

EDITORIAL

The National Curriculum Board released its initial advice papers on the curriculum for English, Mathematics, Science and History in October for feedback by last month. The Board expects to determine its final recommendations in Term 1, 2009, with proposed national curriculum documentation by the end of 2010. According to the Board, 'Implementation will follow, but this will clearly not mean for all year levels in 2011. For Years 11 and 12, all jurisdictions have rules about the period of notice required before a new curriculum is implemented. Below Years 11 and 12, the extent to which the sequences in the Board's curriculum match those in the states and territories will determine whether particular years could be introduced simultaneously or would need to be staged in a sequence so that students have the basis for each year's content before being presented with it.' Not surprisingly, the English and History initial advice papers soaked up the bulk of media coverage, mostly in terms of debate about literacy and grammar in English, whether History 'should occupy at least 10 per cent of teaching time in the primary...years, and in Years 7 to 10...should occupy an average of 100 classes a year,' and whether British history should be privileged. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd admitted in a speech at the National Press Club of Australia in August that he expects some argy bargy, but the argy bargy so far has been fairly predictable. The key questions remain as to whether the Board's remit to design a subject-based curriculum limited to four subjects is itself feasible, whether the Board ought to be given broader powers to direct specific projects that address the limitations of its remit and whether there's adequate time for consultation, trials and feedback. **T**

FAST FACTS

In the draft of the National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians released in September, Australian governments through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA): 'commit to achieve unprecedented collaboration across all levels of government.'

MCEETYA commits to:

- developing stronger partnerships with parents, the community and business
- strengthening early childhood education
- supporting effective transitions
- improving the quality of teaching and school leadership
- developing world-class curriculum and assessment
- improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged young Australians, especially those from Indigenous and low socioeconomic backgrounds, and
- increasing accountability.

Source: National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians. www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/Draft_National_Declaration_on_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf

QUICK QUIZ

1. Who really started ICT in education?
2. What is Web 2.0?
3. Who popularised the Web 2.0 title?
4. What is potable water?
5. Who said, 'I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the classroom....It is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanised or de-humanised'?
6. Who said, 'In the high school classroom you are a drill sergeant, a rabbi, a shoulder to cry on, a disciplinarian...?'
7. Who said, 'To become part of a community, you need to live in the community. You can't just turn up'?
8. What did he mean?
9. In which school did renowned chef, Stephanie Alexander, and students begin the first kitchen garden?
10. Has any educator ever proposed that in order to provide our students with real-world, experiential learning we ought to introduce execution as a part of our educational program?

Answers: 1. Robert Cailliau and Tim Berners-Lee in 1989; 2. a read/write platform where users can engage with others and publish stuff; 3. Tim O'Reilly; 4. drinking water, from Latin potare - to drink - via Late Latin potabilis; 5. Haim Ginort; 6. Frank McCourt, in *Teacher Man*; 7. Camden-MacArthur Residents' Group president Emil Stremchevich regarding a Quranic Society bid to build a 1,200-student school in Camden; 8. identifying a possible answer is tricky; 9. Collingwood College, Melbourne; 10. yes, David Rish in last month's Last Word.

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