



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

MCERA

Media Centre for Education Research
A U S T R A L I A



Education Matters

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FROM THE CHAIR AND CEO

Welcome to the 2021 MCERA Annual Report.

Over the last year, there has been a great deal of unpredictability related to the pandemic that has dominated the news media. The media has reported extensively on the confusion and unpredictability of shutdowns and interruptions to our lives and thus on education.

Thus, it has been increasingly important that when the media reports on education issues it is well informed by research.

Through this time, it has been clear that our services to both researchers and the media are vital. The public continues to be interested in knowing about the latest education research and it is befitting from well informed media reporting on education issues.

For MCERA, we have continued to achieve solid outcomes for our stakeholders, even while we have undergone significant changes.

We've seen our highest reach figures in any financial year to-date, with a cumulative reach of almost 18 million within Australia.

From a financial perspective, we have ended the financial year in a relatively comfortable position, in part because of government supports available through the pandemic, but also due to the ongoing support of our subscribers.

MCERA is also an industry partner of the Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child. The Centre, announced in 2019, has now begun, and we are excited about the opportunities for us to work with these researchers on such a significant issue that impacts on so many parts of contemporary life.

Internally, we have been working around MCERA's branding, and we are looking forward to launching a new website soon. Not only will the site look better, but it will also make interacting with our organisation easier.

We farewelled MCERA's Media Manager, Scott Arthurson, who has begun studying towards his PhD. Scott had been with us since shortly after the commencement of our services in 2017, and we wish him the best of luck in his studies. In his place, Dr Karen Nobes has joined the MCERA team as a Media Officer.

MCERA will continue to work to realise our vision: advancing education by improving the reporting of education research in the media to enable the public to better understand education matters.

By empowering the public with accurate knowledge of education issues, we contribute to better policy-making, greater understanding between students, parents and educators, and a brighter future for all Australians.



Associate Professor Anna Sullivan
MCERA Chair



Dr Shannon Schedlich
MCERA CEO

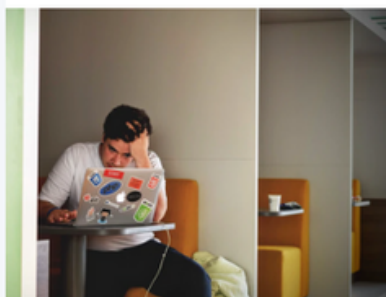
"2020 has reminded us just how central schools are to society ... So many more people have now seen first-hand how complex the work of leaders and teachers is."

–Professor Amanda Heffernan, Monash University

STEPHANIE BENNETT

University of New South
Wales Professor of Edu-

ACARA chief executive David de Carvalho, pictured, said the test provided key information on how well students were learning the essential skills of reading, writing and mathematics.



MCERA
Media Centre for Education Research
AUSTRALIA

08. TRAUMA TRAINING NEEDS AN OVERHAUL

Received this second-hand? Subscribe for 2020

TRAUMA TRAINING NEEDS AN OVERHAUL, SAY SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH WORKERS

Dear Subscriber

...places, with students coming from a diverse range of
...variety of experiences.

nts, these experiences include trauma. Family Berger from Monash University, currently undertaken, and what could be

the latest edition of Informed
ence some form of trauma over the
feel there is need for much
a is whole-of-school responses. I

Initial Teacher Education

Parents must understand

CHRIS RUSSELL

MANY parents of young children don't recognise the difference between bullying and fighting, researchers have found.

This made it harder to address and prevent bullying, according to researchers Lesley Ey from UniSA and Marilyn Campbell from Queensland University.

"Parents are confusing fighting and even playful behaviour with bullying," they said. "This is of concern be-

Parents' of influence

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Education Matters

Teaching the teachers



Education minister Alan Tudge. Photo: NCA NewsWire/Sarah Matray

Experts question minister's call for a review into the quality of teacher education.

By Wade Zaglas

Three of Australia's teacher education experts have questioned statements made by education minister Alan Tudge that a review is needed into initial teacher education (ITE) courses, and that some beginning teachers are not prepared for the classroom because

to inform quality teaching and students' needs.

*Whilst major changes in the ITE, changes in the structure of our schooling system

*Another reform of education cannot foc

issues as the 100+ ref
A focus on how we e

profession and how v
for diversity is paramc


Dean of Programs:
the University of South
Professor Victoria Wh

TIM WILLIAMS

STUDENTS and parents often despair that schools do not seem to be aware of the prevalence of bullying – but a UniSA study shows teachers actually over-estimate it.

Professor Ken Rigby surveyed 1700 students and dozens of teachers about a broad range of bullying types.

For more than half of those types, teachers' estimates were higher than those by students.



Teachers thought physical violence



Dr. Robert C. Anderson

individual cases of bullying but they are aware of the scale of the issue at the whole school level.

The results also show that teachers are generally aware of the

problem school
Prof Rigby, pictu

That was in
cause the effective
balling strategy

bullying strategies
schools having a
of the scale of the
"In order to

these strategies is not to assume underplay bullying

Prof Rigby found that the use of e-mail or internet was not a significant source of information.

This made it harder to address and prevent bullying, according to researchers Lesley Ey from UniSA and Marilyn Campbell from Queensland University.

MCERA SNAPSHOT

17.8 m *

cumulative reach in 2020-21

1,197

media items were directly impacted by MCERA's input - either through reporting on media releases we issued, expert comments or rapid responses we compiled, webinars we coordinated, or journalists' direct requests for experts to contribute to their reporting.

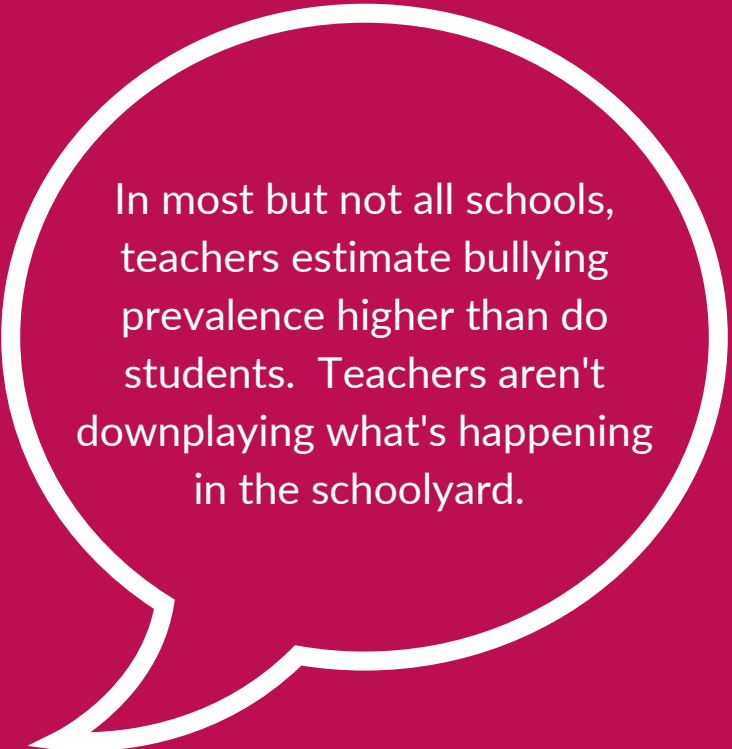
*equalling an ASR of

\$4.44m

CASE STUDIES

Where MCERA's work impacted the media: ensuring education experts inform the reporting

MCERA's Publishing Partner, Springer, published research by Professor Ken Rigby at UniSA on whether teachers were underestimating bullying in schools (they weren't). Professor Rigby worked with MCERA to develop a media engagement strategy for the research, developing a release on his findings. It was pitched to *The Advertiser*, where it was covered in print and online. It was also syndicated across another eight News Corp websites, and following the general release, Professor Rigby's research was covered, by the Super Radio Network, and online by *Clarence Valley News*, and *The West Australian*.

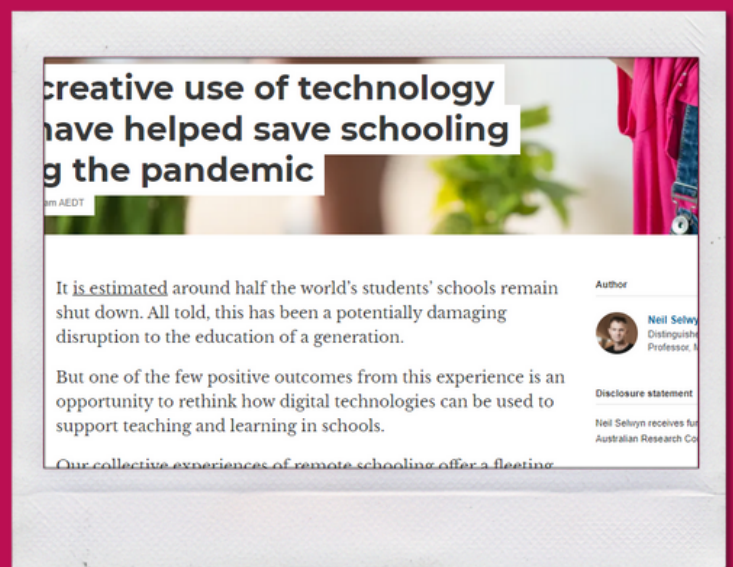


In most but not all schools, teachers estimate bullying prevalence higher than do students. Teachers aren't downplaying what's happening in the schoolyard.

What can we learn from the pandemic about education? How can we make sure that experts' research is informing the reporting?

Through the latter part of 2020, we issued a series of expert comments about what learnings we could take away from the pandemic. This had significant success. For instance, the first issue, concerning parent-school partnerships, led to Dr Rebecca English of QUT being quoted on ABC Radio Brisbane, Channel 7, and in an article in the New Daily. The second issue, concerning learning and technology, led to Professor Garry Falloon of Macquarie University being interviewed for an ABC Radio Sydney segment syndicated across multiple regional ABC outlets, and quoted in the Redland City Bulletin; to the University of Newcastle's Dr Rachel Buchanan being interviewed by ABC Newcastle; and to both of these researchers and Dr Joanne Orlando of Western Sydney University being quoted online by Education Review. The Conversation contacted Professor Neil Selwyn of Monash University to write an article off the back of his comments for the final issue of Education After COVID-19, wherein he highlighted schools' creative use of technology during the pandemic to salvage learning.

In August, a journalist from The Age approached MCERA seeking experts on the effects of any COVID-related recession on private school enrolment. Professor Chandravan Shah of Monash University and Victoria University and Dr Paul Kidson of the University of Wollongong were recommended as experts in the area, leading to both being quoted in the initial article, and to Professor Shah being invited to write an op ed and quoted in the letters section shortly thereafter.



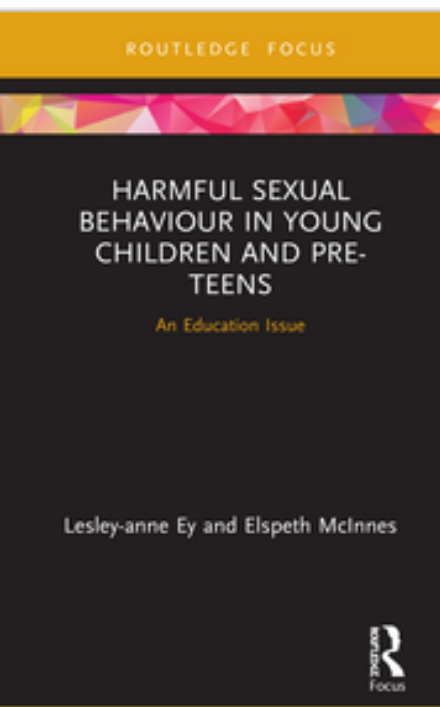
INFORMING THE MEDIA

Ensuring journalists are aware of education research

“Education , training, reporting and responding should be a national approach”

Dr Lesley-Ann Ey and Associate Professor Elspeth McInnes published a book with Routledge, an imprint of one of MCERA's Publishing Partners, Taylor and Francis. Focusing on different findings of the research in *Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Young Children and Pre-teens: An Education Issue*, MCERA developed two releases. The releases were sent as general releases (rather than exclusives), leading to Dr Ey being consulted for an article in the Cairns Weekend Post on health issues caused by pornography. Further, the research was covered in Campus Review.

Subsequently, a media release on a separate T&F-published paper on sexual harassment rates of boys and girls in school, co-authored by researchers including Xiaojing Lei, A/Prof Kay Bussey, and Dr Deborah Mitchison from Macquarie University and Western Sydney University, was pitched to the *Sydney Morning Herald* with the comment that Dr Ey's and A/Prof's McInnes's research could be incorporated into the story. This led to mention of both pieces of research in the resulting article published in the *Sunday Herald* and across four Nine websites.



Using briefings to bring research to the fore

As NAPLAN testing resumed in 2021, MCERA CEO Dr Shannon Schedlich facilitated a live briefing for journalists and policy makers with four expert presenters. There is much public discussion around NAPLAN, and the webinar provided a chance for journalists and policymakers to learn what experts had found through their research on the often-controversial testing regime. Following the briefing, Associate Professor Jess Harris of Newcastle University and Professor Pasi Sahlberg of UNSW were featured in an *Adelaide Advertiser* article. In different coverage from the same event, Sahlberg also appeared in the *Geelong Advertiser*, and the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times*. From the generally released Expert Comment sent out after this webinar, Associate Professor David Curtis of Flinders University was quoted by the *Advertiser*, as well as featuring in publications such as the *Bega District News* and the *Mudgee Guardian*.



Speaking to their research findings, the experts spoke about

- *Standardised testing as an "outdated" mode of assessment*
- *The limited impact of school interventions*
- *Student engagement*
- *The need to not rush back to "normal" after COVID*

MCERA'S PRODUCTS & SERVICES



MCERA's products

- **MCERA in the Media** - quarterly e-newsletter highlighting where researchers have featured in the media
- **MCERA media releases** - develop media releases based on recent research and distribute them to our network of about 1,000 journalists from across Australia
- **MCERA rapid responses** - a series of short quotes from a variety of researchers when an education issues arises in the media, allowing journalists to know who is well placed to speak on an issue. They are compiled very quickly to respond to key events, issues or announcements
- **MCERA expert comments** - a series of short quotes from a variety of researchers in preparation for when an education issue is coming up, such as an embargoed report. This provides journalists with access to a range of experts to speak on an issue
- **MCERA Informed Sources** - a subscription-based service which provides school leaders, educators, parents, researchers and policy-makers short, accessible articles on the latest education research
- **MCERA media reports** - MCERA provides tailored institutional and individual media engagement reports, outlining the reach and output of the engagement of researchers
- **MCERA briefing papers** - compilations of expert comments supplemented with links to additional resources
- **MCERA media engagement plans** - media wrap-around services that comprise of multiple channels of engagement through multiple media sources

MCERA's services

- **MCERA webinar briefings** - for journalists and policy makers to gain a better understanding of a complex educational issue. Experts with varying expertise explain the research related to aspects of specific issue
- **Open access for journal articles** - MCERA is often able to negotiate a period of (or indefinite) open access to articles used in the preparation of media releases
- **MCERA expert referrals** - we refer journalists to experts they should speak to on specific topics
- **MCERA tailored media training** - either individual or group training sessions
- **MCERA Media Awards**
- Promotion of international publications presented within the Australian context.
- Liaison with other organisations where possible to promote releases internationally.
- Assistance in drafting and pitching broader media publications eg op-eds and articles for The Conversation based on works published
- Pitch to individual journalists to arrange exclusives



MCERA BOARD

The MCERA Board of Directors provides governance, strategic direction and oversight for the Centre. It is comprised of a mix of representatives, with a wide variety of expertise and experience, who are well placed to lead the organisation.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR ANNA SULLIVAN

Board Chair, Director

Associate Professor Anna Sullivan is a founding director of MCERA and was appointed the inaugural Chair of the Board in May 2016. Anna is currently an Associate Professor of Education at the University of South Australia and the Director of the Centre for Research in Educational and Social Inclusion (CRESI) at University of South Australia.



MARK ROBERTSON

Deputy Chair, Director

Mark is a private consultant and non-executive director specialising in research and educational publishing, organizational development, career and leadership mentoring, and business in Asia Pacific. He is a non-executive director of Therapeutic Guidelines Ltd, deputy chair of MCERA, and is also the Development Director for Asia Pacific for CHOR Inc (CHORUS). Mark is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (FAICD).

ADJUNCT ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JIM DAVIES

Director

Jim Davies is a lecturer at Flinders University, as well as an independent education consultant and researcher, recently researching principals' professional practices that facilitate indigenous education. He has previously held leadership roles as CEO of Principals Australia Institute, and in the South Australian public education system, including principal and District Superintendent. Jim is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



DIDIER GUÉRIN

Director

Didier Guérin is the Executive Chairman of Media Convergence Asia-Pacific, a company he founded in 1999 to manage or assist the development of international media companies in the Asia-Pacific. Previously, Didier was a senior executive with Condé Nast and Hachette-Filipacchi Media and he served as President CEO for Asia Pacific for each group.

PROFESSOR MICHELE SIMONS

Director

Professor Michele Simons is the Dean and Head of the School of Education at Western Sydney University. She has extensive experience in supporting learning in the fields of adult education, vocational education and workplace learning, and secondary teacher education programs. Michele is President of the Australian Council of Deans of Education.





EMERITUS PROFESSOR CHRISTINA SLADE

Director

Emeritus Professor Christina Slade was Vice-Chancellor of Bath Spa University from 2012-2017. She is Rector of Charles Sturt University and a Director of the National Art School. She trained in mathematical logic and philosophy at ANU and Oxford and worked as a journalist and academic across the world. Christina's research has focused on issues of the media and education since 1990.

LINCOLN SMITH

Director

Lincoln Smith is a Partner at Norman Waterhouse Lawyers, specialising in Employment, Industrial Relations and Media Law, with over 20 years' experience. Lincoln is also a member of the Law Society's Industrial Relations Committee and a former Director of the Mary MacKillop College and Fresh 927.



SUSI STEIGLER-PETERS

Director

Susi Steigler-Peters is the CEO of ProLearning and the founder of Learning 21, an education consultancy group. Susi was previously the Global Education Lead in Telstra, where her role reached all Australian schools, TAFEs, universities and key education agencies.

NICK WILKINS

Director

Nick Wilkins runs Wilkins Advisory, specialising in business consulting and taxation. He has more than 30 years' experience in the provision of taxation, accounting and business services to a full range of clients, from family businesses to large corporates.



CATHERINE VOGEL

Director

Catherine Vogel is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and CEO and Director of Reshaping Schools Pty Ltd. She has extensive experience in marketing, advertising and communications, both in Australia and internationally.

Catherine has worked in and has been associated with the education industry for many years, with a particular focus on IB professional development for IB schools in the Asia Pacific region and subsequently, creating and growing a Professional Learning company for school leaders and educators.



EDUCATION RESEARCH ADVISORY PANEL

The MCERA Education Research Advisory Panel is comprised of senior, eminent researchers. Members of the panel advise MCERA staff in several ways. Their advice is sought on identifying the most appropriate experts for a topic, or to suggest colleagues who may be appropriate experts. They also provide advice on what topics MCERA may wish to consider for media briefings. The MCERA Education Research Advisors have regular, detailed input into various aspects of MCERA's operations and help shape the agenda of MCERA through their detailed knowledge of the sector.

Members who held positions on the MCERA Education Research Advisory Panel in 2020/21:

Associate Professor Catherine Attard
Western Sydney University

Catherine is a Professor in Mathematics Education and Deputy Director of the Centre for Educational Research within the School of Education

Expertise: Primary Mathematics - pedagogy, technology, and engagement; teacher professional learning

Professor Debra Bateman
Flinders University

Dean of Education

Areas of expertise: higher education, futures thinking

Professor Sue Bennett

Secretary of the New South Wales Council of Deans of Education

University of Wollongong

Expertise: Learning design for supporting teachers' educational design practices; sociological perspectives on educational technology investigating young people's creative practices with technology; functional brain imaging and multimedia-based problem solving

Professor Amanda Berry

Monash University

Expertise: STEM Education, Science teacher learning and development, Pedagogical Content Knowledge, Teacher Educator learning and development, Self-study of Teacher Education Practices, Teacher Research

Professor Kim Beswick

University of New South Wales (Sydney)

Director of the Gonski Institute

Expertise: mathematics education

Professor Tracey Bunda

AARE/University of Queensland

Academic Director (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit)

Expertise: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

Professor Lindsey Connor

Flinders University

Dean (People & Resources), College of Education, Psychology and Social Work

Expertise: education systems; education change

Professor Deborah Corrigan

Monash University

Expertise: science; STEM education

Professor Shane Dawson

University of South Australia

Director, Teacher Innovation Unit

Expertise: Learning analytics, educational technology, social network analysis, self-regulated learning, creative capacity, Higher Education

Professor Susan Danby

ARC Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child/QUT

Director

Expertise: Early years language and social interaction, childhood studies, and early literacy

Professor Kalervo Gulson

University of Sydney

Australian Research Council Future Fellow (2019-2022)

Expertise: - Education policy and governance; artificial Intelligence and automated decision-making; race and computation; human geography; science and technology studies

Professor Kathryn Holmes

Western Sydney University

Associate Dean, Research

Expertise: STEM education, teacher education, educational technology, aspirations and student well-being

Associate Professor Scott Imig

University of Newcastle

Expertise: preparation and support of teachers and school leaders; high quality learning environments and coaching; green school environments

Professor Alexander Kostogriz

Monash University

Expertise: Languages, and teaching English as a Second Language

Associate Professor Elspeth McInnes AM

University of South Australia

Expertise: child protection and wellbeing in early childhood education

Professor Julianne Moss

Deakin University

Alfred Deakin Professor and Director, Research for Educational Impact

Expertise: Curriculum theory and change; practitioner inquiry; teacher education and qualitative research methodology (visual methods) with a focus on student diversity

Professor Martin Mills

Director of the Centre for Research on Teachers and Teaching at the Institute of Education, University College London

Past President of Australian Association for Research in Education

Expertise: social justice; pedagogies; school reform; teachers' work; alternative education; gender

Associate Professor Sue Nichols

University of South Australia

Leader, Multiliteracies and Global Englishes Research Group in the Centre for Research in Education at Uni SA

Expertise: literacy; family involvement; practitioner inquiry; inclusive education

Professor Andrea Reupert

Monash University

Expertise: families living with adversity, especially those where a parent has a mental illness

Professor Mary Ryan

Macquarie University

Dean of Education

Expertise: writing pedagogy and assessment, reflective writing, teachers' work and professional learning, the enabling and constraining conditions for graduating students to manage the demands of their profession, and reflexive learning and practice

Professor Pasi Sahlberg

UNSW Sydney

Expertise: International education; educational policy and reform issues; equity in education; school improvement; technology, wellbeing and learning; learning through play

Professor Neil Selwyn

Monash University

Expertise: digital media in everyday life; the sociology of technology (non)use in educational settings

Professor Pat Thompson

University of Nottingham

Expertise: interdisciplinary engagement with questions of creative and socially just learning and change

Professor Helen Watt

University of Sydney

Expertise: Motivation, Occupational choice, STEM engagement and pathways, Gender, Teacher development

Professor Annette Woods

Past President, Australian Association for Research in Education/QUT

Expertise: Literacy; multiliteracies; social justice; curriculum; pedagogy; assessment

MCERA'S FUNDING

MCERA is a not-for-profit registered charity, committed to advancing education by improving the reporting of educational research in the media. To do this we rely on our subscribers and sponsors to support us in this work.

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FINANCIAL REPORT

Media Centre for Education Research Australia

Financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2021

Media Centre for Education Research Australia

ABN: 91 612 123 627

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For the year ended 30 June 2021

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Media Centre for Education Research Australia

ABN: 91 612 123 627 Income

statement

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income		
Government Stimulus	75,614	37,982
Interest received	43	29
Subscriptions	120,000	168,450
Subscriptions (Informed Sources)	1,680	2,180
	197,337	208,641
Expenses		
Bank Charges	39	39
Events and fundraising	310	217
General Expenses	382	300
Insurance	2,534	4,903
Interest	2	0
Marketing and advertising	23	103
Media Monitoring	11,560	6,115
Minor plant and equipment	314	-
Office expenses	2,329	2,274
Recruitment costs	200	-
Repairs & Maintenance	431	-
Salaries and wages (and on-costs) Travelling Expenses	165,157	159,996
Websites	1,496	559
	184,778	175,365
Net profit	12,559	33,276
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	49,164	15,888
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	61,723	49,164

Media Centre for Education Research Australia

ABN: 91 612 123 627

Balance sheet

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Current assets		
Cash at bank	85,822	59,419
Total current assets	85,822	59,419
Total assets	85,822	59,419
Current liabilities		
Sundry creditors	8,578	6,627
GST Paid	3,021	3,629
Income in Advance	12,500	-
Total current liabilities	24,098	10,256
Total liabilities	24,098	10,256
Net assets	61,723	49,164
Equity		
Retained earnings	61,723	49,164
Total equity	61,723	49,164



Education Matters