The preferred future – “... all government school students are entitled to an excellent education and genuine opportunity to succeed, irrespective of the school they attend, where they live or their home background.”

Blueprint for Government Schools

The BEP Teaching and Learning Declaration has arisen out of a series of workshops led and inspired by internationally acclaimed educationalist Professor David Hopkins.

“We need to reach down into the classroom and deepen reform efforts by moving beyond superficial curriculum change to a more profound understanding of how teacher behaviour connects to learning. In particular, it requires a direct and unrelenting focus on what many are now calling the ‘instructional core’.”

- Professor David Hopkins

www.davidhopkins.co.uk
The Bendigo Education Plan (BEP) provides a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform education infrastructure in Bendigo and improve student outcomes.

The plan has a clear focus on the revitalisation of teaching and learning supported by the building of four new state-of-the-art secondary colleges; colleges that will work in partnership with Bendigo Senior Secondary College to offer a high quality and responsive curriculum, highly effective teaching and learning, and world class facilities that inspire students to learn. It is about giving our students access to the best possible educational opportunities.

The new schools are based on design principles that create innovative school buildings with flexible learning environments. These schools will cater for a wide variety of teaching and learning approaches and will allow increased student access, use and ownership of the learning environment.

Powerful learning relies on great teaching practice. The professional challenge for teachers and school leaders is to strive for great practice in great schools. By supporting each other, by observing each other's teaching, by sharing our reflections about what works and why, we can put great teaching within the reach of every teacher and put it to work for every student.

This declaration will make high achievement attainable for every student in a Bendigo Education Plan school. It has been agreed to and embraced by all Bendigo Education Plan schools and provides a consistent reference point for all that we do in our schools.
“Learning experiences are composed of content, process and social climate. As teachers we create for and with our children opportunities to explore and build important areas of knowledge, develop powerful tools for learning, and live in humanizing social conditions.”

- Professor David Hopkins
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OUR GOAL

The goal of the Bendigo Education Plan Teaching and Learning Declaration is that all our students will be successful, compassionate, inquisitive, resilient and capable of contributing as global citizens.
The Bendigo Education Plan Teaching and Learning Declaration is inspired by the belief that every student is capable of achieving and has a right to a high quality education that will provide them with the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary for success at school and in life beyond school.

WE BELIEVE THAT:

- student achievement and student well-being are the fundamental obligations of schools
- every student can succeed
- it is our responsibility to act in ways that make individual success a reality
- given sufficient challenge and support, all students can learn and achieve to their full potential
- the physical and social environment in our schools is important for effective learning
- our schools share a collective responsibility for excellence and continuous improvement and this can be achieved by working together as a network of schools.
OUR CHARTER

STUDENT ENTITLEMENT

The Bendigo Education Plan (BEP) Teaching and Learning Declaration seeks to ensure that in all BEP schools students are entitled to:

- a broad range of quality curriculum that is differentiated according to the developmental needs and interests of each student
- learn in a safe, supportive, collaborative, caring and positive environment
- constructive and respectful relationships with all members of the school community
- a range of learning experiences and opportunities to demonstrate understanding in a variety of ways
- develop the skills necessary for inquiry and problem solving
- use information and communication technology in a purposeful way to promote learning
- support and intervention when required
- meaningful feedback that recognises strengths and successes and helps frame strategies for improvement
- clearly articulated pathways to further education, training and employment
- equity of access to resources and opportunities to succeed
- opportunities to become global citizens.

“Making good teaching happen for every child, every day, in every classroom, is the single most important means by which schools can deliver on their promise to enable all children to learn and achieve at high levels.”

— Robert Peterkin, Harvard Graduate School of Education
TEACHER OBLIGATIONS

The Bendigo Education Plan (BEP) *Teaching and Learning Declaration* seeks to ensure that in all BEP schools, teachers will provide a learning environment which:

- inspires and motivates students to learn
- values and respects individual talent, effort, integrity and difference
- is positive and safe, with clear rules and expectations
- demonstrates co-operation, collaboration and a sense of caring for one another
- is a place of activity where students learn by doing and by participating
- recognises that students learn in different ways, and teaching caters for these differences
- equips students with the skills of metacognition where they develop an awareness of their own learning, reflect upon mistakes and learn from them
- provides students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and demonstrate and communicate their learning in a variety of ways
- develops the skills necessary for inquiry and problem solving and independent living
- recognises that learning is a collective responsibility and is dependent upon strong relationships between teachers, students and parents.

Quality of Teaching Makes the Greatest Difference
The declaration recognises that all teachers in BEP schools are part of a learning community where they are obliged to engage in professional learning in order to improve professional practice and which supports all students to realise their potential.

For BEP teachers, the Seven Principles of Highly Effective Professional Learning will provide the foundation for effective professional learning. This is premised on the understanding that the most powerful professional development happens in the classroom.

Consequently all BEP schools will provide powerful professional learning opportunities that are closely linked to day-to-day professional practice in classrooms.

This will include opportunities and obligations for teachers to:

- support each other
- use data to improve teaching and learning
- observe each other’s teaching
- share best practice within and across the BEP schools.

“Knowledge has to be improved, challenged, and increased constantly, or it vanishes.”
— Peter Drucker

“It’s one of life’s great ironies: schools are in the business of teaching and learning, yet they are terrible at learning from one another. If they ever discover how to do this, their future is assured.”
— Fullan (2001)
THEORIES OF ACTION

Teacher effectiveness is central to school reform. It is through effective teaching practices that the priorities outlined in the Bendigo Education Plan can be achieved.

Expert or distinguished teaching focuses on the understandings and skills of a discipline; causes students to wrestle with profound ideas; calls on students to use what they learn in important ways; helps students organise and make sense of ideas and information and aids students in connecting the classroom with a wider world.

The following theories of action will embed the characteristics of effective teaching in the classroom practice of every secondary teacher in Bendigo.

Quality of Teaching Depends Upon a Focus on the Instructional Core

- When the tasks students are set are both challenging and differentiated then the level of student learning and achievement increases.
- When the more precise the use of academic vocabulary and skill development then students produce more creative and original responses.

CONTENT

You don’t change performance without changing the instructional core. The relationship of the teacher and the student in the presence of content must be at the centre of all efforts to improve performance.

— Elmore (1997)

STUDENT

- When the teacher sets high levels of expectation of behaviour, utilises structures and protocols, and has an appropriate level of pace in the lesson then student engagement and learning increases.
- If students have a high degree of voice in what and how they learn which generates ownership of learning then student performance will increase.
- When students are grouped in a purposeful way and collaborative skills are used then student learning increases.
- When technology is purposefully integrated into the teaching and learning process then student engagement and independence are increased and deeper levels of thinking occur resulting in improved student outcomes.

TEACHER

- When students are provided with personal and concrete expectations and feedback about their performance then they know the next level of work.
- When data is used to inform student learning, then the greater the opportunity for personalisation.
- When the language of learning intentions is consistently applied and translated into learning outcomes then students have more direction and clarity about their learning and outcomes are enhanced.
- When the teacher uses a range of questioning techniques, including wait time and persistent higher order questioning then the level of student understanding is both challenged and deepened.
- The more respectful the quality of relationships between teacher-teacher, teacher-student and student-student then the more positive are the opportunities for learning to occur.
- When teachers work collaboratively to plan, deliver and assess the teaching and learning and the curriculum, then the capacity for personalisation is increased.
MAKING A DIFFERENCE

What difference will our Teaching and Learning Declaration make?

The declaration will provide a learning environment where all students have the opportunity to be:

SUCCESSFUL
- literate at or above national standards
- numerate at or above national standards
- decision makers and problem solvers
- provided with a well-defined pathway to further education and training
- able to complete VCE, VCAL or VET qualifications.

COMPASSIONATE
- able to develop unconditional and respectful relationships
- able to work collaboratively and successfully in teams
- equipped for self-advocacy and social competence
- caring and respectful for self and others and the environment.

INQUISITIVE
- curious, questioning, imaginative
- inquiring and problem solving.

RESILIENT
- strong, purposeful and self-confident
- adaptable, flexible and dynamic.
The Effective Schools Model underpins the Blueprint for Government Schools. It identifies eight domains in which schools must be active, and continuously improving. The BEP Teaching and Learning Declaration reflects these eight domains:

- professional leadership
- focus on teaching and learning
- purposeful teaching
- shared vision and goals
- high expectations of all learners
- accountability
- learning communities
- stimulating and secure learning environments.

The e5 Instructional Model describes five domains that characterise quality teaching:

- engage
- explore
- explain
- elaborate
- evaluate

The model offers a common language enabling teachers and school leaders to discuss and enact quality teaching practice.
The six Principles of Learning and Teaching (PoLT) identify the conditions under which students learn best.

The six principles provide an important framework that teachers and school leaders can use to reflect on, and to strengthen, teaching practice.

The Seven Principles for Highly Effective Professional Learning provide guidance for the design of professional learning opportunities that are most likely to enrich teaching practice.

These are a companion to the Principles of Learning and Teaching which support teachers to select teaching strategies, review teaching practice and identify areas that would benefit from professional learning.