

## K–6 Linkages Website

[www.bosnsw-k6.nsw.edu.au](http://www.bosnsw-k6.nsw.edu.au)

The Board's K–6 Linkages website has been designed to provide advice to teachers on approaches to integrating outcomes and content across the six primary syllabuses.

A *K–6 Contents Link* gives detailed examples of links in content across all six key learning areas. These include:

- mapping of links across all KLAs of commonly taught units
- mapping of skills and key terms in all KLAs
- suggestions for using computer-based technologies in English and HSIE, with suggestions for other KLAs to follow

- learning experiences for developing fine motor skills across KLAs. Examples of integrated units of work developed by teachers can be found on the website and can be downloaded as Word documents. Related work samples are also supplied.

The integrated units of work are designed to highlight the potential for innovation in primary curriculum teaching practices. They show some of the many different approaches developed in schools by teachers in developing integrated learning programs. This includes a case study of the process by which one school maps its current curriculum.

Several new units with an Aboriginal perspective have recently been added to the website. They include a focus on:

- the use of technology by Aboriginal communities ranging from the traditional to the contemporary
- the introduction of mathematics concepts through aspects of contemporary and traditional Aboriginal culture
- providing opportunities for students to explore the concepts of belonging to groups of people and to places
- perspectives about the early years of the colony.

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# Primary Matters

## POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN MATHEMATICS K-6



### Developing the new syllabus

In 2001, the Board of Studies developed a writing brief to revise the K-6 Mathematics syllabus. Groups of practising teachers, academics and mathematics educators were involved in developing the content, outcomes and teaching and learning activities for a new K-6 Mathematics syllabus.

During Term 1 this year, the Draft K-6 Mathematics syllabus was distributed to schools and made available for comment on the Board's website. Structured sample group meetings and meetings with key groups and individuals were held across the state to gain feedback on the draft syllabus.

During the consultation period the Office received 351 survey responses. More than 100 teachers participated in the structured

sample group meetings in Moree, Dubbo, Port Macquarie, Batemans Bay, Griffith, Parramatta and Sydney.

The feedback revealed a positive reaction to the draft syllabus. Teachers were particularly supportive of the overview of learning from Early Stage 1 to Stage 4, as it demonstrates a coherent continuum of learning for students and their transition to secondary school. Many valuable suggestions were made during the consultation process, directly resulting in changes to the draft syllabus.

### Support Materials

Support documents are currently being developed to assist teachers in their implementation of the revised syllabus. During Term 2, 2002, 111 teachers participated in trialling model assessment tasks

and collecting work samples. The assessment tasks together with the student work samples will be included in the package of support materials for the new syllabus. This package is currently being prepared for distribution to all primary school teachers.

Another group of teachers was engaged during the first week of the April holidays to write teaching and learning units for the new syllabus. These units will be trialled during Terms 3 and 4 2002 and work samples will then be collected to become part of the syllabus support materials package for schools.

The new K-6 Mathematics syllabus package will be distributed to all primary teachers during Term 4 this year.

**Schools interested in participating in trialling the teaching and learning units during Terms 3 and 4 are asked to contact Karen Buck on phone (02) 9367 8341 or by email [buck@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](mailto:buck@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au)**

# Visit to Armidale City School

**John Ward, General Manager**

Late last term I spent two days at Armidale City School. During my time at the school, I was very fortunate to get first-hand access to high quality teaching in K-6 classrooms.

The teachers welcomed me to their classrooms and gave me the chance to join a variety of learning activities. In a *Count Me In Too* mathematics group I was able to see the markedly differing levels of involvement and achievement by students and the teaching skill being used to engage them. I could also see the continuous assessment the teacher was making of the learning progress of each student. She was constantly questioning the students and identifying the approaches to numbers that each was using.

Watching number-recognition skills being developed at Early Stage 1 let me see the Board's syllabus requirements being transferred into classroom practice. Once again their teacher was continually assessing progress, tracking where each student was at in developing recognition and sequencing skills and building his or her further learning from that point. I was able to gain an appreciation of the time that is needed to develop the concepts across a whole student group. We discussed this need for sufficient time to develop students' skills in



relation to the Board's new Mathematics K-6 syllabus that will be available to schools later this year.

It was a similar story for word-recognition skills, where the Principal and I were called on to help students with a matching exercise – built around the body parts of a duck – as children prepared for an afternoon environmental excursion to nearby Dumaresq Creek. Students were learning at different rates and in different ways.

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In a Year 5 classroom, students were applying their technology skills to art making. Once again the stages of the children's skill development covered a significant range as the teacher was assessing their progress and varying her teaching accordingly.

Whatever lesson I saw, teachers were focusing on the outcomes set down in syllabuses and without exception, students were achieving high quality learning based on skilled pedagogy.

I particularly valued the discussions I was able to have with these teachers. They reminded me that with a full set of KLA syllabuses now in schools, teachers are seeking a period of stability to enable them to consolidate their



approaches to programming. They recognise that choices have to be made about the content and skills they will have time to target during the primary years. An important issue for them is the tracking of the experiences of all students during their primary schooling so that students are assured of proper scope and sequence of study. At Armidale, teachers had very effective systems in place to address this.

It was clear that experienced teachers are making choices about the balance of KLA experiences for their students. There is a mixed response about whether the Board and systems should provide more guidance about such choices. Some feel that clearer specification of core topics would help. Others believe that teachers themselves can best make such decisions locally. In their view, a period of stability around the current syllabuses, along with examples of flexible models for addressing KLA outcomes over the primary years, would be the most helpful approach.

In either case, my visit underlined the importance of engaging in wider discussion with primary teachers to identify the issues that need addressing to further assist teachers to develop programs that will best achieve their teaching and learning goals for their students.