

early childhood education council of nsw inc

Vol 26 No 1 March 2008

This is the first newsletter of 2008 for the Early Childhood Education Council of NSW. Please refer any comments to the Editor, c/- PO Box 418 Leichhardt NSW 2040 editor@ecec.asn.au

Our Vision

The Early Childhood Education Council of NSW Inc. is a professional association promoting child centred practices through advocacy and professional development, informing on current trends in early childhood education and ensuring a high profile for early childhood issues.



Presidents's Message

I am honoured once again to have been elected President and would like to thank our outgoing committee for all their hard work last year and welcome the new committee for 2008. Some of the 2007 committee have retired from school this year, and will no longer have a role on the committee. We are also losing some of our long-term retirees who without their continued support we would all have had to work a lot harder. They can now use this extra free time and really enjoy their retirement. We have appreciated it immensely. We welcome three new members this year to the committee: Ruth Doyle, Themis Trikilis and Melissa Stock. (There are profiles of our new members later in this newsletter.)

If you feel you would like to be a part of this dedicated group then contact us, as we welcome new members at any time. If you are an advocate for early childhood education and are prepared to give up a few hours of your time once a month to come and enjoy afternoon tea and plan with us, then we would be delighted to hear from you. We are a varied committee with members working in schools across sectors, at universities and in private consultancy. Some of us are

teachers, some are executives in schools, some are consultants, and some are retired. We are all dedicated to the education of young children.

At the Professional Teachers Council awards night, Vilma Fyfe accepted the Minister's Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of ECEC for our voluntary services to quality education and the students of NSW. I am delighted to announce that one of our longest standing members of the committee, Trish Harrington also received an award for her outstanding services to ECEC, from the Minister. Trish was nominated by the committee in recognition of her many, many hours spent as a valued committee member. Congratulations, Trish!

We held a planning day on 4th December, which committee members attended. We have some fabulous professional development planned for 2008. Remember to get in early, as these events are always very popular.

We will continue to be advocates for Early Childhood Education in 2008, and continue to be involved in committees and forums at the NSW Board of Studies, DET and NSW Institute of Teachers.

We welcome your thoughts or ideas on how to best serve your needs and the needs of our students.

This year we will be celebrating our 25th Anniversary. Planning is well underway and we look forward to sharing the celebrations with you and catching up with past committee members. It is also a good time to reflect on the past and to think about future directions for early childhood education. The National Curriculum Standards for early childhood teachers and other burning issues are always on our agenda and we welcome your input.

Hope you had a well-deserved rest and a wonderful holiday, and are looking forward to another great year with ECEC. Welcome back!

Karen Buck
President

ECEC Committee 2008

Following our Annual General Meeting on 13th November 2007, the following members were elected to the committee for 2008:

Executive Committee

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| President | Karen Buck |
| Vice President | Vilma Fyfe |
| Secretary | Kim Dunn* |
| Treasurer | Janelle Ford |

Public officer

Committee

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| Celine Elks | Cheryl Turi |
| Diana Eqbal | Robyn Wild |
| Trish Harrington | Suzanne Ziems |

Kate Highfield

Sara Shehata

New committee members

| | |
|------------|-----------------|
| Ruth Doyle | Themi Trikillis |
|------------|-----------------|

Melissa Stocks

* elected at our first committee meeting

Introducing new committee members:

Ruth Doyle –

Assistant Principal – Bennett Road Public School

In my career as a teacher I have worked in a range of metropolitan locations as well as a short spell in the township of Walgett. I have also held the position of Student Welfare Consultant K – 12 in the former Mt Druitt district which greatly enriched my knowledge and understanding of, and commitment to, the K- 12 continuum of learning. I am responsible for Stage 1 and currently teach a Year 2 class. I enjoy challenging students to develop their thinking skills and to apply them to a wide range of situations. Outside school, I am interested in live theatre and a wide range of music.

Melissa Stock –

After working for ten years in the field of early childhood, I decided I would enjoy the challenge of working with school age children. I completed a Bachelor of Teaching in 2002 followed by a Bachelor of Education in 2004 from The University of New England. I have been at Daceyville Public School for three years and recently completed the accreditation for new teachers. This year I am currently teaching Kindergarten. I am a member of the school council and the student welfare committee. Last year I coordinated Jump Rope for Heart across the school and this year I am developing a 'passive play' area for children who are experiencing difficulty on the playground.

Themi Trikillis –

I currently teach Year 2 at Daceyville Public School. I completed a Bachelor of Education (primary) at Sydney University in 2004. I started teaching at Marrickville Public School for a year in a relieving ESL position where I began to work closely with students from diverse

backgrounds. I developed an interest in restorative practice and integrating creative arts into the curriculum. The following year I moved to Banksmeadow Public School working in boys' education and running a healthy eating program called Munch, Crunch and Read.

ECEC 25th Anniversary Celebration

Thursday 3rd April 2008

PTC Conference Centre,

Leichhardt Public School grounds

101-105 Norton Street Leichhardt.

Time: 5.30—8.00 pm

Cost: \$25.00

RSVP: 19th March 2008

For further information contact:

Suzanne Ziems – 0419 980 880



25th Anniversary Celebration

The Early Childhood Education Council of NSW Inc. has been promoting child centred practices through advocacy and professional development since 1983.

To celebrate this milestone ECEC is holding a special celebration. We are inviting past and present members, friends and supporters to come and share their memories of their involvement with this wonderful professional association.

The evening will be an opportunity to celebrate the work of early childhood

educators in promoting the professional development of teachers in the early years of school. It will also be an opportunity to meet and share memories with past and present colleagues.

All members have been sent an invitation and we hope many will be able to attend. Details can also be found on the ECEC website

www.ecec.asn.au

Science and Technology K - 6 Board of Studies Curriculum Review

The draft writing brief for the new curriculum will be presented to teachers at consultation meetings held between the 5 May and 5 June in regional locations across NSW. Members are encouraged to attend to ensure their viewpoints are included in feedback to the Board.

Professional Workshops Term 4

Two workshops were presented in Term 4 in conjunction with the ECEC Annual General Meeting.

Virginia Fortunat, a teacher at St Gerard's Primary School, presented a workshop on Jigsaw Drama, entitled *Inspiring Interconnectedness through Drama*. She began by explaining what jigsaw drama is...

The co-operative learning strategy "Jigsaw" was developed in the USA, to "facilitate interaction among all children in class, leading them to value each other as contributors to their common task." (Professor Elliott Aronson) It proved to be an effective learning tool at the same time as developing essential social and team building skills.

“Just as in a jigsaw puzzle, each piece, each student’s part, is essential for the completion and full understanding of the final product. If each student’s part is essential, then each student is essential. And that is precisely what makes this strategy so effective.”
(Aronson)

Virginia then explained that children work in groups of three to six to become experts on a particular character, which is based on an overall theme or unit of study. The group members are expected to learn as much as they can about their assigned characters.

The children share ideas and support each other in their learning.



The original group then comes back together to teach each other what they have learned. Each student listens carefully and at the end of the session, all children have a new comprehensive and broad understanding of the character.

A summary of a jigsaw drama session:

1. Divide class into 4-6 member groups; each member is picked to become an expert in a different character/concept as assigned by the teacher.
2. Members of the teams with the same character meet together in the expert group with a variety of resource materials and texts available to explore their character.

3. The children prepare how they will teach the information to others.
4. Everyone returns to the jigsaw teams to teach what they learn to the other members.
5. Team members listen and take notes as their classmate teaches them.
6. Children are given a quiz on the overall character, which has been taught in sections within each jigsaw group.

Then it was our turn.

We divided into small groups of four or five to discuss which character in “The Three Little Pigs” we would become. (The fifth member worked in a hardware shop where the little pigs purchased their building materials.) Then the different characters formed expert groups and decided upon a phrase, which they thought typified their character and which each of them would say when their group’s play was performed. The original groups reformed to discuss how they could present their version of “The Three Little Pigs”. Using mostly mine and only each character’s identical line of text, the groups went into rehearsal.

The different groups watched each other perform, in turn. It was amazing to see just how different each performance was... considering each group had the same story and the same lines of script. We then had a chance to debrief about the differences and similarities between the characters.

Virginia described how our 45-minute experience could take a series of lessons in the classroom and gave us examples of situations around which students could improvise such as:

- The students are lost in a forest and hear a bear coming (have at least one student be the bear).

- Two students have lost their lunch money. They are both very hungry.
- The children can't agree on what movie to go see. Pretend that they are in a line at a movie theatre and let them try to convince each other to watch their choice of the 5 movies.

All of us who attended Virginia's workshop had a great time and experienced the fun of being dramatic. We had been able to experience jigsaw drama for ourselves and realise that we could easily bring this drama into our classroom everyday.

Jenny Walke, a teacher from Gladesville Public School, developed the theme of *Let's Get Creative*. She shared the many classroom activities that she uses to stimulate learning. She believes a child's inherent creativity is an asset that can help children develop confidence and skill across the key learning areas.

Jenny described in detail how art can enrich the class literacy program. She selected children's authors who were also artists such as Eric Carle and Dr Seuss. She used "The Cat in the Hat" to create a red and white classroom with children extending their imagination to think about

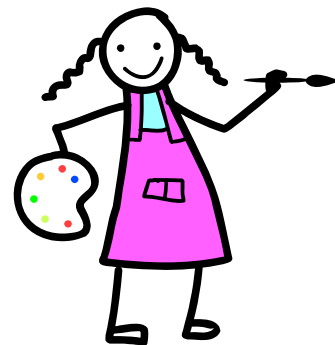
all the things that were red and white. Teaching children to focus on detail in artworks was achieved by cutting up famous artworks into small squares and giving one to each student to replicate.

All the squares were reassembled to produce a new masterpiece. Her teaching strategies have a strong focus on co-operative learning and choice. Talking about their work promotes literacy and enriches their writing.

Even Maths becomes an artistic endeavour where turn-a-round number facts are made into hangings decorated

with the number of feathers to match the two facts it represents. She asked her students to create sculptures to represent multiplication facts as 'groups of'. Students even made their own large addition grids using streamers glued on in a grid pattern and the number facts were recorded in the boxes later.

To encourage skill development Jenny teaches students to use 'feather lines' so they can create an image slowly and not be worried about making the wrong shape. They learn to "feel their way around" and improve their fine motor control as well as confidence. Jenny showed everyone that colourful learning objects can be created by the students themselves. The classroom becomes their learning place and all any teacher needs to do is fill it with boxes of scraps and recycled objects, scissors glue and paint, and then imagine the possibilities.



Summer School 7th-18th January 2008

A fly-on-the-wall view of the Summer School at Wollongong University

In January this year experienced teachers from around Australia spent two weeks of their holidays attending one of the inaugural summer schools, held at Wollongong University. They joined over 1000 other teachers across Australia in a 10-day residential summer school, which aimed to provide high quality professional development.

The previous Australian government promised over \$100 million over four years to the summer schools to provide teachers with opportunities to further enhance their knowledge and skills in one of the five priority areas of literacy and numeracy, English, mathematics, science and Australian history. Those teachers who participated are expected to return to their schools to not only apply their learning to their own work, but also to share their newly acquired knowledge with skills and colleagues.

A consortium made up of Wollongong University, the University of New England, Edith Cowan University and the Australian Literacy Educators' Association provided the literacy and numeracy summer school, which was held at Wollongong University.

The program was designed around four integrated components:

- leading the way in literacy and numeracy
- current research and emergent issues
- school-based project
- leadership for school change.

National and international scholars, including literacy educators Peter Freebody, Len Unsworth and Rob Tierney, and numeracy educators Mike Askew, Doug Clark and Jane Watson, presented keynote addresses.

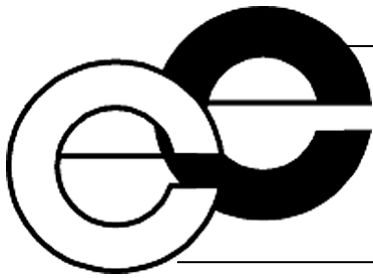
Participants attended modules, which included sessions on: *becoming literate; engaging struggling readers; I hate maths; working mathematically; literacy in the middle years; developing a mental and written computation; effective literacy learning environments; numeracy across the curriculum; numeracy as a social practice; new literacies: new practices.*

The School Based Projects component of the summer school focused on addressing the concept of Action Learning. Participants were supported as they identified and developed a manageable topic, which they will implement at their schools.

After completing the Summer School, teachers will be supported on return to their schools with a facilitated network, web-based environment, which will enable them to continue sharing ideas and materials with each other.

Professional associations and organisations such as The Primary English Teachers Association (PETA), Curriculum Corporation, Learning Federation, Indij Readers, The Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers (AAMT) and the Australian College of Educators, joined the Early Childhood Education Council (ECEC) to showcase publications and professional development opportunities, and to discuss how our organisations can provide teachers with support as they bring about a change in their own schools.





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education council of nsw inc**

CURRENT PUBLICATIONS

ABN: 40 452 650 361 - Not Registered for GST

| Number | Title | | Cost |
|--------|---|---------|------|
| | A Balanced Approach to Literacy | \$10.00 | |
| | Creating an Effective K-2 Learning Environment | \$10.00 | |
| | Developmental Play | \$10.00 | |
| | Fine Motor – Where to now? | \$10.00 | |
| | Higher Order Thinking Skills | \$10.00 | |
| | Kindergarten Orientation Programs – revised edition | \$10.00 | |
| | Patterns and Algebra | \$10.00 | |
| | Transition to School | \$10.00 | |
| | Working Mathematically | \$10.00 | |
| | Literacy ideas for K-2 | \$10.00 | |
| | Special needs students in K-2 classrooms | \$10.00 | |
| | Challenging students in K-3 classrooms | \$10.00 | |
| | Secrets of success in K-2 Classrooms | \$10.00 | |
| | Postage and Handling 1 - 2 booklet | \$ 6.00 | |
| | Postage and Handling 3 - 5 booklets | \$12.00 | |
| | Postage and Handling 6 + booklets | \$15.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | |

To purchase these publications please forward payment with order to
 ECEC Publications Officer
 PO Box 418
 LEICHHARDT NSW 2040

.....
 Please find enclosed a cheque for \$ _____ for the purchase of the above booklets.

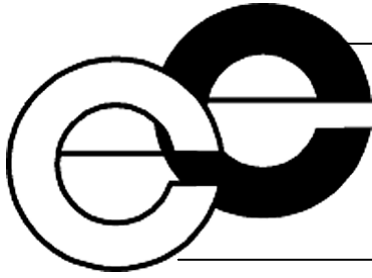
NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CONTACT NUMBERS

(H) _____ (W) _____

(Fax) _____ Email _____



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2008 Membership Form

(Privacy Statement: The data collected is for the purpose of Membership only and will not be disclosed to other parties.)

Please indicate by ticking the appropriate boxes

New **Renewal** **and Membership No.** _____ (Not sure? Then leave blank)

Individual Membership

***Student Membership** *Student No. _____ Institution: _____

Ms/Mrs/Miss/Mr/Dr):- Surname: _____ Given Name: _____

Postal Address: No. _____ Street: _____

Suburb/Town: _____ Postcode: _____ Home Phone: _____

E-mail: _____ Home Fax: _____

School: _____

School Address: _____ Postcode: _____

School Phone: _____ School Fax: _____

School Membership (Remember to complete the contact person's name in the section above.)

School Name: _____

School Address: No. _____ Street: _____

Suburb/Town: _____ Postcode: _____

School Phone: _____ School Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

(Please note school membership will be mailed to school address)

Payment Details

Individual: \$50.00 School: \$100.00 Student: \$10.00

Enclosed is \$ _____ to cover the cost of my/our 2008 membership. (Current to March 2009)

Signature of applicant: _____ Date: _____

Please make cheque payable to ECEC and forward to ECEC, Membership Secretary,
PO Box 418 Leichhardt NSW 2040

OFFICE USE ONLY

Rec: _____ Membership No: _____ Filed: _____

Accepted by the management committee on _____ by _____
(date) (name)