

Values Education School Forum reports from ACT – November 2006

ACT schools have adopted a variety of approaches to the delivery of their forums, including:

- presentations, followed by discussion groups facilitated by students
- school community expos, with displays addressing various values issues and showcasing student-designed displays, performances and presentations
- student-facilitated discussions and sharing with the school community.

Burgmann Anglican School has drawn on whole-school professional learning and key understandings from the work of Neil Hawkes to hold a forum titled *Conversations across Generations*. Parents, grandparents and other community members were invited to analyse the values that were of particular importance and relevance to them.

After whole-school professional learning, **Melrose Primary School** implemented an ongoing programme of self-assessment with its community. This involved surveying the community and developing action plans.

At **Melba High School** curriculum officers presented to students the current context of values education and why values were important to understand and practise. The school then held a highly successful values forum – embedding it in the Year 9 Exhibitions program – where students assessed the values that underpinned a variety of issues. The culminating event of the project was a showcase and forum attended by approximately 300 people where students' work was on view and the Melba High School values banners were unveiled.

Gilmore Primary School adopted a whole-school approach to implementing its values forum and taught explicit values lessons through the school's learning journey program. The essence of the forum was captured by teacher Ms Heather Hill, who wrote in her evaluation of the forum that:

The Forum is over but Values Education continues. As a whole school we have discovered a life long journey about sharing what is important to us as a community and our school now has a raised awareness of our values system. We are now sharing a common language and understanding about how values are embedded in our every day interactions and teaching.

Listed below are other examples of school forums that have recently been held in the ACT.

- **Campbell High School** held a World Café with a values conversation with its community members as the focus.
- **Canberra Grammar School** held a RaVE (Religious and Values Education) forum for students and parents.
- **Chisholm Primary School** held a combination of events, one being a parent evening about Circle Time.

- **Marist College Canberra** has used its MATES Community Service Program to raise awareness of service-learning through its forum.
- **Rivett Primary School** has embedded Philosophy in the Classroom as the basis of its forum.
- **Southern Cross Primary School** held a successful multi-faceted approach to embedding values education into its curriculum. Parents were involved at all stages.
- **Sts Peter and Paul Primary School** has developed a peer education program to deliver its values education forum through building resilience among its community using the Rock and Water program.
- **St Thomas the Apostle Primary School** focused on assessing the values that underpinned its school prayer and after community consultation through its forum rewrote the prayer.