

Issue No. 15

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EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Term 2 has been a term of budget reports at both a Federal and State level and you will find summaries for the two budgets in this newsletter. Funding will be an on-going issue for the non-government sector as we get closer to end of the current funding agreement. The information in the press recently around suggestions from the Green paper of what funding of schools in Australia could look like will need careful monitoring.

APFACTS is excited to be able to tell you that we are close to launching our new and improved website which we hope will make it easier for parents to engage with education issues and the work that APFACTS carries out on behalf of parents in the non-government sector.

We encourage parents to be involved with the Shaddock inquiry which will look at systemic approaches and support for challenging and vulnerable students.

We wish you all a relaxing break over the next few weeks and potentially some time away in the sun!

Julie Sengelman, Executive Officer

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FEDERAL BUDGET 2015

On Tuesday, 12th May 2015 the Federal government handed down its second budget and a number of announcements were made in respect to school education. A summary of the announcements follows:

- School Funding - \$15.7 billion in Students First funding to government and non-government schools in all states.
- Students with disability funding - Schools will receive \$1.3bn next financial year to spend on students with disabilities.
- Parental Engagement - The government has provided \$5 million over two years for a "parental awareness campaign" to highlight the importance of parent engagement on education.
- School Chaplains - \$60.6m each year to pay for school chaplains in 2900 schools over the next three years.
- On-line safety - \$7.5m in grants over the next three years.
- Pre-school Funding - \$843.0 million over three years from 2015-16 Remote Indigenous Students Attending Non-Government Boarding Schools —\$5.4 million over two years from 2015-16 (3.6 million in 2015-16 and \$1.9 million in 2016-17)
- Teacher Quality - \$16.9 million over four years from 2015-16

To read the detail of the announcements, view the APFACTS E-Bulletin on the [APFACTS website](#). APFACTS is concerned about the following impacts of the budget:

- Funding of schools post 2018 by CPI, as CPI has increased on average of 2.8% whilst real school costs have increased an average of 5.4%. This gap in funding could lead to increased school fees for parents in the non-government sector.
- The 2015 budget does not actually deliver any increase in funding

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President's Message

Welcome to the APFACTS Term 2, 2015 newsletter.

We encourage you to be part of the conversation around education issues, join us on:

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Executive Committee members

[Caitlin Blackford](#)
Co Vice-President

[Paul Crowley](#)
Co Vice-President

[Stuart Blackford](#)
Treasurer

[Jeannette Fierro](#)
Secretary

Do you know of an event or resource that non-

for students with disability, so students around the country will continue to miss out in 2016.

- The projection of a huge growth in student enrolments in the coming years does not appear to have been accounted for in this budget.
- Whilst \$5 million to promote the importance of parental engagement in learning is welcome more needs to be done to facilitate parental engagement in schools.

government schools should know about?

Email us at:

admin@apfacts.org.au

Further information:

[The Budget Expense Measures relating to Education](#)

[Further detail including the Department of Education Portfolio Budget Statements](#)

[The Education and Training portfolio media releases](#)

[Continue reading article](#)

ACT BUDGET 2015-2016

The 2015-2016 ACT Budget was handed down on Tuesday, 2nd June by the ACT Chief Minister, Andrew Barr. Once again, there were no significant changes or new initiatives to the Education budget for the non-government sector.

Funding

The funding commitment to the non-government sector of 3% indexation has been maintained and the amount that is to be provided to ACT schools in the non-government sector by the ACT government in 2015-2016 is estimated to be \$63.3 million. The total increase in non-government school funding by the ACT government is \$0.5 million which is a 4% increase on 2014-2015. Whilst we understand that this amount includes funding for students with disabilities, as well as the \$1.2 million for preschools and \$625,000 for ICT Infrastructure which were allocated over a 4 year period in the 2013-2014 Budget, we are yet to see the detail in the forward estimates.

The commitment to indexation of 3% does mean that parents will have some certainty around school fees. However, once this agreement is re-negotiated in 2017 we need to ensure that funding levels are maintained to meet the real increases in education costs. A strong commitment to education funding by the ACT government is welcomed, however the lack of funding for capital works for the non-government sector needs to be addressed as all indications are that schools are reaching capacity in this sector as well as in public schools.

Articles of Interest

[Andrew Barr's budget summary](#)

[ACT Budget at a glance](#)

[ABC News budget summary](#)

[Education](#)

[Budget Video](#)

[Continue reading article](#)

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS IN SCHOOLS

Reconciliation Australia has recently launched Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) for Schools. Narragunnawali is the name given to the program which is a school based model for reconciliation.

Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning is designed to support the 21,000+ early childhood, primary and secondary schools in Australia to develop environments that foster a higher level of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions.

Participating schools will be assisted to find meaningful ways to increase respect; reduce prejudice; and strengthen relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Narragunnawali (pronounced narra-gunna-wally) is a word from the language of the Ngunnawal people meaning peace, alive, wellbeing and coming together.

The Ngunnawal people are Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land and waterways on which Reconciliation Australia's Canberra office is located. The program is a school-specific framework featuring actions in the classroom, around the school and with the community. The tools are provided for you to do it all on-line. To find out how you can be involved with your child and school, find out [more](#)

NAPLAN AND MYSCHOOL UPDATE

What's next for NAPLAN

The recent NAPLAN tests may have been the last paper-based tests for this group of students. From 2017 (when this cohort is due to be tested again), NAPLAN will be delivered online on an opt-in basis over two–three years, with all students online from 2019. [Watch this video of ACARA CEO Robert Randall](#) explaining what research has been done so far for NAPLAN online.

My School Update

ACARA was established to develop a national curriculum, manage the national assessment program and report on schooling nationally – all with the intention of improving learning opportunities for all young Australians, wherever they attend school. The My School website is a key channel for reporting on schooling. Schools, teachers, parents and the wider community can use the quality data on My School to discuss the achievements of schools. Importantly, My School was developed to enable fair comparisons to be made among schools with statistically similar groups of students with the intention of celebrating success or identifying areas for improvement.

ACARA believes that the vast majority of people value what My School offers to education in Australia and use it wisely and with care. My School is supported across Australia by policy makers who understand its value and its power. It provides comprehensive and comparable data on an open website to anyone, anywhere who wishes to access it.

In 2014, ACARA commissioned Colmar Brunton to conduct research with parents, principals, partners, and parent and principal representative groups about My School. ACARA were not surprised to read that the research established that parents appreciate having a range of information about schools available in one accessible place, in a format that is relatively easy to navigate and understand, but acknowledging some scope for improvements. The report also showed My School is used by parents as intended, as part of a suite of information sources to make informed decisions about their child's education.

Read the full article [here](#)

CURRICULUM UPDATE

Improving the Australian Curriculum

ACARA is seeking to improve the learning of all young Australians through the development of a national curriculum. Work is underway to improve the Australian Curriculum addressing themes endorsed by the Education Council. These themes are: un-crowding the curriculum; rebalancing the curriculum; improving accessibility for students with disability; and parental engagement.

ACARA is undertaking a program of work of developing, consulting and seeking agreement in relation to proposed actions. This includes undertaking targeted consultation with key stakeholders, including state and territory curriculum, and school authorities and practising teachers, around any changes.

See the new factsheet on [what ACARA is doing to address themes to improve the Australian Curriculum](#)

STEM projects bring subjects together

How do you get students more engaged with STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects? Thirteen schools around the country are being supported to investigate and document an integrated approach to teaching and learning STEM in Years 9 and 10 – showing how individual subject skills can be brought together and applied to a specific school project.

Read more about the [STEM Connections project](#) in this month's issue of ACARA Update.

Public consultation: Turkish and Hindi language curricula

Language curricula for Turkish and Hindi have been released for public consultation. You can find the language curricula and provide feedback on the curricula at the [Australian Curriculum: consultation website](#).

Eleven languages have been released as a part of the Australian Curriculum: languages (Chinese, French, Indonesian and Italian in 2014; and more recently, Arabic, German, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish and Vietnamese).

ACARA's CEO, Robert Randall, said: "When students learn another language, they become better communicators, both in their first language and in the language they are learning. Learning a language will also help young people to improve their understanding and appreciation of the world in which they live. It allows students to develop deeper understanding of different cultures and, in an increasingly globalised world, it should improve opportunities and employability.

APFACTS is a strong advocate for parents on many curriculum forums in the ACT. We represent parents on:

- BSSS – Board of Secondary Studies
- CAC – Curriculum Advisory Council
- ACT Curriculum Taskforce.

Are you interested in curriculum issues? If you have any areas regarding curriculum you would like us to discuss, please email us executiveofficer@apfacts.org.au

SPORTING SCHOOLS

Sporting Schools is all about fostering a lifelong interest in sport among Australian children. Its key purpose is to encourage more children to do more sport-based activities, and empower schools to help them do that. Central to schools achieving that outcome is the expert, enthusiastic involvement of sporting organisations, clubs and coaches.

Support from parents and family is known to have a positive impact on their child's motivation and enjoyment of sport so come and join in the fun. To find

out how you can be involved as a parent and tips for how to support sport at home follow the [link](#)

EVENTS AND SUBMISSIONS

Australian Parents Council (APC) Webinar

On Thursday, 30 April 2015 the Australian Parents Council broadcast a webinar by Karen Curtis, CEO of the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). Karen discussed early child development and the national quality framework. The Association of Parents & Friends of ACT Schools (APFACTS) is an affiliate of the APC and the APC is the national voice and advocate for the parents of 1,285,000 students attending non-government schools in Australia (Catholic and Independent). To watch the webinar please follow the [link](#)

Submission into Students with Complex needs and Challenging Behaviours

As a long-term response to the cage incident, the government announced a wide-ranging expert panel inquiry into "Students with Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviours".

Ms Burch appointed Professor Anthony Shaddock, Paediatrician Dr Sue Packer and ACT Human Rights Commissioner Alasdair Roy to look at systemic approaches and support for challenging and vulnerable students.

The panel would like to hear from schools, teachers, professionals, families, students and anyone who may be concerned about these issues and to hear suggestions on how to "improve policy and practice in ACT schools". Submissions are due by 31 July 2015 and can be emailed to expert.panel@act.gov.au

APFACTS LAUNCHING A NEW WEBSITE

We have been busy at APFACTS working on a new layout and design for our website which we believe will be more user friendly and organised. We would be interested to hear your feedback on how you interact with our website and whether you find the information on the site useful?

We look forward to launching the website and working with a new improved format for our newsletters from Term 3. We invite you to visit the APFACTS website in the next few weeks when the new version will be live!

STAY IN TOUCH WITH EDUCATION ISSUES

Interested in education issues and want to know more?

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