The *QuickSmart* Program: Where are we and what have we been doing in 2010?

As *QuickSmart* launched into its 10th year of operation, the *QuickSmart* team at SiMERR, University of New England, drew a HUGE breath and prepared itself for a year of tremendous expansion.

Eighteen new clusters of schools have been added to the Numeracy Program and five new clusters to the Literacy Program. As each cluster in the Numeracy Program has on average 10 to 18 schools involved, with the Literacy clusters being much smaller, our commitment to providing and staffing the Professional Learning Workshops along with the resources needed for the increased number of schools has taxed our capacity to the limit.

Over 2009 and 2010, we have welcomed 448 new schools from every state and territory except Queensland to the *QuickSmart* family. There is every possibility of crossing our northern border to Queensland in 2011. There have been a number of enquiries from individual schools but the need to form a cluster has slowed this outcome.

Our data bank reveals that over 8000 students have now participated in *QuickSmart* programs since its inception in 2001.

In 2010, in the Numeracy Program, 7 new clusters have been formed in New South Wales, 3 new clusters in Victoria, 3 new clusters in South Australia, 2 new clusters in the Northern Territory, 2 new clusters in Tasmania and 1 cluster in Western Australia. In Literacy, 2 new clusters have been established in the Northern Territory, 2 in New South Wales and 1 in Victoria.

Already we are looking forward to what 2011 will bring.
QuickSmart Literacy 2010

This year has seen an increase in the number of schools implementing the up-dated Quicksmart Literacy program. Five new clusters have come on board – two in the Northern Territory, two in New South Wales (New England and Western Sydney), and one in the Horsham district of Western Victoria.

There was great excitement when the kits with the flash cards, games and other materials were finally packed and ready for distribution, and they have been enthusiastically received by instructors. The Resources and Organisation folder is now being professionally formatted and it should be ready for printing later this year.

Workshops 1 and 2 have been held for most clusters, with the third ones about to start as I write this.

Lorraine’s presentations at the 4th and 5th workshops in Darwin have been very well received and are something for those schools currently in their first year of implementation to look forward to. (The second year has three, one day training workshops where some aspects of literacy learning are considered in more detail).

We have been fortunate to have had the chance to visit some of our Literacy schools during the year and see for ourselves the great work being done by instructors and the enthusiasm and engagement of students.

The reports at the second and third workshops have been an opportunity for participants to share their experiences in coming to grips with this (often) challenging program, and to hear about the creative ways so many instructors work with the materials. Those ideas are then shared at other workshops as we travel around the country, making Quicksmart a truly national community!

Noelene Raymond
Data Collection and QuickSmart

At this time of the year, staff in most schools will be dealing with the data collection that we at SiMERR ask of you. Many of you would remember that every school contributes to SiMERR’s huge database and in this newsletter we thought we’d give you an idea of what happens to the data that you send to us.

The person responsible for the data is Dr Stefan Horarik. He enters it into the database and then performs various analyses of the information. These analyses are done for a whole cluster and for individual schools.

The important result that comes out of these analyses is a statistic called the Effect Size.

Effect Size is a measure of the size of the academic gains made by a group of students over time. According to John Hattie, a well-respected academic who uses Effect Sizes in his work, an Effect Size of 0.3 is the average growth you can expect from students in a year.

The table below gives a very brief overview of how to interpret different Effect Sizes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect Size</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 0.2</td>
<td>This is the effect size of normal development with little or no schooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.2 – 0.4</td>
<td>The typical effect size from being in a classroom with a teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.4 – 0.6</td>
<td>Something important is happening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.6 – 0.8</td>
<td>Some major improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.8 – 1</td>
<td>Almost too much to expect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are interested in knowing more about how the Effect Size is calculated, you can access this paper from the Australian Council of Educational Research website: www.acer.edu.au/documents/RC2003_Hattie_TeachersMakeADifference.pdf

Back at SiMERR, reports are written for individual schools, giving the Effect Size for your school, and for your cluster of schools. These reports are usually given to Principals at the Principals’ Workshops and time for discussion of these results is allocated in the workshop.
As well as sending your *QuickSmart* students’ and Comparison students’ PAT test results or alternate standardised test results and CAAS assessment results, we also ask you to collect information on student attendance. Please send us a copy of your attendance sheets when you send the students’ post-test results on both CAAS and the PAT tests (or whichever standardised test you are using). This will help drive further analysis of how the number of *QuickSmart* lessons attended can be linked to student improvement.

**Gaining credentials for QuickSmart Professional Development**

2010 has been an historic year for recognising the work done by *QuickSmart* Numeracy Instructors and Teacher Co-ordinators. For the first time, those who have completed 6 days of workshops and who have been actively involved in the delivery of the *QuickSmart* programs in schools, have been given recognition from SiMERR for that involvement.

Teacher Co-ordinators will receive:

- a certificate from SiMERR at the University of New England;
- a list of all the skills that can be developed through involvement with *QuickSmart*; and
- a voluntary self-reflection proforma.

Instructors will receive:

- a certificate from SiMERR at the University of New England;
- a list of all the skills that can be developed through involvement with *QuickSmart*; and
- a voluntary self-reflection proforma.

**What’s the difference?**

The certificate and the list of skills for Teachers is couched in the language of the state professional body overseeing registration and/or accreditation of teachers in the relevant state. In NSW, in addition to the above, the NSW Institute of Teachers will acknowledge 47 hours of Institute-endorsed Professional Development once teachers have completed the online evaluation of the PD.

For Instructors, the language used on the certificate and in describing the skills reflects the TAFE-sector emphasis on competencies.

The intent of the above recognition is to support *QuickSmart* Instructors and Co-ordi-
nators with documents that can meet professional learning accountability requirements and add to individual portfolios for career purposes.

**What do you need to do if you think you are eligible?**
Cluster Co-ordinators will send their lists of those eligible to SiMERR for preparation and dissemination of documents. If you think you have missed out, contact your Cluster Co-ordinator in the first instance. Any omissions/mistakes can be easily rectified, provided there is a record of your attendance at the workshops and the work you have done in your school.

As we come to the end of 2010, there will be many Instructors and Teacher Co-ordinators who will be eligible for recognition. We assure you that we will work as quickly as we can to ensure that your documents are sent out in a timely manner.

***************************
Please Note:
***************************

**UPDATING THE CAAS AND OZCAAS SOFTWARE FOR 2011**
With the start of the New Year schools using the *QuickSmart* Numeracy and Literacy programs will need to update their CAAS/OZCAAS software licenses. This year we are distributing the software via our website. This will enable all participating schools to get the software without delays caused by damaged disks or lost mail.

To get the latest version of the software for your school follow the instructions below:

1. Go to the following URL using your web browser.
2. You will be prompted for a username and password. Enter the username and password provided by SiMERR.
3. A page with a form asking for your school name, your first name, your last name, contact person’s email address, and whether you are doing the *QuickSmart* Numeracy program or the *QuickSmart* Literacy (and Numeracy) programs will be displayed. Fill out the form and click “Submit”.
4. An email will then be sent to the email address entered on the form with further instructions on how to access the software.
Get to know the *QuickSmart* website:
http://www.une.edu.au/simerr/quicksmart/

*QuickSmart* is on Facebook! and Twitter!!
Search for us.
Photo gallery:

John was honoured this year with the Australian Council for Educational Leaders’ William Walker Award to acknowledge his contribution to education.

Fan Photos from QuickSmart

Alice Springs hub members hard at work!
QUICKSMART CONTACT PEOPLE:

SiMERR QUICKSMART TEAM:
Professor John Pegg: Phone: (02) 6773 5070       email: jpegg@une.edu.au
A/Prof Lorraine Graham : Phone: (02) 6773 3821    email: lgraham@une.edu.au
Jenny Thomas: Phone: (02) 6773 2788             email: jthoma26@une.edu.au
Noelene Raymond: Phone (02) 6773 4289         email: nraymond@une.edu.au
Dr Stefan Horarik: Phone (02) 6773 3256         email: shorarik@une.edu.au
Shirley Cooke: Phone (02) 6773 4289             email: scooke2@une.edu.au

The team would like to thank the QuickSmart Co-ordinators and the QuickSmart Instructors in all the QuickSmart School Clusters. The value of these people to the ongoing strength and success of the QuickSmart programs in schools is immeasurable.

We wish you all a Happy Holiday and look forward to catching up in 2011!

FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THIS NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS, STAFF AT YOUR SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY MEMBERS, PLEASE GO TO THE FOLLOWING WEBSITE