe for schools to develop their school improvement plans to 1 January 2016.

The Australian government Minister for Education, the Hon Christopher Pyne MP has now made a specification under the Australian Education (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Act 2013 to delay the requirement for schools to have in place a school improvement framework and plan until 'on and from 1 January 2017'. Click here for further information [from ISQ memorandum 9/9/2015].

National Child Protection Week 2015
[4 September 2015]
National Child Protection Week 2015 is now in its 25th year and continues to be one of the most significant events on Australia’s child protection calendar. Francis Sullivan CEO of the Catholic Church Truth Justice and Healing Council said the 2015 campaign highlights the importance of primary prevention to reduce child abuse and neglect in Australia. 'This year’s theme, 'Be Someone Who Listens to Children', sends an important message that the safety and wellbeing of Australian children should be at the very forefront of our approaches to protecting children and that listening to children is central.'
Read the full media release
NAPLAN online

- The purpose of NAPLAN is to:
  - Provide students, parents and teachers evidence of student achievement against national standards and norms
  - Provide decision makers and the general public evidence of school and jurisdiction achievement to guide policy and resource allocation

- By moving NAPLAN online we will provide better assessment, more precise results and faster turnaround of information. Delivering NAPLAN via computer will better meet the needs of students and it will help teachers tailor their teaching more specifically to student needs.

- Moving NAPLAN online is a collaborative effort
  - ACARA is responsible for developing the NAPLAN test, including significant research on how the test can be best delivered via computer, and taking lead in national communications initiatives
  - Education Services Australia is responsible for building the online assessment platform
  - State and territory school and curriculum authorities are responsible for local readiness to move online
  - The role of TAAs will change to reflect the shift from paper-based to computer-based assessment

- The Online Assessment Working Group, comprising state, territory and jurisdiction representation, is responsible for directing the move to NAPLAN online

- ACARA’s research program involves consideration of 4 key questions
  - What does the research show?
  - What are the “lessons learned” in other programs?
  - How do these “lessons” apply to the Australian/NAPLAN context?
  - How do “real” students react when they sit for online items (Cognitive Interviews)

- ACARA’s research program is focused on the following areas / key questions
  - How well does the Assessment Framework measure the breadth and depth of the Australian Curriculum?
  - Do all item types (traditional and innovative) and item layouts work in the online environment?
  - Are there any device effects that limit accessibility?
  - Is the online assessment fair to all student populations, including those with disability?
  - What proficiency levels should be applied to student performance?

- As it is designed to do, the research is identifying what’s working well, pinpointing issues and providing us with information and evidence to help us to address those issues.

- Results of the research will be released in full so that the community has all the information that we have.
• The observations of students completing the tests are helping us to refine the directions we give students and ensure that the questions they are answering reflect what they are learning.

• On 2 September ACARA released information about three research trials into student engagement with online assessment across reading, numeracy and spelling.

• So far the results from the research have been promising, while also highlighting areas that require further attention. They indicate that most students are engaged and working well in the online environment.

Auto-marking of writing

• Auto-marking of writing has been proven to be a viable option across the world, and our own research (conducted in month, year) tells us that it works in the NAPLAN context. After training, computers were able to mark children’s writing the same as two human markers.

• However, we have more research to do before computer marking of NAPLAN writing is confirmed. In September 2015 ACARA will release the results of a preliminary study suggesting auto-marking can score NAPLAN, followed by a more comprehensive study to be released in November 2016.

• We will be thorough in providing information and, if need be, we will run two NAPLAN marking systems, involving human markers and computer marking for a period of time to ease the transition.
Australian Curriculum and improvements to the Australian Curriculum

- The Australian Curriculum sets the expectations for what all young Australians should be taught, regardless of where in Australia they live. Wherever they are, it means that students now have access to the same content, and their achievements can be judged against the same standards.

- In an increasingly global world it makes sense to set national expectations, rather than different standards for each state and territory, for what we want taught at school.

- The Australian Curriculum has been written to equip young Australians with the knowledge, understanding and skills that will enable them to engage effectively with, and prosper in society, to compete in a globalised world and to thrive in the information-rich workplaces of the future.

- As a national endeavour the Australian Curriculum offers economies of scale, a reduction in effort for individual states and territories and the opportunity for teachers to share resources and professional development across Australia.

- A national curriculum also allows schools and states and territories to make decisions about when and how implementation will take place and the setting of priorities within and across the curriculum to best meet the learning needs of students.

- Following the review of the Australian Curriculum education ministers agreed that ACARA should undertake work to improve the curriculum, with a focus on four themes:
  a) Uncrowding the primary curriculum
  b) Rebalancing the curriculum
  c) Accessibility of the curriculum for students with disabilities
  d) Increasing parent engagement with the curriculum

- Education Council (18 September) will meet to endorse changes and the remaining Australian Curriculum for Health and Physical Education; Technologies; Civics and Citizenship; Economics and Business; and Languages.

- Working with writers and practising teachers and consulting with education authorities we have:
  o Reduced volume overall including 10% reduction in the total number of content descriptions (19% reduction for Years 5-6) and reduced duplication of information about the curriculum
  o Made the content descriptions and achievement standards clearer. For example we have moved many examples from content descriptions to content elaborations
  o Strengthened the presence of phonics and phonemic awareness in the Australian Curriculum: English.
  o Strengthened references to Western influences in Australia's development. For example, we've provided more information about the system of government, the role of our founders and key features of constitutional development, the beliefs and values of Christianity, and the role of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the executive arm of government.
o In Foundation to year 6/7 (primary school), redesigned the subjects of History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship, and Economics and Business to become a Humanities and Social Sciences learning area, with knowledge and understanding in these areas presented as discrete sub-strands supported by a combined inquiry and skills strand; and optional single learning area achievement standards.

o Retained and refined the 7-10 (secondary school) Humanities and Social Sciences subjects of History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship, and Economics and Business.

o Introduced optional, single learning area achievement standards for Humanities and Social Sciences, The Arts and Technologies. The existing subject specific achievement standards will be available as an alternative.