Information statement
8th MCEETYA meeting
Melbourne, 11 December 1997

Related files
No files present

Following a meeting of State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers for School Education in Melbourne on December 11, 1997, the Hon. Peter Adamson, MLA, Northern Territory Minister for Education and Training and 1997 Chair of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, announced that schools Ministers from all jurisdictions had approved progress toward a set of benchmarks in literacy (writing, spelling and reading) for Years 3 and 5 students in Australian schools. Final sign off by all States and Territories is expected early in 1998 (April) when vital stakeholders such as Boards of Study have signed off and teacher professional associations and leading academics have been consulted on the final proposal.

Benchmark standards describe a minimum standard of achievement at each year level. All States and Territories will report nationally on plans and performance against the benchmarks annually to MCEETYA. Planned reports will be published in the MCEETYA National Report on Schooling.

Benchmarks are brief and simply expressed summaries of student achievement written so as to be understood by most people in the community.

Development of the benchmarks has been the responsibility of a MCEETYA Taskforce representing all Australian governments and peak national non-government school authorities, working with Curriculum Corporation.

Ongoing work of the Taskforce will result in development of a similar set of benchmarks in speaking, listening and viewing (by April, 1998), and in the area of numeracy at about the same time.

The Taskforce will also report in April 1998 on progress towards establishing literacy benchmarks at Years 7 and 9/10 levels.

All Ministers agreed that this was a valuable and historic achievement and one which would assist greatly in the national reporting of the condition of Australian schooling. The benchmark materials will be disseminated to all Australian schools early in 1998.