

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Objectives for schooling in South Australia

Government schools

In October 1997, the South Australian Department for Education and Children's Services amalgamated with the Department of Employment, Training and Further Education to become the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE). The department is committed to providing high quality learning, teaching, care, employment and youth services within an integrated and supportive learning organisation and to continuous improvement in service and performance.

Priority objectives for the government schooling sector in 1997 were:

- *The early years*, with a focus on transition, on basic literacy and numeracy skills to help all children to achieve at the national profiles level one in all areas of learning, and on providing additional resources under the Early Years Strategy to help children with learning difficulties;
- *Quality learning and teaching*, focussing on curriculum development, provision of curriculum materials and professional development in teaching and learning. There was also a focus on developing a framework for middle schooling; developing Statewide standards in literacy and numeracy; providing parents with information about students' achievement from a sample using profiles; and improving pathways and options for senior students;
- *Achievement for everyone*, with the aims of encouraging more students to stay at school longer, improving support for students at educational risk and increasing school-industry links and the range of vocational education options for students. A plan to support the

learning of Aboriginal students was developed and additional options are now provided for gifted and talented students, including the establishment of secondary schools to provide programs for students with high intellectual potential;

- *Improving information technology services and infrastructure*, including continuation of a needs-based subsidy scheme for schools to buy computers, providing training and development, developing standards for using information and communication technology in the curriculum, and strengthening electronic communication between sites; and
- *Creative, futures-oriented planning*, including the release of a declaration for public education and children's services, the development of a system-wide planning, monitoring and reporting framework, and improving management of the department to implement the declaration and the strategic plan.

Catholic schools

Catholic schools in South Australia set priorities and implement initiatives to achieve the aims of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) which is committed to Catholic schools working in partnership with parents to educate young people in all dimensions of their lives, so that they are able to participate, to the best of their ability, in the communities in which they live. Priorities and initiatives in 1997 were:

- the development of a literacy strategy for 1998 and beyond;
- identifying strategies for system reporting of learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy;
- finalising the review of special education services begun in 1996;
- continuing the development of DUX software for school administration and finance purposes;

- pursuing consideration of preferred models of schooling for Catholic schools into the next century;
- finalising policies on the education of gifted and talented students, on the education of Indigenous students and on the assessment and reporting of student achievement;
- continuing the development of curriculum statements that provide guideline frameworks for Catholic schools in the development of their curriculum;
- continuing support of system projects relating to further development of curriculum areas, such as mathematics, vocational education and training (VET), and languages;
- introducing the newly developed scope and sequence document for religious education; and
- highlighting and promoting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Independent schools

The objectives for schooling in independent schools in South Australia were shaped by the specific educational and religious environment of each school. Schools were committed to developing policies and practices that focussed on quality in learning and teaching and to ensuring that accountability to parents and the school community reflected a commitment to fulfilling the potential of all students.

Many South Australian independent schools concentrated on improving their school's resources and teaching skills, while objectives relating to the spiritual development of students and changes and improvements to the curriculum were also emphasised. There were some unique objectives, such as aiming at bringing about genuine reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the school community and introducing a skills program to minimise bullying.

Particular initiatives in government schools

Foundations for the Future

After a period of broadly based community consultation, the Department for Education and Children's Services' declaration for South Australian public education and children's services, *Foundations for the Future* was launched in September. It was developed in consultation with key individuals and groups throughout the public education community, including parent groups.

Foundations for the Future is based on enduring values: trust honesty, integrity, responsibility, equity, respect, caring,

fairness, diligence and excellence. It declares that the prime purpose of public education and care is to develop all dimensions of the human intellect so that students can help make Australia a more democratic, cohesive, socially responsible, culturally rich, ecologically sustainable and internationally competitive nation.

It declares that, together with families and the wider community, we have a responsibility to provide the foundations for students' intellectual, physical, social and moral development. We share with families, the community, business, industry and the tertiary sector the responsibility to create a society which is capable of providing opportunities and employment for all its young people.

Foundations for the Future states that children's and students' learning is at the heart of all that we do. It sets out four key principles upon which we operate and which underpin the directions we will take in the future:

- a constant focus on quality and standards;
- equity and access to our services;
- accountability; and
- building partnerships between staff, learners, families and the community.

From the extensive consultation leading up to the drafting of the declaration, five overarching directions emerged and became the strategic directions to the year 2010. They were:

- developing the individual and society;
- achieving unity through diversity;
- strengthening community;
- creating a spirit of enterprise; and
- becoming global citizens.

Other key initiatives in government schools

The Department established the Child Abuse Prevention Task Group to review child protection measures and plan additional strategies to ensure that children have safe learning environments. Child protection has been strengthened by providing information to work sites to reinforce the legal obligations of mandated notifiers to report suspected child abuse. South Australia is well advanced in implementing the majority of the recommendations under the National Strategy to Prevent Paedophilia and other Forms of Child Abuse in Schools.

Work was finalised on a \$500,000 project of which the first phase is called 'Pathways for Planning and Programming in Schools', a resource to support teachers in planning their

teaching programs in the eight key learning areas. The package will be available in print and on the Internet. A database of teaching and learning resources, a comprehensive package of programs and units of work, will be developed during 1998.

The collection of the first sample set of student achievement information, for students in years 1–8, using the profiles in English, science, studies of society and environment and technology, occurred late in 1997. These together with the State data from the Basic Skills Tests add to the rich picture of student achievement and progress which will continue to be monitored by schools and the Department.

The School Entry Assessment program commenced in 1997, aimed at assessing children's literacy and numeracy development on entry to school. This assists teachers in meeting the needs of each child and builds on their existing assessment practices. It is expected that the program will be trialled in schools in 1998, with all schools becoming involved by the year 2000.

A wide range of training opportunities was offered to staff to assist in the teaching of children with learning difficulties and/or at educational risk. In South Australia, teachers' professional development can be accredited into the Graduate Certificate in Professional Practice (Education), University of South Australia.

Key initiatives in independent schools

In South Australian independent schools, the number of students with disabilities is increasing by approximately 20 per cent per year. The educational needs of the students enrolled are becoming more complex. To meet increased demands the sector's special education team, in addition to supporting schools with new enrolments, has a planned and coordinated approach to professional development of school communities in the area of disability. The professional development focus has three major strands: Inclusive Curriculum, Disability Legislation and Disability Awareness.

The accredited Independent Schools Board Incorporated (ISB) Inclusive Teaching Professional Development Program, available to teachers in primary and secondary schools in the non-government sector, has been developed in response to an expressed need from teachers for strategies to include all students in their classrooms.

Continuing this focus, junior primary teachers in the metropolitan area and the Riverland were offered speech therapy workshops to assist them in developing curriculum

strategies to support students with speech and language difficulties in the classroom. Secondary special education teachers had the opportunity to participate in workplace assessor training through the Transition Support Project. This has assisted students with disabilities to participate in vocational education and training in South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) programs at the post-compulsory level. During 1997, many independent schools began to implement a range of vocational education programs utilising the funds provided by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA).

Commonwealth resourcing

Government schools

In 1997, the Commonwealth provided \$17.17m towards capital projects in government schools in South Australia. There were 14 capital projects funded by the Commonwealth and completed both physically and financially during 1997. The most common types of projects were the construction of additional classrooms, refurbishment of existing facilities including classroom support space and libraries, and replacement of sub-standard transportable buildings in primary schools; and upgrades and improvements to science, art and music facilities in secondary schools. Boarding facilities were also provided for Aboriginal students from Anangu/Pitjantjatjara lands studying in Adelaide.

Catholic schools

The Commonwealth provided \$3.77m towards capital projects to the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) Inc. Block Grants Authority (BGA). These funds were used for General element projects for capital development of new and existing places.

Of the 13 projects funded by the Commonwealth and completed both physically and financially during 1997, the most common types of work undertaken and facilities provided by construction, refurbishment and alterations were:

- administration facilities, staff and student facilities and amenities, general learning areas; and
- specialist learning areas including computer rooms and laboratories, design and technical facilities, resource centres, senior students study hall, and multipurpose learning areas.

The Commonwealth also provided the Catholic sector with \$90.27m in General Recurrent Grants for 1997.

Independent schools

In 1997, the Commonwealth provided \$2.24m towards capital projects in the South Australian independent school sector.

Of the 11 capital projects funded by the Commonwealth and completed both physically and financially during 1997, the range of work undertaken and facilities provided included:

- construction of general learning areas, involving site preparation, furniture and equipment;
- installation of library catalogue facilities;
- construction of student amenities and administration facilities;
- refurbishment of science laboratories; and
- revision and redevelopment of master plans in both primary and secondary schools.

Independent schools who receive assistance from the Commonwealth greatly appreciate this valuable form of assistance. However in practice very few independent schools are able to attract such funding and must therefore rely very heavily upon parents and wider school communities.

The ISB Special Education Program continues to fund, as a priority, small items of capital equipment and building modifications, which are essential for students with disabilities to access the curriculum. In 1997, all applications were granted with \$47,000 being allocated to funding items such as ramps, toilet modifications, modified computer keyboards, car park spaces and custom made chairs and desks.

The independent sector also received \$51.94m in Commonwealth General Recurrent Grants in 1997.

School-industry links

South Australia's three schooling systems have worked together to establish school-industry working groups in approximately ten industry areas, with each system assuming responsibility for designated industries. In this way, there will eventually be working groups for all industries and school-industry resource packs will be developed for each industry.

Initial efforts have identified and linked key stakeholders and regular forums to inform and link school-based VET coordinators have been planned. Each system has produced



Murray Bridge High students with local businessman, Murraylands Computer and Office Shop.

its own newsletter to highlight issues and school activity. The cross-system *Information Update* that will have contributions from Registered Training Organisations (RTO), the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA), industry and other associated bodies is currently being produced.

SSABSA consulted widely and developed, with the schooling systems, a policy entitled *Recognition of VET Outcomes Towards the SACE*. Professional development on this policy will assist the expansion and consolidation of school-industry links during 1998.

The Intersectoral Relations Branch of the Department worked with the schooling systems to develop and publicise a VET in SACE Arrangements (VISA) process that seeks to assure quality and recognition across VET in schools. This will be further reviewed in 1998.

Government schools

Ready, Set, Go, a school-to-work initiative, was a major feature in government schools during 1997. The Department coordinated support for enterprise education, key competencies, work placement in the SACE programs, community service placements, district careers advice and regional VET development and coordination programs. Strategic alliances were forged with the State Training Development Board in designing programs based on the national training package.

The "Go" component of the program (work placements) was in place by the end of 1997. Over \$3m of funding was allocated for work placements in SACE, students at risk work placement, community service placement and regional VET coordination programs. Of this figure, \$1.17m was ANTA funding and approximately \$2m was State Government funding.

Preliminary feedback from schools and districts indicates a broadening of the curriculum with a focus on students'



New Apprenticeships in South Australian independent schools.

needs and increasing pathways within academic and vocational provisions. Most districts have strategic plans for coordinating work placements, marketing VET programs and establishing employer networks. An evaluation of work placements was finalised at the end of 1997 and current indications are that 65 programs were developed in 40 schools with the estimated number next year expected to be 300.

Catholic schools

Approximately 700 female and 360 male students from Catholic schools recorded some level of VET activity during 1997. Greatest participation was recorded at Stage One of SACE (year 11) and the progression to a second year of programs will result in greater activity at Stage Two (year 12). In addition, recent government directives, and efforts to avoid disruption in year 11 and 12 will result in activity occurring at year 10 level.

Most of this activity included little workplace learning or other evidence of substantial industry links. Greater time and energy is required to increase these links by educating schools and industry on the scope and sustainability of their partnerships. The popularity of office and hospitality streams and the enthusiastic implementation of VET into some all-girls schools could best explain the greater female numbers.

Most programs and linkages have occurred in the office, tourism, hospitality, furniture, building and construction, metals and engineering and electrical/electronics streams. The scope will expand to match student interest and State Training Authority guidelines to cover information technology, community services, health, sport and recreation, horticulture, viticulture and the arts.

Greater agreement is being reached between industry, training providers and schools on what is a suitable framework for a VET in schools program. Given reasonable time for piloting and professional development, further program improvement and expansion should result in 1998.

Independent schools

Most VET in schools programs in South Australian independent schools are delivered through the cross-sectoral arrangements known as VISA (VET in SACE Arrangements). There was rapid expansion of VISA during 1997, so that by December fifteen independent schools had developed such arrangements. It is expected that during 1998, independent schools will develop further arrangements for the delivery of VET programs particularly in the information technology, multimedia and arts industry areas. One independent school has gained status as a Registered Training Organisation.



Establishing school-industry links in South Australian independent schools—viticulture.

Approximately 700 students from independent schools in South Australia participated in vocational education programs in 1997.

A range of strategies was adopted to enhance the links between schools and industry. These included:

- close liaison with industry training advisory boards/councils, group training companies and personnel from industry Skill Centres; and
- an information strategy that resulted in seminars for teachers which focussed on the House of Representatives paper *Youth Employment: a working solution*, and the distribution of brochures and resource kits publicising the ways industry could be involved in schools.

Indigenous students

Government schools

The Department of Education, Training and Employment is firmly committed to the Reconciliation process. The Chief Executive is co-Chair of the South Australian Advisory Committee on Reconciliation. He has responsibility for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (NATSIEP) Working Group, which reports to the Conference of Education Systems Chief Executive Officers (CESCEO), the national forum of State education chief executive officers. South Australia coordinated the development of national *Towards Reconciliation* curriculum materials to support schools in Reconciliation Week 1998.

A five-year plan to support the learning of Aboriginal students was developed in 1997. The plan outlines the Department's intention to ensure that Aboriginal children and students are successful learners, not limited in choices about their lives, and are active participants in schooling, with the outcome of full participation in the social, political and economic processes of South Australian society.

A Secondary Schools Principals network was established to focus specifically on Aboriginal student issues. A strategy for senior secondary Aboriginal students was implemented by SSABSA and planning was commenced to develop a coordinated approach between TAFE, universities and SSABSA to address the needs of senior secondary Aboriginal students.

In 1997, there were 40 Aboriginal teachers in government schools and 161 Aboriginal Education Workers (AEWs) supporting Aboriginal students' learning. A 14 per cent

salary increase and the implementation of a new career structure for AEWs were agreed. In all, a total of 357 Aboriginal personnel were employed during 1997; of those, 272 were specifically employed to teach Aboriginal culture, history or languages.

Fifty Aboriginal young people undertook a traineeship for AEWs in 1997. In 1998, a further 50 will be trained, 30 in country areas and 20 in the metropolitan area. An employment and leadership strategy for Aboriginal employees is being implemented.

Professional development is a departmental priority, both for Aboriginal personnel and for other personnel involved in teaching Aboriginal children and students and the teaching of Aboriginal studies. During the year, 247 Aboriginal people participated in professional development programs to support Aboriginal students' learning. Programs included Contextualising Maths, English Language Acquisition and Aboriginal Perspectives Across the Curriculum (APAC).

All junior secondary courses are now available for on-site delivery on the remote Anangu Pitjantjatjara lands. The courses, written for an Anangu community context according to the national statements and profiles, are used throughout Australia for Indigenous students.

Numerous curriculum documents and support resources have been prepared for teachers in Anangu Schools including:

- the *Skills for Self Determination* statement and community awareness video. This program focusses on students acquiring the skills for leadership in Anangu communities;
- a junior secondary literacy production with a focus on Anangu culture and raising self-esteem among Anangu students;
- English as a Second Language (ESL) case studies designed to support teachers in the delivery and assessment of English teaching strategies;
- a training CD ROM in teaching English as a second language; and
- an early intervention in literacy/numeracy training program for Anangu and non-Anangu students.

The Commonwealth funded a program to provide education and training to develop the skills of Aboriginal people to participate in educational decision-making. A project officer was employed to coordinate a State conference which was attended by 50 Aboriginal personnel. Outcomes included the identification of training and professional development needs and input into the Plan for Aboriginal Education.



Aboriginal Studies at Flinders Park Primary School, SA

Aboriginal languages were taught in 45 government schools with 5,173 students enrolled in Indigenous languages programs. More than 48,000 students took Aboriginal and Cultural Studies. As visiting speakers/lecturers, 266 Aboriginal people presented sessions in support of cultural studies programs.

A comparison of students' 1997 year 5 basic skills test results with their 1995 year 3 results has shown that Aboriginal students as a group made the greatest gains in both literacy and numeracy.

A new accommodation centre was opened to house Aboriginal students from Anangu lands while they study in Adelaide.

Catholic schools

To better respond to the needs of Indigenous students, Catholic education in South Australia established processes for early monitoring of the progress of Indigenous students.

Professional development and support mechanisms were also established to enable teachers to relate more significantly to the learning needs and outcomes of Indigenous students. In particular, a collaborative structure whereby members of the Indigenous Education Team work with teachers of Indigenous students and literacy and numeracy consultants ensures that teaching strategies, reporting and assessment procedures and understanding of Indigenous learning styles are built in to enable positive learning outcomes for Indigenous students.

Professional development for teachers in Catholic schools has continued to be a priority. Professional development focussed on curriculum implementation of Indigenous education or of Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum. In addition, the professional development centred on increasing teachers' understanding of Indigenous

culture and the implications for teaching Indigenous students. This was carried out through a course for teachers, *Teaching Indigenous Children and Students*.

Independent schools

The independent school sector acknowledges the multiple and complex issues which impact on Indigenous students. The factors involve personal and family issues, socioeconomic and health issues, historical and current social factors such as ongoing exposure to racism, poor literacy and numeracy skills, and differences between family and school values. Even where the values have common ground, there are often great differences in the perception of the appropriateness of the curriculum and the teaching pedagogy.

Supporting the literacy and numeracy needs of Indigenous students can only result in effective outcomes if the multiple issues for any particular student are acknowledged and addressed.

During 1997, the Independent Schools Board initiated a student mentoring project, which targeted specific students at the secondary level and took an holistic approach to establishing a support program in the school. Factors which made the outcomes so successful included the personal relationship developed through the mentoring role, and the strong links established between parents and school as a response to what was perceived as a partnership rather than interference.

A response was made to one of the key issues articulated by students as significant in providing a barrier to schooling success — the level of cultural insensitivity and racism in the schools. During 1997, a comprehensive Indigenous awareness program was delivered to 60 teachers in independent schools. This was regarded as a significant starting point, and resulted in greater numbers of schools implementing Aboriginal studies and seeking to introduce Aboriginal perspectives into a number of curriculum areas. There was an increase in the number of Aboriginal speakers who presented sessions on cultural understandings in schools.

Baseline data was not available in 1997, however, reporting from programs involving targeted funding indicate documented improvements in attendance and commitment to schooling by students involved. At the SACE level, the completion rate is higher than the reported national average, with the five year 12 students all completing SACE and entering tertiary studies.

Languages other than English (LOTE)

Government schools

A new ten-year plan for languages education, 1998–2008 in government primary and secondary schools was conceptualised in 1997. This plan was based on the Lo Bianco review *Consolidating Gains, Recovering Ground: Languages in South Australia*, and took into account the issues raised by schools and other stakeholders during the extensive consultation period.

In 1997, there were 122,177 students studying a LOTE in government schools which represents 67 per cent of the total number of students. In total, 84.7 per cent of schools offered at least one LOTE and 85 per cent of primary students and 33 per cent of secondary students studied a LOTE. In government primary schools, statistical information regarding gender is not collected. In secondary schools approximately 44 per cent of students studying a LOTE are males and 56 per cent are females.

In 1997, there were 27 languages taught in government schools, of which nine were Aboriginal languages.

Curriculum support materials were developed and advisory support was provided to teachers and managers of programs in Aboriginal languages, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Indonesian, Japanese, Modern Greek, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Students of non-English speaking backgrounds were supported in studying their first language through the provision of 20 full-time equivalent teachers to support mother-tongue language development in primary schools and through the South Australian Secondary School of Languages.



South Australian government school students studying LOTE.

Table 1. Number of secondary students studying each LOTE, by gender

Name of LOTE	Male	Female	Total
Arabana	3	8	11
Chinese	693	708	1,401
French	1,538	2,254	3,792
German	2,117	2,571	4,688
Indonesian	964	1,336	2,300
Italian	623	974	1,597
Japanese	2,018	2,507	4,525
Kaurna	65	72	137
Khmer	42	31	73
Latin	17	15	32
Modern Greek	452	377	829
Ngarrindjeri	17	11	28
Pitjantjatjara	8	5	13
Serbo/Croatian	2	—	2
Spanish	805	935	1,740
Vietnamese	131	126	257

Source: Department of Education, Training and Employment

The goal for the new languages plan is that by the year 2008, all students through R–10 will be learning a language other than English in quality programs that are an integral part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Quality language programs in government schools will be supported by the development and implementation of standards. Program standards will identify the pre-conditions necessary for effective management and delivery of language programs and growth in student learning. Language-specific student standards will articulate the learning outcomes of students in a range of settings and programs. Teacher standards will describe the minimum competencies for teachers in terms of both proficiency and teaching pedagogy.

Catholic schools

In Catholic schools, there has been a 12.6 per cent increase in the number of students participating in language programs in the period 1994–97.

Achievements in LOTE for Catholic schools included the continued growth in language study opportunities for students through the implementation of new programs in primary schools and the offering of an additional language in secondary schools. Several schools have introduced accelerated courses for senior students. The rewriting of the SACCS policy statement on languages has focussed discussion on the concept of languages as a key learning area.

Table 2. Number of government schools offering each LOTE, by level of school

<i>Name of LOTE</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Combined</i>	<i>Special</i>	<i>Total</i>
Adnyamathanha	3	–	1	–	4
Antikirinya	–	–	2	–	2
Arabana	1	1	1	–	3
Auslan	1	–	–	–	1
Chinese (Mandarin)	30	16	2	–	48
French	50	32	14	–	96
German	81	39	25	–	145
Indonesian	69	18	21	1	109
Italian	65	13	2	–	80
Japanese	79	32	6	–	117
Kaurna	1	2	1	–	4
Khmer	11	–	1	–	12
Latin	–	1	–	–	1
Luritja	1	–	–	–	1
Modern Greek	36	12	2	–	50
Narunga	–	–	1	–	1
Ngarrindjeri	5	1	–	–	6
Persian	3	–	1	–	4
Pitjantjatjara	7	1	3	–	11
Polish	8	–	1	–	9
Russian	1	–	–	–	1
Serbian	2	–	–	–	2
Serbo/Croatian	2	2	–	–	4
Spanish	32	9	9	1	51
Turkish	1	–	–	–	1
Vietnamese	24	6	1	–	31
Wirangu	–	–	2	–	2

Source: Department of Education, Training and Employment

Table 3. LOTE in SA Catholic Schools

<i>LOTE</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Number of students</i>		
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Vietnamese	4	166	160	326
Spanish	4	388	414	802
French	12	375	1,512	1,887
Italian	67	7,678	9,143	16,821
Japanese	14	1,530	1,453	2,983
German	5	385	194	579
Latin	1	57	0	57
Chinese	5	734	430	1,164
Indonesian	11	1,117	989	2,106

Source: Catholic Education Office

Significant links have been developed between languages and vocational education initiatives. This has resulted in joint seminars during 1997 and planning for teacher professional development in 1998.

In Catholic primary schools there is growing interest in content-based language teaching/learning (ie where other areas of study are delivered in a target language, for example technology delivered in Japanese). Several schools are adopting this approach and considerable professional development is preparing language teachers for the demands of content-based programs.

Teacher training is a system priority. Release time is provided to facilitate participation in programs organised by language consultants. The Catholic Education Office provides financial support and release time to allow

teachers to begin or continue formal study at tertiary level in pre- and post-graduate courses which promote linguistic proficiency and excellence in pedagogy. Scholarships for overseas study have been offered through National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) funds for teachers of Asian languages in Catholic schools.

Teacher availability considerably influences the choice of language offered by schools. With the exception of Italian, all languages suffer from a lack of well-qualified teachers. The system encourages the retraining of language and other teachers so that they will be prepared for future programs.

Research in 1997 focussed on content-based and partial immersion programs. Final reports were written on two semi-immersion programs and the findings have informed teacher professional development and discussions with principals interested in alternative programs.

Independent schools

Independent schools in South Australia continue to have a strong commitment to LOTE and 11 languages were taught in 1997. LOTE teachers maintain a strong support network. Coordinated and systematic opportunities are provided for LOTE teachers to be involved in professional development and curriculum development programs through collaborative networks with other sectors and agencies. Support is given for teachers in independent schools to undertake approved courses of study either in-country or within Australia to upgrade their language proficiency and their skills and knowledge in languages methodology.

In independent schools, emerging issues in LOTE education are continuity in transition from primary to secondary and the use of information technology to enhance LOTE programs.

The NALSAS project provided opportunities for teachers of Asian languages in independent schools to be involved in professional development and curriculum development through collaborative networks with other system sectors and agencies in the form of intensive professional development opportunities, seminars/workshops and network groups/hub groups.

Scholarships were granted to teachers of Asian languages to undertake approved courses of study either in-country or in Australia to upgrade their language proficiency and their skills and knowledge in languages pedagogy.

Grants were provided to independent schools to support projects at primary and secondary level to enhance and expand Asian language programs. Projects funded from direct grants to schools supported the development of curriculum materials. Major curriculum development projects were a Japanese Revision Guide and audio tape, and *Developing Listening Skills* – a package for teachers of senior secondary Indonesian.

Technology

Government schools

The DECStech 2001 Project, which is responsible for the implementation of the Department of Education, Training and Employment's Information Technology Plan, was launched at the beginning of 1996. This key government initiative saw the injection of \$75m to support the implementation of the plan over a five-year period from 1997–2001. The project includes a subsidy scheme for desktop computers, curriculum development, staff training and development and infrastructure support.

The integration of technology with key learning areas is becoming widespread practice in South Australian schools. Teachers are increasingly becoming skilled in integrating programs so that students are able to develop and apply their knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

Teachers have been supported through programs such as the Technology Focus School Program which operated in South Australia from 1995–1997. Primary and secondary schools focussed on providing intensive technology programs with emphases on teaching and learning methodology and

Table 4. LOTE in SA independent schools

LOTE	No of students		
	Male	Female	Total
Chinese	1,524	1,238	2,762
Indonesian	1147	1002	2149
Japanese	1,922	2,497	4,419
French	2,038	3,011	5,049
German	2,784	3,119	5,903
Hebrew	40	43	83
Italian	627	554	1,181
Latin	270	12	282
Malaysian	38	29	67
Modern Greek	192	164	356
Polish	10	4	14

Source: South Australian Independent Schools Board

modelling good practice across all strands of the technology statement.

A training and development strategy was implemented to ensure an appropriate information technology standard in government schools and centres by the end of 1998. For the two years to the end of 1998, \$5m was allocated for information technology training and development in addition to other training and development funding. In term one, \$3m was distributed to support the achievement of three defined outcomes for training and development. Those outcomes were: the use and application of software and programs, incorporating information technology in classroom programs and using computers for administration purposes (for example recording student achievement). Principals were required to report progress towards achieving these outcomes in their annual reports at the end of 1997.

A number of professional development and training courses incorporated the use of interactive computer technology through online links and CD ROMs. The arts, studies of Asia and key competencies were areas in which this occurred during 1997.

A DECStech 2001 Curriculum Working Group was established to investigate the gathering and dissemination of good information technology (IT) practices, units of work with an IT focus and guidelines for evaluating software, as well as the provision of professional development. Action research in schools is being undertaken on the use of information technology in literacy and socioeconomic disadvantage.

Since 1990, the Technology School of the Future has expanded its programs and its role. It now caters for more than 6,000 students each year and has become one of the best recognised training venues in Australia for teachers in the use of technology in the curriculum. During 1997, the school supported over 7,000 teachers in workshops and hosted a number of South Australian, interstate and overseas

visitors interested in the methodology and operations of the school.

The school ensures access to its programs for all educationally disadvantaged groups through subsidised and preferential bookings and special programs.

Catholic schools

In 1997, a strategic plan for information technology was considered and accepted as a blueprint for information technology in schools. The strategic plan emphasised the needs for schools to provide not only the necessary infrastructure but to provide support for professional development. The *Guidelines for the Implementation of Information Technology* was distributed to each school as part of the plan. A grant of \$80.00 per student was also distributed to Catholic primary schools in late 1997.

The plan also emphasised the importance of the Internet as a resource for schools. Catholic education has developed its own website with links to the National Catholic Education Commission website and has contributed to the EdNA initiative.

The rollout of a standard administrative software system, DUX, continued in schools. By the end of 1997, 65 Catholic schools were using DUX. In addition, a centralised database system for aggregating system data was developed. Implementation and collection of data is to begin in 1998.

Independent schools

The peak body for the independent sector established an IT Reference Group consisting essentially of teachers and managers of information technology and computing studies. The group aims to examine current and emerging issues and to provide advice to schools, especially small and rural schools which may not have staff with expertise in these areas. The Group relates to State and industry bodies to effectively obtain information and advice about trends and contemporary standards.