

Issue 70

September 2012

Education in the News brings together a range of recent education news items collected from European and international education websites, Ministry websites and other publications. The bulletin comprises two sections: Europe and International.

Direct links, correct at the time of going to press, have been given where possible. Otherwise the nearest point of entry to the source website is given. Sources are in English unless otherwise stated.

Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. Eurydice at NFER is the national Eurydice unit for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. For more information about Eurydice publications and our enquiry service for education policy makers in local and central government, please contact us:

eurydice@nfer.ac.uk
<http://www.nfer.ac.uk/eurydice>

Austria

10-year building programme for Austrian schools

The Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture has provided an update on its 10-year school building programme (2008-18). The priorities of the programme include:

- increasing capacity in secondary technical and vocational colleges (*Berufsbildende höhere Schulen*)
- renovating and altering buildings in line with sustainability, access and open learning
- improving working conditions for teachers and creating space for various activities in all-day schools.

Team teaching is now commonplace in German, maths and foreign language teaching and the need for different types of teaching and learning space to accommodate this are also being taken into account.

Source	Federal Ministry for Education, Art and Culture, Austria http://www.bmukk.gv.at
Title	Schulentwicklungsplan 2008 bis 2018 sieht 270 Bauprojekte an Bundesschulen im Gesamtwert von 1,662 Milliarden Euro vor. Investitionen steigern Qualität der Schule
Located at/on	http://www.bmukk.gv.at/ministerium/vp/2012/20120724.xml (31/08/2012)

France

Rebuilding the French school system

The key education priority for the newly-elected French Government is to rebuild the education system. The programme of reform, scheduled to be implemented over five years, is based on four themes:

- academic success for all
- students at the heart of rebuilding
- a fair and efficient education system
- teachers who are well trained, rewarded and respected.

Sub-themes include plans to reform primary education, reassert the value of vocational education, redefine the *socle commun de connaissances et de compétences* (common basis/foundation of knowledge and skills), reduce school failure, rethink school evaluation, and ensure equitable provision across France. The system rebuilding website describes all 21 of these sub-themes, outlining issues and possible actions.

Source Ministry of Education, France
<http://www.education.gouv.fr>
Title Refondons l'école de la République
Located at/on <http://www.refondonslecole.gouv.fr> (08/08/2012)

Slovakia

Manifesto for 'the knowledge society, education and culture'

Following parliamentary elections in March, the new Government's manifesto for 2012-16 sets out priorities for 'the knowledge society, education, and culture'. These centre around improving educational standards and the quality of education for all, with a special focus on the young. Science and technology education, financial education and digital competence in lifelong learning are amongst the areas for development. The Government will also address the information flow between education institutions, employers and businesses to achieve better coordination of education and training with the needs of the labour market. Higher education funding will be reformed, with the introduction of differential funding for institutions based on educational results.

Source Eurypedia
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurypedia_en.php
Title Slovakia: National Council approves new government manifesto (2012-2016)
Located at/on https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/News#Slovakia:National_Council_approves_new_government_manifesto_.282012-2016.29.2C_27._6._2012.C2.A0 (31/08/2012)

United Kingdom

England

Literacy programme for disadvantaged children

Press release from the Department for Education announcing that children from poorer backgrounds who are behind in reading and writing at the end of primary school will be able to have catch-up lessons. This forms part of the Government's drive to narrow the attainment gap between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers. Projects will be set up across England to help disadvantaged pupils who fail to reach the expected level of English by the end of primary school (age 11).

Source	Department for Education (DfE), England http://www.education.gov.uk/
Title	£10 million literacy catch-up programme for disadvantaged pupils
Located at/on	http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a00211482/£10m-literacy-catch-up-programme-for-disadvantaged-pupils (10/07/2012)

Scotland

Website to make curriculum more accessible for students

The BeXcellent website has been launched in Scotland, aimed specifically at making the Curriculum for Excellence easy for children and young people to understand and offering a creative and personalised experience. The site has been developed by Children in Scotland and the Scottish Youth Parliament, in partnership with the Scottish Government.

Source	Education Scotland http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk
Title	The BeXcellent website
Located at/on	http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/newsandevents/emailupdates/cfeandglow/news/archive/cfe2012june.asp#link2 (10/07/2012)
See also	For information about Children in Scotland, the national agency for voluntary, statutory and professional organisations and individuals working with children and their families in Scotland, see their website: http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk/

Wales

New learning difficulties programme

The Deputy Minister for Skills has announced a new programme of actions to help people with specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia. A framework will be developed for specific learning difficulties to provide guidance for people of all ages, as well as parents/carers, education establishments, employers, public employees and the general public. The framework will take account of current provision for specific learning difficulties in each local authority and the tools that have already been developed for individual specific learning needs.

Source	Department for Education and Skills (DFES), Wales http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/?lang=en
Title	New learning difficulties programme will assist all age groups
Located at/on	http://wales.gov.uk/newsroom/educationandskills/2012/120719programme/?lang=en (31/08/2012)



International Supplement September 2012

The articles in this supplement have been collected in the process of the NFER's work in maintaining and developing the International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks (INCA) Internet archive (<http://www.inca.org.uk>). INCA, which is supported by the Department for Education, provides regularly updated descriptions of government policy on education in Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the USA and Wales. It makes particular reference to the curriculum, assessment and initial teacher training frameworks in place.

Australia

Bonus payment to help families in greatest need

The Australian Government is introducing a new, upfront cash payment called the 'Schoolkids Bonus', to help families in receipt of Family Tax Benefit or certain youth allowances with the costs of sending their children to school. From January 2013, eligible families will receive AUD410 a year for each child in primary school and AUD820 a year for each child in secondary school, paid in two equal instalments in January and July. Families can use the bonus to pay for school expenses such as uniforms, books, school excursions, stationery, music lessons and sports registration fees. Across Australia, 1.3 million families will qualify for the payment, which replaces the Education Tax Refund.

Source Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR),
Australia
<http://www.deewr.gov.au>

Title Schoolkids Bonus

Located at/on <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/Pages/SchoolkidsBonus.aspx> (08/08/2012)

Online toolkits to tackle bullying

The Australian School Education Minister has announced funding for new online toolkits to help parents, teachers, trainee teachers and students to deal with school bullying. The existing website at www.bullyingnoway.gov.au will be expanded into a national hub that is intended to act as a 'one stop shop', providing a trusted source of information and resources for the whole community. Online toolkits to be created will include a resource for parents, a training package for pre-service teachers, and professional learning materials to assist school principals and teachers to develop 'safe school' policies.

- Source** Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), Australia
<http://www.deewr.gov.au>
- Title** Anti Bullying Strategy
- Located at/on** <http://www.deewr.gov.au/LatestNews/Pages/AntiBullyingStrat.aspx> (08/08/2012)
- See also** <http://ministers.deewr.gov.au/garrett/national-strategies-tackle-school-bullying> for the press release describing these strategies

Victoria

New directions for school leadership and the teaching profession

The State Government has published a discussion paper outlining its vision for reform of the teaching profession. The paper sets out proposals to ensure student performance is at the same level as that found in high-performing education systems around the world. The vision involves attracting high-calibre recruits into teaching, creating a culture of excellence and providing strong direction, leadership and support, with the goals of improving student outcomes and placing the system on a steady trajectory of improvement.

- Source** Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/>
- Title** New Directions for School Leadership and the Teaching Profession
- Located at/on** <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/teachingprofession.htm> (08/08/2012)
- See also** <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/commrel/about/teachingprofession.pdf> for the discussion paper itself

Canada

Saskatchewan

Improving student achievement

The Government of Saskatchewan has issued a press release announcing a new initiative to improve student achievement. All students, from pre-kindergarten to Grade 12, (age 6 to 18 years) will be provided with regular and consistent feedback on their progress. The feedback will also identify and provide the assistance each student requires in the classroom. Saskatchewan is the last province in Canada to introduce a province-wide approach to student assessment. An advisory committee comprised of key stakeholders will provide advice and guidance to the Ministry of Education on the implementation of the student achievement strategy.

- Source** Government of Saskatchewan
<http://www.gov.sk.ca/>
- Title** Student achievement initiative to lead to greater success for Saskatchewan students
- Located at/on** <http://www.gov.sk.ca/news?newsId=4d89c097-8725-4977-a774-f0a081016536> (16/05/2012)

Japan

Ministry team to help schools to fight bullying

A series of suicides related to bullying has prompted the education ministry to form a new team to help schools to combat the problem. The Minister for Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology announced that the team will provide schools and boards of education nationwide with professional advice and guidelines on how to deal with bullying. It will be the first unit set up to specifically tackle the problems associated with bullying.

Source Daily Yomiuri
<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp>
Title Govt team to help schools to fight bullying problems
Located at/on <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T120723003069.htm> (30/07/2012)

New Zealand

New Vocational Pathways launched

Education Ministers have announced five Vocational Pathways to support young people's progression from school into tertiary training and careers. The Pathways bring together the standards and skills recommended by five broad sectors of industry: construction and infrastructure; manufacture and technology; primary industries; service industries; and social and community services. They will use the existing National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) framework and provide new ways of achieving NCEA level 2, which is considered necessary for success in further study and employment. The Pathways have been released in draft form to allow for feedback prior to publication of final versions in November 2012.

Source Beehive.govt.nz - Official website of the New Zealand Government
<http://www.beehive.govt.nz>
Title New Vocational Pathways launched
Located at/on <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-vocational-pathways-launched>
(08/08/2012)
See also <http://youthguarantee.net.nz/> from which the draft Pathways are downloadable

Improving the quality of early childhood education

The Minister of Education has released the recommendations made by two Sector Advisory Groups on quality in early childhood education (ECE), which considered ECE for under-two-year-olds and quality improvement across the whole ECE sector. The groups recommend actions concerning initial training and continuing professional development, staffing ratios and the use of qualified staff, information for parents and families, inspection and licensing, and responding more quickly to rectify substandard provision.

Source Beehive.govt.nz - Official website of the New Zealand Government
<http://www.beehive.govt.nz>
Title Raising quality in early childhood education
Located at/on <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/raising-quality-early-childhood-education-0>
(08/08/2012)

Improving achievement information

The Education Minister has outlined the Government's approach to improving the quality and use of achievement information at year, school and national level. Public Achievement Information (PAI) will be available on the Ministry of Education's 'Education Counts' website. This will allow parents to see how their child's school is performing and the Government to see how well the system is doing as a whole. PAI will include National Standards data, Education Review Office reports, schools' annual reports and National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) data. Over time, other relevant national and international reports will be added. National Standards data, reported for the first time this year, will be published on the website this month.

Source Beehive.govt.nz - Official website of the New Zealand Government
<http://www.beehive.govt.nz>
Title Better public achievement information
Located at/on <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/better-public-achievement-information>
(24/08/2012)

USA

Changes to teacher licensing arrangements

Article discussing how Wisconsin, Massachusetts and around 25 other US states are piloting changes to the way they grant licences to teachers. The states are reducing the emphasis on tests and written essays in favour of a more demanding approach that requires aspiring teachers to prove themselves through lesson plans, homework assignments and videotaped instruction sessions. The change is an attempt to ensure that those who become teachers not only know education theories, but can also show the ability to lead classrooms and handle students of differing abilities and needs, often with limited resources.

Source New York Times
<http://www.nytimes.com/>
Title To Earn Classroom Certification, More Teaching and Less Testing
Located at/on <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/30/nyregion/with-new-standards-going-beyond-paper-and-pencil-to-license-teachers.html?pagewanted=1& r=1>
(06/08/2012)

Maryland

Changes to discipline procedures

Press release announcing that the Maryland State Board of Education has approved changes to its discipline policy. For students to be college and career ready, they need to be in school and therefore, the State's revised school discipline philosophy focuses this. Schools will be prohibited from having disciplinary policies that trigger suspension without the use of discretion and must reduce the number of long-term suspensions out-of-school for non-violent offences. Schools must seek to end the disproportionate impact of school discipline on minority groups and students with special educational needs. School systems will also be required to provide minimum education services to suspended or expelled students.

Source Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)
<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org>
Title Maryland State Board approves revised safe school report
Located at/on <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/exeres/87904885-0212-4183-B362->

[DDD661CB5261,frameless.htm?Year=2012&Month=7&WBCMODE=Pre%25%3E%25%25%3E%25%3E](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/stateboard/Student+Discipline+and+Long+Term+Suspensions.htm?WBCMODE=Pre%25%3E%25%25%3E%25%3E) (22/08/2012)

See also <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/stateboard/Student+Discipline+and+Long+Term+Suspensions.htm?WBCMODE=Pre%25%3E%25%25%3E%25%3E>
for the recommendation and details of how the Board came to its decision

Wisconsin

State sets demanding education targets

Press release announcing that Wisconsin has set demanding targets to ensure that every child graduates ready for further education and the workplace. The targets, to be achieved by 2017, include increasing the high school graduate rate to 92 per cent, increasing career and college readiness to 67 per cent, closing graduation and career and college readiness gaps, increasing the percentage of students reaching satisfactory levels in third-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics, and implementing plans to make school funding more equitable and transparent. Reform work to ensure these targets are met will focus around four questions:

- What and how should kids learn?
- How do we know if they learned it?
- How do we ensure kids have highly effective teachers and schools?
- How should we pay for schools?

Source Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us>

Title Every Child a Graduate, College and Career Ready: Agenda 2017

Located at/on <http://dpi.wi.gov/sprntdnt/pdf/agenda2017.pdf> (29/08/2012)

Wisconsin to introduce a new school accountability system

Press release describing Wisconsin's new school accountability system. The system, which is based on the state's recently approved No Child Left Behind (NCLB) flexibility waiver, will provide annual school report cards that use multiple measures to rate school effectiveness. The report cards will include student achievement, student growth, closing gaps, and on-track and post-secondary readiness for each school. School level report cards will be released in the autumn, and will include student level data from tests taken in the previous November.

Source Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us>

Title Accountability system preview: Report cards will use multiple measures, statewide math and reading results reported on more rigorous proficiency levels

Located at/on http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2012_82.pdf (31/07/2012)

See also <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility> for information about NCLB waivers