EDITORIAL

Graeme Perry

Looking into their eyes as you grasp your student's attention have your thoughts drifted to imagine what threatens that attention span? Understanding what is trending in your students' minds (2023 cf. 2022) is an essential component of preparation for effective teaching. In the Australian context, the ranking of the most important issues for students is shifting. The importance of the environment is decreasing (44% cf. 51% in 2022), financial and economic issues increasing (31%, cf. 22%), while equity and discrimination (31%, cf. 36%) and mental health (30% cf. 34%) are of slightly less concern (Mission Australia, 2023, p. 5), responses to the inflationary monetary period and lower covid anxieties. At a personal level, the biggest challenges related to school (49% - workload, academic pressure, poor teacher relationships and difficulty learning), mental health (24% - stress, anxiety, depression, diagnosed disorders or self-harm), and relationships (21% - with family, friends and significant others over lack of support, abuse or due to death) (p. 6). Particularly disturbing however is that "1 in 3 young people said nothing more could help, or they were unsure what could help with their challenges, indicating there is an opportunity to improve awareness of supports available to them" (p. 6). Fortunately, this report includes informed, commended, suggestions to support educators in addressing some of these issues impacting wellbeing and consequently learning.

In seeking student attention and creating the learning context and content for class did you involve AI processes? The last editorial noted differences in the approach of systems to AI involvement in schooling. The recent release of the Australian Framework for Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Schools by the National AI in Schools Taskforce (NAIIST, 2023) addresses three support goals: Education outcomes, ethical practices and both equity and inclusion. It enunciates 6 interconnected principles within: Learning and Teaching, Human and Social Wellbeing, Transparency, Fairness, Accountability and Privacy Security and Safety and develops 25 guiding statements across them (p. 4). Demands for use (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2023), permission to use (Cassidy, 2023), policies to guide use (NAIIST, 2023), do not readily help a teacher envision the application of AI within their own classroom. Time author Olivia Waxman (2024) provides an eight-minute read of applications by 'early adopters' in the US but also measured perspectives from 'doubters'. Educational Services Australia (2023) provides an exhaustive global context within which local developments are emerging and some local resourcing, but little practical pedagogical help. This pedagogical gap is also missing from online sources but provides a creative opportunity for educators. Henebery (2024) offers recent observations of teachers, including that "85% said it [AI] will never replace educators themselves" (para. 5). This technological innovation will be best addressed by distributed leadership characterised by "the 6Es: Engage, Enable, Enact, Encourage, Evaluate and Emergent" (Harvey & Jones, 2023) supporting teachers in their roles.

Do you (still) aspire to being a phenomenal teacher? In a research presentation for optimising the educational outcomes for students from Pacific Islander, Maori heritages and potentially First Nations students, researchers identified ten habits of phenomenal educators (Chu-Fuluifaga & Ikiua-Pasi, 2021). Of these ten, culturally sensitive relationships that support student wellbeing was supported as the take-out message, one I judge applies to teachers at earlier levels of education even more importantly. This issue of TEACH invites you to prioritise appropriate relationship-building with individuals to support each student's wellbeing, enhancing learning capability. Be phenomenal. TEACH

> *the ranking of the most important issues for students is shifting*

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[Photography: Glenys Perry]

Mountain View Adventist College (MVAC) Technological and Applied Studies class. Photo: MVAC image files.

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