

Very brief report of Mansfield tavern meeting

16 June 2012

Approx 175 people attended including secondary and primary teachers, parents and university academics (UQ, Griffith and JCU)

Peter Ridd (JCU) spoke of the importance of forcing the QSA to be accountable and to do proper survey of teachers, parents and university first year teachers. He is particularly worried about the appalling workloads on students due to excessive EEI's etc.

Anita Bailey went into detail about some of the QSA assessment techniques and pointed out the significant internal inconsistencies and general problems with implementation. She also showed how the primary school teachers are also being forced to use the very time-consuming methods of assessment that have been applied in secondary school.

Matt Dean (UQ) gave a perspective from a first year mathematic lecturer. He explained how memorization and practice are important for learning maths, and debunked Bloom's Taxonomy.

Pat Whalen gave an interesting review of the efforts of PLATOWA which changed the assessment systems in Western Australia.

There was considerable discussion from the floor and the following propositions were endorsed by over 90% of the audience

- (1) That the minister undertakes an independent review of school assessment.
- (2) That the use and scope of EEI's, ERT's and long assignments in science and maths be considerably reduced or eliminated.
- (3) That the non-marks based assessment schemes be replaced with marks based system modeled on other states.
- (4) That an external exam be implemented for a fraction of the total assessment.

There was also a call for teachers and parents to write to the www.platoqld.com website to tell their story and to contact their local members of parliament (MLA's) and union representative.

A group of four QSA employees attended and were invited to speak but declined because they had not been given permission from their director. An animated and illuminating conversation with one particularly opinionated QSA employee continued after the close of the meeting. However, it was clear that they have no intention whatsoever of changing the offending aspects of their assessment system. The QSA invited a group of teachers to talk to them at a later date; however this has been done previously and had no affect on their attitude.