Message from the Chair, ACT Curriculum Taskforce

After two years of implementing the Australian Curriculum Phase 1 learning areas, the ACT has made significant progress and is still a lead jurisdiction in implementation nationally.

The Australian Curriculum: Geography for students from preschool to year 12 will be the first of the Phase 2 learning areas expected to be released in December 2012, with the arts curriculum and the first two of the languages curricula for Italian and Chinese scheduled for release mid-2013. A new ACT implementation plan will be published, before the end of 2012, to take account of the release of these Phase 2 learning areas. The Phase 1 senior curricula for years 11 and 12 are scheduled for endorsement by Ministers of Education in December 2012.

ACARA is in the process of revising the general capabilities and has circulated new drafts as the basis of consultation received. Work is continuing to ensure the Australian Curriculum meets the needs of students with a disability and also for those students identified as learners of English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D). Opportunities to provide feedback on the shape of the Australian Curriculum, particularly in the Phase 3 learning areas, will continue to be promoted on the ACARA website (www.acara.edu.au) and I encourage all stakeholders to contribute to this.

The focus of this issue is ‘Engaging School Communities in Implementation’. It includes ideas for how this can be achieved or how to enhance current school strategies to increase community engagement in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. There are also case studies from schools from each educational sector.

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ACT Implementation of the Australian Curriculum

The following text has been written for inclusion in school newsletters in term 4 at the discretion of the principal. It is intended to provide parents across the ACT with preliminary background information on implementation of the Australian Curriculum.

The Australian Curriculum sets out what all young Australians are expected to learn and the expected quality of learning as they progress through schooling. The overall structure of the curriculum is consistent across learning areas and includes the following elements:
- **A rationale** that explains the place and purpose of the learning area in the school curriculum
- **Aims** that identify the major learning that students will be able to demonstrate as a result of learning from the curriculum
- **An organisation overview** that provides an overview of how the curriculum in the learning area will be organised Pre-school to Year 12
- **Year level statements** that provide an overview of the content that is being studied at that year level
- **Content descriptions** that specify what teachers are expected to teach
- **Achievement standards** that describe the quality of learning typically expected of students
- **General capabilities** that describe a set of skills, behaviours and dispositions that are addressed explicitly in the content of the learning areas
- **Cross-curriculum priorities** that ensure the Australian Curriculum is relevant to the lives of students and addresses the contemporary issues they face.

The Australian Curriculum is outlined on a year-by-year basis for English, mathematics, science and history. The Phase 2 learning areas, due to be released from December 2012, include geography, the arts and languages and these will be progressively implemented in ACT schools in a planned and managed fashion at the appropriate year levels, following online publication. Phase 3 learning areas include health and physical education, information and communication technology, design and technology, economics and business, and civics and citizenship. Development and consultation work is still proceeding for all Phases 2 and 3 learning areas.

**Viewing the curriculum online**
The Australian Curriculum can be accessed at [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au)

A user guide and site map to the website, demonstrating the core elements of the curriculum and the functionality of the site, are available online. Opportunities for consultation on curriculum areas currently under development will continue to be available for all interested members of the public. To take advantage of these opportunities, it is necessary to click on the consultation tab on the Australian Curriculum website and then to register as a user of the consultation site.

**Ideas to support engaging parents with implementation of the Australian Curriculum:**
- Include succinct, regular newsletter articles on aspects of the Australian Curriculum
- Hold information sessions on the implications of the new curriculum for student learning
- Direct parents to the ACARA website
- Notify parents of opportunities to engage in consultation with the progressive development of the curriculum
- Include explicit links to the Australian Curriculum in work sent home
- Ensure that curriculum work featured on school open nights and events is aligned to and features the Australian Curriculum
- Regular feedback to School Boards, Community Councils and School P&Cs to report on implementation progress.