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Discussion Paper

Theme 3: Learning to Learn

*The ‘Learning to Learn’ Initiative: using new knowledge about learning to make a difference across a whole system*

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Abstract
In this paper we will outline the establishment, progress and early outcomes of the ‘Learning to Learn’ Initiative, which is in its sixth year in the South Australian Government Education System.

*Learning to Learn* is changing the way teaching and learning is conceptualised and constructed for the children and students of South Australia. The initiative provides leaders and teachers with extended opportunities to focus on generative learning by learning how to learn. Participants are supported to reflect critically on their current practices by immersing themselves in the latest research on learning and curriculum, and conducting locally based curriculum inquiry.

Specific objectives of *Learning to Learn* are to:
- reconnect teachers and leaders to their vocation, reigniting their passion as learners
- develop deeper understandings of learning, pedagogy and curriculum to transform engagement and classroom practice, and to build new concepts of learning communities through a culture of inquiry.

The outcomes of Learning to Learn at this stage are indicating that preschool/school redesign, driven by a focus on learning and attention to relationships and cultural change, can succeed. Engaging in deep learning about constructivist learning theory and associated pedagogy has brought about improvements in the vital areas of:
- improving student engagement and wellbeing
- enhancing student achievement
- revitalising teacher professionalism and pedagogy
- building system-wide learning.
What is Learning to Learn?

*Learning to Learn* is a unique State Government funded education redesign initiative that is changing the way teaching and learning is conceptualised and provided to the children and students of South Australia. It was developed as a deliberate complement to the State curriculum document – SACSA\(^1\) – an outcomes based curriculum framework that declared a constructivist learning theory at its core. It is a network of over 170 educational sites, from preschool to Year 12, that promotes deep understanding of constructivist learning theories as key to student and teacher engagement for improving student learning outcomes, and represents a State-wide shift within curriculum thinking.

Traditional curriculum reform projects of incremental change are often characterised by a linear view of change or adherence to a blueprint. Our experience showed this would not lead to transformation and we aspired to an understanding of change as an organic/dynamic process - one that valued schools, preschools and the whole education department as complex systems capable of adapting and changing. A key element in the change theory was a belief that transformation in foundational thinking is necessary for transformation at whole school and system level to occur. At the outset this required questioning some of our traditional paradigms of education and change management, and a preparedness to work in new ways.

We cannot restructure a structure that is splintered at its roots. Adding wings to caterpillars does not create butterflies – it creates awkward and dysfunctional caterpillars. Butterflies are created through transformation.  

Pace Marshall, 1995, P 15

Many questions surfaced in the design stage of the *Learning to Learn* Initiative, for example:

- Could we really create a space that allowed people to problematise and explore the ‘big picture’ of where they were now, how they were currently constructed and possibilities for transformation?
- How could we engage deeply with leading edge thinking about learning?
- How could we begin something that allowed us to co-evolve the strategy and not get stuck in the old ways of interacting, confirming the dominant discourse of ‘them and us’ - between the centre and the field?
- Was sustainability a possibility?
- What would we need to do differently to ensure this was not just one more project?

Therefore the design and organisation of *Learning to Learn* was not prescriptively laid down beforehand - rather a broad framework was developed which captured the big ideas we were evolving, our understandings of how change takes place and the values we hold about

\(^1\) The South Australian Curriculum and Standards Accountability (SACSA) Framework is the state-wide curriculum framework. www.sacsa.edu.au
learning. The finer strategy elements were to emerge throughout the Initiative’s life with guidance from all participants.

For *Learning to Learn*, the challenge is to provide a range of learning experiences that re-engage educators and allow them to develop understandings of the current limitations of ‘schooling’ as we know it: to build our capacity and confidence for redesign in a constructivist culture of inquiry.

In a constructivist classroom, the teacher searches for students' understanding of concepts, and then structures opportunities for students to refine or revise these understandings by posing contradictions, presenting new information, asking questions, encouraging research, and/or engaging students in inquiries designed to challenge current concepts.

Brooks & Brooks, 1999, p. ix

So what have we actually learned about change and building a learning community? The principles we have developed over the course of the Initiative may help to make this clearer:

- constructivist learning principles are adhered to
- teachers are learners first
- learners are given maximum autonomy and minimal prescription for their learning
- accountability is reframed as a learning opportunity
- recognition is given that transformation takes time
- an invitational stance is maintained since learner choice is seen as critical to the change process
- a spirit of positive intent is assumed and positive energy is found and harnessed; that is, the success points are embraced and redesign occurs around these.

This final principle, of following and harnessing the positive energy for change, was researched by the project leaders and colleagues through exploration of Appreciative Systems\(^2\) and educational reform initiatives. This has been reported time and time again as central to *Learning to Learn’s* success in sites - building on what works in the local context through drawing on the latest insights into learning, rather than imposing an externally generated solution/program.

**How does *Learning to Learn* operate?**

The Initiative attempts to set the preconditions for teachers to be able to learn and provide a lens into the learning experience for children.

The five major strands of *Learning to Learn* have allowed professionals from participating sites to collaborate and share their learning, whilst providing

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\(^2\) Resources on Appreciative Inquiry, based on the belief that whatever we want more of in our organisation is already happening somewhere within it, are available at [www.thinbook.com](http://www.thinbook.com)
professional learning opportunities for all staff across the state. *Learning to Learn* is therefore structured as follows:

- **The Core Learning Program** sits at the heart of *Learning to Learn* and focuses on leading edge research into learning, curriculum and constructivist pedagogies. It is designed to be quite different from prevailing traditional ‘training and development’ models and asks teachers and leaders to reconsider fundamentally their roles as educators.

- Teams of site leaders meet in *Learning Circles for Leaders* to develop deeper understandings of the role of leaders in reculturing and restructuring learning for the future. These are hosted twice per term by Dr Rosie Le Cornu and Dr Judy Peters from the University of SA, both of whom have captured this learning through a range of papers presented nationally and internationally.

- **Practicums** are three-day extended learning programs for all teachers and leaders, where they can learn from *Learning to Learn* sites. Simultaneously, host sites can synthesise their learning as they support their peers across the state in developing their understandings of the latest research into learning. These have been held in 2000, 2001 and 2004.

- Relationships are constructed within the *Project Colleagues Network* between *Learning to Learn* participants and a range of educators spanning the Department of Education and Children’s Services (DECS), tertiary education sectors such as Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and universities, and educational researchers from around the world. Harnessing the potential innovation and energy from learning across sectors and non-traditional networks has contributed to the generation of new knowledge in sites. The *Project Colleagues Network* contributes to both the conception and design of the Initiative, as well as sharing research and learning with participating sites. The *Network* draws together a formidable group of educational thinkers who both inspire and challenge. Chief mentors of the *Project Colleagues Network* are Dr Julia Atkin, Professor Richard Bawden and, from the University of South Australia, Dr Judy Peters, Dr Rosie Le Cornu and Dr Chris Goldspink. Their research into experiential and inspirational learning, powerful pedagogies, school reform and systems thinking for whole-school change has formed the central themes of the **Core Learning Program**. Additionally, a range of local, national and international educators has contributed their work over the last six years through extensive workshops, conferences, articles and online chat sessions and the 2001 *Learning to Learn EXPO*.

- **The Learning to Learn EXPO**, hosted in 2001 with Phase I sites, ran two strands. The first key strand was the public sharing of site research and learning across the state from the first phase. The second key strand involved Project Colleagues gathering extensive data and evaluating the changes and outcomes through conversations and data collection with each participating schools, cluster and preschool.

As a result of these elements of the Initiative, the following set of reform principles were validated through the Phase I research in *Learning to Learn*:

- reform should be curriculum/learning focused
- successful change involves teachers directly
teachers respond well to being treated as professionals
improved learning outcomes for students are possible with attention to
school environment and with the injection of new ideas.


From the first two phases of Learning to Learn tensions have been
experienced and lessons have been learned. The project continues to
attempt to respond positively to these at every opportunity, for example:

- Rather than adopting a coverage model, Learning to Learn ‘goes deeply’ to
  increase the chance of transformational change. This has meant only
  modestly increasing the number of sites in each new phase. While the
  project has been gathering a critical mass over its history, there has been a
  perception of exclusivity that has impeded its acceptance. Learning to
  Learn has developed strategies to ensure better communication and
  promotion of learning opportunities across the whole community.
- Systems understandings have supported the development of the initiative.
  Often the unexpected arises, and embracing uncertainty and trusting
  emergent outcomes is not a comfortable path. Emergent planning differs
  from traditional planning by seizing on the point of energy in sites rather
  than having a pre-mapped set of strategies. Asking leaders to foster the
  learning of their communities in this way is demanding and requires
  sophisticated understandings and self efficacy.
- Often people come to a learning experience wanting a ‘kit bag’ of solutions
  to implement. This mitigates against learning and, rather than challenging
  prevailing practices, leads one to become a victim of these practices.
- Uncertainty is very stressful as a teacher, and admitting it can be very
  confronting because this strikes at the teacher’s heartland. Fear of losing
  the class or fear of being seen as unprofessional can overshadow other
  considerations. Teachers need a safe environment in which to experience
  uncertainty.
- Wrestling with new concepts can be transformative as people create their
  own meanings. However, it is also challenging and time consuming as
  sites go through a period of confusion, seeming to lack direction. In
  Learning to Learn, a pattern emerges of a time lag of 18 months before
  clear outcomes are discernable.

New knowledge with a common language
At first we needed to understand how our thinking had been constructed - why
were schools the way they were and what were the assumptions that
underpinned the dominant discourses and constructions? – particularly those
that bound us to particular ways of being that were antithetical to learning.
‘Unlearning’ became our conscious work.

Transformational learning – a paradigm shift
The educational contract for 19th century schooling was designed to produce workers
and citizens who would advance the economy by following the rules of machine- and
factory-driven production, but the educational covenant for the 21st century mind
must be grounded in an agenda that is decidedly different.
To pull this off, [schools] for the 21st century must reinvent two things: our institutions and ourselves.

Pace Marshall, 1995 p. 8

A major part of our rethinking has been stimulated by the discomfort of a necessary paradigm shift. Six years into the initiative we are asking ourselves how much we as a system have moved from simply using the latest buzz phrases towards actually having a shared meaning for them. At meetings it is possible to hear the same jargon used with different meanings - in fact a tension for Learning to Learn is the shared language that has evolved within the Initiative excludes others from entering debates about critical educational issues. We have learned that critical to a real learning community is the need to uncover assumptions that lie behind our use of industrial paradigm language, and advance our redesign objectives.

Constructivism
The Neuro Sciences affirm the constructivist theory that underpins our state curriculum framework, SACSA. For example, sites have moved to individual programs constructed from this framework to take into account students’ prior learning, and personal cognitive preferences. Because of this confidence in their new learning, adults and students use SACSA as a tool rather than resist it as a restriction to learning.

Learning to Learn invites sites, through the Core Learning Program, to work with their communities to explore and examine values and beliefs about learning. Many sites have taken up the challenge of creating a critically reflective environment, where explicit values are developed together. Schools are consensually making decisions about learning, with whole-school communities working together.

You have to be clear about what you value, but just as importantly, you have to be accountable to your values and they have to be held up to the scrutiny of others and developed collectively with the school community.

Atkin, 1999, p.1

Through extended work with Dr Julia Atkin, Education Colleague to Learning to Learn, teachers re-engage their intrinsic concern for students’ learning by focusing on both the learning and social outcomes of education, rather than on short term achievement. Thus core values must be identified, both as a central target and to provide a point of integration. This has increasingly led to rich connections around curriculum.

Snapshot 1: Learning about learning
In this metropolitan primary school, the year 3s had recently learnt about the range of learning preferences, represented by colours, that we have as learners. In the class was 'Matthew', who struggled with his learning and whose relationship with his teacher was becoming increasingly difficult.
The principal called a meeting with Matthew, his parents and his teacher to discuss his learning difficulties. To their unexpected delight, Matthew articulated the problem by explaining that his learning style was ‘yellow’, which enabled him to create new and exciting ideas, but made it difficult for him to concentrate on his schoolwork. In contrast, he explained, his teacher was ‘green’, preferring to organise and achieve concrete things. He pointed out that his learning style was in opposition to his teacher’s and that this was the origin of the conflict! Furthermore, whilst Matthew learned more by discussing things with others, his teacher, although encouraging discussion, preferred a quiet classroom.

*Here was a 9 year old child able to analyse and articulate differences between himself and others, and how it related to learning. What a powerful example of metacognition, understanding of self and a deeper understanding of the relationship between student and teacher!*

Learning to Learn data collection, 1999–2003

A Managerialist versus a Systems Approach

Another facet of this unlearning was questioning the assumptions characteristic of the transmissive model of schooling that were playing themselves out in the minds of teachers and leaders – assuming a ‘right’ answer, looking for outside experts, and attributing privileged knowledge to those with authority.

Complexity such as this continues to challenge leaders at all levels across the Initiative, and the old bureaucratic and hierarchical management model where compliance overshadowed learning has to be unwoven. We know that providing "answers/solutions" will undermine the learning principles and touchstones that govern the Initiative but also find ourselves wavering when this demand peaked in the first year. By providing many different scaffolds and entry points for people’s learning we connect with a whole new group of staff who had formerly been openly dismissive of any engagement.

Our progress is assisted by well developed communities from around the world. Yoram Harpaz, Director of the Mandel School for Educational Leadership in Israel, captures the required conceptual shift:

Grand ‘pictures of schooling’:
- Teaching is telling
- To teach is to create the conditions for involved learning
- Learning is listening

New conceptual picture of schooling:
- To learn is to be involved
- Knowledge is an object
- Knowledge is a ‘story that works’
- To be educated is to know
- To be educated is to relate to knowledge sympathetic inquisitively, critically and creatively
Belief in this new picture of schooling enables us to resist to delivering ‘the answers’ to developing learning communities. We believe that as teachers and leaders construct their own deep understandings of learning - alignment of classroom practices, decision making processes and school policy and structures will emerge.

Systems Thinking and Emergence
Systems Thinking has influenced every aspect of the Initiative. Professor Richard Bawden, world leader in systems theory, systems thinking and the developer of the Experiential/Inspirational Learning System, has challenged sites over time to recognise the elements of systems thinking in their own situations.

For example, the idea of ‘emergent strategy' was deliberately introduced to Learning Circles to support leaders develop these deeper understandings about the non linear nature of change and more responsive change strategies.

For sites therefore we discourage traditional planning approaches and encourage mapping or journaling of the collective thinking about their learning journey as the starting point. We consciously use a different language about planning such as 'starting points', 'learning our way forward', and 'emergent strategy'. We also spend considerable time encouraging sites to find the existing energy in their school - what is it that teachers are already passionate about? What can be capitalised on? We are confident that it will all lead back to learning.

Are we actually making a difference?
The outcomes of Learning to Learn at this stage are indicating that preschool/school reform, driven by a focus on learning and attention to relationships and cultural change, can succeed. Engaging in deep learning about constructivist learning theory and associated pedagogy has brought about improvements in vital areas.

In examining their data with a critical lens and looking at the layers beneath the raw data, Learning to Learn sites have developed greater insights and have subsequently changed practices. Project involvement has allowed schools to experience data as a ‘way in’ to a deeper understanding of issues impacting on student achievement. The snapshots included in this paper illustrate the impact of schools’ involvement with Learning to Learn. A summary of the outcomes in four key areas follows. More information on individual sites, and our reports, are available from our website: www.learningtolearn.sa.edu.au.
**Improving student engagement and wellbeing**

Extensive data collection across the entire Phase I and II cohort shows that sites engaged in deep learning about constructivist learning theory and pedagogy have registered significant improvements in student engagement, retention, progression, and attendance, as well as staff effectiveness and morale. These cohorts demonstrate:

- Classrooms becoming more socially inclusive and democratic through enhanced student-centred pedagogy
- Students developing higher order learning skills and taking considerably greater responsibility for their own learning
- Improvement in behaviour and classroom relationships, including student/teacher and student/student relationships
- Students demonstrating a greater sense of engagement and willingness to attend.

**Snapshot 2: Building student engagement**

‘Jackson’ is a middle school student who hated school and teachers. The most regular ‘visitor’ to the time out room, he was disruptive, argumentative and avoided learning, especially literacy.

By investing effort, funds and time into building a positive and supportive school culture and establishing a broad range of literacy programs, this metropolitan R–7 school has turned around the learning experience for the many ‘Jacksons’ in their school. By embracing a range of ways to encourage positive behaviour and utilising creative strategies to engage students in their change process, they have recorded a 60% decrease in time out incidences and improved retention, as demonstrated in Figure 3.

Jackson is now an involved and keen volunteer and leader—and an emerging reader! The school identified as essential to change ‘the subtle shifts of practice and culture that no-one plans, but everyone sees as they emerge’. These, they say, are the keys to sustainability. Now they observe:

- Increased involvement of students across the curriculum
- Increased levels of attentiveness
- Improved sense of community and involvement of the community in the school’s learning program
- Increased respect for the place of research and theory in informing their plans for the future
- Improved confidence of senior students.

*Learning to Learn* data collection, 1999–2003

**Enhancing student achievement**

If students are more engaged in their learning, with improved student-teacher relationships and an increasing sense of curriculum relevance, one would anticipate consequent improvements in learning outcomes. This is borne out by *Learning to Learn* data, which demonstrates not only improvements in outcomes, such as standardised tests and post compulsory certification, but also against identified community learning expectations, Essential Learnings and SACSA Outcomes.
Nearly 90% of survey respondents reported significant improvement in student outcomes.

A range of examples from primary schools include:

Overall mean scores in literacy/numeracy were higher than state average (by an average of 3.4%) in 2001, and increasingly higher (by an average of 5.6%) in 2002. 92% of year 3 students scored in the 3–5 Skill Band in 2002 (similar in 2001) compared with 66% in the state.

*Learning to Learn* data collection, 1999–2003

Metropolitan Primary School

Secondary schools have noted improvements in completion and achievement in SACE\(^3\), as demonstrated by two metropolitan secondary schools:
- SACE completion 1999–2000 from 54% to 73%
- SACE achievement 1999–2000 from 78% to 82%
- Increase in number of students receiving A’s
- Increase in number of ‘satisfactory’ SACE Stage 1 results

*Learning to Learn* data collection, 1999–2003

*Learning to Learn* sites have not only shown that they can improve scores as assessed by the formal measures of achievement, but that they are also registering success in developing learners’ metacognitive skills. The ‘new basics’ for the 21st century is where *Learning to Learn* sites have consistently reported real impact. For example, greater numbers of children and students are:
- exercising choice responsibly
- using meta-cognitive skills
- taking responsibility for learning
- experiencing easier transition between year levels and schools
- accepting alternative viewpoints
- working with greater persistence
- expressing greater hope for a future with expanded opportunities
- experiencing improved progression in site-based programs
- able to articulate their learning
- self assessing their learning.

**Snapshot 3: Literacy and numeracy—a focused approach**

Since 1999 a small country school has significantly increased student engagement by focusing each year on a major learning theory, such as multiple intelligences and brain compatible theories. At this stage, however, these changes had not been introduced specifically into numeracy or literacy. BST results in 2000 were unsatisfactory, as they did not reflect this increased engagement and parents were unhappy.

When the data was examined, several areas of weakness were detected. It was clear that the application of learning theories had been too narrow and focused—it was time to apply them explicitly to literacy and numeracy programs.

\(^3\) The South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) is the post-compulsory certification that is taken over two or three years, and in which prospective employers and tertiary learning institutes are interested.
Additional funding, as part of the Literacy, Numeracy and ICT Learning Project for Disadvantaged Schools, enabled the school to focus on literacy and numeracy and this, together with SACSA implementation, became a Partnership Plan goal. By incorporating *Learning to Learn* practices explicitly into literacy and numeracy, including learning in multiple intelligences and brain compatible theories, results improved significantly. Their efforts were reflected in BST results, which were well above state and like-school averages, with particular improvements from the lowest scoring students, including students at risk.

*The community is now* incredibly supportive and proud of our work. *I have to protect my staff somewhat from too many observation visits from teachers.*  

*Learning to Learn* data collection, 1999–2003

**Revitalising teacher professionalism and pedagogy**

The most commonly reported outcomes identified by *Learning to Learn* participants relate to the transformative power of the *Core Learning Program* and the subsequent reconceptualisation of their role from one of ‘teacher’ to ‘leader of learning’.

It was exactly these big picture questions that are explored through the *Core Learning Program*, using constructivist learning principles that invites teachers and leaders to critically reflect and create new meanings for their roles as both teachers and learners. The structures and processes of the *Core Learning Program* foster informality, dialogue and individual challenge, encouraging participants to explore diverse and sometimes conflicting views of knowledge.

Le Cornu et al (2003) state that the significant outcomes consistently reported by teachers, leaders and students in *Learning to Learn* sites have demonstrated wide-ranging changes to ‘classroom practice, learning environments, learning relationships, learning conversations and learning tasks’.

In one on-line survey, 140 teachers and leaders reported changes to many aspects of school-wide and classroom-based practices. When focusing on their own attitudes and practices, marked improvements were reported in methodology and teacher morale.

Survey results highlighted increasing self-esteem and confidence in teachers, as well as an increase in attendance at professional development and a decrease in staff absenteeism, reflecting greater connection to the profession of teaching. Furthermore, teachers reported:

- openness to questioning and uncertainty
- seeking critical discussion and debate
- questioning long-held beliefs
- improved ability to articulate learning theories and models
- teachers, students and parents working together more frequently
- a greater focus on research and observation of outcomes.
Teachers in project sites consistently report that they will never think in the same ways again. Many now describe themselves as lifelong learners.

However, the sobering downside of this revitalised engagement of teachers and leaders also emerged through the data collection process. There were numerous comments from participants regarding the overwhelming task they see before them in attempting to redesign, not only their classrooms, but the whole school in light of their learning about learning. This systemic view presents a huge challenge; participants recognised that coherent learning environments need to be reflected and supported by all elements of the school—the culture, structures, policies, governance and practices.

**Snapshot 4: Professional engagement through learning networks**

A network of urban preschools has created a Learning Circle, which is supported and mentored by a Learning to Learn Project Colleague. Participants place themselves in personally challenging situations where colleagues observe and examine their practice. Professional learning and innovation of methodology is now the norm for this group, with parents, teachers and children planning for learning together.

*The structure of the Learning to Learn project has provided superb opportunities for cross-sector learning, while allowing individual sites to pursue individual learning relevant to the learners at that site. The increased level of collegiality and critical reflection on practice among staff as a way of improving outcomes has been significant.*

*Learning to Learn data collection, 1999–2003*

**Building system-wide thinking**

Developing ‘centres of learning’ is possible: the leadership, knowledge and resources which enhance deep and authentic learning are within schools and preschools, their communities, Central Office and the wider educational community. Already Learning to Learn has close connections with a range of state and national initiatives, and within the Education Department ‘systems thinking’ is more evidenced than in the past.

The conditions can be created which allow for the teaching profession to work in partnership with DECS to create centres of relevant and authentic learning. Teachers and whole communities embracing SACSA is evidence that learning results from a respectful and invitational stance such as that taken by Learning to Learn.

Creating the conditions for authentic learning is a significant challenge for Learning to Learn. A range of key precepts inform the design of the initiative for this to occur. For example:

- learning comes through trust and acceptance of risk
- vocation is an important motivating factor in the context of education
- transformation is needed, not incremental improvement
- change and uncertainty are ubiquitous and form the backdrop for transformation
- for sustainable improvement to occur, rather than just administrative change, it is necessary to reflect on deeply held world views and question identity
• for sustainable change to occur, responsibility needs to be taken at a local level rather than imposed from above
• for a re-orientation in learning to occur, a catalyst or leader is needed to trigger partnerships
• for complex problems to be solved, complex solutions need to emerge from those who confront them at a local level.

Snapshot 6: The Quality Improvement and Effectiveness Unit

The DECS Quality, Improvement and Effectiveness Unit has developed a continuing dialogue with Learning to Learn, both in the development of the High performing Outcomes Modules [HpO] and in the approach to supporting sites to build their capacity for undertaking improvement in teaching and learning.

The HpO Modules are a systemic approach to improvement, based on theoretical models and research aligned with Learning to Learn. These modules include an understanding of systems theory and approaches to improvement based on building the knowledge, skills and dispositions of DECS personnel to undertake and sustain growth.

The HpO training and development program accesses the thinking and expertise of a number of Learning to Learn project partners, both for support materials and to build the connections that assist site leaders in their learning and work.

We have valued the involvement and expertise of the Learning to Learn team in our work. High quality learning and professional development provide a fundamental basis of high performing and effective schools and preschools. We are keen to continue this partnership through the provision of an aligned cross-unit approach to site improvement.

Learning to Learn data collection, 1999–2003

What of the future?

Learning to Learn has gained significant insights into important factors contributing to successful change, as Goldspink (2003) points out. For example:

• Appealing to teachers' intrinsic motivation is a key to both preventing resistance and ameliorating other de-motivating factors present in the general environment.
• Pursuing change with high levels of flexibility, together with a learning and risk tolerant approach to accountability, can lead to rigorous approaches to change and a focus on results, contrary to ‘managerialist’ assumptions about a need for tight control.
• Maintaining a high level of congruence to the core values that inform the change is vital.
• A non-blaming approach to reform opens up a culture of inquiry and possibilities for institution-wide learning.

These are informing the evolving design of Phase III of Learning to Learn in 2004–2006.

It is clear that Learning to Learn has been successful in engaging students, and thus significantly improving their learning outcomes, by transforming whole-school culture and embracing a holistic approach to learning, based on
constructivism and inclusivity. This means teachers are taking responsibility for their own and their students’ learning, and moving from a position of compliance to self-responsibility – thus reframing the notion of ‘accountability’. At the same time the Initiative is wary of programs that promise a simple formula for success, or are solutions-oriented. These approaches are seductive, but do not reflect the complexity of working with living systems; they can subvert the need to deal at a deep level with our constructions of thinking.

We also recognise that not all participants have wholeheartedly engaged with Learning to Learn and for some it has been a frustrating change process. Although no sites have dropped out of the program, there have been individuals who have described the learning as too arduous. While success stories are numerous, some individuals and communities are yet to be convinced about the need for transformational change.

The renewed purposes for Learning to Learn in Phase III can be summarised thus:
- building professional capacity in a new context, both in the field and at the centre
- acting as a catalyst for curriculum innovation
- influencing the system knowledge-base
- building curriculum leadership density and capacity.

Therefore the foundations of Phase III of Learning to Learn are:
- professional learning;
- research and innovation; and
- accountability and responsibility.

Redesigning schooling for the twenty first century is challenging and can be a rather overwhelming prospect. Neither DECS nor the sites involved have recoiled from this challenge, even though there can be no certainty of outcomes in this complex process of creating something which has never existed in the past. However, the benefits to teachers, students and their families of taking this journey make it well worth embarking upon. It is not just a journey of restructure, but of transformative change in the hearts and minds of educators.

Reculturing is the name of the game. Much change is structural and superficial. Transforming culture—changing what people in the organization value and how they work together to accomplish it—leads to deep, lasting change. …Never a checklist, always complexity. There is no step-by-step shortcut to transformation; it involves the hard, day-to-day work of reculturing.

Fullan, 2002, p. 18
Bibliography


Learning to Learn data collection, Department of Education and Children’s Services, (1999–2003), unpublished—listed in detail below


The Learning to Learn data collection, 1999–2003, includes

- online surveys
- analysis of centrally-held site database records: state test results, attendance, progression, parent opinion surveys from 1999–2002
- qualitative data, case studies and personal narratives
- analysis of existing Learning to Learn documentation and records
- summaries from Phase I sites’ accountability products
- feedback data from Practicums, Core Learning Program workshops and the 2001 Learning to Learn EXPO
- summaries of EXPO evaluation conversations
- Most Significant Change Stories
- case study research
- transcripts from Learning Circles for Leaders and forums
• Project Colleague papers and feedback
• telephone surveys and interviews

Much of this is available from the Learning to Learn website (www.learningtolearn.sa.edu.au) and in papers published from Learning to Learn evaluations and reviews. The unpublished papers are available from the Learning to Learn team.
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