DEAR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND DISTRICT DIRECTOR

RE: PLANNING FOR MEETING 2007 SACSA REQUIREMENTS

Welcome back to the new school year. The purpose of this circular is to provide you with further information about meeting requirements of the 2007 Moving forward with SACSA strategy.

One of the key aspects of the strategy in 2007 is to continue to support teachers to record valid and consistent judgements against SACSA Standards. The aim of this work is for schools, district offices and central office to ensure all students progress successfully in their learning.

It is expected in 2007 that all schools will formally record SACSA data in at least one Learning Area\(^1\) in order to use this data to improve student learning. To assist schools in meeting this requirement, new web-based software, the SACSA Achievement System (SAS), will be accessible to schools\(^2\). This software will allow schools to analyse the data they enter against a data backdrop.

Schools are encouraged to consider planning to formally record data in English, Mathematics or Science as they will benefit from:
- a high quality data backdrop for comparison purposes
- the availability of trained peer reviewers (later in 2007) who will be able to support schools to improve the consistency of teacher judgements, pedagogy and assessment at the local level
- the possibility of random selection for a peer review of student evidence which provides valuable information about the quality of school data, and
- additional information that will enable them to make more effective use of the backdrop data for school improvement purposes.

The DECS Statement of Directions and South Australian Strategic Plan identify English, Mathematics and Science as key focus areas for 2007. Other Learning Areas will be highlighted in subsequent years.

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\(^1\) see page 3, Moving forward with SACSA 2007 Information for Site Leaders and Communities, Infoconnect week 7, 30\(^{th}\) November 2006; copy included in this pack (Part 3)

\(^2\) see accompanying circular regarding SAS rollout (Parts 4 & 5) and Infoconnect letter, Week 6, 23\(^{rd}\) November 2006
Data collected will also be used centrally to review and renew the SACSA Outcomes and Standards through an ongoing process that enables schools, district offices and central office to have a valid, comparable and continuous measure of learning progress. Please note that individual students or schools are NOT able to be identified centrally (as per agreed DECS / AEU protocols, DECS Data Protocols: Student information, November 2005)

To support the validity and reliability of teacher judgements recorded in the SAS, the Office of Primary, Middle and Senior Secondary Services will train over 100 practising teachers to act as peer reviewers. Peer reviewers will provide schools and teachers with another source of feedback about their judgements based on a review of sets of student evidence chosen randomly from the data entered into SAS.

Randomly selected schools, who have entered data in English, Mathematics or Science, will be invited in mid-October to provide a set of student evidence that contributed to the teacher’s judgement about one Standard in one Learning Area for peer review. Schools will be provided with support to collect existing student evidence to be submitted. These schools will also be provided with specific information about their school’s judgements against the SACSA Standards and information about the comparability of their data with the state-wide backdrop.

More information about the peer review process and other support that will be made available to schools throughout the year will be provided periodically via Infoconnect.

I encourage you to carefully read the Moving forward with SACSA 2007 Information for Site Leaders and Communities that was provided in Infoconnect, Week 7, 30th November 2006, and other information provided in this pack, and to talk with staff in your district office regarding support to be provided. For any queries or further information, please contact Julie Roberts, Manager Curriculum Framework, roberts.julie@saugov.sa.gov.au or phone 8226 4142.

Yours sincerely

Greg Petherick
A/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF PRIMARY MIDDLE and SENIOR SECONDARY SERVICES

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