

EDITORIAL

The Commonwealth Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, Peter Garrett, in April announced the Australian Awards for Outstanding Teaching and School Leadership were back. The awards aim to recognise the 'best of the best' in the profession. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) relaunched the awards to recognise the nation's outstanding teachers and principals. The awards began in 2006 and have been presented until 2009, with no awards last year. AITSL will use its new National Professional Standards for Teachers and National Professional Standard for Principals as the basis for judging the awards across five award categories: Australian Primary Teacher of the Year, which includes early childhood and special education; Australian Secondary Teacher of the Year, which includes special education; Australian Primary Principal of the Year, which includes early childhood and special education; Australian Secondary Principal of the Year, which includes special education; and Excellence in Teaching or Leadership in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education. AITSL wants the education departments, Catholic systems and associations of independent schools in each state and territory to nominate one outstanding teacher or principal in the five award categories, using their existing awards processes to identify their nominees. It's worth contacting your department, system or association because winners in each category will receive a professional learning sabbatical scholarship in Australia or overseas for up to four weeks to the value of \$25,000. Nominations close on 30 June. **T**

LINKS:

www.aitsl.edu.au/2011-aitsl-awards.html

FAST FACTS

Number of applicants in 2009 from all states and territories in the Schools First Awards Program of the National Australia Bank, the Foundation for Young Australians and the Australian Council for Educational Research: 1,552.

Number of successful applicants: 88.

Number that identified improved learning outcomes as their primary objective in the school-community partnership for which they received a Schools First award: 23 of 53 successful applicants that supplied data for the first interim report.

That identified the development of workplace skills: 9.

That identified the promotion of healthy lifestyles, mental health and wellbeing: 10.

That identified social and emotional support for students and families: 10.

That identified children's readiness for school: one.

Source: Simons, R. (2010). *First interim report of Schools First: Evaluation of the 2009 awards. Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation*. Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research. Available at http://research.acer.edu.au/policy_analysis_misc/6.

QUICK QUIZ

1. What does Alan Wright's April article in *Teacher* and Russell Boyle's March article have in common?
2. According to a large-scale survey by Andrew Flanagin and Miriam Metzger in the United States, when do most students begin using the internet?
3. What's the name of a \$7.8 million program to equip teachers with the skills to purposefully incorporate infotech in their teaching?
4. What does Wendy Evans recommend to combat workplace psychos?
5. What's the aim of the new Essential Secondary Science Assessment in New South Wales?
6. According to Adam Brice, are iPads a distraction in the classroom or an effective learning tool?
7. Does Jarrod Robinson ban mobile phones in his class?
8. When Gerard Ferrara runs training on psychometric testing, how often do participants mention their or their child's high IQ test results?
9. Their partner's IQ test results?
10. What does 'eureka' mean?

Answers: 1. they both encourage educators to cross the threshold into the classrooms of colleagues; 2. between Years 2 and 6, with most online by Year 3; 3. Teaching Teachers for the Future; 4. communication between colleagues; 5. to mimic real-life problems in the assessment; 6. an effective learning tool; 7. no, he promotes their use; 8. almost always; 9. almost never; 10. from Greek, *heureka*, I have found (it).

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T: (02) 9521 4333
F: (02) 9521 6191
E: davell@davell.com.au
W: davell.com.au
ABN 30 278 820 595

