

# 2007 National Excellence In Teaching Awards

## State and Territory Teaching Excellence Award Recipient



## Matthew Dodd

Bachelor of Science, Diploma of Education

The Peninsula School, Victoria

Nominated By: School Council

Position: Physics, General Science, Chemistry, Mathematics, Drama and Pastoral Teacher • Level taught: Secondary School • School type: Independent • Town: Mt Eliza • Category: Secondary • State: VIC

### *Making science a daily application*

Matthew Dodd's enthusiasm and delight in teaching physics has proven to be a catalyst for inspiring genuine interest in science and physics for his students at The Peninsula School. Matthew uses innovative technology and problem-solving techniques to bring an understanding of science and its relevance and application to daily life.

Matthew has also established links between his school and Noojee Primary School, including cross-age tutoring between the students of the two schools. The learning is open-ended and engaging, and mixes technology and traditional techniques.

Matthew's teaching techniques also provide a resource for other physics teachers. He was recently invited to an international conference on data logging in Sacramento USA.

Matthew is now Head of Balcombe Grammar School, a new school in Mt Martha.

### *Insight*

*Q: In your opinion, what makes a good teacher?*

A: An interest in people, the ability to communicate ideas, and the skill to understand the individual and manage them toward their personal best.

*Q: How do you maintain your enthusiasm for teaching?*

A: By looking at new techniques and ideas, learning from and sharing knowledge with dynamic colleagues, and enjoying the inherent enthusiasm of young people.

*Q: In hindsight, what do you wish your training provided you with more of?*

A: I volunteered for a school based Diploma of Education and extended rounds in school followed by relevant theory at Monash University. I felt this was the ideal course.

*Q: What is the most difficult aspect of teaching today?*

A: Matching parents' expectations can be challenging. Early, accurate and regular communication aimed at improving outcomes seems to keep all parties working toward achievable progress.

*Q: What is your greatest challenge as a teacher?*

A: To deliver individual management of students while serving the needs of the group - achievable on a good day, but challenging!

*Q: How has teaching changed over the years?*

A: Families are very busy so the role of teachers as mentors seems even more important. More research tools to measure the effectiveness of teaching practices.

*Q: What is the single most important thing you, as a teacher, can do to connect with individual students?*

A: Spend time with them and listen.

*Q: If you were the Minister for Education, Science and Training for a week, what would you try to change?*

A: I'd look into top class early learning centres and use these to lobby the government, at the time, for greater support for more such facilities.

*Q: What keeps you awake at night?*

A: Perhaps the most challenging but rewarding aspect of my profession is dealing with and helping to manage children in crisis; occasionally their problems are quite distressing.

*Q: If your students could describe you in three words, what would they say?*

A: Humorous, enthusiastic and caring.

#### **Contact Details:**

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