



Papua New Guinea College of Educators

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President's Message

Welcome to the current edition of the PNGCE News.

I would like to convey our collective gratitude to the broad range of people who have worked together to enable this short newsletter to be published. The contents of this newsletter reflect some of the proceedings of our annual conference. The conference itself was a significant achievement and a great success as is reflected in the accounts presented here in this newsletter. Thanks to everyone who in some small way contributed to the conference event.



The magnificent success stories presented at the conference however, are the fruit of years of dedicated hard work of teachers, school leaders, their school communities and the departmental officers who support them. We hope that in some small way we have been able to cele-

brate your great efforts and success.

It has been our quest for the last two years to tell the stories of what is working well in PNG education so that we can all learn from those who have found ways to make it work in their situation. Only by doing this can educators in PNG become a community of learners to be effective teachers, we teachers also have to become effective learners.

I wish you all a very happy end of year and a restful holiday with you families.

PNGCE NGI Conference in Kokopo 24-26 November, 2009

- Theme: *Taking Ownership and Making Education more Effective, Efficient and Relevant*
- Congratulations to the members in ENB who took the initiative to organise their own conference, with support from the PDoE, Kokopo District and local principals

2009 Annual PNGCE Conference

The 2009 Annual PNGCE Conference was a success with about 1000 people attending over the two days.

Participants were impressed with the presentations and discussions that took place.

It was a venue where educators both from the public and private sectors as well

as from all levels of education could meet and discuss issues of concern to all.

Many participants commented that the conference gave them the opportunity to meet and discuss pressing issues especially to do with making the reform curriculum work. There were presentations both on the difficulties and successes experienced by those

implementing the reform.

A lot of good feedback was also offered to those facing difficulties.

Basically the message at the end of the day was that the reform is here to stay, so it is up to the educators to make it work.

The PNGCE conference was one of the avenues for identifying solutions.

President's Conference Address

Distinguished guests and members of PNGCE participating in this conference, welcome to our annual conference for 2009.

First of all, I wish to apologise that I cannot be with you. Changes to the conference dates which were beyond the control of the organising committee have meant that the conference coincides with a long term work commitment that I cannot avoid.

I believe it is timely that we the practitioners in our education system in PNG together put our thinking hats on to search out the true issues about what matters in our sector and give our voice to the ongoing education debate about standards of curriculum, teaching and student achievement.

Our theme focuses the key question for us to answer How do we make the curriculum work in our schools to promote excellence?

In the past 20 years we have seen significant achievement in our sector. There has been enormous growth in the numbers of children attending school and for example, the numbers graduating at grade 10 level have grown by almost 200 percent. The PNG education system has also written and implemented a world class school curriculum that extends from Elementary to Higher School Certificate level. Our curriculum matches the standards expected in developed countries but has been adapted to suit our culture and particular circumstances. Teacher education has been revamped and the numbers increased. Infrastructure development has been targeted with much old infrastructure refurbished and new infra-



structure established. Administrative capacity has been reorganised and developed.

While all this growth and development has been happening, we hear lots of criticism and bagging of our education system.

We hear reports about bullying, declining standards, ineffective curriculum, lack of facilities, poor levels of classroom learning resources, lazy teachers, lack of effective inservice training, inadequate funding and the list goes on. We can all find examples of this negative picture from among the schools across our country and many others. It makes newsworthy stories for our media.

As a side story I listened to a wonderful story during our 2008 conference that was told by one of our PNG schools that had been very successful in reducing vandalism of the school by engaging parents and students

through the 'Making a Living' curriculum. We were interviewed by a journalist after the session who had also listened to the same session.

The report that appeared in one of our daily newspapers next day only spoke about the student discipline and resourcing problems in schools. It made no mention about the wonderful achievements of the schools that had presented the previous day at the conference. I would hope our media partners take a more responsible approach to their work this time round.

I don't believe that we educators should hide from our shortcomings. We do need to be honest, look at the facts, evaluate and then act appropriately. The growth and development over the past 20 years has created many challenges for education in PNG. I would hope that we at this conference look at the facts and figures about the challenges we face, evaluate them to identify what really

needs to be done and then get on with it within the resources we have available to us.

It is my belief that attributing blame to one particular set of factors without taking into account the many other realities that impact upon the provision of education in our nation is folly. No one in their right mind would spend millions of Kina to develop a world class modern curriculum and then dump it with the stroke of a pen.

I believe much of the talk about dumping the Reform Curriculum arises out of a need by some to find an easy target to blame for criticism they don't like to hear. Such criticism largely comes from uninformed opinion from a number of high profile personalities who happened to have gone to school 20 or 30 years ago and who also have no educational qualification to warrant respect for their critical view.

I challenge you all at this conference to put the facts and figures about our achievements and failures on the table and debate them with intelligence and integrity. Let us all be willing to learn from the wonderful success stories that you will hear about at this conference. Be inspired in whatever your capacity and take up the challenge to make the curriculum work for our children in the farthest corners of our beautiful nation.

The PNG education system has also written and implemented a world class school curriculum that extends from Elementary to Higher School Certificate level.

PNG CURRICULUM IS WORLD CLASS

The 2009 PNGCE Annual Conference held on the 7th and 8th of September was a very important event. Members and non-members gathered at the PNG Education Institute to share their experiences and views on the Outcome Based Education (OBE).

Two weeks prior to the PNGCE Conference the National Department of Education (NDOE) held a similar workshop. Unlike the NDOE workshop which attracted mostly participants from the government education circles the PNGCE conference was attended by educators from a range of organizations and institutions including NDOE, the universities, secondary schools, donor funded education projects, International Education Agency, church education agencies and others.

Despite a fair amount of negative feedback on the reform curriculum since implementation began five years ago the

2009 PNGCE Conference was told that it was a “World Class Curriculum”. What is needed at this stage is for educators to identify the areas that are lack-



ing and address them appropriately.

Dr Robert Gilfillan, Education Adviser Kokoda Development Program and former Head of School – Teacher Education, Southern Cross University said the PNG reform curriculum was World Class, and all educators needed to do was

work together to address effectively the areas of concern.

In his opening address the Minister for Education, Hon-

ourable James Marape said it was important to improve the curriculum, however, quantity should not be at the expense of quality. He urged educators to identify the real issues and address them appropriately, and in the process provide quality education.

He said quality education is the means that will build PNG

in the future. “If we offer a vibrant and positive education then that is what we will get. Curriculum must not be a static thing, it must be adjusted to address the changes that are taking place all the time.

Minister Marape also suggested that the curriculum must address basic skills in life through vocational and technical training, and it must also address character building at all levels.

President of the PNG College of Educators Mr Trevor Birney said educators should not hide from their shortcomings.

“We do need to be honest, look at the facts, evaluate and act appropriately. The growth and development over the past 20 years has created many challenges for education in PNG. I would hope that we at this conference look at the facts and figures about the challenges we face, evaluate them to identify what really

PNG Curriculum Reform; Observations by Dr Rob Gilfillan

Effects of the reform

- a significant increase in the number of teachers and student enrolments, as well as an increased demand for texts, equipment and other learning materials in schools.
- PNG Government has received support from various donors to provide texts and curriculum materials. This includes the Education Capacity Building Program (ECBP), and Basic Education Development Program

(BEDP) integrated programs of development assistance between the Australian and PNG governments

However, major systematic weaknesses remain

- While overall primary enrolment rates have increased over recent years, many children still either do not enter school or drop out before the end of the basic education cycle of 9 years. Maintaining minimum quality standards is proving difficult and regional and gender disparities remain.
- Capacity of National Department of Education, Provincial education administrations and central agencies of

the PNG Government to budget and manage funds effectively remains relatively weak

Kokoda Development Program- identifying real issues and how to address them

- Needs and priorities for schools and communities identified while implementing activities under the KDP. These needs are no different to other school clusters throughout PNG. However, remoteness has seen many problems with infrastructure, resources, curriculum and teaching materials and supply of teachers.

(Continued on page 4)

RURAL TEACHERS HAVE THEIR SAY

There has been so much, both positive and negative, said about the PNG reform curriculum. Many are saying, it is not working and should be completely done away with but there are those who are saying it is a great curriculum, but needs to be understood and certain adjustments made for it to be implemented effectively.

The latter seems to be the common consensus especially after much consultation amongst important stakeholders. Two recent conferences held to share experiences and to make improvements where necessary identified poor resourcing as a major factor that is hindering implementation of the reform curriculum.

A contributor to the 2009 Annual PNGCE conference, Bernadette Aihi, confirmed poor resourcing as a major hindrance during a study carried out to gauge the views of rural teachers on the reform curriculum. Mrs Aihi is a lecturer and PHD student from Divine Word University. Mrs Aihi's paper and those of other presenters confirmed that poor resourcing and lack of understanding were major factors.

Mrs Aihi said one of the desired results expected to be seen in a school if the implementation was effective included availability of resources such as adequate library and library books, curriculum materials for each teacher to have their own and lots of curriculum support materials and kits for practical subjects. However, most rural teachers fall short of re-

sources needed to effectively implement the reform curriculum.

"Some of the challenges faced by teachers that hinder effective curriculum implementation are a lack of sufficient



Mrs Bernadette Aihi

numbers of Syllabuses and Teachers Guides for each class teacher, lack of collaboration among the teachers in most schools, lack of collaboration and networking with the Elementary school teachers by the lower primary teachers and lack of housing for teachers," Aihi said.

The study also showed that most, especially experienced teachers, lack understanding of programming and the use of the new assessment procedures and processes. This was also confirmed by other speakers during their presentations.

"They are having difficulty in understanding some of the words that are in the syllabuses and teachers guides. Some teachers showed negative attitudes and

beliefs about the new curriculum. Most teachers complained about not being prepared well to implement the new curriculum. They have inadequate in-services to help them implement the new curriculum as well as not given or having limited professional development opportunities.

As well as limited supervision by inspectors there are only few support visits by education officers including "curriculum experts" and teachers lack curriculum knowledge. Teachers have complained of increased workload in terms of programming and assessing and they do not have the time for research on topics, Mrs Aihi explained.

Other factors identified by Mrs Aihi as hindering implementation of the reform curriculum such as lack of resources such as electricity for lighting, teacher housing, communication services, water supply, libraries, storage rooms and others have actually been in existence well before the reform curriculum was introduced.

In conclusion Mrs Aihi said there is a great need for professional support at this point in time. Teacher qualification upgrade is a must as many feel inadequate to teach the new curriculum. In-services should be given to teachers at the provincial, district and school levels.

"Despite the gloomy picture that has been portrayed by the presentations, it is the reality so it needs to be said so that we can together do something about it," Mrs Aihi said.

(Continued from page 3)

Addressing the problem

Currently the KDP Education Initiative is strengthening communities along the Kokoda Track through involvement in education infrastructure projects.

- Rather than sending in builders and materials the project has identified local chain-saw operators, carpenters

and builders and community labours to build twelve double classrooms. From the sourcing of local timbers and local tradespeople to the final construction of the classrooms and teacher's houses the project is community based.

Teacher Strengthening (KDP)

- Issues of in-service training, teacher up-grading and pre-service training are being addressed through the Kokoda Education Initiative and will prove to be excellent test cases of successful teacher strengthening and curriculum implementation.
- The role of school Board of Managements is central to this initiative.

CHILDREN TAUGHT IN MOTHER TONGUE PERFORM BETTER

Research has shown that children taught in their own mother tongue perform better in school than those taught in Pidgin or English only. This was revealed by separate studies conducted by Mathematician Dr Rex Matang of the University of Goroka and educationist Patricia Paraide of the National Research Institute (NRI).

Dr Matang's study involved 272 elementary children, aged between 8 and 12 years, from four provinces who were taught in their own mother tongue, Pidgin, or English. A total of 22 elementary schools were the subject of the study which involved Grade 2 classes.

"The results revealed that, on average, children taught in their own mother tongue performed better than those taught in Pidgin or English only," Dr Matang said.

Dr Matang's findings are supported by the findings of Mrs Paraide who reported that empirical research have shown that the vernacular and bilingual teaching strategies can assist second language learners to master the speaking, reading, reading comprehension, and writing skills in the second language being learned, if the literacy skills in both the first and second languages are taught and supported well in learning environments. Once first language speakers have mastered literacy skills in their first language, they can transfer these skills to learning the English language.

Mrs Paraide explained that PNG students who were instructed in the language that they knew best—either Tok Ples or Tok Pisin—in Elementary School performed

better in a picture word matching exercise in English, and also in two English reading comprehension exercises in Grade 3, than those who had received their instruction exclusively in English.

Their reasoning and application skills were stronger, and their understanding of basic mathematical concepts were also stronger than those who had received their instruction exclusively in English (Paraide, 2002).

Dr Matang's research involved the class teacher in each school being asked to select the top nine students (5 boys and 4 girls or vice versa) based on their internal school assessment. This selection approach ensured that each school was represented by the top performing students that maintained uniformity across all participating schools.

These results suggest that the difference in children's performances is not due to chance and there is highly likelihood that it is due to the influence of each Language For Instruction (LFI).

This result suggests that the Vernacular-English (VE) language combination is a better transitional language combination for bridging into English than the VP (Vernacular-Pidgin) and PE language combinations. This result further suggests that children taught in their own mother tongue (Vernacular only) have an educational advantage if they are 'bridged' directly into English rather than using Pidgin as a linking LFI between vernacular languages and English.

Better performances by children in VO schools indicate that children taught in their own mother tongue are not disadvantaged in their learning of early school mathematics compared to those children taught in Pidgin or English only. This result is contrary to the popular view held by some parents and critics of education and curriculum reforms in PNG, Dr Matang explained.

"On average, children attending Vernacular Only schools spend at least 80 percent of their classroom time learning to read and write in their own mother tongue unlike those attending PO and EO schools, who by default, do not have any opportunity at all to learn their own language or traditional counting system. By default, children in PO and EO schools are educationally disadvantaged unlike children in VO schools who learn their own vernacular thus automatically enable them to count and perform basic number operations using their own traditional counting systems," he said.

In contrast, the irregular and disjoint number words in Pidgin and English languages coupled with their lack of physical use of hands and feet do not provide the important numerical and linguistic foundations to fully assist children in PO and EO schools to perform efficiently on early number assessment.

Conclusion

The results obtained so far indicate that children learning to read and write in their own mother tongue and perform basic arithmetical skills using their own traditional counting system performed better than those children taught in Pidgin or English only. The results

provide further evidence that children's learning is more effective and meaningful if teaching progressively begins from the more familiar socio-cultural environment of school children.

This is consistent with a basic principle of good teaching taught in all teacher training courses which is to start with what is familiar (known) to the learner before progressing to what is new and unfamiliar (unknown)

The use of CMS is an example of a sustainable mathematics curriculum that enabled children to make important mathematical connections between the unfamiliar school mathematics formally taught in schools and their familiar out-of-school mathematical experiences found in their everyday cultural practices of mathematics.

The use of CMS also promoted children's sense of knowledge ownership and identity which in turn provided additional reasons and the incentive for learning school mathematics. While the results from the present study suggested possible reasons why students taught in their own vernacular will perform well during their learning of formal school mathematics, further research covering all regions of the country is needed to confirm this. This is necessary to find out how best to assist all elementary teachers to take advantage of the prerequisite number concepts found in the respective Indigenous languages and traditional counting systems in effectively teach school mathematics in elementary schools in Papua New Guinea.

Curriculum reform a plus for Kokopo Secondary



Female carpentry students putting up posts for a new building

A presentation on Kokopo Secondary School highlighted empowerment, confidence, self-reliance, gender equity, community support and ownership and successes and capacity building in practice at the school and SLIP in practice.

The school’s vision is to strive towards creating a “School of Relevance”, and its mission is to try to provide quality relevant education, and to pursue Academic Excellence and Technical Vocational Education Training & Life-Skills through the providence of broad range of subjects and work related programs that are relevant to further education,

industry needs and productive living in the community.

Training is an ongoing activity at Kokopo Secondary . Staff inservice fosters empowerment, building confidence, mentoring, coaching, building trust, collaboration, improvement, ownership and commitment and team Building.

Curriculum and Training

Skills learnt in the classroom are put to



A teacher visiting students who run their own trade store business

use during practical sessions. Two examples are carpentry and business skills. Carpentry students, both male and fe-

male, have built school buildings and teachers houses.

Many students run small businesses such as trade stores, selling food, printing and selling laplaps using the knowledge gained during their lessons.

Leadership

Peer educators attend leadership training to gain skills needed to empower them to lead.

As a result of a conducive learning environment students ;

- own and enjoy their learning,
- have excelled
- are empowered
- have high self-esteem
- able to choose their pathways for future life
- demonstrate confidence and self respect for themselves and others

PARTICIPANTS’ EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS

Dr Catherine Nongkas’ view

1. Competent authentic leadership is pivotal in any change process in the curriculum
 - To be true to your profession and the people you serve
2. Educational change in the curriculum must be understood
 - Qualified personnel
3. Subject specialization be addressed
 - Teachers’ (implementers) involvement in development of curriculum
 - Adequate funding and resources, and appropriate infrastructures

Cluster Session /Discussions/concerns:

- Resources for ‘Bridging’ are needed
- ‘Bridging’ from Vernacular to English is not working well because some teachers/schools are bridging from Vernacular to Tok Pisin and then to English. This is what is confusing a lot of students.
- Teachers have to come from and (competently) speak the community’s vernacular in order to be able for the Bridging program to be successfully implemented.
- Bridging does not necessarily have to end at (the end of) Lower Primary – it can continue on to Upper Primary.

LEADERSHIP

- Leadership starts from within
- Leadership is about influencing others
- Leadership develops a rich learning environment
- Leadership builds professionalism and management capability
- Leadership inspires leadership actions and aspirations in others

The heart and soul of learning

SUCCESS STORY

REFORM CURRICULUM SUCCESSFUL IN CHIMBU

Introducing a new way of doing things maybe daunting to many, but there are those who will take up the challenge and make it work despite numerous obstacles. Such was the case with a female teacher from Chimbu, Rosemary Teine.

Rosemary was appointed Assessor/Facilitator when the education reform was

I reformed myself. I empowered myself. Only then was I comfortable to share with others.

introduced in Chimbu. Her job was to create awareness among other teachers on the reform curriculum that was being implemented, and also to co-ordinate inservice training for her colleagues.

Being the adventurous type Rosemary refused to be dragged down by people who had already formed a negative attitude as a result of hearsay.

I was very interested in the reform, and the processes involved to make it work. So I learned as much as I could about it. I reformed myself. I empowered myself. Only then was I comfortable to share with others.

I understood and appreciated the reform before I started awareness among my own friends who are also teachers. It was a slow process. Then I moved onto my colleagues, and then started

inservice training at my own school, Kundiawa Primary.

The inservice program covered planning, programming, teaching and learning, assessment and reporting. This took a whole year. The program covered the whole of Kerowagi District, and then spread throughout the



Rosemary Teine reformed herself before reforming others

province. Teachers who attended the inservices were convinced that it was a good thing and accepted the curriculum.

During a one week awareness held in and around Kerowagi secondary and its four feeder schools Rosemary made sure relationships and networking was recognized and cemented with a cultural ceremony called *Moknabre*. Students, teachers and community

members from the four feeder schools took part in the food exchange ceremony with Kerowagi secondary.

Today Rosemary has also been tasked with the job of writing a resource book for the elementary level. The book will be used for bridging starting at Elementary 1

plementation of the reform. At the engagement stage everyone is involved in the implementation of the reform with good support from stakeholders while ownership stage is where the result of the OBE are clear as schools can see all students equipped with knowledge, competencies and directions needed for future success.

Rosemary also attributes the success of the reform in the Kerowagi District to colleagues including Raphael Gadi, a teacher who conducted continuous in-service and demonstrated practical assistance to his teachers. He is now the head teacher at Mingendi Primary School. Credit also goes to another teacher, Susan Algua, who demonstrates effective plans, teaches, assesses, reports and evaluates reform practices.

Effective implementation has also been attributed to support from the school communities and AUSAID through education support projects including CRIP, EBCP, BEDP and National, Provincial, District and Local level Governments.

The reform is also working in Kerowagi because teachers make it their business to make the reform curriculum work by getting involved in district and school inservices, teaming up in streams to plan for whole school activities and assessment and creating learning environment among subordinate groups to discuss in service units

as identified by the Province. A draft will be ready by October this year.

The reform was implemented in several stages as in all other provinces of PNG. The stages were awareness, involvement, engagement and ownership. At the involvement stage the teachers, communities, provincial education personnel and other stakeholders began to get involved in the activities meant to prepare for the im-

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Promoting professional development of PNG educators and educational leaders for quality teaching and learning at all levels



PNGCE Objectives

The purpose of the Papua New Guinea College of Educators is to provide a national professional organization through which all educators in PNG, administrators as well as grassroots teachers and their community partners, are able to participate in professional activities to develop education to serve the people of PNG.

The objectives of the PNGCE are to:

- Promote the image and profile of PNGCE as a national professional organization.
- Promote the professional development of educators at all levels in PNG
- Promote the development of educational leaders and emerging leaders in PNG
- Implement quality professional development programs
- Promote partnerships in education with parents and community members
- Position PNGCE as a source of national policy advice
- Foster research in education in PNG
- Improve, protect and foster the best interests of educators in PNG

(PNGCE Constitution Section 1b)

PNGCE Membership Options (ask PNGCE for application forms)

PNGCE Membership gives you the opportunity to interact with other educational leaders in PNG and participate in a range of rich professional activities organised by the Association. Members also receive any publications PNGCE produces and discounts when attending events such as the National Conference for which a fee needs to be charged to cover costs.

PNGCE Individual Member = K40/year.

PNGCE Corporate (Institutional) Membership = 200 /year - up to 10 members.

- School board members can be included in the membership.
- Small schools can combine their numbers to have a combined membership
- Institutions may purchase corporate membership for a group of staff and single memberships for CCEAM / ACEL

PNGCE members have the option of joining our international partner organisations the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration (CCEAM) and Australian Council for Education Leaders (ACEL) and receiving the publications

they send to their members.

PNGCE members who also join CCEAM receive, as well as their CCEAM membership Certificate, the journal *International Studies in Educational Administration* and other CCEAM publications.

CCEAM publications contain information about a range of education issues and practices in developing as well as developed countries.

PNGCE members who also join ACEL receive an ACEL membership Certificate and approximately K350 worth of publications each year. These include *The Australian Educational Leader*, *Directions in Education*, *Hot Topics* and *Ed-Vine Newsletter* and *Perspectives on Educational Leadership*.

If you have internet access, find out more about CCEAM and ACEL from www.cceam.org and www.ancel.org.au

Individual Membership Options

PNGCE only = K40

PNGCE+CCEAM Membership (K20) = K60.00

PNGCE + ACEL Membership (120.00) = K160

PNGCE + ACEL + CCEAM Membership = K180.00

Corporate Membership Options

PNGCE Corporate Membership (5-10 persons) = K200

PNGCE Group + CCEAM Full Membership for 1 member @ K20.00 =K220



CCEAM



Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management