



Big Picture Goes Down Under

Across Australia, some small schools are being closed to make way for sprawling campuses that merge elementary, middle and high schools. Like everywhere else, students abilities are measured by tests that have no connection to their lives. The good news though, is that schools across Australia are beginning to challenge the idea that 'big is better'.

Over the past six months, Viv White and Elliot Washor and a group of Australian educational reformers have set up the first international arm of The Big Picture Company. *Big Picture Australia*. It is now a registered not-for-profit organization with the twin goals of spreading this philosophy as widely as possible and starting small schools in Australia. This workshop will explore these ideas...

We believe the Big Picture can be drawn, photographed and captured beyond your shores.

Why Australia?

Big Picture responds to the devastating educational effects of poverty and racism in urban America. We, too, have major inequalities in our educational system. Only 20% of our indigenous students finish high school and the gap between rich and poor students results is widening. We believe the Big Picture can be drawn, photographed and captured beyond US shores. Its design is robust, well researched and flexible.

What are we doing?

Elliot Washor and Dennis Littky have been named international consultants of Big Picture Australia and have granted us exclusive license on the intellectual property. In addition to starting schools, we are developing a network of Aussie educators interested in redesigning their existing schools to fit the Big Picture philosophy. We will support Australians to learn more about BPC. To help us build our capacity to do this work, we plan to establish partnerships with a few Big Picture schools.

In May of 2006, we hope to have two advisors and two seniors from a Big Picture School present their work to The Learning Choices conference on new educational models in Queensland, where we will formally launch our new company. This group will then be invited to visit Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne.