

Report on performance:

Portfolio relationships

The Department of Education:

... will ensure that its relationships with other government departments and statutory authorities are focused to support the work of teachers and to benefit diverse student pathways. In particular, curriculum and assessment support and the registration of teachers provided through statutory authorities should assist state schools to deliver the quality of education required.

Department of Education Strategic Plan 2001–2005, p. 16.

Performance

Partnerships

The department's relationships with statutory education bodies, the non-state schools and higher education sectors, and other portfolios – such as employment, training, health and families – continue to support the goals of QSE–2010 for quality education and to raise the Year 12 completion rate for both state and non-state school students.

Statutory authority reform

During 2000–2001, the process to reform the statutory arrangements for curriculum development, assessment, certification and tertiary entrance continued.

The department worked closely with the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies, the Queensland School Curriculum Council and the Tertiary Entrance Procedures Authority and the non-state schooling sector to consider arrangements for curriculum development, assessment, certification and tertiary entrance that would address the needs of students in the changing world of work and further study.

In December 2000, the then Minister for Education launched a green paper, *Student Achievement in Queensland*, which canvassed a range of issues and proposed three options for reform. This paper was based on an understanding of the need to ensure that Queensland is doing its best to support students as they move through school to further study and take an active role in the community. Statewide consultation on the green paper was completed in April 2001.

The consultation process indicated general support for a merger of the existing three authorities into a single statutory authority with responsibility for curriculum development, assessment and certification for preschool to Year 12. However, there were a range of views about the structure and operation of the new authority and some uncertainty about how the roles and functions of the tertiary entrance authority would fit in with the new authority.

Future developments in the reform of the statutory arrangements in Queensland will see the amalgamation of the three existing authorities to provide a more coordinated approach to curriculum development, assessment and certification.

Working with other education bodies

During 2000–2001, the department worked with the three existing statutory authorities responsible for curriculum development, assessment and certification. Work with the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies included expanding vocational education and training in schools, trialling new subjects and monitoring the standards of the first students involved in the department's Virtual Schooling Service.

Staff also worked with the Queensland School Curriculum Council on syllabuses and curriculum materials for Years 1–10 in the eight nationally agreed key learning areas, including English and Mathematics.

Staff provided input to the Board of Teacher Registration for its review, *Fresh Look at Teacher Registration*, and its report, *Literacy in Teacher Education: Standards for Preservice Program*.

Ongoing discussions on key issues have continued with unions, associations of school principals, and parent representative bodies.

Working with the wider community

The department provided \$473 000 in grants to more than 25 community organisations to support programs in the arts, public speaking, science, the environment and sport for students and schools across Queensland. In addition, organisations responsible for national educational initiatives received \$805 000, and State associations working in partnership with the department to provide public education received \$187 000. More detailed information about the distribution of these grants is available on the Education Queensland website at: <http://www.education.qld.gov.au>

A number of initiatives that draw on and strengthen school–community relationships were implemented in 2000–2001. These are discussed on page 34.

International connections

The Director-General hosted the inaugural International Heads of Education Learning Round Table at Sanctuary Cove in May 2001. Senior government and education personnel from Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Australia attended the forum. The final communiqué to delegates noted the commonality of issues facing education systems in contemporary knowledge societies. It is planned to hold these forums on an annual basis and to encourage participation by a wider range of countries.

The department also supports international student exchange programs. At 30 June 2001, 56 non-profit organisations and schools were approved to offer secondary school student exchange programs to Queensland students. During 2000, 335 full-year equivalent (FYE) students from Queensland undertook approved exchange programs overseas, while 280 FYE exchange students from overseas countries attended Queensland schools. At 30 June 2001, there were 295 institutions registered to offer programs to international students. These institutions offer 4315 courses. The department's central office and school staff worked with the Queensland Museum to develop programs and links with the Smithsonian Institution and schools in the United States.

Partnerships with other government departments

Interdepartmental linkages are essential in meeting the demands and expectations of the Government's focus on the Smart State. The Department of Education has taken a lead role along with a number of other significant agencies to ensure that students in all state schools are able to contribute meaningfully to this goal.

The State Government has identified seven key priorities ranging from employment and skilling to the environment. During 2000–2001 Education Queensland worked with other government departments including Family Services, the Department of Employment, Training and Industrial Relations, Queensland Health, the Department of State Development, Queensland Transport and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to meet these priorities. These included:

- providing alternate pathways for students and increasing employment opportunities;
- focusing on local-level marketing and the need to ensure that school communities fully support QSE–2010 initiatives in schools;
- using QSE–2010 programs such as New Basics to allow students with exceptional skills to develop those abilities within flexible learning structures;
- expanding students' learning opportunities in their local communities;
- increasing retention and completion rates for young people;
- increasing community confidence in state schools.

The department worked with the Environmental Protection Agency to further the adoption of best practice in environmental performance through the design of a sustainable school community.

In conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency, the department supported a pilot project,

involving 17 schools, to introduce and demonstrate the latest solar power generation technology. Similar projects in schools are outlined on page 35.

In order to provide coherent government services to meet the learning needs of particular communities, the department participated in a number of interdepartmental and whole-of-government initiatives relating to the learning and development of children and young people. These included establishing a childcare and family support hub in the grounds of Aurukun State School, finalising the Putting Families First policy statement, implementing the Project Axis recommendations to combat child sexual abuse, and International Year of Volunteers initiatives.

The department also participated in the following Queensland Government initiatives:

- the ten-year partnership developed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- the response to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Task Force on Violence Report;
- Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy;
- Child Protection legislation;
- Juvenile Justice Strategy.

The department engaged in collaboration across government and with other community, business and industry services in the Community Access Schools project.

Home schooling

Up to 30 June 2001, 1138 parents had applied successfully for dispensation from the compulsory attendance requirements of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 1989*, in order to educate their children at home.

Of these home schoolers, 654 were educated using programs from the state schools of distance education, 412 were taking programs from three non-state schools offering approved programs of distance education and 72 had devised their own programs of education.

Outlook

The department will:

- report to government, after consulting with state and non-state sectors, on a preferred model for reform of the statutory arrangements;
- organise a 2002 International Heads of Education Learning Round Table and expand participation to a wider range of countries.

PORTFOLIO RELATIONSHIPS

In this section, we have reported 2000–2001 progress towards the QSE–2010 **Portfolio relationships objective** through:

- consultation and cooperation with statutory authorities within the education portfolio, the wider community, other parts of government and international counterparts, and parents who provide home-schooling.

