EDITORIAL

The Independent Schools Council of Australia in its submission to the Commonwealth Review of Funding for Schooling chaired by David Gonski has called for, 'A student-based methodology which relies on robust data regarding student characteristics (that) provides an effective and transparent means to determine the resourcing needs of individual schools' – aka a voucher system. The Australian Education Union (AEU) submission called for a funding model that funds government and non-government schools separately, breaking the current indexation system through the Average Government School Recurrent Costs (AGSRC). The current system means non-government school funding increases in line with increases in the AGSRC for government schools. AEU Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos, writing in *Australian Educator* in 2009, described such a funding system as 'flawed and dangerous.' There was no reference to vouchers in the AEU submission to the Gonski review, beyond discussion of vouchers to deliver additional funding for students with disabilities or special needs, but Gavrielatos in his 2009 article made clear the AEU's opposition to a voucher-based funding system. The surprise is not the quality of debate over vouchers, but that there hasn't really been any debate. April's Commonwealth *Schools Assistance Amendment (Financial Assistance) Act 2011* extended existing arrangements until the end of 2013. Explained Commonwealth Minister for School Education Peter Garrett in February, that's to enable non-government schools to transition to any new funding arrangements the government implements in response to the Gonski review, which will report to the government by the end of this year. T

FAST FACTS

Amount that the state government spent, on average, per person, on the arts in 2008-09, in New South Wales: $17.

In Victoria: $32.

In South Australia: $55.

The disciplines included as strands in the Arts Key Learning Area in the second phase of the Australian national curriculum: dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts.

Benefits for students whose learning is embedded in the arts, over students whose learning is not: better grades and overall test scores, higher levels of engagement, improved self-concept, improved attendance rates.

Areas of concern voiced by the National Advocacy for Arts and Education: lack of mandated representation of the arts across the K–12 curriculum, inadequate pre- and in-service teacher education and professional learning in the arts, and inadequate resourcing, teaching standards and research.

Source: Ewing, R. (2011). The arts and Australian Education: Realising potential. Australian Education Review 58. Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research. Available at http://research.acer.edu.au/aer/11

QUICK QUIZ

1. What is the name of David Hopkins' and Wayne Craig's model for school improvement?
2. Who looked after Odysseus's son Telemachus during the Trojan war?
3. According to Catherine Scott, is intelligence fixed at birth or changeable over time?
4. According to Veronica Harris, can creativity be planned for and assessed?
5. What form of construction does Paul Bailey suggest is best for schools that need purpose-built classrooms, and what are the benefits?
6. What is the name of the program that places architects in schools to teach primary school students about sustainable design through building cubbyhouses?
7. What can schools do to reduce the risk of pain, injury and poor posture in students who spend a lot of time on computers?
8. What new research project looks at the use of grants in schools?
9. In what country is the Hamilton and Alexandra College's partner school?
10. When is Autism Awareness Month?

Answers: 1. Powerful learning; 2. Mentor; 3. changeable over time, influenced by experience and learning; 4. yes; 5. modular construction, which is economical, can be tailored to meet specific needs, is environmentally sustainable, and can be completed quickly with minimal disruption to classes; 6. Eco-Cubby; 7. use furniture and equipment designed for children, set up workstations correctly, encourage students to take regular breaks and act when students complain of pain or discomfort; 8. Leading Learning in Education and Philanthropy; 9. China; 10. April.

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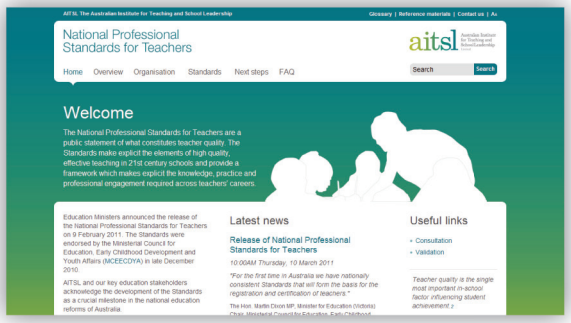

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