



**Newsletter # 1 / 2007**

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## **EDITORIAL**

Much has been achieved over the break and many announcements have been made. But are they what we have been waiting for? Many contributors to the Forum don't believe so. English is still in limbo and K-10 are still Outcomes-driven.

But can this situation last? The levelling process has been completely discredited. The CC and the Minister have accepted this. Retaining levels in their current form is therefore untenable. I know I will not be referring to them in lower school ever again. If teachers simply do not use them, they will disappear like videos and floppy discs. If we insist on allocating real grades on reports instead of those falsely derived from levels, then the heart has been ripped out of OBE. What is left?

The new syllabus documents for K-10 will have to pass the plato test before being implemented. We have become the educational watchdog. The story to dump OBE was big. Can you imagine the story in the West if it was all an elaborate hoax? A return to OBE? Mr McGowan would go the same way as his predecessor. I know politicians are accused of lacking sincerity, but the one issue they do take seriously is their survival. Ms Ravlich severely underestimated the power of plato. I don't think Mr McGowan will make the same mistake.

Year 12 English is a real problem. The English Teachers' Forum has called an emergency meeting for Tuesday 30th January. I urge all members to attend, not only English teachers. The TER can only be derived from one method of assessment common to all students. English teachers can simply do exactly what they did last year for 12 English. It is not fair that these teachers and students are singled out for special treatment. It also sends conflicting messages to parents. Levels can not be used in any subjects if they have been discredited.

Is the fight over? Most definitely not. We must keep up the pressure to rid K-10 of OBE. The first step is to rid ourselves of levels. The second is to reinstate a syllabus. The third is to make sure the true believers publicly denounce OBE. This can be done at PD days and Awareness days. Ask the presenters if they support OBE and levelling. Ask your HOD. Ask your Principal.

The new Minister has shown much courage in making the changes to personnel and curriculum and I congratulate and thank him for that. I was disappointed

to hear him resort to the cliché about teachers no longer using chalk and talk etc. The fact remains that teachers will use whatever works to get the job done. An integral part of this is chalk and talk. I defy anyone who says it is not. To transfer knowledge requires explanation and modelling. One of the most efficient ways of doing this is with a big piece of paper (a board) and a writing implement (chalk). The Minister himself took extensive notes at our meeting.

I think special mention must be made of Greg Williams who retired as President at the AGM. He is an inspirational leader and his wisdom and courage established plato as an independent voice of reason. I would also like to thank Webbie for the massive amount of work he puts into maintaining the website. It is without doubt the best educational site in WA, if not Australia. I would also like to thank all the contributors to plato, the letter and e-mail writers and those who take the time to show up to meetings. Without you, plato would cease to exist.

I hope you all have a good start to 2007. Compare this to the start to 2005 and 2006 and it is clear just how much has been achieved.

CERTA BONUM CERTAMEN

Marko Vojkovic  
President