

*Evaluation
of the
Discovering
Democracy
Program*

**A Report to the Commonwealth Department of Education,
Training and Youth Affairs**

EREBUS CONSULTING GROUP

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While the busy schedules of key stakeholders led to tight time constraints, most have been able to find time to talk directly with the consultants. Their insights have contributed significantly to our understanding of the program.

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We also wish to thank the members of the Evaluation Advisory Committee, who also have provided guidance and feedback throughout the course of the evaluation. The membership of the Advisory Committee is shown in Appendix 1. Responsibility for the accuracy of the findings and the conclusions drawn, are however, the responsibility of the evaluation team.

Dr Tim Wyatt

For the *Discovering Democracy* Evaluation Team

Executive Summary

An overview of the findings and recommendations of this evaluation

*D*iscovering Democracy is a Commonwealth program that has been initiated by the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) with the aim of improving the knowledge, skills and attitudes of students across Australia about their system of government and civic life. The program thus far has focused on the production and dissemination of high quality materials, principally for schools, supported by:

- ◆ coordinated professional development;
- ◆ promotion of program objectives through funding for key stakeholders such as principals, teachers and parents and their professional associations, and
- ◆ the monitoring of outcomes through targeted research activities.

Discovering Democracy also provides activities for universities, and the adult and community sector.

The core of the program is designed around curriculum materials that were sent to all schools in kit form in November 1998 to stimulate teaching and learning in this most important area. The program also encompasses a range of other activities, including funding for teacher professional development, teacher pre-service development, and a series of research projects and other national activities.

This evaluation, conducted by the *Erebus Consulting Group*, gathered data from a variety of sources, including:

- ◆ visits to 63 schools across Australia, representing country/city schools; government/non-government schools; and primary and secondary schools;
- ◆ a survey of 8000 teachers in 3000 schools across Australia; and
- ◆ interviews with key stakeholders in civics and citizenship education across the country.

The evaluation took place over the months September-December 1999.

Findings

While the *Discovering Democracy* program is nearing the end of its funding cycle, the necessary lead-time in producing and disseminating materials and conducting awareness raising through professional development has meant

that schools have really had less than a year of effective time for implementation. Consequently, the program has not yet been taken up in any serious way in the majority of Australian schools. In many schools, implementation is scheduled for 2000 because material or training arrived after the completion of planning for the 1999 academic year.

Awareness of the program has increased significantly over the past twelve months. Of the teachers who responded to the national survey in 1999, 80% indicated that they were aware of the *Discovering Democracy* program to some extent. However, 69% of teachers also said that they had no significant experience in teaching the *Discovering Democracy* program.

As would be anticipated for a program in its introductory stages, variation is a key feature of the implementation. There is variation in implementation approaches and stages between states and territories and variation within states and territories. There is also considerable variation between and within schools in the extent to which they have implemented *Discovering Democracy*.

Overall, for those who have knowledge of the program and its materials, there is widespread, though not unanimous, praise. For these people, known as the early adopters, the aims of the program are generally seen as sound and among the most important and valued learning experiences for their students.

As with many aspects of the *Discovering Democracy* program, there are strongly polarised views about the materials in both the primary and secondary school kits. There is some criticism that the material is “too wordy” or “too hard”; assumes prior knowledge that neither the teachers nor students may have; is too much to absorb in a busy teacher schedule; or focuses too much on history. However, other teachers give the material nothing but praise as being well structured, clear, easy to adapt to various student needs, providing all the guidance necessary and reducing the usual need for the teacher to plan and gather resources prior to teaching. The background materials, written by Dr John Hirst, are consistently singled out for praise.

On analysis, the evaluation team have concluded that polarisation of reactions is influenced more by the respondents’ backgrounds, pedagogical preferences, and school contexts than the quality or characteristics of the materials. What separates the exceptional teaching of *Discovering Democracy* from the ordinary is the extent to which the content and accompanying activities are made to live for students. The best teaching saw the social/historical material contained in the kits firmly anchored to students’ current real world experiences. In our school visits, such observations were more often made in primary schools than in secondary schools. The message that emerges from this observation is that, if the program is not to focus on mere acquisition or repetition of facts, classroom implementation support is needed to help teachers bring the program to its fullest potential.

The experiences of schools in this first wave of implementation has raised questions about where the material fits in the overall curriculum and, of

course the corollary, what is to be left out to make time for it. In many schools the question of finding time to plan and implement what is seen as a valued but “additional” curriculum element among competing priorities is a burning issue. The most frequent response from teachers regarding perceived barriers to further implementation are the pressures from competing demands on their time and the already “overcrowded” curriculum.

The Leading Edge

For those who are implementing the *Discovering Democracy* program within its intent and spirit, these issues are not problems. In these schools the program, always driven by a committed school leader or teacher “champion”, is an embedded part of the school culture. Good teaching of *Discovering Democracy* is most often observed where there is good teaching in the school in general.

The personal effort expended by these highly skilled and dedicated teachers, over and above the norm, must be acknowledged widely. Without them, this program would not enjoy its current level of success.

Leading edge schools have ensured the sustainability of *Discovering Democracy* by integrating it as one part of a broader Civics and Citizenship focus across the school’s curriculum, reinforced by many aspects of classroom and school community life. *Discovering Democracy* materials are most frequently used as the basis of integrated studies of society and environment. In many schools in this category, the program material is included for example, in English (debate, written exposition), human relations or personal development (rights and responsibilities) and even mathematics with analysis of voting systems and the like.

Several schools at the leading edge of program implementation have incorporated civics knowledge and approaches to active and informed citizenship across their whole operation. They provide a wide range of activities outside the formal curriculum, but often fully integrated with it, whereby students of all backgrounds and abilities can participate in democratic decision making processes. Such activities include, *inter alia*:

- ◆ student councils
- ◆ class meetings
- ◆ school rallies for and against issues
- ◆ mock referendum with each grade and the staff taking the part of a state and counting the votes as done in a referendum
- ◆ developing and presenting petitions to relevant authorities, including Parliament
- ◆ organising community activities such as cleaning up a creek, developing a garden, visiting the sick or elderly
- ◆ participating in debates about current issues such as Aboriginal reconciliation, the Republic Referendum, the East Timor issue, boat people.

- ◆ conducting fund raising activities for less fortunate people
- ◆ taking part in local issues by becoming informed and simulating the approaches of various debating sides
- ◆ taking part in radio interviews to explore and present their views
- ◆ conducting forums and interviews with local people regarding pressing and controversial issues.

In one school it was salutary to hear that a student who had been suspended several times for rebellious and anti-social behaviour had changed his approach after becoming involved with community volunteers. He was able to recognise and acknowledge through his behaviour that these people, who gave willingly of their time to help out people from backgrounds worse than his own, were worthy role models. In several schools there were stories of student maturity of response to citizenship responsibilities, for example toward the unfortunate people in war torn East Timor or earthquake ravaged Turkey. Timely and salient issues about the Republic, the Referendum in November 1999, the approach of the Centenary of Federation, Aboriginal reconciliation and a host of local issues all provided real opportunities for students to demonstrate an appreciation of the rights and responsibilities of active and informed citizens.

These schools have taken a sophisticated approach to “uncrowding the curriculum”. The school planners work on the assumption that a singular teaching and learning activity, be it inside or outside the classroom, can provide learning growth across a range of key areas and competencies. Again, what separates this approach from others is the extent to which teachers draw out explicit links between experiences to build students’ understanding, not simply providing multi-purpose activities. They recognise that, while learning requires an understanding of content, it has to be internalised; it has to be personal. They plan so that emotion and action complement cognitive activity to support learning. In these schools *Discovering Democracy* is not a program but an incorporated way of life.

Discrete Implementation

In this category of schools, while some good work may be observed, it is likely to be limited to a single classroom or grade level, a short block of time, or a single topic area. Such work is likely to be a “one-off” event, and not part of any developmental sequence. In such primary schools the approach is to incorporate *Discovering Democracy* material as a unit of work within studies of society and environment. Most often, the kit material is used as an additional resource to support teaching of topics traditionally covered as part of the middle-senior primary syllabus, such as “Gold” and “Local Government”. In such secondary schools, *Discovering Democracy* is most often taught as a particular topic in a civics subject where one exists, but is more often a unit or work in history or geography.

An essential element in all schools implementing *Discovering Democracy* is the presence of commitment and drive from at least one but usually more, staff

members who feel strongly regarding the need to educate students about civics and citizenship. Without a strong champion for the program or external influence, the program does not appear to be sustainable in the majority of schools. Where the driving force moves on or becomes burnt-out – features commonly commented upon in all systems and sectors – the program may not continue in other than a paper-based or cursory manner.

Even where there are teachers to champion the program, a range of personal, school or system circumstances often mean that the implementation is limited. Such circumstances may include:

- ◆ an unbalanced focus on content and behaviourist learning alone
- ◆ a focus on student passivity and discipline rather than learning
- ◆ a view of the student as an “empty vessel” to be filled by “knowledge”
- ◆ structural divisions between faculties or grade teams which hinder cross-faculty communication
- ◆ conflicting and competing school priorities
- ◆ timing in relation to school planning
- ◆ subject or learning area divisions
- ◆ external examination requirements; or
- ◆ lack of strong leadership support.

Those Yet to Implement

There remain many schools across the country where little has been done or where what has been done is languishing. In schools where there has been little championing or the priority has not (yet) been implemented – or where teacher champions have moved on – the program has not become established. Given the high rate of teacher turn-over in some areas, this will present a significant challenge.

Even in areas where the program is mandated and the content examined, the phasing in of such changes has provided scope for some schools to wait while others develop work. It is sad to note that in one school a great deal of work was done by a teacher to develop a unit of work that may not be implemented. The work was undertaken in response to a grant but because the syllabus into which the unit would be incorporated is not yet scheduled for implementation in the school, the unit may “sit on the shelf”. This was not an uncommon phenomenon.

For some teachers, feeling overwhelmed by change and the apparent complexities of subject focused curriculum, there is little will to commit to the *Discovering Democracy* program. Others haven’t yet accessed either the materials or in-service support to tackle the necessary planning prior to implementation. Here time and distance are key constraining features that combine with the industrial issue of reduced teacher relief funding for professional development that is common to many systems.

Curriculum Approaches

Some states and territories have long-standing approaches to integration of the curriculum at the implementation level. This factor is a facilitator, obviously throughout the primary curriculum, but also where it exists in the curriculum to middle secondary years.

Of particular note in providing underpinning support for the program is the emergence of a philosophy of:

- ◆ bringing integrated learning to the students
- ◆ providing students with a minimum number of teachers
- ◆ providing active and involved learning opportunities in practical application
- ◆ having few formal constraints to the timetable
- ◆ facilitating teachers to work in teams that focus curriculum planning and activities on a particular group of students, rather than on a subject.

This philosophy, characteristic of the middle school movement, appears to be facilitated by, but not necessarily dependent on, the structure and organisation of the school. There are many situations where a school that has students from Years 7 or 8 to the senior school certificate is able to approach the middle years in this way. This can be made to work either within a single organisation, or in consort with feeder primary schools.

Where a civics component, albeit in somewhat remnant form, has been a continuing subject or feature of the curriculum in previous years, there is a clear place for the incorporation of *Discovering Democracy*. Where there is not, in secondary schools it is often placed within a Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE), history or geography area. It must be noted however that remnant civics courses are often associated with less rigour than their competing counterparts. Where this is the case, association of *Discovering Democracy* with such courses is not advantageous for its wider adoption.

In many instances the civics component is reduced to an historical study and the citizenship component becomes a study of social or environmental themes. Neither of these approaches fully realises the intent or substance of the program, although the formal requirements may be met. In those areas where there is mandated testing of formal curriculum content, this tends to be the approach taken.

Professional or Curriculum Development Approaches

Some approaches to program implementation appear more successful than others. States which gave early priority to awareness raising in 1999 tended to have greater take-up than others. Such activities have often included a formal launch of some description that served to give the program status and imprimatur. Such activity indicated the level of system support for the program. It allowed teachers to know how important this program was

among the many emerging, competing programs. It was a symbol, a signal that highlighted the commencement of the program.

Provision of teacher relief, travel and accommodation facilitated attendance and led to greater teacher commitment. Where stimulating, community-based presentations occurred, heightened teacher enthusiasm was frequently noted. Local teams were often formed becoming committed to plans to spread the word among their colleagues.

Where the work of such teams was followed up and facilitated by materials provision, resource support to meet and plan, and communication mechanisms to share ideas, units, resources and outcomes, the work continues to grow and spread. In one state the accessing of the Open University course by coordinators throughout the schools has been a focus to train local teacher-facilitators who will undertake to support local teachers in their implementation.

Where follow-up has not occurred the local coordinator can lose momentum; the energy behind the program can dissipate quickly. There is evidence of the program enthusiasm languishing, despite sound efforts in early take-up. This a significant issue that program planners may wish to consider

While the provision of the materials in the form of the kits in particular is seen as pivotal support for the implementation, they alone are not sufficient. In most schools, the material went to the Library. While it may have been drawn to the attention of teachers, it has often been set aside as one among many.

Further stimulus in the form of reminders, seed funding or the provision of some form of professional development activity, invariably led to the materials being re-examined. Where the school was offered a grant, or where some form of in-service support was offered, often the kit was dusted-off for further work.

While the provision of grants for resource trialling or development was unanimously welcomed, this was not sufficient to ensure sound implementation. Sometimes the grant for trialling or unit development meant that the implementation was pigeonholed within the confines of the trial or unit development and spread no further. Often tight timelines and the lack of contact during trial or development were cited as issues that caused the demise or reduction of the program.

Grants seemed to have ranged from \$250 to \$5000. There appears to be no correlation between the size of the grant and the impact on implementation. The seeding funds appear to generate similar activity to the fully funded programs. However, where the grants can be used to buy teacher time, there appears to be more teacher commitment to, and interest in, the program.

It appears that follow up, regular support, opportunities for teacher talk and sharing, and the provision of teacher time were all essential for capitalising on the provision of grant money.

Significant differences in the rate of implementation, curricular approaches, curricular structures, teaching strategies and general attitude towards *Discovering Democracy* exist between primary and secondary schools. Across the country and across educational sectors, there is generally greater support for the use of *Discovering Democracy* materials in primary schools.

Discussion

The next three years will be critical to the success of the *Discovering Democracy* program. While it has experienced success in some schools, the program needs continuing support. If not, the initiative will certainly diminish, if not flounder.

The extent to which the Discovering Democracy program has achieved its purpose so far

The data gathering process produced findings that clearly indicate schools across Australia are still in the early stages of implementation of the *Discovering Democracy* program. Because of this stage of the implementation, great variation was found both in the depth and breadth of implementation of the program.

In the best schools, teachers demonstrated sound examples of curriculum integration, ongoing and structured professional development initiatives and sound future planning for school wide implementation of *Discovering Democracy* throughout 2000. In these sites students had a clear understanding of what it means to act as responsible citizens and to participate actively within a democracy at school and broader social levels.

At the other end of the continuum many schools are yet to implement the program or even consider planning for its implementation. In these schools, the materials delivered as part of the program often remain unopened.

Across the broader sample of Australian schools, there are particular issues that militate against the implementation of the program. Limitations were experienced by groups with distinctive backgrounds and characteristics that have not been explicitly acknowledged throughout the material in the kit.

Those schools in more isolated settings have particular difficulties in implementing the program, although there are some outstanding examples of how particular teachers in isolated areas have been able to achieve successful outcomes from the program on the strength of their own initiative. Such problems have been exacerbated for some teachers and students by the absence of teaching and learning materials reflecting relevance to local groups such as indigenous populations. In settings focused on particular religious beliefs, the lack of acknowledgement of

some aspects of civics pertinent to religion and culture cause concern. What some perceive as the dominance of a white Anglo-Saxon, middle class approach to civics and citizenship also causes frustration for some teachers, parents and students.

The assessment of student learning outcomes is the weakest aspect of program implementation. Where teachers are considering assessment of student learning outcomes, the evidence indicates little other than a focus on measurement of understanding of content. While assessment needs to be encouraged and supported in the majority of schools where it is undertaken, there is a need for a shift towards a broader understanding and assessment of the range of learning outcomes.

While the current focus of the program is on Years 4 to 10, the evidence from teachers and school leaders in many schools suggests there may be an opportunity to extend its reach both upwards into Years 11 and 12 and downwards from K to 3.

In order to accelerate the implementation process in schools, ongoing funding for structured professional development initiatives, targeted at the level of teacher and school need is imperative. It is clear from case studies, stakeholder interviews and the survey that networking among teachers, both within schools and with their colleagues is an essential element of this professional support.

However, for those teachers and school leaders still unaware of the program and its full intent, there is a clear need for basic information sessions to increase awareness of the program potential, its materials and the system support for it.

Discovering Democracy projects have also been undertaken by several groups including: teacher associations; principals; the adult and community education sector; parents; academics and Open Learning Australia. As well as benefiting in-school implementation indirectly, these projects help strengthen stakeholder and education community involvement in the program as a whole. Two national forums have also been held.

The appropriateness of the program strategy

As noted above, the *Discovering Democracy* program strategy encompasses a range of activities. In relation to in-schools implementation, several aspects of the program strategy have proved supportive and successful. However, several aspects of materials provision and implementation support need careful consideration in the design of future similar programs.

The early investment in the development of materials will bear fruit in the next stages of the program's implementation. The materials are generally perceived as sound.

The funded trialling of materials by self-nominating schools and teachers has potential to support implementation. The potential of this approach

will only be realized, however, if schools are treated not as contractors but as co-developers of the units and if some criteria are followed to ensure selection of sites most likely to succeed.

While it was anticipated that the timing of the delivery of the kits at the end of the 1998 school year would prove problematic, this was not found to be significant in the medium term. However, the apparently equal distribution of one kit to each school has brought some criticism. In future materials distribution, it may be appropriate to ask schools to submit a short plan of intent regarding implementation and to indicate how many kits are required to carry out the plan.

In terms of the types of support provided by the systems and sectors throughout the states and territories, there are clear indications that success relates directly to the level of contact and support provided. Awareness raising sessions have been successful in moving the kit from the library to the classroom. While they resulted in some movement towards implementation, the various forms of grants were not found to be sufficient alone to foster incorporation of the program in schools. Overall, ongoing support was found to be the most effective mechanism to broker implementation.

Professional development coordinating committees have been set up in each State and Territory and through them funding provided for State/Territory coordinators, grants to schools and other professional development activities.

Effective in-school implementation requires effective stakeholder and community support. They reinforce each other. A range of projects involving the Australian Principals Association Professional Development Council, the Australian Federation of Societies for the Study of Society and the Environment, the Australian Council of State School Organisations and the Australian Parents Council are increasing awareness of the *Discovering Democracy* program. Annual *Discovering Democracy* Implementation Forums bring professional developers, classroom practitioners and stakeholder representatives together to share information on best practice and look at ways of taking the program forward.

The *Discovering Democracy* strategy builds on an ongoing self-monitoring and evaluation component. It draws in academic expertise to reinforce best practice approaches and diagnose difficulties as they arise. The University of New South Wales Educational Testing Centre developed assessment instruments for Year 6 and Year 10 students and conducted a National Sample Survey in 1999. *Discovering Democracy* has also funded the development of a national academics consortium primarily to facilitate support for teacher professional development. Such support will be further enhanced by a pre-service teacher education project being conducted by the University of Queensland

Discovering Democracy has also included a limited focus on the provision of materials for universities and the adult and community education sector. At

this stage there does not appear to be a need for more materials in these sectors but there is a need to promote the resources.

Overall, while the implementation of program support in these areas is vital for the future embedding of the intent, the evidence to date indicates that while these activities have been successful in their own right, they have thus far had limited impact generally, both in terms of Australian society and support for structured activities in schools. The limitation of the success of these associated programs is mainly due to the small reach either gained to date or possible within the current resources and delivery scope. They remain generally successful and supportive for those at the leading edge of program implementation.

From a policy perspective, it is apparent that a clearly defined set of objectives is needed for the next phase of the project. Progress towards the achievement of these objectives needs to be reviewed at the end of that time. The priority for continued funding of the program needs to be directed towards supporting further consolidation and implementation rather than the development of new curriculum materials. It is appropriate that funding for state/territory professional development coordinators be continued. Grants and further copies of the kits need to be provided to support structured professional development in schools, designed to introduce implementation and support extension of implementation in accordance with a plan submitted by the school and approved by the system. Continued funding to facilitate appropriate partnerships supportive of *Discovering Democracy* and for high quality research to inform implementation is also appropriate, but such activities need to be tailored to the revised objectives agreed for the next phase of the program.

The extent to which Discovering Democracy accords with current and emerging priorities in government policy

The *Discovering Democracy* program is clearly in accord with the 1999 *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century* (especially Goals 1.4, 3.4 and 3.5). The goals recognize that:

“Australia’s future depends upon each citizen having the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills, and values for a productive and rewarding life in an educated, just and open society. High quality schooling is central to achieving this vision.”

The National Youth Roundtable has commended *Discovering Democracy*. Civics and Citizenship education helps young people take their place as inheritors, participants and future leaders in Australian civic life. It helps them engage in civic communities and take their part in the Australian ‘social coalition’. There will be opportunities to address these issues as Australia celebrates its liberal democratic political history in the Centenary of Federation.

In *A New Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* (December 1999) the Commonwealth Government supports an appropriate emphasis on the meaning of multiculturalism and links to Centenary of Federation activities

in any future *Discovering Democracy* program. Continuation of *Discovering Democracy* can also assist with activities associated with the Centenary of Federation, the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000) and the International Year for Volunteers (2001). It is also in accord with widespread sentiment amongst both opponents and proponents that the recent Republic Referendum highlighted the continuing need for education on constitutional matters.

The level of understanding of the aims and scope of Discovering Democracy among key stakeholders in the program

The salient issue of understanding for key stakeholders relates to the perceived scope of the *Discovering Democracy* program and its intentions. At the broader advisory level, the Civics Education Group (CEG) has been instrumental in providing informed guidance for the program. Such quality advice, translated directly at times into the materials for schools, should clearly continue to guide the development of the program in the next phase.

Priority should be given particularly to assist teachers and schools to address the balance between content and process in teaching *Discovering Democracy* including integration of a range of learning areas and other school activities as well as significant civic events. The relationship between state curriculum outcomes and the scope and sequence of the *Discovering Democracy* program needs to be continually updated. State coordinators are best placed to undertake such continuous curriculum mapping roles.

In terms of general support for teachers, the evidence indicates that school leaders can play a pivotal role in facilitating teachers' understanding and implementation of *Discovering Democracy*. Various examples have been cited where principals have reorganized school structures and routines, provided teacher relief and encouraged team-based planning to facilitate implementation.

There is a need to provide ongoing targeted funding to support the various key stakeholders such as teachers, curriculum leaders, principals and parents. They need to be supported to undertake the constructive roles that champions from within their groups have generated to facilitate the delivery of the program.

Support for the take up of Discovering Democracy materials

At the practical level, the vast majority of teachers who are implementing the program identified sample units of work, teacher guides and reference material as major resources for planning, teaching and integration with other subject areas. However, the sample units of work need to be constantly updated and linked to other civic events to build their relevance for schools. There is a need for these materials to be accurate, current and inclusive.

While the videos were perceived as a valuable resource for teaching *Discovering Democracy*, only the leading edge teachers appeared to have used excerpts from them in a manner that extracted best possible learning for students. Although the CD-ROM received extensive praise from teachers using it, the reality was that very few teachers had either the opportunity or expertise to fully exploit its value.

A perceived strength of the kit has been the flexible use of the materials by schools. Several secondary schools committed to implementing the program incorporating student populations at varying stages of the learning continuum have readily adapted the Primary Kit for secondary school use. Such implementation reflects the importance of learning continuity from primary to secondary schools that has been captured by the kits.

The level of teacher skills, knowledge and understanding of Discovering Democracy content and teaching strategies

The evidence suggests that internal champions for *Discovering Democracy* generally possess a set of skills and a personal commitment towards the ethos of *Discovering Democracy* that overcome perceived obstacles created by a lack of sophisticated understanding about key democratic content and insights.

At a deeper level of professional implementation, the *Discovering Democracy* program challenges some fundamental aspects of teaching practice for many teachers. While the approach inherent in the program materials facilitates student-focused social learning situations that can contribute to high levels of understanding, the kit alone cannot drive fundamental change. The most common implementation approach has seen teachers pick and choose from among many topic areas and activities. While this is not necessarily inappropriate, it does allow some teachers to use the kit material in less educationally productive ways than the potential allows.

Clearly, recognition of what has been achieved to date needs to be promoted and celebrated. Best practice needs to be identified and shared. Small-scale research activities into best practice, focused on the researcher working closely with the practitioner, could be effective in supporting implementation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to capitalize on the program expenditure to date. They are designed to assist moving the program forward over the next three to four years. Their implementation is essential to foster broader implementation across Australian schools and to further the incorporation into the schools already undertaking the program. The recommendations are grouped under a number of headings corresponding to the terms of reference for the evaluation.

The extent which the Discovering Democracy program has achieved its purpose so far

It is recommended that:

- ◆ the Commonwealth continue to fund the *Discovering Democracy* program for a further 3-4 year period although at a reduced level and with a different focus from earlier phases;
- ◆ greater priority be given to assisting schools to more effectively assess student outcomes from their teaching of *Discovering Democracy*, and that a shift in focus from assessment of content to assessment of learning outcomes be facilitated by the further development and dissemination of assessment materials;
- ◆ support be given to a variety of voluntary state and territory initiatives for extension of *Discovering Democracy* into Year 11 & 12, but another set of curriculum learning units should not be created.
- ◆ the program be extended to years K (or R) to 3, supported by adaptation of the existing curriculum materials.

The appropriateness of the program strategy

It is recommended that:

- ◆ a clearly defined set of objectives for the next phase of the project be identified and that progress towards the achievement of these objectives be reviewed at the end of that time;
- ◆ the revised set of objectives should include recognition of the opportunities provided by *Discovering Democracy* for genuine integrated learning across the curriculum (particularly where civics and citizenship principles are embedded in the life of the school);
- ◆ the priority for continued funding be directed towards supporting the further consolidation and implementation of the program rather than the development of new curriculum materials;
- ◆ funding for state/territory professional development coordinators be continued;
- ◆ grants and further copies of the kits be provided to support structured professional development in schools, designed to introduce implementation and support extension of implementation in accordance with a plan submitted by the school and approved by the system;
- ◆ a national benchmarking project be created to establish an appropriate set of standards in Civics and Citizenship education. This would reinforce the baseline study of student performance and assist schools with their assessment of student outcomes;
- ◆ Projects for principals, teacher associations and academics be continued over the next three to four years as much remains to be achieved by these groups to secure the implementation of *Discovering Democracy*. Links between the three groups should be encouraged.

The level of understanding of the aims and scope of Discovering Democracy among key stakeholders in the program

It is recommended that:

- ◆ the Civics Education Group (CEG) continue to provide an advisory and oversight role in relation to the *Discovering Democracy* program;
- ◆ state professional development coordinators give priority to assisting schools in adopting approaches towards teaching *Discovering Democracy* that emphasise an appropriate balance between content and process and encourage wider inclusion across learning areas and other school activities;
- ◆ the Commonwealth assist each state and territory to indicate the relationship between state curriculum outcomes and a scope and sequence of *Discovering Democracy* activities in order to devise a national 'picture' of *Discovering Democracy* in the school curriculum over the next 3 to 4 years;
- ◆ at an appropriate time a strategy be formulated and implemented, in conjunction with State/Territory professional development coordinators, to stimulate teacher awareness of *Discovering Democracy*. This might be around March 2001;
- ◆ funding be considered for the development of a pre-service teacher education program to support *Discovering Democracy*. This should be in addition to the materials and activities prepared by the University of Queensland's current project.

Support for the take up of Discovering Democracy materials

It is recommended that:

- ◆ limited funding support be provided to ensure that *Discovering Democracy* curriculum material is accurate, current and inclusive, particularly in regard to the needs of Indigenous students;
- ◆ the preferred means for dissemination of curriculum and support materials be through a dynamic means such as a website;
- ◆ appropriate mechanisms be established for the development and management of such a website, the location and operation of which be determined through competitive tendering;
- ◆ consideration be given to the rationalization of web sites currently developed by systems and sectors so that all teachers have access to materials and ideas produced by others, and so that national teacher interaction is encouraged.

The level of teacher skills, knowledge and understanding of Discovering Democracy content and teaching strategies

It is recommended that:

- ◆ the focus of *Discovering Democracy* support in the future be teacher professional development with State & Territory professional

- development committees encouraged to use a networking approach to delivery of professional development;
- ◆ that the Commonwealth support activities to promote best practice, which might include:
 - national, state and local activities which recognize and celebrate achievements under the auspices of the *Discovering Democracy* program, such as national awards for outstanding civic educators;
 - small scale research into best practice in teaching *Discovering Democracy* and what makes a difference to student learning;
 - sharing of school based approaches and material to disseminate best practice through publication of information in both hard copy and through the website.

Education activities to support national priorities in government policy

It is recommended that the CEG identify ways to:

- ◆ co-ordinate activities with the National Council for the Centenary of Federation celebrations;
- ◆ acknowledge and integrate in future *Discovering Democracy* activities the Government supported recommendations of the recently released document *A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia* (December, 1999);
- ◆ integrate future activities in *Discovering Democracy* with the Government's initiatives in literacy. Civic literacy is an important component of a comprehensive literacy program for schools.



Background

The Discovering Democracy program, its origins, content and plan of implementation

This section briefly reviews the history of the *Discovering Democracy* program, the content of the program and the strategy for its implementation. It is most important to have some understanding of these issues, since they have significantly impacted on the nature of the program and its delivery into the schools across the nation.

Origins of the *Discovering Democracy* program

The Commonwealth, in collaboration with state education ministers, has long fostered a non-partisan approach to civics and citizenship education. In goal 7 of the 1989 Hobart declaration of the *National Goals for Schooling* by the Australian Education Council, the education ministers across Australia recognised as “top priority” the importance of students being prepared for “...informed and responsible participation in public life”¹.

However, in 1994 a national civics survey found, as part of a national review of civics and citizenship education, there was:

“... widespread ignorance and misconception about the structure and function of Australia’s system of government, about its origins, and about the ways it can serve the needs of its citizens.”²

Concurrently, the Prime Minister established a peak Civics Expert Group to:

“... recommend a non-partisan program to enable all Australians to participate more fully and effectively in the civic life of our country, and therefore promote good citizenship.”³

The Civics Expert Group noted the need for Australians to develop a new and richer concept of citizenship, rather than simply accommodating the many changes and pressures faced by Australia. They emphasised the need for citizens: to be informed, vigilant and skilled in acting within democratic institutions; to participate responsibly, with knowledge, in exercising civic rights; and, to appreciate the benefits of active citizenship.

At the same time they observed that the school curriculum throughout the states and territories no longer incorporated a formal mandatory component to teach about the structure, functions and origins of Australian government.

This Civics Expert Group proposed a wide-ranging program that, in schools, should be mandatory within the learning area of studies of society and environment. They suggested the inclusion of civics and citizenship was of a different order to the inclusion of other aspects that had contributed to 'curriculum over-crowding'. Their recommendations included a reduction in the scope of other areas of "far less relevance and importance"⁴. Education for citizenship was seen as ranking with English and mathematics as a priority for school education.

In May 1997, this strong position on civics and citizenship education was reinforced when the Commonwealth Minister, the Hon Dr David Kemp MP, released the national *Discovering Democracy* program. He recognised that:

"... Civics and citizenship education is central to Australian education and to the continuance of a strong and vital Australian citizenship".⁵

Following a review of the program developed from the recommendations of the Civics Expert Group, the *Discovering Democracy* program committed \$17.5 million over the next four years for a civics and citizenship program refocused on emphasising:

"... an understanding of history and operations of Australia's system of government, and institutions and the principles that support Australian democracy"⁶.

The former Civics Expert Group was enlarged to five members, renamed the Civics Education Group (CEG), and given a steering role on behalf of the Minister.

While the Commonwealth acknowledged the rights of the states and territories to set curriculum, in June 1997 education ministers from all states and territories gave in-principle support for the Commonwealth program⁷. With this endorsement, the Commonwealth provided support for civics and citizenship as a core part of the studies of society and environment learning area within the curriculum of all states and territories.

The *Discovering Democracy* program

The *Discovering Democracy* program has a number of discrete elements for the school sector. They include:

- ◆ Curriculum materials for schools, including a primary education kit and secondary education kit
- ◆ Support for teacher professional development and pre-service development
- ◆ Support for Parent groups, Teacher Associations, Principals, and Academics Consortium

- ◆ Support for systemic professional development infrastructure, including state/territory professional development coordinators
- ◆ Support for a range of national activities, including a series of conferences and forums.

The Discovering Democracy program

The bulk of the funds for *Discovering Democracy* have been allocated to efforts in the school sector. However, the program also supports Open Learning Australia to produce courses for teacher education and as part of an arts/humanities undergraduate degree. Vocational education and training has received assistance to survey the civics component in courses. The adult and community education sector has received support for the development of four study/learning circle programs.

For schools, the *Discovering Democracy* program covers support for the school curriculum, professional development of teachers, and national activities. Curriculum materials for the program have been produced and distributed by the Curriculum Corporation.

Stage 1, in November 1997, saw the distribution of a booklet entitled *Discovering Democracy* which outlined the program and noted the state of play of civics and citizenship in the curriculum structure of each state and territory. A “home page” was established and “One Destiny”, a CD-ROM on Federation, was distributed.

In Stage 2, November 1998, all schools, government and non-government, throughout Australia received free curriculum kits funded as part of \$10.6 million worth of materials through the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. They contained a comprehensive set of units of work (eight in primary and ten in secondary) accompanied by teacher books, student handouts and work sheets, three CD-ROMs, video segments, posters, cards and links to the Internet.

Stages 3 in November 1999 saw the distribution of sets of *Australian Readers*. Stage 4, set for the year 2000, involving research activities and assessments, is in development.

Announced in November 1997, an amount of \$4.6 million was distributed to state and territory education authorities for professional development of teachers between 1998 and 2000.

A further \$2.1 million was allocated for a comprehensive program of national activities including all key education groups such as principals, teachers, parents and academics. Activities include implementation forums, awards, resources for Years 11 and 12, and support for national Schools Constitutional Conventions. The national activities aim to build national support for Civics and Citizenship education.

Recent Support

With the 1999 *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century*, the education ministers further re-affirmed that when students leave school they should

“... be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia’s system of government and civic life”⁸.

They agreed to establish a national performance monitoring agenda to report on the educational outcomes with the national goal framework. While six areas including literacy and numeracy were cited for early reporting, the meeting of ministers noted the need to develop performance indicators in civics and citizenship education.

This places firm pressure on schools to demonstrate student performance in the area within a short time span. The Educational Testing Centre (UNSW) has recently conducted a national survey of a sample of Year 6 and Year 10 students to assess their level of knowledge and understanding about civics. It is proposed that this survey be repeated annually.

The Current Situation

Civics and citizenship education has thus been on the national agenda for some time and generally received sound support from all systems and sectors. Both the former Civics Expert Group and the current Civics Education Group, strongly supported by all education ministers, envisaged a comprehensive and core civics and citizenship program throughout Australian schools.

However, recognising that this area of the formal curriculum had long been neglected, there is a need for a realistic perspective in terms of expectations of outcomes to date. Arriving late in the 1998 calendar year, actual teaching materials for *Discovering Democracy* have been in schools for just on a year. Professional development is only midway through the planned program. There are two more stages of curriculum support materials to be taken up.

In terms of practical implementation of such a core cultural change in the curriculum of schools, the *Discovering Democracy* program is as yet at an early stage.



Methodology

The Evaluation Process

In conducting an evaluation at this stage, *Erebus Consulting Group* visited all states and territories. Sixty-eight case studies of schools were carried out. These schools were varied in nature, being in the city and the country, primary and secondary schools, government and non-government schools. These schools are not a random sample and therefore the data generated cannot necessarily be called “representative” in the traditional statistical sense. The data generated does indicate some of the possibilities, however, for *Discovering Democracy* and was helpful in illuminating the implementation issues in schools who had, for the most part, expertise in the area.

Fifty key stakeholders were also interviewed.

Questionnaires were distributed throughout a range of three thousand schools across the country and responses were received from over one thousand teachers. These represented views across all jurisdictions, from teachers in the city and the country, secondary and primary schools and all education sectors. The rate of return, at 30% of the sample, was lower than expected but nonetheless generated statistically reliable information to further inform the evaluation.

Most data collection, including the survey responses, was completed by the first week of November.

The methodological approach adopted is thus a blend of qualitative and quantitative techniques. A range of sources was investigated to produce data which would inform the development of tentative findings which were tested in subsequent data gathering. This was an iterative process that occurred throughout the data gathering as interviews and case studies were conducted concurrently. The key stakeholder interviews and school case studies were used to triangulate the emerging findings from the national survey material and the school case studies.

Each of the data gathering methods is described in further detail below.

National Teacher Survey

Survey Purpose

The purposes of the survey were to identify:

- ◆ the extent and nature of the *Discovering Democracy program* as it is practised in Australian schools, and
- ◆ to identify how effective the program is for teachers and schools.

The Sample

Late in 1999 questionnaires were sent to over 8000 teachers in 3,526 schools using the Curriculum Corporation schools database as the address source. This database was appropriate as *Discovering Democracy* materials were issued to each of these schools. The questionnaire was targeted at teachers who would be likely to have some obvious relationship with the *Discovering Democracy program* (e.g. Studies of Society and Environment Head Teachers). A stratified random sample of schools was selected, with sample proportions calculated according to (1) the number of schools in each state, (2) by level, i.e. primary or secondary, and (3) government/non-government school membership. Multiple copies of the survey were sent to each school, the actual number determined by the school enrolment. Questionnaires were returned anonymously and respondents given an assurance of confidentiality of their response.

The Response Rate

To date, over 1000 surveys have been received and processed from teachers across all states/territories, sectors, and levels (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1: Survey Response Rate by Educational Sector

	Teachers, (percent)		
	Sample	Population	Difference
Primary	54	50	4
Secondary	46	50	(4)
Government	68	70	(2)
Catholic	16	18	(2)
Independent	16	12	4

The sample is close to representative of teacher populations by level and sector (difference range $\pm 4\%$), but by state/territory, NSW and Victoria are under-represented (-8% and -2% respectively), and other states and territories are

over-represented (range 1-3%). By location, most respondents teach in cities (40% capitals, 24% other cities); and 36% teach in regional schools.

Table 2: Survey Response Rate by State

	Teachers, (percent)		
	Sample	Population	Difference
ACT	3	2	1
NSW	26	34	(8)
NT	2	1	1
Qld	21	18	3
SA	9	8	1
Tas	4	3	1
Vic	23	25	(2)
WA	12	10	2

While the overall response rate for this survey was not high, it is in line with that obtained from similar surveys, and although it may not be sufficient to have high levels of statistical reliability, it does provide useful, indicative data.

Respondent characteristics

Most teachers responding to the survey reported they had 10 or more years of teaching experience (70%). Most had taught civics and citizenship in 1999 (71%), and even more teachers report that their schools are planning to teach civics and citizenship in 2000 (88%). While the sample may appear to be reasonably representative of teachers across states/territories, sectors, and levels, the large size of the non-response group may indicate that it is not representative of the entire potentially targeted sample within the population. Indeed, it is likely that the response sample strongly over represents those teachers who have had experience with the *Discovering Democracy* program. Based on anecdotal evidence, it is more likely that those who did not respond may not have been aware of the program.

Reporting the Survey Data

For the majority of items in the survey, the results are reported as frequency distributions. Cross-tabulations by sector, level, geographic area, teacher experience, and exposure to professional development with the other variables were calculated. In the majority of instances, there were no significant differences in the responses provided by teachers from different locations, sector, experience or exposure to professional development. The major area of difference was found to be between education levels, that is, between primary and secondary schools. Only significant differences are reported in the findings below.

Key Stakeholder Interviews

Fifty-one key stakeholders were contacted to provide input about the intentions and delivery of the *Discovering Democracy* program. A common set of key questions was asked of all stakeholders irrespective of status, role and interest in the program. In addition, a more extensive set of questions relevant to the stakeholder's representative group was asked to elicit key insights and information about the program.

The findings from these questions were used to inform the case study data gathering and have been integrated with those findings in the following chapter. Both common and specific questions for stakeholders are shown in Appendix 2.

School Case Studies

Case Study Site Selection

The purpose of the school site visits (here called case studies) was to provide rich, anecdotal data on individual school experiences with the *Discovering Democracy* program. The educators interviewed during the case study field visits were teachers in charge of implementation of the program or whose responsibility was generally within the society and environment learning area.

The schools were selected for the case studies on the basis of three distinct levels of implementation, as advised by the respective state curriculum coordinators.

The first category, described in this evaluation project as “leading edge”, was intended to include those schools that had already developed a fine reputation for implementation of *Discovering Democracy* at either primary or secondary school level. It was anticipated that within these schools there would be evidence of:

- ◆ existence of a committed internal champion for change
- ◆ growing depth of implementation throughout the school
- ◆ integration with relevant existing syllabus documents
- ◆ programs that crossed curriculum areas
- ◆ well founded, ongoing professional development programs for staff
- ◆ a high level of student engagement, demonstrated inside and outside the classroom
- ◆ clearly articulated, student focussed units of work and school developed resources
- ◆ team based planning and sharing of units of work and resources.

The second category, described as “discrete implementation”, was intended to include schools that exhibit at least some of the characteristics above, but in

general terms, implementation was limited. The implementation may have been within one or two classes only, or indeed one faculty or grade only.

Such “pockets of implementation” could be reflected in the teaching of *Discovering Democracy* as for example a six-week unit in a subject within a whole year’s program. It was anticipated that within these schools there would be evidence of:

- ◆ stronger content focus than integrated development of student understandings and values within the units of work;
- ◆ ad hoc application of *Discovering Democracy* principles and values outside the classroom;
- ◆ limited ownership of and support for implementation of *Discovering Democracy* within the school;
- ◆ individually based planning and development of resources; and
- ◆ focus on implementation within one discrete subject area.

The third category, described as “not (yet) implementing” was intended to include schools that had commenced implementation and stalled or that saw *Discovering Democracy* as a low priority within the school community at this time. It was anticipated that implementation in these schools would be limited to the development of teacher awareness or even teacher discussion of the merits of introducing the program, if at all.

It was also anticipated that within these schools there would be:

- ◆ no internal champion of the program;
- ◆ no readily observable passion about the program;
- ◆ limited discussion about the link between *Discovering Democracy* and other syllabus areas; and
- ◆ limited evidence of teachers’ being aware of or accessing the *Discovering Democracy* kits.

The schools selected for the case studies (see Tables 3 and 4) were not necessarily a random sample. In contrast, they were selected on the basis of the three categories above, and where it would be evident that lessons could be learnt for the future implementation of packages similar to *Discovering Democracy*.

The sample was also skewed in selection towards those schools where there was at least limited knowledge or implementation of the kit. Despite this bias, a genuine attempt was made to select a sample of schools that reflected appropriate proportions of government and non-government, primary and secondary, and state or territory distributions of schools.

In addition to the factors above, pragmatic site selections were made to include some schools that had volunteered to trial *Discovery Democracy* units on behalf of Curriculum Corporation.

Table 3: Analysis of case study schools by category and school sector/type

Category	Gov't Primary	Gov't Secondary	Non Gov't Primary	Non Gov't Secondary	Total
Leading Edge	13	9	5	4	31
Discrete Implementation	9	7	4	2	22
Not (yet) Implementing	5	2	3	2	12
Totals	27	18	12	8	65

The responses provide a ratio of 45 government to 20 non-government schools or 69.2 percent to 30.8 percent. The target ratio was 70 percent to 30 percent. This suggests that a degree of confidence can be placed in interpretations of results recorded by sector.

Table 4: Analysis of case study schools by category and state

	Leading Edge	Discrete Implementation	Not (yet) Implementing	Totals
NSW	4	3	5	12
Vic	5	2	2	9
Qld	5	3	1	9
SA	7	5	2	14
WA	4	1	1	6
ACT	3	4	1	8
NT	0	3	0	3
Tas	3	1	0	4

In total, 65 schools were included in the case study sample. In all states or territories (except Northern Territory where three instead of 4 schools were visited), the agreed quota of schools was either met or exceeded. There were proportionally more schools visited in South Australia and the ACT than required because local consultants had negotiated visits and it was decided that it was more important to keep faith with the schools than to restrict the number visited to the agreed ratios.

Case Study Discussion Starters

Along with a set of discussion starters, the following information was sent to each school prior to the visit:

“Interviews will be conducted with the Principal where possible, the coordinator of the curriculum area responsible for implementing the Discovering Democracy program, and as many teachers as

can be made available in the time.¹ It would be appreciated if relevant documents produced by the school were available as a possible source of data. These discussion starters will allow time to prepare the relevant information. The interviews will be semi structured around the discussion starters to guide the evaluation but allow the school to provide its own perspective. Material will be written up in case study form but neither the school nor the individuals will be identified in any way”.

Five broad themes were identified as a conceptual framework for data gathering within the case studies:

- ◆ Teacher awareness and access
- ◆ Teacher support
- ◆ Organisational features
- ◆ Student learning outcomes
- ◆ Now and the future

Within each of the theme descriptors outlined above, discussion starters were developed to assist the data gathering process. These are shown in Appendix 3.

¹ As this evaluation focusses on the implementation of a program and not the student learning outcomes *per se*, schools were told that it was not intended to interview students or to observe lessons.



Findings

Systemic Support for *Discovering Democracy*

This section of the report discusses the placement of *Discovering Democracy* in the curriculum structure of each State/Territory.

Australian Capital Territory

In all ACT schools up to senior years, schools set the curriculum locally. For government schools it is based on guidelines including the national curriculum statements and profiles and nine cross curriculum perspective statements.

The national profile for Studies of Society and Environment provides a content base for civics and citizenship education for years 1–10. In Years 11 and 12, Aboriginal and Australian history courses, legal studies and politics courses provide a content base.

Having direct access to the simulation studies offered by the education offices of the various national political institutions was seen as a great benefit to the civics and citizenship curriculum offered to ACT students. Representative councils and class parliaments were a feature of active citizenship in many ACT schools.

There was a ready appreciation in schools visited that the ACT had particular ease of access to a wide variety of institutions (eg Federal parliament) that had the capacity to significantly stimulate both staff and student interest in the principles and practices of *Discovering Democracy*. Furthermore, there was a general view that the ACT is a politicised community, having significant institutions close by, an accessible territory government and a culture of interest in politics. The result of these, and the factors described above, is school curriculum development in the *Discovering Democracy* area.

Curriculum resources are developed at the school level and these are increasingly being shared through various strategies (eg the Web Quest publications). There is also clear evidence of professional support networks that assist and encourage curriculum development in the area.

New South Wales

In 1996, the NSW Government requested that the Board of Studies incorporate explicit outcomes and content relating to citizenship education in the mandatory curriculum. The Board endorsed a Citizenship Education Framework in 1996. All syllabus developers are to use this framework to ensure that K–10 syllabuses include civics and citizenship content.

Following a comprehensive mapping, the Board decided the Human Society and Its Environment course from K–6 and the Australian History and Australian Geography 7–10 courses would act as primary courses to embed a systematic and coherent approach to citizenship education.

A collaborative research project between the Board, the University of Sydney and the NSW Department of Education and Training has been working to identify critical student knowledge in civics and citizenship education. As part of this research, a benchmarking project has been undertaken to assist with the measurement of learning outcomes in this area.

Draft syllabuses for History and Geography 7 to 10 have been released for consultation. Sample test papers for the School Certificate examination have been circulated. These papers include compulsory sections on civics and citizenship.

Northern Territory

Board Approved courses in Social Education (T–10) and Business Education (8–10) are designed around strands of social justice, democracy and ecological sustainability. While there is no perfect correspondence between the Northern Territory curriculum and learning profiles in the Studies of Society and Environment learning area and the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum materials, opportunities to participate in and learn about citizenship were seen as being provided through these courses.

All syllabus documents, K-12 are about to be revised and will be adapted to fit a curriculum Framework model based on the National Goals. The South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework will form the template for local development and adaptation. Civics and citizenship education will be the reference point for the teaching of *Discovering Democracy* within studies of society and environment.

Queensland

A Studies in Society and Environment syllabus (Years 1-10) is being designed to promote civics and citizenship through all syllabus elements, which will be available for statewide implementation in 2000. This was seen as supporting the approach taken in the *Discovering Democracy* program. The design brief has the syllabus incorporating civics and citizenship in a variety of contexts including the home and places of employment. In addition,

optional junior secondary courses in history, civics and geography are to be available.

Drafts of the studies of society and environment syllabus documents will be circulated in the near future. Decisions have been taken to allow the study of either an integrated studies of society and environment course or any two courses of history, geography or civics. The Board of Studies is currently undertaking collaborative analysis and development of annotated student work samples as a basis for outcome standards in each syllabus. Work samples in the civics and citizenship area will become part of this process.

South Australia

Civics and Citizenship education is an integral part of South Australian curriculum in the three stages of early childhood, the compulsory and the post-compulsory years. Civics and Citizenship education is embedded in all learning areas but in particular through implementation and incorporation of the national statements and profiles on Studies of Society and Environment.

The *Discovering Democracy* materials were seen as providing opportunities for students to achieve the established learning outcomes in civics and citizenship. Some teachers find scope for the incorporation of the *Discovering Democracy* materials within senior courses including the compulsory Australian Studies and Politics.

South Australia is currently undertaking consultation around the Preliminary Draft of its Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework. Incorporating essential learnings in all learning areas, this Framework will provide a broad structure within which teachers can readily plan *Discovering Democracy* experiences across a range of learning areas commensurate with student needs.

Tasmania

One of the six organisers in the Tasmanian Studies of Society and Environment K–8 guidelines is civics and citizenship. The *Discovering Democracy* materials were seen as providing support for teachers in implementing their Studies of Society and Environment programs in years 4–10.

Several strands of the Tasmanian Secondary Assessment Board syllabuses are closely related to civics and citizenship. A 1997 review of the Studies of Society and Environment syllabuses was to take into account the development of the *Discovering Democracy* materials and the implications they have for syllabus alignment with statements and profiles. The sympathetic synergy between *Discovering Democracy* and studies of society and environment in both primary and secondary levels continues to provide a seamless platform for continuous learning experiences in civics and

citizenship. Such continuity provides a sound foundation for evaluating student outcomes, irrespective of year level through both primary and secondary learning.

Victoria

The Studies of Society and Environment component of the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework specifically incorporates civics and citizenship at various levels of the different strands. Students encounter increasing complexity and breadth in the civics and citizenship area as they progress from K–10.

Civics and citizenship content in secondary school is quite explicit. Print and non-print curriculum materials have been produced to support Victorian students to learn about civics and citizenship. Units of work and sample programs are available at each of the seven levels. CD-ROMs called *Understanding Australia* were distributed for Year 6 and year 10 to all schools in term 2 1997. Regional constitutional conventions are conducted leading to a state and national convention. Other civics and citizenship related support material is also supplied, including for other key projects such as the National History Challenge.

Discovering Democracy materials were welcomed in Victoria as further implementation support in an area already well supported. Victoria is undertaking the review and development of their Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF11) that will become the basis of syllabus documentation into the next millennium. Civics and citizenship will continue to be a key component with the studies of society and environment at both primary and secondary levels. Statewide commitment to the *Discovering Democracy* initiative will ensure that both primary and secondary teachers will capitalise on this material in the teaching of civics and citizenship. Some interviewed during this process indicated that a more detailed commitment to the principles and practices of *Discovering Democracy* would assist in getting this higher on the agenda of those schools less interested or committed.

Western Australia

Civics and citizenship education contributes strongly to empowering students with knowledge for public good, the key purpose of the Western Australian Studies of Society and Environment learning area.

The *Discovering Democracy* materials were seen as useful in broadening students' knowledge and understanding of civic ideas, institutions and processes. Teachers were encouraged to make use of them to foster connections between citizenship responsibilities and the everyday lives of their students.

These and the CD-ROM *One Destiny* were promoted as providing learning opportunities for students to develop major outcomes in the *WA Society and Environment Curriculum Framework*. The home page was seen as an "excellent

teacher reference” as well as providing opportunities for students to share and apply their learning. Incorporated within a curriculum and standards framework, an integrated approach to civics and citizenship continues to provide a framework for teaching of the *Discovering Democracy* program.

School Approaches to Teaching Civics and Citizenship

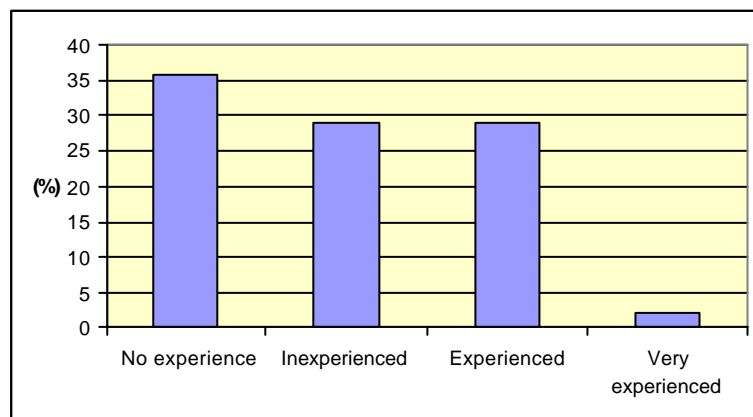
Teacher Awareness of *Discovering Democracy*

The level of awareness of teachers and school planners about the Discovering Democracy program, its intentions, content and support materials.

The great majority of teachers responding to the survey indicate that they are aware of the *Discovering Democracy* program to some extent (80%). A slightly smaller proportion of teachers believe that their colleagues are aware of the program (75%). The point of contrast on this issue is that while a majority report they are either moderately or highly aware (56%), teachers say that only 19% of their colleagues are moderately or highly aware. Awareness of *Discovering Democracy* has increased markedly in the past year: in 1998, the *Discovering Democracy* Academics Consortium found that 54% were completely unaware of the program; in 1999 only 20% of teachers and 25% of colleagues are unaware of the program.

When asked to describe their level of experience using *Discovering Democracy*, 33% of teachers in the present national survey answered ‘No experience’, 36% ‘Very inexperienced’ or ‘Inexperienced’, 29% ‘Experienced’, and 2% ‘Very experienced’ (see Figure 1). This corresponds closely with their estimates of how much time is spent on teaching civics and citizenship. Teachers were asked how much time on average they spend per class per week teaching civics and citizenship in 1999. Of those who answered this question, 19% spend no time, 60% spend less than one hour/week, 13% spent 1-2 hours/week, and 8% spend more than 2 hours/week.

Figure 1: Teacher Experience with *Discovering Democracy*



Teachers were asked whether they had seen or used the seven *Discovering Democracy* components (Table 5). With the exception of the website, a majority had seen or used each component. However, it is still a cause for concern that almost one-third of teachers had not seen any component of the kit. The relatively high 'not seen' scores for CDROM, video and website may be attributable to the need for associated equipment. This is covered later in the report under 'obstacles'.

Table 5: Awareness of *Discovering Democracy* by component

Component	Not seen (%)	Seen (%)	Used (%)
Teacher reference	32	32	35
CD-ROM	40	33	26
Teacher guides	31	30	39
Video	42	30	29
Units of work	35	27	38
Posters and cards	44	35	22
Website	64	24	13
Mean	41	30	29

The level of teacher awareness of *Discovering Democracy* and access to the curriculum material suggested by the survey is supported by information gathered from the school site visits, and can be described as limited but growing. Overall, and with some notable state exceptions, based on the evidence from the case studies, interviews and survey, the program is probably at the implementation stage in no more than twenty five percent of schools.

Where the program is championed by teachers and related stakeholders at the leading edge, it is being drawn to the attention of planners and colleagues. Where there is little ongoing support, the program is tending to become, if anything, an inclusion as a unit of content in the curriculum or is languishing.

In some states, the development and implementation have been enhanced by system wide initiatives, designed to accelerate teacher awareness. However, the national picture is not consistent in this regard.

There are various levels of understanding of the program intentions. At one level, teachers committed to developing a high degree of student engagement with and commitment to citizenship, see the intent in terms that lead to student involvement in civic action. At another, the intent is seen as developing an understanding of the history, background and workings of government to inform civic decision-making. At yet another, the intention is seen as either the inculcation of historical knowledge to better understand today's institutions, or the opportunity to conduct case studies of citizenship in action, for example, focused on the environment.

At the leading edge, those teachers who view the intent as a combination of all of these aspects appear to be fostering understanding of civics and engagement in citizenship at the level commensurate with the intent espoused by the Civics Education Group.

In relation to levels of awareness of content, even teachers at the leading edge acknowledge the exponential nature of the understandings required in this area. For some teachers there is a lack of confidence in relation to the technical aspects of the content. This is especially so as they relate to such concepts as constitution, state and federal jurisdictions, implications of monarchy, and relationships between law and parliament. While this is particularly relevant for some primary teachers, many secondary teachers acknowledge that they are struggling to know the content and understand the concepts at a level required to engage students with the issues.

In one state, there has been system-facilitated engagement of trainer/coordinators with the Open Learning course on civics and citizenship, offered through Griffith University. Here the issue of teacher knowledge has been addressed in a supported, engaging and practically oriented manner. For those teachers able to access the Parliamentary Fellowship program there has been strong reinforcement of content understanding. Where teacher champions have taken the initiative to plan and deliver professional development programs for colleagues, issues of technical content have been addressed.

For practicing teachers, the issue of content awareness has generally been tackled by provision of curriculum support materials. In this regard the materials produced by the Curriculum Corporation have provided excellent support, with special mention often made of the content booklets. The use of materials provided by the Australian Electoral Commission is also widely acknowledged.

However, while these support materials provide ideas and content suitable for classroom implementation, they often do not provide concepts at a level of sophistication and depth for teachers to understand background facts and issues needed to make the content live for their students. Where more sophisticated concepts and content are provided in various resources, teachers often cite the demands on their time in indicating they have not yet accessed such material. However, the booklet included in the kits written by Dr John Hirst was often cited as providing a useful resource for increasing teachers' knowledge, in an area where surprisingly many felt unprepared.

For pre-service teachers, the University of Queensland is currently contracted to undertake an evaluation of the range of approaches to inclusion of *Discovering Democracy* materials across all relevant institutions. At this level, issues of content are now beginning to be recognised and addressed in a variety of ways, along with issues of implementation in the classroom. While there are examples of strong engagement in some pre service courses, there is some concern in others that this is ad hoc and remains only at the level of awareness raising.

The nature of response of the teachers and curriculum planners to the Discovering Democracy program

In the vast majority of cases, teachers' initial responses to the arrival of the kit in their school was "yet another kit" – something more for them to do. In general the kit sat on the Library shelf, often unopened. Indeed, one of the functions of this evaluation has been to raise awareness in such schools and to get teachers to actually look at the kit and consider how it might be of future use.

Teacher reaction to the arrival of the *Discovering Democracy* material was in part found to be a function of the timing of the arrival of the kit in the school. Since the majority of kits arrived in schools in November 1998, many teachers chose to ignore their existence because educational priorities for the following year had already been established.

In contrast, the Curriculum Corporation had previously selected a small number of schools within the case study sample as volunteers. These schools were to become trial schools for the development, teaching and evaluation of trial *Discovering Democracy* units. In cases where this was a positive experience, internal champions were not only waiting for the arrival of the kit, but had also planned orientation activities for teachers to facilitate its introduction into the school's education program.

In some cases where the experience of trialling a unit was negative, decisions had been made to suspend implementation. Reported negative experiences included the view that the trial material: was too academic, difficult or long; too oriented towards history; lacked a citizenship focus; presented knowledge in a passive manner with few opportunities for student involvement; or, was poorly presented in the form of photocopies which provided little student stimulus or motivation.

In several cases schools noted their concern with the contractor-purchaser relationship and the requirement to implement with complete fidelity. These schools had expected clear ongoing guidance, the growth of shared practical understandings with the developer and flexibility to adapt the materials for their students.

High praise was given to the Curriculum Corporation for its comprehensive response to the feedback from the trials. The final published material was acknowledged as representing the feedback with fidelity and as being of high quality and utility. Where these perceptions were held, implementation was supported through perceived ownership.

Where internal champions, for example the trialling teachers, principal or librarian, acted as gatekeepers of change, attention was drawn to the kits. This often resulted in preliminary action, at least to examine the contents. From this stimulus, generally in the form of perceived imprimatur or pressure for implementation, actions in the form of planning, resource gathering, development of content understanding, searching for committed colleagues or placement of requests for in-service training appear to have produced a bias for action.

How teachers found out about the Discovering Democracy program, when material (especially the kits) arrived in the school and their reaction to it in the immediate and longer term.

Very few teachers appeared to know of the original booklet about the *Discovering Democracy* program or the CD-ROM "One Destiny", distributed to schools in late 1997. In some cases the material had not been linked with the kit, or it had become lost in the school. Where the material was known and used by teachers, it received praise.

Most teachers found out about the *Discovering Democracy* kits, usually at the commencement of 1999, when some form of catalyst occurred. This was sometimes internal as indicated above, but was more often external with a systemic influence. For example:

- ◆ the professional associations (e.g. the Australian Principals Association) ran activities (e.g. a national video conference) to introduce the materials
- ◆ the various system and sector support agencies conducted a major launch or some other awareness activity
- ◆ schools were offered grants to develop units of work or as support to undertake implementation, and
- ◆ networks of support teachers were formed.

In one state, with a small number of schools, a different and creative strategy was employed. The state coordinator organised for all kits to be delivered to his office site as a central storage area. He then systematically contacted each school and offered professional development awareness programs on that school site, at an agreed time of delivery of the kit.

Although at an early stage of implementation, this initiative appears to have been extremely successful in terms of the breadth of initial use and integration of the material within the existing curriculum of the school. This is particularly evident at the primary school level.

Initial impressions indicate that the success of the initiative has ensured wide participation of schools at this stage of the implementation process. While this has been a function of size and geography, the number of schools reached is in the same range as the numbers reached in other larger states. However, the cost has been less, the proportion of schools reached has been maximised and the intensity of the contact greater.

This type of locally delivered activity may increase the probability of take-up in the longer term. Evidence collected suggests sustained implementation is likely to be a function of ongoing support and professional development that is fostered if close colleagues have a shared understanding of the content and issues in a jointly implemented program.

The levels of access teachers have to the Discovering Democracy kit and other resources

In general, at this early stage of implementation, access to the *Discovering Democracy* kit has not been an insurmountable problem, with the small

number of teachers engaged in planning *Discovering Democracy* experiences. However, it is anticipated that as interest and commitment grow, more significant planning and implementation problems will emerge due to the single copy nature of many items within the kit.

This is already becoming evident in larger primary and secondary schools, or schools with split sites and administrations, that received the same number of kits as the one teacher primary school, i.e. one kit per school. While it is acknowledged that schools have the opportunity to purchase additional kits, the reality of competing priorities with a limited budget potentially may mitigate against effective implementation in the longer term. The planned release of *Discovering Democracy Electronically* (including both primary and secondary kit material) in 2000 will alleviate this pressure.

Some states, in recognising this limitation, have provided implementing schools and district training coordinators with an additional kit. This has especially been necessary for secondary schools.

Despite these limitations, in those schools or systems where there is a committed and passionate champion for the cause, access is not an issue. Local adaptation of the resources through team based planning not only resolves the issue but also produces materials that relate more directly to local needs. This scenario provides yet another example of the ways that teachers can overcome adversity through mutual and ongoing support.

Some schools have deliberately addressed the access issue through technology, where they have placed the CD-ROM on the school's intranet. Such schools have also suggested a solution whereby an internet website is established and *Discovering Democracy* program resources are placed on that website for easy shared access.

For most schools, where teachers are still at the awareness stage in the application of technology to enhance teaching and learning, this remains a real challenge. However, as will be seen below, the CD-ROM has been the least used component of the kits – largely because the majority of schools do not have the technological resources necessary to use it effectively.

The issue of copyright involved in placing commercially provided materials on a publicly accessible Internet site have also arisen in this context. Some schools perceive a conundrum in receiving Commonwealth sponsored free-to-them materials provided to encourage implementation, while apparently being restricted by Curriculum Corporation from publishing the material on unrestricted websites for ease of school and student access. This may be a misperception on the part of these teachers.

Teacher use of *Discovering Democracy*

Teachers were asked to describe how civics and citizenship in general is included in their school curriculum (Table 6).

While the most common approach was to teach a single unit of work within one subject, support for other approaches is roughly evenly distributed.

Table 6: School approaches to teaching civics and citizenship

Civics and citizenship is taught as:	<i>n</i>	Sample (%)
A unit of work within one subject	296	33
Embedded learning in two or more subjects	201	22
An across the whole curriculum approach	201	22
A separate unit of study	171	19
Embedded learning within one subject	172	19
A unit of work within two or more subjects	159	17
Whole school activities	103	11
Extra-curricula activities	79	9

Use of the Discovering Democracy curriculum materials

Teachers were asked how often they used *Discovering Democracy* components, what proportion they used, and how they used them. Some teachers answered these questions even though they had neither seen nor used some components; however, these responses are not included in Tables 7-9.

Table 7: *Discovering Democracy* frequency of use by component

	Frequency of use, (percent)					
	Never	Once a term	More than once a term	Once a week	More than once a week	Daily
Teacher reference	17	30	34	10	9	1
CD-ROM	38	25	27	5	3	2
Teacher guides	15	27	37	11	8	1
Video	32	37	26	3	1	1
Units of work	16	28	33	11	8	4
Posters and cards	35	30	27	4	3	1
Website	56	23	17	3	2	0.3
Mean	30	29	29	7	7	1

As suggested in earlier tables, on average about a third of teachers responding to the survey had not used any component of the kit. The majority had not used the website or posters and cards, or used them very infrequently. The teacher reference, teacher guides and units of work were the most frequently used components.

In line with the above findings, the most intensively used components were also those that were most often used. The units of work were those that were used to the greatest extent. Surprisingly, of those teachers who had used the videos at all, the majority had not used less than half of them. Table 12 suggests that a substantial proportion of teachers had not found them to be very useful.

Table 8: *Discovering Democracy*, proportion used by component

Component	Proportion of component used, (percent)				
	Nothing	One-third	One-half	Two-thirds	All
Teacher reference	15	49	20	11	6
CD-ROM	36	34	15	8	7
Teacher guides	13	45	20	14	9
Video	29	36	13	9	14
Units of work	13	39	23	17	8
Posters and cards	33	34	16	8	10
Website	48	34	8	5	5
Mean	27	39	16	10	8

Table 9 suggests that most commonly, teacher reference and teacher guide are used as sources of teacher information while the video, and posters and cards and units of work are used to stimulate discussion.

Table 9: *Discovering Democracy*, how components are used

Component	How components are used, (percent of all survey participants)						
	Never used	Teacher info. source	Stimulate discussion	Problem solving exercises	Supplement teacher talk	Simulation role plays	Other ways
Teacher reference	5	36	13	5	10	4	1
CD-ROM	12	12	13	9	9	2	3
Teacher guides	4	37	8	5	8	3	1
Video	10	9	23	4	11	3	1
Units of work	4	20	21	21	15	12	4
Posters and cards	11	8	18	4	10	3	2
Website	10	12	4	2	4	0.4	2
Mean	8	19	14	7	10	4	2

Units of work are used in diverse ways, an unsurprising finding given the variety of activities suggested in them. The use of the units of work as a stimulus for role-plays is worth special mention. At the 1999 National Implementation Forum in Canberra, a significant proportion of the reports from schools mentioned the value of role plays in powerfully communicating to students not only knowledge, for example about the dispossessed, the unequal treatment of minorities and women, and so on, but also values and dispositions, which they considered to be an important aspect of the program's goals.

What the school is doing to implement the Discovering Democracy program in terms of incorporation into:

- *curriculum areas/themes, level of integration*

Within the primary context and in middle schooling, integrated units of work within the learning area of studies of society and the environment are by far the most common tool for managing the

Discovering Democracy program among the competing priorities within each school's curriculum. The scope ranges from single units in one grade to sequenced units across year levels.

In contrast, at the secondary school level, *Discovering Democracy* is taught most frequently as a single unit of work within a subject discipline for example history, geography, politics, commerce, civics. Decisions in relation to where and how the program is taught in secondary schools relate directly to:

- issues of subject ownership and territory,
 - the existing mandated structure and contents of subject syllabuses
 - practices that may inhibit the opportunity for flexibility in terms of teaching style and subject matter.
- *number of and time devoted to units of work or other relevant activities*

Within the case study schools, time allocation to *Discovering Democracy* varied dramatically in accordance with the level of school priority, teacher expertise and commitment, the existence of structured planning for implementation and the curriculum organisation of the school. Despite such variation, the most common form of organization was a single unit lasting for about six weeks each year.

A number of primary school teachers indicated that by June 2000 the school would have incorporated planning for at least one unit of *Discovering Democracy* content in each grade from years 4 to 6. Secondary teachers generally indicated that their planning consisted of no more than one unit from years 7 to 10, taught at some suitable stage during those years.

- *production and use of resources*

Comments from teachers consistently indicated their view that the materials in the kit were more than adequate for implementation.

However, many teachers appear to have developed worksheets that reduce the material to small steps to be taken by each individual learner. Many of these worksheets tend to focus more on the development of content knowledge and ensure that students work quietly and diligently through a sequence of clear steps. More commonly found in secondary schools, such approaches limit the real potential for student and group application of *Discovering Democracy* principles in action.

- *learning and teaching strategies*

Among those teachers described as “leading edge” a broad range of learning and teaching strategies was evident. These include:

- student and group centred approaches
- opportunities for “hands-on” practical application e.g. student parliament
- individual and group assignments
- team based activities.

Such approaches are highly consistent with the underpinning philosophy of *Discovering Democracy* principles and the development of a constructivist learning approach. This builds upon existing and new learning and constantly provides opportunity to test new insights against the student’s reality.

In contrast, a number of schools in the early stages of implementation adopted a more behaviourist approach to learning where a majority of activities had a strong content focus. In such instances, the learning outcomes do not appear to have produced the higher level of cognition as represented by the program materials. There is doubt that the students have understood many of the ramifications or issues from an active civics and citizenship perspective.

Approaches that build from content to deeper levels of understanding and application tended to allow students to satisfy formal curriculum requirements while at the same time incorporating the knowledge into their own citizenship values and civic actions.

- *other organisational features*

Several features of school organization were found to support the implementation of *Discovering Democracy*. These include:

- classrooms which allow flexible use of space
- teacher sharing
- team based planning and implementation
- middle schooling structures in secondary schools that focus on student learning rather than subject boundaries
- whole school professional development in primary schools rather than particular year levels e.g. K-6 rather than 4-6.

Each of these tends to offer opportunities for genuine integration of learning experiences. Because they conform to the essential learnings and approaches within studies of society and environment, there is genuine synergy between the *Discovering Democracy* program and the learning area. “Leading edge” teachers capitalised upon the relationships and added genuine value to students’ learning.

Teacher evaluation of *Discovering Democracy*

Perceived Relevance

Teachers were asked “Considering the curriculum framework/syllabus you use for teaching civics and citizenship, how relevant are the knowledge, skills and values in the *Discovering Democracy* package as a whole?” Table 10 shows that more than 90% answer ‘relevant’, ‘highly relevant’, or ‘extremely relevant’. A majority of respondents say the materials are ‘Highly relevant’ or ‘Extremely relevant’. *Discovering Democracy* materials certainly are perceived as relevant to the curriculum and syllabus.

Table 10: Relevance of *Discovering Democracy*

Relevance of	Percent				
	Not relevant	Slightly relevant	Relevant	Highly relevant	Extremely relevant
Knowledge	0.3	5	33	41	21
Skills	1	6	37	37	19
Values	1	5	33	40	21
Mean	1	5	34	39	20

Achievement of Program Aims

Question 22 asked how much the *Discovering Democracy* materials contribute to achieving the aims and goals set out in the teacher guides. Table 11 shows that 99% say the materials meet the stated aims and goals to some extent, and at least 80% say the aims and goals are achieved a ‘Moderate amount’ or ‘A lot’. Secondary teachers rate achievement of aims and goals more positively than do primary teachers.

Table 11: *Discovering Democracy* achieving its aims and goals

Aims and goals	Percent			
	Nothing	A little	Moderate amount	A lot
Gain knowledge and understanding of Australia’s system of government and law	0.4	5	40	54
Understand the diverse make up of the Australian nation	1	13	49	37
Understand how participation and decision-making operate in contemporary Australia	1	8	42	50
Understand citizens’ rights and responsibilities, and the opportunities for exercising them	1	7	43	49

Usefulness

In question 23, respondents were asked to rate “the usefulness of the *Discovering Democracy* components to [their] civics and citizenship teaching”. For all components, most ratings are ‘Useful’ or better, and less than 5%

rate components as 'Not useful'. However, 23% have not used the website (Table 12).

By school level, primary teachers rate components as more useful than do secondary teachers (difference range 3% to 22%). Nevertheless, 81% of secondary teachers rate units of work as either 'very useful' or 'extremely useful'.

Table 12: Usefulness of *Discovering Democracy*

Component	Percent					
	Never used	Not useful	Slightly useful	Useful	Very useful	Extremely useful
Teacher reference book	5	1	10	34	31	18
CD-ROM	16	3	13	31	23	14
Teacher guides	5	1	7	31	34	23
Video	14	2	11	36	23	15
Units of work	6	1	7	24	36	26
Posters and cards	15	4	13	32	26	11
Website	23	5	14	30	19	10
Mean	12	2	11	31	27	17

Appropriateness of units of work to the curriculum

The matrix at question 24 asked participants to evaluate the appropriateness of eighteen units of work to their teaching at middle primary, upper primary, lower secondary, or middle secondary level. Table 13 shows that of those who use the units of work, at most 2% consider the materials 'Highly inappropriate', and at most 8% rate the materials 'Inappropriate'. Put positively, more than 90% say that the units of work are appropriate to their curriculum in civics and citizenship education.

Teachers at independent and Catholic schools rate the materials more favourably than do teachers at government schools. The more experienced teachers give higher ratings to primary materials, but give lower ratings to secondary materials.

When ratings are cross-tabulated for appropriateness with the incidence of completing professional development courses, teachers who did not complete professional development in 1999 rate middle primary and lower secondary units of work less effective than do others.

Table 13: Appropriateness of *Discovering Democracy* Topics

Unit of work	Percent				
	Never used	Highly inappropriate	Inappropriate	Appropriate	Highly appropriate
MIDDLE PRIMARY					
Stories of People and Rulers	25	0	2	50	24
Rulers and Laws	23	0	1	50	26
We Remember	25	0	1	51	23
Joining In	26	0	1	49	25
UPPER PRIMARY					
Parliament vs. Monarch	14	0	3	49	34
The Law Rules	12	0	1	49	38
People Make a Nation	15	0	0	51	34
People Power	15	0	1	47	37
LOWER SECONDARY					
Should the People Rule?	17	1	3	46	33
Law	16	2	5	49	28
Democratic Struggles	19	2	5	49	26
Men & Women in Political Life	22	1	6	51	20
MIDDLE SECONDARY					
Parties Control Parliament	18	0.4	4	50	28
Democracy Destroyed	23	1	8	42	27
Human Rights	18	1	4	46	31
Making a Nation	15	1	4	48	31
What Sort of Nation	17	1	5	50	27
Getting Things Done	21	1	6	50	22
Mean	16	1	4	41	24

Principal, teachers and curriculum coordinator judgement about how well the Discovering Democracy program is being implemented in the school.

The most common response to this question was that Discovering Democracy was being implemented about as well as could be expected, given the timing of its introduction. Although this was a biased sample of schools, in most cases teachers agreed it was in its very early implementation. Except in schools with a strong tradition of civics and citizenship education, there was widespread concurrence that the program implementation needed a great deal of further development. To become embedded it needed to be extended to other teachers, grades and even learning areas.

Much of the response was a function of teachers not knowing what was being done elsewhere or what was possible in lighthouse examples. Early stages of planning, production of materials, raising awareness or training teachers were legitimately viewed by many as success to date.

In a few instances, where frustrating experiences in trialling materials for the Curriculum Corporation had produced negative attitudes, the program was viewed as languishing. In some places, despite the development of

resources and units of work, the program was seen to be on hold pending decisions about syllabus implementation.

The evaluation team noted that many case study schools had on-going programs of student participation and action in the life of their school and their community. These programs move beyond mere facts and take the principles contained in *Discovering Democracy* and turn them into actions. This powerful paradigm has the capacity to fundamentally change the nature of the educational experiences of students. While it is vital that students have the necessary knowledge of their system of government, the encouragement of student involvement in their schools and communities should complement the knowledge gained.

Teacher Support

The availability of professional development for the Discovering Democracy program, how well it was (or will be) accessed and what the response to it was in terms of supporting understanding and implementation.

The provision of professional development and the level of access vary dramatically from state to state. Access also varies within states, generally a function of either the level of teacher interest or the distance from the delivery centre. While there is a range from one hundred percent to very few, throughout the country, staff in no more than about twenty five percent of schools have accessed professional development. Within most of these schools, only a few teachers have responded to the stage of implementation of the program. However, professional development is seen as they key to the future success of the program.

Professional Development

Most teachers (70%) did no professional development about *Discovering Democracy* in 1999. Of those who did, three-quarters completed activities through *Discovering Democracy* committees, their own schools, or subject associations (Table 14).

Table 14: Usefulness of Professional Development Activities about *Discovering Democracy*

Courses via	Not useful (%)	Useful (%)	Extremely useful (%)	N=	Total (%)
(State) Discovering Democracy committee	7	46	47	207	38
Own school	4	44	52	104	19
Subject association	7	55	38	98	18
School system	9	54	37	65	12
University	31	33	36	39	7
Postgraduate	29	46	25	24	4
Other	20	27	53	15	3
Totals	10	47	43	552	

The remaining one-quarter completed activities through their school system, universities, postgraduate, and other providers. Teachers rated professional development activities as 'Not useful', 'Useful', or 'Extremely Useful'. While an aggregate majority rated all courses 'Useful' or 'Extremely useful', teachers are less satisfied with university and postgraduate activities.

Readiness to Teach Discovering Democracy

When asked to rate their skill and content understanding for teaching *Discovering Democracy*, most teachers answer 'High' or 'Very high' (Table 15). Secondary teachers rate skill and understanding higher than do primary teachers (difference 7% skill and 11% understanding for 'high' and 'very high' combined). Capital city teachers rate skill and understanding higher than do city and regional teachers. More experienced teachers rate skill and understanding higher than do others, but the margin is modest (11% skill, 7% understanding).

Table 15: Readiness to teach *Discovering Democracy*

Level of . . .	Percent				
	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Teaching skill	1	3	40	42	15
Content understanding	1	6	34	39	19
Mean	1	5	37	41	17

Teachers who completed professional development in 1999 do not rate their skill and understanding significantly higher than do others. Further, when teachers are coded by whether their states and territories tend to approach professional development using networks or not, there is little difference for skill and understanding, or for other variables.

From the point of view of the schools visited during the evaluation, there appears to be four interacting levels of professional development support offered.

At the first level there is limited evidence of local self-initiated professional development support. This situation relies on the internal champion in a school taking the initiative in self-teaching, followed by co-ordination of professional development for other interested teachers within the school.

At times, the thrust for such professional development was provided initially by the arrival of the kit in the school. Where this engaged a teacher's professional or personal interest, further implementation action sometimes occurred. Where limited interest was fostered, implementation has been slow or, in many cases, has not yet occurred.

Where the local professional development provision was initiated through the offer of grants to develop units, the implementation has varied from production of resources to the development of sound school-based

programs. In some states, the schools were encouraged to use grant money for teacher release to develop units and resources to assist implementation of the kit. Where this occurred, teachers not only appreciated the opportunity to raise awareness, but also implementation has been significantly enhanced.

One caveat was observed at this level of professional support. Without external stimulus and broader challenge, the level of implementation of the program was frequently limited. For example it was often treated as a single unit within a subject or learning area. The full extent of the intent was sometimes not realised.

One structural difficulty reported by primary school teachers was in relation to the target grades for the program implementation. In primary schools, almost all teachers visited expressed frustration that the program was not targeted across the whole school. Professional development in primary schools is almost invariably a whole school activity, reflecting the integration of infants and primary departments that has been underway for many years. Where a program is not whole school oriented, difficulties are often encountered in establishing its place in whole school planning. In some instances, these difficulties have resulted in *Discovering Democracy* not yet gaining a place in school priorities.

A number of teachers who have only been supported to implement *Discovering Democracy* at the local school level suggested that funding at the district level would now enhance teaching of the program. They consider that such an initiative would readily bring interested teachers and schools together to enhance the quality of overall implementation through appropriate networking.

At the second level, in some states there is evidence of genuine district based activity directed towards the sharing of ideas and resources among teachers and schools around *Discovering Democracy*.

Indeed, in those schools described in the project as “leading edge”, this level of professional development is now in existence, or emerging as the next professional development need for teachers. They indicate they have reached a stage where their internal implementation needs the further catalyst of shared ideas with other teachers.

One adaptation of this approach uses already established professional development networks. For example, a secondary school within the case studies has cleverly leveraged from the technology bias within the school to introduce *Discovering Democracy* to students through the school’s computer network. Such a positive response was generated that the teacher involved has now shared that experience within a technology user’s group. As a result of this sharing, other schools are now also beginning to use *Discovering Democracy* within their schools.

At the third level, there has been considerable variety among state/system initiatives for professional development. While it has never been anticipated that there would be a consistent approach to professional

development across all states, the various structures of activities have produced differing levels of success.

State/system based professional development initiatives include:

- *State-wide launch for interested/invited teachers*
In all instances cited during the case studies, launches provided a catalyst for work in schools. Imprimatur of the system was clearly provided where launches were seen as an important initiative. The involvement of committed community leaders provided explicit support as well as stimulating teacher awareness about the key issues and intent. Most importantly, launches provided opportunities to become cognisant with the contents of the kit and to form local alliances and commitments to implementation.

However, pro-rata attendance of teachers at launches varied dramatically from state to state, corresponding with such factors as:

- ◆ the tenor of the industrial situation including the general morale of the profession
- ◆ the level of advertising and support prior to the launch
- ◆ the level of provision of relief, travel and accommodation to attend the launch
- ◆ the status of the launch including the venue and the key presenters
- ◆ the requirements in some states for teachers to provide evidence of attendance at a certain number of hours of professional development
- ◆ teachers' prior involvement with the *Discovering Democracy* program, for example as a trial school
- ◆ the size of the teaching service in the state and the distances within the state.

While some states provided relief, travel and accommodation for rural people, in general, it was city-based teachers who gained the advantage from a launch. Some state coordinators have indicated their intention of providing regional launches as they move the program from the centre.

While a statewide launch formally signalled the commencement and significance of the program, it was not of itself seen as sufficient to guarantee further and ongoing work in schools. However, where there was no statewide launch or limited knowledge of the launch among practitioners, implementation at the school level appears to have been ad hoc and patchy, if occurring at all.

- *Establishment of networks of practicing teachers including individual visits to schools by teachers acting as consultants and visits by other related professionals*

This report has already drawn attention to the implementation support provided by visits to all schools. While the scale of the support provision for the program does not generally allow for school visits by the systemic

coordinators, many systems have set up training mechanisms that facilitate local practicing teachers to visit nearby schools.

Many states have provided program funds to “train trainers”. In one state, seventy-five trainers from throughout the school districts were supported to undertake the Open University course provided by Griffith University. Following graduation, each of these teachers was provided with an extensive support package to undertake at least two professional development courses for teachers in their districts. Some teacher release was provided to allow the trainers to visit the schools of teachers seeking sharing and support. While still in its first round because of the six-month lead-time required to complete the course, this approach is showing evidence of sound implementation support.

Other states too have established and funded locally based networks for sharing of ideas among teachers. One state invited the nomination of two representatives from each district throughout selected areas to act as partners in coordinating the professional sharing in ten nearby schools. This will be followed up shortly by similar activities in other regional centres.

While the success of such initiatives relies on the skill, commitment and energy of teachers, they provide key elements of local support, professional teacher talk, sharing about classroom implementation issues and the stimulation of colleagues. Such initiatives, regularly boosted by central contact (or indeed but not essentially resources such as relief days), provide the firm foundation of implementation support that provision of either materials or grants alone cannot give.

Most important, they provide the expansion of teacher understanding of the full intent of an initiative such as *Discovering Democracy*. Mandates and written examinations have not been seen by teachers in the schools visited to provide such implementation support.

- *Establishment of websites*

There is a plethora of websites being developed as part of the program at both school and system levels. While the national website receives praise from teachers, the need to share and improve their developing work has driven many, at both state and local level, to publish their work on their own sites

This represents a first step in state and school-based networking with other interested colleagues, locally, statewide and nationally. It provides an opportunity to develop a shared language and commitment as a springboard for future shared activities. These local efforts can provide a rich resource to the system as a whole and therefore consideration should be given to further promotion of this resource.

One website in particular contains highly developed units of work that resulted from participation in the Open University course.

However, the slow take up of technology in some schools, and the different stages in roll out of technology to schools across the country, is a limiting factor for this form of professional support. This is not a resource issue but reflects a need to embed and integrate the concept of learning with technology into the curriculum and teaching practice.

In addition, the lack of shared knowledge about this range of websites and the diffusion of efforts and contributions means that this valuable resource for professional development is not being utilised to its potential. Many system and school personnel indicate the need for some form of coordination of an interactive national (and even international) website especially to deliver current material to keep the kit content up to date. Such a coordination effort would add considerable value to the achievements of all participants currently engaged in the implementation process.

- ◆ Development of “Occasional Papers” as background reading for teachers. Some teachers are well informed about both the pedagogical underpinnings and practical implications of *Discovering Democracy* and this need to be more widely available in the various systems
- ◆ Funding of time for teachers to collaborate in the development of curriculum materials
- ◆ Funding the distribution of existing teacher developed curriculum materials
- ◆ Funding the development of local collaborative networks to sustain in school champions, to develop links between primary and secondary schools and to promote programs of student involvement and action
- ◆ Funding of internal school champions to attend national initiatives such as the *Discovering Democracy* program conference or the Parliamentary Fellowship scheme
- ◆ Development of assessment scales relating to key understandings within civics and citizenship as they apply to the *Discovering Democracy* program
- ◆ Provision of grant money ranging from \$250 per school, through \$1500 to \$5000, depending on system decisions and priorities.

The variety of professional development initiatives highlighted above should not be interpreted as critical of any particular state implementation support processes. On the contrary, each state developed an implementation plan in accordance with their allocated budget, system priorities and approaches, number of teachers, physical geography and size of the jurisdiction, availability of technology and related resources in schools and the timing in the state’s curriculum development cycle.

However, the findings from the case studies suggest that, in terms of professional development, a major program launch followed by networked support from practicing teachers, work together to provide the professional development pressure and support that favours implementation. Visits to schools by consultants and the development of chat sites on the web

further facilitate professional sharing. The provision of grants is seen as valuable in relation to the ability to buy teacher release time and to secure an element of commitment by obligation.

At the fourth level, state and national associations and other government agencies have undertaken initiatives that support the implementation of the *Discovering Democracy* program.

Professional associations such as teachers and principals groups, and ancillary activities such as those initiatives undertaken by parents, academics and interested community members such as lawyers have provided significant professional development support. Accessed more by “leading edge” schools, these mechanisms give formal imprimatur and community status to help the program stand out from others on offer.

Visits of interested personnel to schools also stand out at this level. In this regard, particular mention must be made of the school visits by Australian Electoral Office Divisional Returning Officers. In the lead up to the Referendum, their work in schools to explain the voting system and indeed to “run the ballot” in various schools received high praise.

Overall, those who are able, or have made the effort, to access it have seen the professional development on offer as sound and supportive. In those states where professional networking has been undertaken, by June 2000, access to schools will range from one hundred percent in one case up to between one quarter and half in most others.

However, even within schools where professional development has been accessed, the level of access is generally the interested teachers rather than all teachers. The evaluation team estimates that no more than twenty percent of teachers have yet accessed professional activities to support the program. In states without networking, teachers who know of development activities only tend to identify their own local professional development.

The range of resources or support used, accessed, or available to the school in implementing the Discovering Democracy program, including the kits supplied by the Curriculum Corporation and other materials

The material in the kits is by far the most important resource for implementation. Teachers who are using the material readily identify with it and in general the praise is strong. Student learning orientation, relevance, the comprehensive nature and the variety are all mentioned as sound features.

The videos have been well used and the interactive nature of the material makes it teacher and student friendly. There is general praise for the historical material with the kit and readers eagerly awaited.

There was some concern that the “talking heads” approach in the secondary video lacked interest for some students while some teachers found their own technical limitations had been tested in accessing the

interactive game. The amount of required reading within the kits is daunting for busy teachers.

The primary school kit is seen as providing an integrated approach, targeted carefully and successfully at the level and interests of the students. It is viewed as having already carried out the curriculum development work of the teacher who is then freed to bring the student to the knowledge in a professional manner. Where state consultants have provided taxonomy to show how the material addresses aspects of state syllabuses, this is reinforced.

For those who use the kit across the learning areas, the activities, achieved several outcomes at the same time. This is seen as an effective way of overcoming concerns with the crowded curriculum

The secondary kit is well thought of but not to the extent of its junior partner. Indeed, in several secondary schools, the primary kit is more widely used. Some teachers mentioned that the level and pitch of the concepts in the secondary kit are too difficult. Others noted that the reading levels contained in the primary kits are more suited for some secondary students, together with the belief that the primary kits form a valuable base on which the secondary kits can build. Others reported their view that it was too focused on historical facts, with a range of complex content they found difficult to absorb and access. In general, the kit was seen to have a less constructivist and more behaviourist approach to learning.

Several teachers expressed the need for a great deal of support to develop their own knowledge prior to implementing the kit. These teachers were concerned that the engagement induced in students led to deep student questioning where they, the teachers, felt inadequate to provide the answers. Such issues may reflect a didactic approach to teaching as much as specific shortcomings of the kit.

In some instances teachers complained of the time they had spent rewriting the kit into simplified instructionally based worksheets. Several teachers were concerned at the need to photocopy class numbers of a range of work sheets. Many such complaints reflect the salient need by such teachers to keep students well disciplined, quiet and diligent. Where the approach was more investigative, less restrictive in terms of knowledge expected and more interactive in terms of the growth of learning, these issues did not arise.

The issue of access was mentioned as a difficulty but it was seen as neither serious nor insurmountable. Larger schools, in particular secondary schools, mentioned the perceived inequity of providing one kit per school when the usage is dependent on individual teachers.

Several teachers suggested that a better distribution policy would be to send to schools a well-publicised invitation to submit an implementation plan and apply for whatever number of kits was necessary to carry out the plan. While this would mean that not all schools would have nominal access to

the kit at the outset, it could be supplied in appropriate quantity as needed. Although this approach may be more resource intensive, it would address the issue of the obvious waste of resources with many kits sitting unopened on library shelves. With a clear finding that the arrival of the kit did not induce implementation, such an approach may be warranted in future projects.

Other resources cited included materials on offer from the agencies that have education about civics as a key performance requirement. In terms of the electoral and parliamentary systems, materials provided by the Australian Electoral Commission (especially around the Referendum) and the Parliamentary Liaison Office in each state were evident in many schools. These were seen as content based and provided much needed explanation. Materials from the Department of Communications and the Arts and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs were also cited as providing excellent assistance.

Apart from these, many schools had resurrected older textbooks that dealt in some detail with the history of various issues addressed in the kits. Some commercial material is also available as vendors realise the emergence of civics and citizenship education across the country. The recent ABC programs and other material videotaped from news and current affairs programs provide high quality and timely visual resource.

Overall, at present there is no lack of material resources to support the program. While there is concern at the need to keep material current, this aspect of the program has achieved its goals.

There was widespread support for the use of the Internet to provide updated material, especially student centred-material developed to integrate with other aspects of the kit. Support for the provision via the Internet of more sophisticated content for teachers is also strong. There is, however, the caveat that not all teachers are yet computer literate or have ready and fast access to the Internet.

Discovering Democracy in the Adult and Community Education (ACE) Sector and in Universities

In addition to the kits devised for schools, another strategy was developed to engage students in the adult and community education sector and in universities in the issues and concepts covered by *Discovering Democracy*.

This adult and community education strategy is based around “Learning Circles”, a proven methodology in that sector. This approach is based around the concept of preparing materials, which can then be discussed in a group at the local level facilitated by a community volunteer.

Four Learning Circles have been commissioned, the materials to be distributed in 2 kits (2 Learning Circles per kit). There have been some delays with the finalisation and distribution of these kits and this has caused some concern in the ACE community.

There is also a view that the materials being prepared for the ACE sector will be suitable for use with students in Years 11 and 12 and this issue needs to be further explored in concert with other recommendations contained elsewhere in this report.

Open Learning Australia (OLA) prepared two higher education units, a general one for undergraduates and one specifically for teacher education students. OLA also prepared radio, television and website resources to support these units. Strategies for improved pre-service teacher education to enhance in-school implementation are discussed elsewhere in the report.

Factors facilitating the Implementation of *Discovering Democracy*

In addition to system factors highlighted above and below, several common school-level facilitating factors emerged during the school visits. Often such factors acted in synergy to support implementation.

Among many, the four most outstanding facilitating factors identified during the school visits were:

- *The support of the principal or relevant school executive*

While school leadership may not be the chief factor in determining the quality of a program, it is a salient factor in determining whether the program is “on the agenda”. In all schools at the leading edge of implementation, the principal (or head teacher in secondary schools) was not only supportive of, but was generally involved in, the program.

Shepherding the program through the rigours of school priority setting amongst the range of competing programs in need of redevelopment or implementation requires political skill and commitment beyond the capacities of many teachers.

In some cases, commitment came from previous, often long term, involvement in civics and citizenship activities. Here commitment was an emotional thing, a strong force for implementation.

In other cases, commitment came from more recent information, recognising in some way that civics and citizenship education was a national, state and system requirement.

Where the commitment stayed at the level of fulfilling a mandated requirement, the implementation appeared to be limited, for example as inclusion in a unit in a subject or learning area. Where there was strong personal commitment, implementation was usually deeper and broader, often pervading both the formal and informal curriculum.

- *An internal “school champion” for the program*

The following activities of internal school champion assist take-up of the program;

- addressing the initial resistance;
- demonstrating the program’s efficacy;
- gathering converts;
- training supporters;
- developing implementation resources;
- organising formal and informal integrated activities; and
- widely, and constantly lauding the virtues of the program.

In those schools where energetic champions are driving themselves and the program, its incorporation into school life is noticeable. Where charisma and persuasion are coupled with deep personal commitment the program takes on life.

In such schools, however, many staff warn that care needs to be taken to ensure the natural enthusiasm and energy are recognised, rewarded and husbanded. After school, in holidays and during school, there are many teachers giving their very being to the program – and loving it. But the program implementation cannot rely on the continued high levels of personal input from these “early adopters”.

Other supports, including leadership succession planning, must be found in schools where such singular drive provides program foundations. Burnout will be rife among such people and the program must be more strongly embedded in the life of the school.

However, in many implementing schools, champions for the program come in other forms than the totally absorbed and committed. In most schools, a single teacher or small number of teachers (often a grade or faculty group) has been given or has asked for the responsibility for the development of a unit or resources to implement the program. In these schools, the program is generally based in the formal curriculum.

In such situations the quality of the implementation is largely dependent on the quality or the material produced by the championing teacher(s). Where the unit produced is well resourced, clearly structured and carefully sequenced, its use, in a single class or across a grade, has or will be firmly in place.

Whether the program has been reduced to content or is implemented with fidelity to the intent of connecting to students’ life learning, depends largely on the developments undertaken by the championing teacher(s). In some cases, “death by worksheet” produces passive regurgitation at a mundane level. In other

classrooms, the unit lives, supported by investigative, involving, active, thinking activities that engage and extend the students.

In most cases, where the program is embedded in the curriculum of the school, it is likely to be incorporated for some years until another round of curriculum development displaces it. Once it is developed and displaces another unit, the inertia of a unit program usually guarantees continuing implementation.

- *The learning focus provided by an integrated approach to the curriculum*

Some states and territories have long-standing approaches to integration of the curriculum at the implementation level. Many states have accepted the concept of a learning area as opposed to separate subject disciplines.

Where the curriculum is organised around broad key learning areas, the civics and citizenship component finds fertile ground. Teachers perceived that there is ample scope for integration of the topics and themes in the *Discovering Democracy* program across traditional subject boundaries, for example, the interaction among history and geography, environmental studies, debating, personal development and so on. In some states, active citizenship has long been championed by academics and well supported publicly. Mandates of this sort, as opposed to mandates of content, tend to lend themselves to commitment. This kind of integration has been a feature of the primary curriculum in most States, but also exists in the curriculum to middle secondary years in some years. Where the curriculum is fragmented, or where key learning areas do not inter-relate, a program such as *Discovering Democracy* will not achieve its full potential.

In particular, teachers in those states that have moved to a curriculum based on values, essential learnings or key competencies, and which provides a clear scope and sequence framework can more easily incorporate the intent and structure of the *Discovering Democracy* program. This is strongly supported by the systemic provision of links between the program and the framework

Of particular note in providing underpinning support for the program is the middle schooling philosophy of:

- bringing integrated learning to the students;
- providing students with a minimum number of teachers;
- providing active and involved learning opportunities in practical application;
- having few formal constraints to the timetable; and
- facilitating teachers to work in teams that focus curriculum planning and activities on a particular group of students, rather than on a subject.

This philosophy appears to be facilitated by, but not necessarily dependent on, the structure and organisation of the school. There are many situations where a school that has students from Years 7 or 8 to the senior school certificate is able to approach the middle years this way. This can be made to work either within a single organization, or in consort with feeder primary schools.

- *The stage in the school curriculum implementation and redevelopment cycle*
Although school (faculty) planning can be relatively ad hoc, where schools or faculties have some longer-term plan for curriculum review and renewal, there is often little room to include new programs. This is especially so when the programs seemingly arrive after the planning for the ensuing year has taken place. The arrival of the kits in November 1998 left little opportunity for inclusion in planning for the 1999 academic year.

However, there is substantial evidence in many of the schools visited that preparation is underway for year 2000 implementation. For these schools, the November 1998 arrival stimulated inclusion of preparation in the 1999 plan and was quite suitable.

Obstacles to Implementing *Discovering Democracy*

The constraints and problems faced (or anticipated) at the school in planning for and/or implementing the Discovering Democracy program

Many of the constraints mentioned by teachers have been drawn out in the findings to date. Most are the opposites of the issues that, when addressed, become facilitators. The following points represent the most significant perceived constraints.

Teachers were asked to rate the extent to which a range of factors had impacted negatively on the implementation of *Discovering Democracy* in their school (question 25).

Table 16 shows that for the majority of respondents, competing school priorities, access to the Internet, and access to computers with CD-ROM are the major impediments to implementing *Discovering Democracy*. Also ranking high as obstacles are: the (limited) numbers of kits per school; access to kits; opportunities for professional development; and the cost of additional materials.

On a more positive note, 72% say that quality of the materials is not an issue. Also, the majority of teachers perceive the timing of delivery of kits, adequacy of student-centred strategies, and ideas for assessment as not significantly impeding implementation.

Table 16: Obstacles to implementing *Discovering Democracy*

Obstacle to implementation	(Percent)			
	Not at all	A little	Quite a lot	A lot
Competing school priorities	19	24	21	36
Access to the Internet	33	17	17	33
Access to computers with CDROM	35	17	19	28
The number of kits per school	29	27	21	24
Access to the kits	37	26	20	17
Opportunities for professional development	38	27	18	17
Cost of additional materials	40	26	17	17
Integrating it into the existing curriculum	38	31	17	14
Timing of delivery of kits	53	24	14	9
Level of difficulty for students	43	36	14	6
Adequacy of student centred strategies in the materials	50	36	10	4
Ideas for assessment	52	36	9	3
Quality of the materials	72	19	6	3
Other	n/a	6	5	17

Cross-tabulations show that teachers in government schools tend to rate problems more severely than do teachers in independent and Catholic schools. By sector, majorities say that 'competing school priorities' is 'quite a lot' or 'a lot' of a problem. Ratings are similarly high for 'access to the Internet' in government and Catholic schools, and for 'access to computers with CD-ROM' in government schools. By level, primary teachers are less likely to report high order problems, and secondary teachers are more likely to report problems with integrating *Discovering Democracy* into the existing curriculum, and accessing CD-ROMs and the web. By location, city teachers are more likely to report that level of difficulty and curriculum integration are problems. More experienced teachers are less likely to say that 'cost of additional materials' is an obstacle.

Time, change and curriculum overcrowding

By far the most common constraint mentioned is that of time in a busy teacher schedule. Teachers also perceive rapid changes in curriculum requirements and many report they are on overload. Associated with this was the perceived problem of the over-crowded curriculum. For those able to implement the program in an integrated manner achieving a range of outcomes with the same activities, this was a constraint successfully addressed.

However, single learning area or subject approaches, sometimes mandated within testing regimes, tend to dominate a didactic and behaviourist approach to teaching and learning, especially in secondary schools. Here teacher burnout, issues of too little time to do too much, is a very real constraint.

Leadership

Lack of leadership support was identified as a constraint but only in the context of competing priorities. In general the program was seen by leaders to be valuable but where it was not (yet) in the planning cycle, there was identifiable frustration with those teachers seeking to implement it.

Distance

Distance from major cities and from nearby district schools is a major constraint for rural teachers. While there are many examples of excellent implementation in such schools, there is some concern that the lack of facilitating teacher interaction will leave the program restricted to the ideas and enthusiasm that can be locally generated.

The distance issues are constraints too in accessing professional development activities, key excursion sites and key visiting personnel. While there are ways of addressing these issues, there is a perceived advantage for this program in having easy city access to, for example, parliament house, the parliamentary liaison staff and sites of historical citizen action.

There is a need to ensure that the resourcing of this program does not significantly advantage metropolitan teachers and students over and above those in more remote areas. This is particularly the case for remote Aboriginal students and their teachers. In acknowledging these issues, one state is spending some time developing resources and facilitating the sharing of resources and ideas already developed by local teachers.

Systemic constraints

Systemic constraints vary from state to state but are identifiable within the information gained from the visits. As drawn out above, most noticeable is the difference in implementation facility provided by an integrated approach to studies of society and environment compared with single subject dominance.

Where the curriculum approach is through traditional disciplines, the practical integrating nature of the program is seen more as a frustration than a facilitator. Strongly reinforced by mandates and testing, discipline based approaches to curriculum tend to guarantee that all students will undertake a study of the program.

But that study may not fulfill the intent of the program designers. Evidence suggests that implementation is more likely to be focused on content, learned for the purposes of succeeding in written tests.

There is strong evidence to confirm that disciplinary constraints will not produce the full range of cognitive, affective and skill based outcomes built into the program intent. Indeed, the cognitive outcomes are tending to be of a low order, with little evidence of the development of key competencies

embedded within the program. Care needs to be taken that the national sample testing does not reinforce the emphasis on such limited outcomes.

Student Learning Outcomes

The types of assessment being used (or planned) to determine student learning progress in Discovering Democracy

This evaluation did not seek to evaluate the extent of student achievements in the civics and citizenship area. The baseline national survey conducted in 1999 for the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) by the Educational Testing Centre at the University of NSW will provide useful information about student performance in this area. The evaluation rather sought to gather evidence about the extent to which teachers assess the value they add to students' knowledge, skills and values through the use of the *Discovering Democracy* materials.

Further work is needed to support teacher assessment of student outcomes in this area. In most instances cited by teachers visited, assessment is not being given a high priority. While traditional methods of content testing and assignment setting are built into most programs for accountability purposes, there appears to be little diagnosis of the range and depth of intended outcomes. The Curriculum Corporation is preparing assessment materials that will be distributed in June 2000.

A small number of teachers report the use of observations, judgments about set oral responses, incorporation of elements of involvement, leadership, perseverance, initiative or persuasion. While often not formalised or reported, there are innovative approaches to making judgements about higher order understandings, group decision-making or taking of action.

The use of indicators for assessment purposes is not yet featured. There is little evidence of student based, ongoing portfolio development, analysis or reporting. While the *Discovering Democracy* kits include outcome descriptors and indicators for each learning unit, we did not find a systematic approach to assessment in our case studies.

In general, the assessment approach tends to reduce the "valued" learning to memory of factual content, often confounded by issues more in the domain of reading skills or common sense. At its worst, some examples of poster presentations and assignments appeared to reward neatness and the ability to "colour in" more than anything else. At the other end of the spectrum, one school had taken the innovative approach of surveying parents about what they had perceived their children had learned. They argued that if students are motivated enough to talk spontaneously to their parents about what they had done in class, then they had achieved a significant outcome.

However, in general, few teachers were able to describe convincingly how pre-existing disparities between students' knowledge and understandings of

the topics covered by *Discovering Democracy* had been reduced. While some students in some schools had clearly benefited from the school's program, clearly also a great many students still "miss out".

The types of learning outcomes that have been discerned (or anticipated) by the teachers, principal and curriculum coordinator which have been attributed to the Discovering Democracy program

Observations of learning outcome types depend largely on embedded program values and the approaches taken to assessment. The visits revealed the measurement and reporting of outcomes ranging from content knowledge about the history and development of civics to deeply embedded commitments to citizenship.

Where what is valued in the program involves the predominance of factual content, the approaches to assessment usually measure narrow cognitive outcomes. These indicate a level of engagement with the concepts and understandings that tends to vary depending on the student's level of maturity of learning, ability to interpret written requirements and development of memory skills.

In line with expectations, success for the more academically inclined is reported, while difficulties accessing and responding to the more challenging concepts is reported for the less academically focused. There were repeated comments from secondary teachers with students from lower socio-economic backgrounds that the content proved too difficult for, and was unrelated to, their students. Where testing was undertaken, the usual bell curve of results indicated that understanding and ability to respond was spread normally.

Where the program valued higher orders of understanding translated to action, schools reported exceptional outcomes, frequently unrelated to levels of academic success. In response to deeply personalised outcomes from one program, students undertook to raise funds for victims of the recent Turkish earthquakes. In another students debated whether they would "strike" in support of East Timor refugees, but decided in the end to prepare and present petitions to Parliament over the issue. In one primary school a community garden was developed, in another visits to local hospitals were initiated.

Individual students responded in personal ways. One student from a disadvantaged background whose life had been spent in rebellion decided to reform after visiting and working with community volunteers who were helping homeless people. Other students took advantage of such activities as the constitutional conventions to hone their debating skills. Others were better informed about the development of our democratic systems and applied their knowledge in public forums in the lead up to the recent referendum.

Caution is needed however in accepting such anecdotal judgements about outcomes. While they are certainly valid in the schools concerned and may

well have resulted from the program, they are not widespread in schools throughout the country. They remain program possibility outcomes for most students.

The level of engagement of students with the Discovering Democracy program to date

Not surprisingly, the level of engagement of students with the program depends largely on the vitality of the approach taken to its implementation. While most schools reported that students generally found the area valuable, interesting and relevant, where the complexities of the content daunted them, engagement was limited. This was particularly so for the secondary units and especially so for trial units.

Similar comments were made about the secondary videos. Many students found their lack of background and content understanding in the area prevented them from accessing much of the meaning behind the videos. There is an obvious need to build up this background throughout primary years so that the deeper meanings and nuances underpinning our present civic arrangements are better understood.

Where the approach was low order worksheets with little linkage to reality or their own learning, students were generally passive and only somewhat interested. The level of interest was increased when variety was introduced through use of the videos and other support material. Engagement with the content was increased when tests were mooted.

Where the approach opened students up to personalised and valued learning possibilities, engagement was reported as outstanding. In programs where the approach included investigation, discussion, written expression and simulated applied activities, engagement levels for better students were very high. With the addition of practical application, many students who showed little involvement with the academic were able to find relevance and meaning.

Now and The Future

The perceived strengths of the Discovering Democracy program in the school, and in general

For those teachers committed to implementation, the greatest perceived strength of the *Discovering Democracy* program is its importance and relevance for students. These teachers see the program as providing a much-needed understanding of the workings of Australian public institutions and the skills for students to take their place as active and informed citizens.

Some see its greatest strength as its capacity to engage students. These teachers praise the kit as mentioned above and see its contents and approach as excellent. They respond to its comprehensiveness and, for the primary kit in particular, to its constructivist approach to learning.

For many, the kit “puts the flesh on the bones” of curriculum frameworks in a very practical way. Translated successfully into the school, it provides teacher professional support and adds to their efficacy.

As mentioned above, some teachers who have felt the curriculum is crowded and their task impossibly time consuming, see the program as a means by which curriculum overcrowding can be reduced. They see the program as showing how wide ranging conceptual coverage can be made possible within the time constraints of a school day. These teachers see the approach and the program as enlightened, providing a way forward for other curriculum initiatives.

For others, its greatest perceived strength is the approach to systemic implementation. The actual provision of a well-developed and integrated kit of resources, backed up by professional development and money to implement the program in the school is seen as exceptional. Teachers see this as alleviating the grind of school-based curriculum development, replacing it with a professionally developed approach that can be adapted as necessary to suit teaching style and student learning capabilities.

The perceived weaknesses of the Discovering Democracy program in the school, and in general

Long-standing complaints about the pace and complexity of change, lack of time and competing demands for curriculum coverage dominated the initial listing of weaknesses. It is likely that these reflect more the teachers’ points of view about the state of teaching and society in general than anything specifically related to the *Discovering Democracy* program.

Other perceived weaknesses have already been identified above. These include perceptions that it is too history oriented, has a particular political bias or is too dominated by civics aspects rather than citizenship represent some opinions.

Perceptions that it is conceptually too difficult for younger students tend to come from secondary teachers in reference to junior secondary students. Primary teachers rarely raised this as an issue, but where mentioned considered it normal practice to adapt the material to suit the ability level of their students.

Where the Discovering Democracy program in the school is predicted to be by June 2000

The answers to this question tended to ground the program in the reality of its early implementation. In some cases for the schools visited, advances in establishment, spreading to other areas, deepening commitment and widening understanding were offered. For those schools where preparation was taking place in 1999, the year 2000 was seen as the initial implementation year.

In most cases, however, the stage of implementation was seen as likely to be little further advanced than at present. In schools where a unit of work

had been developed, it was seen as likely to be taught again next year. Where major whole school activities were underway, they were seen as likely to continue. These schools envisioned that current issues and events would be woven into the program each successive year.

However, the reality is that the majority of schools are yet to consider implementation of the program. It is not on their agenda, not under development and not planned for implementation.

What other support would help in the implementation of the Discovering Democracy program in the school

The response to this question varied depending upon the extent to which schools had already implemented the program. For those already well down the implementation path, two salient responses were provided. The first category of response was a request for expanded professional development support, especially in the form of teacher networks to better develop implementation strategies. As mentioned previously, this will be crucial to ongoing stimulus and support. Without this support, many schools will not move past the current early implementation stage.

The second category of response concerned the need for a mechanism to keep the kit material current. While there was strong praise for the materials to date, there was a concern that some of the material would need to be updated regularly.

Many teachers suggested that further written publication was unnecessary. However, they saw need for dynamic, web-based publication, including carefully selected press clippings about key civics and citizenship issues which they could access cheaply and easily.

In those schools – the majority – where the *Discovering Democracy* program is not yet being implemented, systemic pressure and support will be needed to a greater extent than has been needed for the early implementing schools. For those schools currently implementing pressure to implement came from internal champions. Consideration needs to be given to putting in place mechanisms to develop such an approach in all schools, so that there is a real commitment and pressure on the ground to ensure that the program is implemented and, furthermore, reaches its full potential.

While states and territories have not yet reached the conclusion of their funded program of support, it will generally be reached by June 2000. Although there will be maintenance of some form of systemic support in most jurisdictions, contracted staff and dedicated internal resource has generally not been set-aside after that date.

Many of schools have not yet availed themselves of or had access to professional development and implementation support. While they all have a copy of the kit, it remains “one of many”, possibly unknown to the majority of staff and almost certainly unopened by most. They will need some specifically targeted activity or systemic mandate to ensure that the

program becomes a development and implementation priority. These schools have not yet crossed a critical threshold and leadership will be needed for this to occur.

The experience, peer pressure and support of already successfully implementing colleagues will need to be harnessed to support these schools. This will require education systems to establish and communicate some high-level directions and expectations for implementation of the program, and sustained implementation effort at least commensurate with what has been provided to date.

Issues in extending *Discovering Democracy* to Years 11 and 12

The *Discovering Democracy* program was initially conceived as being targeted towards the middle years of schooling (roughly, Years 3 to 10 in various States and Territories). One aspect of the evaluation involved exploring the possibility of extending *Discovering Democracy* into years 11 and 12. On behalf of Erebus Consulting Group, Dr Kevin Donnelly, Consultant to the *Discovering Democracy* program, contacted senior curriculum officers across Australia to explore the feasibility of extending the program into the senior school years. This section discusses some of the issues involved in potentially expanding the program to include senior years of schooling.

The post-compulsory years context

The issue is often raised that as many senior high school students are either already eligible to vote, or soon to be able to register, that the immediacy and relevance of this entrée into adult society should be capitalised upon. Anecdotal, and some research evidence suggests that a great many young adults are either ignorant of, apathetic towards, or disengaged from political processes (in the broadest sense). The question arises as to how educational authorities can or should respond to these issues. Years 11 and 12 present a unique educational environment quite different to the compulsory years of schooling in which the *Discovering Democracy* program is currently being introduced. Factors contributing to this uniqueness include:

- ◆ the 'high stakes' nature of senior school certificates given their importance in deciding post school options for students;
- ◆ the influence of tertiary prerequisites and the tertiary selection process on students' subject choice; and
- ◆ the independent, statutory nature of the respective boards of studies and the fact that each has its own particular history and educational environment.

Introducing the *Discovering Democracy* program into years 11 and 12 is made more challenging given that most Australian states and territories have recently undergone extensive curriculum review at the post-compulsory level. Examples include the review of the NSW senior school certificate by Professor Barry McGaw in 1997 and the review of the Victorian Certificate of Education in 1998, chaired by Professor Kwong Lee Dow. Most states

and territories are now implementing recommendations that arose out of the review process.

Advice was sought from the curriculum authorities in each State/Territory as to how *Discovering Democracy* (and Civics and Citizenship in general) might be included in the senior years of schooling. Each of the various state and territory Studies of Society and the Environment curriculum managers responsible for Years 11 and 12 were contacted (see Appendix for a list of those contacted) and asked to respond to the following statement:

I would very much appreciate your thoughts on the question of whether there is any benefit in extending the Discovering Democracy program into the senior school years. One possibility involves providing resources to develop a new course or reshape an existing course. Another possibility involves providing resources – either in terms of teacher professional development material or curriculum material to assist students related to existing courses. An obvious example of the latter is to provide students with material that would assist them in investigating the issues/current affairs units common to most English study designs.

The responses that were received as a result of the above request are summarised as follows:

- ◆ South Australia – are interested in exploring the possibility of extending the *Discovering Democracy program* into years 11 and 12; both in terms of resources and professional development for existing studies, such as Politics, and support for the re-design and accreditation of the compulsory study, Australian Studies.
- ◆ Queensland – before agreeing to any extension of the *Discovering Democracy program* there was a request that implementation at the compulsory years be evaluated. Given that Queensland had already completed a significant curriculum review there was no interest in developing a new study related to civics and citizenship.
- ◆ Western Australia – there would be value in extending the *Discovering Democracy program* to support existing studies and new studies coming on line. Of interest was the comment that the *Discovering Democracy program* materials published to date were being used to support the study, Political and Legal Studies.
- ◆ NSW – the Board of Studies had just finished a review and the Board was not willing to entertain a new centrally designed and assessed subject in the area of civics and citizenship. A small number of schools had expressed interest in designing school-based subjects in the area of civics and citizenship. On reading the draft outline course prepared by Dr Hirst and Dr Manne, entitled *Australian Society and Culture*, the comment was that it would be good if the *Discovering Democracy program* resources could be used to assist schools in designing and trialling such a course.
- ◆ Victoria – Australian Studies was being phased out and a new study dealing with contemporary issues was being developed. The Hirst/Manne draft study had been received and was being considered. The comment was made that the main area of support would be to resource parts of existing studies, for example the contemporary issues part of the English Study Design.

The question of extending the *Discovering Democracy program* to the post-compulsory years was also raised at a meeting of state and territory civics and citizenship representatives, held in Melbourne on Friday 29 October 1999. The consensus was that the *Discovering Democracy program* should be extended and possibilities included:

- ◆ providing resources, both for teachers and students, to support existing studies;
- ◆ providing support and development of school governance and community support projects related to civics and citizenship;
- ◆ designing materials for students coming of age and who were about to vote; and
- ◆ supporting, where appropriate, development of new studies or the re-design of existing ones by making use of the Hirst/Manne draft.

Schools were also asked about any provision they had made for teaching elements of the *Discovering Democracy program* beyond Year 10 or any intentions to do so, including any thoughts about the necessity or viability of extension to Years 11 and 12.

This question provoked a mixed response. In most instances, the feeling was that the content and concepts were well suited for the deeper understanding and maturity of learning required of Year 11 and 12 students. Most people felt it only common sense that the program continues, especially as students reached voting age. In many instances, where appropriate senior courses already existed, teachers demonstrated that they had included the content of the program in such areas as Australian history, politics or legal studies.

In South Australia, several schools mentioned the one-semester Australian Studies course in Year 11 as the logical location for the program in the senior years. In schools where civics and citizenship is valued as a way of life, both formal and informal activities such as student councils and voting for representatives and captains are seen as supportive of elements of the *Discovering Democracy program*. Many schools (particularly Catholic and independent schools), require senior students to perform some form of community service, which in some schools is linked to the *Discovering Democracy program*.

However, many teachers cited the reality of a very full program of study for seniors, especially with the dominance of tertiary entry requirements. These circumstances were seen as preventing the introduction of yet another course. Such caution indicates that civics and citizenship education is yet to find parity with the dominant science, mathematics and English courses.

However, where there was a different approach to tertiary entry, based less on subject than generic performance, the place of civics and citizenship was strongly promoted. Even here, however, threats were seen coming from the disciplines embedded in separate teachers' associations. In contrast, where teachers' associations had formed partnerships to implement civics and citizenship, implementation in the senior years was strongly advocated.

An interesting outcome from asking the question of primary teachers was the clear and unanimous information that the program should be extended to the lower years. While it has been noted that whole school professional development is preferable, the place of civics and citizenship in early years as a building block for later primary years is advocated.

It was noted that much of the approach to early years schooling involved inculcation of the rules and expectations of social behaviour. Because these were seen as underpinning civic institutions and the rights and responsibilities of citizens, they were seen as ideal forerunners to the current program. Links to the program were seen as sensible, easily implemented and vital for iterative growth in student understanding.



Discussion

This chapter discusses the implications and consequences of the findings above. This chapter documents:

- ◆ the extent to which the *Discovering Democracy* program has achieved its purpose so far
- ◆ the appropriateness of the program strategy
- ◆ the level of understanding of the aims and scope of *Discovering Democracy* among key stakeholders in the program
- ◆ support for the take up of *Discovering Democracy* materials
- ◆ the level of teacher skills, knowledge and understanding of *Discovering Democracy* content and teaching strategies.

Conclusions about each of these five key areas are drawn from data presented in the previous Findings chapters. The findings were verified through a range of data sources including document and curriculum analysis, case studies, interviews and a national survey.

The extent to which the Discovering Democracy program has achieved its purpose so far

The data gathering process produced findings that clearly indicate schools across Australia are still in the early stages of implementation of the *Discovering Democracy* program. As a consequence, great variation was found both in the depth and breadth of implementation of the program.

In those schools where the program was most successfully established, teachers demonstrated sound examples of curriculum integration, ongoing and structured professional development initiatives and sound future planning for school wide implementation of *Discovering Democracy* throughout 2000. In these sites students had a clear understanding of what it means to act as responsible citizens and to participate actively within a democracy at school and broader social levels.

At the other end of the continuum many schools are yet to implement the program or even consider planning for its implementation. In these schools, the materials delivered as part of the program often remain unopened.

While few of the schools visited in the evaluation reflected this non-implementation position, this was because of the planned bias in the sample selection process. The case study schools chosen for this aspect of the data gathering process were deliberately selected so that lessons could be gleaned about current and future implementation strategies. The survey sample was, however, a stratified random sample. In contrast to findings from the case study sample, results from the survey indicated the majority of schools have not yet implemented the program. However, the extent of non-implementation appears to be less than was indicated by a similar previous survey. The findings indicate progress in implementation is occurring

Between these extremes, the findings reveal schools in which activities related to *Discovering Democracy* are not necessarily planned or designed to link with existing initiatives within civics and citizenship education. They tend to be unsystematic, lacking structure, one-off activities or discrete units of work. As anticipated, they occur mainly within the curriculum learning area of studies of society and environment. In general, such activities reflect neither whole school scope and sequence in a learning area, nor the embedding of the program within whole school civics and citizenship teaching and learning initiatives and programs.

In such circumstances, student-learning outcomes relating to responsible citizenship and democratic participation were limited to those classes where teachers were acting in isolation as internal champions for the program within the school. However, despite the lack of whole school perspective or the establishment of the program as a school priority, many individual teachers within such schools were found to be highly committed and, at times, planning and teaching exciting civics and citizenship units based around the *Discovering Democracy* kit. Where committed and enthusiastic teachers have taken up the program, implementation has been more than satisfactory at a classroom, and in some cases, a school wide level.

However, in the majority of schools, the absence of school wide commitment and support has meant limited implementation of the program, acknowledging the fact that it is still in the early phases of implementation. In most schools there is little evidence that less relevant aspects of the curriculum have been disbanded or that civics and citizenship education has achieved parity with other learning areas.

Across the broader sample of Australian schools, there are particular issues that militate against the implementation of the program. Limitations were experienced by groups with distinctive backgrounds and characteristics that have not been explicitly acknowledged throughout the material in the kit.

Those schools in more isolated settings have particular difficulties in implementing the program. These difficulties include limitations in access for support and sharing of ideas and resources. It is difficult for students in isolated settings to access the range of operating exemplars such as parliament. The cost of excursions is prohibitive and in these cases teachers have had to use secondary source material as a sometimes inadequate substitute.

Such problems have been exacerbated for some teachers and students by the absence of teaching and learning materials reflecting relevance to local groups such as indigenous populations. In settings focused on particular religious beliefs, the lack of acknowledgement of some aspects of civics pertinent to religion and culture cause concern. What some perceive as the dominance of a white Anglo-Saxon, middle class approach to civics and citizenship also causes frustration for some teachers, parents and students. While the kit offers the flexibility to employ local content samples, some teachers in isolated areas appeared reluctant to utilize local resources but rather adhered to examples within the teacher guides. All of these issues contributed directly to a limited take up of the materials.

Where teachers are considering assessment of student learning outcomes, the evidence indicates little other than a focus on measurement of understanding of content. While assessment needs to be encouraged and supported in the majority of schools where it is undertaken, there is a need for a shift towards a broader understanding and assessment of the range of learning outcomes. This shift is needed as a foundation for the planning of appropriate student learning experiences. The provision of exemplars and related assessment materials will assist teachers to achieve this shift in focus.

While the current focus of the program is on Years 4 to 10, the evidence from teachers and school leaders in many schools suggests there may be an opportunity to extend its reach both upwards into Years 11 and 12 and downwards from K to 3. While it is acknowledged that upward extension would imply curriculum substitution, a sufficient number of schools have indicated the need for further exploration of the idea. There appear to be ample opportunities within the existing curriculum structure to explore possibilities without major resource input or introducing new courses. At the K-3 level, there is a ground-swell of opinion that indicates existing materials can be adapted to introduce key principles in the early years. There may also be a need to adapt materials to better suit the needs of Indigenous students.

In order to accelerate the implementation process in schools, ongoing funding for structured professional development initiatives, targeted at the level of teacher and school need is imperative. It is clear from case studies, stakeholder interviews and the survey that networking among teachers, both within schools and with their colleagues is an essential element of this professional support.

However, for those teachers and school leaders still unaware of the program and its full intent, there is a clear need for basic information sessions to increase awareness of the program potential, its materials and the system support for it. These sessions should be integral to a structured professional development program for all targeted teachers and need to include the establishment of local teacher networks, support mechanisms and commitment to implementation plans. All of these features were found to be effective in promoting implementation.

The appropriateness of the program strategy

In relation to schools, several aspects of the program strategy have proved supportive and successful. However, several aspects of materials provision and implementation support need careful consideration in the design of future similar programs.

The early investment in the development of materials will bear fruit in the next stages of the program's implementation. The materials are generally perceived as sound. Once the program is given priority in a school, they tend to provide excellent and clear support for teaching and learning. The material in the Primary Kit in particular is seen to support student oriented learning and teacher planning in a way that allows for integration and a clear focus.

The funded trialling of materials by self-nominating schools and teachers has potential to support implementation. Appointment of trial schools prior to full scale implementation tended to enhance in-depth implementation for those schools while it also allowed those schools to act as lighthouses for best practice when they shared ideas and resources within districts.

The potential of the trialling approach will only be realized, however, if schools are treated not as contractors but as co-developers of the units and if some criteria are followed to ensure selection of sites most likely to succeed. This implies the capacity to allow schools to vary the course of the planned activities, to adapt to student needs and interests and to share with other co-developers. It also implies the opportunity to work closely during the trial with writers and other experts to translate the intent into faithful practice.

While it was anticipated that the timing of the delivery of the kits at the end of the 1998 school year would prove problematic, this was not found to be significant in the medium term. However, the apparently equal distribution to all schools has brought some criticism. Not the least is the fact that the kits were targeted at schools through the gatekeepers of principals and librarians or teacher librarians. In a kit focused within the studies of society and environment learning area, it may have been more appropriate to target each relevant teacher within that area, including the learning area coordinators in primary schools. In many instances the kits remain unopened while in other places, there is a salient need for teachers to have a kit of their own to facilitate student work throughout their classrooms.

In future materials distribution, it may be appropriate to ask schools to submit a short plan of intent regarding implementation and to indicate how many kits are required to carry out the plan. If the provision of the kits carried with it an implied contract of commitment with a requirement to unobtrusively indicate progress in implementation, both limited pressure and strong support would militate for implementation.

This would also allow development of a central tracking of the implementation of the program while providing focused information for

systems in following up those schools yet to implement. Such a tracking system would also assist in targeting support and developing networks for those schools that have taken the program up. The additional infrastructure needed for such an approach would be more than rewarded by the facilitation of implementation and the saving in unopened kits.

In terms of the types of support provided by the systems and sectors throughout the states and territories, there are clear indications that success relates directly to the level of contact and support provided. As mentioned above, awareness-raising sessions have been successful in moving the kit from the library to the classroom. Awareness raising was found to be most successful where a consultant personally visited a school, explained the full purpose of the program, helped teachers explore the materials, gained commitment and brokered an implementation plan. Also successful were systemic meetings where teachers were provided with relief and travel to undertake similar awareness raising and planning activities.

While they resulted in some movement towards implementation, the various forms of grants were not found to be sufficient alone to foster incorporation of the program in schools. Grants for the production of teaching units were successful depending on the teacher concerned. In many instances, however, the outcome appears to be small scale, single unit, single subject, content-oriented activity, often limited to one grade or class. Grants to support professional development and the planning for implementation across a school were found to be more successful, more often provided some form of external support was made available.

Such external support provided ongoing impetus to keep the development of *Discovering Democracy* a priority in the school, while bringing ideas and resource information shared among teachers. Overall, ongoing support was found to be the most effective mechanism to broker implementation. Seen in forms ranging from personal visits to schools, through the establishment of formal and informal teacher networks coordinated by paid and unpaid teachers, the adult learning techniques used throughout such activities tended to promote and guide.

Several elements of such visits appeared to be influential. These include:

- ◆ providing in-class support to address issues as they arise;
- ◆ facilitating teacher talk to share ideas;
- ◆ building teaching materials together;
- ◆ sharing integration strategies;
- ◆ linking *Discovering Democracy* teaching ideas with the school's mission, vision and values;
- ◆ building school community stakeholder involvement through shared planning and related activities; and
- ◆ undertaking whole school shared activities to extend the program

The program has also included funded activities intended to increase stakeholder and community support for *Discovering Democracy*, to monitor its

progress and to include the adult and community education and university sectors.

Overall, while implementation of program support in these areas is vital for the future embedding of the intent, the evidence to date indicates that, while stakeholder and community support are vital to the future of the program and these activities are having success in their own right, they are having a limited impact generally, both in terms of Australian society and support for structured activities in schools.

Several teachers, particularly within one state where it was found to be highly supportive in providing the content background necessary to feel confident when approaching students, have accessed the Open Learning Program. However, few teachers indicated they knew about the program. Its potential; remains largely untapped.

Program sponsored initiatives such as the *Discovering Democracy* Forum and related opportunities like the Parliamentary Fellowship Program are proving both motivational and content expanding support for the program champions selected to take part in them. As such they play a vital role in supporting these committed people. Such support is much needed, as their activities in implementation of the program require expenditure of a great deal of personal energy. Recognition activities including the upcoming national *Discovering Democracy* Awards are seen to produce similar invigoration for committed and successful people.

Preparation of the Adult Learning Circle kits has helped engage the adult and community education sector with *Discovering Democracy* and the kits will be of benefit to the participants. Community involvement in various state and territory activities such as awareness raising launches has directly fed into in-school implementation. Associations of professional groups, including the legal profession, have provided strong support. Similarly, teachers and school principals in their associations have provided pockets of strong support, although with caveats where subject “patch protection” has undermined integration of learning.

The limitation of the success of these associated programs is mainly due to the small reach either gained to date or possible within the current resources and delivery scope. They remain generally successful and supportive for those at the leading edge of program implementation. For the majority, including the community as a whole, as well as targeted teachers, their effect is minimal. It comes mainly under the support categories of awareness raising and imprimatur. As such, for the program overall, their impact, while valuable in itself, has not fostered significant implementation support.

While the compilation of approaches to the incorporation of the program in teacher pre-service education is not yet finalized, the trends to date indicate that relatively scant attention is paid to the *Discovering Democracy* materials and philosophy throughout these courses. In many instances this is because the courses themselves are given limited time in overall teacher training. However, the trends indicate the need for a more systematic

incorporation of the materials and their intent if the support outcomes for schools are to be achieved.

From a policy perspective, it is apparent that a clearly defined set of objectives is needed for the next phase of the project. Progress towards the achievement of these objectives needs to be reviewed at the end of that time. The priority for continued funding of the program needs to be directed towards supporting further consolidation and implementation rather than the development of new curriculum materials. It is appropriate that funding for a professional development coordinator in each state/territory be continued.

Grants and further copies of the kits need to be provided to support structured professional development in schools, designed to introduce implementation and support extension of implementation in accordance with a plan submitted by the school and approved by the system. Continued funding to facilitate appropriate partnerships supportive of *Discovering Democracy* and for high quality research to inform implementation is also appropriate, but such activities need to be tailored to the revised objectives agreed for the next phase of the program.

The level of understanding of the aims and scope of Discovering Democracy among key stakeholders in the program

Key stakeholders within this section of the report are those charged or associated with the responsibility of implementation in systems and schools. Such personnel include in the first instance teachers, supported by school and system curriculum leaders, and the broader educational community, including parents. The outcomes of the levels of understanding relate directly to the extent of success of the program to date.

The salient issue of understanding relates to the perceived scope of the *Discovering Democracy* program and its intentions. At the broader advisory level, the Civics Education Group has been instrumental in providing informed guidance for the program. Such quality advice, translated directly at times into the materials for schools, should clearly continue to guide the development of the program in the next phase.

At the implementation level, where the scope has been interpreted as the embedding of civics and citizenship principles and understandings in the life of the school, *Discovering Democracy* has been implemented within existing school programs as an integrated learning experience that adds value to students' broader understanding of what it means to be active and informed citizens.

In contrast, where understanding at the teacher, school and system levels has been at a more embryonic stage, implementation has been characterised by discrete units of work taught regularly but without linking to the broader concepts of social education intended by the program. In such situations, teachers and school leaders tend to perceive the aims and scope of

Discovering Democracy as content that can be used to more effectively teach concepts within existing programs of learning.

For example, where environmental issues and actions offer the opportunity to study civics and citizenship at work, they may be reduced to studies of the geography and the social impact of the outcomes. In effect *Discovering Democracy* enables both teachers and students to examine an issue from a variety of perspectives, not limited by the discipline of existing subject areas. The program offers opportunity for teachers to design a range of activities to broaden students' perspectives about how they can be involved in such issues, facilitating them to act as responsible citizens in socially acceptable ways. Where the learning is bounded within subject frameworks, lost is the chance to explore the ways the government and community agencies interact to improve the outcomes for all citizens.

Such an example highlights the responsibility of system and curriculum leaders to provide activities that make teachers aware of the opportunities provided by *Discovering Democracy* for genuine integrated learning about social issues. The responsibility to promote civics and citizenship as a key focus among the learning areas needs to be realized.

Priority should be given particularly to assist teachers and schools to address the balance between content and process in teaching *Discovering Democracy* including integration a range of learning areas and other school activities as well as significant civic events. Where not yet done, a logical starting point for this initiative is for each state to undertake a curriculum mapping exercise to identify the relationship between state curriculum outcomes and the scope and sequence of the program. State coordinators are best placed to undertake such a role.

It should be noted that such early levels of implementation do not yet characterise the majority of schools where issues of developing awareness and a basic understanding of the principles of *Discovering Democracy* are still the major challenge. Such commentary on the existing state of implementation in schools is not designed to be a criticism of teachers but rather to acknowledge the early stage of development that most teachers experience at the moment in relation to the program.

In terms of general support for teachers, the evidence indicates that school leaders can play a pivotal role in facilitating teachers' understanding and implementation of *Discovering Democracy*. Various examples have been cited where principals have reorganized school structures and routines, provided teacher relief and encouraged team based planning to facilitate implementation.

In such settings, teachers have worked in partnership with parents and the principal as the internal champion for the program, cognizant of the direct support being offered by the principal and other members of the education community. Particularly in secondary schools, the imprimatur of and support from parents is essential in choosing an integrated civics and citizenship approach above distinct subject disciplines. The long embedding of subjects, especially as they flow through to the senior years,

is a strong tradition that potentially restricts the impact of learning which transcends existing subject boundaries. Where parents are informed about the value that can be added through cross-disciplinary learning, the artificial nature of such learning boundaries becomes more transparent.

In light of the conclusions regarding variations in the levels of understanding, there is a clear need to further support the *Discovering Democracy* program at the school, community and system levels. The success of initiatives to date indicates key approaches to be incorporated in support. However, there is a need to provide ongoing targeted funding to support the various key stakeholders from teachers to curriculum leaders. They need to be supported to undertake the constructive roles that champions from within their groups have generated to facilitate the delivery of the program.

Support for the take up of Discovering Democracy materials

As alluded to above, the materials provided to support the program have in general proved a significant support for implementation and will be a valuable investment to continue the program. The evidence identified a range of factors that facilitated or inhibited the take up of the program materials.

At the practical level, the vast majority of teachers who are implementing the program identified sample units of work, teacher guides and reference material as major resources for planning, teaching and integration with other subject areas. These resources became the catalyst for leading edge teachers to adapt and develop their own units in team based planning sessions. However, the sample units of work need to be constantly updated and linked to other civic events to build their relevance for schools. There is a need for all materials to be accurate, current and inclusive.

While the videos were perceived as a valuable resource for teaching *Discovering Democracy*, only the leading edge teachers appeared to have used excerpts from them in a manner that extracted best possible learning for students. In contrast, the majority of teachers implementing the program used the videos most commonly as discussion starters around issues such as racism, environmental pollution and Australian history in discrete segments of learning.

While the CD-ROM received extensive praise from teachers using it, the reality was that very few teachers had either the opportunity or expertise to fully exploit its value. Even in those cases where the CD-ROM was employed, it was generally used as a discrete teaching resource in the absence of other materials from the kit.

There was however, one exception in the secondary school setting where the CD-ROM was placed on the school's network and used for students in conjunction with related software for individual students assignments, debates, role plays and related presentations around key *Discovering Democracy* principles. Such an application reflects the potential of such

technology when teachers have the expertise and the access to software and hardware for student learning.

Depending on their level of expertise, teachers value practical materials that assist planning and provide classroom learning solutions. Such a conclusion is vindicated by the fact that a number of teachers identified posters and cards as potentially being very useful but due to their limited number in the kits considered this to be a genuine restriction.

In contrast to the support provided by the materials within the kits, a number of school principals and teachers commented about the need for clear advice about how to use the material most effectively to enhance student learning. Advice to this effect emerging from the evaluation led to an additional flyer with the November 1999 distribution of *Discovering Democracy* materials.

A key lesson for the future delivery of such kits in schools is to identify key potential stakeholders in the school and to clearly articulate suggested roles and responsibilities for those personnel to optimise the value of the materials. Models for such advice are now readily available in relation to documentation supporting the recently released syllabus documents in various states of Australia. Informal feedback from schools indicates the recent release of the *Discovering Democracy* readers, accompanied by such supporting documentation, immediately placed them into the context of their intention in relation to the overall program.

In this context, an understanding of the relevant states' existing curriculum documents provides not only a framework for teachers planning but in fact adds genuine value for students' learning through carefully considered integration of learning experiences and appropriate evaluative strategies. Where support material that linked the kits to the curriculum framework was absent, the potential learning provided by *Discovering Democracy* within the broader curriculum perspective was minimised.

A perceived strength of the kit has been the flexible use of the materials by schools. Several secondary schools committed to implementing the program incorporating student populations with varying levels of learning needs have readily adapted the primary kit for secondary school use. Such implementation reflects the importance of the learning continuum from primary to secondary that has been captured by the kits and also emphasises the varying levels of conceptual sophistication that characterise the materials. Moreover, the scope and sequence of learning activities embodied within the two kits overall also readily enables provision for students with high intellectual potential to be challenged at an appropriate level.

Such comments however, must be balanced against the reality that primary and secondary schools, irrespective of size received only one kit. Where primary/secondary sharing did not occur, teachers found conceptual and learning limitations that, at times, led to criticism that the materials, especially in the secondary kit, were overly sophisticated and difficult for students to access due to complex language and concepts. In some cases,

by reducing the material, the effect for students was to stultify and restrict potential learning.

As systems and schools increase teacher and student access to technology and teachers become more confident with technology as a learning tool, problems of limited access to *Discovering Democracy* materials can be alleviated. Several schools identified the need for an easily accessible, coordinated web page containing curriculum materials that could be readily accessed and regularly updated. Such a web page could also be used as a vehicle enabling interested schools to network with each other by sharing resources and critiquing each other's work for the mutual benefit of teachers and students. Appropriate mechanisms need to be established to manage such a website.

The level of teacher skills, knowledge and understanding of Discovering Democracy content and teaching strategies

The evidence suggests that internal champions for *Discovering Democracy* generally possess a set of skills and a personal commitment towards the ethos of *Discovering Democracy* that overcome perceived obstacles created by a lack of sophisticated understanding about key democratic content and insights. While it is acknowledged that a sound understanding of content is an essential driver for program success, interviews with key stakeholders and case study analyses have clearly shown that such potential inadequacies can be compensated for by direct reference to both the materials in the kit and supplementary resources.

This potential issue was perceived to be more common in primary schools where teachers rarely had specific academic qualifications relating to the essential understandings within the *Discovering Democracy* framework. A key message relates to the formal preparation of teachers in developing their capacity to teach such programs as *Discovering Democracy*. Evidence gathered within this project indicates that teacher-training institutions, with notable exceptions, generally do not have a systematic approach towards addressing such fundamental knowledge issues with teachers, particularly at the primary school level.

One exception to this situation is the work currently being undertaken in the Open Learning Program that has been positively received by teachers, facilitating their preparation to teach even the most sophisticated concepts that arise from the program. A message therefore is that, to ensure optimum value for investment in the program, ongoing and structured professional development must be an integral component of any change management approach.

It should be noted however, that such a professional development initiative in no way is a substitute for the demonstrated enthusiasm and commitment exhibited by leading edge teachers identified throughout this study.

At a deeper level of professional implementation, the *Discovering Democracy* program challenges the fundamental components of teaching practice for

many teachers. Exemplified by the reduction of learning units in the kits to worksheets, there is evidence in some schools of teachers focusing on content based, individualised approaches that are more designed to keep students quiet than they are to increase student engagement and level of understanding.

While the approach, particularly of the Primary kit, facilitates student-focused social learning situations that can contribute to high levels of understanding, the kit alone cannot drive fundamental change. The kits cannot “teacher-proof” the curriculum. However, if the true potential of the program is to be achieved, there is an opportunity in the implementation to attach to professional development that focuses strongly on quality teaching, especially for teachers steeped in the more didactic approaches.

Where teachers resorted to a simple worksheet approach, the evidence indicated they reduced content to the most basic concepts, eliminating the opportunity for synthesis of understandings and application to their own lives. Such instances were not found to be as common in the middle school setting where the integrated structure across grades gives students greater opportunity for personal stretch in learning at various year levels from years 5 to 8 (or 9).

Clearly, recognition of what has been achieved to date needs to be promoted and celebrated. Best practice needs to be identified and shared. Small-scale research activities into best practice, focused on the researcher working closely with the practitioner, could be effective in supporting implementation.

International recognition of Discovering Democracy

As part of the wider dissemination of the *Discovering Democracy* program, consideration should be given to establishing further international recognition of programs of this nature. Indeed, civic educators and administrators in many countries around the world are aware of the program. Their depth of understanding of the program and its applicability to their needs, however, is very limited.

Given that programs in civic education are beginning to be developed in many countries around the world, including in the Asia-Pacific region, a proactive dissemination of information on the process and outcomes of *Discovering Democracy* would be a valuable contribution for Australia to make. *Discovering Democracy* could act as a model for a curriculum project in civic education. Countries such as Indonesia, The Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, and China (Hong Kong) are in the early stages of developing civic education programs.

This approach is consistent with Government policy, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. The Civics Education Group and DETYA would need to liaise with other appropriate organisations to negotiate an appropriate program.

The *Discovering Democracy* program could also support, and help fund, visits from overseas civic educators and appropriate administrators who wish to observe the program in practice.

Given the forthcoming Olympic Games, the CEG could identify ways to 'hook' *Discovering Democracy* to this highly visible activity (e.g. through "Civic Values"; "Ancient Greece").

The broader context of the Discovering Democracy program

The overall *Discovering Democracy* strategy has funded a number of organisations to develop various aspects of the program. The key stakeholders in these projects have all made successful contributions towards the implementation of *Discovering Democracy*. A useful, informative brochure has reinforced those contributions. Most of the stakeholders specifically created websites for the project or were linked to their own site or the Curriculum Corporation's *Discovering Democracy* website. However, the reach of most of these activities has been small.

At this point in time the contributions of the key stakeholders are all increasing awareness of the program, but apart from that they fall into two categories; those whose projects do not directly feed into in-school implementation and those that continue to make an ongoing contribution in this area.

In the first category are current projects with parents, Open Learning Australia and the adult and community education sector. Future activity in this area should be directly linked to in-school implementation and state/territory professional development committee priorities. While continuing support for a pre-service teacher education project is definitely needed it should be devised and implemented by consensus amongst teacher education institutions that can actively engage trainee teachers in Civics and Citizenship education through *Discovering Democracy*.

Projects for principals, teacher associations and academics need to be continued over the next three/four years. These groups play an important role in facilitating the next stage of implementation particularly with teachers. Stronger linkages between the three groups should be encouraged to enhance their effectiveness.

The by-invitation annual national forums have served an internal informative and bonding function with limited success. There may be a need for some form of national forum to be continued. This conference should focus on publicizing the strengths of the program and successful practice across the range of programs. Reporting on the baseline study, the International association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) Civic Education Project and by key stakeholders would be useful. It could also include some overseas civic educators and appropriate system administrators to observe the success of the program.

The extent to which Discovering Democracy accords with current and emerging priorities in government policy

The *Discovering Democracy* program is clearly in accord with the 1999 *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century* (especially Goals 1.4, 3.4 and 3.5). The goals recognize that:

“Australia’s future depends upon each citizen having the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills, and values for a productive and rewarding life in an educated, just and open society. High quality schooling is central to achieving this vision.”

Goal 1.4 states that when students leave school they should:

“be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia’s system of government and civic life.

Goals 3.4 and 3.5 are also relevant to citizenship. They state that schooling should be socially just so that:

“... all students understand and acknowledge the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to Australian society and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians’ (Goal 3.4)

“all students understand and acknowledge the value of cultural and linguistic diversity, and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, such diversity in the Australian community and internationally.” (Goal 3.5)

Civics and citizenship education helps young people take their place as inheritors, participants and future leaders in Australian civic life. It helps them engage in civic communities and take their part in the Australian ‘social coalition’. It has been strongly endorsed by the National Youth Roundtable. *Discovering Democracy* helps young people understand the diverse nature of Australia’s heritage and the reconciliation process between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. There will be opportunities to address these issues as Australia celebrates its liberal democratic political history in the Centenary of Federation.

In *A New Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* (December 1999) the Commonwealth Government supports an appropriate emphasis on the meaning of multiculturalism and links to Centenary of Federation activities in any future *Discovering Democracy* program. Continuation of *Discovering Democracy* can also assist with activities associated with the Centenary of Federation, the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000) and the International Year for Volunteers (2001). It is also in accord with widespread sentiment amongst both opponents and proponents that the recent Republic Referendum highlighted the continuing need for education on constitutional matters.

Including Young People in Civic Communities and the 'Social Coalition'

The Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs, the Hon Dr David Kemp MP and the Minister for Family and Community Services, Senator the Hon Jocelyn Newman stressed the importance of including young people in Australian social, economic and civic life when they released the Federal Government response to the recommendations of the final report of the Prime Ministerial Youth Homeless Taskforce, *Putting Families in the Picture* in September 1999:

"We want young people to be able to engage fully in their community, both socially and economically. Cultivating better outcomes for young people and their families provides for a more cohesive Australia.."

Much of the original impetus for the *Discovering Democracy* program came from the realisation that civics and citizenship education could help assist fuller social inclusion of young people. A number of surveys reported low levels of knowledge about, and interest in, politics amongst people aged between 15 and 35. This led to worries about the health of Australia's democratic political system amongst politicians, civic leaders, educators and other groups in the community. Similar concerns and a similar rationale for civics and citizenship education have been expressed in comparable liberal-democracies such as the UK and the USA.

The Commonwealth Government established the National Youth Roundtable to create a direct dialogue with young Australians and to ensure that their views are taken into account in policy-making processes. The Roundtable brings together 50 young people, aged 15 to 24, to meet with the Government and provide input on issues of importance to young people. Participants undertake a series of consultations with their peers across Australia to develop a comprehensive picture of the views and attitudes of young people, which are reported back to the Government. The National Youth Roundtable, at its meeting in September 1999, noted that surveys have consistently shown that knowledge of basic civic matters among young Australians is disturbingly low, commended *Discovering Democracy* and recommended:

- ◆ that State and Territory Governments introduce compulsory civics and citizenship education for all Australian school students by the year 2003;
- ◆ that the Ministerial Council for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs establish performance indicators and possibly targets as incentives for State and Territory Governments to prioritise civics and citizenship education; and
- ◆ that the Commonwealth Government continue to fund *Discovering Democracy* beyond June 30, 2000 to promote its continued implementation and to develop new units.

National Youth Roundtable delegates asked to be included in this evaluation, which has taken note of their concerns. They recommended that the evaluation include consideration of:

- ◆ Extending the program to senior secondary students;
- ◆ Better incorporating education concerning Australia's place in the Asia-Pacific region and the international community;
- ◆ Reviewing how State and Territory Governments have utilised the program; and
- ◆ Encouraging State and Territory Governments to expand their utilisation of the program.

Commonwealth Government policies for the social inclusion of young people operate in a broader context of building the 'social coalition' linking individuals, business, government and community organisations in communities across the country to address contemporary social problems. Young people and their organisations have an important place in this Australian 'social coalition'

The 'social coalition' philosophy recognises that government cannot solve all of society's problems. It draws on our vibrant and diverse civil society and the 'social capital' represented by a myriad of voluntary organisations. Australia has a long tradition of volunteering and community self-help (eg through bush fire brigades and Clean Up Australia Days).

Civics and citizenship education can contribute to the conservation and renewal of Australia's valuable 'social capital'. *Discovering Democracy* contributes to young people's understandings of citizenship and community involvement as they become the inheritors, participants and future leaders in Australian civic life.

A New Agenda for a Multicultural Australia (December 1999)

A New Agenda for a Multicultural Australia (the Commonwealth Government's response to the National Multicultural Advisory Council report *Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century*), stresses the need to ensure "that all Australians have the opportunity to be active and equal participants in Australian society". The Government also that the democratic foundations of our society "contain a balance of rights and obligations. The freedom of all Australians in practice is dependent on their abiding by mutual civic obligations". This has been one of the cardinal principles of Australian civic life and underpins the 'social coalition' approach to social policy.

A New Agenda for a Multicultural Australia indicates in-principle support for the NMAC's recommendation that the *Discovering Democracy* program be used to reach as many Australians as possible. It noted that *Discovering Democracy*:

"helps students to understand the relevance of political and legal systems to everyday life, and develop capacities to participate as informed, reflective and active citizens within their civic communities ... Any future program would include appropriate emphasis on the meaning and value of multiculturalism".

Centenary of Federation

Centenary of Federation celebrations offer opportunities for synergies with associated citizenship education initiatives such as a continued *Discovering Democracy* program. The National Multicultural Advisory Committee recommended linking Centenary of Federation activities to promotion of educational programs highlighting cultural heritage (including Indigenous history, European settlement, multicultural Australia and the heritage of a democratic political system). The Government response indicated support for “the current links and the development of future activities between the *Discovering Democracy* program and initiatives planned by the National Council for the Centenary of Federation”.

International Years

A continuing *Discovering Democracy* program could contribute to Australian involvement in the International Year for a Culture of Peace (2000) and the International Year for Volunteers (2001). The International Year for a Culture of Peace, for example, might provide opportunities to incorporate consideration of Australia’s international contribution to peacekeeping operations in East Timor and Bougainville into civics and citizenship education. The National Youth Roundtable asked this evaluation team to consider ways of better incorporating education concerning Australia’s place in the Asia-Pacific region and the international community into the *Discovering Democracy* program. In a similar manner, the International Year for Volunteers could provide opportunities to promote young people’s involvement in their civic communities and Australian ‘social coalition’.

Republic Referendum Aftermath

After the November 1999 republic referendum, there appears to be a consensus between both constitutional monarchists and republicans that continued education of Australians about their Constitution is a high priority.

A Final Note

Awareness of *Discovering Democracy* has increased markedly since the 1998 survey conducted by the Academic Consortium. Most teachers who indicated awareness of the materials rated them favourably in terms of relevance, usefulness and appropriateness and their potential for achieving aims and goals. However, obstacles to implementation remain, especially around issues such as obtaining access to the materials and the equipment necessary to use them.

The next three to four years will be critical to the success of the *Discovering Democracy* program. Now that many schools are aware of the program, *Discovering Democracy* needs extensive and ongoing support. If not, the initiative will certainly diminish, and potentially flounder. Despite the

Discovering Democracy program battling a school environment characterized by curriculum change, competing priorities, limited funding and resources and substantial system change, the *Discovering Democracy* program is nevertheless perceived by a growing number of teachers and stakeholders as important and necessary for students.

A major issue, however, is to engage more teachers with the *Discovering Democracy* program materials. Many teachers who have examined the *Discovering Democracy* program materials have identified their potential and would like to use them. Those teachers who have used the resources really like them and are strongly committed to them. Some teachers are planning to integrate *Discovering Democracy* program materials with curriculum changes scheduled for 2000 and beyond.

Teachers who have used the materials have expressed the wish for more sets to be available for their colleagues to employ. However, what teachers need most in order to understand, integrate and implement the *Discovering Democracy* program is time. This need translates into substantial amounts, and possibly different forms, of professional development support.



Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to capitalize on the *Discovering Democracy* program expenditure to date. These recommendations stem directly from the conclusions reached and are designed to move the program on in the next three years. Their implementation is essential to foster broader implementation across Australian schools and to further the incorporation into the schools already undertaking the program.

The *Discovering Democracy* program thus far has focused on the development and dissemination of quality curriculum materials acceptable to systems and schools for students in Years 4-10. This has been supported by small projects through key stakeholders. This approach has seen the materials gain a 'foothold' in school curricula and teaching practice.

A new focus is needed which concentrates upon the effective implementation of *Discovering Democracy* in schools. This requires extensive support the teacher professional development programs. A second component is the extension of existing *Discovering Democracy* resources to Years K-3 and also to Years 11 and 12.

In general the following recommendations would extend the rationale and practice of *Discovering Democracy* to be increasingly consistent with broader Government policy priorities. This has been evident with recent developments from the National Multicultural Advisory Council (NMAC), the Australian Citizenship Council and the National Youth Roundtable. It is also worthwhile noting that the 1999 Referendum on a Republic produced bipartisan support for greater civic education in schools.

The Government's response to recommendation 8 of the NMAC's report, for example, endorses the *Discovering Democracy* program and commits the program to appropriate emphasis upon multiculturalism. Similarly the Government supports links between the National Council for the Centenary of Federation (NCCoF) and *Discovering Democracy* (Recommendation 11, NMAC).

Given that Australia is about to celebrate the Centenary of its Federation the new focus of *Discovering Democracy* should also include that recognition. The study of federation is currently a major part of *Discovering Democracy* so the recognition of its centenary and linking with the activities of the

National Council of Centenary of Federation is both logical and appropriate.

The recommendations are framed around the terms of reference for this evaluation.

The extent which the Discovering Democracy program has achieved its purpose so far

It is recommended that:

- ◆ the Commonwealth continue to fund the *Discovering Democracy* program for a further 3-4 year period although at a reduced level and with a different focus from earlier phases;
- ◆ greater priority be given to assisting schools to more effectively assess student outcomes from their teaching of *Discovering Democracy*, and that a shift in focus from assessment of content to assessment of learning outcomes be facilitated by the further development and dissemination of assessment materials;
- ◆ support be given to a variety of voluntary state and territory initiatives for extension of *Discovering Democracy* into Year 11 & 12, but another set of curriculum learning units should not be created.
- ◆ the program be extended to years K (or R) to 3, supported by adaptation of the existing curriculum materials.

The appropriateness of the program strategy

It is recommended that:

- ◆ a clearly defined set of objectives for the next phase of the project be identified and that progress towards the achievement of these objectives be reviewed at the end of that time;
- ◆ the revised set of objectives should include recognition of the opportunities provided by *Discovering Democracy* for genuine integrated learning across the curriculum (particularly where civics and citizenship principles are embedded in the life of the school);
- ◆ the priority for continued funding be directed towards supporting the further consolidation and implementation of the program rather than the development of new curriculum materials;
- ◆ funding for state/territory professional development coordinators be continued;
- ◆ grants and further copies of the kits be provided to support structured professional development in schools, designed to introduce implementation and support extension of implementation in accordance with a plan submitted by the school and approved by the system;
- ◆ a national benchmarking project be created to establish an appropriate set of standards in Civics and Citizenship education. This would reinforce the baseline study of student performance and assist schools with their assessment of student outcomes;

- ◆ Projects for principals, teacher associations and academics be continued over the next three to four years as much remains to be achieved by these groups to secure the implementation of *Discovering Democracy*. Links between the three groups should be encouraged.

The level of understanding of the aims and scope of Discovering Democracy among key stakeholders in the program

It is recommended that:

- ◆ the Civics Education Group (CEG) continue to provide an advisory and oversight role in relation to the *Discovering Democracy* program;
- ◆ state professional development coordinators give priority to assisting schools in adopting approaches towards teaching *Discovering Democracy* that emphasise an appropriate balance between content and process and encourage wider inclusion across learning areas and other school activities;
- ◆ the Commonwealth assist each state and territory to indicate the relationship between state curriculum outcomes and a scope and sequence of *Discovering Democracy* activities in order to devise a national 'picture' of *Discovering Democracy* in the school curriculum over the next 3 to 4 years;
- ◆ at an appropriate time a strategy be formulated and implemented, in conjunction with State/Territory professional development coordinators, to stimulate teacher awareness of *Discovering Democracy*. This might be around March 2001;
- ◆ funding be considered for the development of a pre-service teacher education program to support *Discovering Democracy*. This should be in addition to the materials and activities prepared by the University of Queensland's current project.

Support for the take up of Discovering Democracy materials

It is recommended that:

- ◆ limited funding support be provided to ensure that *Discovering Democracy* curriculum material is accurate, current and inclusive, particularly in regard to the needs of Indigenous students;
- ◆ the preferred means for dissemination of curriculum and support materials be through a dynamic means such as a website;
- ◆ appropriate mechanisms be established for the development and management of such a website, the location and operation of which be determined through competitive tendering;
- ◆ consideration be given to the rationalization of web sites currently developed by systems and sectors so that all teachers have access to materials and ideas produced by others, and so that national teacher interaction is encouraged.

The level of teacher skills, knowledge and understanding of Discovering Democracy content and teaching strategies

It is recommended that:

- ◆ the focus of *Discovering Democracy* support in the future be teacher professional development with State & Territory professional development committees encouraged to use a networking approach to delivery of professional development;
- ◆ that the Commonwealth support activities to promote best practice, which might include:
 - national, state and local activities which recognize and celebrate achievements under the auspices of the *Discovering Democracy* program, such as national awards for outstanding civic educators;
 - small scale research into best practice in teaching *Discovering Democracy* and what makes a difference to student learning;
 - sharing of school based approaches and material to disseminate best practice through publication of information in both hard copy and through the website.

Education activities to support national priorities in government policy

It is recommended that the CEG identify ways to:

- ◆ co-ordinate activities with the National Council for the Centenary of Federation celebrations;
- ◆ acknowledge and integrate in future *Discovering Democracy* activities the Government supported recommendations of the recently released document *A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia* (December, 1999);
- ◆ integrate future activities in *Discovering Democracy* with the Government's initiatives in literacy. Civic literacy is an important component of a comprehensive literacy program for schools.

Appendix 1

Membership of the Evaluation Advisory Committee

Ms Mary Johnston (Chair)
Assistant Secretary, Quality Schooling Branch
Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra

Mr William Thorn
Assistant Secretary, Research and Evaluation Branch
Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra

Mr Noel Simpson
Director, Languages and Civics Education Section
Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra

Dr John Hirst,
History Department, LaTrobe University
Chair, Civics Education Group

Dr Kevin Donnelly
Director, Impetus Consultants

Ms Susan Dennett
Manager, Curriculum Development
Victorian Department of Education

Mr Brian Huppatz
Senior Advisor
Catholic Education Office, Adelaide

Dr Murray Print
Faculty of Education, University of Sydney

Ms Debbie Heck
Chair, Australian Federation of Societies for the Study of Society and the
Environment, Griffith University

Mr Tony Brown
Executive Director,
Adult Learning Australia

Appendix 2

The Questionnaire

Discovering Democracy: National Civics and Citizenship Education Questionnaire

Please return this questionnaire in the reply-paid envelope to Dale Kreibig, Reply Paid 1042, Civics Centre, Faculty of Education (A35), University of Sydney, 2006. Your responses are not identifiable as the results are collected as a group. We will report our findings to the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs as part of evaluating the Discovering Democracy program.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Where is your school located? (Please tick one box on each line)

1. ACT NSW NT Qld SA Tas Vic WA
2. Capital city City Town Other
3. What school level do you mostly teach? (please tick one box)
 Middle Primary Upper Primary Lower Secondary Middle Secondary
4. Education Sector (please tick one) Government Independent Catholic

TEACHER EDUCATION BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5. Number of years of teaching experience (please tick one box)
 Less than 5 years 6-10 years 11-20 years More than 20 years
6. Have you undertaken professional development activities or courses in Discovering Democracy in 1999?
 Yes (please answer the next question) No (please go to question 8)
7. How useful were the Discovering Democracy activities and courses you completed in 1999? (please circle one number for each type of course you completed in 1999)

Not Useful	Useful	Extremely Useful
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1	2	3
1	2	3
1	2	3
1	2	3
1	2	3
1	2	3
1	2	3

Professional Development Courses run by:

- your state/territory Discovering Democracy committee
- subject association/s
- your school
- your school system
- a university

Postgraduate Teacher Education Courses

Other (please specify):

TEACHING CIVICS & CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

8. Have you taught or will you teach civics and citizenship during 1999?

- Yes No

9. Is your school planning to teach civics and citizenship during 2000?

- Yes No

10. Within which area of study do you teach civics and citizenship mostly? (please tick one box)

PRIMARY

- Studies of Society and Environment
 Human Society and Its Environment
 Society and Environment
 Other (please specify):

SECONDARY

- Social Studies/Studies of Society & Environment
 Society and Environment
 Australian Studies
 Commerce/Economics
 Other (please specify):
- Legal Studies
 History
 Citizenship Education
 Geography

I do not teach civics & citizenship

I do not teach civics & citizenship

11. Averaged over this year, how much time per class do you spend teaching civics and citizenship education? (please tick one box)

- None Up to 1 hour/week 1-2 hours/week More than 2 hours/week

12. Civics and citizenship is taught in your school as (please tick all that apply):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A separate unit of study | <input type="checkbox"/> Embedded learning in two or more subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A unit of work within one subject | <input type="checkbox"/> An across the whole curriculum approach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A unit of work within two or more subjects | <input type="checkbox"/> Whole school activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Embedded learning within one subject | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra-curricula activities |

USING DISCOVERING DEMOCRACY SCHOOL MATERIALS

13. How do you rate your awareness of the Discovering Democracy program? (please tick one)

- Not Aware A Little Aware Moderately Aware Highly Aware

14. How do you rate the awareness of fellow teachers in your school of the Discovering Democracy program? (please tick one)

- Not Aware A Little Aware Moderately Aware Highly Aware

How do you describe your level of experience using Discovering Democracy? (please tick one)

- No experience Very Inexperienced Inexperienced Experienced Very Experienced

16. Which parts of the Discovering Democracy materials have you seen and/or used? (please circle one number on every line)

Not seen	Seen	Used	
1	2	3	Teacher reference book – A Guide to Government & Law in Australia
1	2	3	CD-ROMs
1	2	3	Teacher Guides – Using the Primary/Secondary Kit
1	2	3	Video
1	2	3	Books of units of work for primary/secondary
1	2	3	Posters and cards
1	2	3	Discovering Democracy Website (Curriculum Corporation)

If you have not taught Discovering Democracy in the past, are not teaching it now, and are not expecting to teach it next year, then please go to question 30.

1

17. On average over a school term, how frequently do you use each Discovering Democracy component in teaching civics and citizenship? (please circle one number on every line)

Never	Once a Term	More than Once a Term	Once a Week	More Than Once a Week	Daily	
1	2	3	4	5	6	Reference book
1	2	3	4	5	6	CD-ROMs
1	2	3	4	5	6	Teacher Guides
1	2	3	4	5	6	Video
1	2	3	4	5	6	Units of work
1	2	3	4	5	6	Posters and cards
1	2	3	4	5	6	Website

18. How much of each Discovering Democracy component do you use in teaching civics and citizenship? (please circle one number on every line)

Nothing	About One-third	About One-half	About Two-thirds	All	
1	2	3	4	5	Reference book
1	2	3	4	5	CD-ROMs
1	2	3	4	5	Teacher Guides
1	2	3	4	5	Video
1	2	3	4	5	Units of work
1	2	3	4	5	Posters and cards
1	2	3	4	5	Website

19. In what ways have you used Discovering Democracy components to teach civics and citizenship education? (please circle all that apply)

Never Used	Teacher Information Source	Stimulate Class Discussion	Problem Solving Exercises	Supplement Teacher Talk	Simulation Role-plays	Other Ways	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Reference book
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	CD-ROMs
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Teacher Guide
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Video
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Units of work
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Posters & cards
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Website

20. Considering the curriculum framework/syllabus you use for teaching civics and citizenship, how relevant are the knowledge, skills and values in the Discovering Democracy package as a whole? (please circle one number on each line)

Not relevant	Slightly Relevant	Relevant	Highly Relevant	Extremely Relevant	
1	2	3	4	5	Knowledge
1	2	3	4	5	Skills
1	2	3	4	5	Values

21. What areas of your civics and citizenship teaching are NOT covered by the Discovering Democracy materials? (please write your answer in the space below)

22. The Teacher Guides list student aims and goals. To what degree do the Discovering Democracy curriculum materials contribute to achieving them? (please circle one number on each line)

Nothing	A Little	Moderate Amount	A Lot	
1	2	3	4	gain knowledge and understanding of Australia's system of government and law
1	2	3	4	understand the diverse make up of the Australian Nation
1	2	3	4	understand how participation and decision-making operate in contemporary Australia
1	2	3	4	understand citizens' rights and responsibilities, and the opportunities for exercising them
1	2	3	4	develop skills for participation as informed, reflective and active citizens (e.g., mutual respect, empathy, and critical thought)

23. How do you rate the usefulness of the Discovering Democracy components to your civics and citizenship teaching? (please circle one number on each line)

Never Used	Not Useful	Slightly Useful	Useful	Very Useful	Extremely Useful	
1	2	3	4	5	6	Reference book
1	2	3	4	5	6	CD-ROMs
1	2	3	4	5	6	Teacher Guides
1	2	3	4	5	6	Video
1	2	3	4	5	6	Units of work
1	2	3	4	5	6	Posters and cards
1	2	3	4	5	6	Website

24. Overall, how appropriate are Discovering Democracy units of work to your curriculum in civics and citizenship education? (please circle one number for each relevant unit of work)

Never Used	Highly Inappropriate	Inappropriate	Appropriate	Highly Appropriate	
1	2	3	4	5	MIDDLE
1	2	3	4	5	PRIMARY
1	2	3	4	5	Stories of People and Rulers
1	2	3	4	5	Rulers and Laws We Remember
1	2	3	4	5	Joining In
1	2	3	4	5	UPPER PRIMARY
1	2	3	4	5	Parliament vs. Monarch
1	2	3	4	5	The Law Rules
1	2	3	4	5	People Make a Nation
1	2	3	4	5	People Power
1	2	3	4	5	LOWER
1	2	3	4	5	SECONDARY
1	2	3	4	5	Should the People Rule?
1	2	3	4	5	Law
1	2	3	4	5	Democratic Struggles
1	2	3	4	5	Men & Women in Political Life
1	2	3	4	5	MIDDLE
1	2	3	4	5	SECONDARY
1	2	3	4	5	Parties Control Parliament
1	2	3	4	5	A Democracy Destroyed
1	2	3	4	5	Human Rights
1	2	3	4	5	Making a Nation
1	2	3	4	5	What Sort of Nation
1	2	3	4	5	Getting Things Done

25. To what degree have any of the following issues impacted negatively on the implementation of the Discovering Democracy program in your school? (please circle one number on each line)

Not at All	A Little	Quite a Lot	A Lot	
1	2	3	4	Timing of delivery of kits
1	2	3	4	The number of kits per school
1	2	3	4	Access to the kits
1	2	3	4	Quality of the materials
1	2	3	4	Cost of additional materials
1	2	3	4	Level of difficulty for students
1	2	3	4	Integrating it into the existing curriculum
1	2	3	4	Adequacy of student centred strategies in the materials
1	2	3	4	Ideas for assessment
1	2	3	4	Opportunities for professional development
1	2	3	4	Access to computers with CDROM
1	2	3	4	Access to the internet
1	2	3	4	Competing school priorities
1	2	3	4	Other (please specify below):

26. How often do you use the following teaching strategies suggested in the Discovering Democracy materials? (please circle one number on each line)

Never	Rarely	Infrequently	Frequently	Very Frequently	
1	2	3	4	5	Focused and collaborative inquiry
1	2	3	4	5	Direct teaching
1	2	3	4	5	Use of historical narrative
1	2	3	4	5	Analysis of primary and secondary sources
1	2	3	4	5	Building on existing knowledge, skills, values and interests
1	2	3	4	5	Group work
1	2	3	4	5	Research using technology
1	2	3	4	5	Using evidence to support a point of view
1	2	3	4	5	Presentation of different perspectives
1	2	3	4	5	Analysis of a variety of media and genres
1	2	3	4	5	Active citizenship within & beyond the school

27. When you teach civics and citizenship using the Discovering Democracy materials, how frequently do you use these types of assessment? (please circle one number on each line)

Never	Rarely	Infrequently	Frequently	Very Frequently	
1	2	3	4	5	Written tests
1	2	3	4	5	Exams
1	2	3	4	5	Essays
1	2	3	4	5	Oral assessments
1	2	3	4	5	Peer assessment
1	2	3	4	5	Projects
1	2	3	4	5	Short answer questions
1	2	3	4	5	Participation/classroom observation
1	2	3	4	5	Class notes/workbook
1	2	3	4	5	Portfolios
1	2	3	4	5	Performance (e.g., a play)
1	2	3	4	5	Community activities
1	2	3	4	5	Other (please specify):

28. How do you rate your overall level of (a) teaching skills and (b) content understanding for teaching Discovering Democracy? (please circle one number on each line)

	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	
	1	2	3	4	5	Teaching skills
	1	2	3	4	5	Content understanding

29. OTHER COMMENTS Please write here any other comments you would like to make.

Please check carefully that all questions are answered.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION

Appendix 3

Stakeholder Interview Questions

For all interviews

1. What do you see as the major aims of the *Discovering Democracy* program?
2. What has been your role in relation to this initiative?
3. What do you see as your likely role in the *Discovering Democracy* program (a) up to June 2000 (b) after June 2000?
4. What have been the major outcomes of this involvement?
5. How have you influenced the implementation of *Discovering Democracy*?
6. What factors do you believe have facilitated the implementation of *Discovering Democracy*?
7. What factors have hindered the implementation of *Discovering Democracy*?
8. What challenges do you believe lie ahead for the program?
9. What is your view about extending the program to Years 11 and 12? What would need to be addressed if this were to be carried out?
10. What lessons can be learned from the way that this program has been rolled out?

For professional development providers

1. What professional development initiatives have you been associated with in regard to the *Discovering Democracy* program?
2. How effective do you think these activities have been in assisting teachers to implement *Discovering Democracy*? Can you give some specific examples of success?
3. How do you measure your success?
4. What further plans for professional development initiatives do you have in regard to the *Discovering Democracy* program?
5. How adequate, in your opinion, has the budget/resources for professional development been in regard to *Discovering Democracy*?
6. What cross-sectoral involvement has there been in relation to professional development for *Discovering Democracy*?
7. What kinds of systemic support have you received to implement professional development for *Discovering Democracy*?
8. How has the *Discovering Democracy* program been marketed to your constituency?

For Principal Groups

What level of support has been offered to you in implementing *Discovering Democracy*?

What do you believe has been the impact on teachers of the *Discovering Democracy* program?

What do you believe has been the impact on students of the *Discovering Democracy* program?

DETYA has initiated an annual sample study of student knowledge of Civics. What do you think will be the consequence of this for the way in which schools use the *Discovering Democracy* kit?

For Parent Groups

1. What has been your level of involvement in the development and implementation of *Discovering Democracy*?
2. Has this level of involvement been adequate in your opinion?
3. What do you see as the major achievements of *Discovering Democracy* program?
4. To what extent do you believe schools have embraced the spirit of *Discovering Democracy*? What evidence do you have of this?
5. How do parents perceive they can assist in the implementation of *Discovering Democracy*? Has there been an opportunity for parents to do this?
6. Do you have any views on the appropriateness of the content of *Discovering Democracy* for students?

For Consultants/Curriculum Advisors

1. How does *Discovering Democracy* relate to your state based curriculum/syllabus?
2. What support has your system provided to teachers/schools in relation to *Discovering Democracy*?
3. What further assistance do you believe schools/teachers need?
4. What does your system plan to do in future to support schools implement *Discovering Democracy*?
5. From your experience, how would you rate the current level of implementation of *Discovering Democracy* by schools in your system?
6. What measures of success for the implementation of *Discovering Democracy* do you have in your system?
7. What networks (interstate/DETYA) have been established to assist you implement *Discovering Democracy*? How effective have these been?
8. What level of support have you been given by DETYA/Curriculum Corporation to implement *Discovering Democracy*?
9. Have you a state level plan for introducing *Discovering Democracy* to schools?

DISCOVERING DEMOCRACY PROGRAM EVALUATION

10. What has been your role in relation to professional development for *Discovering Democracy*?
11. What involvement have you had with other stakeholder groups in *Discovering Democracy*?
12. How is your budget for *Discovering Democracy* distributed?
13. Have you developed any other curriculum support materials for *Discovering Democracy* other than the kits?
14. How have you facilitated integration of *Discovering Democracy* with existing related curriculum documents?

Appendix 4

Stakeholder Interviewees

State	Interviewee	Title and Address
NT	Denise Wilkowski	Director Curriculum Services Northern Territory Department of Education GPO Box 4821 Darwin NT 0.0801
NSW	John Gore	CEO HSIE Curriculum Support Directorate NSW Department of Education and Training 3a Smalls Road Ryde NSW 2112
	Peter Miller	Senior Curriculum Adviser Civics and Citizenship NSW Department of Education and Training 3a Smalls Road Ryde NSW 2112
	Josephine Lonergan	Executive Director Australian Parents Council National Secretariat PO Box 1894 North Sydney NSW 2059
Tas	Lesley French	Principal Curriculum Officer SOSE Teacher and School Education Branch Tasmanian Department of Education, Community and Cultural Development GPO Box 169B Hobart Tas 7001
	Nigel Brown	<i>Discovering Democracy</i> Project Officer Teacher and School Education Branch Tasmanian Department of Education, Community and Cultural Development GPO Box 919

State	Interviewee	Title and Address
Vic	Susan Pascoe	Civics Education Group Coordinating Chairperson Catholic Education Office PO Box 3 East Melbourne Vic 3002
	Kevin Donnelly	Director Impetus Consultants Pty Ltd Level 7 412 Collins Street Melbourne Vic 3000
	Susan Dennett	Manager Curriculum Development School Programs Division Victorian Department of Education 33 St Andrew Place East Melbourne Vic 3002
	Dr John Andrews	Senior Project Officer Curriculum Development Victorian Department of Education Rialto Tower GPO Box 4367 Melbourne Vic 3001
	Prof Stuart Macintyre	Civics Education Group History Department Third Floor John Medley Building University of Melbourne Melbourne Vic 3000
Vic	Tony MacKay	National Council of Independent Schools Associations 82 Jollimont Centre Jollimont Vic 3002
	Janet Baker	Manager Academic Programs Open Learning Australia 30 Collins Street Melbourne Vic 3000
	Marian Schoen	Executive Director Constitutional Centenary Foundation Level 2, 723 Swanston Street Carlton Vic 3053
WA	Glenn Bennett	Learning Area Supervisor SOSE Education Department of Western Australia 151 Royal Street Perth WA 6004

State	Interviewee	Title and Address
	Geraldine Ditchburn	Program Coordinator WA “ <i>Discovering Democracy</i> ” Professional Development Project Education Department of Western Australia 61 Dyson Street Kensington WA 6151
SA	Frank Mittiga	Curriculum Superintendent SA Department for Education and Children’s Services 31 Flinders Lane Adelaide SA 5000
	David Butler	Curriculum Officer Studies of Society and the Environment SA Department for Education and Children’s Services 31 Flinders Lane Adelaide SA 5000
	Leanne Carr	Project Officer Studies of Society and the Environment SA Department for Education and Children’s Services 31 Flinders Lane Adelaide SA 5000
	Mary Hudson	Project Officer Studies of Society and the Environment SA Department for Education and Children’s Services 31 Flinders Lane Adelaide SA 5000
	Andrew Buxton	President History Teachers’ Association of Australia PO Box 268 Fullarton SA 5063
Qld	Murray Campbell	Senior Project Officer <i>Discovering Democracy</i> Professional Development Centre for Teaching Excellence Education Queensland Floor 20 Education House 30 Mary Street Brisbane Qld 4001

State	Interviewee	Title and Address
	Leonie Shaw	Acting Director Centre for Teaching Excellence Education Queensland Floor 20 Education House 30 Mary Street Brisbane Qld 4001
	Jo Diesel	Director Teaching and Learning Branch Centre for Teaching Excellence Education Queensland Floor 19 Education House 30 Mary Street Brisbane Qld 4001
	Debbie Heck	Chair Australian Federation of Societies for the Study of Society and the Environment Faculty of Environmental Sciences Griffith University Nathan Qld 4111
	Peter Bond	Graduate School of Education The University of Queensland Brisbane Qld 4072
NSW	Mr Lindsay Wasson	Director , Curriculum Department of Education and Training Smalls Rd Ryde NSW 2000
ACT	Bob Nield	Manager Curriculum Initiatives Section ACT Department of Education and Community Services Manning Clark House 186 Reed Street Tuggeranong ACT 2901
	Lillian Chapman	Project Officer Curriculum Initiatives Section ACT Department of Education and Community Services Manning Clark House 186 Reed Street Tuggeranong ACT 2901
	Ms Lindsay Ferguson	Executive Officer Australian Council of State School Organisations C/- Hughes Primary School Kent Street Hughes ACT 2605

State	Interviewee	Title and Address
	Tony Brown	Executive Director Adult Learning Australia PO Box 308 Jamison Centre ACT 2614
	Meg Bishop	Real Options 67 Bonython Street Downer ACT 2602
	James Barr	Centenary of Federation Canberra Secretariat Department of Communication and the Arts Old Parliament House George Terrace Parkes ACT 2600
	Rodney Inder	Assistant Secretary Citizenship and Language Services Branch Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs Benjamin Offices Chan Street Belconnen ACT 2617
	Phil Rabl	Director Policy Development Section Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs Benjamin Offices Chan Street Belconnen ACT 2617
	Paul Anderson	Director Australian Electoral Commission West Block Kingston ACT 2604
	Brenton Holmes	Director Commonwealth Parliamentary Education Office SG119 Parliament house Canberra ACT 2600
	Wendy Michaels	Senior Policy Officer Australian Local Government Association 8 Geils Court Deakin ACT 2600
NSW	Dr Murray Print	Director Centre for Research and Teaching in Civics Faculty of Education A35 University of Sydney NSW 2006

State	Interviewee	Title and Address
	Terry Hand	Educational Testing Centre Level 2 Squarehouse High Street Gate 2 University of New South Wales Kensington NSW 2052
Vic	Dr John Hirst	Chair Civics Education Group History Department LaTrobe University Bundoora Vic 3083
	Gabrielle England	Project Officer Professional and Leadership Development Centre Victorian Department of Education Ground Floor, 2 Treasury Place East Melbourne Vic 3002
	Sue Ferguson	Curriculum Corporation Casselden Place Level 5 2 Lonsdale Street Melbourne Vic 3000
	Kate Dishon	Project Office Catholic Education Office James Goold House 228 Victoria Parade East Melbourne Vic 3002
ACT	Prof Kerry Kennedy	President Australian Curriculum Studies Association PO Box 331 Deakin West ACT 2600
	Joan Warhurst	Executive Officer Australian Curriculum Studies Association PO Box 331 Deakin West ACT 2600
SA	Mark Blencowe	Curriculum Coordinator SA Department of Education, Training and Employment Flinders St Adelaide
	Mr Brian Huppertz	Senior Advisor Catholic Education Offices 116 George street Thebarton SA 5031

Appendix 5

Case Study Discussion Questions

Teacher Awareness and Access

The level of awareness of teachers and school planners about the *Discovering Democracy* program, its intentions, content and support materials.

The nature of response of the teachers and curriculum planners to the *Discovering Democracy* program.

How teachers found out about the *Discovering Democracy* program, when material (especially the kits) arrived in the school and their reaction to it in the immediate and longer term.

The levels of access teachers have to the *Discovering Democracy* kit and other resources.

Teacher Support

The availability of professional development for the *Discovering Democracy* program, how well it was (or will be) accessed and what the response to it was in terms of supporting understanding and implementation.

The range of resources or support used or accessed by (or available to) the school in implementing the *Discovering Democracy* program, including the kits supplied by the Curriculum Corporation and other materials.

Organisational Features

The factors that are seen (or anticipated) as facilitators of the *Discovering Democracy* program in the school and the level of support they each provide.

The constraints and problems faced (or anticipated) at the school in planning for and/or implementing the *Discovering Democracy* program.

What the school is doing to implement the *Discovering Democracy* program in terms of incorporation into

- *curriculum areas/themes etc, level of integration,*
- *number of and time devoted to units of work or other relevant activities,*
- *production and use of resources*
- *learning and teaching strategies*
- *or any other organisational features.*

Principal, teachers and curriculum coordinator judgement about how well the *Discovering Democracy* program is being implemented in the school.

Student Learning Outcomes

The types of assessment being used (or planned) to determine student learning progress in *Discovering Democracy*.

The types of learning outcomes that have been discerned (or anticipated) by the teachers, principal and curriculum coordinator which have been attributed to the *Discovering Democracy* program.

The level of engagement of students with the *Discovering Democracy* program to date.

Now and The Future

Any provision of elements of the *Discovering Democracy* program beyond Year 10 or any intentions to do so, including any thoughts about the necessity or viability of extension to Years 11 and 12.

The greatest perceived strengths of the *Discovering Democracy* program in the school, and in general.

The greatest perceived weaknesses of the *Discovering Democracy* program in the school, and in general.

Where the *Discovering Democracy* program in the school is predicted to be by June 2000.

What other support would help in the implementation of the *Discovering Democracy* program in the school

Appendix 6

Case Study Schools

STATE SCHOOL	
ACT	Farrer Primary School Holt Primary School St Thomas the Apostle Torrens Primary School Charles Condor Public School Melba High School Alfred Deakin High School Mackillop Catholic College
NSW	North Sydney Boys High School St Joachim's Public School Castle Hill High School Fairfield West Public School Pennant Hills Public School Kincoppal Rose Bay Junior School East Hills Girls Technology High School Erskine Park High School Mt Annan Christian College Centaur Public School Faulconbridge Public School Kelso High School
NT	Palmerston High School Katherine High School Gillen Primary School
Qld	Rainworth State School Bray Park State School Eagleby State School Helensvale State School Cleveland District State High School Centenary Senior High School A B Paterson College St Rita's College All Hallows' School
SA	St Peter's Collegiate Girls' School Norwood Morialta Middle School Valley View Secondary School Lucindale Area School St Anthony's Catholic Primary School Mulga Street Primary School Mt Gambia East Primary School North Haven Primary School West Lakes Shore Primary School
SA	Faith Lutheran Secondary School Nuriootpa High School Maitland Area School Black Forest Primary School Pembroke School
Tas	Table Cape Primary School Arthur Support School Rose Bay High School

	Rokeby Primary School
Vic	Leopold Public School
	Belmont High School
	Newcomb Secondary College
	Sacred Heart Public School
	Glenferrie Public School
	Rivergum Public School
	Mill Park Secondary College
	St John Vianneys Public School
	Martin Christie College
WA	Albany Senior High School
	Melville Public School
	All Saints' College
	Morley Senior College
	Kensington Public School
	Servite College

Appendix 7

Curriculum Managers – Boards of Studies consulted in regard to the extension of the program to Years 11/12

Mr Rob Randell - NSW

Ms Jen Smith - ACT

Ms Wendy Gilson - Tas

Mrs Norma Jeffrey/Mr Rees Barrett - WA

Mr Antonio Mercurio - SA

Dr Bob Dudley - QLD

Mr John Firth – Victoria

*Note: the officer in the Northern Territory was not contacted as the Territory follows the SA senior school curriculum.

Appendix 8

Annotated Bibliography

1. Ministerial Council on Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (1999): Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty First Century.
 - *relates directly to the aims and scope of the Discovering Democracy program*
 - *relates especially to National Goal 1.4.*
2. Australian Parents Council Publication: Discovering Democracy - A Program of Civics and Citizenship Education in Schools
 - *a very useful overview of the essence of Discovering Democracy, including a brief description of the various units in the kit*
 - *also includes parents' attitudes towards Civics and Citizenship education (generally very positive) and their expectations for their children.*
3. National Multicultural Advisory Council (1999): Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness.
 - *published in 1999 by the National Multicultural Advisory Council, this Executive Summary provides a strong case for the future of Australia having a strong multicultural basis*
 - *of particular import is the section on p.8 re "Multiculturalism and Concepts of Citizenship".*
4. Commonwealth Government (1999): A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia
 - *Commonwealth Government response to the above National Multicultural Advisory Council report.*
 - *supports appropriate emphasis on the meaning of multiculturalism and links to Centenary of Federation activities in any future Discovering Democracy program*
5. Educational Testing Centre, UNSW (1999) Civics Yr 6, Civics Yr 10 Student Baseline Sample Survey
 - *containing 33 and 44 questions respectively, these tests are essentially concept understanding and knowledge recall although some attention is given to skill development and values appreciation*
 - *conceptual language component is quite sophisticated for both tests.*
6. Australian Citizenship Council (1999). Contemporary Australian Citizenship.
 - *published in 1999 by the Australian Citizenship Council, the paper focuses on matters of Australian citizenship of a general nature.*
7. Curriculum Corporation: Discovering Democracy Flyer
 - *Marketing brochure outlining the contents of the primary and secondary Discovering Democracy kits.*

8. DETYA Discovering Democracy Brochure
 - *key contacts resources and stakeholders prepared a small colourful brochure*
 - *provides information and website addresses of funded activities.*
9. Discovering Democracy Program Summary
 - *prepared by Noel Simpson (Director, Languages and Civics Education Section, DETYA), this one page sheet provides a brief overview of the nature of Discovering Democracy, its purpose, background and education sectors involved*
 - *also provides valuable information on budget expenditure for the various activities in schools (Materials \$10.6m, Teacher PD \$4.6m, National activities \$2m).*
10. Evaluation of Discovering Democracy School Materials Project
 - *published by the Curriculum Corporation in February 1999 as a mid term evaluation, its purpose was to assess the processes and products of the project so far and to anticipate further activity*
 - *generally a very positive result. Thematic organisation and historical approach met with approval*
 - *kit format and learning approaches well received.*
11. Discovering Democracy: Ministerial Statement by the Hon David Kemp MP, then Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training
 - *published in 1997, this document provides the background and framework for the Discovering Democracy initiative*
 - *major headings include the purposes of civics and citizenship education, the background of civics and citizenship education, the nature of support provided and the role of schools*
 - *media release also provided.*
12. Discovering Democracy: Schools Material Project, 1997
 - *published by Curriculum Corporation, this book provides a good overview of the Discovering Democracy program and the supportive role to be played by civics and citizenship education in the provision of related curriculum materials*
 - *timelines are provided re expected delivery dates of material in schools*
 - *Section 3 focuses directly on relationships with existing curriculum documents at state level*
 - *the last section of the book provides sample unit outlines at both primary and secondary levels.*
13. *Whereas the People.....*
 - *this document was published both as a Report and an Executive Summary in 1994 by the Civics Expert Group to Prime Minister Keating and constituted the platform from which the case for Discovering Democracy was launched*
 - *it traces the nature of citizenship, the case for school participation and the principles upon which the initiative should be implemented during the compulsory years of schooling (see p8-13 of the Exec Summary)*

- p14-15 highlight some issues about civics and citizenship education in the post compulsory years.
14. National Youth Roundtable: *Civics and Citizenship Education - Education for Involvement*
 - draft paper developed by National Youth Roundtable provides a strong case for including the four focus areas of the National Perspectives Working Group: National Identity, Youth in Governance, Reconciliation, the Republic and Constitutional Reform
 - subsequent document provides an executive summary and a set of recommendations
 15. Letter from National Catholic Education Commission
 16. Submission from Mr A. Mills
 17. Submission from Rev Gregor. Henderson, General Secretary, National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia

The Uniting Church's interest in *Discovering Democracy* dates from 1995. In 1996 thousands of church members signed a petition which asked for recognition in the Civics and Citizenship curriculum material of the contribution to the development of Australia and Australia's democratic institutions by people of religious conviction. The church was disappointed in the response of the Government at that time, and continues to be disappointed at what it regards as significant omissions and errors in the curriculum material.

By way of summary, the Uniting Church makes two requests:

- ◆ that the role of religious influences in movements towards democracy and democratic institutions, and in leading individuals, be far more recognised in the *Discovering Democracy* materials, either through the printing of errata pages and/or through a second edition of the *Discovering Democracy* materials,
 - ◆ that a section or unit be developed and included in *Discovering Democracy*, which specifically addresses the role of organised religion in Australian society and the role of religious faith in the lives of prominent Australian leaders throughout Australian history.
18. Submission from Dr Grant Maple (Anglican Church in Australia).
 - The Anglican church submission recommends essentially the same points as those above.

Endnotes

- 1 Cited in the National Report on Schooling in Australia, 1997, paragraph 1.5
- 2 Executive Summary of Whereas the People, 1994, page 5, citing an ANOP research survey
- 3 Executive Summary of Whereas the People, 1994, page 2
- 4 Executive Summary of Whereas the People, 1994, page 13
- 5 *Discovering Democracy*, a Ministerial Statement by The Hon Dr David Kemp MP, 1997 page 4
- 6 *Discovering Democracy*, a Ministerial Statement by The Hon Dr David Kemp MP, 1997 page 7
- 7 Minutes of the June 1997 meeting of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA)
- 8 Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century, 1999, paragraph 1.4