Learning Together: A vision for education, training and information into the 21st century

Tasmania. Department of Education, 2000

Overview of the document

36 page glossy booklet that sets out a broad vision for education and training in Tasmania.

Keywords

Lifelong learning; diversity; self-worth; creativity; imagination; critical thinking; adaptability; resilience; access; participation; ethical and moral education; enterprise education; basic skills.

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FOREWORD
➢ Two page foreword by Minister for Education, Paula Wriedt, which begins with a statement about her passion for public education then goes on to say "*Learning Together* reaffirms the principle of this Labor Government that our public education, training and information systems are our number one priority." (p. 1)
➢ Presents a vision for Tasmania as having "world-class public education, training and information systems". Notes that this document, which has been developed following extensive consultation, provides the broad framework for long-term strategies to realise that vision. Notes that the document identifies:
  o An overall vision.
  o What's important in our system – our values and principles that will guide us in what we do.
  o A set of goals.
  o Our strategies that will lead us to achieve our goals.
  o A range of ways to measure our success and check our progress. (p. 2)

OVERVIEW
➢ Notes that a draft document was released in February 2000 and this document is result of responses. Notes that the document details:
  o A vision for our public education, training and information system.
  o A set of values which underpin and drive our goals and new initiatives.
  o A set of goals that align with the vision and values.
  o A grouping of new initiatives that grows out of the goals.
  o A variety of ways to measure our success.

THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN LIFELONG LEARNING
➢ Presents two pages of pictures of people of different ages under the following headings: childcare, primary schooling, secondary schooling, college education, vocational education and training, TAFE, adult education, library and information services. (pp. 6-7)

OUR VISION
➢ States that "Tasmania will have a world-class education, training and information system which matches the best anywhere." (p. 8)
➢ Discusses "What's important" and identifies:
  o People: "We support people in developing their feelings of self-worth, creativity, imagination, critical thinking, adaptability, optimism, resilience". (p. 9)
  o Achievement: "We have high expectation of ourselves and others"; "We make sure that everyone has the opportunity to develop their full potential at all stages of their life." (p. 9)
  o Flexibility and innovation: "We recognise the significance of creative solutions", and "We encourage, value and celebrate diversity." (p. 9)

- o Organisation and planning: "We are strategic" and lists a number of other attributes. (p. 9)
- o A fair go: Discusses equity of access. (p. 9)

OUR GOALS
- ➢ Identifies and elaborates on the following goals:
  1. Responsive and continually improving services – To ensure all Tasmanians develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need.
  2. Enriching and fulfilling learning opportunities – That enable people to work effectively and participate in society.
  3. Safe and inclusive learning environments – That encourage and support participation in learning throughout life.
  4. An information-rich community with access to global and local information and resources – So that everyone has the opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, a healthy democracy and a prosperous society.
  5. A valued and supported education workforce – That reflects the importance of teaching as a profession.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR GOALS: 1 – RESPONSIVE AND CONTINUALLY IMPROVING SERVICES

1.1 *Learning Together* – build and sustain a world-class education system
- ➢ Outlines the following strategies:
  - o Implement Learning Together Initiatives: Outlines Learning Together initiatives which include the establishment of the Learning Together Council to monitor the implementation of the framework, and the appointment of a senior educator with specific responsibility for the initial implementation.
  - o Increase access to Government: Notes that web technologies will be used to enable interaction between the Education Minister and the community

1.2 Our teachers and staff are the foundation of a world-class education, training and information system
- ➢ Outlines the following strategies:
  - o "Provide support to beginning teachers": Lists a range of measures, including two hours per week work release for first year teachers to work with experienced teachers in planning; an information and induction package; financial support to pre-service teachers for teaching practice in rural areas; working with universities in areas of pre-service teacher training. (p. 12)
  - o "Support teachers in developing their professional knowledge and skill": Lists a range of measures including developing processes for feedback to teachers on their work; refresher courses for teachers who have been out of the workforce; and extending TAFE staff retraining programs to teachers involved in VET in schools. (p. 12)
  - o "Support the professional learning of administrative and clerical staff": Notes that a framework will be developed for skill development of non-teaching staff. (p. 12)

1.3 Strengthen leadership opportunities for all educators
  - ➤ Outlines the following strategies:
    - o "Develop and sustain a culture of professionalism": Notes that the Department will establish the Tasmanian Educational Leaders' Institute (TELI) and establish an Advisory Council to guide TELI's professional activities. (p. 13)
    - o "Encourage potential leaders to take on positions of authority": Notes that the process for promotion will be improved and formal mentor programs established. (p. 13)

1.4 Empower schools to be flexible to form genuine partnerships with their communities
  - ➤ Begins by noting an increase in interaction between the classroom and the community.
  - ➤ Outlines the following strategies:
    - o "Support flexible and innovative school management": Argues that schools need to be supported "with a flexible policy framework that enables them to be enterprising and innovative in building partnerships in their communities". Lists a range of measures including the sponsorship of pilot programs "that propose viable and innovative concepts to redesign organisational and management arrangements", and the development of "Partnership Charters" and "models and processes to provide schools with flexibility in the deployment and use" of resources. (p. 14)
    - o "Encourage shared use of school facilities": Outlines how resources might be shared between school, local government agencies and the community. (p. 14)
    - o "Integrate community strengths into school programs": Notes that this will be done through developing classroom web pages for parent access; sponsoring and evaluating programs with a view to identifying best practice in school and community partnerships; and through documenting and promoting innovative projects of school-community ventures. (p. 14)

1.5 Reinforce the Department of Education as a quality, high-performance organisation
  - ➤ Outlines the following strategies:
    - o "Commit to quality and high-level performance": Overviews how the Department will focus on internal performance, educational leadership, strategic planning, the achievement of performance goals and the provision of high quality services. (p. 15)

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR GOALS: 2 – ENRICHING AND FULFILLING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
2.1 Establish a curriculum that develops our students' knowledge, skills and confidence
  - ➤ This section begins with the following statement: "There is overwhelming support for a comprehensive review of the curriculum with wide input from stakeholders. While the value ascribed to particular aspects of the curriculum will vary, it is essential to be clear about our curriculum intentions and not to rush such a crucial process. There will be many views to reconcile in the process. We will need to consult and determine what people believe our purpose to be when establishing a curriculum for the beginning of the 21st century. We will need to consult about the emphasis that needs to be given, for example, to ethical and moral education, enterprise education, affective and social areas of development. Similarly we will need to consult about basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, as well as science, health and physical education, environmental education, and the visual and performing arts. We will need

to focus on the importance of learning before school and in the post-compulsory years as well as on the links between the transition stages of learning. All of these are important issues to resolve so that we can develop lifelong learners through our education system." (p. 16)

- Outlines the following strategies:
  - "Provide a curriculum for the 21st century": Notes that a comprehensive review of the curriculum "will determine what we want our children and young people to know, understand, value and be able to do". States that "We will develop:
    - A clear statement of the values-base and the purposes of education
    - A description of what is considered to be essential learning
    - Support for teachers in their curriculum planning and teaching
    - A statement of what we want our students to achieve
    - An assessment guide for teachers to use." (p. 16)
  - "Monitor and report student achievement": This covers monitoring and reporting to parents, state-wide reporting and the collection of student achievement data so that progress can be tracked. (p. 17)
  - "Link childcare programs and schools": Outlines several initiatives are outlined to incorporating curriculum from early childhood to schools. (p. 17)

2.2 Create a comprehensive post-compulsory education strategy for Tasmania

- Notes that in the global economy that it is important that skills continue to be developed beyond school and discusses the importance of "lifelong learning". (p. 18)
- Notes that the strategy to achieve goals in post-compulsory education will include the following initiatives:
  - "Establish and Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training": Notes that this will provide a single policy body that covers different providers. (p. 18)
  - "Streamline the qualifications process": Notes that this will involve the establishment of a Tasmanian Qualifications Authority to integrate separate roles of the qualifications system, which in the longer term, will survey employers to ascertain how "job ready" young Tasmanians are, develop a coherent format for presenting "lifelong qualifications" and build links between schools, VET providers and UTAs. (p. 18)
  - "Engage young Tasmanians in post-compulsory learning": Outlines a number of strategies to encourage young people to "make the transition from compulsory education to self-motivated learning". Argues that this transition must be managed "by setting high participation goals and by offering flexible and innovative opportunities that renew and refocus Tasmanians" learning as their lives, and our society, change". Initiatives outlined include the following:
    - post-compulsory participation benchmarking;
    - establishing "a 'VET Account' of training hours available to schools and secondary colleges";
    - network school and TAFE counsellors with other industry bodies to develop career strategies;
    - facilitating partnerships between schools, colleges and TAFE colleges;
    - tracking all Year 10 students for a period of 3 years; and
    - increasing the role of the Office of Youth Affairs in developing individual strategies for renewing participation of young people who have left school. (p. 18)

- o "Provide alternative entry points for people to acquire foundational life, study and work skills": Notes that a lifelong learning requires a solid foundation of general education including literacy and numeracy skills, IT skills, problem solving and "the capacity to work with others." States that "All of these combine to provide the self-confidence essential for work and lifelong learning". Notes that initiatives in this area include providing an "e-learn voucher" (of $100) to post-school Tasmanians who do not have an IT qualification; providing more opportunities for adults to gain foundational skills; and establishing course for adults wishing to enter higher education. (p. 19)
- o "Provide current and practical information on learning opportunities": Argues that the concept of lifelong learning needs to become embedded from an early age. Notes that the following strategies will be used to assist in this area:
    - ▪ Establishment of a Lifelong Learning Call Centre;
    - ▪ Publish an annual Tasmanian Learning Opportunities Guide;
    - ▪ Promote lifelong learning through a marketing campaign;
    - ▪ Showcase adult education opportunities;
    - ▪ Implement a new General Education program in TAFE;
    - ▪ Provide informal re-entry points; and
    - ▪ Provide fee-based training in the use of library and information services.

2.4 Link skills development and training to Tasmanian economic opportunities
- ➢ Overviews the following proposed strategies:
    - o Support training that will lead to increased employment.
    - o Assist students in identifying career options.
    - o Maximise local partnership opportunities.

2.5 Enhance the community value of TAFE
- ➢ Notes that the major initiative in this area is the creation of a single Institute of TAFE in Tasmania.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR GOALS: 3 – SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
3.1 Ensure that all childcare services, schools and training institutes are supportive and safe places
- ➢ Notes that "All people have a right to feel safe and secure and to be free from harassment, discrimination and bullying. This is one of the fundamental beliefs that underpin the whole of society" and it has implications for learning. (p. 22)
- ➢ Outlines the following strategies:
    - o Establish a Behaviour Support Team.
    - o Support Pilot Project.

3.2 Ensure that students who are "at risk" have the opportunity to participate
- ➢ Notes that lifelong learning needs to be accessible and inclusive and that particular strategies in this area include to:
    - o "Implement targeted program to improve school attendance rates": Notes that this includes incentives for schools to improve attendance rates; public education programs; and the provision of "efficient electronic processes for recording and tracking student attendance". (p. 23)

o "Implement strategies to include "at risk" students in post-compulsory education and training": Notes that this includes the development of more "flexible learning alternatives"; support for VET in schools projects; strategies for indigenous people; and the implementation of strategies for people with disabilities. (p. 23)

3.3 Ensure that our learning organisations successfully target the acquisition of literacy skills
  ➢ Notes that literacy is fundamental to learning, "critical in building confidence and self-esteem" and "enables us to participate in society and enter the world of others". (p. 23)
  ➢ Outlines two strategies in relation to literacy:
    o Literacy intervention programs for students at risk.
    o Promote literacy and numeracy development.

3.4 Ensure that all learning organisations successfully include all students
  ➢ Refers to Inclusion Policy and the Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Act and states that it is important for all learning organisations "to cater equitably and inclusively" for all students". (p. 24)
  ➢ Particular strategies outlined in this area include:
    o Strengthen the skills and confidence of all staff who are working with children with disabilities.
    o Make learning opportunities more accessible to the community.
    o Provide increased opportunities for gifted students.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR GOALS: 4 – AN INFORMATION-RICH COMMUNITY WITH ACCESS TO GLOBAL AND LOCAL RESOURCES
  ➢ Outlines the following strategies to meet the demand for access to online services and ensure that Tasmania has the technological base for education in the 21st century.

4.1 Develop world-class facilities and programs for online learning
  ➢ Outlines the following strategies:
    o Establish a Centre for Excellence in Online Learning.
    o Create a business partnership between education and the IT industry.

4.2 Promote Tasmania's culture and heritage to the world and preserve our documentary heritage
  ➢ Outlines a strategy to: Use our electronic and digital resources to establish links and promote Tasmania to the world.

4.3 Enable individuals and communities to access information
  ➢ Outlines the following strategies:
    o Coordinate access to community information and cultural resources.
    o Facilitate access to global information

4.4 Enhance community education by linking the Department's community learning providers
  ➢ Outlines a strategy to: Engage the State Library and Adult Education in a Strategic Partnership.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR GOALS: 5 – A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE

- ➢ Begins by noting the critical importance of teachers in the lives of young people and the importance of recognising and valuing the contribution teachers make. (p. 28)

5.1 Recognise the professional status of teachers and the teaching profession

- ➢ Outlines a number of initiatives in relation to enhancing the status of teaching and recognising excellence.

5.2 Improve communication with all employees and extend opportunities for consultation

- ➢ Outlines strategies to improve communication and consultation. (p. 29)

WORLD CLASS

- ➢ States that the vision is for Tasmania to go "From First Class to World Class" and notes that Learning Together "builds the bridge from a first-class to a world-class education system". (p. 30)
- ➢ Reiterates key points including the importance of a "valued and supported workforce", "enriching and fulfilling learning experiences" and "safe and inclusive learning experiences". (p. 30)
- ➢ Notes the "unresolved challenge" of measuring the "highest-level outcomes of learning" and that "personal fulfilment, creativity, self-confidence and innovation" are important outcomes that cannot be easily measured. Notes that the three key elements that can be measured are:
  - ○ Access to programs, facilities and resources;
  - ○ Participation in learning throughout life;
  - ○ Achievement through recognition or qualification processes; and
  - ○ An increased use of direct "customer satisfaction" measures. (p. 31)
- ➢ Notes that the Learning Together Council will play a role in measuring the success of these initiatives and that the key elements will be:
  - ○ Access: which will include the availability of school facilities and other services to the wider community and the availability of printed electronic resources.
  - ○ Participation: which will include student retention, attendance rates at school, participation rates, enrolment in adult education, participation rates in programs targeting equity groups and numbers of library and information services users.
  - ○ Achievement: which will include accreditation, post-school destinations, student outcomes and completion rates for TCE.
  - ○ Satisfaction: which will include the satisfaction of parents, libraries and schools, the community, employers, industry and learners.