

Focus 2007

Directions for Schools





FOCUS 2007

The *Plan for Government Schools 2004-2007* sets out the strategies for ensuring that all students in the public school system achieve the highest possible standards of learning.

Our schools have made excellent progress in achieving the objectives of the Plan.

Focus 2007 clarifies for school staff the priorities for 2007. It describes particular requirements related to student learning, behaviour, health and wellbeing and the expectations that all our staff will maintain the highest standards of professional conduct. The confidence of the public in the Department relies upon its ability to provide high quality education to all students in safe learning environments.

Focus 2007 also outlines the way in which central and district offices will support schools to address these priorities and to build on the progress made from 2004 to 2006.

I commend *Focus 2007* to you and trust that it will assist you and your staff in planning to deliver an excellent education to your students.

SHARYN O'NEILL
A/DIRECTOR GENERAL
January 2007

PRIORITIES FOR 2007: EXPECTATIONS OF PRINCIPALS

Curriculum Framework

- progress the full implementation of the *Curriculum Framework and Outcomes and Standards Framework*.

Standards in literacy and numeracy

- develop evidence based whole-school approaches to the teaching of literacy and numeracy in schools
- provide targeted support for those students not reaching the WALNA benchmark
- implement early intervention strategies, particularly in the early years of schooling
- closing the gap between our highest and lowest achieving students in literacy and numeracy, particularly Aboriginal students
- ensure effective whole-school implementation of the Aboriginal Literacy Strategy in RTS schools.

Building capacity in assessment, moderation and reporting

- provide opportunities for teachers to participate in moderation activities
- ensure teachers' judgements and system endorsed assessment tools are used to monitor, respond to and set targets for student achievement
- use the Department's templates for reporting to parents their children's progress and achievement twice a year.

Standards in science

- work with staff to improve teaching practice in science
- provide opportunities for teachers to participate in moderation activities in science to ensure consistent, comparable judgements on student achievement.

Standards of student behaviour, wellbeing and health

- ensure all students are provided opportunities to participate in two hours of physical activity each week in school time
- in partnership with parents and the community, ensure whole-school approaches to healthy eating habits are established and promoted through the services of the school canteen
- implement effective behaviour management strategies to promote student engagement in learning.

Professional standards and conduct

- ensure that all staff act in accordance with the Department's *Staff Conduct* policy
- ensure compliance with all Departmental policies, including complaint management processes.



PRIORITIES FOR 2007: CENTRAL AND DISTRICT OFFICE SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

Curriculum Framework

Central office

- develop syllabus, scope and sequence and practical resources for teachers
- provide support directly to the senior years of secondary schools, including through the Teacher Development Centres.

Standards in literacy and numeracy

Central office

- provide targeted support in schools where students have not reached the WALNA benchmark
- deploy *Getting It Right* literacy and numeracy specialist teachers to identified schools
- develop *First Steps* resources ensuring accessibility to all schools
- support the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Review recommendations
- provide a framework for whole-school approaches to literacy and numeracy in schools.

District directors

- monitor whole-school literacy and numeracy planning and subsequent improved outcomes, particularly for those students at risk
- support the delivery of *First Steps* professional learning opportunities
- provide direction and advice on early intervention strategies.

Building capacity in assessment, moderation and reporting

Central office

- develop a professional learning strategy on assessment for improvement
- expand support for moderation activities through the provision of online student performance exemplars
- develop a range of tools for early childhood assessment.

District directors

- provide assurance that schools are engaging in evidence based decision making on student and school improvement
- monitor and support capacity building among school staff for monitoring student outcomes, moderating judgements on student performance (including science) and reporting to parents.

Standards in science

Central office

- develop a *Making Consistent Judgements* professional learning strategy
- deploy Primary Science Project support teachers across the system.

District directors

- monitor the provision of appropriate pedagogical practice and improved outcomes for students in science.

Standards of student behaviour, wellbeing and health

Central office

- put in place research strategies to support and intervene for the most severe disruptive students
- provide support for professional learning in Fundamental Movement Skills in all districts for teachers in the early childhood phase of schooling
- provide professional learning for generalist classroom teachers and those in education support facilities and physical education teachers K to 10
- provide support and training to schools in the implementation of whole-school approaches to healthy food choices and their promotion through school canteens.

District directors

- monitor the implementation and effectiveness of behaviour management systems
- provide assurance that all students are given opportunities to participate in two hours of physical activity each week during school time
- monitor schools' compliance with the promotion of healthy food choices.

Professional standards and conduct

Central office

- establish a new Professional Standards and Conduct Division
- commence a process of planned and continuous improvement of the Department's policies and procedures aimed at giving effect to its policy of a safe and secure environment
- provide appropriate training relating to matters of professional conduct to strengthen standards across the system.

District directors

- focus on standards of professional conduct within the school review and performance management processes
- monitor and support schools' compliance with Departmental policies and procedures, including complaint management processes.

BUILDING ON PROGRESS FROM 2004 TO 2006

Syllabus development

The emphasis in 2006 was on providing support for teachers to consolidate their practice. Teacher resources with draft scope and sequences were developed to provide additional support for the ongoing implementation of the *Curriculum Framework* and reporting of student achievement using the *Outcomes and Standards Framework*. Development of syllabus materials in 2007 to assist teachers to deliver high quality education.

Aboriginal education

In 2006 the Aboriginal Literacy Strategy was delivered in 43 Remote Teaching Service (RTS) schools resulting in increased participation rates in WALNA. In 2007 the focus remains on closing the gap between our highest and lowest achieving students in literacy and numeracy, particularly for Aboriginal students. Intervention strategies, particularly in the early years of schooling, are paramount to improving student outcomes. This focus will be articulated in the School Accountability Framework and the Performance Management of Principals.

Raising the leaving age

In 2006 the focus was on supporting the change in legislation that saw the school leaving age raised to 16 years. This primarily involved providing new or additional programs designed to meaningfully engage young people in education and training or combinations of these. As a result a participation rate of 97% was achieved for all 16 year olds. The focus for 2007 will be on consolidating program offerings in schools and TAFEWA colleges and continuing preparatory work ahead of the forthcoming increase in the leaving age to 17 in 2008.

Courses of study

In 2006 three new courses of study were introduced into Year 11: English, Media Production and Analysis, and Engineering Studies with Aviation Studies in Year 12. Teachers completed five days of professional learning on the four new courses being introduced into Year 11 in 2007. In preparation for the TEE aligned courses being introduced in 2008, teachers completed three days professional learning in 2006 and will complete a further two days in 2007. Additional support will be provided to teachers in the implementation of courses of study through Teacher Development Centres.

Attendance

Student learning is linked strongly to regular attendance and participation in educational programs. Ensuring programs are relevant and engaging for learners will assist in improving school attendance. Schools must use detailed attendance data to plan interventions for those students who are at risk because of poor attendance. Schools are required to report on the achievement of targets during 2007.