Research Evidence from QuickSmart

A critical aspect of the implementation of *QuickSmart* since 2001 has been the attention paid to the ongoing intensive evaluation of the program. This has included gathering assessment information from comparison groups of average-achieving students drawn from the same schools as low-achieving *QuickSmart* students. This research design helps quantify ways that *QuickSmart* narrows the achievement gap for low-achieving students and serves to isolate any effects attributable to the instructional program.

Independent assessment results (using state-wide or standardised tests) gathered from thousands of *QuickSmart* and comparison students provide rich data sets related to student growth that complement computer-based data collected on students’ speed and accuracy on basic skills during *QuickSmart* lessons. Interviews and surveys of students, parents, teachers, and Principals have also yielded consistently positive qualitative data.

This strong evidence base confirms the success of *QuickSmart* from a range of perspectives. On the basis of extensive quantitative and qualitative data, it is clear that students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, have made substantial academic improvement over the course of the *QuickSmart* Program. Important examples of research evidence indicate that:

- In the Northern Territory during 2006, 2007, and 2008 the effect size growth of many hundreds of *QuickSmart* students based on state-wide tests was 0.68, 0.60, 0.78, respectively, and, compared to a considerably lower effect size of approximately 0.3 or less calculated for the average-performing comparison cohort.

- In the Northern Territory, data collected over the past three years indicates that schools can expect on average a 10% improvement on standardised test results of *QuickSmart* students in the first year of implementation and that jumps to approximately 20% improvement in the second and subsequent years of implementation.

- Over the last five years in the Lismore Diocese, *QuickSmart* students’ results on the State-wide Basic Skills Tests (BST) improved substantially. On the Numeracy assessments, 92% of students improved by at least one band with 40% of students improving by at
least two bands. In the Reading BST assessments, 97.5% of students improved by at least one band with 50% on students improving by at least two bands.

- At Orara High Government School in Coffs Harbour on the North Coast of New South Wales, all Year 7 students who were below Benchmark in 2005–2006 \( (n=67) \) and in 2006–2007 \( (n=68) \) and who subsequently participated in QuickSmart, were above the National Benchmarks in Year 8.

- The State–wide Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP) and English Language and Literacy Assessments (ELLA) results, as well as effect size data, identify Orara High School, in 2006, 2007 and 2008, as one of the best performing schools in New South Wales in terms of value–added results.

- At Orara High of the there were 44 students who undertook the QuickSmart program in 2006 and also presented for the National NAPLAN test in Year 9 in 2008. The results show that 42 students were above Benchmark, the two students below Benchmark were diagnosed IM students in Year 7, however each student managed above average growth for the period.

- Results from the eight schools who participated in QuickSmart in the North Coast Region of NSW in 2007 had an effect size on ACER PAT of 0.75 while the comparison cohort’s value was 0.19. Representing in excess of threefold growth over the year. This result improved in 2008 with an effect size for the new QuickSmart sample of 238 low–achieving students of which 52 were Indigenous of 0.801.

- An analysis by independent statistician, using the large data–sets of several hundred students in NSW over several years whose performance on QuickSmart has been evaluated using the ACER PATM test found that the Effect Size for QuickSmart students ranged from 0.59 to 0.69 with the latter figure representing those students who completed the full 30 weeks of instruction.