

## **FOURTH MCEECDYA MEETING**

**10 June 2010, Perth**

### **COMMUNIQUÉ**

The Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs met today at La Salle College in Perth. Ministers met in the school's new Senior Learning Centre.

A progress report was presented to Ministers on the implementation of the National Quality Agenda (NQA) for early childhood education and care. Implementation of the NQA remains on-track with all jurisdictions working to tight timeframes associated with the drafting and introduction of the new national applied laws legislation and to prepare for field-testing of the new assessment and ratings process.

Work is still on track to introduce the national applied laws legislation into the Victorian Parliament later this year. Western Australia will enact corresponding legislation. Under this legislation MCEECDYA will have the power to make national Regulations, including enforcing the National Quality Standard (NQS) through the regulatory authority in each State and Territory. The power for MCEECDYA to make Regulations is central to the agreement to a uniform, jointly governed national framework.

Field testing of a draft assessment tool and guidelines with 21 long day care services is being undertaken in June. Following this, the self-assessment tool, Quality Improvement Plan and guidelines will be refined, and assessment with a group of around 200 services including all service-types will be undertaken from July 2010 to November 2010.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) provided Ministers with details on the next update of the My School website and reported on the development of the Australian Curriculum. Ministers endorsed a number of initiatives for the future development of the My School website (see attached) and as part of this affirmed the importance of reporting school financial information later this year.

Prior to the next NAPLAN tests, Ministers asked ACARA to implement a comprehensive communication strategy for parents and to provide Ministers with advice on ways further to strengthen security and test administration protocols.

Ministers noted the significant work ACARA has made towards progressing the Australian curriculum and made plans to discuss in July the outcomes of consultation on the draft phase 1 K–10 curriculum and proposed directions for revision. Ministers confirmed that the scope of the Australian Curriculum over time will comprise the eight key learning areas, general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities.

Today MCEECDYA agreed to realise the National Education Agreement (NEA) commitment to review funding and regulation across the Government and non-government schooling sectors. MCEECDYA will consider regulatory and funding arrangements to support the achievement of the outcomes and targets outlined in the NEA. The process agreed by MCEECDYA will provide opportunities for data sharing and exchange between MCEECDYA and the Australian Government Review of Funding for Schooling.

Ministers also agreed to an evaluation strategy for the Smarter Schools National Partnerships. The purpose of the national evaluation will be to assess the extent to which Smarter Schools National Partnerships outcomes have been achieved; identify and share best practice; and inform decisions about future directions for the Australian Government in supporting better educational outcomes for all students.

Recognising that there is currently a great deal of work occurring across all states and territories throughout Australia to address these issues, it was agreed that a National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in March each year, with the first occurrence on 18 March 2011.

Ministers welcomed a presentation from Ms Ange Barry, CEO of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation.

The Kitchen Garden Program provides positive and enjoyable food education for young children across Years 3 to 6. The underlying belief is that by introducing this holistic approach, the program has a chance to positively influence children's food choices in ways that have not been tried before.

The Ministers welcomed a presentation from South Australia regarding its new data linkage developments. These developments will enable policy makers to better understand how the broader social, physical and other drivers affect children's learning and development.

Ministers agreed that the jurisdictions will explore how existing data can be used in new ways to enable a better understanding of child development and learning, with South Australia and the Commonwealth to report back to MCEECDYA options for a national approach.

## **MCEECDYA agreed initiatives for the future development of *My School* website**

### **Initiatives already agreed**

MCEECDYA has already tasked ACARA with investigating or providing the following additional information for presentation in future upgrades of *My School*.

#### *School income information*

School income information will be published in the 2010 website update as part of the information about a school's capacity. Work is underway to develop a nationally comparable indicator for school income so that this information can be available in 2010. (MCEETYA decisions 17 Apr 09 and 6 Nov 09)

#### *Nationally comparable senior secondary information*

– Currently data on these indicators is only comparable within the state or territory. Indicators relating to senior secondary outcomes, including information relating to Year 12 attainment and tertiary entrance scores, will be refined to ensure national consistency. (MCEETYA decision 7 Apr 09)

#### *Satisfaction with schooling*

ACARA is to investigate the feasibility of a national satisfaction survey of parents, teachers and students to enable nationally comparable satisfaction information to be published on the website in future. (MCEETYA decision 17 Apr 09)

#### *Student population indicators*

In future it is planned to expand on the contextual information provided about a school by including information about the percentages of students with disabilities and students with a language background other than English in each school. Currently only information about the school's Indigenous student population is provided. ACARA is to investigate nationally consistent definitions. (MCEETYA decision 17 Apr 09)

#### *Growth data on literacy and numeracy achievement*

Once NAPLAN 2010 data is available the website will be able to show growth measures – eg students in Year 3 in 2008 and their growth in year 5 in 2010. (MCEETYA decision 17 Apr 09)

#### *Teaching staff levels of expertise*

Under the Quality Teaching National Partnership, new national certification/registration standards are being developed. It is intended that information on proportion of teachers at each level of expertise will be published when standards are in place. (MCEETYA decision 17 Apr 09)

#### *Building on ICSEA*

ACARA has also been tasked by Ministers to investigate the feasibility and desirability of drawing SES data on student background from parents at schools as an alternative to using data from the ABS. (MCEETYA decision 11 Sep 09)

## Other work endorsed by Ministers

### Action to minimise the potential of external agents creating 'league tables'

'Click-wrap' requiring users to agree up-front to the terms and conditions of use as currently set out under copyright on the web-site. (AGS advises this would considerably strengthen ACARA's position in preventing copyright breaches.)

Use hardware/software to prevent automatic scraping of data from the website by bots (web robots).

### Index of community socio-educational advantage (ICSEA)

Obtain updated and comprehensive home address data for all students.

Use student-level data on occupation and education level of parents/carers where these data are available and can be shown empirically to correlate more highly with NAPLAN than estimates of socio-educational advantage derived from ABS data for Census Collection Districts in which students' home addresses are located.

Include within the formula to calculate ICSEA, a variable to capture the effect of language background other than English.

Clarify the process for quality assuring ICSEA values for individual schools where the initial estimate is shown to be inappropriate and provide schools with clear support in this process.

Where initial estimates of schools' ICSEA are adjusted, make corresponding adjustments to the distribution of students' ICSEAs or, where such adjustments cannot be made, do not publish the distribution by quarters.

### Reporting of results

Allow users to refine the list of statistically similar schools using filters, or provide lists of like schools using analytic methods.

Provide a filter to see school averages for all students in the school or for all students excluding students with learning difficulties.

Provide a facility for schools to provide a brief commentary on their NAPLAN results.

Display more prominently information about student absences, withdrawals and exclusions from NAPLAN testing.