

EDITORIAL

Devastated communities and schools across Victoria are still counting the terrible cost of bushfires that began on 7 February, 2009, killing and injuring people, destroying property and leaving Victoria and the nation in shock. Kinglake, St Andrews and Marysville on Melbourne's northern fringe were all but destroyed. Strathewen Primary School, near Kinglake, Middle Kinglake Primary School and Marysville Primary School were razed in the fires, while 72 government schools were closed in the immediate aftermath. The Australian Council for Educational Research, which publishes *Teacher*, is mourning the death of Dr Ken Rowe, who died in Marysville, and David Holcombe and his wife Carol, who both died in Kinglake. Schools remain at the heart of many fire-devastated communities, as Sharon Walker, principal of Dixons Creek Primary School, explained to the *Age's* Britt Smith after an assembly on the return of her school's 46 students and their parents a week after the bushfires. 'Many of these children lost everything,' Walker said, 'but their desk is still here, their bucket is still here and their school hat is still here, and for a lot of them that is all they have.' Speaking on ABC Television's *7:30 Report* and again on *Insiders*, Liberal Fran Bailey, in whose electorate much of the devastation occurred, called on governments to ensure that schools are rebuilt to the highest possible safety standards. 'We've got to make sure that those schools are really safe for our children... and...can provide refuge for people within those small communities,' she said. **T**

To donate to the 2009 Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund, call 1800 811 700 or visit www.redcross.org.au/vic

FAST FACTS

Funds to build or upgrade large-scale infrastructure in all primary schools, special schools, and Kindergarten to Year 12 schools through the Building the Education Revolution fund: \$12.4 billion.
 Strings attached: such facilities must be made available for community use at no or low cost.
 Funds to build 500 new science laboratories and language learning centres in schools with a demonstrated need, readiness and capacity: \$1 billion.
 Funds to refurbish existing infrastructure and undertake minor building works in schools, with every Australian school to receive up to \$200,000, subject to its size: \$1.3 billion.
 Funds for fund round two proposals of the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program: \$110 million.
 Other measures: a \$950 back-to-school bonus for each eligible child, and a \$950 bonus for students receiving a youth allowance, Austudy, Abstudy or Sickness Allowance or Special Benefits.

QUICK QUIZ

1. How much have the governments of poor and rich countries failed to spend to achieve the goal of providing basic education for all children by 2015?
2. Is it all bad news for children in poor countries?
3. Peer-to-peer sexual assaults tend to be infrequently reported because they are interpreted as being 'part of the rough and tumble of high school life.' True or false?
4. Complete this phrase: 'Teach a man how to fish...'
5. Can members of a school board be personally liable?
6. Does 'psychometric' mean going crazy with a ruler?
7. What are Steve Dinham's four fundamentals for successful schools?
8. Research into children's behaviour is child's play. True or false?
9. Who wrote *A Story of Natural Numbers*?
10. How does Peter Bowler define a 'facilitator'?

Answers: 1. US\$30 billion, according to UNESCO's *Overcoming Inequality* report; 2. no, global not-for-profit, One Laptop per Child; 3. true, according to a research review by the Australian Institute of Family Studies; 4. '... and you'll feed him for life'; 5. yes, according to Nicole Stevens-Warton; 6. no, it simply means 'to measure the brain'; 7. a focus on students, quality teaching, professional learning and educational leadership; 8. false, according to Gwenda Beed; 9. David Demant; 10. 'Someone who can't do something, hired for good money to orchestrate an attempt to enable others to do it.'

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