



EDITORIAL

April 2015

This month's edition of the Australian and International Journal of Rural Education (AIJRE) marks an important milestone for the journal and editorial team, namely our transition to an online journal. This move is the first step in our process to increase the impact and scope of the AIJRE. The online version of the journal includes an online submission portal to make submitting manuscripts and revisions easier for authors, as well as a reviewing portal to ensure that reviewers can also experience the same streamlined process to reviewing that they would be familiar with from other leading education journals. Articles will also be much easier for members and subscribers to access.

This crucial milestone of the Australian and International Journal of Rural Education, is marked by an issue containing significant articles from Australia and the International stage. The issue includes work conducted in South Africa by Alfred Masinire on the importance of rural practicum placements in influencing the thinking of student-teachers about rurality. Dr. Masinire's work joins a growing body of evidence about the importance of these rural practicums in increasing the attractiveness of rural school placements for student-teachers, and hopefully thereby increasing the numbers of student-teachers joining the rural teacher workforce in years to come. Important Australian research complements, and is complemented by this work, with Henriette van Rensburg, Karen Noble and Peter McIlveen's work exploring Australian student-teachers' perceptions of rurality. Van Rensburg et al., discuss the need to construct a stable vocational identity for students so that they can meet the challenges and make the most of opportunities that rural service brings. The growing international focus of the journal continues with work evaluating the Strengthening the Implementation of the Visayas Education (STRIVE) Program in the Philippines by Vicente Reyes Jr. This research includes some unexpected revelations about the return on investment for the STRIVE program which are extremely important for future projects of this kind.

The important research at home in Australia also continues with Deidre Clary, Susan Feez, Amanda Garvey and Rebecca Partridge's research on a whole-of-school approach to literacy teaching. This work highlights the importance of the development of a shared school language to support literacy education. Important work on the largely overlooked field of gifted education in rural Australia by Barbara Bannister, Linley Cornish, Michelle Bannister-Tyrrell and Sue Gregory contributes to our understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with teaching gifted students in a virtual high school context. The work explores a massive geographical footprint of students in a virtual environment, spanning over 385,000 square kilometres. Finally, Mitchell Parkes, Linley Cornish, Michelle Bannister-Tyrrell and Sue Gregory also add to our understanding of remote teaching, with their work exploring remote teaching in a university context and how this can be used to support the development of students' skills in online environments.

We are happy that this can be such a great issue marking the first online edition of the Australian and International Journal of Rural Education. We are supremely grateful to our authors, members, readers and SPERA for the ongoing support to help make this journal the flagship rural education journal for Australia, and to grow the journal into one that is internationally renowned.

Aaron Drummond & Sue Ledger.

Chief Policy Editors