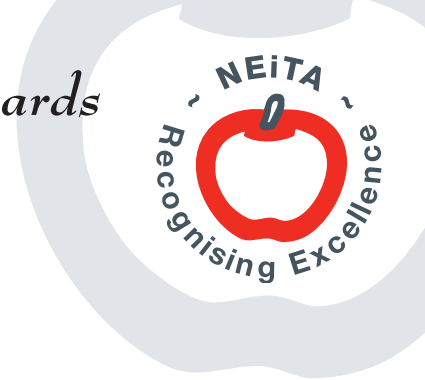


# NEiTA 2009 ASG Inspirational Teaching Awards

## State and Territory Award Recipient



## Jennifer Hansen

Bachelor of Education

**Curramulka Primary School**, Curramulka, South Australia

Nominated by: Governing Council, school parent

*Position: Class teacher • Category: Primary • Level taught: Years 5 - 7 • Years teaching: 37 years • Years at this school: 8 years • School type: Government • Town/Suburb: Curramulka • State: South Australia • Postcode: 5580*

### Why teaching?

As a child I was very shy and lacking in self-esteem. I knew how debilitating this could be and believed through teaching that I might be able to help young people overcome their insecurities and achieve their potential. As a commitment to this, in all of my teaching years, not only have I taught the kids in the schools but I have looked for ways to involve children in extracurricular activities that would empower them with life skills.

What maintains my enthusiasm is seeing kids take on challenges, seeing them step into leadership roles, listening to them talk with pride about their school, community and projects that they have led. Working with young people everyday is a privilege.

### Making a big difference in a small community

Curramulka Primary School is a small rural school situated in the rich barley and wheat producing area of the Southern Yorke Peninsula. The population of the town of Curramulka is only 100, and the enrolments at the primary school usually fluctuate between 45 and 55 students. As upper primary teacher at Curramulka Primary School, Jenny Hansen has developed a classroom culture in which students are encouraged to take risks. Jenny promotes the concept that each child has his or her own unique strengths, and she believes that tapping into these strengths is the best way to engage a young learner.

When Jenny took over as upper primary teacher in 2001, there were very few extra-curricular activities offered at the school. Jenny initiated the school's participation in the South Australian Primary Schools Amateur Sports Association. The Curramulka students are now regular participants in a wide range of sports including volleyball, softball and cross-country running. Teams from the school have been state champions in both volleyball and softball. Jenny devotes much of her personal time to coaching some of the school teams.

Environmental projects are very important to Jenny. She initiated the Parklands Project that involves reclaiming and rehabilitating 15 hectares of woodland scrub. Jenny has worked along with students, teachers, families and volunteers to revitalise the land. Approximately 6000 native trees have been planted over a series of tree planting days, and the area now contains a 1.5 km walking loop complete with interpretive signage. Visitors to the parklands can now learn about endangered species, native vegetation, and Indigenous food and medicine. The school has won two Keep South Australia Beautiful Best Environmental School Awards.

Jenny also organises a significant class camp experience for her students biennially, with her class having very recently returned from a week in Canberra.

Jenny integrates information and communications technology into her rural school. She promotes the history of Curramulka and last year was named State Heritage Teacher of the Year. Jenny is a teacher who makes a big difference to a small school.

#### Contact details:

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