



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Education and Training**

Your ref :
Our ref : D09/0416068
Enquiries :

Dr David Worth
Principal Research Officer
Education and Health Standing Committee
Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000



Dear Dr Worth

The Department of Education and Training supports *School Drug Education and Road Aware* (SDERA) as the State Government's primary strategy for support and delivery of school-based drug education in Western Australia. SDERA plays a valuable role in the provision of evidence-based professional development, curriculum support material, and consultancy advice across all education systems and sectors in Western Australia.

The Department is a key agency engaged in the *Whole-of-Government Western Australian Drug and Alcohol Strategy (WADAS) 2005 – 2009*. As chair of the SDERA Board, the Department supports the implementation of the WADAS objectives and SDERA forms an integral part of the Department's Drug and Alcohol Action Plan. In this regard, SDERA has submitted a detailed response to this inquiry.

The Department is committed to supporting teachers in the delivery of knowledge and skills necessary to support students in the achievement of their full potential. All public schools in Western Australia must ensure that students maximise their achievement of outcomes articulated in the *Curriculum Framework*. All students undertake comprehensive Health and Physical Education programs which provide the skills and knowledge required to develop and maintain positive healthy lifestyles.

Health and Physical Education programs aim to develop students' abilities to make informed and responsible decisions about health and well-being for themselves and others; and develop the skills needed to make informed decisions in a range of contexts including drug education. Teachers have a range of resources, including the *K-10 Syllabuses*, to assist them in developing and implementing teaching and learning programs that support students' learning needs. The *K10 Syllabus* offers examples of the content and pedagogy that might be developed, although it is not prescriptive.

Teachers make judgements about the particular content, emphasis and examples chosen at each phase of student development. Their judgment may be influenced by factors such as: the values, attitudes and experiences of their students; the capabilities and ways of learning of their students; and the different cultural and geographical settings in which learning takes place. In this regard the Department is working together with other education systems and sectors to ensure effective coverage and increased uptake of SDERA initiatives with a particular focus on identified target groups.

I commend the Education and Health Committee for undertaking this important piece of work and look forward to the benefits that may be obtained as an outcome of the inquiry.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sharyn O'Neill', written in a cursive style.

SHARYN O'NEILL
DIRECTOR GENERAL

12 AUG 2009