Smart classrooms in Victoria, Australia

The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has introduced smart classrooms in Victorian government schools as part of its reform agenda. Overall, the reform agenda is focused on the needs and interests of children, and aims to improve students’ learning outcomes.

The smart classrooms bring together some of the most advanced classrooms in the world:

• New classroom design to create flexible, multiple-use spaces for students and for teachers
• New teaching and learning technology, including interactive electronic whiteboards, mini-computers with learning resources and software, video-conferencing, cameras, screens, projection systems and table-top touch screens
• New teaching and learning practices based on personalised learning programs for every student, which take account where students are up to in their learning, and create challenges for them.

The new learning spaces are designed to ensure all students have access to innovative new teaching practices, comfortable and adaptable learning environments and state-of-the-art technology that equips children and young people for life and work in the 21st century.

Linked to these changes in the smart classroom, a school leadership program has been developed and a school leadership institute established, which together provide professional development for principals and identify and train new leaders in schools. As well, an effective schools model, outlining what every school needs to do to continuously improve, has been implemented in the Victorian government school system.

Teachers and students report how much they enjoy learning and teaching in smart classrooms, and Balwyn High School, a Victorian government school whose students are participating in the Connections 2010 program, reports very strong academic outcomes for the statewide end-of-school examination (the Victorian Certificate of Education).

For more information, visit: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/events/connections2010/china/default.htm