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Senator the Hon Kim Carr
Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email: senator.carr@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator Carr

We have noted your press release of Wednesday, 24 September 2008 regarding OPEN ACCESS AND RESEARCH.

You may wish to know, if you are not already aware, that the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) has been a consistent supporter of open access to research results and documentation for many years. In 1989 AARE created and now maintains a voluntary deposit and free digital dissemination system for its members' educational research conference papers. This is freely available on the internet but earlier research work has been available via ACER Cunningham Library for many years.

Here are some brief details of the current state of the publicly available archive of research information. This collection began well before the Australian Project for Sustainable Repositories (APSR) and all the AARE members' papers are also in PANDORA and the National Library of Australia.

There are some 5,000 full text papers in the collection and it will grow by about 300 papers after the AARE 2008 conference in December 2008. For more details see <http://www.aare.edu.au/confpap.htm> and a 2007 article in the collection <http://www.aare.edu.au/07pap/jef07610.pdf>.

The papers are used extensively. For details see AARE website statistics page <http://www.aare.edu.au/stats/index.htm>. The collection has been referred to as "The Down Under Goldmine" by northern hemisphere education researchers.

Recently a large donation of papers from 1978, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1984 has been given to AARE from the Department of Education, Training and the Arts, Queensland and with the assistance of ACER we will now digitize those papers and add them to the collection.

We welcome the attention which you are giving to free public access to research and the additional funding for this. We would be happy to assist if we can.

The AARE Digital Archive work is entirely voluntary and funded by the members of AARE in the public good. AARE receives no government funding at present. See www.aare.edu.au. The AARE Digital Archive work is coordinated by Peter Jeffery who may be contacted at pjef@aare.edu.au.

Yours sincerely

Professor Noel Gough
President, AARE 2008