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Colleagues,

I know that all of you will be interested in the developments being considered for the *My School* website when it is updated later this year and into the future.

The Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs has asked ACARA to examine a number of possible developments for the website. I attach a document that provides a brief outline of these proposals, including an indication of the timeframe for their possible introduction.

Some of the data required do not exist yet or exist only in an inconsistent form across Australia so there will be much to be done to achieve the ministers' goals.

You will know that the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, the Hon. Julia Gillard MP, recently announced that ACARA would convene a *My School* Working Party to address concerns expressed by the Australian Education Union and other groups. The Working Party met for the first time last week. ACARA will seek its advice on developments already in train and will also work with it to consider developments that it proposes. The Working Party will present its recommendations to ministers at the end of August 2010. The membership of the Working Party is attached.

As school leaders, I hope you will find this information useful for yourselves and your communities. I also encourage you to visit the ACARA website for information www.acara.edu.au.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Hill, PhD
Chief Executive Officer

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE *MY SCHOOL* WORKING PARTY**

**Professor Barry McGaw AO**

Chair, ACARA Board

**Professor Max Coltheart**

Emeritus Professor of Cognitive Science, Macquarie University

**Mr Ian Dalton**

Executive Director, Australian Parents Council

**Mr Neville A Feeney**

Executive Officer, Catholic Secondary Principals Australia

**Ms Fiona Forbes**
President, Australian Special Education Principals Association

**Mr Angelo Gavrielatos**

Federal President, Australian Education Union

**Mr Rupert Macgregor**

Executive Director, Australian Council of State School Organisations

**Professor Geoff Masters**

Chief Executive Officer, Australian Council for Educational Research

**Dr Thelma Perso**

Executive Director, Literacy and Numeracy Taskforce, NT Department of Education and Training

**Ms Leonie Trimper**

President, Australian Primary Principals Association

**Ms Sheree Vertigan**

President, Australian Secondary Principals Association

**Mr Chris Watt**

Federal Secretary, Independent Education Union of Australia (IEUA)

# Proposals for Enhancing the *My School* Website

The original plans for the *My School* website envisaged staged development, with some elements that could not be completed for the first version added in the second in 2010 and third in 2011. In meetings over the past 13 months, ministers of education have asked the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to investigate additional proposals for enhancing the *My School* website. The following is a brief summary of the proposals now under consideration.

**School financial data** (Ministers' meetings of 17 April and 6 November 2009)
Ministers have agreed that financial data for each school will be published in the 2010 version of the website.  This is intended to include 2009 recurrent income, disaggregated by source of funding (Commonwealth government; State/Territory government; school-initiated fees, charges and voluntary contributions, and; other sources).  It is also likely to include capital expenditure in 2009, also broken down by source of funding.  Deloitte is assisting with the collection and validation of the data to ensure that they are accurate and comparable across states and territories and across government and non-government schools.

**Nationally comparable senior secondary information** (17 April 2009)
Currently limited data are displayed on the *My School* website and these are comparable only within individual states or territories.  Work is underway to obtain more nationally consistent data, especially indicators of senior secondary outcomes and including information relating to Year 12 attainment and tertiary entrance scores.

**Satisfaction with schooling** (17 April 2009)
ACARA has been requested to investigate the feasibility of a national satisfaction survey of parents, teachers and students to enable nationally comparable satisfaction information to be published on the website in future. It is hoped that this will be available for inclusion in the 2011 version of the *My School* website.

**Student population indicators** (17 April 2009)
ACARA will expand the reporting of contextual information about schools by publishing the percentages of students with disabilities (as indicated by those in receipt of special provisions) and of students with a language background other than English.

**Growth data on literacy and numeracy achievement** (17 April 2009)
Ministers have asked ACARA to provide advice on ways of reporting the growth in learning of students who took NAPLAN in 2008 and 2010. In the absence of unique student identifiers, the analysis will be restricted in the 2010 *My School* release to students who were in the same school in both years. For primary schools, an indication of growth between Years 3 and 5 should be available later this year and, for Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia, also between Years 5 and 7.  For secondary schools in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania, ACT and the Northern Territory, a measure of growth between Years 7 and 9 will be available in most cases.

**Teaching staff levels of expertise** (17 April 2009)
New national certification/registration standards for teachers are being developed. It is intended that once they have been implemented, information on proportion of teachers at each level of expertise will be published. These data will not be available for the 2010 version of the *My School* website.

**Using student-level data to compute ICSEA (**11 September 2009; 10 June 2010)
For the first release of the *My School* website the index of community socio-educational advantage was (ICSEA) was developed from the characteristics of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census Collection Districts (CCD) in which students' home addresses were located. Ministers have asked ACARA to investigate the feasibility and appropriateness of making use of student-level socio-economic status (SES) such as information on their parents' or carers' education and occupation. Some states and territories have this information but it was not used for the initial *My School* website because others did not. For *My School 2010*, two approaches are being considered. One is to obtain the family information in all jurisdictions. The other is to use it for those jurisdictions that have it and to continue to use home addresses and Census Collection District data for the others.

**Other enhancements to ICSEA** (10 June 2010)
Ministers have endorsed ACARA's proposals to investigate:
- obtaining updated and comprehensive home address data for all students to improve the accuracy of ICSEA in cases where Census Collection District Data are used;
- including within the ICSEA formula a variable to take account of the effect of language background other than English;
- improving the process for quality assuring ICSEA values for individual schools and, for those for which Census Collection District data are used, identifying instances where the initial estimate is inappropriate.

**Reporting of results** (10 June 2010)
Ministers have endorsed ACARA's proposals to investigate:
- allowing users to refine their search for like and statistically similar schools;
- providing a facility for users to view NAPLAN results for all students in the school, or for all students excluding students attracting special provisions;
- providing a facility for schools to provide a commentary on their NAPLAN results; and
- displaying more prominently information about student absences, withdrawals and exclusions from NAPLAN testing.

**Action to minimise misuse of *My School* data** (10 June 2010)
Ministers have endorsed ACARA's proposals to investigate:
- a 'click-wrap' requiring users to indicate their agreement up-front to terms and conditions of use of *My School* data;
- ways of deterring or preventing automatic scraping of data from the website.

ACARA will report on the progress of each of these measures to meetings of the Ministerial Council in August and October 2010.