Curriculum Reform Update

Since my last report in the March P–10 Supplement Issue 3, I am pleased to be able to tell you that, with your help, the VCAA has developed and published the Victorian Curriculum Reform 2004: Consultation Paper. During March the VCAA conducted 18 statewide consultation forums which sought responses from the educational community on the proposed framework of ‘essential learning’. Feedback from these meetings helped clarify issues related to the proposed framework and helped shape the consultation paper.

The Minister for Education and Training Lynne Kosky, MP, launched the consultation paper at a seminar, ‘Towards a framework of essential learning’, hosted by the VCAA in late March. Victorian and interstate representatives from key education organisations, including schools, universities, and parent bodies attended this highly stimulating and informative two-day conversation about curriculum reform.

A particularly interesting feature of the seminar was the use of school based panel sessions to provide participants with school perspectives and commentary on the key presentations provided by national and international guest speakers. Presentations, panel discussions, lively debate and conversation during the breaks helped to focus the important issues in relation to essential learning, including standards and relationships between elements of the proposed framework and current practice and innovation in schools.

The Victorian Curriculum Reform 2004: Consultation Paper, which provides teachers with a basis for discussion of the framework, is now available for reading and downloading from the VCAA website and will be distributed to all schools at the beginning of Term 2.

I commend this consultation document to all teachers and schools and urge you to read and review it and provide the VCAA with your considered comments and suggestions. Working together, as we have done so successfully in the past, will ensure a curriculum that will prepare our students for success at school, work and life in the 21st century.
Invitational Seminar: Towards a Framework of ‘Essential Learning’

On Monday 29 and Tuesday 30 March 2004, the VCAA hosted an invitational seminar to highlight current thinking and research, and to stimulate debate, about ways of developing and implementing quality curriculum for Victorian students in the 21st century. The seminar was designed to complement the consultation with the education community on the VCAA’s approach to the development of a framework of ‘essential learning’.

The seminar focused on such key curriculum reform issues related to the consultation process as:

- What core concepts within the disciplines of knowledge do students need to understand?
- What generic skills, attributes, values and knowledge do students need to equip them for success and fulfilment in the 21st century?
- How do we shape a curriculum that will provide our students with the best opportunities for their continuing education, work and life?
- How do we develop appropriate performance standards and assessment processes for ‘essential learning’?

In opening the seminar, Michael White explained that the seminar has gathered together leaders in thinking and action to discuss what a curriculum should look like in the 21st century and to ‘go beyond the rhetoric to actually spelling it out in the context of the opportunity the Minister has given the VCAA’.

The seminar was facilitated by Tony Mackay, Executive Director, Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria (IARTV), and included presentations from a number of national and international speakers and Victorian school and system representatives.

Keynote speakers for the seminar included Tom Bentley, from UK think-tank DEMOS, who has been influential in advising on education and public policy reform in that country; Bruce Wilson, CEO of Curriculum Corporation, who is closely involved in the development of national curriculum consistency; Gabrielle Matters, Director of New Basics in Education Queensland; Lorna Earl, Associate Professor and Head, International Centre for Educational Change at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, whose most recent book focuses on using classroom assessment to maximise student learning; and Professor Geoff Masters, Executive Director of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), who drew on his widely recognised expertise in assessment and reporting, including recent work for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Keynotes were followed by panel discussions involving school and system representatives from around Australia and leading practitioners from a range of Victorian schools.

During the seminar, the Minister for Education and Training, Lynne Kosky, MP, gave an address on the directions for curriculum reform in which she also formally launched the VCAA Consultation Paper on Curriculum Reform.

This seminar provided an excellent opportunity to harness the expertise of educational leaders into the process of developing a framework of ‘essential learning’ that will engage, support and challenge Victorian students in the 21st century. A summary of the seminar proceedings will be published on the Curriculum Reform page of the VCAA website.
Curriculum Victoria: Foundations for the Future

The structure of the proposed framework for ‘essential learning’ is based on both national and international research and learning. In 2003 the VCAA undertook a review of curriculum from 14 national and international jurisdictions. Its purpose was to focus on national and international initiatives and current directions in the development of curriculum and standards documents for the compulsory years in order to contribute to the development of a rationale for the selection of curriculum content, indicate best practice in relation to pedagogy and assessment, and provide insights into how to resolve current concerns about the adequacy of curriculum and standards documents for the compulsory years. Following a literature search, an analysis was undertaken which identified key issues for curriculum development, compared the approach taken with the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) II and that of other jurisdictions, evaluated the documents in terms of world’s best practice and considered the implications for policy development.

A summary report of this research is available on the VCAA website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/CRP/CVFoundations.pdf

The report summarises the key findings of the project and outlines issues and implications for a new approach to Victorian curriculum. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the curriculum structures and frameworks of Ontario (Canada), Finland, Hong Kong, the International Baccalaureate organisation, Singapore, United Kingdom, Pennsylvania (USA), Australian Capital territory, New South Wales, Northern territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia.

Sample Units on the Web

Information and Communications Technology

Development of sample units in all key learning areas to support teachers in integrating information and communications technology in their teaching and learning programs is continuing. A CD-ROM containing 52 units is scheduled for publication in Term 2. To provide teachers with early access to these resources, units are being progressively published in PDF format on the VCAA website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/csf/support/icts/ictspd.htm

Units available for downloading include:

English
- Level 1 – Farm animals book
- Level 2 – Rhebus story

Health and Physical Education
- Level 2 – Stop, look, listen, think
- Level 3 – A healthy and active week
- Level 4 – A fitness profile
- Level 5 – Prevention is better than cure
- Level 6 – Who am I?

LOTE (French)
- Level 1 – Les animaux
- Level 2 – Les fruits
- Level 4 – Notre classe

Mathematics
- Level 1 – Navigating numbers
- Level 2 – Shape pictures
- Level 3 – Multiplication patterns
- Level 4 – Shoe size
- Level 6 – CAS and algebra

Science
- Level 2 – Animal life cycle
- Level 6 extension – The clone rangers

Studies of Society and Environment
- Level 6 – Conscription: 1916–17
- Level 6 – River of noise

Technology
- Level 5 – Safety manual
- Level 6 – Garden brochures.

Sample Units in English and Mathematics: Years 8–10

Sample units designed to engage English and Mathematics students in Years 8–10 are also being prepared for publication on CD-ROM. PDF versions of the following sample units are now available for downloading at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/csf/support/sampleunits/sample_units.htm

English
- Fundraising
- Organising an excursion
- Talk your head off
- Text messaging
- Travellin’
- Zines and magazines

Mathematics
- Atoms, babies and bacteria
- Building algebra experience
- Fairground games
- Extending algebra experience
- Graphical approach to modelling with quadratics
- Introducing integers
- Solar house
- Sports simulation
- Strategy games
- Taking the world’s temperature.
Consultation Paper: A framework of ‘Essential Learning’

In response to the Minister for Education and Training’s request to the VCAA to develop a new framework of ‘essential learning’ for all Victorian schools in both government and non-government sectors, the VCAA has released a paper for consultation with the education community. This is available on the VCAA website at <www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/crp/paper.htm> and will be distributed to all schools in the week beginning Monday 19 April.

The consultation paper explains the new approach to curriculum, standards and assessment for Victorian schools planned by the VCAA.

During Term 2 we are seeking feedback from schools on the new approach and inviting responses to an online questionnaire by Friday 25 June 2004. Your feedback will contribute directly to the development of the new framework, a complete draft of which will be published in Term 4 2004.

What type of curriculum?
The proposal outlined in the paper is designed to deliver a curriculum which:
• is learner centred, personalising the education experience for young children and meeting their learning needs as they progress from Prep to Year 10
• is knowledge based and has clear specification of core content
• enables students to develop the skills and attributes expected of people in a modern knowledge society and to participate productively in the economy of the 21st century
• encourages innovation through mastery of deep knowledge and pedagogy based on students thinking their way through issues and problems

What are the challenges?
Our challenge is to provide the clarity and focus necessary to ensure that all students have access to essential learning, while at the same time allowing sufficient flexibility for schools to innovate and adopt different program and teaching styles to provide for local and individual student needs.

Schools need to prepare students for a world which is global in its outlook and influences, consistently changing, complex in its political and economic structures and processes and underpinned by high speed and interactive information and communications technology. The specific challenge for schools is to equip all students with the knowledge, skills, self-esteem and attributes to be:
• responsible individuals capable of relating with family and friends
• informed citizens with the capacity to understand and contribute to civil and community relations at a local, national and global level
• community members with the capacity to contribute socially, economically and culturally to the society in which they live.

What are the key elements?
The new framework will be underpinned by a set of agreed values and based on three separate but closely related ‘pillars’. They are:
• core disciplines of knowledge – human understanding of the world is organised largely through the core disciplines of knowledge. These are dynamic and represented by key concepts, not detailed content. Understanding how such concepts relate to each other across disciplines is the basis of the intellectual challenge. Students need access to these core ways of thinking to understand their world. (An example of a core concept in the discipline of science is provided in the paper.)
• generic or cross-curriculum skills are needed for students to be adaptive, to transfer learning and to be prepared for a life of continual learning. Communication in its various forms is at the heart of these skills. Learning standards for the 21st century must explicitly recognise them. (The exact nature of the generic skills, values and attributes that will form part of the new framework is a matter for further discussion. A suggested set is provided in the paper for feedback.)
Consultation Timeline

In developing a new framework of essential learning the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority is conducting an extensive consultation with the education community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1, March 2004</th>
<th>Statewide consultation forums to inform the development of the consultation paper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>End Term 1, Late March 2004</td>
<td>Publication of consultation paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Term 2, 2004</td>
<td>Distribution of consultation paper to schools and other stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2, April to June 2004</td>
<td>Consultation period: Responses to consultation paper via online questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 25 June 2004</td>
<td>Final date for responses to online questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms 2 and 3, April to September 2004</td>
<td>Writing of content of framework/standards and development of support materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4 2004</td>
<td>Publication of complete draft of framework</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consultation Forums

Throughout March, the VCAA conducted a series of statewide forums, the purpose of which was to inform participants about the key elements of the VCAA approach to enable them to discuss these further with their school communities. Feedback from the forums was also used to help shape and inform the Curriculum Reform Consultation Paper.

At each consultation forum, a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation assisted in providing an overview of the proposed structure of the new framework. It was made clear that the framework would:

- build on best practice in schools
- provide standards based on discipline concepts and skills and generic skills, and competencies for each CSF level
- maintain the importance and centrality of literacy and numeracy
- allow schools to be responsible for developing appropriate content
- incorporate CSF II as a core reference to support the new framework.

In groups, participants responded to a series of questions. The Deakin University Consultancy and Development Unit collated these responses which provided the VCAA with a rich resource of data to assist in shaping the consultation paper.

A Microsoft PowerPoint presentation to further assist schools in discussing and exploring the key features of the new framework is available on the VCAA website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au
The P–10 Supplement Issue 3 to the March 2004 VCAA Bulletin, No. 11 carried a number of important articles and notices about new initiatives in assessment during 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 7 AIM Online Statewide Testing Program</th>
<th>Years 3 and 5 AIM Online Pilot</th>
<th>Pre enrolment Pilot Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interested? How can your school sign up?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Volunteers wanted. How can your school sign up?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Volunteers wanted. How can your school sign up?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In 2004, secondary schools can choose to do their Year 7 AIM Tests on either computers or as pencil and paper tests.</td>
<td>In 2004, a limited number of primary schools will be able to participate in an AIM Online pilot. The trial schools will undertake both the pencil and paper and Online tests during August 2004.</td>
<td>This year the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority is trialing a program where schools can pre-enrol their students. AIM test booklets will be delivered with student names and details pre-printed on them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To register your school’s interest in any of the above programs, visit the AIM website <www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/aim/teachers/index.htm> complete the appropriate form and fax it back to the VCAA on (03) 9651 4615.

The closing date for the AIM Online Testing and Pre-enrolment Pilot is 23 April 2004.
On Demand Assessment for P-10 Classrooms

The March P–10 Supplement, Issue 3, to the VCAA Bulletin carried an article about a new initiative in P–10 Assessment – On Demand Assessment. This On Demand assessment tool has been developed to enable teachers to assess the strengths and weaknesses of student achievement through access to calibrated tests prepared by the VCAA. These will be available for students in all levels Years P–10. The On Demand Testing System is a component of the VCAA Assessment Online program that is under development at the VCAA.

Examples of Tests
In the first instance, tests will be available for On Demand Testing in:

Mathematics
- Number CSF Level 2/3
- Number CSF Level 3/4
- Number CSF Level 4/5

English
- Reading CSF Level 2
- Reading CSF Level 2/3
- Reading CSF Level 3/4

Studies of Society and Environment
- History: Continuity and Change CSF Level 2/3
- Geography: Map Reading CSF Level 2/3
- History: Australian History CSF Level 3/4
- Geography: Conservation CSF Level 3/4

An expanded number of tests, levels and key learning areas will be available in due course.

Types of On Demand tests
Tests are composed of short-answer questions and questions that require longer answers mapped to the Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) II. Items are delivered in a present linear order and are available to schools from a central assessment test item bank. The tests will consist of items in varying formats from multiple-choice questions, ‘drag and drop’ questions and ‘typed in’ responses. The tool provides the facility for students to enter their answers on screen via mouse or keyboard. As students move through questions in the test, they will have the opportunity to review questions and to change answers if they want to.

The On Demand assessment tool will mark the closed items by computer and provide facilities for teachers to mark open-ended items for completed tests. Immediate feedback can be provided to students and reports generated for teachers – with test results and responses remaining on the school’s computer system. This in itself is a compelling aspect of the program.

Pilot
A pilot of the On Demand assessment tool will be trialed by schools in Term 2 2004. In the first instance, the system will only be available to selected schools participating in the pilot program. Once the pilot phase has been completed, all schools in Victoria will be able to access this new assessment program. For Government schools, the On Demand tool will be available via the new CASES servers being rolled out to schools in 2004. Details about the hardware requirements for the On Demand System are available at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/aim/aimonline/techreq.html

Professional Development
The VCAA will conduct workshops for schools starting in late May 2004 that will cater for both teachers and technicians through the provision of User Manuals. These will be complemented by a comprehensive online Help screen function, and interactive online tutorials for the system.

Future
Eventually the central assessment test item bank will include a range of tests for P–10 across a number of key learning areas of the Victorian Curriculum. Test items may in the future include multimedia elements such as audio and video clips. It is also intended to provide the On Demand Testing System to Years 11 and 12 students and their teachers in due course.
AIM Important Dates and Timelines

AIM Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 April</td>
<td>Final date for receipt of Expressions of Interest to participate in AIM Online 2004 and Pre-enrolment Pilot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 May</td>
<td>P–10 Supplement to the May 2004 VCAA Bulletin, No. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 June</td>
<td>Final date for schools to request a variation to the testing dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 June</td>
<td>Final date for schools to request large print and Braille materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 July</td>
<td>P–10 Supplement to the July 2004 VCAA Bulletin, No. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of 12 July</td>
<td>Years 3 and 5 schools to receive and check contents of the AIM test packages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of 26 July</td>
<td>Year 7 schools to receive and check contents of the AIM test packages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19–30 July</td>
<td>Conduct the Teacher Assessed Tasks Years 3 and 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–27 August</td>
<td>AIM Online Year 7 tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 August</td>
<td>Mathematics AIM test Years 3, 5 and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 August</td>
<td>English AIM test Years 3, 5 and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 August</td>
<td>Test booklets packed and ready for collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 August</td>
<td>Final date to return test booklets for catch-up assessments and variations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early October</td>
<td>Reporting packages delivered to schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All forms and dates can be found on the VCAA website: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/aim/teachers/index.htm

Timeline for Online Statewide Testing Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 April</td>
<td>Final date for receipt of Expressions of Interest to participate in AIM Online August 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 May</td>
<td>Notify selected schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 May – 23 June</td>
<td>Training of teachers from participating schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12–30 July</td>
<td>Preparatory trial of the online system at schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–30 July</td>
<td>AIM Online tests available for download</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–27 August</td>
<td>AIM Online testing period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 August</td>
<td>Final date of upload of student responses back to the VCAA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Timeline for On Demand Testing Pilot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 March</td>
<td>Final date for receipt of Expressions of Interest for On Demand testing pilot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 and 2 April</td>
<td>Notify selected schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–28 April</td>
<td>Training of teachers from participating schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–21 May</td>
<td>Running of pilot at schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**AIM Administration Handbook for Principals 2004**

The AIM Administration Handbook for Principals 2004 for the August Testing Program will be distributed to schools in May. This is being provided to all schools in advance of the testing materials.

It contains:

- the timetable for the 2004 AIM August testing program
- advice to principals about preparation for the AIM Years 3, 5 and 7 pen and paper August tests
- advice to principals about preparation for the Year 7 AIM Online August tests
- guidelines for administration of the tests
- forms for requesting extra materials, large print and/or Braille copies
- register for exemptions from sitting the tests.

**Reminder**

**Request to vary dates for AIM Statewide Testing 2004**

Schools wishing to vary the dates for the AIM Statewide Testing must complete the form ‘Request to vary dates’ and fax it to the VCAA no later than Friday 25 June.


Government and catholic schools require approval from the appropriate sector authority. Contact details for the Department of Education and Training and Catholic Education Offices are available on page 10 of this Supplement.

---

**AIM Assessment Program**

freecall 1800 648 637  
fax (03) 9651 4612  
email vcaa.aim.help@edumail.vic.gov.au  
website www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

**Online Assessment Program**

freecall 1800 623 681  
fax (03) 9651 4612  
email aimsupport@edumail.vic.gov.au  
website www.aimonline.vic.edu.au

**Dates for AIM Testing Program**

2004 3 and 4 August  
2005 2 and 3 August  
2006 1 and 2 August
## Contact details for Department and Education and Training Regional Offices and Catholic Education Offices

### DE&T REGIONAL OFFICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Name/Title</th>
<th>Mailing Address</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Fax</th>
<th>Site Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barwon South Western</td>
<td>Mrs Glenda Strong Regional Director</td>
<td>PO Box 240 North Geelong 3215</td>
<td>5272 8300</td>
<td>5277 9926</td>
<td>Vines Road North Geelong 3215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Highlands</td>
<td>Mr Malcolm Millar Regional Director</td>
<td>1/1220 Sturt Street Ballarat 3350</td>
<td>5337 8444</td>
<td>5333 2135</td>
<td>1/1220 Sturt Street Ballarat 3350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wimmera</td>
<td>Mr Ross Kimber Regional Director</td>
<td>Level 2/29 Lakeside Drive Burwood East 3151</td>
<td>9881 0200</td>
<td>9881 0241</td>
<td>Level 2/29 Lakeside Drive Burwood East 3151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Mr Peter Greenwell Regional Director</td>
<td>PO Box 381 Moe 3825</td>
<td>5127 0400</td>
<td>5126 1933</td>
<td>Cnr Kirk and Haigh Streets Moe 3825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gippsland</td>
<td>Ms Adele Pottenger Regional Director</td>
<td>PO Box 403 Benalla 3672</td>
<td>5761 2100</td>
<td>5762 5039</td>
<td>Arundel Street Benalla 3672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loddon Campaspe</td>
<td>Mr Greg Gibbs Regional Director</td>
<td>PO Box 442 Bendigo East 3552</td>
<td>5440 3111</td>
<td>5442 5321</td>
<td>37–43 Havlin Street Bendigo East 3550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallee</td>
<td>Ms Victoria Triggs Regional Director</td>
<td>Locked Bag 88 Fairfield 3078</td>
<td>9488 9488</td>
<td>9488 9440</td>
<td>1st Floor 582 Heidelberg Road Fairfield 3078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Metropolitan</td>
<td>Ms Jan Lake Regional Director</td>
<td>PO Box 5 Dandenong 3175</td>
<td>9794 3555</td>
<td>9794 3594</td>
<td>VACC Building 1st Floor 33 Princes Highway, Dandenong 3175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Metropolitan</td>
<td>Mr Rob Blanchford Regional Director</td>
<td>Level 4/369 Royal Parade Parkville 3052</td>
<td>9291 6500</td>
<td>9291 6555</td>
<td>Level 4/369 Royal Parade Parkville 3052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Name/Title</th>
<th>Mailing Address</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Fax</th>
<th>Site Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>Ms Susan Pascoe Director of Catholic Education</td>
<td>PO Box 3 East Melbourne 3002</td>
<td>9267 0228</td>
<td>9415 9325</td>
<td>James Gooold House 228 Victoria Parade East Melbourne 3002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballarat/Main Office</td>
<td>Mr Larry Burn Director Catholic Diocesan Office</td>
<td>PO Box 576 Ballarat 3353</td>
<td>5337 7135</td>
<td>5331 5166</td>
<td>Catholic Education Office 5 Lyons Street Ballarat 3353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandhurst/Bendigo</td>
<td>Mr Denis Higgins Director of Catholic Education Diocese Bendigo</td>
<td>181 McCrae Street Bendigo 3550</td>
<td>5443 2377</td>
<td>5441 5168</td>
<td>181 McCrae Street Bendigo 3550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandhurst/Wangaratta</td>
<td>Mr Michael Avery Educational Consultant</td>
<td>PO Box 1181 Wangaratta 3676</td>
<td>5762 4177</td>
<td>5762 5676</td>
<td>71 Ryley Street Wangaratta 3677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale/Warragul</td>
<td>Dr Therese D’Orsa Director of Catholic Education Diocese Sale</td>
<td>PO Box 322 Warragul 3820</td>
<td>5622 6600</td>
<td>5623 4258</td>
<td>6 Witton Street Warragul 3820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne/Southern Area</td>
<td>Mr Neil Matheson Acting Regional Manager</td>
<td>14 Spring Street Highton 3190</td>
<td>9532 1922</td>
<td>9553 5005</td>
<td>14 Spring Street Highton 3190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne/Eastern Area</td>
<td>Mr Peter Ryan Regional Manager</td>
<td>PO Box 174 Ferntree Gully 3156</td>
<td>9758 4999</td>
<td>9752 3192</td>
<td>15 Forest Road Ferntree Gully 3156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne/Northern Area</td>
<td>Ms Pauline Zappulla Regional Manager</td>
<td>Cnr Howard and Rosslyn Streets, West Melbourne 3003</td>
<td>9329 8800</td>
<td>9326 7443</td>
<td>Cnr Howard and Rosslyn Streets West Melbourne 3003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne/Western Area</td>
<td>Mr John Mills Regional Manager</td>
<td>PO Box 4026 Hoppers Crossing 3029</td>
<td>9748 0844</td>
<td>9748 5289</td>
<td>255–267 Old Geelong Road Hoppers Crossing 3029</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Experience the City - Live to Learn

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and the Education Foundation are working in partnership to document approaches to learning using city-based experiences and provide resources for schools that will model innovative approaches to curriculum provision in the middle years of secondary schooling. Using the Foundation’s innovative City Centre program, a real-life city-based learning model is being developed as an example of what can be achieved through broad middle years reform.

The Curriculum Reform Project identifies Years 9 and 10 as an important phase in the development of young people. At this stage in their lives, students are often reflecting on priorities and weighing things up. It is a time of both opportunity and insecurity. Innovative teaching strategies which link learning directly to their lives are required. Years 9 and 10 need an approach to learning that actively engages and encourages young people to develop.

The City Centre is an example of a program which meets the specific needs of students and which will have an impact beyond its direct benefits to the young people who attend. Seeing young people excel in real-world settings changes the way teachers see their students. Even more importantly, independent learning outside the classroom changes the way young people see themselves.

Student feedback has indicated that participation in the City Centre pilot program has been a positive and beneficial experience, providing exciting and valuable learning experiences and helping them to feel better about themselves.

The program consists of an eight- to ten-week unit of work and includes a five-day action week of city-based research and investigation. Student teams have considerable ownership of their learning experience, deciding on issues such as what they want to investigate or test, who they will need to meet, where they will need to visit and how they will collect their information while in the city. The culmination of the investigation and research group projects enable the student teams to use a variety of communication strategies for sharing project outcomes with a wide audience, including peers, teachers, family members and friends.

Further information about the program is available at www.educationfoundation.org.au

▲ Michael White, VCAA (on right) with students from Rowville Secondary College discussing their city experience
Curriculum Reform Project: Updates on the Web

A new page has been added to the VCAA website to provide schools with regular updates on the Curriculum Reform project. The homepage includes links to current information, background work and documents for downloading. These include:

- Victorian Curriculum Reform Consultation Paper
- Online questionnaire for responses to the consultation paper
- Frequently asked questions about the new framework
- A report of proceedings from the VCAA seminar, ‘Towards a framework of essential learning’.

Teachers can access the website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/CRP/index.htm

Invitational Seminar: Towards a Framework of ‘Essential Learning’

Minister for Education and Training, Lynne Kosky, MP, launches the VCAA consultation paper on curriculum reform at the VCAA seminar

Participants at the VCAA seminar on curriculum reform in late March

For a full report on the Invitational Seminar see page 2