

**Year 3 Test and Maths syllabi**Updated: 16 July 2001 Author: John Battams Maintained By: media@qtu.asn.au

Queensland Teachers' Union Newsflash 09-01 ... 16 July 2001

NEWSFLASH

(i) Year 3 Test

(ii) Secondary Maths A, B and C syllabi

(i) Year 3 Test

Background

As members will be aware, the QTU surveyed Year 3 and Year 4 teachers, administrators and any other interested members regarding the question of providing the Year 3 census test to Year 4 students. The survey was conducted because this is the first year that a full census test is to be introduced in Queensland state schools in Year 3. Queensland students are significantly younger than Year 3 students in most other states and have completed one less year of schooling. Inappropriate national comparisons are also made using the results.

Survey results

The survey result indicated that whilst most teachers did not support an early childhood census test there were major concerns about the potential loss of \$23 million in Federal funding. The major issue for the Union is the direct link made by the Federal Government between the test and funding of \$23 million. This funding is contingent on the Year 3 census test being completed.

Negotiations

Due to this concern, the QTU has met with the Minister and the Department of Education on a number of occasions in an attempt to negotiate a compromise regarding the introduction of a Year 3 census test in 2001.

The Minister considered delaying the Year 3 Test until later in the year at the request of the QTU. This has proved too difficult as even an August test date means that delivery of reports would occur as late as November. In response to Union concerns, the Minister wrote to the QTU. Her letter says in part:

"Whilst it is not feasible to change the date of testing, I wish to indicate support for our joint view and to highlight the redundancy of the Year 3 population test results. Therefore, the use of the Year 3 data will be restricted and this data will be treated differently from the Year 5 and 7 data. In particular, when the QSCC sends out results for schools, teachers and parents, Education Queensland will not use the Year 3 test information to compare schools and will not make it available through the Corporate Data Warehouse."

As reported in previous correspondence, June QTU Conference was to make a final decision regarding this issue. The Minister was able to address Conference and answer questions on the issue.

QTU Conference decision

Conference therefore resolved that the completion of the Year 3 Test is necessary to ensure the receipt of \$23 million in funding from the Federal Government and as a consequence the QTU will not stop the implementation of the Test in the year 2001. Conference also called on the Minister for Education to continue to advocate for the Year 3 Test to be sample in nature, and for the test not to be linked to Federal Government funding.

The QTU will continue to advocate this position, including lobbying the Labor Party, should they be elected to Federal Government later this year.

(ii) Maths A, B and C Syllabi

The QTU issued a Newsflash to all secondary schools prior to the June vacation seeking feedback from maths teachers about the implementation of the new Maths A, B and C syllabi.

Union reps and maths teachers are thanked for their prompt responses given the very tight timelines. Approximately two thirds of the state's secondary schools responded to the request with 85% of those supporting the views expressed in the Newsflash and voting yes for a directive to ban further implementation of the Maths A, B and C Syllabi unless the BSSSS agreed to negotiate with the QTU around the areas of concern.

QTU Conference heard a report on the matter and carried the following resolutions:

1. THAT Conference note the Director of BSSSS has agreed to meet to discuss concerns of QTU members.
2. THAT the QTU seek assurances that the Director of the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies will deliver a strong message to schools re interpretation of these syllabus changes as soon as possible provided there is agreement on these negotiated areas.
3. THAT any decision by the Executive to issue a directive to members to ban further implementation of the Maths A, B and C syllabi be deferred until these initial negotiations with the BSSSS have been conducted.

The Board has agreed to meet with QTU representatives and a panel of Maths HODs early next week to discuss these issues. Any developments arising out of these negotiations will be reported to members once details are known.

Authorised by:

John Battams
General Secretary
19 June 2001