

# ***Educating for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. A Charter for Public Schooling in South Australia***

South Australia. Education Department, 1990

## **Overview of the document**

27 page charter of the ideals and aims held for the children who will leave school in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, outlining the commitments given by the Education Department, the required areas of study, the essential skills and understandings and the expected student outcomes.

## **Keywords**

Curriculum; essential skills and understandings; required areas of study; outcomes.

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## **Summary of Contents**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- Notes that this charter looks to the current and expected demands of public schooling in the 1990s.
- State that the document affirms and builds on many of the core values and educational priorities of 'Into the 80s. Our schools and their purposes', in that it:
  - continues to place high priority on educational fundamentals; and
  - reaffirms and strengthens a commitment to the inclusion of girls, Aboriginal students and students of non-English speaking backgrounds, with disabilities, in poverty and in isolated settings. (p. 5)
- Notes that the document sets important new directions, encompassing:
  - global issues to do with care about the planet's survival;
  - cultural issues to do with quality of life, justice, interdependence and mutual respect; and
  - economic issues.

- Notes that in particular, the charter underlines and concentrates on the key role of the public education system: “to provide high quality teaching in the service of challenging, formal learning”. (p. 6)
- Describes the document as a blueprint for the future and a vision towards which all schools will work, guiding and shaping plans but notes that it is not itself a plan. (p. 7)

## **SECTION 1: AIMS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

### **Charter**

- States that “The Education Department of South Australia has a charter to provide education based on the following premise. All young people in South Australia have the right to gain, through the public schooling system, a broad and balanced education that prepares them for effective participation in society.” (p. 8)

### **Commitment**

- Notes that putting this charter into practice requires all those who work within the education system to do the following things:
  - Strive for excellence.
  - Enact principles of social justice.
  - Provide a secure setting.
  - Foster cooperation.
  - Involve the community. (pp. 8-9)

### **Outcomes**

- Notes that within this shared commitment, the Education Department of South Australia aims to develop individuals who have the following attributes:
  - Valued knowledge, skills and understandings.
  - Self-reliance.
  - Community responsibility. (pp. 10-11)

## **SECTION 2: WHAT WILL BE TAUGHT**

### **Essential Skills and Understandings**

- Notes that for the outcomes stated in Section 1 to be achieved, all schools must work within a common framework.
- Identifies the following nine essential skills and understandings as forming the framework for all students throughout their years at school:
  - Communication skills.
  - Social skills.
  - Planning and design skills.
  - Information skills.
  - Mathematical skills.
  - Health and safety skills.
  - Technological skills.
  - Work skills. (pp. 12-13)

### **Required Areas of Study**

- Notes that there are seven areas of study which provide students with the broad range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and understandings that will prepare them for active participation in Australian society.

- Notes that the Education Department of South Australia requires that studies in the following seven areas be undertaken by all students at every year level during the years of compulsory schooling:
  - Languages, encompassing both studies in English and the learning of languages other than English.
  - Mathematics.
  - Health and personal development.
  - Science.
  - Society and environment.
  - The arts.
  - Technology. (pp. 13-15)

### **How Studies Relate to Phases of Schooling:**

- Notes the following in regards to the three stages of schooling:
  - Pre-compulsory schooling:
    - Children are not required to begin formal schooling until they are six years old but may enter Reception level soon after they turn five.
    - The pre-compulsory curriculum will provide for the development of the nine essential skills and understandings through integrated studies in the seven areas outlined above. (pp. 15-16)
  - Compulsory schooling: Studies in the seven areas, set in the framework of the nine essential skills and understandings, will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, as well as opportunities to develop areas of talent and interest in which they may choose to specialise. (p. 16)
  - Post-compulsory schooling:
    - Post-compulsory schooling is available to all and has no upper age limit.
    - Curriculum and assessment will be largely shaped by the requirements of the SACE under the auspices of the SSABSA.
    - The nine essential skills and understandings will continue to be taken into account in the planning of students' learning programs.
    - On leaving school, all post-compulsory students will receive a Student Achievement Record. (p. 17)

## **SECTION 3: HOW SCHOOLS WILL SUPPORT STUDENTS' LEARNING**

### **Essential Student Care**

- Notes that successful student learning requires that students are secure, healthy, well-adjusted and provided with special measures where necessary.
- Notes that the school exercises its duty of care in these areas with parents, the education system as a whole and other government and community agencies.
- Notes that services provided within schools and across schools by agencies within and outside the Education Department reflect the shared nature of this responsibility. (p. 18)

### **Quality Education in a Productive School**

- Notes that the Education Department of South Australia endorses the following characteristics as indicators of quality for all government schools:
  - School climate.

- Diversity.
- Assessment and reporting.
- Teaching. (pp. 18-20)

### **The Education Partnership**

- States that “Schools must have clearly stated policies on parent and student participation. The policies will promote and develop the role of parents in schools and support parents and students in school decision-making processes.” (p. 21)
- Describes the role of teachers, including their responsibilities with both parents and students.
- Describes the role of parents and the role of students.

### **SECTION 4: CURRICULUM ASSURANCE**

- Sets out the processes designed to ensure that this charter is put into practice.

### **APPENDICES**