ACARA Consultation on the draft Australian Curriculum

A draft national curriculum for K-10 English, mathematics, science and history will be released on Monday 1 March for consultation until 23 May.

Documents proposing the broad shape of the curriculum in each of these subjects were published in draft form in 2008 and, after extensive consultation, revised and published in early 2009. They have guided the development work that is now provided as a detailed draft curriculum on which comment is sought.

Professor Barry McGaw, Chair of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) said, “The process has been rigorous and national. We have consulted extensively and now seek advice from a wider audience.”

“We want the teaching profession to review the work. Over 150 schools around Australia have been recruited to test the proposals in the classroom. Other schools are also welcome to test the materials. Parents, business and industry, academic organisations and the whole community are encouraged to get involved,” he said.

“The full versions of the drafts will be published for all to see on Monday on the website (www.australiancurriculum.edu.au). Responses can be provided easily via the website. Face-to-face consultations and public forums have been organised throughout the country in collaboration with state and territory curriculum agencies.”

“The drafts differ from current curricula in some important ways. Grammar is emphasised in English to a greater extent. The mathematics and science drafts both propose less content but ensure that essential concepts are dealt with to give students the opportunity to study in more depth. Too often, at present, teachers are forced to rush on from topic to topic.”

“The drafts include Indigenous history and traditions. In science, for example, there is reference to Indigenous understandings of the natural environment. Of the 237 draft content descriptions in science, there are 10 that refer to Indigenous perspectives - on average, one per year. The history draft covers Indigenous history prior to European settlement and proposes that both Indigenous and settler views of the arrival of Europeans be investigated. This involves 39 of the 234 draft content descriptions in history.”

“The release of the draft Australian Curriculum is a significant event in our history. We must create a rigorous and demanding curriculum and want to know what others think before the Australian Curriculum in these subjects is finalised,” Professor McGaw said.

ENDS

For interviews with ACARA Chair, Barry McGaw AO contact:

Teneille Rennick on 02 9928 1517 or 0412 584 679 or mediacontact@acara.edu.au