

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

University and State Government partner in new drive to boost numeracy and literacy

The University of Tasmania's Faculty of Education and the Department of Education have joined forces in a new initiative to improve student performance in literacy and numeracy.

The project was launched today (**Tuesday 29 January 2013**) at UTAS' Sandy Bay campus by the Minister for Education, Nick McKim; the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Rathjen, and Dean of the Faculty of Education, Prof Ian Hay.

The UTAS project team, headed by Prof Hay, will target Years 5 to 8 in response to the outcomes of the NAPLAN results in Years 7 and 9. It will work with four secondary schools and one district high school, and their feeder primary schools. The aim is to develop and trial a number of ideas and initiatives that may be transferrable to all Tasmanian schools.

"This project is a response to state and national concerns surrounding literacy and numeracy results for high school students, and targets those students transitioning from primary to high school," Prof Rathjen said today.

"In the University's strategic plan, *Open to Talent*, we highlight that sharing our knowledge, understanding lessons from the past, and building opportunity and capability for the future are key elements that the University brings to its community.

"We believe that this project in conjunction with the Department of Education will help all schools in Tasmania build opportunity and capability within their students, and is an important positive step towards securing our intellectual future."

Prof Hay said the Faculty's significant expertise across the numeracy and literacy education domain would be effective in increasing student learning in the critical transition phase between primary and high school.

"What we learn from this collaboration will also have an impact on quality procedures and policy," he said.

Fellow UTAS team members include Associate Professor Rosemary Callingham and Assoc Prof Kim Beswick.

The participating schools are: Tasman District, Scottsdale, Ogilvie, New Town and Penguin high schools, along with their associated primary schools.

In mid-2012 the University and the State Government signed a new three-year Partnership agreement. Core priorities include boosting educational outcomes for Tasmanian students and encouraging greater research collaboration between the university and government agencies.

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