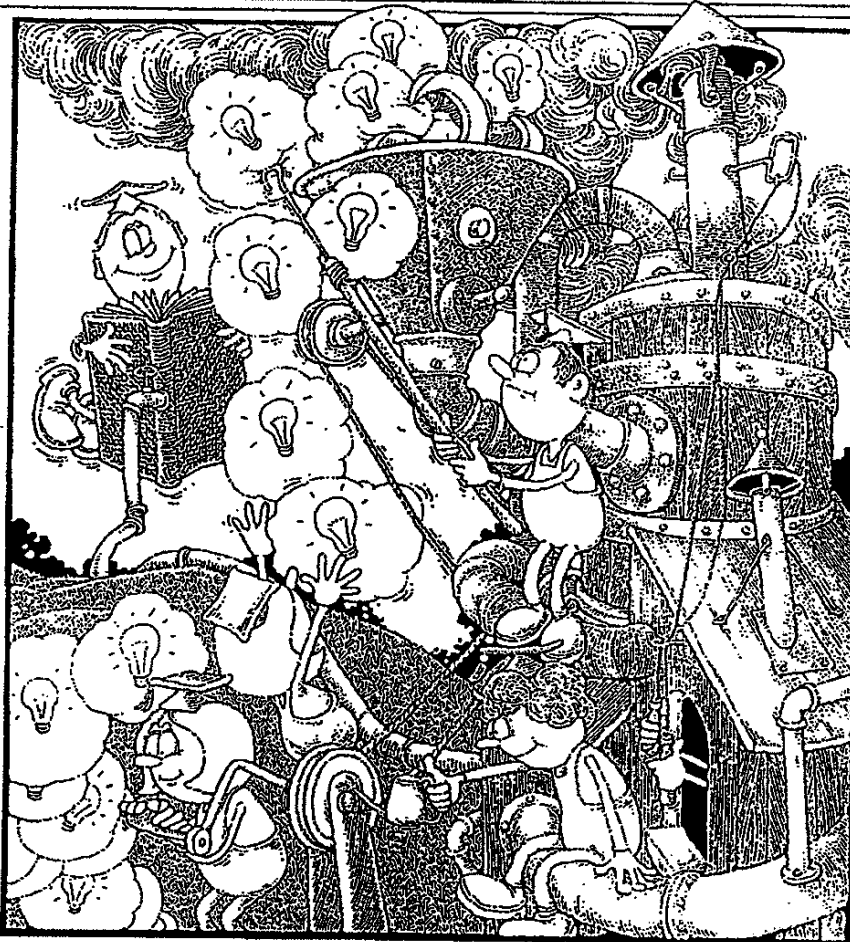


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**THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL, SYDNEY**



**AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

1.

## N.S.W. CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

## RATIONALE

The Correspondence School has an integral role within the NSW education system. In common with other schools it exists "to guide individual development in the context of society through recognisable stages of development towards perceptive understanding, mature judgement, responsible self-direction and moral autonomy".\*

The Correspondence School is, however, a unique teaching agency which seeks to minimise the peculiar problems arising from its physical separation from its pupils and the resultant absence of daily personal contact of pupils and teachers, of pupils with each other, and of pupils with the larger community.

This statement of Aims and Objectives has been prepared at a time when more students are staying on at school and when schools must respond to meet the needs of these students. It is produced in the light of current educational thinking and increasing technological change. It recognises the mandatory policy documents of the Department of Education and the issues raised by statements such as *Future Directions*. In the Primary School it recognises curriculum changes based on child-centred, experiential learning.

\* *Aims of Primary Education in NSW (page 14), 1977.*

\* *Aims of Secondary Education in NSW (page 11), 1973.*

2.

**GENERAL AIM**

The aim is to bring quality education and equality of educational opportunity to Correspondence School students who, for a variety of reasons, do not receive daily face-to-face teaching.

To achieve this aim it is necessary to provide for full participation of our students in educational experiences, to ensure the greatest possible interaction between the school and the community, and to encourage students to use their diverse and special environments, circumstances and abilities to their educational advantage.

3.

**OBJECTIVES: STUDENT**

The following STUDENT OBJECTIVES are to be seen in the context of the stated AIM of the Correspondence School:

A SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.

THE FULFILMENT OF INDIVIDUAL POTENTIAL.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-CONFIDENCE AND BELIEF IN ONE'S OWN WORTH.

THE ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY, TO THINK IN A LOGICAL MANNER, AND TO UNDERSTAND AND ADAPT TO PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE.

AN ENJOYMENT OF LEARNING FOR ITS OWN SAKE AND A RECOGNITION OF THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS GAINED IN VOCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES.

AN APPRECIATION OF THE VALUE OF SELF-DISCIPLINE AND A COMMITMENT TO THE SAFETY OF ONESELF AND OTHERS.

A KNOWLEDGE OF, AND RESPECT FOR, PERSONAL HEALTH, HYGIENCE AND FITNESS.

AN APPRECIATION OF CREATIVITY AND AN ENCOURAGEMENT OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION.

AN ATTITUDE OF TOLERANCE OF THE IDEAS, FEELINGS AND CUSTOMS OF OTHER INDIVIDUALS AND AN APPRECIATION OF THE MULTI-CULTURAL COMPOSITION OF AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY.

THE ABILITY TO OBSERVE AND ANALYSE, IN ORDER TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS AS A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN.

AN AWARENESS OF THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF PARTICIPATION IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.

AN APPRECIATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN THE NATURAL AND THE CULTURAL.

A CRITICAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE APPRECIATION OF THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE MODERN WORLD.

## STRATEGIES

- Providing appropriate material with achievable goals, in an enjoyable learning environment, through the medium of caring, skilled teachers.
- Ensuring that all educational experiences, in accordance with Departmental documents, are free from racist, sexist, religious and other stereotypes, but at the same time encouraging students to be aware of, and sensitive to, the plurality that makes up Australian Society.
- Providing a wide and flexible curriculum to ensure that all students can select or be encouraged to take courses which suit their particular needs and abilities and which prepare them to benefit from the increasing leisure opportunities of modern society.
- Providing course material at a level to suit individual students, e.g. core course and extension/remedial work.
- Providing stimulating learning experiences for students, using experiential learning where appropriate
  - to develop, extend and communicate their thoughts and ideas, through speaking, writing and other expressive modes,
  - to develop skills in decision making, and
  - to develop an environmental and social awareness.
- Providing direction and purpose to help the student set and achieve attainable objectives, and the guidance and encouragement needed to evaluate progress.
- Ensuring that students have realistic views of their abilities and receive regular, informative and honest assessments of their progress.
- Providing each student who leaves the Correspondence School with a document giving recognition to course coverage and achievement, school and community involvement, personal character etc.
- Increasing peer contact by various means such as
  - classes organised at the Correspondence School.
  - mini-schools at both the Correspondence School and other centres.
  - electronic mail as well as normal mail service.

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- tele-conferences.
- student camps/athletic carnivals/swimming carnivals.
- Promoting student/teacher contact through
  - use of student information sheets.
  - effective use of the Title Page.
  - regular contact with supervisor.
  - use of Personal Message Cassettes (audio).
  - use of Video Personal Message Cassettes.
  - use of video-taped lessons.
  - use of phone, particularly 008 link.
  - use of advanced technology such as computer-links, tele-memo etc.
  - encouragement of student visits to the school.
  - classes held at the Correspondence School.
  - mini-schools.
  - travelling teachers from the Correspondence School.
  - special appointment of itinerant teachers to each region.
  - use of an especially equipped vehicle.
- Increasing opportunities for all students to share the aesthetic expressions of human experience.
- Ensuring all students have access to career advice and vocational resources, including work experience.
- Making students aware of the school's total community so that they can take advantage of the diverse range of resources available to them.
- Taking advantage of the unique circumstances of our students and developing their abilities through the use of advanced technology.
- Increasing the opportunities for students to contribute to the functioning of the school e.g. setting up a student council to assess student suggestions and make recommendations.
- Ensuring a framework of efficient school organisation which maximises the use of all human and technical resources.

6.

- Ensuring a short turn-around time for lessons through
  - regular posting of completed lessons by students and supervisors.
  - posting on schedule all teaching material from the Correspondence School.
  - the use of electronic mail.
  - the efficiency and dedication of staff.

7.

## OBJECTIVES: STAFF

The following STAFF OBJECTIVES are to be seen in the context of the stated AIM of the Correspondence School:

TO MAINTAIN A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE WHERE STAFF MORALE REMAINS HIGH.

*Strategies*

- Maintaining a friendly co-operative environment.
- Producing a staff handbook containing school Aims and Objectives including the role of teaching, clerical and printing staff.
- Producing a staff newsletter, recognizing the contributions of staff to the life and activities of the school.
- Encouraging an active social club.
- Fostering a system of mutual support to assist staff members and to enhance their confidence in their role within the school.

TO PROVIDE A PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL.

*Strategies*

- Providing opportunities throughout the school for staff participation in initiating, implementing and evaluating school policies and organization.
- Setting up a School Education Committee with an appropriate committee structure.
- Encouraging staff to attend in-service both inside and outside the school.

TO ENSURE CONGENIAL WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT.

*Strategies*

- Encouraging school involvement in the Occupational Health and Safety Committee.
- Providing adequate accommodation for staff and for visiting students and their parents.
- Providing some recreational space for staff and for visiting students for both primary and secondary departments.



8.

- Providing better designed desks and chairs, ergonomically designed if necessary.
- Providing adequate storage for resources.
- Providing a clean environment.

TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL FACETS OF THAT UNIQUE PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, AN APPOINTMENT TO THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.

*Strategies*

- Encouraging staff to participate in production of teaching materials.
- Encouraging staff to be on various committees in the school.
- Facilitating staff participation in mini-schools, camps, face-to-face teaching etc.

TO ATTRACT A STAFF WHO HAVE THE SKILLS TO PREPARE MATERIALS FOR TEACHING BY CORRESPONDENCE AND TO TEACH BY CORRESPONDENCE.

*Strategies*

- Selecting and appointing teachers to fulfil the special needs of the school.
- Advertising vacant positions in the Gazette with job requirements and qualifications needed.
- Using staff expertise to greatest advantage.

TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL.

*Strategies*

- Encouraging staff in all sections of the school to participate in staff development programs, across curricular planning and course production.
- Encouraging interaction between faculties and sections within the school.
- Producing staff newsletters.
- Making available minutes of meetings of all committees and groups.
- Sharing expertise in writing descriptive and informative reports on students.
- Holding regular faculty meetings, general staff meetings and class meetings.
- Circulating all relevant literature throughout the school.

TO ENSURE THAT STAFF ARE KEPT UP TO DATE WITH CURRENT EDUCATIONAL THINKING AND PRACTICES.

*Strategies*

- Ensuring in each faculty early awareness of curriculum and changes in curriculum so that course production will be on time.
- Having representation on Syllabus Committees, with regular feed-back to Staff.
- Ensuring that each teacher knows the Board requirements for the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate.
- Providing continuing staff development programs for enrichment and innovation in teaching to suit the needs of: beginning teachers, teachers transferring into the Correspondence School, Casual Relief teachers, all certificated teachers, teachers seeking promotion and teachers in promotion positions.
- Making provision for programs involving teaching and/or observing in other schools and short term staff exchanges with other schools.

TO KEEP STAFF UP TO DATE WITH CURRENT DISTANCE EDUCATION TEACHING PRACTICES.

*Strategies*

- Providing induction courses in distance education methodology and organizational procedures for staff inexperienced in distance education course production and teaching.
- Organizing continuing staff development programs for all the staff, with the help of experienced members of staff and visiting experts.
- Making teachers proficient in the use of technology, important in distance education.
- Disseminating information about distance education.
- Encouraging participation in distance education conferences including tele-conferences.

- Encouraging staff visits to other distance education centres.
- Providing for exchanges of teachers between various distance education centres.
- Maintaining a program of action research and needs analysis of the highest standard.
- Encouraging frequent and regular contact between teachers, clerical staff and administrators of other Correspondence Schools.

TO INVOLVE TEACHERS IN THE PLANNING, DEVELOPING AND EVALUATING OF NEW COURSES.

*Strategies*

- Encouraging staff to share resources they have developed, and to \*"adopt, adapt and create" resources as needed.  
\*David Cohen, School of Education, Macquarie University.
- Calling in Consultants early in the planning and evaluation of programs.
- Encouraging the use of word processors to speed up production of teaching resources.
- Making full use of the potential of modern technology in the preparation and teaching of new courses.
- Utilising staff so that the most effective use is made of their teaching expertise.
- Trialling leaflets wherever practical.

TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE RESOURCES FOR TEACHING INCLUDING BOOKS, JOURNALS AND OTHER RESOURCES NEEDED IN DISTANCE EDUCATION.

*Strategies*

- Making staff aware of the funding available and encouraging involvement in budgetary planning.
- Building up library resources on general teaching methods and on methods applicable to distance education.
- Making staff more aware of compensatory funding available for distance education students such as the School Travel Grant, Participation and Equity funding and Country Area Program funding.
- Making file copies of all written teaching materials, e.g. on microfiche, for safe storage outside the school.
- Providing access to the widest possible range of resources to aid production of teaching materials.

TO FACILITATE THE PRODUCTION OF QUALITY LEAFLETS, CASSETTES AND VIDEOS.

*Strategies*

- Making readily available tools of modern technology for production of teaching materials.
- Utilising greatest range of resources in production of leaflets and other teaching materials.
- Inviting suggestions from teachers when leaflets are in draft stage.
- Conferring with other writers at various stages of leaflet production.
- Exchanging course materials with other distance education schools.
- Assessing effectiveness of courses, leaflets and other materials with a view to improving and updating.

TO UTILIZE MODERN TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF DISTANCE EDUCATION.

*Strategies*

- Organizing in-service courses to train staff in the use of computers etc.
- Providing an adequate number of computers and up-to-date programs.

TO ENCOURAGE STAFF TO BE PERSONALLY INTERESTED IN THEIR STUDENTS AND TO WELCOME EVERY OPPORTUNITY FOR FACE-TO-FACE TEACHING.

*Strategies*

- Ensuring frequent dissemination of information about students to assist in teaching, reporting and pastoral care.
- Building up and maintaining a set of student records to assist in teaching.
- Holding class meetings for exchange of information and for informed advice to students and supervisors.
- Organizing with staff participation parent conferences and parent/student camps.
- Improving communication between students and teachers, between supervisors and teachers, between class teachers and subject teachers so that there is up-to-date information about students.
- Encouraging staff to confer with class teachers.
- Encouraging face-to-face contact with students.
- Encouraging and facilitating exchange of staff and student photographs.

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- Using personal cassettes, audio and video.
- Having telephone contact with students, including 008.
- Encouraging use of electronic mailing systems.

### OBJECTIVES: PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY.

The following PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES are to be seen in the context of the stated AIM of the Correspondence School: .

TO INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION AND OF THE ROLE OF THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL IN PROVIDING SUCH EDUCATION FOR ITS STUDENTS, AND TO ENLIST COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR ISOLATED STUDENTS.

#### *Strategies*

- Making use of local expertise to help students with relevant school tasks.
- Encouraging feed-back from interested members of the community to assist teachers at the Correspondence School with diagnosis of student needs and difficulties.
- Making use of facilities of local schools.
- Obtaining input from holding parents' conferences.
- Developing a general school newsletter including teacher, parent community and student contributions.
- Continuing to produce an annual school magazine.
- Establishing a school consultative committee.
- Providing work-experience opportunities for secondary students.
- Making available material about the Correspondence School to community radio stations and local newspapers.
- Producing high quality videos on the operation of the Correspondence School for use on local television and home video viewing.
- Developing regional parents' and community activities (using Agricultural High School Mode).\*
- Encouraging participation by Correspondence School representatives in PEP, CAP, FOSCO and ICPA conferences. (Participation and Equity Program, Country Area Program, Federation of School and Community Organisations, Isolated Children's Parents' Association).

\* Residential agricultural high schools often have a number of P and C Associations, each located at a separate regional centre e.g. Bathurst, Orange, Dubbo and Glenfield P and Cs for Hurlstone Ag. High. A staff member visits these P and Cs from time to time and reports on current developments at the school. Each group tends to run its own fund-raising activities.

TO INVOLVE PARENTS/GUARDIANS IN THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING.

*Strategies*

- Having regular, informal contact with parents/guardians/supervisors.
- Holding conferences of parents/guardians/supervisors.
- Preparing a newsletter for parents/guardians/supervisors.
- Gaining input from parents/guardians/supervisors for the school magazine.
- Developing a special training course for supervisors using cassette and video tapes and, where possible, face-to-face seminars.
- Using teleconferencing.
- Using 008 phone link.
- Using electronic mailing systems.
- Using informative reporting systems.
- Developing mutual support structures for parents/guardians.
- Encouraging visits from itinerant teachers to students/parents/guardians/supervisors.
- Encouraging students and families to visit the school.

TO INVOLVE PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE COMMUNITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF SCHOOL POLICIES.

*Strategies*

- Holding conferences of parents/guardians.
- Securing parent/guardian and community involvement through a Correspondence School Consultative Committee.
- Using student and parent/guardian check lists and surveys.
- Using a more informative reporting system.

TO GENERATE THE PARTICIPATION OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE SCHOOL IN A RANGE OF SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

*Strategies*

- Holding student and parent/guardian camps.
- Holding special gatherings in centralised locations with visits by Correspondence School teachers.
- Developing regional parents' and community activities.
- Developing special relationships with central schools.
- Encouraging participation in cultural and sporting activities.
- Holding regional athletic and swimming carnivals.
- Introducing a Correspondence School graduation ceremony.
- Holding a Correspondence School concert.
- Introducing special group activities for part-time language students.
- Making available lists of pupils and parents/guardians with a view to social contacts (N.B.: Parent/guardian consent essential.)
- Providing suitable meeting rooms and a common room for visiting students and parents/guardians.
- Developing a Student Council.
- Developing contact structures for parents/guardians for mutual support, the exchange of ideas and the discussion of problems.

TO SEEK COMMUNITY SUPPORT IN MAKING AVAILABLE EDUCATIONAL, VOCATIONAL AND LEISURE EXPERIENCES FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENTS.

*Strategies*

- Using local expertise in providing practical work for Correspondence School students.
- Using work experience and work experience exchange programs.
- Conducting regional camps using community facilities.
- Involving Correspondence School students in local sports days, social and cultural events.
- Developing stronger TAFE links.



TO MAINTAIN LIAISON WITH COLLEAGUES IN OTHER SCHOOLS FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR STUDENTS.

*Strategies*

- Close communication with teachers/supervisors via telephone, the post and supervisor's seminars.
- Exchange of relevant student information.
- Encouraging constructive criticism of our teaching and resources.
- Making available our teaching resources where needed, e.g. in central schools or small high schools where library and other resources may be limited.