



Student leadership framework for primary schools





© 2000, New South Wales Department
of Education and Training,

Student Services and Equity Programs.

RESTRICTED WAIVER OF COPYRIGHT

The printed material in this publication is subject to a restricted waiver of copyright to allow the purchaser to make photocopies of the material contained in the publication for use within a school, subject to the conditions below.

1. All copies of the printed material shall be made without alteration or abridgement and must retain acknowledgement of the copyright.
2. The school or college shall not sell, hire or otherwise derive revenue from copies of the material for any other purpose.
3. The restricted waiver of copyright is not transferable and may be withdrawn in the case of breach of any of these conditions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Department of Education and Training wishes to acknowledge the work of the following in the preparation of this document.

Project Manager: Stuart Hearne

The contributions of principals, teachers, departmental officers and personnel are gratefully acknowledged. In particular the members of the Primary Schools' Student Leadership Working Party; Sue Lewis, Joy Connolly, Fiona Johnstone, Di Whelan and Greg Jones.

Photographs: David Lefcovitch, *Inform*

Graphic Design: BIAGDESIGN

ISBN 0 7313 7002 3

SCIS 1016721



Student leadership in primary schools

In its most traditional form, student leadership in schools provided opportunities for a small group of senior students to play roles that were usually ceremonial in nature. Primary and secondary schools now offer a much broader range of experiences for a larger group of students under the umbrella of student leadership. Schools and teachers build the understandings and skills of leadership through the total curriculum and the many varied activities of school life.

In this way students develop their individual capacity to lead and influence others in a responsible manner.

Student leadership activities link strongly with learning about citizenship and the processes involved in a democracy. They can assist all students to learn about, and exercise, the rights and responsibilities of participating in a community that values social justice. Student representative councils and school parliaments provide excellent opportunities for students to apply their learning in decisions that affect them in the school environment.

Student leadership therefore encompasses the school's provision of:

- formal and informal learning opportunities which develop the competency of individuals as leaders and effective participants
- processes and structures for student representation and the incorporation of students' views into decision making and the life of the school.

The development of student leadership skills involves opportunities which encourage students to:

- act in roles of responsibility with integrity and honesty
- foster a sense of vision and purpose
- work with others to determine and achieve collective goals
- take on responsibilities and use decision making skills in order to carry a project through to a successful conclusion
- be active, reflective listeners who respond effectively
- earn the respect of others through their actions.



Good Practice:

Acknowledging students in school decisions

Shared values and common goals are encouraged in a number of primary schools, when school based policies are formally endorsed by

- the SRC president(s) on behalf of the students
- the school principal for the staff
- the P&C president for the parents
- the school council president for the local community.

Good Practice:

Student leaders as catalysts for change

Students leaders usually have a strong interest in the social issues that affect them and can provide good support for teachers in school programs that deal with drug use, bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Good Practice:

What is a good student leader?

In many primary schools this is an important aspect of encouraging an effective SRC. Class discussion of this question before SRC elections can clarify the differences between popularity and effective leadership. A popular student does not necessarily make a good leader and vice versa.