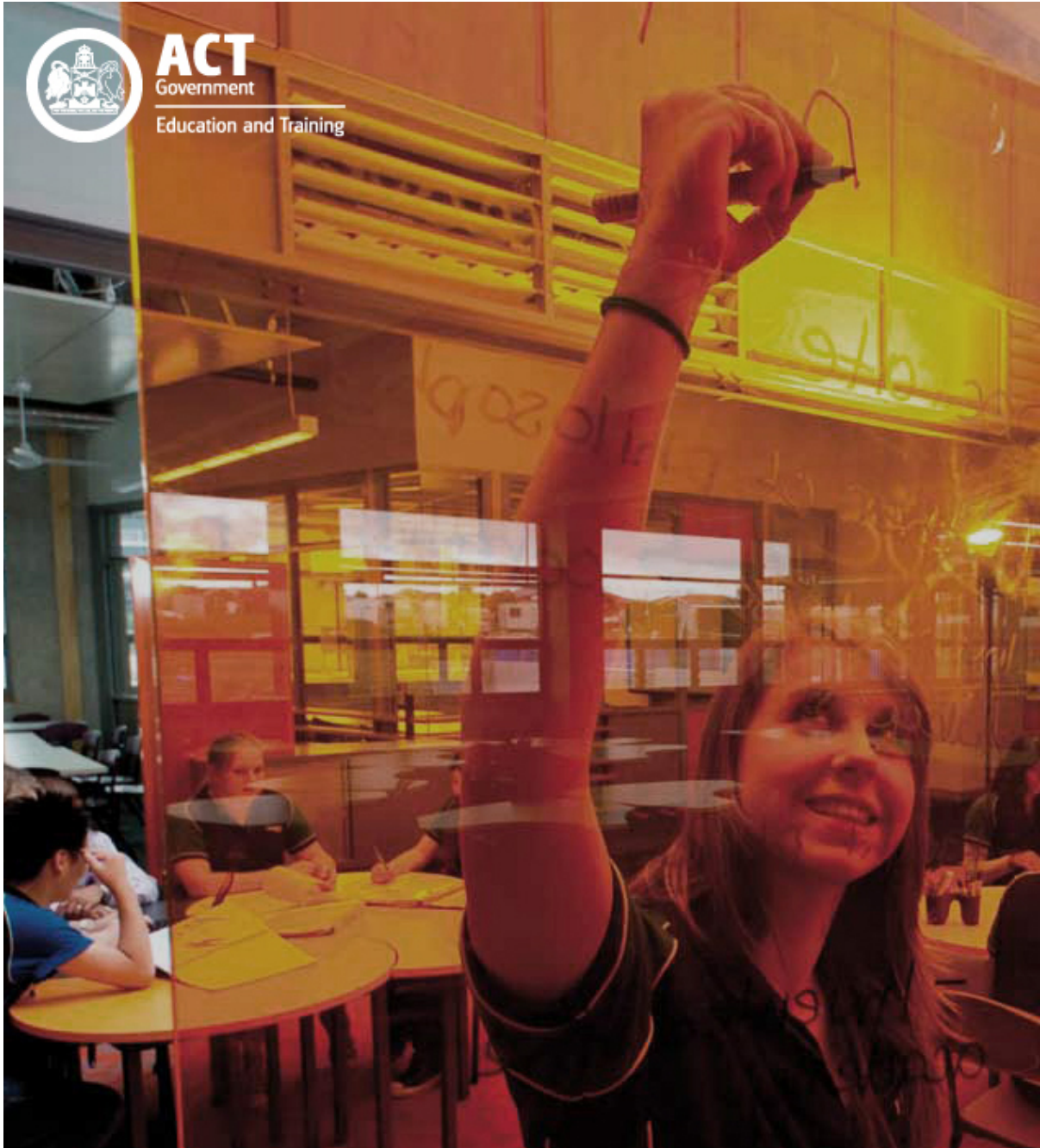




ACT
Government
Education and Training



Excellence and Enterprise

Advancing Public Schools of Distinction

Quarterly Action Report
November 2011

Introduction

The Action Plan outlines the activities being undertaken to advance the key directions of the *Excellence and Enterprise: Advancing Public Schools of Distinction* framework for improving secondary schooling in the ACT. The Plan reports our achievements as well as new and developing activities and it will be updated regularly. The Education and Training Directorate website also provides information and updates on the initiative.

Excellence and Enterprise: Advancing Public Schools of Distinction represents a long term approach to enhancing public secondary schooling in the ACT.

Eleven key directions under three broad themes, guide short, medium and long term actions:

- Advancing distinctive public schools – focuses on building excellence in every area of the curriculum across all secondary public schools in the ACT as well as the opportunity for every school to develop areas of curriculum specialisation or excellence to enhance choice and flexibility for students.
- Flexibility, pathways and partnerships – will ensure that the pathways through schools are coherent and understood by students, parents and the community and that the necessary support is provided to students as they navigate these pathways.
- Strengthening the system – seeks to build confidence in the quality of the teaching and learning environment and the capacity of school leaders to make effective decisions to enhance student learning.

The framework aligns with many of the strategies introduced through National Partnership agreements including those designed to address disadvantage, improve literacy and numeracy, closing the learning and achievement gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students and further develop our school leaders.

Excellence and Enterprise complements a number of the recommendations in the ACT Tertiary Education Taskforce's report *Learning Capital: an integrated tertiary education system for the ACT* particularly: encouraging capital region employers to further build partnerships with education providers, supporting tertiary providers to engage in increased collaboration and enhancing the quality and scope of career counselling for everyone in the ACT.

Key Actions

Stakeholder forums will be held each quarter to report progress and receive input regarding future directions.

A Secondary Schooling Innovations Fund has been established to provide seed funding to schools, clusters of schools or networks to develop innovative approaches to support secondary educational renewal under the *Excellence and Enterprise: Advancing Public Schools of Distinction* framework. Five initiatives will receive support through the first round of funding. It is anticipated that there will be two further gateways for funding in term 1, 2012 and July 2012.

Key Direction	Work to date	What's happening
Key Direction 1 – Improve educational provision for students with high academic ability		
<p>To ensure every high school and college can meet the needs of all students with high academic ability, including our most gifted and talented students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> options for the development of a Virtual Learning Academy will be identified accelerated pathways for students will be investigated. 	<p>The initial pilot of the VLA will focus on Science for Years 7 and 8.</p> <p>Eight schools have been identified to trial the VLA in two phases.</p> <p>Significant professional learning has been undertaken by teachers involved in developing the VLA.</p> <p>Procedures and Guidelines for the acceleration of students demonstrating high ability levels in one or more areas, including vocational learning, have been drafted and are under consultation.</p> <p>108 students graduated from the ANU Secondary College in November 2011 and the application process for 2012 placement has been initiated.</p>	<p>Launch of the first phase (a pilot) of the VLA is scheduled for term 1 2012.</p> <p>The second phase will be piloted in a further four schools from Term 3, 2012.</p> <p>Further, ongoing professional learning will be undertaken by teachers involved in the pilot programs for the VLA.</p> <p>Students who are accepted into the ANU Secondary College will commence in term 2, 2012.</p>
Key Direction 2 – Develop centres of specialisation and excellence to enhance choice, flexibility and diversity		
<p>A strategic approach to the development of specialist programs and centres of excellence for students with particular talents or interests will be undertaken.</p>	<p>Initial mapping of existing specialist programs in high schools and colleges has been undertaken.</p> <p>Gungahlin College has launched a specialised learning program aimed at Year 10 students from across the ACT, with an interest in Science, Mathematics, Mechatronics and IT.</p> <p>Schools in the South/Weston Network have initiated the development of a pilot Languages program.</p> <p>The Belconnen Network has initiated the development of a pilot virtual learning program in English/SoSE for Year 7 students.</p> <p>Six schools in the Gungahlin cluster have initiated the development of a pilot virtual learning program in Mathematics and Science.</p> <p>Initial discussions have been undertaken with the Australian National University regarding a partnership to establish and ACT Space Science Education Centre.</p>	<p>Procedures for a system wide approach to specialist programs will be developed and a prospectus of existing specialist programs in high schools and colleges will be designed and distributed in semester 1, 2012.</p> <p>The three pilot programs (Languages, SoSE/English and Mathematics/Science) will be launched in semester 1, 2012.</p> <p>A working party to further investigate the development of an ACT Space Science Education Centre will be formed to develop partnerships and identify funding opportunities to support this initiative.</p>

Key Direction	Work to date	What's happening
Key Direction 3 – Improve the provision of, and access to, high quality vocational learning opportunities		
<p>Vocational Education and Training (VET) for students in high schools and colleges will be improved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the development of a strategic plan for VET in ACT public schools. ▪ increased access for students in years 9-12 ▪ enhanced partnerships with stakeholders ▪ increased pre-vocational opportunities for students in the primary and middle years 	<p>An ACT VET Strategic Plan has been drafted and is currently being prepared for consultation.</p> <p>The ACT submitted three Trade Training Centre proposals to the Commonwealth Government as part of the 2011 round of funding.</p>	<p>Consultations regarding the ACT VET Strategic Plan will be undertaken with internal and external stakeholders, in semester 1, 2012.</p> <p>Support for the implementation of Trade Cadetships will commence in 2012.</p> <p>Notification regarding successful proposals for Trade Training Centres is expected in December 2011.</p>
Key Direction 4 – Improve the provision of education in school and community settings to support young people with behavioural issues and those at risk of disengaging, or who have already disengaged from education		
<p>A multi-level strategy will be implemented including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the exploration of potential models for full service flexible learning centres ▪ the establishment of school network action plans to support the re-engagement of young people in education ▪ the investigation of approaches to the development of online learning resources 	<p>A Student Engagement Framework for ACT schools is being developed.</p> <p>The Tuggeranong Reengaging Youth Network Board, is being established with internal and external stakeholders, to support the development of a coordinated approach to the reengagement of young people through education, training and/or work.</p> <p>Consultation with internal and external service providers, regarding the establishment of a community based outreach of the Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre, has been undertaken.</p> <p>A pilot Suspension Support Team continued to support schools in the Melba-Copland and Kingsford Smith clusters throughout 2011, resulting in a reduction in the number of suspensions in these clusters.</p>	<p>A model for full service schools will be developed in 2012.</p> <p>Reengaging Youth Network Boards will be established in further school networks in 2012.</p> <p>A community based outreach of the Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre will be established in 2012.</p> <p>In 2012, a Suspension Support Team will be formed to support the reduction of suspension in a further cluster of schools in the Tuggeranong Network.</p>

Key Direction	Work to date	What's happening
Key Direction 5 – Develop clear learning pathways and improved transition planning across local schools and between schools and other education providers.		
<p>Local area education planning will be developed across each school network to describe typical learning paths for students from preschool to year 12 in their neighbourhood schools.</p>	<p>Network and System Plans are being progressed in order to develop curriculum pathways for all students.</p> <p>In 2011 Pathways Planning processes have been put in place for students in Years 10 and 11.</p> <p>Resources to support the use of Pathways Plans have been developed and shared with schools.</p> <p>A model for transition plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students is being developed and trialled in the North/Gungahlin Network.</p>	<p>By the close of the 2011 school year, all Year 10 and 11 public school students will have had the opportunity to develop a Pathways Plan.</p> <p>Professional learning for the implementation of Pathways Planning for students from Years 6 to 9 will be undertaken.</p> <p>In 2012, students in Year 9 and 10 will have the opportunity to develop a Pathways Plan.</p> <p>The transition planning model for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will be evaluated and utilised to inform further transition planning approaches in 2012.</p>
Key Direction 6 – Improve the quality and scope of career education in schools		
<p>Improved Career education in schools by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ coordinating and aligning career education provision in schools and tertiary institutions ▪ expanding the roles of other stakeholders ▪ providing targeted professional learning to school staff involved in career education ▪ establishing a consistent approach to Pathways Planning across schools 	<p>Career Education Guidelines for ACT Public Schools are currently being drafted.</p> <p>Pathways Planning processes for students in Years 10 and 11 are in place.</p> <p>As of term 4, 2011, 42 ACT public school teachers are qualified in the Certificate IV Career Development and 17 teachers are qualified with a Graduate Certificate in Career Development.</p> <p>A pilot program for supporting Career Education for Years 4-12 is being developed.</p>	<p>Career Education Guidelines will be prepared for consultation in Term 1, 2012 and a Career and Transition Website will be established.</p> <p>Opportunities to enrol in the Certificate IV Career Development will be provided to school staff in 2012.</p> <p>A pilot program to support Career Education for Years 4-12 will be initiated in 2012.</p>

Key Direction	Work to date	What's happening
<p>Key Direction 7 – Improve opportunities for parents and carers to participate and engage in school processes.</p>		
<p>Systemic processes to increase parental and student participation in school activities, particularly those involving key decisions about individual student's progress, will be improved.</p>	<p>A process for identifying current, successful methods for parent engagement and communication is being developed.</p> <p>The scope of a potential parent portal is being investigated.</p> <p>The Our Schools website, designed to provide contextual information and performance data and to compliment the My Schools website, is currently under development.</p> <p>An education program for parents and carers of students with a disability, to support engagement in Individual Learning Planning, has been developed.</p> <p>A guide for parents and carers of students with a disability, to support engagement with schools and service providers, is being drafted.</p>	<p>Consultation on the scope of a parent portal will be undertaken in 2012.</p> <p>The Our Schools website will be launched in March, 2012.</p> <p>An education program for parents and carers of students with a disability, to support them in engaging in Individual Learning Planning, will be initiated in Term 1, 2012.</p>
<p>Key Direction 8 – Enable schools to adopt more innovative structures and use technology to support flexible approaches to learning</p>		
<p>Opportunities to increase structural flexibility and exploit the potential of technology will be investigated.</p>	<p>The use of ADOBE Connect to support collaboration, professional learning and the connection of students to virtual learning opportunities, is now being trialled.</p> <p>The development of pilot initiatives which utilise a virtual learning environment and alternative models of learning, is being undertaken through the Excellence and Enterprise Innovation Fund.</p>	<p>Professional Learning in the application of ADOBE Connect will be undertaken throughout 2012.</p> <p>Pilot programs will be undertaken in 2012, in three networks, to explore the use of virtual and digital learning environments to support flexible approaches to student learning.</p> <p>A pilot program to support the development of innovative, flexible approaches to teaching and learning, using the Big Picture Education Design, will be introduced in the Tuggeranong Network in 2012.</p>

Key Direction	Work to date	What's happening
<p>Key Direction 9 – Establish a cross-sectoral committee to advise the Minister for Education and Training on the formation of a curriculum certification and regulatory body to monitor standards and ensure curriculum coherence from preschool to year 12</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cross-sectoral committee will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ develop a paper on the P–12 curriculum body ○ provide advice on issues • The Directorate will : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ investigate the potential of a new senior secondary certificate of applied learning ○ review the purpose of the year 10 certificate. 	<p>Research and planning has been undertaken to consider possible approaches to the proposed P-12 curriculum body.</p> <p>A paper outlining the scope and guidelines for the development of a P-12 curriculum body is being drafted.</p>	<p>A cross-sectoral committee will be established in term 1, 2012.</p>
<p>Key Direction 10 - Plan for modern, flexible and adaptable learning environments in all secondary schools</p>		
<p>To ensure every high school and college has the facilities and infrastructure to support high quality teaching and learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a public secondary school redevelopment plan will be prepared, • an analysis of facilities will be undertaken for each school built more than 20 years ago. 	<p>An Interim Redevelopment Plan is being prepared and four high schools have been identified as priority schools for redevelopment.</p> <p>Initial Capital Works proposals for these four schools have been developed. This will be subject to ACT Budget considerations.</p> <p>Work on the Canberra College Performing Arts Centre has commenced.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Plans will be progressively prepared for all ACT public schools.</p> <p>The newly built Harrison Secondary School will be officially opened in March 2012.</p> <p>The construction of an environmentally sustainable landscape at Stromlo High School will be completed in Term 1, 2012.</p>

Key Direction	Work to date	What's happening
Key Direction 11 - Enhance local decision-making through increased school and school board autonomy		
<p>The Directorate will continue to maximise local decision making through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing school autonomy • Enhancing accountability 	<p>In 2011, eight partner schools were identified to pilot school autonomy in the areas of staffing and the allocation of school resources.</p> <p>Feedback from principals leading the eight partner schools has been sought throughout 2011 and used to inform and guide current and future implementation.</p> <p>A process to identify further partner schools for 2012 has been initiated.</p> <p>An information session for schools interested in joining the implementation of school autonomy for 2012 was held in November 2011, with approximately 60 representatives attending.</p>	<p>In 2012 it is anticipated that the number of autonomy partner schools will be increased to twenty.</p> <p>Expressions of interest from potential autonomy partner schools will be submitted for consideration in November 2011.</p>

Working together

The Steering Group welcomes the participation, feedback and input of interested groups and individuals on the actions arising from the *Excellence and Enterprise: Advancing Public Schools of Distinction* framework.

The themes and directions outlined in the framework connect with a range of actions being taken both within the Education and Training Directorate and across ACT Government to improve secondary schooling in the ACT. Where applicable, the actions will be coordinated across a range of related projects and services to maximise efficiency and outcomes.

Further information

To learn more about the progress of the initiative visit the Education and Training Directorate website. <http://www.det.act.gov.au/>. If you have a query about the key directions or any action in implementing the framework please email the Project Manager at excellenceandenterprise@act.gov.au.