

Issue No. 7

10/07/13

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Another busy term has passed with what has seemed like endless hours and weeks of consultation over the new funding model, submissions and representation. It has certainly absorbed much APFACTS time and energy. The new funding model and national plan for school improvement are in this [newsletter](#).

APFACTS is very proud of the PROJECT ROCKIT workshops held June 17-21 which saw over 2,000 primary and secondary students, teachers and parents attend a weeklong focus on anti-bullying and cyber bullying.

Truly an amazing week - 18 workshops in 8 locations enabled the awesome co-founders of PROJECT ROCKIT, Lucy and Rosie Thomas to work with all parties (students, teachers and parents) in helping build skills and address one of the biggest social issues of today.

APFACTS hopes to do more of these types of workshops and in-depth focus on education and social issues showcasing how a 'whole school' approach can bring about positive change.

Thanks also for the fantastic feedback on our facebook and twitter pages. We are glad you are enjoying these posts and being part of our parent community!

All the best for the holidays.

Charuni Weerasooriya

APFACTS PROJECT ROCKIT WORKSHOPS – JUNE 17-21, 2013

APFACTS has long advocated for 'whole school' approach to education and social issues.

PROJECT ROCKIT workshops held June 17-21, 2013, saw 18 workshops in 8 locations and over 2,000 primary and secondary students, teachers and parents attend a weeklong focus on building skills and leadership to address today's bullying and cyber bullying.

The APFACTS PROJECT ROCKIT workshops helped showcase our vision that through collective engagement from all - students, teachers, parents and principals we can work together for lasting 'whole school' solutions.

Our heartfelt thanks go to our host schools:

- Radford College
- Canberra Girls Grammar School
- St Thomas the Apostle, Primary school
- Daramalan College
- Merici College
- Emmaus Christian School
- St Edmunds College
- St Clare's College

Your partnership with us as host schools for this initiative is greatly appreciated.

Seeing the final day with over 2,000 speech bubbles from kids on how they plan to show leadership against bullying and cyberbullying was truly breathtaking! We are already thinking of ideas on how to work with schools into this social issue.



For more information on Project Rockit workshops and picture gallery, visit : www.facebook.com/apfacts

NEW FUNDING MODEL AND NATIONAL PLAN FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

In the APFACTS [E-bulletin of June 6](#), we detailed the Commonwealth's funding arrangements and transition timetable.

The new funding model for schooling is contained in the [Australian Education Bill](#) which provides the legislative basis for the Commonwealth Government's proposed funding reforms and the associated [National Plan for](#)

Much has been said by APFACTS and others about the complexity of the new funding model. The technical aspects of the model are enshrined in legislation (it will require an act of Parliament to correct any teething problems) and questions remain about the robustness of the underpinning data.

In addition, many of the elements of the model are being reviewed over the next six years which adds even more uncertainty. Another serious concern is that budget forecasts show that any meaningful increases in funding over the next few years, in which time we could have two federal elections, and the bulk of the additional funding is not included in forward budget estimates.

APFACTS is wondering what the future holds as far as funding for students in Australian schools. It is the parents of students attending non-government schools who will be required to make up any funding shortfalls.

In briefings with the Australian Parents Council on June 13, we were given presentations on the funding model by the Department of Education, the Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) and the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC). The presentation provides a comprehensive overview of the many parts that make up the model. While this presentation gives much needed details around the structure and elements of the funding model, it does not cover the details of negotiations with ISCA and NCEC or their state and territory counterparts.

Some of the many myth's about the new funding model are busted!

- **A uniform national funding model**

Each individual State and Territory will determine their own 'needs based funding model' and this will be approved by the Commonwealth.

Contrary to the original architecture and current portrayal as a new "national" funding model it will have some broad consistencies in respect of its underlying principles and basic framework but indications are that it will that there will be differences in how it is applied between the Catholic and Independent school sectors as well.

Each state and territory negotiation (in respect of government schools) has been done without the ongoing consultation with the non-government sectors at their State and Territory level (in fact this is still ongoing).

- **Every school will be in the new funding model**

The promise from the Commonwealth that 'no school will lose a dollar' meant the distinct differences in how every school in Australia was funded would then enter the new model at that rate (2013 funding). Whilst it is a Territory's investment in education differs and Territories like the ACT who invest heavily in education should not be penalized by lower funding, it does make transition to the model highly complex and as noted previously and Territory and between them and the non-government sector.

Participating schools (in the government sector) are those where their States and Territories have signed up to the model (NSW, ACT, SA, TAS). On entering the new funding model, they will receive the equivalent of that above the School Resourcing Score (SRS) they will receive an additional 3% indexation; if their 2013 funding was below the SRS they will receive 3.6% indexation.

Non-government schools are all participating schools and therefore automatically signed into the model and the same application of indexation applies as above (3% if above SRS, 3.6% if below SRS).

Non-participating schools are those government schools where their State or Territory has not signed up to the model (VIC, QLD, NT). We are not sure what the latest iteration of their funding is to be. It will be interesting that these schools will not attract any Commonwealth funding at all, as would be the case for any non-government schools that did not sign up to the model. ISCA today announced finalisation of negotiations on behalf of Commonwealth Government for ACT Catholic systemic funding arrangements.

- **Integrity of the 'capacity to contribute' regime for non-government schools is the same as old SES scores**

The new model was designed to take into account the capacity of non-government school parent communities to contribute to the cost of running their schools. This was intended to remove the historic funding maintain eventually bring all non-government schools to a 'level' playing field.

The new negotiations being done around weighted averages of SES scores nationally will in effect artificially reduce the SES scores of some schools and potentially not be truly reflective of their parent communities.

APFACTS has advocated for the removal of 'parent capacity to contribute' in the ACT. In a Territory that seems similar SES values for parents whether they send their child to a government or non-government school, a should not apply in the ACT.

- **Data sources for new model better than the ones populating the old model**

DEEWR has admitted that many of the data sources used to populate the new funding model are not robust. Various data sources will be reviewed over the next 6 years and this could bring further instability to the new

- **Indexation guarantees will be good for schools**

Experience tells us that in the ACT, education costs are high. It is known that education costs in the ACT will grow at a rate that could be much higher than the forecast 3% indexation. In the new funding model most ACT are above the SRS which means that they will continue to receive 3% indexation but it will be a very long time until schools in other jurisdictions come to the same level of base funding. With the delivery of school education all ACT schools will be going backwards for quite some time.

APFACTS calls for clarity for parents in the non-government sector ...

For parents in non-government schools in the ACT even though the ACT Government has signed onto the new funding model there is much to still finalise.

The 'needs based funding model' for the ACT has not yet been released. AISACT today finalised their negotiations with the Commonwealth but final MOUs have not been signed off by NCEC for ACT Catholic system school

We have been assured that a new tool has been released by DEEWR last week which will help schools understand what their funding will look like at school level. We urge principals once this information is understood

- what these reforms look like at individual school and classroom level
- what the transition arrangements mean for the school
- what impact the new arrangements and funding have on school fees for 2014 and beyond?

This is a press release that was issued today urging for clarity for ACT non government parents by Term 3: [APFACTS Press Release asking for clarity - July 10, 2013](#)

ACT BUDGET

APFACTS was invited to the budget lock-up this year where ACT Treasurer, Andrew Barr announced a \$339.8 million deficit for this financial year, deficit of \$250 million in the coming financial year and then \$100 million surplus of \$29.3 million in 2015-2016.

In hard economic times, the ACT Budget still delivers signature reforms in education and disability with DisabilityCare.

Total education spending (government and non-government) will be \$900 million and \$34 million over 4 years towards the commitment to the new national agreement for 'needs based' funding.

From election commitments, the following budget allocations are for non-government schools:

- \$5 million in grants for establishment and/or upgrades to non-government preschools
- \$2.5 million for access to ICT infrastructure

Interested in further information regarding the ACT Budget ?

- [budget summary by ACT Government on education](#)
- [Non government schooling budget allocations](#)
- [APFACTS Budget submission in February 2013](#)

CURRICULUM UPDATE

Have your say!

The following curriculum consultations are open for comment :

- Closes July 25, 2013:
 - Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages. [More](#)
 - French, Indonesian Korean [More](#)
 - Modern Greek, Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, German, Japanese. [More](#)
- Closes July 19, 2013:
 - Civics and Citizenship. [More](#)
 - Economics and Business [More](#)

To provide your feedback visit : <http://consultation.australiancurriculum.edu.au/>

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](#).

PARENT RESOURCES

Following on from our PROJECT ROCKIT workshops, some parent resources around Anti-bullying and cyberbullying :

- [Safe schools hub](#)
- [Cybersmart – parents cybersafety tool box](#)
- [Parent involvement in preventing and responding to cyber bullying](#)

- [How do teens view their digital lives ? Answers might surprise you !](#)
- [Digital citizenship tips](#)
- [Teen privacy paradox an interesting issue for parents](#)

STAY IN TOUCH WITH EDUCATION ISSUES

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