

# MEDIA RELEASE



Thursday, 13 September 2007

## **\$2.5million for Deakin teacher summer schools**

Deakin University today welcomed an announcement by the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Honourable Julie Bishop MP, that it would receive a \$2.5 million grant aimed at developing up to 250 English teachers from around Australia.

Deakin University Pro-Vice-Chancellor Development Dr Irene Irvine said the grant boosted the university's reputation in education leadership.

"Deakin University is recognised for its leadership in teacher education, research and doctoral programs," she said.

"The Centre for Educational Leadership and Renewal was opened in 2006 in response to demand for leadership and specialist training from teachers, principals and schools.

"Today's announcement is a terrific endorsement of the Centre's growing reputation and profile in this area."

Professor Karen Starr, Director of the Centre and expert in educational leadership, said the training would underpin the Federal Government's focus on the national curriculum priority areas of English, Maths, Science and Australian History.

"The Summer Schools, which will be run at Deakin's Geelong Waterfront Campus, will draw on the expertise of a team of literacy experts from Deakin University - Associate Dean (Academic) Susie Groves, Associate Professor Catherine Beavis, Professor Clare Bradford, Dr Liz Parsons, Dr Chris Walsh, Ms Julie Mitchell, Professor Claire Bradford, Dr Liz Parsons and Mr Cal Durrant from Murdoch University," she said.

"English teachers from a range of schools throughout Australia will attend.

"The primary focus of the training will be on developing leadership skills in English so that teachers will be in a position to lead change and mentor and support other teachers when they return to their own schools and districts.

"A significant component of the training will address the changing nature of literacy, and the ways in which the subject of English can respond to these changes to ensure students are fully literate. It will also address assessment demands on teachers and the teaching opportunities created by Information Communications Technology."

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Professor Starr said the sessions would also consider the challenges presented by cultural diversity in children's literature and how significant literary texts could continue to have a place in the 21st century curriculum

Professor Starr said leadership within the education system was a critical issue, not just for schools, but the communities they served. "The Summer School for Teachers Program is about change, renewal and succession planning in this fundamental learning area," she said.

Professor Starr said change across curriculum, pedagogy, policy, leadership and administration was a permanent feature of education and as such staff in leadership positions, including teachers, required special skills to lead and manage effectively.

"Deakin's Centre for Educational Leadership and Renewal provides quality advice, professional development, education and research capacity in leadership and school renewal," she said.

"Our courses assist teachers who are currently either in leadership positions or who are thinking about applying for such roles to develop the skills required. "The English Teachers Summer School will be an exciting venture for all involved."

**Media contact** Professor Starr is available for interview. Please call Sandra Kingston 0422 005 485 in the first instance.