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Message from A/ED Strategic Initiatives

Stage 1 of the Middle Years Consultations is now all but over, with a strong response received from schools and school communities. My special thanks goes to all those Principals and dedicated staff who made time to collect and collate individual responses into considered whole-school responses. Your responses have now been forwarded to the Consultants where they will be used to inform a Principles and Policy Framework in the form of a report to government.

What is already clear, from the responses received, is that there is much happening in schools that we can celebrate. A good many schools have embraced aspects of the middle years approaches, a few have moved further along the journey towards that goal. I believe that, even before the report is received, the consultation process has already achieved one very valuable objective ... it has caused us all to pause and reflect upon our teaching and learning practices. In doing so it has also caused schools to move closer to their constituents and to establish or confirm perceptions about what it is that they want from their schools for these important middle years of schooling. We need now to focus on how we will progress the middle years approach in our schools.

John Glasby

Distance Education

Recently, the tender for Interactive Distance Learning services was announced, with the successful tender for satellite services coming from Singtel Optus and for software services from M&S Consulting with REACT.

Since this announcement, planning and work around the required software upgrades have been taking place.

This news has also provided us with a clear picture of the requirements for the Interactive Distance Learning studio at Katherine School of the Air. Work is now well underway at the school to prepare the studio for the start of full time delivery and commencement is planned for the beginning of the 2006 school year. Kim Window, the Interactive Distance Learning leader at Katherine School of the Air, has been working hard with the DEET facilities unit to ensure that everything is moving along smoothly.

Professional Learning Communities

A large number of high quality applications were received from groups of schools with a vision for what could be achieved under this BBS initiative. The Professional Learning Communities steering group was eventually able to select ten applications to be supported and funded in their collaborative goals.

The successful applications met the declared priority target areas of:

- teaching and learning in the middle years (including teaching across the primary transition)
- teaching and learning in the senior years (including science, mathematics, flexible learning programs and VET)
- online learning in the middle and senior years
- assessment for learning in the middle and senior years.

The schools selected for assistance in forming these learning communities represent a true cross-section of Territory education. Represented are all regions and all school types in urban, rural and remote locations. Participating schools included senior colleges, high schools, primary schools and CEC's, some working with NTOEC others with Curriculum Services. The models proposed cut across the primary/secondary divide with some schools participating in two or three different projects simultaneously. The proposed collaboration of one successful project also involves two non-government schools working with their government counterparts; another combination serves to cement an exciting north/south collaboration. A full list of successful applicants and the focus work for their community is available on the BBS website.

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MOVING THE TERRITORY AHEAD



