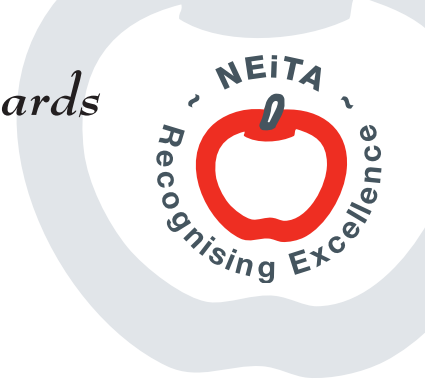


NEiTA 2009 ASG Inspirational Teaching Awards

State and Territory Award Recipient



Jane Hayward

Diploma of Education, Bachelor of Education
Strathewen Primary School, Wattle Glen, Victoria
Nominated by: School Council

Position: Teaching principal • Category: Primary • Level taught: Year 3 - 6 • Years teaching: 16 years • Years at this school: 3 years • School type: Government • Town/Suburb: Wattle Glen • State: Victoria • Postcode: 3096

Why teaching?

I began teaching at 20, with a passion for education. Having the opportunity to foster this passion within students, make a difference and nurture student learning is a privilege.

Seeing students achieve their potential and be the best that they can be is always exciting. Teaching is still my passion.

Fostering hope in a devastated community

It is hard to imagine the feelings of Strathewen residents after the Black Saturday bushfires had swept through their town on 7 February 2009. The bushfires left a trail of death, destruction and heartache. Many homes were destroyed as well as the community hall and Strathewen Primary School. As teaching principal of Strathewen Primary, Jane Hayward had to act quickly and decisively. She knew that it was vital to re-establish a routine for the students quickly. In just a single day, Jane and her colleagues arranged and announced the temporary relocation of their school to Wattle Glen. Just four days after the bushfires, classes were running again at Strathewen Primary's new location.

As a teaching principal, Jane has a busy schedule. She teaches the upper levels within the school, administrates, writes submissions, deals with tenders, and oversees the whole school community. In the aftermath of the bushfires, Jane has taken on many additional responsibilities. In addition to classroom teaching and the leadership aspects of her role, a priority has been to ensure that the welfare needs of students are met, with regular debriefing and sharing of experiences becoming part of the normal school day. She has organised counselling, ensured that aid supplies were distributed to families in need, coordinated volunteers, and dealt with dozens of external bodies, from local councils to government departments.

Jane is committed to the construction of a new Strathewen Primary. She has been heavily involved in the planning and design of the new school and it is largely thanks to her efforts that the new school is scheduled for construction commencing in January 2010.

In the midst of all the turbulence and trauma caused by the bushfires, Jane has helped to position Strathewen Primary as a stable and important place in the lives of its students and their families. She coordinates a Highlights Program that involves excursions, activities and special events on a fortnightly basis so that the students have something to focus on, and look forward to, in the short term. Jane has involved parents and members of the community in activities at the school such as gardening, filmmaking, environmental science, chess, craft and music.

Post bushfire Attitudes to School surveys place the school in the top quartile in the state and reflect a very positive school climate. In a time of great hardship for the local community, Jane has helped establish her school as a beacon of hope for the future.

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