



New South Wales Secondary Deputy Principals Association

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Fellowship Application

Name of Applicant: JENNIFER ANNE PARRETT

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Demonstrated commitment to public education:

I have undertaken the "reverse drift" by leaving the private system to work for public education in my career. The effect on my professional growth as a teacher and educational leader is something I value passionately. I am therefore committed to making a significant contribution to the values of public education. I have:

* **As Deputy Principal at James Fallon HS 2008-9**, I have led the Northern Spirit Learning Community in transition. I have developed an excellent working relationship with the principals of each school within the learning community, which has included improvements for our students and their families.

* **As Deputy Principal at James Fallon HS 2008-9**, I have demonstrated a commitment to leading the school during a time of succession. I feel privileged to serve this school as leader in the roles of Curriculum development, Aboriginal and Equity programs, Professional Learning, at a time when many changes to staff are occurring. My work includes developing the next School Plan through consultation with the whole school community, leading the development of a culture of professional learning through staff led initiatives, creating a senior decision making program that has enhanced and informed choice making for students in their senior years, and creating a stronger middle school for our younger students.

* **As 2009 office bearer (Secretary) of the Riverina Deputy Principal's Association**, I mentor and support other Deputy Principals in their work at their schools. I have been an integral part of the planning of local professional learning activities for the last three years.

* **I have demonstrated principled leadership in my roles as Deputy Principal, Head Teacher and Teacher** in schools throughout the Riverina. I am known as a leader in my subject area (History) to the point where I was invited to be the DET rural representative on a Board Consultation Committee for the Ancient History syllabus in 2004, and was a NSW Premier's Scholar in 2005.

* **As a leader of Public Education**, my actions are accountable to the NSW public, of which I believe there is no higher accountability. I therefore lead in NSW schools in a positive and proactive manner in all I do. I engender a high standard of integrity in all public and private contexts.

Demonstrated understanding of Issues in public education of that impact on the work of Deputy Principals:

The work of Deputy Principals is far reaching and extremely time consuming. In the work of Deputy Principals, a great deal of learning through practical application and in the sharing between others takes place.

It is my intention :

- to provide research that has a practical application to a current issue – that being Year 6 to 7 Transition within a Learning Community – i.e. within the work that is being looked into at present by Deputy Principals.
- to develop and publicise a best practice model on transition that Deputy Principals can take and modify for their own working situation, but can also use without having to start from scratch.

Public Education has the responsibility of inclusivity for all students. My research fellowship is specifically related to the inclusion of all students engaged in primary education. I wish to use the fellowship to analyse the current work our Learning Community is doing to improve the 6 to 7 transition program, use the training that Brian Ralph is providing all teachers in our Learning Community in July, and develop a model for all schools to use as best practice for transition for all students. NSW Public Education has a golden opportunity at present to reaffirm itself as the leader in Australian and International Education, and many members of the Albury

community are looking at James Fallon HS as a leader in its transition programs, and increasingly choosing our school for their children. I want to ensure that its reputation is based on solid practices that include all students and all staff, and create strong traditions in transition within the Northern Spirit Learning Community. This one issue impacts directly on the welfare of all students – as I believe successful transition has a great deal to do with successful retention – and is therefore a critical part of the work of Deputy Principals. The issues of curriculum, student welfare, parent partnerships, equity and professional learning are embedded into my fellowship application.

How results of research will be disseminated:

In the following ways I propose to disseminate the research through the fellowship:

- Locally, through the staff, students and parents within the Northern Spirit Learning Community – our local meetings will comprise of my research and the findings for the future.
- Regionally, through the Riverina DP Association, I will include presentations, with follow up on a sharing session we are engaging in at the next meeting in June. I will also offer any mentoring or sharing of my experiences and research to any interested DPs.
- State-wide, through the Middle Schools Initiative Directorate, and as one of the Riverina DPs, develop workshops for the 2011 NSWDPCC conference, which the Riverina has applied for, titled “Building Bridges on the Border” – with the theme of inclusivity, linkages and connections.

How the research can improve policy and practice to advantage public educations and the work of Deputy Principals:

Transition from 6 to 7 has been improving with each year. Schools have been granted funding to assess and enhance their practices in this area. It is timely to examine a program in action, to assist in effective expenditure in this area, and give Deputy Principals a case study to work from. The Northern Spirit Learning Community is an excellent example for a case study – it is rural, but in an urban area. It comprises 1700 students, from one and two teacher schools, one SIP school, three PSP schools, and one Focus school, to a high school with over 700 students. It has an active wider school community, which chooses to support the school positively, in an area where there are many alternative forms of school education. The research therefore is proposed as useful for the work of Deputy Principals at a time where transition is receiving monetary support to improve programs and initiatives.

The work I wish to research already has some strong activities in place, but I want to research the effectiveness of those activities, and incorporate the best practices within the state. This is so this Learning Community can be used state-wide by Deputy Principals as a model of best practice.

Year 6 to 7 Transition and the creation of Learning Communities are two areas that are being actively encouraged and financially supported by DET. There is funding arriving in high schools to assist with transition, and the creation of Learning Communities is being funded through application. The research I will conduct will provide a model that will create sustainability in programs in Year 6 to 7 Transition within a Learning Community, thus giving Deputy Principals practical, sustainable, working ideas for their own programs.

Outcome /s of research:

The research into this active learning community will provide the best possible practice and a model for schools to follow. The ingredients for study for best practice exist, given that the members of this learning community are proactive, and there is a considered transition plan in place. The outcomes of this for students in this community will be the best possible transition program, and for the state, a working model for teachers and school leaders to observe and adapt to their own learning communities.

Description of the project:

The project will involve a thorough evaluation of the transition program within the Northern Spirit Learning Community. It will involve surveying all stakeholders in the transition process, analysing data from measurable sources, and interviewing the executive from the learning community to examine what works and what does not. This research will take place after the Term 3 Staff Development Day, where all staff members will have the opportunity for self evaluation with Brian Ralph’s workshop tools. It will

also involve some travel to witness models from other learning communities, ostensibly those Brian identifies as proactive – largely in the Hunter region.

Referees:

1.

Name: Anne –Marie Gill School James Fallon HS Phone 0260251688

2.

Name: Anne Nolan School Thurgoona PS Phone **0260401433**

Proposed Budget:

Item/description	cost\$
1. Relief for myself for 2 weeks to collect evaluation data	\$3200
2. Meeting and interview facilities – hospitality, photocopying, recording interviews	\$400
3. Travel to model learning communities	@ \$1400
	Total \$ 5000

Signature:

Date: 17th May, 2009

To Barry Lovegrove
bjlove@zeta.org.au