

# ENSEMBLE

## MUSIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA'S SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Volume 4 Number 1, 25 February 2010

- [MUSIC MATTERS: \(3 items\)](#)
- [EVENTS: Making Music Being Well 2010](#)
- [PRIZES & AWARDS: National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education](#)
- [INSURANCE FOR COMMUNITY MUSIC GROUPS: Music in Communities Network](#)
- [COMPETITIONS & CONTESTS: \(3 items\)](#)
- [OPINION: Teaching Music to Very Young Children](#)
- [OPINION: Proportionate Cuts to Arts Education: A Bad Strategy](#)
- [NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE: \(7 items\)](#)
- [CONFERENCES: \(4 items\)](#)
- [REMINDERS](#)
- [ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS](#)

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### MUSIC MATTERS

#### Music education 'vital for children'

All children should learn to read music while they are at school, says Richard Tognetti.

*Nine News, 26 January 2010 (AAP)*

Mr Tognetti, who has been appointed an officer in the Order of Australia (AO), celebrated 20 years as artistic director of the Australian Chamber Orchestra in 2009.

Mr Tognetti says he wishes music was taken more seriously in Australian schools.

"Something like 75 per cent of our kids don't have access to music education," he told AAP.

"They don't have access to instruments, they don't have access to teachers. The level is one of the lowest in the western world."

A good musical education is not just about producing practitioners, Mr Tognetti added, but also good listeners.

"Everyone considers it to be a right as a citizen to be able to read, to write words, in a literary sense," he said.

"And so it should be in a musical sense."

Read more at <http://news.ninensn.com.au/entertainment/1004237/music-education-vital-for-children>

[< top >](#)

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### The research is clear, music education matters, so it's vital there's a place for music in the curriculum

*David Hobson*

We all know that active participation in music from an early age is good for children, but did you know it's been well documented that active participation in music can help children optimise their potential by improving capabilities in a number of essential learning areas – such as reasoning and problem solving, mathematics and language, lateral thinking and memory, time management and eloquence, social and team skills – not to mention the transformative impact music can have on a child for the rest of their life?

Unfortunately, though, not all of our students have the chance to enjoy, and learn from, musical experiences. The 2005 National Review of School Music Education, conducted by a team led by Murdoch University on behalf of the Commonwealth government, found that just 39 per cent of Australian students from Years 1 to 12 studied music in the previous year, with more than 60 per cent of public school students nationwide receiving very little music education.

The research is one thing, but I know from personal experience that every child has musical potential which, if not properly nourished, dies. When that happens, they miss out on a very important slice of their development at all levels – intellectual, creative and emotional.

This is an edited extract from: [http://www.musicaviva.com.au/downloads/Why\\_Music\\_Matters.pdf](http://www.musicaviva.com.au/downloads/Why_Music_Matters.pdf)

David Hobson is one of Australia's most-loved tenors, a composer, the parent of two young children and recently-appointed Ambassador for Musica Viva in Schools.

Find out more about the Musica Viva programs for schools: <http://www.musicaviva.com.au/education/home>

[< top >](#)

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## **Musical Futures and Informal Music Learning in pre-service music education at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music**

*Michael Webb*

I currently lecture in the pre-service music education degree program at Sydney Conservatorium of Music, the University of Sydney. In this brief case study I outline what we've been doing over the last three years in some of the degree subjects I teach at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in the area of informal music learning. I concentrate on challenges we've faced, as well as on some of the successes, both of which are captured in this email I received only several weeks ago from one of my students while on a Professional Experience placement (note the enthusiasm but also the reference to apprehension):

*Hello Michael,*

*[Teaching] Prac is going great! Currently, my Year 10's are working on their Musical Futures project, which so far has run over 3 lessons, and they are loving it, even the ESL students- what a positive response I am getting from them!*

*I am very surprised about how well this is going, as I was a little hesitant about commencing this project. Each lesson, students are quite eager to start, where as a group, they work hard in achieving their goals. Very impressive.*

*Amara*

I came across the Musical Futures website in 2007 and was instantly drawn to the project's scope, emphasis on new dimensions in music learning and teaching, and its rich resources, both philosophical and practical.

Already familiar with Lucy Green's work on informal music learning, I immediately began thinking of ways aspects of informal music learning could be incorporated into the Teaching Music in the Junior Secondary School (TMJSS) Unit, that I was about to co-teach to students in their third year of the Sydney Conservatorium Bachelor of Music (Music Education) degree.

Read more at

[http://www.musicalfutures.org.uk/media/resources/musicalfutures\\_live/documents/resource/27457/Musical%20Future%20Australia%20-%20Informal%20music%20learning%20Case%20Study.docx](http://www.musicalfutures.org.uk/media/resources/musicalfutures_live/documents/resource/27457/Musical%20Future%20Australia%20-%20Informal%20music%20learning%20Case%20Study.docx)

[< top >](#)

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## **EVENTS**

### **Making Music Being Well 2010**

*17-23 May 2010*

An active national celebration of active music making for well-being.

MMBW is a joint initiative between the Australian Music Therapy Association and Music Play for Life. The Making Music Being Well phenomenon celebrates the links between active music making and wellbeing.

Everyone is welcome to register - musicians, teachers, music therapists, community musicians, performers, health workers, community workers, students - just sign up and plan an event!

The last time the initiative ran, in 2008, there were more than 130 events nationwide, involving more than 12,000 people! Celebrations took place in every state and territory: in hospitals, schools, nursing homes, community health centres, community arts spaces, concert halls, markets, churches, universities, parks - anywhere people can make music.

Register before April 30 to receive your promotions pack of great brochures, posters and stickers.

For further information go to <http://www.makingmusicbeingwell.org.au/>

[< top >](#)

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## **PRIZES & AWARDS**

### **2010 National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education**

*Nominations are now invited – closing 16 April 2010*

Up to thirteen awards for excellence and leadership in school music education with a value of \$5,000 will be awarded to teachers and school leaders. The awards will recognise the recipients' exceptional contribution to enhancing the status and quality of music education in their schools.

Up to eleven teachers will receive an Excellence by a Teacher award for their success as teachers in enabling the development of new musical understandings that build on and enrich students' knowledge and skill in music;

Up to two school leaders will receive an Excellence by a School Leader award for their catalytic and inspiring support for music education as an essential element in the life of their school and its community

Nominators and intending nominees should refer to the Guidelines for Nomination and Nomination Form for detailed information. Nominations close on Friday, 16th April, 2010.

Full details at: <http://musicawards.asme.edu.au/scripts/index.php>

[< top >](#)

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## **INSURANCE FOR COMMUNITY MUSIC GROUPS.**

### **Music in Communities Network**

Are you involved in a community choir, band, orchestra or some other form of community music group? Do you want cheaper public liability and accident insurance for your group?

Through its Music in Communities Network, Music Play for Life is investigating a discounted public liability & accident insurance scheme for community music groups.

At this stage, they need to determine the level of demand and the types of activities for which groups need coverage, so they have come up with a simple survey which will help with their negotiations.

You don't have to be a current member of the Music in Communities Network to complete the survey. However, any scheme which arises from our negotiations will be administered through the Network.

Complete the survey: <https://www.computerjazz.net/secure/1/mic-insurance>

[< top >](#)

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## COMPETITIONS & CONTESTS

### Global Anti-Corruption Youth Music Competition

This competition is open to all musicians under 35 years of age, from any country.

Jeunesses Musicales International (JMI) and the World Bank Institute announce the launch on 1 February 2010 of Fair Play - Anti-Corruption Youth Voices, a global competition for original songs by young musicians on the theme of anti-corruption and good governance.

The competition is an initiative of the Global Anti-Corruption Youth Network, a worldwide network of civil society organizations with the specific agenda of fighting corruption. Winners of Fair Play - Anti-Corruption Youth Voices will be invited to perform at the group's international summit Spring 2010 in Brussels, Belgium.

"This is not an idol search like most music competitions targeting youth today," says project coordinator Kate Declerck "this is a call for young musicians to join the global anti-corruption youth movement, and ensure that their messages are heard by the global community."

Read more at: <http://www.jmi.net/newsletter/newsletter.php?nr=59>

[< top >](#)

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### Melbourne Prize for Music 2010

The Melbourne Prize for Music and Awards will be launched in the first half of 2010

The key dates for 2010 will be published shortly on the Website along with the entry form as soon as this is available for release.

With a total prize pool over \$100,000 the Melbourne Prize for Music 2010 and Awards is one of the most valuable music prizes in Australia.

Open to Victorian musicians, across all musical genres, it will recognise and reward excellence and talent in music.

To request an Entry Form, please email your contact details to [enquire@melbourneprizetrust.org](mailto:enquire@melbourneprizetrust.org)

Further information on the website: <http://www.melbourneprizetrust.org/annualprizes2.html>

[< top >](#)

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### Loss of Rock Eisteddfod a 'disgrace'

*ABC News, 9 February 2010*

The annual schools' Rock Eisteddfod Challenge has been cancelled across Australia due to a lack of sponsorship and support.

The event has been axed after three decades because reduced support was pushing ticket prices ever higher. Organisers say it was getting beyond the budgets of some families.

Rock Eisteddfod executive producer Peter Sjoquist says South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania, the ACT and New South Wales had reduced their support, with Queensland the only state offering more.

Mr Sjoquist says it had been costing \$4 million to stage the schools performance event.

"This has been 30 years, over one million students participated in the event, so we're very disappointed," he said. "The event has such a depth in the community, it's community building and we're just devastated."

The Eisteddfod was still getting a federal contribution.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/02/09/2813927.htm>

Listen to organiser Peter Sjoquist explain: <http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/news/audio/audio/201002/20100209-sa-rock.mp3>

[< top >](#)

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## OPINION

### Teaching Music to Very Young Children

The Importance of Parental Involvement in Kids' Music Lessons

*Cheryl Metzger, Suite 101.com. 1 December 2009*

Many parents wonder if their pre-schooler can handle music lessons. The answer is yes, with a little bit of parental guidance.

It happens all the time. Parents hear their four-year-old carefully picking out songs on a toy (or real!) piano, or see him making new rhythms with the help of a spatula and some pots and pans. The question arises: is it too early to enroll a child this young in music lessons?

If the child can concentrate for a half hour period, it is never too young to start music lessons. Preschool age children are soaking in everything from the world around them. This is the best time to introduce new sounds, rhythms and musical sensitivity. Music stimulates areas of a child's brain that other mental and physical activity will not, and it will make a lasting impression.

Parents must keep in mind though that they are a necessity in their child's development process! A four-year-old is only going to remember the music lesson for maybe five minutes after it's over. It's the parents' job to get lesson notes from the teacher, and then follow through with them during the period before the next lesson, making sure the young child practices what the teacher said in the correct way.

Read entire article at:

[http://musicappreciation.suite101.com/article.cfm/teaching\\_music\\_to\\_very\\_young\\_children#ixzz0fg1BayTR](http://musicappreciation.suite101.com/article.cfm/teaching_music_to_very_young_children#ixzz0fg1BayTR)

[< top >](#)

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### Proportionate Cuts to Arts Education: A Bad Strategy

*Richard Kessler, Arts Journal, February 2010*

Every once in a while I like to use a somewhat elliptical title. Today is a prime example. Some of you got it immediately, others were thinking "huh?"

So, let me explain.

Word is coming from all over the country about deep cuts to arts education. Some describe "blood on the floor." A fair number of people have been talking about fighting to ensure that the arts are not cut on a basis disproportionate to other subjects.

This has been explicitly stated as the approach of the NYCDOE (in theory at least, since the principals can do whatever they please), and I have seen it on press releases coming out of other regions. The strategy seeks to establish some sort of fairness doctrine.

The problem here is that some subjects, like the arts and physical education, in urban school districts in particular, have been so overwhelmed by other interests for so many years that the proportionate cuts strategy will leave our children with very, very little at the end of the day.

Read more at <http://www.artsjournal.com/dewey21c/2010/02/proportionate-cuts-to-arts-edu.html>

[< top >](#)

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## NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

### **Bach to basics regime deters school troublemakers**

*Guardian (UK), 18 January 2010 (Press Association)*

Classical music is behind a Derby school's success in cutting the number of pupils behaving badly by more than half, a head teacher said today. Brian Walker, principal at West Park School in Spondon, Derby, turned to Mozart, Verdi and Bach as he tried to tame unruly students.

Youngsters at other schools might expect lines or a 30-minute detention, but those caught breaking the rules at West Park have to sit in silence for an hour listening to classical music on a Friday evening.

They are then subjected to a maths DVD before spending a final half hour writing up what they have learned. Badly behaved pupils are also named and shamed with their pictures plastered on video screens in the school.

The "Bach to Basics" regime, it has seen the number of pupils in trouble drop by 50%. In 2006, up to 60 pupils were missing lessons because of bad behaviour. Now, only around 20 find themselves in trouble regularly.

Read entire article: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/jan/18/classical-music-deterrent-schools>

[< top >](#)

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### **Oklahoma music classes not in tune**

*Susan Simpson, NewsOK, 20 January 2010*

A report on music programs in Oklahoma public schools shows widespread access, but the types and number of courses vary greatly among districts.

The report was commissioned by the Kirkpatrick Foundation to evaluate music offerings around the state. Foundation Executive Director Susan McCalmont said quality music programs spur creativity and innovation in students, and that can help the state's economy and way of life.

"We see a lot happening with the music industry in Oklahoma," she said. "If we are serious about creating a music industry we need to look at the access and quality issues in education."

Read more:

[http://www.newsok.com/article/3433302?searched=%22We%20see%20a%20lot%20happening%20with%20the%20music%20industry%20in%20Oklahoma%22&custom\\_click=search#ixzz0gY05KSGK](http://www.newsok.com/article/3433302?searched=%22We%20see%20a%20lot%20happening%20with%20the%20music%20industry%20in%20Oklahoma%22&custom_click=search#ixzz0gY05KSGK)

[< top >](#)

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### **The iPad in Music Education - First Impressions**

*Dr James Frankel, Music Technology in Education, 30 January 2010*

Well by now you have no doubt heard of the game-changing device from Apple called the iPad. As a huge fan of Apple products, I am always swept up in the frenzy over a major new product release, and the iPad is certainly something I would like to have in my ever growing collection of gadgets.

While walking my dog in the woods this morning I thought about how the iPad could fit into music education, and education in general.

Here are my first impressions: while certainly very cool, it's not quite ready for widespread adoption in K-12 education. However, the day when devices such as the iPad will become the norm in classrooms is not that far off.

The iPad has some wonderful features: multi-touch 10" screen, iBookstore, enhanced app experience, 10 hour battery life, and optional built-in wifi. It also has some serious shortcomings: no USB port, no Flash support, no third-party application support (you can't run Sibelius, Finale, or even GarageBand), and the usual closed Apple platform (it's either Apple's way or you hack).

The iPad is basically an iPod Touch on steroids, but it is not quite the device that I was hoping for in terms of education.

Read more at <http://jamesfrankel.musiced.net/2010/01/30/the-ipad-in-music-education-first-impressions/>

[< top >](#)

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## **Focus on test scores must not remove music from young children**

*Dr Phillip Fried, New York Times (USA), 5 February 2010*

With all the scientific literature supporting the arts as part of American education why do administrators continue to, or try to, cut elementary music programs?

1. Short term gains and no oversight. Principals' jobs are on the line. Though NCLB fully supports the arts as part of a long term education, Principals are being held accountable for test scores now. They are not held accountable for cancelling music programs. The easy choice is to prioritise the academics and throw out the arts.
2. The belief that the arts, or some of the arts, don't require specialists: the arts can be fully addressed by the classroom teachers with no reduction of quality. Though the State has Arts standards it does not specify who assesses them. Nor is there any penalty if they are not met. This is wrong. We know better.
3. Space. Older dedicated music rooms can be large and flexible as well as sound proof. This makes them extremely desirable teaching spaces and many of these music spaces have been re assigned to other uses. This is while instrumental music and some vocal programs with hundreds of students are taught in hallways, closets, cafeterias, and small offices The lack of acceptable music teaching space leads to several other problems including; conflicts with classroom teachers as we create too much sound for them to teach....

Because No Child Left Behind has no penalties for schools that drop arts programs they have become expendable. On the other hand there are severe penalties for principals and school districts if they don't make their AYP now. This means that arts teachers (Phi Ed too) can't directly help a principal keep their jobs no matter how good we are.

Read comments in full:

<http://community.nytimes.com/comments/www.nytimes.com/2010/02/05/opinion/05fri1.html?sort=highlights&scp=28&sq=music%20education&st=cse>

[< top >](#)

---

## **Maria Joao Pires: helping disadvantaged children through music**

The outspoken pianist is giving up concert life for good to help the children of Brazil

*Geoff Brown, the Times, 5 February 2010*

After a Japanese tour in 2011, this most poetic and searching of pianists plans to stop all concert work. There's no question, though, about how she would spend most of her time. It would be on educational community work...

The passion climaxed in 1999, when she opened the Belgais Centre for the Study of Arts on 450 remote rural acres in Portugal. Musical activities mingled with classes for underprivileged children — a timetable of instrumental workshops, experimental artistic fusions, baking bread, making olive oil and milking goats.

Her new home was chosen mostly by chance. She had friends in Brazil and discovered "a little house, near the sea, nice place, simple", north of Salvador, in the state of Bahia. "...but Bahia and Salvador have so much misery, and I

don't find real happiness where so many human rights are missing. And that's also one of the reasons I like to work there."

She has plans for a new educational project, quirkier and more holistic than the famous Venezuelan music education system associated with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra.

Read entire article: [http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts\\_and\\_entertainment/music/article7015482.ece](http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/music/article7015482.ece)

[< top >](#)

---

### **Blur beat Mozart in IQ music chart**

*Gillian Passmore, the Times (UK), 7 February 2010*

A study found that children's brainpower is boosted more by music they like than by apparently more complex classical music.

Susan Hallam, of London University's Institute of Education, and Glenn Schellenberg of Toronto University tested 8,000 10- 11-year-old children by playing them 10 minutes each of Albarn's band Blur, Mozart and Hallam's voice. The children then performed spatial reasoning tests.

Hallam and Schellenberg concluded there was no scientific basis for the so-called "Mozart effect" and that the pupils performed slightly better after listening to Blur's songs. Hallam's voice was the least beneficial. Proponents of the Mozart effect, first identified in a study in 1993, claim that music by classical composers can improve children's cognitive skills because of its complexity.

Hallam said: "I don't think there is a Mozart effect, it's completely untenable. It's nothing to do with Mozart, it's totally to do with your arousal levels and how much you concentrate."

Read entire article: [http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts\\_and\\_entertainment/music/article7017902.ece](http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/music/article7017902.ece)

[< top >](#)

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### **Disharmony in state orchestra**

Management confiscates players' instruments over dispute!

*Christina Chin, the Star (Malaysia), 11 February 2010*

A simmering feud between senior members of the Penang State Symphony Orchestra and Chorus (Pessoc) and its new board reached a crescendo when Pessoc officials went to the musicians' homes and took back musical instruments they have been using for years.

The members, already unhappy with the board for cancelling the annual Pesta Music Camp and Concert last year, said Pessoc officials came to their homes to take back the instruments they had had for years.

It is learnt that the senior members were also unhappy at being asked to re-fill application forms as part of the board's restructuring exercise.

Bassoonist Khoo Swee Hong claimed that a Pessoc administrator visited her home as well as the homes of two other senior members. "The bassoon has been with me since 1995 so I don't understand why they suddenly want it back..."

Read entire article: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2010/2/11/nation/5651866&sec=nation>

[< top >](#)

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## **CONFERENCES**

### **Musikmesse Frankfurt**

24-27 March 2010 - Frankfurt am Main, Germany

Musikmesse Frankfurt is the International Fair for Musical Instruments, Sheet Music, Music Production and Music Business Connections

Here you will find a complete range of products with everything required for making music, not to mention innumerable workshops, concerts, demonstrations and discussion events.

<http://musik.messefrankfurt.com/frankfurt/en/besucher/willkommen/erleben.html>

[< top >](#)

---

## **Living Music and Dance (LMD)**

### **Victorian Orff Schulwerk Association**

*7-8 May 2010: Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre, Preston, Victoria*

A conference of creative music and movement for teaching professionals of any age group, community musicians and interested community members, and anyone who loves music!

Each day begins and ends with an All In session (some regard these as the highlight of the day!). Our key presenters will set the scene daily with exciting music and dance. Participants will then choose from a wide variety of vocal, instrumental and movement sessions. Electives will be offered on a wide range of topics.

Further information, registration etc: <http://www.vosa.org/events/?do=eventView&action=detailed&ID=159>

[< top >](#)

---

## **International Society of Music Educators (ISME) World Conference 2010**

*1-6 August 2010: China National Convention Centre, Beijing, China*

For full details go to the Conference Website: <http://www.isme.org/2010/>

[< top >](#)

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## **“Music Matters”**

### **Kodaly Music Education Institute of Australia National Conference 2010**

*26-29 September 2010: Caulfield Grammar School, Glen Eira Road, East St Kilda, Victoria*

This year's national conference features these outstanding international presenters (and much, much more):

- Fernando Malvar-Ruiz (USA) Choral specialist and director of the American Boy Choir.
- Géza Szilvay (Finland) Acclaimed string pedagogue. Author of the Colour Strings method.

Further details, registration etc: [http://www.kodaly.org.au/index.php?option=com\\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=61](http://www.kodaly.org.au/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=61)

[< top >](#)

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## **REMINDERS**

24-27 March 2010 - Musikmesse Frankfurt - Frankfurt am Main, Germany -

<http://musik.messefrankfurt.com/frankfurt/en/besucher/willkommen/erleben.html>

[< top >](#)

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## ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

- Australian Education Digest : <http://www.acsso.org.au/australian-education-digest/> (weekly)
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- International News Roundup : <http://www.acsso.org.au/roundup/> (monthly)
- Values Education : <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/news.htm> (monthly)
- Languages Education : <http://www.languageseducation.com/news.htm> (monthly)
- Ensemble - Music Education : <http://www.ensemble.org.au/news.htm> (monthly)
- Family School Partners : <http://www.familyschool.org.au/news/> (monthly)
- Public Education Voice : <http://www.acsso.org.au/public-education-voice> (quarterly)

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