



WELCOME



As we begin another school year many school boards/ councils will be getting ready for their Annual General Meeting. The importance of ensuring that our schools have the requisite skills cannot be underestimated in

the regulatory and financial landscape of independent schooling in Australia. Governance training for board members is now a legal requirement in at least one State and others are likely to follow. It is also important to try to recruit members who are not existing parents in the school to ensure

a wider perspective. Grandparents, retired accountants and lawyers all make good board members.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at our Leadership Network Meetings, which will be held in each State in March this year. At this time we can update you with our events and also listen to your needs as well as give you an opportunity to chat with leaders from other Montessori schools.

Christine Harrison
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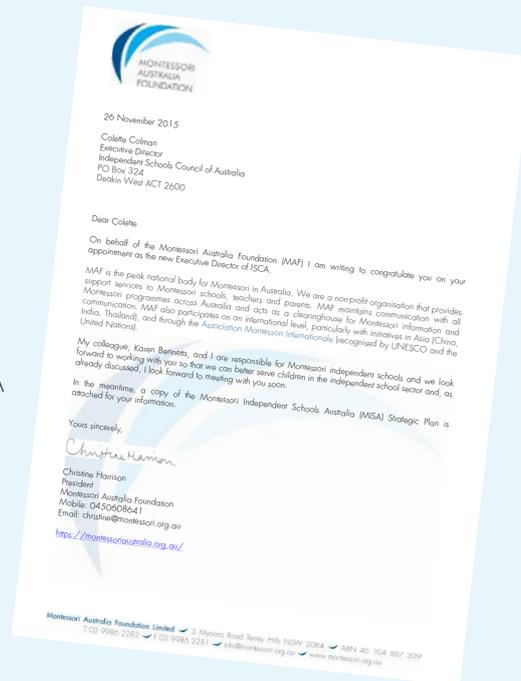
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ISCA email

The Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) represents the interests of the Independent school sector at the federal level. MAF participates in ISCA's National Consultative Group meetings, which provide the independent school sector with an update on the political environment, funding arrangements, relevant White Papers, current issues in education, and the work of other significant organisations such as ACARA and AITSL.

The Chair of ISCA, Mr Warwick Dean, recently announced the appointment of Ms Colette Colman to the position of Executive Director of ISCA. Colette has been acting in this position since July 2015. She has had extensive experience in the development of education policy for both the Commonwealth Government and the Independent school sector for some 23 years. Colette has been with ISCA for over seven years, most recently as Deputy Executive Director (Research).



MAF sent a letter of congratulations to Colette on her appointment. Colette's response is included here:

Dear Christine

Thank you so much for your letter. It's very much appreciated.

Montessori Schools are a key reason why the Independent sector can claim to incorporate schools which offer parents and children real choice and diversity in school options. I've been lucky enough to visit a few Montessori schools and am always impressed at the engagement, joy and confidence of the students.

I'm thrilled that ISCA can continue to work closely with MAF and look forward to our ongoing liaison into the future.

Kind regards,
Colette

Colette Colman
Executive Director
Independent Schools Council
of Australia – The peak national body
for the independent schools sector

Leadership Network Meetings

MAF's annual Consultation Forums will be replaced by new events in March this year. Stakeholder feedback suggested a lower cost, more streamlined event would be appreciated by attendees. Accordingly, in 2016, MAF is pleased to announce a series of Leadership Network Meetings across Australia, in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. Each Leadership Network Meeting will be held at a local Montessori school and include a network meeting followed by nibbles and drinks.

The Leadership Network Meetings are specifically designed for Montessori board members, heads of schools, business managers, other Montessori school leaders, aspiring Montessori leaders and educational leaders from the wider community. The focus of these meetings is strategy and networking.

Participant outcomes include:

- Connection with Montessori board members, heads of schools, business managers, other Montessori school leaders, aspiring Montessori leaders and educational leaders from the wider community.
- Opportunity to voice and discuss key issues and explore potential solutions.
- Awareness of recent milestones for the Montessori movement in Australia and internationally.

\$30.00 MAF Subscribers
\$40.00 Non-Subscribers

Dates and venues can be confirmed on MAF's 2016 Event Calendar included with this issue.

Did you know?

Each state and territory has an association of independent schools that conducts complimentary or low fee governance training for school board members. Make the most of the money your school pays to your state association by ensuring all your board members are trained. The state associations are:

AISNSW: <http://www.aisnsw.edu.au>

ISV: <http://www.is.vic.edu.au>

ISQ: <http://www.isq.qld.edu.au>

AISSA: <http://www.ais.sa.edu.au>

AISWA: <http://www.ais.wa.edu.au>

IST: <http://www.independentschools.tas.edu.au>




MONTESSORI INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS NATIONAL SUMMIT
 Wednesday, 31 August to Friday, 2 September 2016

Save the date ...
Uluru, Northern Territory

This extraordinary summit places the needs and aspirations of the leaders of Australia's Montessori community front and centre, and at the red heart of the Australian continent, Uluru. Focused upon the shared and local challenges of leadership, in this unprecedented period of reflection in education, this retreat will provide a unique opportunity to network and learn from Montessori school leaders and business managers from around Australia.

Drawing from the 2014-2016 Montessori Independent Schools Australia strategic plan and review process, we will collectively determine future directions for the Montessori Independent Schools sector addressing key issues such as leadership development, MAF training, financial resilience, marketing, governance and MAF services. The summit is open to Heads of Schools, Business Managers, other school leadership staff and school board members. We hope that every school will be represented so that future directions will reflect the collective agreement of the entire community.

Summit Venue: Sails in the Desert, Desert Garden Hotel
Accommodation: Sails in the Desert, Desert Garden Hotel or Emu Walk Apartments
Summit Cost: MAF Subscribers \$600, Non Subscribers \$880

Includes Welcome Reception and 'Sounds of Silence' Dinner

Registration: montessoriaustralia.org.au/events/2016-events

National Summit

Do you want to influence the direction of Montessori Independent Schooling in Australia?

The National Summit may be the most significant event MAF has ever hosted for its independent schools. It will mark a new phase in the history of Montessori in Australia wherein MAF and Montessori independent schools will collectively determine future directions for the Montessori sector. Significant decisions which will impact your school are going to be made during the event. Key issues such as governance, leadership development, financial resilience, marketing, trained staff and MAF services will be addressed and action taken. It is very important that at least one representative from your school attends, ideally your Board Chair, Principal and Business Manager.

Join us for this unique and ground breaking event on:

Wed 31 Aug – Fri 2 Sep, 2016
Sails in the Desert, Uluru

MAF Subscribers \$660
Non-Subscribers \$880

Montessori Boards seeking confidential support are advised to contact:

CHRISTINE HARRISON – Managing Director,
 Montessori Schools and Centres Australia
christine@montessori.org.au

KAREN BENNETTS – Senior Consultant,
 Montessori Independent Schools Australia
karen@montessori.org.au

feature school

MARGARET RIVER MONTESSORI SCHOOL



Effective and Positive Principal Evaluation

With the newly appointed Principal, Lisa Fenton, on board it was crucial that the School Council of Margaret River Montessori School ensured its Principal Performance Evaluation process was both as effective and substantial as it could be. Lisa writes about how positive and encouraging this experience was for her.



Lisa and some of the children from Margaret River Montessori School

All Principals out there can surely relate to the baptism of fire that their first year in the job feels like. Having a supportive board was necessary to me not only surviving the year but also to it being a successful experience for the school community.

However, one essential fact ensured the successful induction of a new principal, and that was that the board was fully aware that performance management does not just occur once a year but is an ongoing process focussed on development, not on judgement.

It was helpful taking on a role that was clearly defined in a school where the separation of governance and management was clear and well understood by all board members. The Strategic Plan was set and strong and gave me clear direction.

In addition our School Council Chairperson, then Lauren Beetson who handed over to

Frank Pethica, both met with me fortnightly to discuss board matters. As a new Principal this open line of communication was vital and ensures the success of our ongoing professional relationship.

At all points in the year I was very aware of the formal performance evaluation process that would be undertaken for my role. The criteria were communicated to me early on and there was plenty of opportunity for self-reflection along the way.

Frank, along with School Council vice Chairperson, Charity Coffman, consulted with previous Chair, Lauren, to ensure the process was rigorous. They met regularly to compare their individual evaluations and then brought those together with my self-evaluation.

The final process was an open and candid face to face discussion about specific and realistic goals that were born out of the above combinations.

Overall it was a very positive experience and provided me with a good measure of 'pat on the back' plus clear goals for my second year in the role.

Our next step is to review the process and documentation to ensure we are completely aligned with the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Australian Professional Standard for Principals and the Leadership Profiles. We are also investigating processes used by the British Council who are recognised for best practice in the area of performance management.

UPDATES

For a copy of all MAF updates sent to schools go to
<https://www.montessori.org.au/updates>

MAF EVENTS

Many MAF Events may be of interest to Board members.

A full list of events on offer can be found at <https://montessoriaustralia.org.au/events/2016-events>

Date	Place	Event
27 February 5 March 28 May	Melbourne Brisbane Sydney	READY FOR READING WORKSHOP 3-6 – PAMELA NUNN \$180 subscribers, \$240 non-subscribers
3 March 7 March 8 March 9 March 10 March	Perth Brisbane Sydney Melbourne Adelaide	MONTESSORI LEADERSHIP NETWORK MEETING \$30 subscribers, \$40 non-subscribers
18-20 March	Brisbane	MONTESSORI EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE CONFERENCE THE FUTURE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION \$480 subscribers, \$640 non-subscribers
29-30 April	Melbourne	MONTESSORI IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FORUM \$180 subscribers, \$240 non-subscribers
14 May 18 May 20 May 23 May 25 May	Perth Adelaide Brisbane Sydney Melbourne	WORKSHOP – MENTORING \$180 subscribers, \$240 non-subscribers
14 May 15 May 17 & 19 May 24 September 1 October	Melbourne Brisbane Sydney Adelaide Perth	SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE WORKSHOP 0-3 – SARA BRADY \$180 subscribers, \$240 non-subscribers
21 May	Sydney	NSW AIS GOVERNANCE WORKSHOP \$TBA
10-11 June	Sydney	MONTESSORI WHOLE SCHOOL REFRESHER CREATIVITY AT THE CORE \$570 subscribers, \$760 non-subscribers
15 & 16 July 29 & 30 July 12 & 13 August 26 & 27 August	Perth Adelaide Melbourne Brisbane	MATHEMATICS WORKSHOP 6-12 – PETER ERSKINE \$270 subscribers, \$360 non-subscribers
19 August	Melbourne	PRACTICAL LIFE WORKSHOP – AMY KIRKHAM \$90 subscribers, \$120 non-subscribers
20 August	Sydney	ENCOURAGING CREATIVE WRITTEN EXPRESSION WORKSHOP – FIONA MACKENZIE \$180 subscribers, \$240 non-subscribers
31 August to 2 September	Uluru	MONTESSORI NATIONAL SUMMIT \$660 subscribers, \$880 non-subscribers
6-9 October	Melbourne	MEETING IN THE MIDDLE \$270 subscribers, \$360 non-subscribers
11 October	Melbourne	BUSINESS MANAGERS FORUM \$180 subscribers, \$240 non-subscribers
18 October	Brisbane	MONTESSORI ECEC CENTRE DIRECTORS FORUM \$270 subscribers, \$360 non-subscribers

