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STRATEGIC PLAN

2014 = 2017 >

RIGHT SERVICE AT THE RIGHT TIME

BUILD A BETTER SYSTEM

ENGAGE CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

HIGHER STANDARDS OF LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT

IMPROVE HEALTH AND WELLBEING

IMPROVE AND INTEGRATE CHILD SAFETY



FROM THE ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I'm pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to this edition of the DECD Australian Curriculum News. The new [2014-2017 DECD Strategic Plan](#) outlines six priority areas for improvement that we'll deliver to the South Australian community over the next four years and how we'll achieve them. Our public education system must be characterised by high achievement, growth, challenge, engagement, and equity.

Higher standards of learning achievement is the priority area that is integral to our work with children and young people. Together we must strive to maximise each and every child and young person's learning to help them become the most successful learners they can be, confident individuals and informed citizens.

In this edition of the DECD Australian Curriculum News we highlight the work of the Numeracy and Literacy Unit in the context of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum and the *Great start - Strong Foundations - Powerful learners* numeracy and literacy strategy. Implementation of the Australian Curriculum provides the opportunity to focus on how we can help all young people leave school as confident communicators, capable of reading, writing and using digital media and mathematics in their everyday lives.

On 1 August the new weekly communications channel called LinkED commenced which is now being used to disseminate information from central office to schools and preschools.

We've taken this opportunity to review the existing two ways of communicating Australian Curriculum related information to you, that is, the DECD Australian Curriculum News and the DECD Australian Curriculum E-zine.

Now that we have the LinkED channel of communication we will publish one electronic newsletter each term and use the LinkED channel of communication to distribute this. Look for the link to future editions of the DECD Australian Curriculum News in the 'all staff' section of LinkED which leaders are forwarding onto their respective staff. In between editions of the newsletter there might be important Australian Curriculum information that we want you to know and this will also be included in LinkED.

I would like to acknowledge the quality work that is occurring in schools across the State as we implement the Australian Curriculum and focus on using engaging and high challenge pedagogy that contributes to improving students' achievement.

Deonne Smith
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ACARA UPDATE

Australian Curriculum website

Have you seen Version 7.1 of the [Australian Curriculum website](#) released on 27 August with some new features and iconography?

Updates include:

- **New icons for each general capability and for most cross-curriculum priorities:** In order to make the icons easily accessible and downloadable for third parties, many of the icons on the Australian Curriculum update have been updated.
- **Revised identification of general capabilities for English, Mathematics, Science and History, and new identification for all other learning areas and subjects:** General capabilities are now identified in content descriptions as well as in content elaborations for all subjects.
- **Updated cross-curriculum priority links for English, mathematics, science and history:** This only applies to Phase 1 subjects at this stage.
- **Improved navigation panel in the Curriculum page:** There is now a collapsible show/hide options for the curriculum browser and learning area pages to enable columns and the text to fit more readily on the screen.

PRIMARY MATTERS NEWSLETTER

Have you seen the [ACARA PRIMARY MATTERS](#) newsletter? It's a new quarterly update from ACARA's Primary Curriculum team.

This newsletter explains more about ACARA's assistance to primary schools across Australia, as well as providing an additional opportunity to provide feedback or raise questions in relation to primary matters.

POWERFUL LITERACY LEARNING THROUGH COACHING

Literacy coaches continue to play a key role supporting teachers to familiarise themselves with [Literacy as a General Capability](#) across all learning areas and subjects in the Australian Curriculum.

Coaches are using the ever-increasing number of digital resources being developed for Australian Curriculum implementation that assist teachers to develop their own integrated units of work, for example, [English for the Australian Curriculum](#), [Asia Education Foundation](#) and [Scootle](#).

Through collaborative planning discussions with individual teachers and in groups of teachers networking together, coaches have been able to guide a learning design process. Teachers and coaches are extending and deepening this planning process by using the key inquiry questions, particularly from the Australian Curriculum for [History](#) and [Geography](#).

Coaches are also supporting teachers to identify literacy-rich texts across a number of learning areas which can be excellent source materials to develop both reading comprehension skills and stimulus for particular content areas. Using a strategy known as **SCORE** (**S**kim and scan, **C**onnect and question, **O**rganise thinking, **R**ead and reflect; be the **E**xpert), teachers can prepare students for

independent reading using material which is also suitable for engaging students in 'close reading' activities to extend them intellectually.

This approach has been successfully used for both the Australian Curriculum: [History](#) and [Civics and Citizenship](#). Here students study a one-page text for 10-15 minutes every day for a week, with the teacher leading them through various reading comprehension and collaborative problem solving activities until they have reached a point in their learning where they can confidently showcase their content knowledge, read fluently and demonstrate overall mastery of the text. Having achieved this level of mastery students can then go on to plan their new goals for reading.

The Australian Curriculum subjects [History](#), [Geography](#), and [Civics and Citizenship](#) are part of the Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) learning area. HASS also includes the [Economics and Business](#) subject and the strategies described above are readily transferable when teaching this subject.

By working with a coach teachers are deepening their understanding about how the development of powerful literacy learners can be best supported. To find out more about literacy coaches go to: http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/literacy/a8_publish/modules/publish/content.asp?id=48410&navgrp=152

SCAFFOLDING LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

In many secondary schools teachers are observing each other's practice and collegiately critiquing and reflecting in order to support improved student literacy attainment in Australian Curriculum learning areas and subjects and SACE subjects. These teachers are using student achievement data and evidence to identify challenges students are experiencing in reaching desired outcomes.

For example, a Year 12 **Physical Education** class was not completing the required 'Issues Analysis' tasks to the same level as other aspects of the course. The teacher was keen to identify a range of strategies to help students write with greater clarity and purpose in the required genre. **Teaching for Effective Learning** (TfEL) domains 2.4 and 4.1 helped to inform the development and implementation of the following process. The collegiate process started with analysing the students' work and identifying that knowledge of text structure and ability to express ideas clearly, simply and logically were the two areas for improvement.

Together the teachers planned a teaching-learning cycle to scaffold the explicit teaching necessary to enable students to demonstrate their understanding and knowledge within the 'Issues Analysis' tasks. This included teaching the use of nominalisation to produce a more abstract and formal tone to a piece of writing. Student marks improved with over 50% of students achieving a B grade or better. This was impetus enough for the teacher to then share his learning with other members of the faculty and start developing a teaching-learning cycle that begins at year 9.

Another example of teachers working together to scaffold students' literacy achievement involved an early career science teacher who was keen to continue developing his knowledge of **literacy** within the **Australian Curriculum: Science**. The teacher identified student writing as an area of particular interest as students' writing lacked clarity and cohesion. Together the teachers decided to focus on developing the students' understanding of paragraph structures in academic writing as a tool for focussing student thinking and planning when producing written work.

Students participated in a range of teacher lead and collaborative learning tasks over several weeks that developed their ability to plan and write clear and concise paragraphs using subject specific texts and knowledge. While the creativity of the better writers was also supported by refining their knowledge of paragraphing structures, there were significant improvements in clarity of outcomes for struggling writers.

By actively participating in collegiate professional learning both teachers were able to identify areas for improvement within their teaching practice with clear links to improved student outcomes. They were able to successfully implement a range of new teaching strategies into their existing practice without disrupting or hindering the curriculum specific content learning of student's while supporting literacy acquisition skills within their learning area. This was further enhanced through the teachers sharing learning and developing supportive processes to implement explicit literacy teaching across other curriculum areas.



THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM AND NEWLY ARRIVED STUDENTS IN AUSTRALIA

The primary **Intensive English Language Program** (IELP) and the secondary **New Arrivals Program** (NAP) are early intervention programs providing specialist second language acquisition pedagogy for newly arrived students in Australia. Within the limited time in the IELP/NAP, students are prepared for the broad language demands and concepts of the Australian Curriculum with an understanding that these will take years to consolidate.

The Programs provide breadth in content knowledge while deepening English language proficiency. Using the expertise of IELP/NAP teachers in professional learning communities, **Australian Curriculum** content is modified to allow access to the curriculum, yet with high challenge learning. Topics include orientation to the practices of Australian society and community.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING IN IELP/NAP

Student achievement is measured using modified tools and/or expectations or ones designed for specific English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) purposes. The principal assessment tool is the **Language and Literacy Levels across the Australian Curriculum: EALD Students**.

Student progress is recorded in the **IELP Progress Report** which is closely aligned with the Language and Literacy Levels and the **Australian Curriculum Literacy Continuum**.

The IELP/NAP Mathematics and Numeracy Report assesses the learning outcomes of students with beginning or emerging English. It is aligned with the **Australian Curriculum: Mathematics** so that students are prepared for entry into mainstream settings and receiving teachers can easily map the next stages of learning onto current understandings to support the goal of successful transition.

The report comes in two parts:

- **IELP/NAP Maths and Numeracy ABC** for Reception -Year 2 content
- **IELP/NAP Maths and Numeracy DEFG** for content from Years 3-6.

In the IELP and NAP, teachers draw on the scope and sequence of the **Australian Curriculum** across several year levels to provide a range of entry points for students with a diverse range of experiences. Often there is a need to draw on content from lower year levels, where the functions and language to describe them are less complex. This structure allows a senior years teacher, for example to describe achievement of their Year 10 student as Level D instead of Year 3, respectfully acknowledging the student's legitimate and current capacity to demonstrate understanding.

The DECD Guideline **Reporting on Australian Curriculum in DECD schools Reception–Year 10 V2.0** provides advice about how to report achievements of newly arrived students who cannot yet fully access the Australian Curriculum. There is no requirement for schools to assign A–E grades or word equivalents in reporting on NAP - eligible students. For EALD students whose NAP eligibility has expired, there is a period of time when the school can negotiate the reporting arrangements with the student and their parents/carers.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY LEVELS ACROSS THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: EALD STUDENTS

Students for whom English is an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) require specific support to build Standard Australian English language skills required to meet the increasing demands of the [Australian Curriculum](#) across the years of schooling from Reception to Year 10. Mainstream and EALD specialist teachers can learn more about the development of Standard Australian English required by any student regardless of their language background by becoming familiar with the DECD [Language and Literacy Levels across the Australian Curriculum: EALD Students](#). This is possible because the [Language and Literacy Levels](#) detail the language required by any student to access the Australian Curriculum rather than describing the progression an EALD student might make when learning Standard Australian English.

It is primarily an assessment, monitoring and reporting document for all teachers, which can also be used to inform programming and planning. Click [here](#) for copies of the document and accompanying support materials. Click [here](#) to access professional learning resources.

The [Language and Literacy Levels](#) were developed with reference to:

- the [Australian Curriculum Literacy General Capability: Literacy Continuum across stages of schooling](#)
- the [Australian Curriculum](#) phase one subjects: English, Maths, Science and History, with particular links made to the English Language strand
- the ACARA [English as an Additional Language or Dialect \(EAL/D\) Teacher Resource](#).

SUPPORTING NUMERACY IMPROVEMENT

The **Numeracy Leaders' Network** and the **Leading Numeracy Improvement Program** are two initiatives of the Powerful Learners' Numeracy Team to support numeracy improvement, through the use of research-based high gain strategies in preschool and schooling contexts.

The **Numeracy Leaders' Network** is an opportunity for leaders to engage in professional learning and to network with colleagues sharing similar passions and professional challenges. The Network meets once each term and is also supported by online resources. The Network sessions utilise the skills and knowledge of national experts in the field and other personnel across Teaching and Learning Services as well as representatives from professional associations. The focus is on promoting the development of powerful learners in numeracy through specific references to the Early Years Learning Framework Australian Curriculum: Mathematics and the General Capabilities, in particular Numeracy, and Critical and Creative Thinking.

The **Leading Numeracy Improvement Program** supports leaders to improve numeracy outcomes in their sites and is currently being trialed with Local Partnerships groups. The program connects with the [Early Years Learning Framework](#), [Australian Curriculum](#), [SACE](#) and the pedagogical approaches outlined in the Teaching for Effective Learning (TfEL) framework. Working as part of a professional learning community, the leaders reflect on their site's current practices and are provided with tools and resources to support teachers to develop effective practices in numeracy across all learning areas. The program also supports leaders to use and manage data effectively to guide teaching practices with a focus on assessment for learning, promoting the TfEL- Learning Design and intellectually stretching all learners in order to achieve whole school numeracy improvement.

For further information about these programs contact grant.small@sa.gov.au.

OUTREACH EDUCATION SUPPORTS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

The Curator's Table is another quality DECD Outreach Education digital program to be offered to South Australian schools. It is a web-based and iPad compatible resource aligned with Years 6 and 9 Australian Curriculum: **History** and **Geography** and **SACE**. It has the potential to support the teaching of the General Capabilities **Ethical understanding**, **Intercultural understanding** and **Literacy**.

Selected sources (documents/media/objects and personal letters) have been brought together to support teachers' discussions with students about the significant contribution of German people in the settlement of South Australia. The first chapter centres around the experience of German South Australians at the time of World War I. This resource is made possible through a partnership between DECD and **History SA**.

Don't forget that the popular website and teacher resource **Changing Worlds: A South Australian story** can now be accessed via Scootle.

This is a web-based resource aligned with Years 4, 5 and 9 Australian Curriculum for **History** and **The Arts**. Selected artefacts, images and works of art from the South Australian Museum and Art Gallery of South Australia have been chosen to support teachers' discussions with students about the colonisation/invasion of South Australia.

