

## Tertiary institutions look to raise fees above limit

**A number of tertiary institutions want to raise fees above the 5 percent legal annual limit next year in an effort to get enough income to keep quality up.**

Massey University, Dunedin College of Education and Christchurch College of Education have applied to the Tertiary Education Commission for an exemption to raise their fees between 5 and 10 percent for 2006. Final decisions on the applications are expected in late November.

- Victoria University wants a 10 percent rise for its humanities and education courses by July next year with other course fees to rise by 5 percent from the start of 2006.

- Canterbury and Otago University are to raise fees by 5 percent.
- Auckland University of Technology is to raise fees by 13 percent for post-graduate programmes, and by 5 percent for undergraduate courses.
- Waikato University is to raise fees by an average of around 3.4 percent.
- Auckland University fees had yet to be set when *Subtext* went to print.
- Lincoln University has notified students of a 4.4 percent fee increase but vice chancellor Roger Field said

there had been a compelling case to consider applying for an increase of greater than 5 percent.

“The Government’s intransigent attitude to the eroding effect of inflation on the ability of universities to provide the level of services expected of them puts institutions in a very difficult position,” Professor Field said in a statement.

In a Victoria University website article, chancellor Tim Beaglehole said

### Give feedback on ECE degree and you could win an iPod Nano

If you are part of the early childhood education sector and have informed opinions on good education, your thoughts could win you an iPod Nano.

New Zealand Tertiary College is seeking ECE sector feedback – including from ECE students – on its proposed degree course, and an iPod Nano is up for grabs for one lucky participant.



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# Private students well-placed to get holiday jobs

**With workplace skills shortages biting hard, students at private training establishments (PTEs) are well-placed to find holiday jobs, because of the relevance of their training, an employment agency says.**

Chris Young, the Student Job Search (SJS) business development manager for the Wellington/Marlborough region, said his organisation had lots of demand from employers for the practical skills taught at PTEs.

“If an employer, looking to fill a temporary position, had to choose between a student with a good academic record in the arts, for example, or one with strong practical skills, the practical skills would be viewed positively. Employers are looking for people who can hit the ground running.”

Mr Young said PTE students were

often enrolled in subjects in hot demand in the workplace but with poor coverage in universities and polytechnics. There were not enough private students applying for work compared with the number of opportunities for them.

There was strong demand from employers for call centre work, hospitality, early childhood education, computing and general office work as well as the more traditional labouring and domestic work.

The service worked to target course-related jobs and, where possible, to match students with relevant work.

SJS interacts with over 50,000

students and 19,000 employers annually. Students earned over \$77 million in jobs referred and placed through SJS last year.

SJS has seven year-around offices – Auckland, Hamilton, Napier, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, and a number of summer sites, including Whangarei, Tauranga, Gisborne, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Nelson and Invercargill.

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*SJS encouraged students to enrol for the service through its website at [www.sjs.co.nz](http://www.sjs.co.nz)*

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the fee increases were proposed with reluctance, but the university had to ensure it had the resources to maintain the quality of its programmes.

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*A Tertiary Education Commission press release is at [http://www.tec.govt.nz/about\\_tec/mediareleases/release76.htm](http://www.tec.govt.nz/about_tec/mediareleases/release76.htm)*

*The Lincoln University statement is at [http://www.lincoln.ac.nz/news/media/2005/Lincoln\\_University\\_fees06.htm](http://www.lincoln.ac.nz/news/media/2005/Lincoln_University_fees06.htm)*

*The Victoria University article is at [http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/news\\_article.asp?ArticleID=1042149455](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/news_article.asp?ArticleID=1042149455)*

## Student Job Search free to PTE students this summer

Student Job Search is encouraging privately educated tertiary students to join its service by making it free for them this summer.

Students enrolled in registered PTEs accredited for access to student component funding and/or access to student allowances are able to use SJS for no charge until February next year.

Access for PTE students outside the summer months would cost a one-off \$25 fee, to cover March to September.

An SJS business development manager, Chris Young, said it was a common misconception that SJS worked only for university students.

“Student Job Search has an office which is usually based on each region’s main campus, but this is not because we are solely a university organisation but because those locations have the highest student population density.”

In summer, SJS opens satellite offices in most regions to give more access to students, including those from PTEs.

# Global rankings put spotlight on university performance

**Rankings of university performance are becoming more common as people look for guides on how institutions are performing. We profile some recent, high-profile rankings.**

*The Times* has recently released its second world university ranking with British universities doing well, as well as New Zealand's top-ranked institution, Auckland University.

Harvard University took out the top spot, with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology second. Cambridge and Oxford universities came in third and fourth places, up from sixth and fifth respectively last year, as part of a general increase in the standing of UK institutions.

In the ranking, Auckland came in at 52 (up from 67 last year), Otago was equal 186 (114 in 2004) and Massey equal 188 (108 in 2004).

Tokyo University, ranked at 12, was the highest-ranked institution in Asia, followed by Beijing University at 17. Six Australian universities were among the top 50, led by the Australian National University at 16.

The United States had 62 of the top 200 universities, followed by Britain with 30, Germany 17 and Australia 14, the *Times* reported.

Twenty-nine countries were represented in the global rankings overall.

The *Times* said the rankings used the results of a survey of 2,375 academics from across the world, combined with measures including the number of times that research papers are cited by academics, staff-to-student ratios and number of students and staff from overseas. It also included a measure based on the views of international employers on which universities they preferred to recruit from.

The other international ranking, published by Shanghai Jiao Tong University earlier this year, also put Harvard and Cambridge in the top two. Stanford came in at three while Oxford dropped two places from its 2004 position to tenth.

Auckland University was just outside the top 200 in the Chinese ranking.

In Canada, *MacLeans* magazine puts out an annual ranking of that country's universities.

*Macleans* editor-at-large Ann Dowsett Johnston told the *Globe and Mail* newspaper that the ranking was a public-policy wakeup call ... "and I think it's especially important

right now, given that since 1987 we've seen a 50 percent growth in enrolment in Canadian universities and only a 7 percent growth in hiring of faculty".

Meanwhile, a ranking of the United States' most expensive tertiary institutions at [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) saw Landmark College, the school with the priciest tuition since at least 1998, again in first place.

The CNN website said Landmark charged US\$37,738 for tuition this year, up 42 percent from 1998. Landmark gives a liberal arts education to students with learning disabilities.

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A Times story is at <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-1343642,00.html>

Information on the Times' rankings is at [http://www.thes.co.uk/story.aspx?story\\_id=2025650](http://www.thes.co.uk/story.aspx?story_id=2025650)

The Shanghai Jiao Tong University rankings are at <http://ed.sjtu.edu.cn/ranking.htm>

Information on the Canadian ranking is at <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20051106.wunivv1106/BNStory/Front>

The CNN ranking is at [http://money.cnn.com/2005/10/27/pf/college/priciest\\_colleges/index.htm?cnn=yes](http://money.cnn.com/2005/10/27/pf/college/priciest_colleges/index.htm?cnn=yes)



# UK parents support 'school choice'

**Letting UK parents choose either state or independent schools, and have taxpayers' money follow children to the chosen school, is supported by half of all voters says UK think tank Reform.**

Under the current education system effective choice of schools existed only for the wealthy, a Reform report says.

"Around 7 percent of children are educated privately. Others can afford to move into the catchment areas of good state schools. But most parents cannot afford to do so. The result is inequity."

The think tank said after Sweden introduced 'school choice' reforms in 1992 it saw a dramatic increase in the number of taxpayer-funded independent schools in all areas of the country, including rural and deprived areas.

- The number of independent schools in Sweden increased from 107 (1992) to 576 (2004).

- The share of independent schools rose from 2 percent in 1992 to nearly 12 percent in 2004.
- The number of pupils in independent schools rose from 8,629 pupils (1992) to 69,451 (2004).
- The share of pupils in independent schools rose from 1 percent (1992) to 7 percent (2004).

Based on the Swedish experience, Reform estimated a further 3,750 new schools would open in England over 12 years.

Central planning of school numbers by local education authorities had seen the number of primary schools fall by 21.4 percent in the past two decades,

relative to the number of pupils; and the number of secondary schools fall by 15.6 percent, relative to the number of pupils. The number of secondary schools had fallen by 17 percent in the last decade alone.

*The Reform report, 'The potential benefits of real education reform in England', is at <http://www.reform.co.uk/filestore/pdf/The%20potential%20benefits%20of%20real%20education%20reform%20in%20England.pdf>*

*Recent research into Swedish school choice is at <http://www.reform.co.uk/filestore/pdf/A%20Survey%20on%20the%20Development%20of%20Independent%20Schools%20in%20Sweden.pdf>*

## Private universities on the rise in China

About 1300 private universities have started up in China in recent years as tertiary student numbers take off, the *Christian Science Monitor* reported.

China has about 20 million students in tertiary education. It is estimated that more than 1.5 million of those students are at private institutions.

The *Christian Science Monitor* story is at <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0729/p01s01-woap.html>

## Making university more accessible will not help poor students, study finds

Universities may have to rethink how to attract lower-income students, because making universities more open will not help students who do not even finish school.

Marni Brownell is the lead author of a study finding that poor children are doing dramatically worse than others, both in terms of staying in school and in doing well when they're there. She said the results pointed to difficulties for universities.

"No matter how open universities become, if we don't do something earlier, the [poor] kids are not going to be finishing Grade 12, or won't be engaged in the process and [won't] even want to continue their education," Dr Brownell was quoted in the Canadian *University Affairs* publication.

More information is at [http://www.universityaffairs.ca/issues/2005/november/start\\_stay\\_behind\\_02.html](http://www.universityaffairs.ca/issues/2005/november/start_stay_behind_02.html)

# Business skills holiday program for primary students finds favour

**Wellington primary school girl Rebecca Bullen worked as the accountant for an organisation that this year launched a lifestyle and political magazine – *New Word* – that sold out its first print run; and its success brought her team good profits and a technology award.**

Rebecca was part of the St Mark's Church School team in Biz4kidz, a holiday programme run by Enterprise New Zealand Trust teaching business and entrepreneurial skills to primary school children.

The magazine was the team's business project during the week-long course, and the children worked on all aspects of the business from doing profit and loss reports and budgets, hiring consultants, selling advertising space in the magazine, to producing and marketing the magazine.

Their work brought them a sold-out magazine and a course award for best use of technology.

Eleven-year-old Rebecca said she had known that running a business was hard work "but I didn't realise it was that much hard work".

"It was a real hands-on experience and we had a really fun time and met new people. Me and my best friend hope to do the course again and we would also like to run our own business when we leave school."

Other students ran business ventures involving crafts, beauty, jewellery, knickknacks and food.

St Mark's head of upper school, Kent Favel, said the course – held during the last school holidays – was an excellent

alternative to the usual run-of-the-mill holiday programmes.

"The children couldn't wait to come in every day and they told us they wanted to start earlier and work later. Producing their own goods gave them a huge amount of satisfaction," he said.

Mr Favel said the course taught children about appreciating the value of money and business and financial responsibility, and "shows them what the real world is like".

The five-day course includes completing a curriculum vitae and applying for jobs. Within their ventures, students appoint managers who become responsible for business planning, design, production, finance and marketing. They design their currency for the week and parents exchange New Zealand dollars into the course currency to buy goods at the market.

Students also keep personal financial records as well as business records.

The course ends in a market evening



where the children make marketing presentations and sell their products to friends and family.

The course is adapted from the Enterprise New Zealand Trust's term-long PrEP programme where primary school students build, and work in, a society, complete with a government, banks and law courts.

Mr Favel said both courses fitted in well under the secondary school Young Enterprise Scheme, which many of the students on Biz4kidz now wanted to do.

The Biz4kidz course – for Year 5–8 students – had been a pilot and the next was likely to be held in the first school holidays of 2006.

# Performance standards will get best results from ECE, says economist

**Early childhood education subsidies based on performance standards not on centre ownership, and more targeted funding – for example, for at-risk children, will get the best results for the sector.**



Jean-Pierre de Raad

Mr de Raad this month presented further analysis from a report into early childhood education (ECE) funding he had written earlier this year for the Early Childhood Council (ECC).

He said more targeted funding could include abolishing the '20 free hours' policy as it would do little for participation, raise costs for many centres and drive out the service features parents want.

With the 20 free hours for three- and four-year-olds to be funded on an

average national cost it would mean a windfall for centres in lower-cost areas but centres in higher-cost areas would either have to reduce quality to lower costs, pick up the difference from other children at the centre who did not qualify for the free hours, or close down.

Mr de Raad said the government had an important role to play in promoting quality and safety standards, and in funding to ensure ECE was accessible to all, but there was "no apparent role" for government in ownership.

He said there was no evidence from Education Review Office reports of any specific issue with quality, when assessed against current standards.

The government should also abolish

the requirement that all teaching staff be registered teachers and adopt a system that recognised diversity of staff roles. The requirement for teaching qualifications raised costs for 'uncertain gains in quality'.

It was important to have a range of qualifications that met the wide range of roles in a centre, rather than having all staff trained to degree level.

Though there was a relationship between qualifications and process quality, being qualified did not equal being competent, Mr de Raad said.

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*The ECC report, 'Putting Children First', was released in July and is online at <http://www.ecc.org.nz/report/>*

## *Business skills holiday programme for primary students finds favour* Continued from page 5

Enterprise New Zealand Trust business development officer Caroline Steele said it was hoped the course could be rolled out across the country.

Ms Steele said the PrEP programme was in 10 percent of New Zealand's schools, so there was a lot of room for growth for it and for Biz4kidz.

She said Biz4kidz gave children the "total business experience".

More information on Enterprise New Zealand Trust's school programmes is at <http://www.enzt.co.nz/>

A Subtext feature on the 2004 PrEP scheme is at [http://educationforum.org.nz/upload/subtext/subtext\\_Dec04.pdf](http://educationforum.org.nz/upload/subtext/subtext_Dec04.pdf)



# Performance pay making headlines

**Performance pay for teachers has been prominent in education news in the past month. We highlight some stories.**

## **Denver voters agree to performance pay budget**

Denver voters this month agreed to pay an additional US\$25 million in property taxes in a plan to reform teacher pay, and reward teachers for student achievement.

The plan will also give bonuses for taking on hard to teach subjects or teaching in tough schools and phase out the union-negotiated salary structure.

More information is at [http://www.denverpost.com/politics/ci\\_3173807](http://www.denverpost.com/politics/ci_3173807)

## **Turn-around in Arkansas student results under performance pay scheme**

A school in Arkansas in the second year of a performance pay scheme has seen a dramatic jump in student results, a *Wall Street Journal* columnist reports at <http://www.opinionjournal.com/columnists/dhenninger/?id=110007406>

## **California looking to replace teacher tenure with performance bonuses**

California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger wants to make it easier to dismiss poorly performing teachers by lengthening the time it takes a newly hired teacher to qualify for “permanent” employment status and making it easier to fire them. Performance pay is also part of his controversial proposal.

More information is at <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/1025/p08s02-comv.html?s=hns>

## **Proven literacy skills needed before teaching, inquiry finds**

All aspiring teachers in Australia should have to prove they can read and write proficiently before being allowed into a classroom, a national literacy inquiry has recommended.

A Sydney Morning Herald story on the issue is at <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2005/11/07/1131212008716.html?oneclick=true>

## **Successful performance pay requires systemic change**

Performance pay requires ‘systemic reform’ to be successful: including changing how a school system thinks and behaves in the areas of student learning, teacher rewards and institutional culture, according to US commentator William Slotnik.

More information is at <http://www.ctacusa.com/MissionPossible-95.pdf>

## **Performance pay a factor in tertiary sector**

**Performance pay is also becoming an issue in the tertiary sector. We look at recent news from Australia and Canada.**

### **Professors perform best on merit pay**

Universities that pay professors based on merit, rather than seniority, outperform other universities, says a recent Canadian study.

The CD Howe Institute study, “How We Pay Professors and Why It Matters,” argues that basing pay on performance makes professors accountable to students, and benefits the education system.

More information is at [http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/commentary\\_221.pdf](http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/commentary_221.pdf)

### **Australian universities get more freedom in hiring staff**

Australian universities now have more scope for individuals to negotiate their own pay and conditions, rather than being locked into a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach, following the introduction of new legislation this month.

Education minister Brendan Nelson said “university staff should be offered the same opportunities as those available to other workers with every staff member free to choose their employment arrangement”.

A statement from Dr Nelson is at <http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2005/11/n2041101105.asp>

# No-interest policy will mean ‘more debt and lower quality education’

**Labour’s student loan scheme will result in increased student debt and lower quality education, the National Party says.**



**Bill English**

said the billions of dollars spent on the policy would take money away from polytechs, university staff and facilities, and do nothing to help the 20 percent of children who struggled with basic reading and maths.

He said the policy encouraged more students to borrow more money and pay it back more slowly.

“Currently, just 55 percent of

The legislation providing for interest-free loans was tabled in Parliament this month.

Education spokesman Bill English

students eligible for a loan take one out. But now the more than 100,000 students who are eligible for a loan but haven’t yet taken one out have a strong incentive to take out a full student loan and put it in the bank to earn a nice little nest egg on the taxpayer.”

Finance spokesman John Key described the policy as “fiscal insanity” that would encourage students to borrow the maximum and repay the minimum.

Before the election, Labour announced it at costing around \$300 million a year but National and Treasury have made higher estimates: \$500 million a year in five years and about \$900 million in 10 years.

Mr Key said the government had been deceitful about the policy’s cost.

## Students repaying loans faster

Meanwhile, the Student Loan Scheme annual report to 30 June 2005, was published this month. It shows that in 2004/05 21,079 loans were fully repaid and it suggests that more students are repaying their loans faster.

The report shows that the average loan balance is \$14,997, with about 40 percent of loans under \$8,000 and 0.1 percent over \$100,000.

The scheme was introduced in 1992, and around 680,000 people have used it. Some 445,074 people had a student loan at 30 June 2005, representing 14 percent of the population over the age of 15 years.

A statement from Bill English is at <http://www.national.org.nz/Article.aspx?ArticleId=5398>

## Loan subsidies do not work, academic says

Labour’s no-interest loan scheme will fail to improve access and to produce the extra resources needed to improve quality, London School of Economics professor Nicholas Barr says.

In an article published in the *Dominion Post* last month, Professor Barr said Britain had faced the same issues over the past decade and it had been found that interest subsidies did not work.

“Because subsidies are expensive they start to crowd out university income and hence to erode income.”

## Scheme ‘won’t help government achieve its policy objectives’

The government’s no-interest student loan scheme will not help it achieve its policy objectives, says Education Forum policy advisor Norman LaRocque.

In a speech earlier this year Mr LaRocque said the scheme would not do much “to increase or broaden tertiary education participation, lift the quality of teaching, pay top performing staff more, help build New Zealand’s research infrastructure or encourage more on-the-job training. Further subsidised borrowing under the loan scheme will also mean there is less money available for priority areas such as schools, hospitals, police and tax cuts.”

Mr LaRocque’s speech is at [http://educationforum.org.nz/upload/pdf/Student\\_Loans\\_060905.pdf](http://educationforum.org.nz/upload/pdf/Student_Loans_060905.pdf)

# Private provider creating ECE teaching degree – distance learning an option

**A degree programme for early childhood education (ECE) teachers is being put together by a private ECE teacher training college that specialises in distance learning.**



Selena Fox

Auckland-based New Zealand Tertiary College (NZTC) is turning its top level diploma into a three-year Bachelor of Teaching (Early Years) degree.

NZTC's proposed degree will let students choose from college-based, field-based or distance learning. NZTC also plans to expand its distance learning option to include online learning.

NZTC general manager Selena Fox said the college had received positive encouragement for the degree proposal from its NZQA appointed monitor and from the previous Minister of Education, Trevor Mallard.

The college was now seeking feedback on the proposed degree programme to ensure it was closely

aligned to sector needs.

The college hopes to submit the programme proposal to the Qualifications Authority before Christmas and have the degree formally approved by the middle of next year.

NZTC currently offers three ECE study programmes, and over 75 percent of its students, from all around New Zealand, use the distance-learning option to earn their qualifications.

Ms Fox said students would be able to start the distance-learning

degree programme at any time during the year, meaning the first students might start near the end of 2006, if the Qualifications Authority application went smoothly.

She expected the course to be popular with students and employers.

“Research has never been so compelling that well trained and qualified teachers make a difference to the lives of young children and that linking theory with practice is significant in improving student learning.”

Give feedback on degree contents and win an iPod Nano

New Zealand Tertiary College is seeking ECE sector feedback – including from ECE students – on its proposed degree course.

To encourage people to take part in the consultation an iPod Nano is up for grabs.

Consultation papers are at <http://www.nztertiarycollege.ac.nz/>

Download the papers, complete them, return them to NZTC by 12 December and you will go into the draw for the iPod Nano. The winner is drawn on 16 December.

*No-interest loan policy will mean ‘more debt and lower quality education’ Continued from page 8*

## Loan subsidies do little to ‘promote access or achieve efficiency’

New Zealand once had the world's best student loan scheme. But, since the late 1990s, the loan scheme has been transformed from a model of sensible student financing to a political football, and in the recent election campaign both parties gave it a good kicking, argues economist Mark Harrison in a *Subtext* opinion piece from earlier this year.

A statement from John Key is at <http://www.national.org.nz/Article.aspx?articleId=5396>

A New Zealand Herald story is at <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/search/story.cfm?storyid=000D9937-2070-1371-9D8483027AF1002A>

An Education Forum hot topic on the no-interest student loan scheme is at [http://educationforum.org.nz/text-hot\\_topic\\_26-27](http://educationforum.org.nz/text-hot_topic_26-27)

The latest student loan report is at <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=10873&data=1>

## More freedom for private education helps economy, report says

**Overregulation, micromanagement and insufficient financial support for students are holding back private vocational and career colleges, and the result is a less productive economy says a report from the Canadian CD Howe Institute.**

The Canadian labour market depends on private career colleges and vocational training, and all would be better served with more self-regulation and if student loan limits were increased, a commentary from the institute argues.

Written by Doug Auld, a Trent University professor, the report says there has recently been an explosion of new legislation, putting career colleges among the most highly regulated sectors in Canada.

Overregulation stifled innovation and limited entry into the sector, and policymakers should look at how self-regulation could better serve students and society in general, Professor Auld argues.

The commentary says private career colleges' rapid training response to labour market shortages helped raise productivity and was a reason to not exclude them, or their students, from public aid.

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'Selling Postsecondary Education: The Role of Private Vocational and Career Colleges' is at [http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/commentary\\_219.pdf](http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/commentary_219.pdf)

## Growth in charter schools sees public schools improve

**Growth in North Carolina charter schools brought substantial improvements in the performance of traditional public schools, a study shows.**

Between 1996 and 2005, the number of charter schools in North Carolina grew from 0 to 99. (State law currently caps the total number of charter schools at 100.)

Traditional public schools in North Carolina responded to the limited competition from charter schools by improving their "average proficiency rates", an academic study reported in *Education Next* has found.

The research found "consistent evidence that charter-school competition raises the performance composite of traditional public schools. The effect is statistically significant for four of the seven measures of charter-school competition and falls just short of significance for the other three".

The authors calculated the increases in traditional school performance at about 1 percent. This represented more than half of the average achievement gain of 1.7 percent made by public schools statewide from 1998 to 2000.

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'Friendly Competition', by George M. Holmes, Jeff DiSimone and Nicholas G. Rupp, is at <http://www.educationnext.org/20061/67.html>

## Parents should be key decision-makers in ECE, paper argues



**Recognition of the role of families in early childhood education (ECE) is important, and parents need to be in the ECE 'driver's seat', a New Zealand researcher argues.**

A recent paper by ECE researcher Sarah Farquhar says parents should

make most of the decisions about their children's ECE because the family's role in children's lives is more influential than their teachers; and parenting is critically important for a child's development and educational outcomes.

"Professional teachers are involved in children's learning for a comparatively short period of time and only in the context of the school or early childhood centre. Parents, in contrast to professional teachers, have a substantive knowledge of their child that goes across contexts and time."

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Dr Farquhar's paper, 'The Role of Parents and Family in Children's Early Education', is at [http://www.childforum.com/article\\_details.asp?REF\\_NO=8](http://www.childforum.com/article_details.asp?REF_NO=8)

## briefs

### Quote of the month:

*"I do believe that where you've got low-performing schools in bad situations, you ought to give parents ... choice, wherever that happens to be."*

Washington Democrat mayor Anthony Williams, November 2005. A New York Sun story about vouchers in Washington quoting Mr Williams is at <http://www.nysun.com/article/22972>

### Christchurch school zones 'deprive parents of choice'

Principals of in-demand Christchurch schools have hit out at the tough Ministry of Education zoning rules that they say deprive parents of their right to choose, *The Press* has reported.

The Press article is at <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3474513a7694,00.html>

### NZ takes lead at WTO for liberalisation of education services

New Zealand trade negotiators have recently established a group in the World Trade Organisation to push for 'more liberalised market access commitments' in education services, Education NZ has reported in a recent e-Newsletter.

The group would be a semi-formal, pro-liberalisation cluster of WTO countries pushing for more market access to education services.

### Education and science select committee announced



**Brian Donnelly**

The following MPs have been appointed to the education and science select committee: chairperson, Hon Brian Donnelly (NZ First); deputy chairperson, Moana Mackey (Labour); Ashraf Choudhary (Labour); Te Ururoa Flavell (Maori Party); Colin King (National); Allan Peachey (National); Dianne Yates (Labour); Jacqui Dean (National); Hon Bill English (National); Marian Hobbs (Labour).

A full list of select committees is at <http://otherpublications.clerk.parliament.govt.nz.clients.intergen.net.nz/browse/show.aspx?type=7&typemode=1&displaymode=7>

### UK private schools may devise own exams

UK private schools will abandon GCSE and A-level exams and devise their own unless the government acts quickly to improve the exam system, British newspaper *The Independent* has reported.

Meanwhile, in New Zealand, some schools are being consulted over a new international qualification from University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE). The qualification is designed to extend brighter students.

Education Forum chairman and Auckland Grammar School principal John Morris told the *New Zealand Herald* his school was taking part in the consultations. Forty-four New Zealand schools offer CIE qualifications.

The Independent article is at <http://education.independent.co.uk/news/article316901.ece>

The New Zealand Herald article is at [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/story.cfm?c\\_id=1&ObjectID=10352311](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/story.cfm?c_id=1&ObjectID=10352311)

A Subtext story on CIE exams is at [http://www.educationforum.org.nz/documents/e\\_newsletter/02\\_04/Feb04\\_CIE.htm](http://www.educationforum.org.nz/documents/e_newsletter/02_04/Feb04_CIE.htm)

### Private schools popular in Australia

Though public schools are making a bit of a comeback in parts of Sydney, private schooling is on the increase, with the public school share of students expected to drop from a national rate of 67.6 percent in 2003 to 63.7 percent by 2010.

A Sydney Morning Herald story is at <http://www.smh.com.au/handheld/articles/2005/11/06/1131211949421.html?oneclick=true>

### Funding found for a Bahrain private university for women

Bahrain's first private university for women is to be built after a funding package was put together by financiers.

More information is at <http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/Story.asp?Article=127328&Sn=BUSI&IssueID=28245>

## Australia popular for international students

Australia is growing in popularity among Asian students, with the UK and US losing ground as places to get a degree, the *Guardian* has reported.

Australia's overseas student enrolments have doubled since 2000 to 200,000 at a time when the US and UK face declines. Australia's education exports rose 17.8 percent last year and were valued at more than \$5 billion for the first nine months of 2004.

The *Guardian* reported that Australia was perceived by its international students to offer the third highest standard of education – behind the UK and the US, but ahead of Canada, New Zealand and Germany.

The *Guardian* story is at <http://education.guardian.co.uk/higher/worldwide/story/0,9959,1594125,00.html>

## Govt benefits for families with nannies a possibility in Australia

Parents who employ nannies should receive a government benefit similar to those who put their children into childcare centres, according to Australian prime minister John Howard reported in *The Australian* recently.

A story in *The Australian* is at [http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/story\\_page/0,5744,16996583%25E601,00.html](http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/story_page/0,5744,16996583%25E601,00.html)

## Charter school students do well in reading

Fourth-grade charter school students across the US improved on their 2003 scores, especially in reading “at a faster rate than students in traditional public schools,” according to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools.

The Alliance report is at <http://www.publiccharters.org/pdf/NAEP2005.pdf>

## More children than ever are now attending charter schools

Charter schools, after growing 13 percent last year, now account for 4 percent of the US's public schools.

Almost 1.1 million students are enrolled in 3,625 charter schools, the Center for Education Reform (CER) has found.

A CER report is at <http://www.edreform.com/index.cfm?fuseAction=document&documentID=2214&sectionID=5&NEWSYEAR=2005>

## Milwaukee moves to grow voucher scheme

The state of Milwaukee is looking to increase the size of its voucher programme from 15 percent to 18 percent of public school enrolment.

More information is at [http://www.journaltimes.com/articles/2005/11/05/local/iq\\_3752682.txt](http://www.journaltimes.com/articles/2005/11/05/local/iq_3752682.txt)

## Class size reduction is unlikely to ‘foster learning’, argues researcher

Across the board class-size reduction can be expensive and is unlikely to ‘foster learning’, a new study finds.

Leading education policy researcher Ludger Woessmann said his study suggested that, “at least in the context of the resources and organisational structure of West European lower secondary education systems, expensive across-the-board reduction of class sizes is extremely unlikely to foster student learning”.

Ludger Woessmann's study is at [http://econpapers.repec.org/article/blaecpoli/v\\_3A20\\_3Ay\\_3A2005\\_3Ai\\_3A43\\_3Ap\\_3A445-504.htm](http://econpapers.repec.org/article/blaecpoli/v_3A20_3Ay_3A2005_3Ai_3A43_3Ap_3A445-504.htm)

## Is it OK to get rich in the public education business?

A feature story on US firm Charter School Management Inc that runs publicly funded schools in Philadelphia with 1,700 students looks at the vexed questions of public education, private profits and student performance.

The feature is at [http://www.zwire.com/site/news.cfm?BRD=1675&dept\\_id=18168&newsid=15471346&PAG=461&rfti=9](http://www.zwire.com/site/news.cfm?BRD=1675&dept_id=18168&newsid=15471346&PAG=461&rfti=9)

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