

The Highest Common Factor



August 2025

From the CEO's desk



The past few months have been, as always, a whirlwind - equal parts energising, challenging, and deeply rewarding.

In my role, I'm often moving between conversations with policy-makers, teachers, researchers, and school leaders, but the thread that connects them all is the same: how do we create the conditions for every young person in Australia to experience meaningful, empowering mathematics learning?

One of the most satisfying developments this year has been seeing our *Pedagogy in Mathematics* position paper continue to find its way into schools, universities, and professional networks.

It has been the catalyst for new reading groups bringing together educators from across the country to unpack the paper, share experiences, and reflect on its implications for their own practice. We're exploring other ways to connect teachers across the country to reflect on this paper and their practice.

Alongside this, we've been keeping up a steady pace with our advocacy work. Whether it's contributing to policy discussions, responding to media on the latest data, or championing the importance of mathematics as a foundational skill for all - not just the so-called "maths people" - AAMT's voice is being heard. Part of that advocacy has included developing clear, accessible infographics to help unpack complex reports, such as those from the OECD. These are designed to distil key messages, highlight the implications for schools, and prompt further discussion. You can find them on our social media channels, and they've been some of our most shared and discussed posts this year.

If you're not already following us on social media, now's the time to click 'follow'. That's where you'll first hear about the next round of *Focus on Maths* and the new season of our *Strength in Numbers* podcast. Both are designed to keep the conversation moving and to connect you with the latest thinking in our field.

Last week, I had the privilege of attending the Australian Education Awards in Sydney. It was an honour to serve on the judging panel and to present an award on the night. Every year, I'm amazed anew by the breadth and depth of innovation happening in schools - projects and practices that are not only improving learning outcomes but also reimagining what education can be. Events like these are a celebration of the profession, and I left feeling both inspired and grateful for the work happening in classrooms every day.

In this edition of *Highest Common Factor*, I particularly want to draw your attention to the *Teacher Reads* from MERGA. Our partnership with MERGA continues to grow, and their work provides a rich channel of research and practical insight for teachers. If you've not yet explored their resources, I highly recommend you do so - it's one of the many benefits of our collaboration that directly supports professional growth.

Finally, a quick reminder: the *ATSIMA Conference* is coming up in Tasmania. Through the Focus on Maths project, we've been able to fully fund three participants to attend. ATSIMA's work in embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into mathematics

education is vital, and their conference is an important space for deep learning and connection.

As always, thank you for being part of this community. I hope you enjoy this edition of HCF.

Allan Dougan

CEO, AAMT Ltd

What Does Effective Teaching Look Like in Your Classroom?

Teaching approaches are frequently discussed in media and policy, but teachers' voices are often missing.

This 10-minute anonymous survey from the University of South Australia invites Australian mathematics teachers to contribute their classroom expertise to important conversations about mathematics pedagogy. Your insights will help create a more informed understanding of diverse teaching practices across Australia.

If you would like to share your experiences, please take the survey here.

Research by Professor Amie Albrecht and Associate Professor Lisa O'Keeffe, University of South Australia

[Click here to respond to the survey](#)

Focus on Maths grant program

Our latest round of the *Focus on Maths* grant program closes on 28 September. This funding supports projects starting at the end of Term 4 this year or the beginning of Term 1 2026. Grants of up to \$30,000 are available for multi-school projects, with the average grant size around \$7,800. So far, the program has supported teacher professional learning projects in 34 schools from the outback to tropical Queensland, metropolitan Sydney and Melbourne to Tasmania's leafy countryside. To date, 190 teachers have taken part in Focus on Maths-funded maths professional learning, benefiting more than 6,000 students.

Could your school be next? We are seeking projects:

- With a clear aim of developing teachers' mathematical content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching skills - especially for teachers who lack confidence in teaching maths or who are teaching out-of-field; and
- From disadvantaged schools with an ICSEA below 1000, in rural or remote Australia, and/or with significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

[Click here to find out more and to apply](#)

MERGA - Teacher Reads
Learning to Share Fairly: The Importance of Spatial Reasoning in
Early Partitioning Experiences
by Dr Chelsea Cutting



Teacher Reads are one-page extracts of research findings from MERGA conference papers. The purpose of Teacher Reads is to disseminate aspects of research that are meaningful to teachers, such as mathematical tasks, assessment tools, strategies for teaching, considerations for student learning, findings of research that may impact classroom practice, etc.

We hope teachers will draw inspiration from these Reads and follow up with details from the conference papers for research-informed classroom practice.

Learning to Share Fairly: The Importance of Spatial Reasoning in Early Partitioning Experiences by Dr Chelsea Cutting, presented in 2024 at the Gold Coast for the next Teacher Read.

Chelsea won the Early Career Research Award for this work.

[Click here to read the paper](#)

Leadership for Building Thinking Classrooms 2025 Adelaide Concludes!



The *Leadership for Building Thinking Classrooms* workshop in Adelaide concluded this afternoon, and was very well received by participants.

Over the two days, educators explored practical strategies to foster thinking classrooms. Attendees left inspired and equipped with techniques to make thinking more visible and learning more engaging in their classrooms.

It was a privilege to hear from social researcher and demographer Mark McCrindle, who shared valuable insights into the current state of education in Australia.

Drawing on McCrindle Research's latest report based on data from teachers, students, and parents he explored timely topics such as the role of AI and mobile phones in schools. He also highlighted some of the paradoxes shaping today's educational landscape for students, offering plenty of food for thought.



We're now looking forward to the next workshop on the Gold Coast on 25–26 August!

Vale James Bruce Henry OAM 09/10/1937 - 19/06/2025



Bruce Henry was a towering figure in Australian mathematics education, whose career began as a mathematics and chemistry teacher at Shepparton High School and spanned decades of innovation, leadership, and service. He moved to Springvale High School where he started teaching pure mathematics. His expertise was well recognised and he moved to make a greater difference to generations of students and teachers through teacher training with a long career at Rusden Teachers' College which became part of Deakin University.

Bruce was a respected VCE assessor marking countless exam papers but more importantly writing questions and sharing expertise with others.

He was a textbook writer, and one of the leaders of the Rusden Activity Mathematics Project (RAMP), which transformed classroom practice through engaging, inquiry-based resources.

At the national level, Bruce played a foundational role in the Australian Mathematics Trust (AMT). He served as the Victorian State Director of the Australian Mathematics Competition for nearly four decades and was the founding Chair of the Mathematics Challenge for Young Australians. He also contributed to the International Mathematical Olympiad, helping shape high-level problem-solving programs that inspired gifted students on an international scale.

His achievements were recognised with numerous awards, including the BH Neumann Award, the Erdős Award (World Federation of National Mathematics Competitions), and the Order of Australia for his outstanding contributions to mathematics education.

Bruce is remembered not only for his remarkable professional impact but also for his generosity, wit, mentorship, and unwavering passion for mathematics. His legacy lives on through the generations of students, teachers, and colleagues he inspired.

The Board, the Life Members and staff of the AAMT extend our heartfelt condolences to the entire Henry family.

STEM, Statistics & Investigations in the Data Age National Schools Poster Competition & Student Workshops - 2025

Below are details of two STEM initiatives by **Statistics, Sustainability, Systems thinking and STEM** for students in the Data Age - supporting curriculum learning outcomes across all eight learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities (Years 3 to 12):

The FREE National Schools Poster Competition (NSPC) – now in its 12th year!

Students conduct data-oriented investigations and report in poster format – the investigation may be on any area of interest.

Submissions are due online by 10 November.

All participants receive certificates. Prizes per Division (students and school) + for the school with the most submissions!

Click [here](#) to read more.

Student workshops – Using Data to Develop our World!

Interactive online sessions introduced in 2025, delivered by Dr Peter Howley.

Flexible delivery times nationally.

Content and number of sessions tailored to audience's age and learning area.

Click [here](#) to read more.



Copyright Agency Survey

Copyright Agency is asking for your help by completing a short online questionnaire about materials you have copied and shared with your students in the past 12 months.

By completing the questionnaire you can enter a random draw to win one of five eGift cards from GiftPay worth \$500 each. The information you provide will help Copyright Agency make copyright payments to writers, artists and publishers of the material you use.

[Click here to answer](#)

The questionnaire should take you less than 10 minutes to complete.

Complete the questionnaire by Monday 15 September 2025 to enter the prize draw. Your support in this important initiative is appreciated.

The ATO's Tax, Super + You competition about to close!

In the last newsletter, we shared that the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is running its Tax, Super + You competition for school students in years 7-12

This is a reminder that entries are open until 5 September 2025.

Students can use the ATO's online Tax, Super + You resources to help with their entries. It's free, provides all the info they'll need, and aligns to the Australian Curriculum.



[Click here to learn more](#)

Curriculum-making and knowledge-rich curriculum in Australian primary schools

Australian primary school teachers - what is your approach to curriculum? What does "knowledge-rich" curriculum mean to you? What are the factors that mostly strongly influence your curriculum practice? What are your opinions and beliefs about your work, including the resources available to you, and your influence over curriculum and instruction at your school?

The survey is part of a PhD study being led by teacher and education policy researcher [Jacqueline Magee](#).

Jacqueline is keen to ensure teacher members of education associations have the opportunity to have their views heard as part of the study, given her research interests in the importance of disciplinary practice.

To take the anonymous survey or to learn more about the study, scan the QR code or click [here](#).



Thank you for subscribing to the AAMT newsletter.

Here are a few other ways to stay updated on the latest in maths education in Australia:

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Connect with **AAMT Ltd** , our **CEO Allan Dougan** or **Education Specialist Denise Halliday** on LinkedIn.

Our quarterly newsletter is delivered right into your mailbox. Past newsletters can be found on our website under the **About Us/Newsletters** section.

And if you like what you read, please tell your colleagues about us!

Kind regards,
AAMT Team

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