



EDUCATION AUSTRALIA

ONE STUDENT AT A TIME IN  
A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

**SMALL SCHOOLS BY DESIGN**

# A Big Breakthrough

## ANNUAL REPORT 2010

Big Picture Education Australia

**A SNAPSHOT OF THE WORK OF BIG PICTURE EDUCATION AUSTRALIA IN 2010**

*"Last year I really did not like school at all. I'd have a couple of weeks off because I just couldn't do it. This year I've had hardly any days off. And I want to come to school. I find myself in my spare time working towards doing my work. Last year there's no way that would have happened."*

**Imogene, Ogilvie Girls High School**



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*"I was a naughty kid. My parents were always getting phone calls. But now I've gone two years without any phone calls at all, or if there are phone calls - they're good ones!"*

**James, Montrose Bay  
Big Picture School**



## BREAKTHROUGH YEARS

2010 proved to be a breakthrough year for Big Picture Education Australia.

Greenfield and Conversion Big Picture schools opened their doors to young people around Australia.

More and more schools, teachers, systems and academics are coming aboard and being inspired by our approach to public education.

Our funders are seeing their valued investments have a real impact on the lives of young Australian people.

*"Big Picture's changed a lot for me... now I'm doing heaps and heaps of work!"*

**Sarah, Ogilvie Girls High School, Tasmania**



## WHO WE ARE

Big Picture Education Australia (BPEA) is a non-profit company aiming to stimulate vital changes to Australian education by starting innovative and successful schools and changing the conversation around education. We want to make schools better. Our philosophy is grounded in educating "one student at a time".

We promote the creation of personalised education programs that are unique for each student. BPEA believes that too many of our young people are failing in our schools. This is because for too many of them school is not relevant to their lives and needs and they do not become engaged in learning.

**We want to make vital changes in education by generating and sustaining innovative, personalised schools that work with the real world of their greater communities.**

# BIG PICTURE SCHOOL DISTINGUISHERS

All Big Picture Schools share common characteristics that are called 'distinguishers' (or principles). The distinguishers that follow exist as a comprehensive whole. They are interrelated and inform one another. Consequently, no distinguisher is more important than another and none work in isolation. It is the combination of the distinguishers, the degree to which Big Picture schools employ them, and the intensive conversations of reflection and action that results in the powerful success of the model.

The distinguishers are:

## 1. Academic rigour: 'Head, heart and hand'

Powerful learning goals are set for each student:

- Quantitative Reasoning
- Empirical Reasoning
- Social Reasoning
- Communication skills
- Improving Personal Qualities

## 2. Learning in the community

We use adult world immersion learning. Students work two days a week in an interest-based internship with a mentor from the community on an intellectually rigorous project connected to their learning goals. This is known as Learning through Internship (LTI).

## 3. One student at a time

Students all have a personal learning plan based on their specific interests. It is developed with input from the students, their advisor and parents. It includes an individual project.

## 4. Authentic assessment

Each term the students exhibit their work, providing evidence of achievements of their learning goals and reflecting on the process of their learning.

## 5. Collaboration for learning

Students work in one-on-one or small group learning environments around their interests both inside and outside the school. The community plays an integral role in the education of the students through their internships.

## 6. Learning in advisory

Students are in an advisory with up to 17 other students to one teacher/advisor for the whole of their secondary education. The teacher advisor manages students' learning plans and ensures that all learning goals are covered in these plans.

## 7. Trust, respect and care

One of the striking things about Big Picture Schools is the ease with which students interact with adults. There is a culture of trust, respect and care between students and adults, as well as among students themselves.

## 8. Everyone's a leader

In Big Picture Schools, leadership is shared between the principal, staff, students and family and relevant community partners. Opportunities for leadership are provided and created for everyone.

## 9. Families are enrolled too

Big Picture schools aim for real family engagement. Parents and families are regarded as essential members of the learning team, starting with the application process, through to learning plan development, exhibitions and graduation.

## 10. Creating futures

All students are expected to graduate from school to further learning. They are prepared for and connected to opportunities for learning at University and/or TAFE.

## 11. Teachers and leaders are learners too

New ideas are constantly required as the learning cycle is constantly being reviewed. Teachers and leaders need to deal with new ideas and learn new ways of working. They need to develop reflective practice and find ways of sharing this learning with others.

## 12. Diverse and enduring partnerships

A Big Picture School has a strong focus on building and creating external partnerships. These include partnerships with the family, mentors, local councils, businesses, corporations, Universities, TAFEs and other training providers. These partnerships give students the opportunities to pursue their learning and achieve their goals.

# OUR BOARD

## **Viv White**

Viv is the CEO, Founder and Company Secretary of Big Picture Education Australia. Prior to leading this innovative venture, Viv was CEO of the Victorian Schools Innovation Commission and the Australian National Schools Network. She has a thirty-year history of international work in educational reform, research, policy and practice.

## **Bruce Kiloh - Chair**

Bruce is the BPEA Public Officer. Bruce was the Assistant Regional Director for the Western Metropolitan Region, Department of Education & Training in Victoria; and prior to that was an Assistant General Manager responsible for a range of social justice initiatives in the Department.

## **Susan French**

Susan is the Principal of St Johns Park High School and a Board Member of the Australian National Schools Network (ANSN). She has held a number of senior executive positions with the Australian Education Union (AEUACT) and the NSW Teachers Federation.

## **Joanne Roberts**

Joanne is Principal of Ascot Vale Primary School, a past Board Member of Victorian Curriculum Authority and past Victorian State Coordinator of the Australian National Schools Network. She has worked in both Primary and Secondary sectors of education in Victorian schools. Her current research work in her school is exploring Middle Years of Schooling implementation and looking at Big Picture Design principles at the primary end of schooling.

## **Keith Reams**

Keith is a client services principal of Deloitte's Global Transfer Pricing Group and the Service Line Leader for the Asia Pacific Region. He is also the Client Services Principal and Lead Economist Pacific Rim Global Transfer Pricing for Deloitte's Transfer Pricing Group in San Francisco.

## **Chris Bonnor**

Chris Bonnor AM is a public education consultant and advocate. He is the co-author (with Jane Caro) of "The Stupid Country – How Australia is dismantling public education" published by UNSW Press in 2007. He has served as principal of two secondary schools in NSW and until 2006 was President of the NSW Secondary Principals' Council.

## **John Hogan**

John is one of the co-founders of BPEA and is engaged as a School Consultant. John has extensive experience, expertise and training in consulting, coaching and supervision; action learning and group work; strategic and project planning; curriculum development; and research and evaluation. John runs an education consulting business, Redgum Consulting Pty Ltd.

## **Andrew Bunting** (Outgoing Chair)

Andrew is a Principal Director of the Architectural Firm Architectus. He completed his Ph.D in Educational Design and is an executive member of Council of Education Faculty Planners International (CEFPI) and an Accountant.

# CEO REPORT



**“This is a breakthrough strategy that engages and encourages young people to achieve their best. It involves the school and the teachers, it involves the family and parents, and it involves the community. Over time it could transform the community.”**

The students continue to inspire me. I sit with them and listen to their plans, their projects, their exhibitions and their passions and interests as often as I can: it helps to keep me on track. Natalia who is doing Chinese as an internship; Alla, who has spoken publicly for the first time in a study of indigenous history to find her people; Ethan who can't understand how to help his dad get over his sadness about his mother leaving and thinks studying psychology may help; Mary who is learning Latin online because she wanted to know the language spoken in the Roman chariot races; Leah who is using Photoshop to re-create new Japanese characters for her novel...and on it goes.

Each of our 34 schools has stories like this. John Hogan recently wrote:

*“This is a breakthrough strategy that engages and encourages young people to achieve their best. It involves the school and the teachers, it involves the family and parents, and it involves the community. Over time it could transform the community.”*

This year has been an exciting time in the growth phase of our network. We have met all of the goals and targets set out in our Strategic Plan 2007-09, with support from Tim Fairfax Family Foundation (TFFF), developed a new one for 2010-2013 and completed a Three Year Fund Raising Strategy with support from The Caledonia

Foundation and Social Ventures Australia (SVA). In addition we are in negotiations for ongoing funding with the Origin Foundation for a long term, multi-year partnership. We thank our supporters.

Our network has grown across Australia and now into New Zealand. Although we are yet to establish schools in all states, high-level negotiations are occurring in Queensland and the Northern Territory and we are working with Te Kura in NZ to develop an online BP program to support our work, and to establish a NZ Big Picture Network. Whilst this may not seem to be a core part of our work, the Te Kura folk will help us enormously as we develop our BP Online project with our counterpart in the US.

In May, we conducted our first national conference in Hobart, “The Start of Something Big”, where we launched our first schools: Yule Brook College in Perth, Montrose Bay and Bridgewater High Schools in Hobart and Croydon BP School in Melbourne. All of our schools worked together for the first time, showcasing their work and giving each other (and our team) support and critical feedback. We all worked

with Elliot Washor, the co-founder of BP International and Steve Binger, the architect of BP schools. These two, along with our chair Andrew Bunting, also provided high-level advice about design to the Tasmanian architects of the BP schools.

Thanks to our team, Bruce Kiloh, John Hogan, Peter Flynn, Cathy Danaher, Linelle Gibson, Joe and Sara Wickert and Gillian Emmett for their magnificent support. And thanks too, to my great Board who continue to hold the dream tight and support us to grow it. Finally, I would like to thank our outgoing chair Andrew Bunting for his continued support of our work and our goals. Whilst no longer the chair, Andrew will continue to work with our organisation, particularly in the schools. He has been with us since the beginning and continues to be passionate about our work.

**Viv White CEO**

# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2010

## Our schools

In 5 years BPEA has come a long way. During 2010 we had:

- 6 Big Picture Inspired (BPI) Schools
- 11 Schools with Big Picture Inspired Programs
- 5 Big Picture Exploring schools
- 1 Big Picture Conversion school
- 4 Big Picture Greenfield schools

Our approach with our schools is one school at a time. All of them are connected to our network and we tailor coaching and development plans for each school depending on needs, size of program, availability and budgets.

Some schools are exploring Big Picture ideas with BPEA assistance to decide if the model is good for them. Some stop there; others implement Big Picture ideas.

Some schools are inspired by Big Picture to implement a program or use the ideas to influence their school. We are helping them too.

Other communities are converting whole schools to Big Picture and we are committing to joining them in journeys that may take years.

We offer our schools:

- Getting started consultation
- School Visits
- Workshops
- Coaching
- Networking – learning from each other
- Research and Communications



## Case study - Montrose Bay Big Picture High School

Montrose Bay is a Greenfield and Exhibition Big Picture School. It grew out of the combination of Rosetta and Claremont High Schools which joined Big Picture Education Australia in 2009.

The school has a total of six advisories, two in Year 9, four in Year 10 with two support staff. The advisories follow a weekly timetable with a daily agenda. They are all involved in Individual Learning Plans, Exhibitions and Internships.

*"The benefits are enormous, we've had students who had dropped out, weren't coming to school who are now engaged in their learning.*

*We have kids who were what you would have described as quietly compliant, sitting in the classroom but not necessarily learning anything, who now say things like "I love learning"*

*And we have high flying kids who are able to pursue their learning in areas they are passionate about.*

*The kids want to be there, they care about what they are doing, they are respectful to others, but also have this new found self respect for who they are and where they're at.*

*It's really powerful."*

### Michelle Muir

Advisor/Assistant Principal - Montrose Bay Big Picture High School

## How we help

Big Picture Education has been central to the set-up of Montrose Bay. We delivered a tailored Professional Development program in Launceston for teachers. We provide ongoing and high level coaching support. We connect the teachers and kids with others in our network.

## Case study - Yule Brook College Big Picture Conversion School. Big Picture Exhibition School



Yule Brook College is a middle school situated in Maddington, WA. The College caters for the needs of students in Years 8, 9 and 10. Yule Brook College was founded in 2000 specifically to develop more effective ways of assisting the teaching and learning of young adolescents. The College has developed an environment in which teachers foster relationships and pastoral care, and in which students learn collaboratively.

Yule Brook College is a Big Picture Conversion and Exhibition School. It joined Big Picture Education Australia in January 2007 with Year 8 students and continued to introduce a Big Picture inspired programme with each subsequent Year 8 cohort. The Big Picture program now operates across Years 8, 9 and 10 in every classroom and with every student. It is now well embedded throughout the College and they are still refining it as they continue to move forward, with some excellent results. There are 11 advisory groups in total, three in Year 9, and four in each of Year 8 and Year 10. On average each advisory has 15 students. In 2010 there were 53 Big Picture graduates from Yule Brook College.

### How we help

Big Picture Education has been supporting and coaching Yule Brook College throughout its three year conversion.

We have helped them gather the data to prove their success with specially commissioned research and school self evaluation surveys.

We run regular professional development workshops in Perth to hone the skills of new and experienced teachers.

We produced a video documentary following the journey of Yule Brook College that has proved a valuable resource for the school and Big Picture Education Australia.

*"Using the Big Picture model at Yule Brook College has enabled me to build meaningful relationships with students and families around their learning. It has enabled me to gain a holistic knowledge of my students that in turn helps them and myself build a positive educational experience."*

*Big Picture Education has supported my work by providing frameworks for reflective practice and opportunities to think deeply about the work that I do as an educator and colleague. It has*

*prompted me to critically evaluate the work that I do and to make sure that there is a focus on educational integrity to facilitate the learning of all students."*

**Marie Adams**, Yule Brook College

*"It is wonderful to be the principal of Yule Brook College - since arriving here at the beginning of last year I have seen a lot of difference between this school and others I have worked in. The students are more engaged, interested in their work and proud of their school and themselves. Visitors always comment on the calm feel of the school and the positive attitude towards learning that is glaringly evident in every classroom."*

*As a new BP principal it has been great to have the support of a network of educators to share reflections and to consult with. I have always felt supported and listened to, and that Yule Brook College is part of a big 'family'. It is wonderful to have others around Australia and the world to celebrate our successes and to share their own stories with us."*

**Janette Gee** - Principal,  
Yule Brook College

# OUR NETWORK-BUILDING EVENTS

Big Picture Schools are doing groundbreaking work. A critical role of Big Picture Education Australia is to provide opportunities for these schools to network and share. We help teachers and school leaders from across Australia share experiences, support each other, develop new ways of working and stay inspired.

## National Conference

With active participation from Big Picture USA co-founder, Elliot Washor, our first national conference “The Start of Something Big” lived up to its name.

We had over 150 teachers and school leaders from across Australia sharing and learning from each other’s work over 4 days in Melbourne and Launceston.

The conference was opened by The Hon. Lin Thorpe - Tasmanian Education Minister.

US architect Steve Bingler shared his knowledge about designing places for learning. He has been working with Big Picture Learning (USA) for many years and continues to seek to make flexible, affordable spaces for learning that are shared with the community.

Elliot Washor, founder of a Big Picture school, The Met, Rhode Island, talked about the nature of learning and the critical importance of real relationships.

There were eloquent presentations from Big Picture students - telling their stories of successful learning journeys. And the teachers shared their journeys too.

The conference is a critical element in building a learning network for Big Picture and we are already planning to make it bigger and better in 2011.

## Study Tours

In 2010 we organised our third study tour to the US with three teachers from Ogilvie BP, two from Croydon, one each from Bridgewater and Launceston and two from NZ. The teachers attended the Big Bang Conference, visited The Newport campus of The Met, Frida Karlo BP High and the BP Theatre School in LA, the Sacramento Met and Met West in San Francisco. This continues to be self-funding and a good strategy for growing the confidence and knowledge of our people in the network. This continues to be self-funding and a good strategy for growing the confidence and knowledge of our people in the network.

## Professional Development

We conducted 7 Foundation Training programs in 2010. They were held in Yea, Croydon, Canberra, Hobart, Launceston, Sydney, and Perth.

Our training programs are based around personalising learning; we model the same skills, techniques and approach to learning that we teach our students.

Our Registered Training Organisation was successfully audited in 2010.

## Gained strong support from schools and citizens,

Philanthropy, business and communities are supportive of our work.

Organisations that want to help disadvantaged communities can see how Big Picture Schools re-engage kids with learning and make the school a hub for engaging family and community.

Business can see how the Big Picture model prepares kids for the 21st century workplace, helping students become the catalyst for their own learning and pursue their passions.

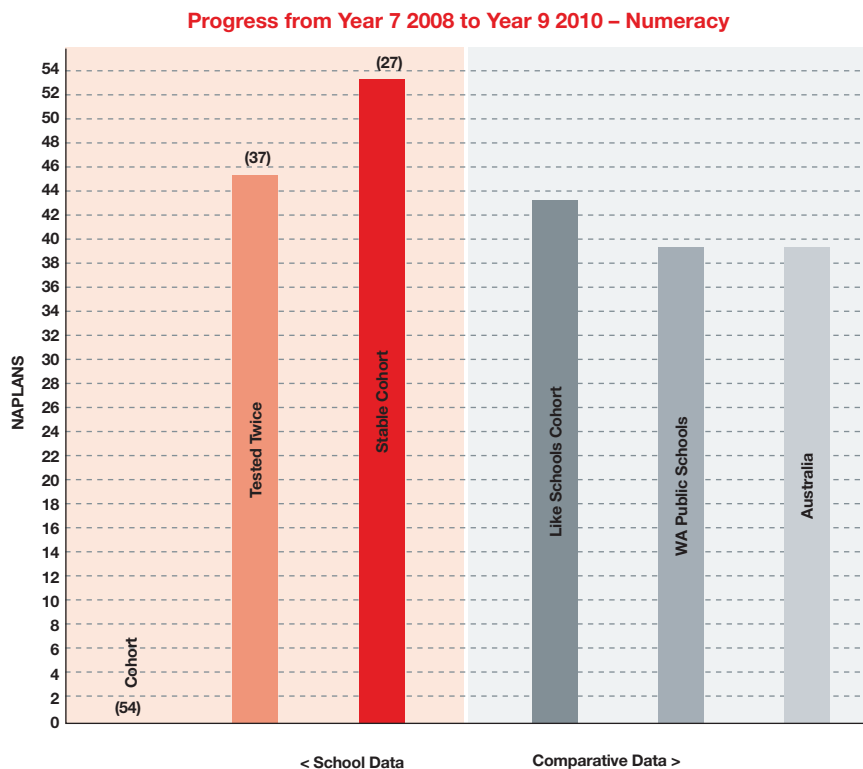
With real world projects Big Picture students develop superior thinking skills, employability skills and technical expertise.

Even though Big Picture schools are relatively new, the evidence that they work is impressive. Attendance and engagement measures show students and families are engaging and learning. Discipline problems are greatly improved. Student work and exhibitions are rich and authentic.

Even though our schools are not focused on training young people to get high scores in NAPLAN Testing, their results are good.

At Yule Brook College the value adding data that was released this year show wonderful results for reading, writing and numeracy.

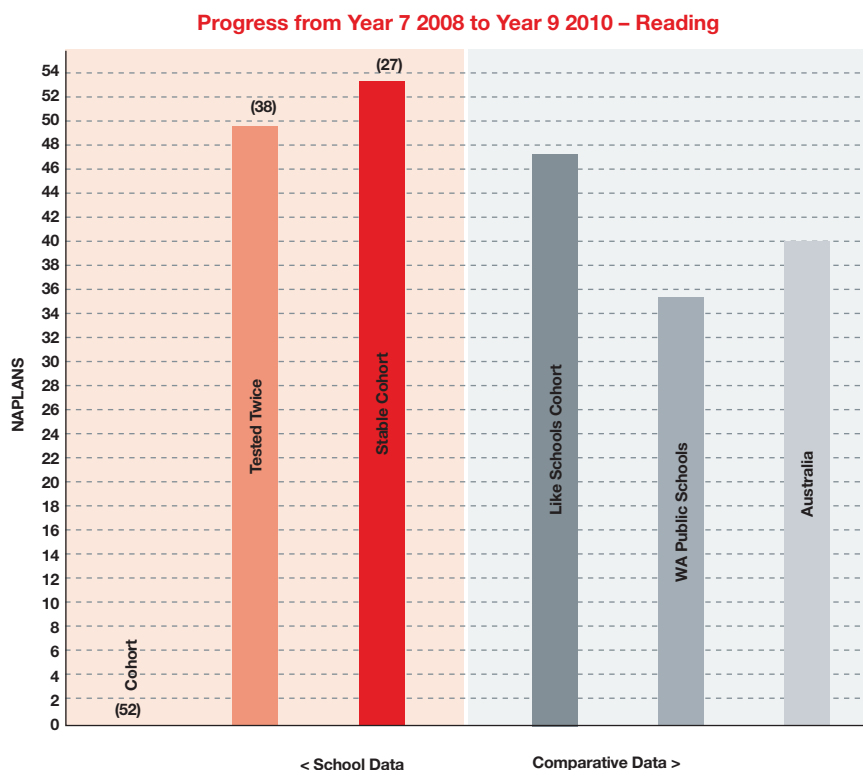
The graphs opposite show the progress from year 7 to year 9 and the ‘stable cohort’ info is particularly exciting although the whole cohort is not bad either for most sections.



### From one of our funders

*"I took the opportunity over the forum dinner to share how much we appreciated being involved. For me, seeing their energy and commitment was renewing and compelling. My father, who spent a life in the Victorian state education system, always reckoned there were two sorts of people: those who had a crack at things, and those that didn't. This was a room full of people having a crack. It's early days, but in listening to their conversations and hearing the early but extremely positive signs of improved engagement and performance from Big Picture students and communities, there is real momentum for Big Picture Australia."*

**Michael Trail,**  
Social Ventures Australia



### Joined conversations with government and citizens

This work is ongoing, and will be strengthened by our work with the Origin Foundation. To date we have the Tasmanian and WA governments supporting our work and Education Queensland exploring their opportunities to do the same. At the end of the year we received advice from the Tasmanian government advising that our grant submission for the Retention, Attainment, Productivity - RAP Up grant was successful. The grant is for a total of \$300,000 over 3 years (i.e. \$100,000 per year).

Our experience is that Governments are well aware that too many kids are disengaged or disaffected with school and they know the implications for the local and national economy.

*"I got in a lot of trouble... but it didn't stop me. But when I came here, I'd be here every day, doing my work. I was stunned at my own motivation - I'm actually doing my work here! What's going on?! When I was at high school I was never really that good at it, but when I came here I started to shine a bit."*

**Shannon, Shepparton**



## WHERE TO FROM HERE

In 2011 we will be working at consolidating our success.

We have major funding from the Origin Foundation to fund research and local level community support for our schools.

We will use the annual conference, school visits, PD, e-news, the website, public relations and research reports to measure and review progress each quarter & demonstrate the Big Picture effect.

We will continue to support our schools with direct contact and local support, as well as continuing high level discussions with government, business and the media.

### **A design for regional and remote schools**

We have developed a discussion to see if the model could be implemented in these contexts.

We have developed a strategic link with Chris Sarra and the Stronger Smarter Institute. We are absolutely convinced this model can work in these contexts.

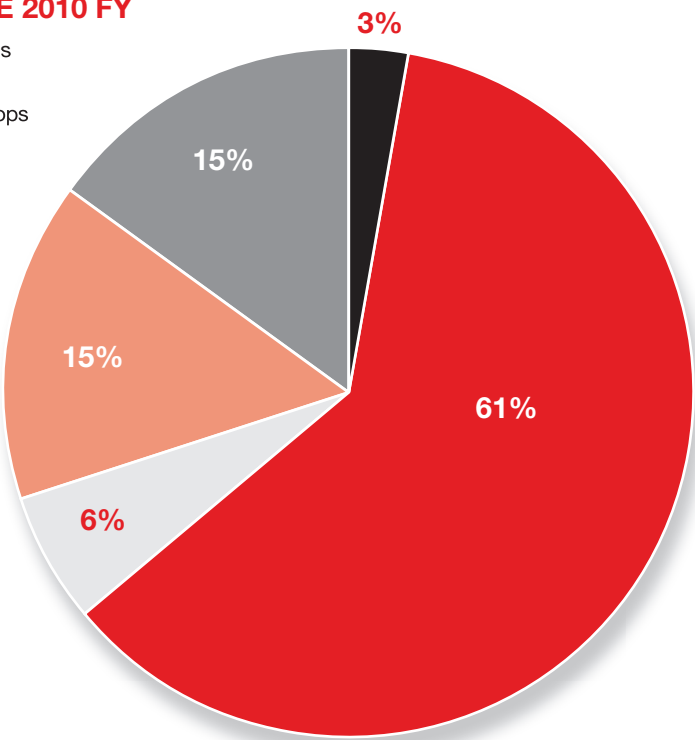
### **Big Picture Online**

We see great opportunity in developing the Big Picture model of education in distance education mode. We are identifying national partners to implement Big Picture for students who are home-schooled, remote or unable to attend school regularly.

# FINANCIALS

## BPEA INCOME 2010 FY

- Grants & donations
- Membership
- Seminars/workshops
- Consulting
- Other



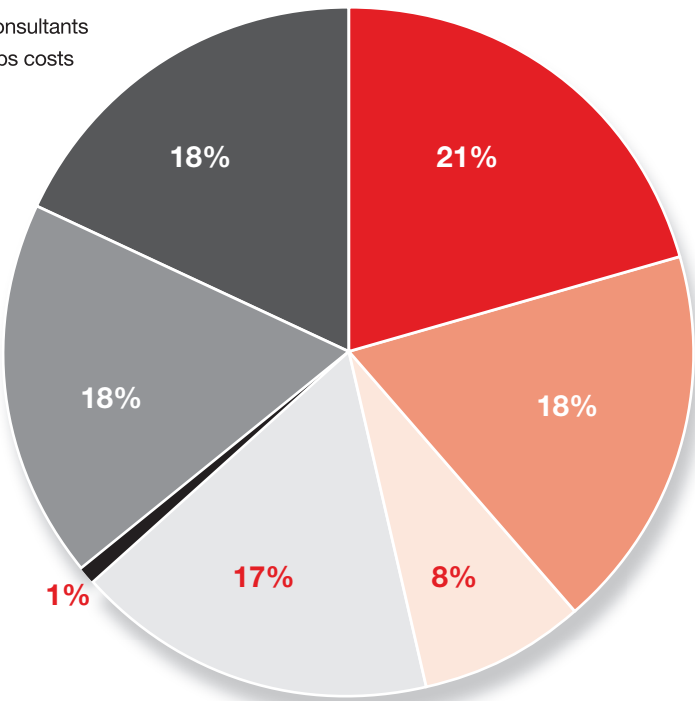
## Government financial support

Although BPEA is not directly funded by Government at this point in time, we must acknowledge that our schools get enormous support from their relevant state and federal departments.

This comes through student funding, priority funding, teacher relief for professional development and specific project grant monies. Government funding of BPEA schools amounts to many millions of dollars. One of the priorities in the coming financial year is to account for and acknowledge this incredible support.

## BPEA Expenses

- School support/consultants
- Seminar/workshops costs
- Communication
- Salaries
- Design & printing
- Travel
- Other admin



## Balance sheet

ASSETS CURRENT ASSETS	2010
Cash and cash equivalents	174,046
Trade and other receivables	37,133
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>211,179</b>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS	
Property Plant & Equipment	1,646
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>1,646</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	
CURRENT LIABILITIES	212,825
Trade and other payables	79,890
Current tax liabilities	654
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>89,544</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>89,544</b>
NET ASSETS	132,281
EQUITY	
Capital Reserve	2,000
Retained earnings	130,281
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>132,281</b>

## Income Statement 2010

Miscellaneous Income	1,845
Membership Income	34,203
Seminars and Workshop Income	89,959
Consulting Income	89,143
Donations Received	350,000
Other Income	15,880
Subcontracting expense	-152,658
Wages and Salaries expense	-82,341
Stationery and Printing expense	-4,254
Travelling expense	-90,909
Other expenses	-148,635
Profit before income tax	88,397
Income tax expense	2047
<b>Profit/(loss) after income tax</b>	<b>86,350</b>

*"We're a lot more mature, we don't muck around anymore, because we actually want to focus on what we're doing."*

**Hayley, Yea High School, Victoria**



**Small schools by design**

ONE STUDENT AT A TIME IN A  
COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

***"My reputation has changed  
from being a "little rat", to a  
bright student."***

**Nathan, Yea High School,  
Victoria**



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**Address:** Big Picture Education Australia PO Box 836 Williamstown Vic 3016

**Phone:** (03) 9399 1000 **Email:** [info@bigpicture.org.au](mailto:info@bigpicture.org.au)

**Website:** [www.bigpicture.org.au](http://www.bigpicture.org.au)