

Report on the 2006 Student Learning Survey

In November 2006, principals were invited to complete the 2006 Student Learning Survey. We would like to acknowledge and thank the many principals who took the time to respond. This report provides a summary of the main findings from the survey. A more detailed overview is provided in the slide show, which includes tables and notes.

Background

The 2006 survey was designed, like the 2005 survey, to inform the work of the central and regional offices in providing ongoing effective and targeted support to schools as they implement the suite of student learning initiatives. As well as assisting schools to reflect on their progress in 2006 and plan ahead for 2007, the survey provides a snapshot of how schools across Victoria are travelling in implementing the Student Learning initiatives, and the effectiveness of resources provided.

The Student Learning Whole School-Assessment Tool was used to collect some of this data. Data was also collected about the following resources:

- Curriculum Planning Guidelines and Modules
- Principles of Learning and Teaching P-12 and related resource materials
- Assessment advice, Modules and related resource materials
- Student Learning Whole School Self-Assessment Tool
- English and Mathematics progression points and assessment maps
- English and Mathematics Developmental Continua P-10

Results

Participation

1148 government schools responded to the survey. This constitutes 70% of all primary schools, 72% of all secondary schools, 75% of all P-12 schools, 47% of all special schools and 75% of all language schools.

Progress with student learning initiatives

The first section of the survey was based on the Student Learning Whole School Self-Assessment Tool and was designed to assess the progress schools have made in implementing the Student Learning initiatives.

For more information on the Whole School Self-Assessment Tool see:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/curriculum/preptoyear10/schoolassessment/default.htm>

This section included descriptors of four stages of implementation of the Student Learning initiatives characterising progress along a continuum from Level 1 (lowest) to Level 4 (highest exemplification) in relation to 5 elements: Learner at the centre; Leadership; Implementation and integration of Student Learning initiatives; Organisational structures and learning environment; and Performance and Development Culture.

For each of the five elements, principals were asked to make an on-balance judgement as to which descriptor best matched their school's current situation.

The responses indicate that overall most schools are operating at Levels 2 and 3 in relation to 'Learner at the centre' and 'Leadership'.

Schools reported having made the most progress in 'Organisational structures and learning environment' and 'Performance and Development Culture'. In both these areas a higher proportion of schools are operating at Levels 3 and 4.

Schools reported having made the least progress with 'Implementation and integration of Student Learning initiatives'. There is a higher proportion of schools operating predominantly at Levels 1 and 2.

The value of the resources

The second section of the survey focused on resources and sought feedback from principals on the value of the materials that have been provided to support the implementation of the Student Learning initiatives. It comprised seven multiple choice questions, one for each of the relevant resources and three optional free text questions calling for feedback and suggestions.

Principals were asked about the value of each resource, for example, 'To what extent have the Curriculum Planning Guidelines and Modules been of value in your school?' Principals chose from:

- limited value
- of some value
- valuable
- extremely valuable.

Findings are as follows;

Curriculum Planning Guidelines and Modules

Most frequently schools reported them as being valuable, with primary and P-12 schools seeing them as more valuable than secondary schools. In comparing 2005 to 2006 responses, there has been an increase in value for all schools. In particular, they have increased in value for P-12 and for special schools.

Principles of Learning and Teaching P-12 (PoLT) and related resource materials

The largest proportion of schools reports them as being valuable. In comparing 2005 to 2006 responses, there has been an increase in value for all schools, with fewer schools seeing PoLT as 'of some' or 'limited' value.

Assessment advice and related resource material

The most frequent response from all schools is that the advice and materials are 'valuable'. They are seen as more valuable by primary and P-12 schools. In comparing the 2005 responses to the 2006 responses there has been an increase in their value for all schools.

Student Learning Whole School Self-Assessment Tool

The most frequent response from all schools is that the tool is 'of some value'. It is considered more valuable by primary schools.

English and Mathematics progression points

This is considered the most valuable resource of all with more schools reporting it as being 'extremely valuable'. It is most valuable to primary schools.

English and Mathematics assessment maps

The most frequent response from all schools is that the assessment maps are 'valuable'. They are most valuable to primary schools.

The English and Mathematics Developmental Continua P-10

As this resource was only just released and not widely used prior to the survey, principals were asked about their anticipated value. This resource is reported as 'valuable' by a larger proportion of schools and of most value to primary and P-12 schools.

The free text responses called for suggestions on how the resources could be improved or extended. The responses were grouped by theme. These represent the major themes that emerged in these responses.

The responses are listed in order of importance (as measured by the number of similar responses).

- student Learning resources are high quality and comprehensive
- provide time for professional learning, implementation and consolidation
- take into account that some schools are feeling overwhelmed (especially smaller schools)
- make the website easier to navigate
- provide examples (eg units of work) and school models
- communicate updates to all teachers, not only principals.

In particular:

- small schools noted the need for additional support
- rural schools noted the need for access to additional professional learning/consultancy support
- special schools noted the need for more support and resources.