MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM OFFICE

The program office is in the process of establishment and we are looking forward to assisting school communities through this fantastic initiative. This bulletin will provide a brief overview of the arrangements so far and the team will endeavour to provide more support material in future editions. We will also be setting up a website with FAQs, professional reading and lots of great ideas to take advantage of this exciting initiative towards maximising outcomes for NSW public school students.

On the team are experienced educational leaders:

Dianne Marshall
Acting Program Director
(School Education Director, Coffs Harbour Network, North Coast Region)

Terry O’Brien
Policy Project Officer
(Principal, Georges River College Oatley Senior Campus)

Barbara Bober
Connected Learning Project Officer
(Principal, Beverly Hills Girls HS)

There will be more secondments in the future.

UPDATE AS AT 9 FEBRUARY 2009

Laptops

The tender process for the laptop computer is nearing completion. It will have the following features: compact, lightweight, high quality screen, approximately the size of an A4 sheet of paper; robust design with anti theft features; powerful processor, sufficient battery life for a day’s work; camera, microphone and audio capability; wireless connectivity, secured to the DET network, usable at school and at home for internet access through home internet provider; capacity to attach a keyboard, monitor, mouse, data projector.

Software on the laptop will include: productivity software; multimedia creation and consumption tools; online collaboration software; utilities; professional learning and curriculum support materials.

The rollout of laptops will start with year 9 students in 2009 and to future year 9 cohorts on an annual basis. The laptop will be allocated to the students for use while they are enrolled in a public school. At the end of year 12, students exiting school, will take the device with them. It is envisaged that students will take the laptop home and recharge the battery each night. They will have the ability to connect up to their home internet connection with a relaxed filtering environment.
Teachers will also be allocated a laptop. The exact details of the teacher laptop and staged rollout are unknown at this stage. Professional learning and associated curriculum support material will be available.

**Wireless**

The tender process is nearing completion. The task is to provide wireless access in classrooms and common use areas of all sites with secondary student enrolments. The rollout schedule and scope of works at each school is unknown at the moment. It will be a staged rollout and principals are advised to consult with regional information technology managers before purchasing any new equipment.

Features of the network will include: high capacity, wireless network, secure environment, flexible and manageable networking will have capacity to be expanded. Configuration of network will be standardised statewide and will have flexibility in what services can be consumed through it by local personnel. Core infrastructure will be there. Schools can expand with their own investment later.

**Technical Support**

Enhanced onsite technical support services will be provided at each school, based on school size. More information will be available shortly.

**Professional Learning, Curriculum Resources**

Barbara Bober and her team will be working with other Directorates, regional office staff and school staff to assemble a comprehensive suite of professional learning and curriculum resources for teachers.

**Policy and Procedures**

Terry O’Brien will be working across Directorates to develop a number of policies and procedures to assist schools and their communities such as:

- acceptable usage policy including copyright and restrictions on personal data, inappropriate use of devices
- issues relating to allocation of laptops to students including allocation per cohort of year specific model, students who transfer schools or move from

NSW public education, formal transfer of ownership to students who have completed year 12

- dealing with loss/theft or damage including automatic replacement allowance and termination of rights to laptops
- health and safety
- safe transport and storage
- use of laptop for non school initiated activities.

**Students with Special Needs**

There have been a number of queries from Special Schools regarding the best suited ICT equipment for their students. These schools are advised that the Department will work in consultation with the school staff, student/s and their parents or carers to determine the best suited ICT equipment where the laptop is deemed not to be appropriate.

The cost of the alternative ICT equipment will be inclusive of the school’s overall allocation.

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