

# NEiTA 2009 ASG Inspirational Teaching Awards

## State and Territory Award Recipient



## Paul Richardson

Diploma of Teaching, Bachelor of Education, Master of School Management,  
Doctorate in Education (current)

**Beaconsfield State School**, Mackay, Queensland

Nominated by: Parents and Citizens' Association

*Position: Principal • Category: Primary • Responsibilities: Teacher leadership, curriculum leadership, school management  
• Years teaching: 33 years • Years at this school: 10.5 years • School type: Government • Town/Suburb: Mackay • State:  
Queensland • Postcode: 4740*

### Why teaching?

I became a teacher because I believed I could offer relevant, creative, innovative, and enjoyable ways for my students to gain self-confidence and self-awareness in order to experience fulfilment through learning.

I am driven by my belief that the skill of a teacher is to recognise potential so to engage, enthuse, and empower each student to gain fulfillment and seek improvement regardless of ability.

As principal, I have expanded my interests in pedagogy to the development and implementation of school-based student focused programs and curriculum. This is exciting and fulfilling, and will continue to challenge me into my future.

### Engaging students and building a sense of community

Paul Richardson has been the principal of Beaconsfield State School since its establishment 10 years ago. Paul has overseen the creation and implementation of the school's Developmentally Appropriate Learning System. Based on ongoing research, this approach places children in developmentally appropriate learning groups rather than the conventional year levels. This enables teachers to tailor curriculum programs to target students of common academic needs, achievements or abilities. Paul believes that this more individually tailored teaching encourages greater student self-esteem and connection with learning. Many children who began their schooling as disinterested and disengaged learners are now thriving under the developmentally appropriate model.

In addition to being principal, Paul is involved in numerous school activities. He runs elective classes, helps produce the school musical, and is the guiding force behind the student-based Footprints Program which looks at positive ways to reduce the school's impact on the environment. Paul also promotes the school's Reef Guardianship ventures, which involve protecting the vegetation, beaches and waterways around Mackay.

Beaconsfield State School also sponsors a Reef HQ Turtle Hospital and has made presentations at the International Youth Coastal Conference. The school won the 2007/2008 Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority National Award.

Paul has also led the introduction of Steiner Education classes to the school. The Beaconsfield Steiner education program commenced in 2006. This is testimony to Paul's commitment to offering choice to parents in a public education setting. The Steiner education program has added a richness to the school culture and diversity to the learning environment.

Since Beaconsfield State School opened, Paul has used his 33 years of teaching experience to guide children, parents and staff on the journey to a better quality education. A measure of his success can be seen in the more than doubling of enrolments, from 220 students in 1999 to 530 in 2009.

#### Contact details:

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