

Prisoner education innovations Forum

Media Release: 24 September 2018

“New methods of delivering prisoner education with the use of technology and e-learning platforms will be presented at a public forum at NSW Parliament next Wednesday 26th September. Corrective Services NSW, Opposition and Greens shadow Ministers Guy Zangari and David Shoebridge as well as the NSW Teachers Federation will share the platform” said the Community Justice Coalition President, the Hon John Dowd AO QC.

Media is invited and there will be questions from the floor.

Stephen Seymour (USQ) will present *Making the Connection* that uses computers that prisoners take to their cells to do courses. Dr Jedidiah Evans (ACU) will discuss the *Inside Out* and *Learning Together* co-learning programs in Victoria and internationally. “This involves collaborative learning with university students and prisoners with the potential for Blackboard/Moodle to expand that work to virtual classrooms” said former Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia the Hon Elizabeth Evatt AC.

“In May 2017 private company BSI Learning took over education provision in NSW prisons, replacing qualified public teachers with Certificate IV trainers. CSNSW Assistant Commissioner Anne-Marie Martin will discuss the benefits of that privatised model of education. The NSW Teachers Federation will raise the negative aspects” said Mr Dowd.

“The rollout of computers in cells at the new prisons in Cessnock and Wellington is an encouraging step toward increasing educational opportunities for inmates” said Dr Evans. “A RAND Corporation report in 2013 concluded

that, on average, inmates who participated in correctional education programs had 43% lower odds of recidivating than inmates who did not.”

“Computer access will also allow arts and music classes to continue, as they are not only therapeutic but can also serve as gateway courses to education. Since the privatized model has been adopted they are no longer provided” said Ms Evatt.

Comments:

The Hon. John Dowd AO QC 0439 625007

The Hon. Elizabeth Evatt AC (by arrangement)

Dr Jedidiah Evans 0409 906892

Venue: Macquarie Room, NSW Parliament House

Time: Wednesday, 26th September 2018, 5.30pm-7.30pm

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