INTRODUCTION
You might wonder what CAFE and Beacons have to do with Computer Education; these are just two of many strategies the Metropolitan East Region of the NSW Department of School Education has in place for the professional development of teachers.

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
CAFE stands for Computer Applications For Education and is an in-school inservice course offered to Primary schools. The course is run at the participating school using their existing computer hardware and software. The basis of the course is to provide the staff members with the skills and confidence needed to use computers in their own classrooms. The course runs for a 2-hour session one afternoon a week for 5 weeks. Relevant pre-readings are provided and each of the sessions offers a balance of theoretical and practical, 'hands-on' activities.

The sessions are as follows:
• Week 1: Computer Education in Schools and Software for Problem Solving
• Week 2: Adventures Across the Curriculum
• Week 3: Option 1 (see below)
• Week 4: Option 2 (see below)
• Week 5: English K-6 and Computers and What’s New in Computer Education

The choices for the Option Sessions:
• Databases Across the Curriculum
• Simulations in the Classroom
• Drawing and Painting
• Telecommunications Across the Curriculum

In addition to the 5 week course the school receives a relief day and the tutor for a day to provide ‘face-to-face’ support for integration into class programs. The tutor may work with the staff individually; or in small groups on areas of their choice; or conduct demonstration lessons or work with small groups of children to train them as peer tutors. The school also receives 5 vouchers for Beacon School visits. Beacon Schools demonstrate exemplary practice in one or more areas of computer education. (See next section for Beacon Schools.)

The CAFE Tutor running the course is usually a practising classroom teacher who can offer first-hand experiences, units of work, practical teaching strategies and loads of examples of student's work, to show how the various computer education applications have worked in their classrooms. This practical, first-hand advice to date has been very well received.

When the course was first offered late 1993, the response was overwhelming with over 80 primary schools in Metropolitan East Region expressing an interest in participating.

COMPUTER EDUCATION BEACON SCHOOLS
Computer Education Beacon Schools offer teachers in the Metropolitan East Region (NSW) an alternative method of professional development, specifically supporting computer education across the curriculum. Beacon Schools provide visiting teachers the opportunity to observe student-centred learning in non-threatening situations.

Small groups of visiting teachers’ ‘tour’ a range of classrooms, witnessing the teaching strategies employed by the ‘Beacon’ teachers; observing how resources are used and managed in the classroom; and seeing how problems and limitations have been overcome. Afternoon tea is then provided, along with the opportunity to chat with the ‘Beacon’ teachers and ask questions relating to the activities observed and gain knowledge and confidence (or reassurance) to implement these ideas on return to their own school situation. The Beacon Schools provide ‘over the phone’ pre-visit information and substantial printed handouts at the time of the visit. The motto of a ‘Beacon Day’ is, ‘Seeing is believing!’ Here are some quotes from the evaluations of visiting teachers:

• Being able to see children using the computers in relevant situations. Feeling comfortable to ask questions that needed answering personally.
• Range of ideas for use with all computers.
• Observing how to integrate the computers and all the KLAs with group work.
• Seeing software actually being used by children in the classroom. Speaking to other teachers about how they use computers in their rooms.
Our Computer Education Inservice Leaders

Our Computer Education Inservice Leaders (CEILs) offer more specialised inservice courses either at the Region's Computer Education Centre or at a school at the school's request. A CEIL may also conduct School Development Days in exchange for casual relief at their own school. Our Computer Education Consultants and CEILs conduct a large variety of courses that cater to current demands. 'Software to Support Science and Technology' and 'Introduction to the Internet' are just two examples.

Talented Writers and Talented Problem Solvers Camps

Talented Writers and Talented Problem Solvers Camps are another initiative of John Walters, the Leader of (NSW) Metropolitan East Computer Education Unit. The Camps not only provide activities to cater for Gifted and Talented Students, but at the same time, offer professional development to the teachers accompanying the students from each of the schools. Limited numbers are offered to each of the schools in the Region to attend these technology-rich learning environments so that a greater number of schools have the opportunity to participate. Brian Caswell, a well-known author, has attended the last several Talented Writers Camps, providing writers' workshops for the students. Computer Education Consultants and CEILs conduct other workshops in conjunction with the writing session.

These Camps offer students the challenge of working with experts, the latest technology and exemplar software. The accompanying teachers observe each of the sessions and gain valuable ideas and knowledge for use at their own school.

Each of the programs aims to target a different area of Computer Education and various groups of teachers K-12, offering something for the new computer educator through to the more experienced.

Reference


Technology And Teacher Training

DAVID PERRY

Head of Junior School
Hamilton College, Hamilton, Vic.
Joint winner of 1995 ACEC Teacher Educator of the Year Award

INTRODUCTION

With the emphasis being placed on technology within the classroom, the training of teachers is of utmost importance. I have been actively involved in computer education for the past ten years. My initial interest arose through the need to keep ahead of my five students. Following the completion of a Graduate Diploma in Computing, I took on the role of Junior School network manager at Somerset College, in Mudgeeraba on the Gold Coast. Whilst in this role I became involved in QSITE. It has been through QSITE, that I have had the opportunity to continually develop my computing interest and skills.

This year, 1995 has seen the culmination of my involvement in computer education. I have been fortunate enough to receive the QSITE award for Leadership in Computer education as well as being joint recipient of the National award. This year I have also accepted the position of Head of Junior School at Hamilton College, Hamilton, Victoria. This latest move opens up another avenue in the web of technology in schools.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Having an interest in computer education, coupled with the role of network manager and most recently my appointment as Head of Junior School, technology in the classroom and the training of staff is an area of great interest. To some, the introduction of Technology into the curriculum is viewed as a new subject being imposed on schools. However, I hold the view that within Primary schools, technology particularly computing, extends across all areas of the curriculum. Computers must be viewed as a tool, and along with the other elements of technology, used to enhance the learning process.

The key to implementing technology across the curriculum is planning. To most this sounds simple enough, but for many the inclusion of computers and technology into the classroom programme is a daunting task. Integrated and Thematic approaches have been around for many years, however these are possibly the easiest ways of including technology into the curriculum. By choosing a theme, you can start to select appropriate technology-based activities.

An example of this is the perennial 'Sea' theme. Depending on the emphasis taken such a theme is an ideal way of incorporating technology into the curriculum. Within this theme a variety of activities can be carried out ranging from computer based presentations...