



UPDATE 6 | November/December 2005

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Message from A/ED Strategic Initiatives

This is my final message for the year and like you, it has been busy. Most of the initiatives planned for 2005 have been implemented successfully, which is encouraging as I look ahead to 2006 when there will be much more activity happening in schools. I extend my gratitude to the many people who have contributed to the success of BBS, and I look forward to your continued support next year.

On behalf of the Building Better School Implementation Team, I wish you all the best for the Christmas and New Year period.

John Glasby

Middle Years

Thank you for your participation in the Stage One consultation process for the Middle Years. The Government has recently released *Making the Most of the Middle Years - A report on the community consultation for the Principles and Policy framework for the Middle Years of Education Stage 1* and endorsed the Policy and Principles Framework for the Middle Years. DEET will now convert this into the formal policy, which will be available for the start of the 2006 school year.

Looking ahead to 2006 We are now preparing for the Stage Two consultation process that commences in Term 1 2006. This will focus on the implementation of middle years approaches. Everyone will have an important role in this consultation, so make sure you have your say!

Some key dates for 2006 include:

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| 23 January | Middle Years Principals' Workshop (for those who participate in cluster meetings) |
| Weeks 1 to 5 | School and Cluster based discussions |
| Weeks 6 to 8 | Socom facilitate Territory wide consultation |

Professional Learning Communities

The successful applicants for the Professional Learning Communities recently participated in a two-day workshop to establish communities and to develop their action plans. Viv White and John Hogan were facilitators at the workshops, supported by Curriculum Services who will continue to work with project managers over the next 18 months. Two of the successful projects are showcased below.

Effective Secondary and Middle Schools Programs in Arnhem Land Professional Learning Community:

The schools involved in this project are Maningrida CEC, Shepherdson College, Milingimbi CEC, Ramingining, Nhulunbuy High School, Gapuwiyak and Yirrkala CEC.

This project aims to investigate effective secondary and middle years programs being used with Indigenous students in remote secondary schools in Arnhem Land. The project will provide opportunities for teachers to reflect upon their current practice, to learn from each other, to maximise opportunities for their students, and to investigate possible flexible modes of program delivery and integrated curriculum options. The project will also provide opportunities, through this reflection, to evaluate the current program offerings, and to inform programs in further accredited schools.

Northern Suburbs Middle Schools project:

There are 25 teachers from Sanderson and Dripstone high schools, Manunda Terrace, Wanguri, Nakara, and Anula primary schools participating in this project.

This project aims to develop a learning community that explores middle years pedagogy to support and enhance student learning.

The intention is to document teacher learning, changes to teacher practice and the impact this has on student outcomes in the middle years in order to share that information/learning with the wider education community. An associated goal of the work of the learning community is to provide opportunities for teachers to gain accreditation towards Masters programs and other qualifications related directly to Choice Theory.

MOVING THE TERRITORY AHEAD



Staffing Formula

The School Staff Allocation Model is seeking to design a transparent and equitable staffing allocation model for schools, based on the identified needs of students.

The new model will streamline the allocation of staff to schools. To this end, the project team is working with areas such as Student Services and Curriculum Services to incorporate their school staff allocations into a model. Since October 2005, the project team has been working closely with the Student Services Advisory Action Group (SSAG) on the Special Education School Resourcing Project. This project is developing a new method of allocating Special Education resources to schools and this will be incorporated into the new Schools Staff Allocation Model.

Looking ahead to 2006 The BPID Portfolio Principals recently received another update on the development of the new model and the AEU and CPSU will be briefed again in the coming weeks. Clusters are invited to put the new staff allocation model on the agenda for their first cluster meetings in February 2006. The model will also be presented at various forums in 2006.

Data Collection and Reporting

The project team has conducted two rounds of consultations, including undertaking a review of interstate education department systems through site visits and teleconferences. Work has commenced on an education and awareness program about the project. Furthermore, the project team has begun developing data processing and reporting procedures for student-level demographic, enrolment and attendance information.

Looking ahead to 2006 Next year will see student data reported upon in real rather than apparent terms. The first area to see this change will be student retention and progress. The analysis of student-level information will enable more detailed reporting of student enrolment, arrivals, departures and turnover. Student progress will be reported using MAP results and eventually NTCE data. Reporting will also include student attendance with reasons for absence. Furthermore, the analysis of staff-level reporting will provide valuable information about staff demographics, occupancy and length of service.

Indigenous Students' Leadership and Mentorship Program

The program has been successfully established with most students now working closely with their mentors. Mentors include teachers, health workers, Australian Defence Force personnel, musicians and traditional elders. Urban students came together in Darwin and many brought their mentors with them. Alice Springs and Nhulunbuy students and their mentors participated via teleconference. This proved an excellent opportunity for mentors to get to know each other.

Looking ahead to 2006 Starting Term 1 2006, students will be able to submit Educational Funding Requests to purchase additional materials or resources that will help them develop their particular skill or interest. Some students are thinking of purchasing laptops to assist with home study, or musical instruments and sound equipment to enhance their band or

musical interest. Other students are planning trips to Darwin or interstate, to participate in educational workshops and tour various universities and training colleges.

In the April school break, students take part in a three-day Leadership Camp. Many students have already suggested potential guest speakers or workshop facilitators who work in their area of interest.

Chief Executive's Student Forum

A hectic final term for schools saw the postponement of the pilot forum. Program structure, application procedure, selection criteria and program guidelines have been developed with considerable input from teachers, students and representatives from throughout DEET. New Chief Executive, Margaret Banks, is thrilled at the prospect of working directly with students to discuss educational issues.

Looking ahead to 2006 Keep an eye out early in 2006 when applications open for the Chief Executive's Student Forum. There are 16 places available for students in Years 10 – 12. Successful students will have the opportunity to discuss topical educational issues directly with the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is looking forward to meeting the inaugural group of students and has already suggested a number of ways in which the forums can be extended and developed.

Parents and Teachers Working Together

This new project will provide opportunities for young people and parents to assume a range of roles in educational forums and participate in decision-making.

The program will assist schools to develop specific programs to increase the knowledge, skills and experience of parents and teachers in working together to enhance young people's learning. In particular, the program will look to engage those parents who may be reluctant to become involved in the school community.

The program recognises that parents and caregivers have an important role to play in providing positive support to their children and encourage their attendance at school.

Programs for Young People to Undertake Leadership and Support Roles in their own Communities

Another new program currently under development, aims to assist schools to develop programs for young people to prepare them to undertake leadership and support roles in their own communities.

The program has a remote area focus and will look to help young community leaders. Schools will be working closely with communities to identify participants for the program. Participants will be provided with practical leadership skills that will assist them in their future endeavours.

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