

**EDITORIAL**

The Review of Australian Higher Education commissioned by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education Julia Gillard, and handed to her in December, has called for structural reforms and additional investment for the higher education sector to the tune of more than \$6 billion over the next four years. Chaired by Professor Denise Bradley, the Review also called for a direct entitlement or voucher system for higher education in which ‘funding will follow the student.’ As Bradley said, ‘I’m not sure that it is necessarily quite the report that we would’ve thought that we were going to produce when we started. I think there were things that we have discovered that were different from what we had expected’ – namely, ‘The student income support system needed a much more fundamental look at it than we had realised.’ Receiving Bradley’s final report, the Deputy PM remained noncommittal on the report’s recommendations, including vouchers. ‘Whilst I’m not today responding to any specific recommendation in the report, clearly, this is a government that believes it’s important that the benefits of education are shared widely, and this is a government that believes it’s important that we have a knowledge-based economy with people with the skills and capacities to ensure that we can compete on the world stage as we’re required to do in this globalised age,’ Gillard told a press conference. That could mean anything. The schools sector and higher education sector operate in different ways, and the Rudd government appears happy to develop centralising policies for the one and decentralising policies for the other, but its response to the Bradley Review’s recommendations, on vouchers in particular, should be of interest to all educators. **T**

**FAST FACTS**

Number of schools in Australia at the time of the last schools census, August 2006: 9,612.  
 Government schools: 6,902.  
 Catholic systemic schools: 1,703.  
 Independent schools: 1,007.  
 Number of students in all schools: 3,393,000.  
 In government schools: 2,271,000.  
 In Catholic systemic schools: 680,000.  
 In independent schools: 442,000.  
 Percentage movement in all student enrolments between 2002 and 2006: 1.8 per cent increase.  
 In government schools: 0.6 decrease.  
 In non-government schools: 7.1 per cent increase.  
 Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff employed in all schools: 240,000.  
 In government schools: 158,000.  
 In Catholic systemic schools: 45,000.  
 In independent schools: 37,000.  
 Number of female teaching staff in all schools: 164,000.  
 Male teaching staff: 76,000.

*Source: Year Book Australia, 2008, National Schools Statistics Collection. Australian Bureau of Statistics.*

**QUICK QUIZ**

1. What did Australian governments through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs commit to do in their draft of the National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, released last September?
2. Research on the effects of collaboration in education using information and communications technology (ICT) is almost entirely absent: true or false?
3. Should a school’s ICT leader be an educator or a technician?
4. Who were the original Aboriginal occupants of northern Sydney?
5. Were any Australian universities in the top 10 best universities?
6. Does Ibstone Church of England Infant School have a permanent head?
7. What is the difference between marketing and public relations?
8. What is the Large Hadron Collider?
9. Teachers are scrooges: true or false?
10. Is it fair to say that teachers have the lowest standard of professional wardrobe?

Answers: 1. to achieve unprecedented collaboration across all levels of government; 2. true, according to Gerry White; 3. an educator, according to Therese Keane; 4. the Kammeragal people; 5. the answer depends on what you mean by top 10; 6. not at the time this edition of *Teacher* went to print; 7. Marketing is public relations with a price point, according to Alicia Patterson; 8. the world’s largest high-energy particle accelerator, which collides opposing beams of protons or lead ions, each moving at 99.999999999 per cent of the speed of light; 9. Quick Quiz would, um, politely prefer to pass on this one; 10. and, um, this one, too.

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