

Dear principals, teachers, students and parents

Celebrating Democracy Week is one of the Australian Government's national activities supporting civics and citizenship education in schools. The Australian Government has committed \$44 million to civics and citizenship education from 1997 to 2008.

During Celebrating Democracy Week 2007, I invite your school to participate and showcase how your students are responsible and active citizens, caring for each other and their community.

The Australian Government is funding small grants of up to \$1,000 to help schools participate in Celebrating Democracy Week 2007 and I encourage your school to apply.

Celebrating Democracy Week 2007 includes the *Every Voice Counts!* competition for Year 10 and 11 students. Students from across Australia are selected to participate in this national forum which is a highlight of the Week. Students who took part in 2006 discussed current issues with parliamentarians and observed Question Time in the House of Representatives. I encourage all eligible students to apply for a place at this forum.

I look forward to hearing about the activities which will be conducted around Australia from 15-21 August 2007.



Julie Bishop
Minister for Education, Science and Training

How can schools participate in Celebrating Democracy Week 2007?

Celebrating Democracy Week gives your school an opportunity to highlight how you are encouraging students to explore and understand the rights and responsibilities of being an Australian citizen.

Some examples of what your school can do:

- Hold a debate on an issue of concern in your community.
- Invite Federal Members of Parliament and local councillors for a mock parliament and election.
- Conduct a community service activity to highlight the importance of volunteering.
- Learn about the community pioneers and how they lived their lives.
- Discuss the peaceful transition of Australia from separate colonies into an independent democratic nation.

To register your school activity or to apply for a small grant, visit the website www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au, download the application form and fax it to Curriculum Corporation on 1300 780 545 by Wednesday 25 July 2007. If you need help with your application please telephone (03) 9207 9600.

All schools participating in Celebrating Democracy Week 2007 will receive a certificate.

Visit the website www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au to see the resources which can help your school to prepare for Celebrating Democracy Week 2007.



Bright Idea
St Bernadine's school, Queensland researched the need for water tanks and presented its findings to various levels of government.

Highlights of Celebrating Democracy Week 2007

Celebrating Democracy Week 2007 will be launched on Wednesday 15 August 2007 in Parliament House, Canberra, by the Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Education, Science and Training.

State and Territory winners of the Year 10 and 11 *Every Voice Counts!* student competition will be presented with certificates. The winners will be selected from their response to the topic: 'Being a responsible citizen - what it means to me'. The State and Territory winners will receive an all expenses paid trip to Canberra to see first hand our democracy in action and take part in a forum to debate the topic "Being a responsible citizen in Australia's Democracy".

Visit the website www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au for information on how to apply for the *Every Voice Counts!* student competition or telephone Curriculum Corporation on (03) 9207 9600. Applications for *Every Voice Counts!* close on **Wednesday 25 July 2007**.



Bright Idea
Menindee Central School, New South Wales interviewed older Indigenous Australians about the 1967 referendum, their first vote, their education experiences and reconciliation. The students published a booklet for classroom use.





Australian Government
 Department of Education,
 Science and Training

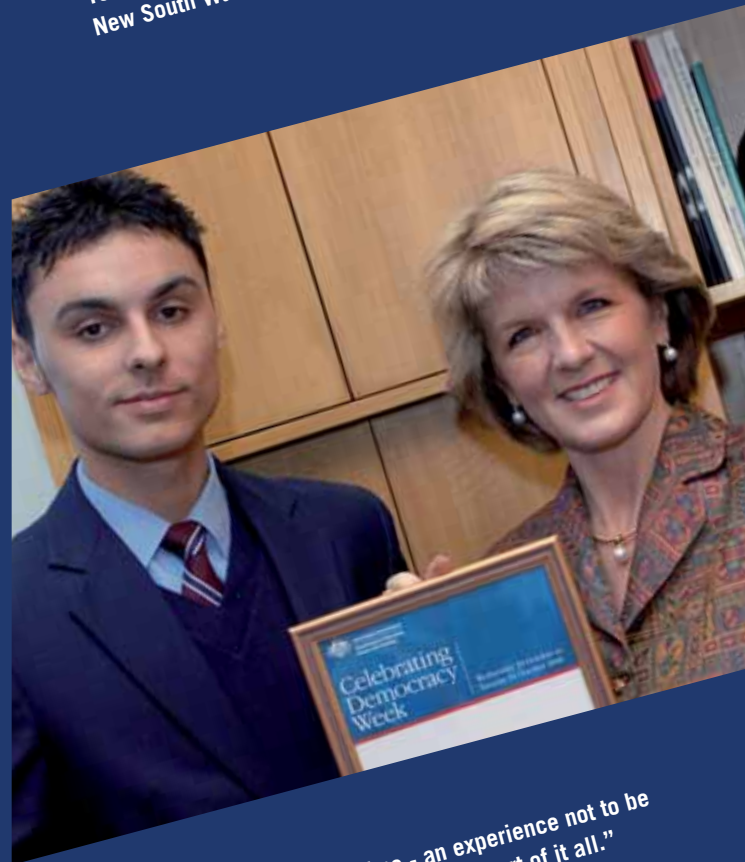
Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER)

The Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER) encourages students to learn more about our national democratic and historic institutions as part of their civics and citizenship education. PACER provides a subsidy for students who travel more than 150 kilometres to Canberra to visit Parliament House, Old Parliament House and the Australian War Memorial. For more information telephone 1300 368 248 or visit the DEST website www.dest.gov.au

Some Useful Links

Australian Electoral Commission: www.aec.gov.au
 Civics and Citizenship Education:
www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au
 Parliament of Australia: www.aph.gov.au
 Parliamentary Education Office: www.peo.gov.au

“Over the three days I learnt more about Australian democracy and how politics actually works. It is important for people approaching voting age to have an understanding of how to vote and not be disengaged from politics. This forum gave me the opportunity to do this.”
 Year 10 student from Narara High School,
 New South Wales



“It’s the opportunity of a lifetime - an experience not to be forgotten.... I was lucky enough to be a part of it all.”
 Year 10 student, Lumen Christi College,
 New South Wales

**CELEBRATING
 DEMOCRACY
 WEEK** 15 to 21 August 2007

