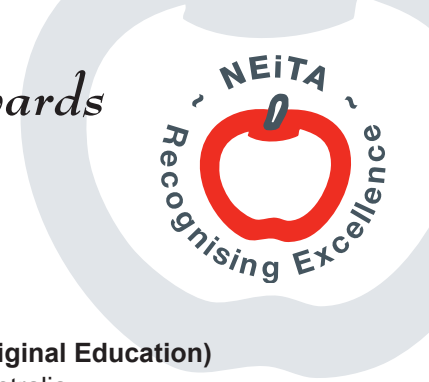


NEiTA 2009 ASG Inspirational Teaching Awards

State and Territory Award Recipient



Steve Dowie

Diploma of Teaching, Bachelor of Education (major in Aboriginal Education)

Dawesville Catholic Primary School, Dawesville, Western Australia

Nominated by: Parents and Friends Committee

Position: Principal • Category: Primary • Years teaching: 34 years • Years at this school: 4.5 years • School type: Catholic • Town/Suburb: Dawesville • State: Western Australia • Postcode: 6211

Why teaching?

I believe that each child is a unique and special individual who needs to be nurtured and encouraged to be a valuable contributor to their community. Watching children have fun from learning and developing is a constant inspiration for me to keep growing as an educator.

To witness my students develop into amazing young adults is a source of great pride, and to have them tap me on the shoulder 10 years later is deeply gratifying. My six year involvement in Aboriginal education in the Kimberley and now my direct involvement in the development of a school on the island of Flores in Indonesia help keep me motivated.

Building not just a new school, but a new community

As founding Principal of Dawesville Catholic Primary School, Steve Dowie has been a visionary leader. He has been the driving force behind the school's growth and success, from an initial 67 students in 2005 studying in portable classrooms, to the current 300 students working in the soon to be completed permanent school buildings. Over 400 students will enjoy the new facilities when completed.

Steve is described as an inspiring, hard working principal who has earned the respect of the whole school community. He knows each of his students by name, where they live, who their friends are, and what sports they love. He models the behaviour that he hopes to engender in his students and is passionate about them learning the values needed to succeed in today's society. Six years spent fostering relationships within Kimberley Aboriginal communities has given Steve a fresh perspective on life and the value of education. In 2011, Steve will spend his long service leave, teaching at Zeu Christian College in Flores, Indonesia.

At Dawesville Catholic Primary School, Steve has helped to foster a culture that encourages and celebrates student achievements. He is constantly implementing new initiatives, with the most recent being the Wicked Writers program that promotes good handwriting, Weekly Wizard to improve Mental Maths recall and the Dawesville Ducks Swim Club of which Steve is the head coach.

Steve has instigated a healthy school policy including a healthy lunchbox initiative, a healthy canteen and the establishment of the school's Garden Centre. The Garden Centre is run by the children and grows fresh vegetables that are used in the canteen and sold to parents. Food scraps are fed to the school's worm farms, while children collect the eggs from the centre's hens. In this manner, Steve promotes ideas about sustainability, recycling and teamwork.

With 34 years of teaching experience, Steve remains an innovative and motivating teacher. Each term, he arranges parent information evenings where the local community can hear from guest speakers about the latest theories on subjects such as bullying, education of boys, cyber bullying, dealing with grief and drug awareness. Steve aims to educate his students with both academic and life skills so that their learning doesn't occur in isolation. He educates the whole person through a focus on values and the development of respect for self, for each other and for the environment, so as to give each child the skills to flourish as a valuable member of society.

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