"I'm not a believer in man-made global warming."

Donald Trump

Developing scientific literacy about climate change in world leaders and students is a challenge p18

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The benefits of a coach
Do you ever wonder what experiences shape...

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the professional voice of the Independent Education Union of Australia

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Editorial

In this first edition of *IE* for 2017 we address current challenges facing teachers and support staff across Australia and throughout the world.

Today teachers are online as much as they are offline, whether it's for research, video streaming, providing content for the virtual classroom or communicating with colleagues or students. How much do we need to be part of that connected world and how technically proficient do we need to be to reach the online generation? Andree Wright from the Office of Children's eSafety Commission explores the topic (p14).

Sydney teacher Mark O'Sullivan is an enthusiastic tweeter. He writes to tweet or not to tweet is no longer the question. Mark argues twitter offers a global network that is easy to control and successful in facilitating discussion with likeminded professionals worldwide (p34).

Developing scientific literacy about climate change in world leaders and students is a challenge - Donald Trump declares "I'm not a believer in man-made global warming". But are there still sides to the argument and what information do teachers believe they should provide their students and the community? A Queensland study of more than 300 primary and secondary teachers gives insight into what teachers think and do (p18).

ABC's *Gruen* panelist, media commentator and advertising executive Dee Madigan tells Kaleidoscope about her school years and brief foray in teaching. Dee talks about what now inspires her and why she promotes women in advertising (p8).

Andrea Stringer explores the experience of being mentored as an early career teacher and confirms that mentoring and coaching are invaluable (p10).

Principals are well educated, live in stable families and are relatively well paid, yet their self rated health is 10% worse than the general population. Read about the alarming results of the latest Australia wide survey (p30).

For a glimpse at the future of learning, and Australian schools in 2040, read Steve Whittington's view (p12). Steve believes "a quantum shift is required if our students are to perform new types of work in new ways for a truly global market".

So there you have it…enjoy!

John Quessy
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AUS WIDE

New South Wales
New authority, less representation

Following the resignation of Mike Baird, Gladys Berejiklian assumed the role of NSW Premier just days prior to the start of the 2017 school year. The change in leadership sparked the usual cabinet reshuffle including the appointment of Rob Stokes as the new minister for education replacing Adrian Piccoli. This was a significant development, particularly for teachers in NSW, as the previous minister had made massive changes to the regulatory arrangements by abolishing the Board of Studies Teaching and Education Standards (BOSTES) and replacing it with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) on 1 January 2017.

The new authority is far less representative of teachers and their issues, less democratic and has little legislative requirement to consult with stakeholders. The recent legislation provides that all significant positions are ministerial appointments. The new minister will be taking on these responsibilities with no experience in the portfolio and no knowledge of or relationship with key stakeholders such as the IEU.

Since the end of Term 4 2016, officers of BOSTES (now NESA) have taken advantage of the absence of a Quality Teaching Council (abolished by current legislation and replaced with a not yet appointed Quality Teaching Committee) to substantially rewrite policy and remove practicing teachers even further from any governance of their profession. The approval of professional development providers, formerly the responsibility of QTC, now rests with the authority itself.

The IEU NSW/ACT Branch will, as a matter of urgency, seek a meeting with the new CEO of NESA to raise our serious concerns and to pursue answers to outstanding questions. The Union will also continue to promote the voice of teachers and their interests through the IEU position on the board of NESA.

Victoria
Raft of new legislation

The Victorian Government continues to introduce a raft of child protection related legislation. Since August last year changes to the requirements for school registration have meant that Victorian schools have had to attest that they met (or were in the process of meeting by the end of the year) nine child safe standards, including the development of a Child Safety Code of Conduct for Staff, procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse, and staff selection, supervision and management practices.

Since late last year, legislation introducing a Reportable Conduct Scheme similar to that operating in NSW, has been tabled in parliament. Both the IEU Victoria Tasmania and the AEU (Victorian Branch) have raised a number of issues of concern with the Department of Human Services and the minister's office. The unions are concerned about the definitions of reportable conduct which do not seem as clear as those in NSW. Mechanisms of appeal are also limited. Unlike NSW, where the scheme is administered by the Ombudsman, the scheme in Victoria will be overseen by the Victorian Commission for Children and Young People.

The scheme requires an employer to notify the Commission in relation to the allegations of 'reportable conduct' by an employee, and report the findings of an investigation carried out by the employer, and any subsequent action taken or not against the employee. The unions expect to be consulted further on guidance or practice notes that the Commission should develop to help clarify the definition of 'reportable conduct'. (See p32 for more on reportable conduct schemes).

Most recently the Union has responded to a discussion paper on a proposed legislative model for Child Safety and Wellbeing Information Sharing which will enable prescribed bodies to share information on a child in relation to the safety and wellbeing of that child. The legislation will outline thresholds for sharing information. The organisations that are listed as prescribed, including schools, will be able to request information. They will however be required to provide information requested by another prescribed body, except in certain circumstances. The proposed scheme is similar to that operating already in NSW.

Queensland
Making a difference for refugees and people seeking asylum

IEUA-QNT members across regional Queensland have helped to provide much needed education resources to refugees and people seeking asylum as part of a new member donation drive.

The drive saw members in Term 4 donate non perishable items to assist with learning, such as pens, notepads, novels and children's books, on behalf of the Teachers for Refugees and People Seeking Asylum (TRAPSA) network.

IEUA-QNT Regional Organiser Richard Pascoe said refugees and people seeking asylum often experienced mental and emotional distress and these donations were a significant contribution to helping improve their daily lives.

TRAPSA was created by the Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) and the Union in 2015 to recognise the importance of school communities in supporting refugees and people seeking asylum.

TRAPSA aims to also provide support for representations to governments and employing authorities in relation to the implementation of policies and programs for refugees and people seeking asylum, and people from a refugee and asylum seeker background, in childcare centres, schools and TAFE institutes.

The terms of reference for TRAPSA can be found at www.qieu.asn.au/TRAPSA.

Northern Territory
Education students burdened by literacy and numeracy testing

Aspiring teachers in the NT will be forced to sit a literacy and numeracy test before graduating university.

From 2017 the Literacy and Numeracy Test will become a mandatory requirement for all NT initial teacher education (ITE) students as part of university course requirements.

The test, to be administered by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), is designed to assess elements of an individual's literacy and numeracy skills and will be used to demonstrate that ITE graduates are in the top 30% of the population for literacy and numeracy.

The Teacher Registration Board, together with Charles Darwin University (CDU), will ensure that all applicants for ITE programs after 1 January 2017 will meet the new federal government requirement.

Testing students' language and literacy skills is not unusual in other professions and all educators should have high literacy and numeracy skills. However, the timing of these tests is critical.

Our Union recommends the test should be given in the first semester of initial teacher training – not at the end of their course.

The introduction of early testing should also have an emphasis on follow up examination for at risk students.

The Board has stated that testing is a retrospective requirement for the current group of ITE students.

While the Board encourages all current ITE student teachers to take the test, it will not be mandated for this group of student teachers as a condition of registration.

The plan for graduating teachers to sit a compulsory literacy and numeracy test at the end of their studies is questionable as it does not improve the morale of practising teachers nor public perceptions of the profession.

While it is desirable that students entering education courses have a record of high academic achievement, this in itself does not guarantee the student will be a good teacher.

Government and media rhetoric implying that those currently working in teaching are deficient in skills and knowledge fails to acknowledge the professionalism of practising teachers.

For more information, visit the Department of Education and Training website at www.studentsfirst.gov.au/teacher-quality .

Western Australia
Measuring professional boundaries

The Teacher Registration Board WA (TRBWA) released their Teacher Student Professional Boundaries resource on 23 January 2017. The document was developed in consultation with key stakeholders.

IEUA WA provided written feedback on the draft document in June 2016 and met with the TRBWA to discuss our feedback in September 2016. The resource reflects the feedback of IEUA WA with many of our suggested amendments taken on board.

The resource provides information about professional boundaries. It seeks to raise issues, prompt reflective behaviour and provide some guidance.

The TRBWA is clear that the resource is not a statutory code and that it sits alongside a school's code of conduct. It does not claim to be exhaustive and encourages teachers to seek advice about situations they find themselves in if they have any concerns.

The release of the resource has resulted in media claims about teachers needing explicit instruction about friending students on social media and warning them against buying lunch for disadvantaged students. The challenges for teachers in navigating social media norms are clearly addressed in the document and it recognises the challenges of the digital age, as well as a world where teachers' interactions with students come under close scrutiny and interactions need to be documented and transparent.

The resource provides a measured and practical approach to recognising and maintaining professional boundaries. As indicated in the IEUA WA submission this is a resource that should be included in initial teacher training and provides professional learning opportunities.

South Australia
Review of school registration requirements

The Education Standards Board is consulting on its proposed revised requirements for the registration, review of registration and endorsement of registration of schools in SA from mid 2017. The proposed requirements will apply to all government and non government schools operating in SA at any year level.

The revised requirements do not constitute an increase in regulatory requirements. The revisions are intended to clarify and formalise current arrangements and enable the Board to more effectively undertake its legislative responsibilities. It is also the Board's intention to streamline its regulatory processes to ensure the efficiency and cost effectiveness of regulation.

Eligibility for registration is assessed against criteria determined by the Board based on the parameters set by the EECSRS Act. Registration may be with conditions, but there is no time limit to registration; once registered, a school's registration remains in place unless cancelled. It is part of the Board's regulatory responsibilities to monitor schools' compliance with the requirements of the EECSRS Act which it can do at any time and in a manner it determines appropriate. Once registered, schools may apply for endorsement to offer education services to full fee paying overseas students.

Standards for schools are of critical importance to the proper provision of education and it is the Union's position that all schools operating (or proposing to operate) in SA should be held accountable for not only initial compliance, but ongoing compliance as well. It is hoped the risk based approach will be sufficiently rigorous to identify problems at an early stage, while keeping the administrative burden to a reasonable level for schools which consistently operate at a high standard.

The three standards relate to: school governance, student learning and assessment and student safety, health and welfare.

The criteria outlined against the three standards seem to be quite sensible and sufficient, and the IEU makes no further comment on them.

The IEU does not have a high level of confidence in schools self reporting. The self interest is all too obvious. Visitation would give an insight into the tone of a school and from a visitation program involving all schools (over a cycle of say five years) the Board would be able to select some schools for more thorough inspection. The IEU experienced this approach through its membership on the now defunct Ministerial Advisory Committee for Non Government Schools.

Tasmania
New rates for support staff

An amendment to the current Tasmanian Catholic Education Single Enterprise Agreement 2015 (TCESEA 2015) was ratified by the Fairwork Commission on 16 January, significantly improving the classification structure for support staff.

IEU Victoria Tasmania negotiated the new structure, which replaces four separate structures covering different occupational groups eg clerical, administration, teacher assistants etc. Wellbeing employees, such as counsellors had not previously been classified.

Improvements include better salary rates and access to improved career paths for each occupational strand of employee; improved parity of salaries with government school employees doing the same job for administration, laboratory, library and ICT and teachers aides and wellbeing employees; and classification levels for each occupational strand which detail typical capabilities, roles and duties.

Deputy principals have their say…

Key challenges examined

During the last couple of years there has been much research on the work and challenges of principal leadership. But what about the rest of our school leadership teams? What do deputy principals and campus heads feel about their roles and their professional learning needs? Cathy Hickey looks at the survey results from a group of 40 deputy principal/ head of campus members of the IEU Victoria Tasmania.

The demographics

Sixty one percent of our group were primary school deputies, 31% secondary, and 8% P-12. Sixty seven percent were women, and 88% were from Catholic schools in Victoria. Three deputies worked in Tasmanian Catholic primary schools and two in large Victorian P-12 independent schools.

The role and workload

Workload is always an issue, and there was quite a discrepancy in the hours per week that simular size schools officially allocated to deputies to undertake their duties. The time allocation in small primary schools ranged from 1-3 hours per week (one respondent) through 1-1.5 days (five respondents), 2-2.5 days (two respondents), and 3-4 days (two respondents). In medium sized primary schools we saw 2-2.5 days (five respondents), 3-4 days (three respondents), and five days (four respondents). Both of the deputies in the large primary schools (550 to 699 enrolment) had five days per week.

In secondary schools there was again variation of allocated release time, with those in medium size schools (that is, 550 to 1100 enrolment) having either 3 to 4 days (four respondents), or five days (two respondents). In the large secondaries (more than 1101 enrolment) six deputies had 3 to 4 days, and one had five days. Even the deputies in the two large schools of over 1500 students differed – one allocated 3 to 4 days and the other five days a week.

When asked what they found most stressful about the role, "workload" (34% of respondents) and "dealing with others" (29%) stood out as the most significant issues for both primary and secondary deputies in similar proportion.

A significant 31% of the group indicated that they did not have enough time allocated to undertake their duties. Reasons related to the extensive multifaceted nature of the role and increasing demands, particularly with administrative duties on top of dealing with student issues.

Lack of clarity in the role was experienced by 18% of the respondents, with three-quarters being in secondary schools. Again the extensive and multifaceted nature of expectations – along with ever expanding scope and amount of duties included – were given as reasons.

Aspiration and PD needs

Just under half of the total group indicated they were aspirant principals, with more male and secondary deputies here (54% of the male deputies and 43% of female deputies, 50% of the secondary deputies and 42% of the primary deputies). When asked if they had applied for principal positions, only 37% replied yes (50% of secondary deputies and 30% of primary, 27% of the female deputies, and 54% of the male deputies). Both aspiration and application were spread across the range of years of experience.

The reasons given for lack of desire to become a principal were largely because of the large workload and complex role and responsibilities principals experience, as well as the problem of lack of support.

The top three areas of professional development focus were managing difficult conversations, effective leadership skills, and supporting staff; with curriculum knowledge and legal issues following closely. Eighty six percent of the deputies had attended specific leadership focused PD.

Deputies/heads of campus are a vital link in the education leadership chain and the IEU believes that the issues highlighted by their members need to be tackled at both school and system level. This will ensure that they are well supported in their roles and the well documented concerns about taking on a principalship are addressed.

Cathy Hickey is an Assistant Secretary of the Independent Education Union Victoria Tasmania.

Kaleidoscope

Dee Madigan

As an advertising executive, creative director and media commentator, Dee Madigan is best known for her tongue in cheek appearances on ABC TV's *Gruen*. However, her involvement in political campaigning and participation on social justice issues – including a campaign to reinstate the Australia Day ad featuring Muslim children – is what inspires this former teacher the most. Journalist Fiona Stutz talks to Dee Madigan about the value of a quality education and why it is important to promote women in advertising.

Writing was just one of those things, because literally as soon as I could walk and talk that was all I have ever really done. All I ever wanted to do was write but I never wanted to starve for my art. So the original degree I started was a Bachelor of Business in Property so I could make a million dollars and retire when I was 40. That was my plan, and after one year of university in that degree – which was as horrifically boring as you could possibly imagine for someone who just basically likes to read and write – I thought 'I can't do this' so I switched into a teaching degree. I graduated from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Education in English and History – Secondary.

I taught history primarily and I taught a couple of English subjects and HSC general studies. So I had one year teaching at probably one of the best schools in Sydney, which actually made it even clearer to me that I was not cut out to be a teacher because if you can't enjoy teaching like that then you never will.

Growing up

I grew up in Victoria and did Prep, Years 1 and 2 at St Mary's Catholic school in Hampton. Then I went from Year 3 to half way through Year 9 at Loreto Mandeville Hall, Toorak, which is a private Catholic girl's school. And then I did the latter half of Year 9 at a school called Nagle College in Bairnsdale, which was not great because they graded you on how hard you tried, not how well you did, but I was good at doing very well without a lot of effort. Then Year 10 I did at Swift Creek High School. My father then decided that I should go back to Loreto.

Loreto was a sensationally good school. We didn't have a lot of nuns teaching but the ones we did have were all highly educated. English, the literature side of it, was excellent. I ended up with an amazing English teacher – I was really lucky with the English teachers all the way through. One I remember in Year 11 was the first person who said that short stories don't actually have to have beginnings, middles and ends, and sort of introduced me to people like Sam Yeatman and some Russian authors who did things a bit differently.

Advertising

I got sick of looking at a lifetime on a teacher's wage so I did a course in advertising; a 12 week course called 'award school'. If you graduated in the top 10 you got an automatic job placement for six months, which I did, and then that sort of basically started you in advertising and I just absolutely loved it. I ended up staying there for about nine years. It was incredibly long hours but it was fun. Even as a junior you got to work on big brands. I travelled the world.

Gruen

Gruen was interesting. I think I'm the only person who didn't put their hand up to audition for it. My boss at the time, Sean Cummins, auditioned for it and when they were filming the pilot episode they needed to do the pitch segment and he asked "can you do that please" and I said "oh sure!" So I did the pitch segment and Jon Casimir – it was he and Andrew Denton who were doing it – rang me up and said "would you come and audition for the show?" and I said "sure!"

> **"I had one year teaching at probably one of the best schools in Sydney, which actually made it even clearer to me that I was not cut out to be a teacher because if you can't enjoy teaching like that then you never will."**

I'd never been on TV before. One thing that did help was growing up with a really good education was that we did a lot of public speaking and public speaking was something my parents always pushed us to do. Having said that, I was terrible in the first episode. How they ever asked me back is beyond me.

Working for self and politics

I started working for myself when I started having children. I went back in the industry though as a creative director; I did a placement for a while, another maternity leave, and then just decided I could probably do it on my own. So when my kids were little I just worked primarily for myself. The good thing about the industry now with the internet and all that sort of stuff you can do that, but what you can't do is build business like that. So about two years ago I said okay, it's time now to start a proper agency with actual staff.

I have done a lot of government work just because the agency I was working in happened to do a lot of federal government social marketing campaigns and I actually really liked it. I liked the idea of changed behaviour and I was also increasingly uncomfortable with traditional brand advertising because a lot of it is actually selling people things they don't need, they can't afford, and we often make them feel really bad about themselves to buy it. And so even though it was so much fun for a lot of years, eventually you sort of actually start thinking about the ethics of it. You just think 'oh is this the best use of what I do?' And

I've always been incredibly passionate about politics so I almost had two things happening: I was writing about politics and doing political commentary on TV and then I was doing advertising separately.

Women in advertising

Advertising does not have enough women in it; politics has not enough women in it. Australia's better than a lot of countries but we still fall way behind and particularly in my field. What happens is, like hires like, so creative directors will hire a young guy and they think 'oh it just feels like you're sitting so well here' and it's like 'well that's just because he reminds you of you.' Unfortunately women then see guys who are not as good as them being promoted over them, plus it's difficult when you want to leave to have a child. It's an industry that thinks everyone over the age of 40 is almost past their use by date. So it's just not sexist, it's ageist as well, which is ridiculous when you think most of the people who buy grocery products are actually women over the age of 35 or 40. Trying to get a job in an agency I imagine would be very, very difficult once you're over 40. At my agency (Campaign Edge) we've only got a few staff, but I'm very aware of these issues. Hiring women, particularly working mothers who are working three days a week, is actually the best because as anyone knows, once you have kids you actually get better at doing far more in a far shorter time. You get better at organising your life.

The benefits of a coach

Do you ever wonder what experiences shape your educational beliefs and values? Andrea Stringer writes that her experience with a mentor as an early career teacher proves that mentoring and coaching are invaluable.

The expertise within our schools is an untapped resource of professional learning. Although I had attained my teaching degree from an Australian university, it was Washington where I was first accredited.

After I finished my practicums and completed the accreditation process, I found myself suddenly transferred to California, which meant a completely new process and accreditation system. Fortunately, as a beginning teacher in California, I was provided a state funded mentor during my first two years of teaching. The trained mentor was not associated with your school, which provided a more diverse perspective and less school bias.

The program was created to develop and retain more effective teachers. You met weekly or fortnightly with your mentor and also attended university accredited workshops. The relationship with my mentor was unique and valuable. We both had the same goal: to work together to acquire my California teaching credential and become a more effective teacher. I am an advocate for coaching in schools because I had a positive experience and believe in this supportive process.

Performance coaching

In various professions and fields such as sports, business and psychology, coaching is predominantly utilised to enhance performance. Coaching is becoming increasingly popular in education as it offers teachers authentic support and personalised professional learning, which has not been a priority in the traditional professional learning models. With many broad definitions, it is important to establish my definition of mentoring and coaching.

Anyone could learn the process of coaching by either following a framework or steps but I think it takes more than simply applying conceptual and procedural knowledge. Some would say it is a 'mindset', others may say it is a 'way of being'. I would say it is in your character and your convictions. To me, coaching is

a belief and faith in another's ability and capacity for growth. I view coaching as a process that provides autonomy (coachee has a sense of choice), relatedness (coachee has a sense of belonging) and competence (coachee has the perception that they possess adequate ability).

Self Determination Theory posits that human motivation is influenced by the support of three psychological needs of autonomy (choice and control), competence (success and optimal challenge) and relatedness (social connection) (*Deci & Ryan*, 1985; 2016). When experiences are supportive of these needs, a teacher will in turn be more motivated and/or self-determined toward their profession (*Deci & Ryan*, 2016). Teacher accountability is considered an important method in the improvement of teacher effectiveness and student outcomes. To develop effective teachers, the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requires all teachers to be accredited by 2018. Additionally, teachers are mandated to obtain 100 hours of professional learning within the following five years. Does compliance facilitate the highest levels of motivation? I believe coaching can contribute positively to the social and emotional wellbeing of the teachers, while facilitating their professional learning.

Talking not telling

Coaching is not about telling teachers they need to improve or how to improve. Instead, it is the process of having one to one conversations that focus on developing the educator's learning through increasing self awareness. A coach, through questioning, actively listening and challenging the coachee in a supportive and encouraging environment, facilitates self directed learning of the teacher (*van Nieuwerburgh*, 2012). Like students, teachers are complex and diverse. Coaching is personalised. It effectively integrates into the educational context where one size does not fit all. Coaching allows teachers to take responsibility for their choices and provides teachers with agency or autonomy in their educational context. This coaching relationship must be built on trust.

Coaches are not the experts employed to solve problems or fix things. Neither are they the rescuer employed to cover classes, analyse data, or write teaching programs. Coaching is a partnership based on trust. Trust is essential in all relationships but in coaching it needs to be established, protected and held in the highest regard. Without trust, a coach has little influence over the professional growth

Coaching spectrum

Source: Adapted from Miles Downey

> **We need to create environments in which all teachers embrace the idea of continuous improvement.**
>
> Dylan Wiliam

of a teacher, and ultimately, student achievement. When a coach works with a teacher, it is because they care about the teacher, their practice and their students.

As a coach, my intention is to support and guide teachers to develop or sustain their expert skills in teaching. For a teacher, it takes courage to share their thoughts, practices and beliefs about education, let alone invite me into their classroom to observe student learning. Being willing to receive feedback about their professional performance, confirms their desire to improve. This demonstration of vulnerability illustrates their trust in me.

This opt in approach to professional learning provides the opportunity to receive coaching and offers teachers the opportunity to self determine their learning. Coaches understand that teachers know their students best and work in partnership with the teachers to determine goals, decisions and also celebrate successes. Coaches question to clarify the goals of the teacher while providing additional support if needed. In my experience, learning from someone you trust lowers any apprehension of trying something new.

When entering into a new coaching relationship, most are likely to be a little guarded, so patience is essential. When setting up the initial meeting, expectations should be established. Confidentiality is imperative and must be addressed. Being reliable is also extremely important as educators value those who are dependable.

Coaching requires authentic conversations. Many wrongly believe coaching is about evaluation. Coaches should make it very clear that they are not there to evaluate or report to anyone and that confidentiality is paramount. While some teachers may feel they don't have time for coaching, coaches strive to build a culture where the coaching process and goals are highly valued. Coaches encourage teachers to develop new skills, knowledge and abilities to achieve their goals. Establishing trust may take time, but when you are promoting growth and building teacher capacity, it is time well spent.

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Andrea Stringer is a professional learning coach at Wenona School in Sydney. She is currently working towards her postgraduate research that focuses on coaching in education.

The future of learning:
Australian schools in 2040

Is an Australian classroom the best place to learn French? No, a bustling café on the banks of the Seine in Paris is. What about a young graduate describing the ravages of war? Would this not be more effective in the words of an emotional veteran? Can the immense beauty of the Himalayas or Great Barrier Reef be adequately conveyed on the pages of a textbook or laptop or projector screen? Of course not.

Our present day schools have barely evolved over two centuries from industrial age clerical training institutions designed to produce 'excellent sheep' (Zhao, 2012, Deresiewicz, 2015). Yet the working world for which schools are intended to prepare their charges has shifted dramatically. The career ladder of past professions has become a matrix of multidirectional possibility, where offshoring and peer to peer networks such as Freelancer, EBay and Uber have facilitated a shift from job seeker to international entrepreneur across diverse industries.

Despite this, school students still come to an isolated collection of buildings – 'school' – for approximately 200 days each year, sit on chairs at desks in classrooms and, for the most part, follow teacher directed, content heavy curricula. Teachers conduct regular assessments that benchmark students' ability to perform standardised 'memorisation and compliance' tasks (Zhao, 2015) relative to their peers. The ultimate goal? A grade indicating the culmination of 12 years of formal schooling that determines what post secondary path they qualify to take. Is this really the breeding ground for global citizens who will perform work that has not even been invented yet? A quantum shift is required if our students are to perform new types of work in new ways for a truly global market. It will necessitate a rethink on purpose, people, organisation, facilities, curriculum and assessment.

Purpose

Clarke (2012) argues that current educational systems are 'wedded to the industrial model' and presents a model of sustainable communities that encourage a shift from a human centric to eco centric perspective, an 'ego to eco' transition. Until now, schools have largely sought to give individuals the best possible start in life to the extent their capabilities and attributes will align them to an existing profession (*Hannon,* 2016). Lists of capabilities the next generations of students will need abound in futures literature. These attributes combine to form an entrepreneurial mindset, which, as Richard Branson (2016) notes, cannot be taught. However, the world needs entrepreneurs by design, not by accident. Educational systems must therefore encourage children and adolescents to broaden their perspective from individual to global, equipping them with the necessary skills to improve planetary and species longevity, including human quality of life rather than short to medium term economic output. Zhao's Easter Island metaphor for education (2012) is a chilling one if extrapolated.

People

Schools will no longer employ maths, science and language teachers. Instead, learning mentors will work alongside vertically streamed cohorts of like minded students. These learning mentors need not have tertiary qualifications in an academic subject but they will need to be outstanding relationship driven communicators and counsellors, able to engage not just their students (who will already be fully engaged because they're able to pursue

interests of their choosing) but other members of the community. The role of these project mentors is not to educate or report but to guide and advise. Greater integration of schools and communities will provide opportunities for school staff to redefine their roles across an expanded learner demographic. An improvement in autonomy, work flexibility and work life balance will offset a reduction in job security. A peer to peer economy fundamentally alters the conventional employer employee relationship.

Organisation

Students will not be required to physically report to a school campus for 200 days per year. There is no set time during which 'schoolwork' must occur and during which play is prohibited. In fact, there is a complete deregulation of the school day, week and year as students pursue individual interests and choose to work on their personal projects whenever they like. Accordingly, there is no set attendance requirement at a physical school. Rather, students must meet project milestones with their learning and project mentors. Designated project tasks can be performed at any appropriate location. School buildings thus become community hubs from which other organisations – public or private – are engaged to host mentees. Learning mentors may still 'meet' with their cohorts, but this need not be at school or even in person, let alone as a group, and need not be during the 'school day'. Learning mentors will be able to allocate which hours and days they work. Homogeneity is an undesirable concept in the new learning paradigm, so heads of school, heads of year, heads of house and heads of department disappear, replaced by learning stream mentor coaches.

Facilities

As students and mentors will rarely if ever be required on site at the same time, school campuses can be re-imagined to serve an alternative community purpose. As learning liaison hubs, the focus of the facilities must be on communication: e-conferencing, webinar and voice systems are paramount, as is the ability to access them remotely 24/7. Access to learning records and cloud storage are essential: technology in schools must evolve from being a tool to aid learning, to being an environment of itself, in which mentors and students reside. There would still be a need for performance spaces, creative and physical, design studios including a theatre for large scale gatherings, superseding churches as community hubs. When combined with other similar spaces worldwide, these additional facilities, networked on a global scale, would boost international relationships and provide a formidable social cohesion at an inter local level that bypasses traditional diplomatic channels, preserves Indigenous identity and therefore further develops existing global peer to peer networks.

Curriculum and assessment

Sahlberg's (2011) GERM acronym clearly conveys his feelings about uniform, top down curricula. Curricula of the future are bottom up and personalised according to each individual's strengths and passions, assessed in a manner and scope agreed with the learner. Just as entrepreneurship cannot be taught, it cannot be measured other than through the development of a useful or creative product or service consumed by an audience. The focus will therefore be on creating and producing rather than theory and regurgitation; knowledge has even less value in 2040 than in 2017.

Implications

Teachers are all too aware of the shift in focus from whole class to individual, and the commensurate increase in workload. Education needs to surge towards personalisation: learner voice, choice and agency (*Hannon*, 2016). World class learning in 2040 will see a total integration of present day schools into the business and community sectors and require wholesale changes to the roles of teachers and support staff. Most importantly, it will necessitate a complete shift in mindset regarding the purpose of education, from individual job attainment to interdependable global sustainability. Whether education unions lead or lag in this transformation will greatly dictate the extent to which school staff embrace or resist the challenging journey ahead.

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Steve Whittington is an Organiser with IEU Victoria Tasmania. He previously taught in the independent sector and sincerely hopes he will not be freelancing in 2040.

> "A quantum shift is required if our students are to perform new types of work in new ways for a truly global market. It will necessitate a rethink on purpose, people, organisation, facilities, curriculum and assessment."

Reaching the online generation

Once upon a time, 'going online' meant sitting down in front of a computer, logging on and listening to the otherworldly squeal of a dial up modem connecting you to that invisible global network. Andree Wright, Executive Director, Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner, looks at the experience of young people born into an online world.

Today many of us rarely even think of ourselves as 'being online'. Whether we're streaming video on demand, tracking how many steps we've walked, or taking a holiday happy snap, we are generally more likely to be online than offline.

The same is true for the classroom: the ubiquity of laptops, tablets, smart boards, and connected devices puts a world of educational possibilities at the fingertips of students – this also means teachers need to be part time IT gurus just to keep the wheels turning sometimes.

Not keeping pace

Today's young people were born into this connected world and they become technically proficient with internet enabled technology from a young age. However, a child's development of emotional and psychological resilience doesn't keep pace with the rapidly evolving technology they interact with.

The result is that while young people find increasing uses for digital technology and experience a greater degree of their identity formed and expressed via social media, they also find themselves exposed to risks associated with the online world such as cyberbullying, online threats and unwanted contact.

The government recognised the need for a national leader in promoting cyber safety and online safeguarding of Australian children, and thus the Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner opened its doors mid 2015.

The office provides a safety net for children affected by serious cyberbullying. It is also proactive as a provider of high quality resources and training for others to use free of charge. These include the office's virtual classroom programs, the original Cybersmart suite of award winning resources and more recently its Rewrite Your Story initiative.

To ensure our programs and resources are evidence based, our office supports, encourages, conducts and evaluates research about young people's online safety. Our most recent research involved a national survey of kids, teens and parents who use the internet. Parents were asked about how they approach online safety, and what they need to support their children to be safe online. Kids (aged 8 to 13) and teens (aged 14 to 17) were asked about their internet use and online activity.

Internet insight

This research gives us some helpful insights into the role the internet plays in young people's lives: 85% of kids and teens see the internet as important in their lives. As young people mature, they spend more time online: kids spend 19 hours a week online outside of school, whereas for teens it's 33 hours a week.

We've also learnt that the time young people spend online is not all about fun and games: 78% of time spent online is devoted to completing schoolwork. Of course, as a truly multitasking generation, young people also manage to spend 73% of their time online streaming videos, movies or TV, and 62% of their time playing games.

Our research has also revealed how young people deal with the negative aspects of their online experiences. In the 12 months to June 2016, 9% of kids and 17% of teens said they were exposed to inappropriate content, and 8% of kids and

> **"This digital version of social exclusion is a challenge to both identify and intervene in."**

19% of teens told us that they were the target of cyberbullying.

Social exclusion

A large proportion of young people who were cyberbullied were called names, or had lies or rumours spread about them. The largest proportion – 43% of teens, and 50% of kids – were socially excluded.

Social exclusion is not a new phenomenon and has long been a symptom of bullying in the offline world. With the increased importance for young people of online social interactions, victims of cyberbullying are likely to be affected in less obvious ways than sitting alone in the playground at lunchtime.

This digital version of social exclusion is a challenge to both identify and intervene in – for us and for educators. By its nature this form of cyberbullying has an absence of evidence; there's no offensive content that needs to be taken down online, and often no obvious perpetrator to hone in on.

This scenario serves as an example of why a multifaceted approach is needed to tackle cyberbullying, and a reminder of the vital role education plays in effecting real behavioural change among young people.

Webinars

As technology and children's use of the internet has evolved over time, so have we. Our virtual classrooms are available to independent schools across Australia, allowing our expert outreach trainers to reach more students than ever before with online safety lessons. These free, webinar style lessons have been delivered to tens of thousands of students across Australia, and we continue to review and update the content of these lessons to provide the most comprehensive and salient information and advice.

This commitment to staying fresh and keeping pace with changes and trends in the online world permeates everything we do. There always seems to be a new game, app or social networking service that children are using so we provide up to date resources on our iParent portal. We know that children learn while they're having fun so the office is developing gamified experiences, such as our popular Cybersmart Challenge. We're also committed to developing programs directly relevant to young people, such as Rewrite Your Story.

Rewrite Your Story is an educational awareness campaign designed to empower young people to consider, converse and take action when it comes to cyberbullying and rewriting their story online. Rewrite Your Story uses young people's experiences of serious cyberbullying to help others relate, connect and discuss the issues and how they can rewrite their stories too.

We believe listening, understanding and remaining relevant to young people, educators, parents and the wider community is crucial in connecting the dots and bringing us together to create positive change in online behaviour.

Today's young people, born into an online world, will never know what the squeal of a dial up modem sounds like (although I'm sure there's a YouTube video of it!), but they need the guidance and support of the parents and teachers in their lives now more than ever.

Get the latest online safety advice and resources for the classroom at esafety.gov.au .

Record keeping in schools:
Navigating the minefield

Record keeping in schools is a veritable minefield, David Griffiths, Managing Director, CompliSpace, writes. With a complex array of legal and duty of care obligations, combined with multiple data management systems, it is little wonder that many schools struggle to implement effective policies and practices for the management and retention of information.

Why do we keep records?

Proper information governance is becoming more of a priority than ever, especially with the increased focus on schools and their duty of care obligations. But aside from these obligations, schools must also keep records to remain compliant with a suite of other legal and non legal requirements, including those that arise from:

- Privacy Act 1998 (Cth) (Privacy Act) and Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)
- Crimes Acts in each state and territory
- contractual obligations
- canon law, and
- regulators.

Proper record keeping ensures that schools:

- meet the obligations of state and territory record keeping laws
- meet their legal and regulatory compliance obligations
- have information in the event of litigation and legal proceedings
- undertake reputational risk management, and
- retain information for alumni and marketing communication.

What records are kept?

The Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) (see the CompliSpace whitepaper *The New Privacy Laws & Australian Privacy Principles* for more information) are applicable to non government schools and prescribe a framework for the collection, management and disposal of personal information (ie information about an identified individual or an individual who is readily identifiable). If information is not 'personal information' it doesn't matter how a school collects it. To be captured by the APPs, personal information must be contained on a 'record' (eg written down, on a database, in a photograph or video etc). The types of records schools collect include:

- academic, attendance and enrolment
- staff/volunteer records
- child protection/Working With Children's Check (WWCC), and

- complaints handling.

Such records generally contain personal information and consequently, non government schools must consider how the APPs apply to them and their record keeping practices. While the APPs do not apply to government schools, their record keeping practices are regulated by state and territory laws and regulatory guidance.

Child protection

Comprehensive records must be kept where there is an allegation of child abuse within the school. In 2016, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) published a paper entitled *Records and Record Keeping Practices* (Consultation Paper). Of concern is the Consultation Paper's finding that "there is no single unified approach to recordkeeping and archiving embracing government and non government sectors".

Consequently, the Royal Commission proposed five high level principles which are intended to complement existing law and practice, promote and guide institutional best practice and inform future policy development and law reform. The principles are:

- Creating and keeping accurate records is in the best interest of children.
- Accurate records must be created about all decisions and incidents affecting child protection.
- Records relevant to child sexual abuse must be appropriately maintained.
- Records relevant to child sexual abuse must only be disposed of subject to law or policy.
- Individuals' rights to access and amend records about them can only be restricted in accordance with law.

In its investigations the Royal Commission found that many important records were not kept. Not only did these failures affect the schools themselves, it also meant that victims of historical or current child abuse offences were placed at a significant disadvantage when pressing charges against perpetrators. Consequently, schools must ensure

they have record keeping policies and procedures for incidents of child abuse. This is particularly important as past child abuse actions can come to light decades following the incident itself, with the Royal Commission's Interim Report citing 22 years as the average period of time between an offence and the resulting claim.

School registration and accreditation

The school registration and accreditation guidelines and standards of every state and territory emphasise the importance of proper records management in schools. Indeed, in the 2017 Western Australian *Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools* the requirement to keep records appears 62 times.

Records: How do we keep them?

Good record keeping practices can be summarised in four key steps:

1. Capture the information

Schools are firstly advised to categorise different types of records in order to readily identify the purpose of the information and establish protocols for use. Important record types include:

- governance
- compliance
- administration, and
- student services.

2. Location

Schools should adopt a clear framework for the storage of records. These include:

- digital storage facilities for electronic records, and/or
- physical storage facilities for paper/print records.

Regardless of the system, schools should make sure that records can be indexed in a logical manner that facilitates easy location, retrieval and association of related information.

3. Retention

Schools should develop a guide to retention as part of their records management system. This may include:

- permanent retention: records the school is required to keep by law
- records of archival interest: records that are not essential for legal or accountability purposes but are important to the school's 'story' and are of interest or important to the school, and
- not archived: this applies to records containing no personal information, which are of no importance to the school and are not legally required to be maintained.

> **"**
> **Proper information governance is becoming more of a priority than ever, especially with the increased focus on schools and their duty of care obligations.**
> **"**

4. Destruction

If a school determines that records are no longer needed, any copies that have been archived or held as back ups should be destroyed or the personal information de-identified.

What not to do

The consultation paper provides some examples of poor record management. According to research, records were lost or damaged in various ways including:

- loss of hard copy records
- records being lost due to the use of multiple or convoluted indexing systems, and
- records being stored inappropriately for example, in employees' homes.

Poor record keeping has hindered disciplinary action, criminal and civil proceedings, and prevented identification of risks and incidents of child sexual abuse.

Key takeaways

In this day and age, there is no excuse for not keeping records, whether it be incidents, investigations, determinations etc. When implementing record keeping policies and procedures, schools should remember:

- not all records need to be maintained, differentiate between the 'musts' and the 'shoulds'
- records management requirements are in a state of change
- records management does not operate in a vacuum
- understand the what, when, why, how and who of records management in your school
- the use of technology is not a 'nice to have', it's a 'must have', and
- if you want to make it work you cannot simply rely on having a program or policy in place – you must also train staff in all record management policies and procedures in order to influence their actions and behaviour.

David Griffiths is a Managing Director and cofounder of CompliSpace. He is a governance professional with over 20 years' experience in law and management. His principal areas of expertise are in corporate governance, compliance and workplace relations. David has extensive experience in governance, risk and compliance from both sides of the regulatory fence. David is a regular presenter on behalf of the Governance Institute of Australia and other industry bodies on issues relating to governance, risk management and compliance.

Developing scientific literacy about climate change in world leaders and students is a challenge

Are there still sides to the argument?

How do teachers' beliefs affect climate change teaching?

Climate change is a real threat; however, schools may be failing to provide their students with the right tools to observe and understand the effects of climate change. So, why are teachers finding it difficult to teach climate change? Journalist Fiona Stutz looks at a survey of teachers to ascertain whether their preconceived notions and personal beliefs of the controversial subject may be what is holding climate change education back for our students.

As today's students will be tasked with managing tomorrow's climate change, the need for teachers to educate their students about the effects of climate change is crucial.

In the F-10 Australian Curriculum: Science, a priority is put on 'sustainability' and providing contexts for investigating and understanding chemical, biological, physical and Earth and space systems. Cause and effect are explored, and students develop observation and analysis skills to examine these relationships in the world around them. Students are able to better understand the importance of using science to predict possible effects of human and other activity, and to develop management plans or alternative technologies that minimise these effects.

While the idea of exploring climate change may be evident in the curriculum, a teacher's knowledge, personal and professional beliefs may instead be holding the debate on climate change back for students.

A report, *Queensland Teachers' Understandings of Education for Climate Change* incorporated a survey conducted by James Cook PhD student Jennifer Nicholls of more than 300 primary and secondary school teachers. The teachers were asked to identify their personal and professional beliefs about climate change and climate change education.

Neutrality

Teachers' beliefs about their ability to teach the subject matter, opinions about the content matter and political beliefs influence decisions about the inclusion of topics within their classrooms, the report surmised. "A lack of understanding or knowledge surrounding a subject matter to be taught can lead to a topic being avoided by teachers or to be covered poorly or incorrectly. Even with the expressed intent of taking the position of neutrality and balance, the influence of the teacher's own beliefs can be greater than intended."

The survey employed eight sub questions specifically addressing respondents' knowledge relating to the science of climate change as one measure of ascertaining respondents' conceptual understandings and knowledge of the issue.

The results showed some uncertainty relating to the science of climate change, however, the respondents to this survey appeared more knowledgeable in certain areas than the general public.

But it found that 6% of teachers incorrectly believed that climate change was mainly caused by a hole in the ozone layer.

However, the majority, or 79%, strongly agreed to the question 'I am certain the Earth's climate is changing', with the majority also agreeing this was due to 'partly natural processes, partly human activities'. The majority also believed climate change was a serious problem.

Those who took part in the survey were also asked to express, in their own words, what climate change education involves.

For or against arguments

The idea of 'balance' and presenting students with 'both sides of the climate change argument' or a balanced perspective was most frequently identified by teachers as important in climate change education.

Teachers identified that there existed a 'for and against' argument or more than one side to climate change that students should be made aware of.

Not telling students what to believe but allowing them to review or be given all 'sides' of the argument so they were able to 'make up their own mind' about climate change was also considered important by teachers, the report surmised.

However, a small number of teachers noted that students may not have the decision making skills required to 'make up their own minds' and pointed to the need to develop student decision making skills.

With all the signs pointing to teachers personally agreeing that climate change was real, many did not appear to have a complex or nuanced understanding of what climate change education can be for their students.

The survey report made several recommendations on how to ensure teachers have access to best practice education for students, such as professional development, so as to better understand climate change science themselves.

A narrow view of what climate change education is may lead to limiting the quality of education relating to climate change and futures. Professional development and quality reading materials and resources may help widen teacher understanding and confidence in this area, the report suggests.

St Peter Claver College maths and science teacher, Clare Gilliland, said it was important to teach students about climate change; however, it should be relevant to the students and provide them with information that will assist them in making decisions about their future.

Decision making

"Climate change has become increasingly relevant to our students, as decision makers grapple with how best to address this issue. Thus students should be provided with the opportunity to understand so that they can question and encourage decision makers to make decisions in their best interests."

Clare said it was also important for students to take what they learnt in the classroom back home.

"By teaching about climate change in the classroom, we have a fantastic opportunity to support our students in engaging with conversations at home that can only broaden the community's understanding of climate change and promote better scientific literacy in students and the wider community."

At her school, discussions on climate change occur in Years 7, 8 and 10, with Clare teaching the Year 10 unit on climate change for the first time in 2016.

"In Year 10 Science we have an explicit unit around climate change. In Year 8 Science when we look at energy, we have opportunities to discuss renewable and non renewable sources of energy which inevitably lead to climate change conversations. In Year 7 Science, we examine the water cycle, again with conversations that inevitably lead to climate change conversations."

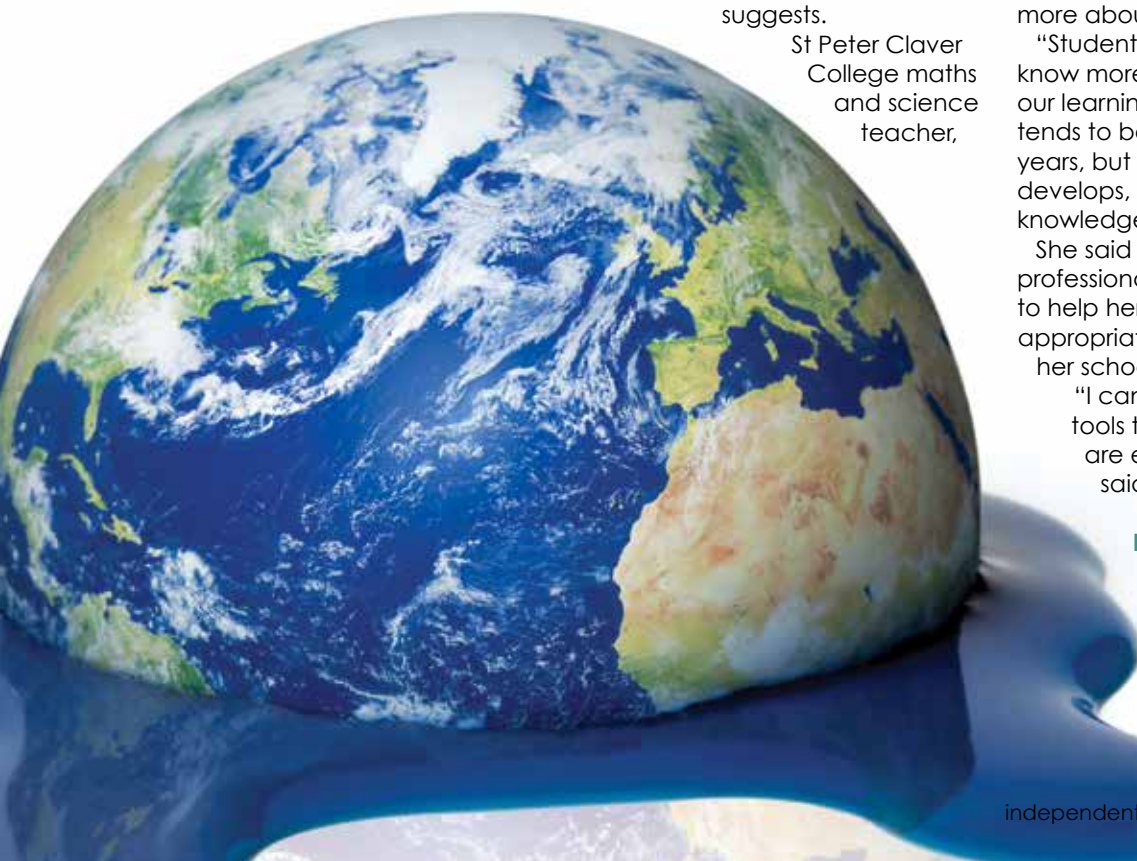She said students were always eager to be involved, ask questions and find out more about the controversial topic.

"Students will ask, because they want to know more and I happily set aside time in our learning to address their questions. It tends to be more general in the younger years, but as students' understanding develops, we look at a greater depth of knowledge."

She said she would like to undertake professional development in the future to help her find resources that were age appropriate, engaging and targeted to her school age students.

"I can teach science, but I need the tools to help ensure all my students are engaged and learning," she said.

Resources

www.coolaustralia.org/curriculum-materials/#body-wrapper

Facebook
- the classroom of the 21st century

Facebook, as a virtual classroom, may be closer than we think, writes Nick Stanley, Managing Director, Tribal Group.

Debates and ongoing school wide bans on social media aside, research has found that students are already turning to networks as an extension to structured learning. It found 59% of students are already using social media to discuss education topics online, while 50% of those who talk about education topics online talk specifically about schoolwork.

Despite reports that younger Australian users are drifting away towards mobile messaging apps, the popularity and reach of Facebook remains staggering, with over 15 million users in Australia alone.

The advent of social learning is unsurprising, considering the concept and deployment of VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) started decades ago. VLE is an online system that allows teachers to manage and share educational materials with their students. While VLE has become analogous with distance learning and homework, the benefits of online learning have transcended to effectively allow a more immersive and direct 1:1 learning experience.

Facebook as a learning tool

Teachers and parents continue to harbour their own (and valid) apprehensions about the use of Facebook in schools. Some argue that it is a distraction, others believe Facebook empowers learner procrastination and, left unmanaged, will potentially make the learning process less effective compared to a more structured learning system.

From an administrative point of view, one major issue is rooted in the way that Facebook is insecure and unmoderated, limiting control for the organisation. The lack of structure, boundaries and protocols can not only lead to poor quality content but also security threats. Organisations would be hard pressed to maintain standards around corporate applications, including those that manage risks.

However, what remains evident is that the wide accessibility and social nature of Facebook as a platform is ideal for learner engagement. As Facebook's user base and the frequency of access by Australians continues to grow, teachers who dismiss Facebook based on privacy concerns are potentially missing an opportunity to harness social networking to inspire children to learn and share using technology in a transparent manner.

With up to 95% of teenagers using Facebook and 25% going online constantly, its potential as a medium to excite and educate students is unquestionable. While Australian school policies may not (yet) support its use, Facebook can and will be used by students to meet, collaborate, share and learn. It is unavoidable that we must, at some point, develop methods to allow us to practically harness this platform.

How to use Facebook for effective social learning

To optimise the positive educational opportunities social media can offer

Nick Stanley

> "Teachers who dismiss Facebook based on privacy concerns are potentially missing an opportunity to harness social networking to inspire children to learn."

students as well as control the adverse elements, teachers need to understand the platform to use it effectively.

1. Create closed groups. Teachers can create a group and invite pupils to join the group by email, sidestepping the anxiety around teacher student privacy. A closed group creates a space where students and teachers can collaborate on the platform, without needing to share access of personal profiles.

2. Moderate. Learner engagement is a two way street. You are more likely to achieve genuine participation and involvement through being proactively engaged yourself. Moderation also allows inappropriate behaviour and conduct to be controlled.

3. Stay active. Active, not passive moderation goes a long way in ensuring students know you're there and see the group as a virtual classroom and its purpose for learning. This also reinforces good behaviours and conduct.

4. Look out. As with any physical classroom, staying aware and managing individual student behaviour in the group is necessary to establish a positive classroom climate.

5. Filter. Introducing keyword lists will serve to filter out inappropriate language for a learning environment. Profanity filters, however, do not apply to images so it's critical to moderate external content and intervene as necessary.

6. Feed. Use RSS feeds and subscribe to feeds so you are alerted regularly to new content.

7. Share. Create a group to share your learnings with other teachers.

8. Accept. Whether you like it or not, they are probably going to use Facebook as part of their learning experience. Just like advising them on the physical environment they might encounter, we can introduce strategies to help them with the virtual environments they navigate daily.

If students and teachers can find a way to productively co-exist and interact on the social network, the Facebook classroom could prove to be a vital tool for teaching and learning in the 21st century, a feat in the modern education experience.

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Standing up for Shakespeare

"To be, or not to be", that was the question for 30 school teachers from across Australia who took part in a year long mentorship with Bell Shakespeare in 2016. Journalist Fiona Stutz spoke with two Queensland members about how they have incorporated the practical experiences they learnt into their own classroom.

Bell Shakespeare, Australia's only national touring theatre company, launched the Regional Teacher Mentorship for the first time in 2016. Thirty regional, rural and remote school teachers were awarded a fully funded mentorship with the company, which included four days of accredited professional learning at Bell Shakespeare headquarters in Sydney. The teachers received specialist training in practical and innovative strategies for teaching Shakespeare as well as being given the opportunity to collaborate and network with other regional education professionals from across the country.

Good Counsel College in Innisfail English teacher, Dr Alison Clifton, said she decided to apply for the mentorship to improve her teaching practice and gain an understanding of how to make learning about Shakespeare's plays and poetry more engaging for her students.

Moving on up

"The mentorship was so practical. We were taught how to use performance based games and physical drama activities in the classroom to provide a kinesthetic learning experience. The games help students to understand aspects of the text ranging from a character's motivations to the way in which iambic pentameter works."

Alison believes her teaching has changed since undertaking the mentorship.

"My teaching has become more vibrant and dynamic. No longer am I tied to a static text. Instead, the students are really able to empathise with the motivations of the characters in the plays. The activities are engaging, highly effective and easy to implement, encouraging students to take risks as performers. Even the really shy students participate!"

English teacher Katelyn Wallace at St Anthony's Catholic College in Deeragun was convinced by her head of department to apply for the mentorship and has always respected the company.

"I have held the company in high regard since seeing Bell performances when I was in high school and wanted to afford our students the same exposure to the wonderful work of Bell. They make Shakespeare so accessible to students without watering down the language, which is an impressive feat considering the language often poses the greatest barrier to students' engagement with Shakespeare."

During the four day workshop, Katelyn said she was taught a wide array of games and activities to get kids 'up on their feet' engaging with the performance aspect of Shakespeare's plays.

Insults and compliments

"The activities were super practical and versatile. We even had a session on how to adapt the activities for various learners/ student groups. I have been able to teach some of these activities to other English teachers at my school during some rather fun departmental meetings.

"One of the favourite activities in my English classroom is Shakespearean insults and compliments, a great way to engage students at the start of a Shakespeare unit. Students combine two adjectives and a noun from columns to form uniquely Shakespearean insults/compliments which they then bestow upon their peers.

"At 32 seconds, plays are a great way to familiarise students with the plot of Shakespeare's plays quickly. In rival teams students are assigned lines from the play which represent key events. Each team aims to perform this highly condensed form of the play in under 32 seconds. The results are pretty entertaining."

Easy learning

She said since the workshop the participants had established a Facebook page, sharing resources, photos, success stories and ideas with each other and with Bell.

"Each teacher has submitted a Shakespeare unit plan replete with

> **"After being on their feet engaged in their own unfolding of the plot and characters, students are in a much better position to pull apart the layered meaning."**

resources to Bell Shakespeare for use in their school, on which Bell will provide practical feedback. Bell has aimed to run in school programs with the schools of teachers involved in the mentorship. Teachers are able to contact Bell Shakespeare for advice, ideas or resources."

For Katelyn, the mentorship helped her realise that when students are engaged the learning comes easy.

"My teaching, particularly of Shakespeare, has become much more centred around student engagement with plays through performance. This has actually facilitated deeper textual analysis of Shakespeare's plays, rather than detracting from analysis or replacing it. After being on their feet engaged in their own unfolding of the plot and characters, students are in a much better position to pull apart the layered meaning in a dense soliloquy or sonnet and actually enjoy it," Katelyn said.

To find out more about Bell Shakespeare's Regional Teacher Mentorship, in-school performances or Artists in Residence programs, visit www.bellshakespeare.com.au .

Specialist intervention strategies – the role of speech pathology in schools

In recent years as more parents choose to send their children to mainstream schooling, speech pathologists are dealing with more complex cases of students with significant disabilities, Mala Ferdinando writes.

It is not uncommon for schools to choose to employ their own speech pathologist in order to meet the diverse needs of schools and students. In many states in Australia, once a student is at school, a school based service is the only free speech pathology service the student can access. While not saying a/th sound correctly may not necessarily affect spelling, it can still limit a student's potential if untreated.

A stutter may not limit a student's ability to learn in the classroom but may lead to social isolation and anxiety and other long term mental health issues. Most school vision statements include a focus on more than just the student's learning outcome. Schools generally include a comment about fostering self worth and enabling students to achieve their full potential and become engaged and responsible members of the local and global community. Good communication skills are essential in this. It is therefore vital that comprehensive speech pathology supports are readily available in a school context.

The work of a speech pathologist in schools is engaging, rewarding, challenging and diverse. Speech pathologists work with a range of student needs including articulation, voice, fluency social skills, language and literacy. The role may involve directly working with students and parents as well as training and planning with teachers and learning support officers (LSOs). The focus of a school based speech pathology service is often on improving student learning outcomes however the social and future potential outcomes for each student should also be considered. Communication disorders can have lifelong implications so intervention for students with speech and language disorders is vital.

Areas needing intervention

Articulation can be as simple as a child not being able to say a/th sound correctly or as complex as Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) where there is a challenge to coordinate muscle movements with air flow to produce and sequence the sounds of speech (Tukel et al, 2015). A child with severe CAS may have little or no functional verbal communication and alternative forms of communication such as signing or using a device may be required. In the early years of schooling with intensive speech therapy and support, these children often make good gains though progress is usually slow. A speech pathologist working with a child with CAS would also monitor receptive and expressive language skills as well as literacy supports. It is important to ensure that a child's inability to articulate sounds does not limit progression with language or literacy development.

There are a number of common voice disorders seen by a speech pathologist working in schools. A hoarse or husky voice can be a result of vocal abuse such as yelling or frequent throat clearing. In these instances a speech pathologist would liaise with the student's family doctor to organise a referral to an Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) Specialist to ensure that no nodules or other abnormal pathology is contributing to the presenting voice concerns. The speech pathologist may then commence a vocal hygiene program with the student, parent and the school to try and decrease or eliminate the behaviours causing nodules. If these behaviours are controlled then the nodules will fade and surgery would not be required. Alternative ways of correctly projecting voice may also be introduced. Prevalence data on voice disorders varies, however one study in Turkey found up to 30% of children had vocal nodules (Akif Kilic et al, 2004). Interestingly, teachers are also often prone to voice disorders as they are considered professional voice users.

Fluency is the absence of stuttering. Fluency in a school context is important. Even though it may not directly impact on student outcomes with reading and writing, it does affect the listening and speaking domains of learning. More importantly however is the fact that young people who stutter are significantly more at risk of developing social anxiety disorders as an adult (Smith et al, 2014). The long term prognosis for someone who stutters is greatly improved by early intervention.

Social skills support is often required for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and may take the form of social groups promoting use of eye contact, turn taking and use of greetings and farewells. A variety of other social skills such as recognition of non literal language and understanding of humour are sometimes also required.

The important role strong oral language skills play in the development of early literacy is often overlooked. Studies have shown the high incidence of low oral language functioning of youth incarcerated in the juvenile justice system. The most effective outcome to support students with difficulty in language and learning is prevention (Snow et al, 2012).

Focus on holistic school based approaches

As the role of the school based speech pathologist is becoming more and more classroom focused, linked to learning outcomes, the clinical role in areas such as voice and fluency and simple articulation should not be overlooked as part of a holistic school based speech pathology service. Combining shared skills and knowledge of professionals who are actively involved with supporting students is an effective way to identify areas of concern, use data to plan, implement appropriate supports and then monitor results to assist with future planning. This ensures optimum outcomes for the student. The role of the speech pathologist in the school is more than improving student learning outcomes in isolation and making recommendations for teachers to implement. Collaboration between teachers and speech pathologists needs to be comprehensive and holistic in order to help students achieve their full potential and become engaged participants in the world around them.

Mala Ferdinando was employed as a speech pathologist for Catholic Education Melbourne for more than 20 years before starting her own business Speech Pathology for Schools in 2017. Mala can be contacted at mala@speech.edu.au. A complete reference list is available on request.

> **Communication disorders can have lifelong implications so intervention for students with speech and language disorders is vital.**

MANAGING SECURITY from the top

School environments are unique and ever changing, Leon Harris, Principal Consultant of Harris Crime Prevention Services writes.

Each day brings something new into the mix: staffing issues, student issues, the weather, engaging with neighbourhoods and parents, meeting visitors, juggling relationships, rules and regulations and property maintenance – all while ensuring positive teaching and learning outcomes.

If you are managing these dynamics, words like rewarding, frustrating, annoying and disappointing readily come to mind. If you add yet another dynamic, security, the challenge increases.

In more recent times the security dynamic has become part of an expanding daily risk management challenge. The school environment and its immediate surrounds has a duty of care emphasis, whereby everyone must be kept 'safe' and must be seen to be 'safe'. Nothing new in that. Personal security and property security (safety) have always been part of every school's agenda.

The security environment

However, our changing society and changing risks have seen antisocial and criminal behaviour happening in ways not previously experienced.

What has changed? Why has security moved from a relaxed subconscious back of agenda topic to something that has become front line? The obvious and worrying answer is that schools have become softer targets for intimidating and criminal behaviour. This brings a new crime (security) risk imperative.

Security risks, threats and incidents

In the management and prevention of antisocial or criminal behaviour, security risks are defined as the possibility or probability that something harmful or damaging might or could happen. Risks require a strategic response. Security threats are beyond the 'could happen' stage. Threats require an urgent response. Something is about to happen. Security incidents are happening or have happened and require an immediate response.

Yet another challenge – whose job?

A clear understanding of risks, threats and incidents in real time and with real consequences, raises the response accountability bar.

Managing security risks and preventing threats or incidents is now a top job. It is yet another challenge to add to a principal's list. Delegation yes, but ultimate responsibility and accountability, as with every other school environment

risk, comes from the principal's desk. But where is 'security' on the 'to manage' list? It is important to include the entire school community in the risk assessment and risk management process.

Security status

Security has moved well up the list because of its new found awareness status. It is a catch all term that nets everything from terrorism to vandalism. It is understandably high on the list of parents, staff, students and the local community. Security risks and management, like other school environment risks, are under regulatory, mainstream and social media scrutiny. Managing security must therefore be strategic and professional.

Simple security science

There is a 'science' to identifying and managing security risks. There are known likely criminal behaviours. There are policies, procedures and practices (the three 'Ps') that can anticipate and mitigate those behaviours. Principals and staff can develop simple yet strategic methods of proactive security 'measurement', using the same formulae that measures and manages every risk impacting on school environments.

There are security risk management experts you can call on to help set up the science. Local police can help with background research and solutions.

Once the three 'Ps' are locked in, remember to rehearse and revisit the 'science'. Security risks and procedures should be regularly challenged to ensure they are current and relevant.

Security sense and sensationalism

Measured security science should be coupled with security sense, not reactive sensationalism. Get the three 'Ps' right and

all stakeholders on and off campus will know that everything has been done to minimise and/or prevent security breaches. Below are a few tips to 'check' when developing and managing the science.

Expectation – do intended offenders have an expectation of success?

- Has the school been 'hit' before and what measures are already in place to prevent subsequent hits?
- Security management strategies need to out manoeuvre the expectation of offender 'success'.

Ability – do offenders have the resources and/or knowledge?

- Often crimes are planned around a 'watch and wait' knowledge of a school campus and its routine operations.

Opportunity – does the benefit outweigh the risk in the eyes of potential offenders?

- Is there a large gain (cash and/or other valuables) with very little risk of being caught?
- What school based crime prevention (security) strategies are likely offenders aware of?

Remembering these tips will help in planning a school's three 'Ps' strategy.

Security stewardship

Finally, understanding, identifying and managing security risks within a challenging school environment cannot be left to a few people. It is an extension of inclusive stewardship that makes for a healthy learning environment which all staff and, wherever possible, all students, should embrace.

Keeping your school safe means taking a serious preventative approach to managing what has unfortunately become core school business.
www.harriscrimeprevention.com.au

> **In more recent times the security dynamic has become part of an expanding daily risk management challenge.**

Why offering mental health support is vital

Mindful Employer Lead Faciliator Eliza Oakley talks about mental health support and why it is vital for our workplaces.

Mental illness comes in many forms and affects a surprising number of people in the workplace at any time. How colleagues and management deal with it can have a dramatic effect on the outcomes for both employees and the company. By looking after its people, who are an organisation's most important asset, the best outcomes for all concerned will be achieved.

Failure to provide support when someone is experiencing a mental health condition in the workplace can make the problem worse for the employee and the employer.

As well as the cost to the person's health, productivity is affected too. This can be seen in absenteeism and presenteeism, which is where someone comes to work but they won't be as engaged.

Fighting stigma

Stigma around mental illness is the key issue, which needs to be addressed in all Australian workplaces, across all industries. A major problem with stigma in the workplace is that people experiencing a mental illness are perceived as not being as capable. However, that's just not true. Just because someone has a mental health condition, it doesn't mean they can't do their job as well as anybody else.

The human costs of stigma in the workplace are stress, morale drop and often conflict. Stigma in the workplace can act as a barrier to someone doing their job in an effective manner.

Stigma can lead an employee who is experiencing a mental health condition, to feeling that they won't be understood or they'll be judged unfairly, if they do disclose in their workplace.

What this means for both the individual and the employer is that they are not seeking help nor being linked into the support they need. It might also mean they won't take advantage of help that's offered because they don't want to be seen leaving work early for an appointment. This has a huge impact: not only does their sense of not coping increase, but they may feel they have to be more resilient, compounding the problem, when in fact there is support available that could help them.

What's the right approach?

Any time you notice a change in someone, whether that is in the form of their performance, appearance or behaviour, it is helpful to check out how they're going.

In the first instance, it's as simple as raising what we notice and expressing our concern for another human being.

The reticence to speak up is usually driven by a lack of confidence or understanding of what can be done. Many managers say 'I'm concerned but don't want to make things worse', 'I don't know what to do', or even 'it's not my business'.

It is our business to care about our employees, so we need to check if the person is okay; all it takes is simple phrases like 'I just want you to know I noticed this, it's not like you, just checking how you're going'. And then be willing to listen to the person's response without judgement.

We're not looking for disclosure or diagnosis. No one at work would diagnose a colleague's limp, they'd probably just notice it and enquire if the person is okay. If somebody behaves in a certain way, or has mood swings, who's to say what's going on for them? We have to be careful we don't decide that for them.

Never ask "are you okay?"... without following it up, even if it's over a coffee or just wandering past and saying 'g'day' the next week. The important thing is to build a supportive, open culture and be proactive, not wait until someone is in crisis or doesn't turn up for work.

> **A more engaged workplace means increased productivity, reduced absenteeism and is more likely to be considered a workplace of choice.**

Link into the support network

Once the dialogue has been initiated, there are ways to link the person in to the support they need:

1. Most organisations have an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which is a free and confidential counselling service that can help in managing our lives at work and home.

2. The SANE helpcentre www.sane.org offers free information, advice and support across a wide range of issues and conditions.

3. Ask if they have a GP they could get checked out with, who might be able to diagnose underlying stress, help with lack of sleep or physical issues and give a referral to see a psychologist if necessary.

Create a supportive workplace

Early intervention, which means checking things out with an employee early, will help the employee to link into support. We need to keep the employee at work as much as possible, rather than automatically sending the person off on leave and telling them to return 'when they are better'.

There might need to be adjustments, such as working from home one day a week or job sharing. It really comes down to the role, but flexibility is crucial. The aim is to help the person perform their job to the best of their ability and continue to be valued as a productive employee.

Creating a supportive environment where people feel safe to ask for help and remain working requires genuine commitment from leadership. The Mindful Employer program provides training and consulting services to organisations on making mental health part of the workplace culture, from the mindful employer charter through to training on best practice mental health approaches in the workplace.

Addressing mental health benefits everyone

Understanding how to address mental health concerns within the workplace means that employees can be linked into the best support available early. This also benefits their colleagues and management along with the person's family and friends.

It also leads to a secure and comfortable place for people to work, where there's increased opportunity for conversations around mental health concerns so that early support can be initiated. If leadership maintains a supportive approach to mental health in the workplace, we are more likely to see employees who are experiencing mental health concerns being willing to seek help from their managers, supervisors or team leaders.

At the business level, a more engaged workplace means increased productivity, reduced absenteeism and is more likely to be considered a workplace of choice.

Mental illness doesn't discriminate; it can affect anyone at any level within an organisation and further impacts families, friends and work colleagues, but understanding and support makes a world of difference – and the world a different place.

Increase in violence and stress hurting principals

Principals are well educated, live in stable families and are relatively well paid. Yet their self rated health is 10% worse than the general population, Journalist Sue Osborne writes.

The 2016 Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing survey, sponsored by Teachers Health, has found principals are experiencing overwork, stress, threats and actual physical violence at much higher rates than the general population.

Now in its sixth year, the survey uses a large sample (5000 respondents) from across all school sectors – public and non government – to draw its conclusions.

Report author Associate Professor Philip Riley from the Australian Catholic University's Institute for Positive Psychology and Education has found a third of principals are working more than 60 hours a week.

Burnout

Principals are experiencing workplace demands that are 1.5 times higher than the general population. This makes them subject to higher levels of burnout (1.6 times higher), stress symptoms (1.7 times higher), difficulty sleeping (2.2 times higher), and depressive symptoms (1.3 times higher).

One in three principals has experienced physical violence at school, a figure which is 29% up from the beginning of the survey. Professor Riley said if this trend continues, principals will experiences threats of violence at 10 times the rate of the general population next year.

On the plus side, principals experience more influence at work, feel more commitment and find their work more meaningful than the average person.

"Unfortunately employers know this and exploit it," Professor Riley said.

Red flags

Principals are motivated to fill out the survey every year because they get feedback on their own health and wellbeing and their progress.

A small proportion of principals (9-10%) generated 'red flag' responses, suggesting they were at increased risk of mental and physical health issues.

> **Offensive behaviour simply must stop. We are concerned about the steadily increasing levels of offensive behaviour across the country in schools of all types.**

Professor Riley said he used to respond to these 'red flag principals' with a personal email when the survey began six years ago, but now the numbers were so great an electronic response was required.

Principals reported stress was mainly caused by the "sheer quantity of administrative work" they were required to perform. They complained about suffering additional stress due to the lack of time available to focus on teaching and learning.

Threats

The prevalence rate for 'threats of violence' against principals is extremely high. In 2011, 38% of participants had been threatened. This rose to 44% by 2016.

"Close to 50% of principals have received threats in their workplaces. This is unacceptable and parents and students must show more restraint when dealing with school principals than resorting to violence, threats or intimidation to solve problems or help them manage their anger," Professor Riley said.

"Those resorting to violence or intimidation when dealing with school leaders need to understand that such behaviour won't solve problems and there are serious consequences from assaulting or intimidating school principals."

Actual physical violence has risen from 27% in 2011 to 34% in 2016. In primary schools the perpetrator of violence is more likely to be a parent. In high schools it is more likely to be a student.

"This is happening across the board, in 'elite' non government schools, Catholic schools and public schools. I know of a case in which a non government school principal was pinned up against a brick wall by a barrister holding his elbow across his throat because of a dispute about fees."

Professor Riley said threats and violence against principals and deputies was

increasing sharply in NSW, NT, Tasmania and ACT and the upward trend in other states was less severe.

"Offensive behaviour simply must stop. We are concerned about the steadily increasing levels of offensive behaviour across the country in schools of all types.

"This is not just happening in schools. There is a similar trend being experienced in all frontline professions.

"Australia needs to have an adult conversation about the root cause of this and set about addressing the issues at every level of society.

"If we improve the working conditions for principals and teachers we also improve the learning conditions for students, as the two are inseparable."

Professor Riley said little is being done by private school employers, Catholic education offices or state and territory governments to ease the burden school principals are carrying.

"As principals are retiring, other senior teachers at the top of their game are saying they are not prepared to take on the role of school leader because of the punishing workload.

Reduce demands

"What every school system in Australia needs to urgently address are the levels of burnout, stress and additional responsibility being loaded onto principals.

"There is a decreasing level of personal support for principals from within the schools they lead and from their employers. That is a major concern.

"Educational employers can help by reducing job demands, or increase resources to cope with increasing demand.

"What also worries me is the pressure of work has become such a burden that many principals are suffering a decline in their health that will get worse unless they can find ways to reduce the pressure they are working under."

Source of support

Most principals reported their main source of support were their partners (80%), work colleagues (67%) and friends (67%).

Only 26% said their main source of support was a supervisor or manager and even fewer, (6%) said they were supported mainly by the department of education or their employer.

To access the full survey: http://www. principalhealth.org/au/2016_Report_AU_ FINAL.pdf .

Professor Riley has proposed a similar health and well being survey be carried out for teachers. "I suspect we might get similar results for teachers, but we don't have the data," he said. Professor Riley is now seeking funding for this work.

Conduct under scrutiny

What is reportable conduct?

In the last few years many state and territory governments have been introducing legislation dealing with child protection matters, Russell Schokman writes.

Various enquiries into child abuse, including the current Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse are resulting in the implementation of legislation dealing with the regulation and conduct of employees working with children.

One by one states have been introducing working with children registration, child safe schools standards, employee codes of conduct, reportable conduct schemes, information sharing and new criminal offences such as grooming, failure to disclose a sexual offence and failure of a person in authority to protect a child from a sexual offence.

Reportable conduct schemes

Reportable conduct schemes essentially require employers to notify, investigate and report the findings of investigations and action taken by the employer in relation to allegations of specified employee conduct to either the Ombudsman or in the case of Victoria, a Commission for Children and Young People. Outlined further in this article are those behaviours which are defined as reportable. Findings of reportable conduct are notified to regulators such as teacher registration bodies and departments of justice in relation to Working With Children Registration/Checks.

Victoria

On 6 December 2016, the Victorian Government introduced a reportable conduct scheme (commencing 1 July 2017) to oversee how organisations in Victoria respond to allegations of child abuse and misconduct toward children by their workers and volunteers.

The Victorian Commission for Children and Young People is the independent statutory body that will oversee the scheme and will have the powers to monitor investigation into allegations of child abuse, share information with key organisations to improve child safety

and inquire into the safety systems or organisations engaged in child related work. Legislation introducing a reportable conduct scheme is, at the time of writing, before the Victorian parliament.

ACT

In August 2016, the ACT Government announced the passing of the *Reportable Conduct and Information Sharing Legislation Amendments Act 2016*. This legislation (commencing 1 July 2017) empowered the ACT Ombudsman with child protection oversight duties similar to those of the NSW Ombudsman also modelling the definition of 'reportable conduct' on the NSW definitions.

The new Victoria and ACT schemes follow a long standing 'reportable conduct scheme' in NSW. There are benefits for reviewing the processes and pitfalls of the reportable conduct scheme in NSW in light of the present situation in other states and territories.

NSW

The current NSW reportable conduct scheme which is overseen by the NSW Ombudsman, has been in operation since 1999 and was established for independent oversight of the handling of 'child abuse' allegations against employees of both NSW government and non government schools and designated NSW agencies.

Many elements of this scheme are found in the Victorian and ACT schemes.

What conduct is reportable?

In NSW, community concerns raised in 2003 about the use of the term 'child abuse' resulted in a change to the term 'reportable conduct', which is defined in Section 25A of the Ombudsman Act 1974 as:

a) any sexual offence, or sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence or an offence involving child abuse material), or

b) *any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child, or*

c) *any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child, whether or not, in any case, with the consent of the child.*

'Reportable conduct' does not however extend to:

a) *conduct that is reasonable for the purposes of the discipline, management or care of children, having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the children and to any relevant codes of conduct or professional standards, or*

b) *the use of physical force that, in all the circumstances, is trivial or negligible, but only if the matter is to be investigated and the result of the investigation recorded under workplace employment procedures, or*

c) *conduct of a class or kind exempted from being 'reportable conduct' by the Ombudsman under section 25CA.*

The introduction of Part 3A of the Ombudsman Act 1974 resulted in the NSW Ombudsman's role and powers extending to the following:

1. scrutinising designated NSW employers' systems for preventing, handling and responding to 'reportable conduct' allegations and convictions ie policies, training, risk management strategies.
2. overseeing and monitoring investigations into 'reportable conduct' allegations by designated NSW employers.
3. assessing investigations by looking for clear and sufficient information to support actions taken by designated NSW employers.
4. handling complaints about the investigation process relating to allegations of 'reportable conduct'.
5. conducting audits on designated NSW employers to assist in improving practices for providing safe environments for children.

The NSW experience

While the IEU NSW/ACT Branch has been supportive of the NSW 'reportable conduct' scheme, the Union retains some concerns relating to designated NSW employer's management of 'reportable conduct' allegations against members. The specific concerns include, but are not limited to:

- thresholds not being consistently applied by designated NSW employers prior to reporting a category of behaviour as 'reportable conduct' to the NSW Ombudsman
- unreasonable delays experienced by members in being provided with details

of the alleged behaviour that amounts to 'reportable conduct' by designated NSW employers
- lengthy delays in the finalisation of 'reportable conduct' investigations by designated NSW employers
- the lack of experienced/appropriately qualified persons conducting 'reportable conduct' investigations
- the limited access to members of information contained in investigation files held by designated NSW employers when an adverse investigation finding is made against the member
- lack of meaningful feedback or no feedback provided at all from designated NSW employers to issues raised by the IEU on behalf of members, and
- the lack of sufficient training and resources provided to members on the requirements of the Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW).

The NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme also has significant impact on the current Working With Children Check (WWCC) which is conducted on all employees in child related employment in NSW.

Designated NSW employers are required to notify the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) the details of disciplinary records relating to a finding against an employee of child sexual misconduct (including grooming) or serious physical assault of a child.This results in the relevant employee undergoing a WWCC risk assessment, with the result being either a clearance or a bar from working with children in NSW for five years.

Teachers in NSW are also required to have a WWCC clearance as part of the NSW Education Standards Authority accreditation process.

Additionally, employers are able to make a request to the NSW Education Standards Authority for the suspension of a teacher's accreditation should a disciplinary proceeding commence into an allegation that has been made against the teacher.

Russell Schokman has been the IEU NSW/ACT Branch Policy Advisor since 2012. His work mainly involves providing support and advice to IEU organisers as well as representing members in matters related to child protection including the Working With Children Check. Russell is experienced in all aspects of policy development, application and advice, having been a detective for over 10 years in the NSW Police Force.

To tweet or not to tweet
– that is no longer the question for teachers

I use social media a fair amount. Actually, a lot. This is because I take the train to my school and I need distractions and to plug into the world outside, especially through Twitter. Here's a few FAQs that can be answered from my experience.

But … isn't Twitter (and other social media) mainly just about sharing pictures?

It can be, but mostly, it's not. There is no better tool to share news, read news as it's breaking and discuss ideas in real time, rather than in halting Facebook time.

Twitter is just people talking about eating or stalking celebrities, isn't it?

No, that's Instagram and yes, people can just stalk celebrities. But Twitter is all about tailoring your timeline and who you follow. If you like someone, follow them. If you don't, stop following them. Once you have set up your following list, you can see the news on it and then share it, comment on it. We are teachers, we like to connect and share, so Twitter is a great and quick way of doing it. Plus, we can connect to communities and ideas away from our close circles – it is better than Facebook in that regard. And connecting with these circles on Twitter can be invigorating, as people can plug into what is cool, what is new as well as emerging discourses about privilege, social movements and other concepts perhaps previously unstirred in our known communities.

There's someone 'wrong' on the internet!

Yes, there are people who are saying all sorts of wrong things, bad things, sharing 'fake news' or propaganda. But there are ways of avoiding them, or dealing with them and keeping your integrity.

Stick to the hashtag chats if you just want professional communication. During various evenings, there are chats centred around a hashtag, such as #aussieed, where a moderator asks questions and people tweet answers using the same hashtag. That way, others using the hashtag can find your tweets and respond to them. Interactions therefore are civilised and tightly controlled – plus, you can float and gain ideas. One drawback is that after a while, some can find the hashtag chats a touch repetitive and restrictive. Professionally, however, they can be very useful.

Consider your online consistency

In order to cover yourself, it is best to try for a consistency of message style, values and substance. Ask yourself whether your tweets represent who you are as a person. If you are happy with being linked to those views, then stick to them. You can't control how people will react to your tweets – and almost every tweet can be seen negatively by someone – but if you feel as though they have integrity, leave them there as a signpost.

Consider the credentials and background of others when engaging with them. So, avoid what I call the 'Frogs'. There are a lot of terrible people who use Twitter. The recent rise of Donald Trump unearthed a swathe of racist, sexist Twitter users, who embraced Pepe as their symbol. Each time there is a controversy about female sports people or politicians in Australia, there's a swathe of men ready to throw unattributable insults at women via Twitter. If such a person has responded to one of your tweets, it is handy to click on the username of the responder and check out what else they have tweeted, who they usually talk with. It doesn't take long to find out what the person is like from their timeline – a racist, sexist comment or meme usually arrives early. On such occasions, if they really are just what I call a 'Frog', ignore them, or if they continue, block them. That way, you aren't dragged to their level and wasting your time trying to reason with the 'Frogs'.

The best thing to do is to watch for a while, find the good people to follow and ask advice as you go. My next article will be about the finer points of discourse and discussion. Until then, follow me @mrmarkosullivan and ask whatever you like about Twitter.

Mark O'Sullivan is an English teacher and Year Coordinator who has been in classrooms for 20 years. He is also a NSW IEU Councillor for Central Metropolitan sub branch and is a keen supporter of the GWS Giants. Mark is also an enthusiastic tweeter and can be found via the handle @mrmarkosullivan

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