

The Association of
Independent Schools of
New South Wales Limited

Level 12, 99 York Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Phone (02) 9299 2845
Fax (02) 9290 2274
Web www.aisnsw.edu.au
Email ais@aisnsw.edu.au
ABN 96 003 509 073

Contents

Vaccination against H1N1 influenza (swine flu)	1
Board of Studies update	2
Dragon's Teeth Markings for 40km/h School Zones	2
New Values Education Resources	3
Anaphylaxis Education Programme 2010	3
DEEWR schools survey	4
New Child Restraint Legislation.....	4
Youth Tobacco Free Day	4
Australian Government Water Education Toolkit	5

Vaccination against H1N1 influenza (swine flu).

NSW Health advises that swine flu activity has dropped significantly in NSW over recent months, but continues to have a heavy impact in many Northern Hemisphere countries. It is possible that a resurgence of pandemic influenza is possible in Australia this winter.

As a result, NSW Health has asked the AIS to remind principals that a vaccine is now available to protect adults and children over the age of six months from swine flu. The vaccine, called Panvax®, has been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

All members of the community are being encouraged to obtain a free vaccination against the H1N1 flu virus. The Panvax® vaccine is available free from most general practitioners and Aboriginal Medical Services and some community health centres and council immunisation clinics are also offering the vaccine free of charge.

To ensure a safe and healthy working and learning environment for staff, students and visitors to schools, NSW Health has requested that schools provide information about the availability of Panvax® to their school community. Immunising a high percentage of staff and students will protect those individuals and reduce the chance that those with a weakened immune system (for whom the vaccine may not work as effectively) will be exposed to the infection.

Principals are encouraged to provide information regarding the availability of Panvax® in all usual communications to their school community, including staff. For further information or if you have any questions about vaccination please contact your local Area Health Unit or go to <http://www.emergency.health.nsw.gov.au/swineflu/vaccination/index.asp>

Board of Studies update

Dr Timothy Wright, the independent sector nominee on the Board of Studies, has provided the following key points from the Board of Studies meeting of 16th February 2010.

The President of the Board of Studies noted that the main “drivers” in the NSW educational sector for 2010 would be:

- the Bradley Review and its emphasis on a 40% level of access to tertiary education of low SES students
- the development of the Australian Curriculum
- the new school leaving age, and
- the reporting of school data on the My School website.

As the My School website has increased the demand for school data that is accessible and understandable, the Board is considering how it might provide its data in future. The pressure for the release of data is inevitable and work must be done on increasing its accessibility to the community as well as its clarity. The Board will be looking at its communication with respect to the HSC.

Other key points raised at the meeting include:

Higher School Certificate

- Online marking of scripts had been successful, notably in General Mathematics and IPT.
- Most papers were uncontroversial with questions being raised about the English Paper, Section II Question 3 wording where students had been asked to discuss one other related text rather than two or more.
- The other paper, with 158 written complaints, was the Studies of Religion paper (Section III). Marking of this section was closely scrutinised and a range of answers were identified and rewarded appropriately. The pattern of marks was similar to previous years. Further materials will be published on the Board’s website to enable preparation for the 2010 HSC.
- Special provisions were again raised in public discussion. The Board must abide by the DDA legislation and all applications are treated on their merits by an independent panel.

Other points

- Concern was raised that many primary school educators are not using schools online due to a perception that the Board is only responsible for secondary education matters.
- The Board is still considering the recommendation of the Ombudsman that raw exam scores should be released. This has implications for public perceptions of the standards referenced Board marks, i.e. the public has firmly ingrained views of 50 = pass. The ombudsman also recommends the release of Band cut scores and the development of a process for challenging marks. The Board will finalise its views later this year.

Dragon’s Teeth Markings for 40km/h School Zones

Between now and the end of 2011 the RTA will be painting triangular markings, known as ‘Dragon’s Teeth’, at the start of each school zone to help increase the visibility of school zones for motorists and provide a reminder to slow down to 40km/h between 8:00am and 9:30am and from 2:30 till 4:00pm.

The program will be rolled out progressively across NSW and school principals should receive a letter from the RTA prior to work beginning outside their school. This letter will provide notice of the intention for work to begin and provide some support material that can be used for communication with staff, students and parents.

New Values Education Resources

At the end of 2009, the Australian Government released the third and final stage of the Values Education teaching and learning resources for Australian schools: *Values Education in Intercultural and Global Contexts*. These resources are designed to support primary and secondary schools to foster explicit values learning, inclusiveness and intercultural understanding. There is also a resource for school leaders to promote values-centred schooling.

The suite of resources includes:

- *Side by Side* – a 'big book' for early years students highlighting diversity and intercultural relationships within a neighbourhood community including teacher notes and additional materials.
- *World of Values* – an online tool offering learning-enriched digital resources for exploring values through film, photography and learning objects.
- *Teaching for Intercultural Understanding: Professional Learning Programme* – a professional learning resource for teachers to support their work as values educators.
- *Values-centred Schools: A Guide* – a new website resource to support school leaders in developing a whole-school approach to values education.

The resources complement the existing Values Education website and the Values for Australian Schooling print and online resources delivered to schools in 2006 (*Values for Australian School Kits*), 2007 (*Building Values Across the Whole School*) and early 2009 (*Supporting Student Wellbeing Through Values Education*).

All new and previously released Values Education resources are available on the Australian Government's Values Education website at www.valueseducation.edu.au

School staff are encouraged to visit the website in order to make full use of these resources. A special access key is required to access the resources. The access key has been sent in print form to all schools however, if you cannot locate the access key please contact AIS Education Consultant Jo McLean on (02) 9299 2845. Please note that third party copyright restrictions prohibit the distribution and/or publication of the access key or the resources on a publicly accessible website or via email.

Anaphylaxis Education Programme 2010

NSW Health has issued a reminder for schools of the Anaphylaxis Education Programme which is endorsed by NSW Health and the three education sectors. This is a training programme for teachers conducted by nurse educators who provide information about anaphylaxis and the use of the Epi and Anapens. Schools are strongly encouraged to book a training session for their teachers regardless of whether there are current students in the school who have been diagnosed with anaphylaxis. The training sessions run for 1 hour and 10 minutes and a small cost is involved. Training sessions can be conducted in school time or after school hours. For more information about the Anaphylaxis Education Programme and to book a training session, schools should contact Ms Rasheda Dunn on (02) 9845 3501 or RashedaD@chw.edu.au

The Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology & Allergy (ASCI) is presently developing an anaphylaxis e-learning programme which will be launched in Canberra in March this year. It is currently being trialled in a number of schools across NSW. The e-learning programme will not replace the specialist training provided by nurse educators through the NSW Health Anaphylaxis Education Programme, however it is envisaged that the programme can be used as an interim training programme for schools until face-to-face training can be organised, by new or casual staff until they can attend specialist training, and/or as a refresher course between training sessions. The AIS will inform schools as to when this e-learning programme will be ready for use.

For more information about anaphylaxis and the resources available through Anaphylaxis Australia visit the website at www.allergyfacts.org.au

DEEWR schools survey

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) is conducting an online survey of a sample of Australian independent schools to gather information about the types of online curriculum resources and ICT-based assessment tools and resources currently used by teachers and students. All schools are invited and encouraged to complete the online survey which is part of a wider national audit of all Australian schools.

The survey is straightforward and designed to be user-friendly and is aimed at school staff or management with knowledge of the types of online curriculum resources and ICT-based assessment tools and resources used by your school's teachers and students, such as: the principal or deputy/vice principal; a curriculum coordinator or head teacher; a librarian; or an ICT coordinator.

There are two surveys – one for primary schools/campuses and one for secondary schools/campuses. K-12 schools will need to complete both. Each should take between 20 and 30 minutes to complete but the survey does not need to be completed in one session. Further instructions about its completion appear on the introduction page of each survey.

To access the primary school/campus survey go to:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Nationalprimaryindependentschoolsurvey>

To access the secondary school/campus survey go to:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/nationalsecondaryindependentschoolsurvey>

The survey needs to be completed before 12th March 2010 to enable the project to be completed on time and inform future policies and programs for the longer term benefit of all school sectors, particularly in the development and use of online curriculum resources.

New Child Restraint Legislation

New national child restraint laws commence in NSW on 1st March 2010. The new laws state that children under 7 years of age must be secured in an approved child restraint when travelling in a vehicle. The RTA will be making contact with school principals and supplying more detailed information about the legislation together with supporting materials.

For more information about the national child restraint laws contact Susan Osborne at the RTA on 8588 5804.

Youth Tobacco Free Day

National *Youth Tobacco Free Day* (YTFD) will be celebrated on 19th March this year. It is an annual event that aims to raise awareness of tobacco as a health and social issue among young people. In 2010 YTFD aims to highlight the cost of smoking and encourage young people to think of other things to spend their money on. Young people and teachers are invited to visit www.OxyGen.org.au where they can win an array of prizes by playing the 'Scary Maths' game. Schools can also access ideas for celebrating YTFD and free promotional posters by visiting the Resources for Schools section of the OxyGen website.

Australian Government Water Education Toolkit

The *Water Education Toolkit* provides Australian teachers and schools with access to more than 650 national, state, territory, regional and urban water education resources into one easily accessible, convenient and comprehensive web portal. Funded from the Australian Government's \$12.9 billion *Water for the Future* initiative, the *Water Education Toolkit* aims to help raise awareness and understanding in the classroom about all aspects of water use.

Although this resource is mainly to assist teachers, students will also find it a valuable tool when researching school assignments and seeking additional water information. Teachers and students can access case-studies, lesson and unit plans, visual aids, in-class activities, Indigenous cultural resources, informational resources, games, experiments and more.

The *Water Education Toolkit* and more information about the *Water for the Future* initiative is available from www.environment.gov.au/wet

PLEASE REMEMBER TO ADVISE THE AIS OF ANY CHANGES TO YOUR SCHOOL'S CONTACT DETAILS, INCLUDING CHANGE OF PRINCIPAL, BUSINESS MANAGER AND CHAIR OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL. CHANGES CAN BE EMAILED TO admin@aisnsw.edu.au

Dr Geoff Newcombe
Executive Director
1st March 2010