



Wednesday 10th May 2006

Janet Holmes
Inquiry Secretary
Parliament of Australia
House of Representatives
Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training
Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 6000

Dear Janet

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to your committee additional information about the Knowledge Building Community alternate teacher preparation program that we run at Wollongong.

I have attached

- a) three papers, which describe the program and some research completed so far,
- b) a School-Based Learning Handbook and
- c) a document that describes, in detail, a costing example for the program.

Essentially, the costing of the program varies from the mainstream program in the following ways

- 1) Additional Instruction.
Because of the nature of the 'home room' problem solving and reflective activity, there is a greater face-to-face commitment of academic staff involvement (approx. 25% greater) with the students.
- 2) Relationship With Schools.
In order for the program to work effectively the partnering schools need to have feedback and contribute to the program maintenance. This involves an annual cost for bringing teaching staff from these schools together in discussion forums.
- 3) In School Mentoring.
The school-based mentors need to have time with our students away from their classroom to help the student reflect on their experiences i.e. staff replacement costs. This is a cost not incurred in our mainstream program.

I hope this additional information helps the committee to understand the additional costs involved. We have tried a number of variations on these additional costs, but there is a strong belief in the Faculty that the full program is the most effective in achieving the stated goals.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Harper'.

Barry Harper
Dean, Faculty of Education

Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong- May 2006
Sample of the Knowledge Building Community Project Sessional
Costing

The following is a breakdown of typical costs for a normal year for the Knowledge Building Community (KBC) program. It should be assumed that a cohort of 20-30 students of the KBC program is in operation for each year of the program at any one time (1, 2, 3 & Interns).

Autumn Session

Weeks 1-3 – The Community Establishment / Course Preparation Phase

KBC 1 students undertake 4 six-credit point subjects
 KBC 2 students undertake 4 six-credit point subjects
 Interns undertake 1 six-credit point subject (EDUT 432)

Group	Homeroom Days	Hours per day	Consultation hours/week	Total hours F-F per week
KBC 1 (intensive)	3	6	2	20
KBC 2	1.5	3-6	2	11
Interns Meet once per week		3 hours week	1	4
Face-to-face hours				31

Weeks 4-13 – The school based learning phase

Group	Homeroom Days	Hours spent in homeroom	Consultation hours/week outside homeroom	In school days per week	School visits approximate hours/week	Total hours F-F per week
KBC 1	1	6	2	2	Tuesday – 5	13
KBC 2	1	6	2	2	Wednesday -5	13
Interns		1	1			2
Face-to-face						29

KBC 3 Spring session

The majority of KBC 3 students undertake 2 subjects 1 X 6 credit point elective & the 12 credit point Curriculum & Pedagogy III (most KBC 3 students complete their other elective over summer session)

Weeks 1-3

Group	Homeroom Days	Hours per day	Consultation hours / week	Total hours F-
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				to F/ week
KBC 3	1	6	2	8

Weeks 4-9

Group	Homeroom Days	Hours per day	Consultation hours/week	School visit hours/week	Total hours F- F /week
KBC 3	1	6	2	3	8

Weeks 10-13

Group	Homeroom Days	Hours per day	Consultation hours/week	School visit hours/week	Total hours F- F /week
KBC 3	0			4	4

Costs Associated with the School based Learning Phase

School Supervision Costs

Since 1999 KBC 1 students have spent approximately 16-18 days per session in schools. The time spent in school depends upon how the university, school calendars & Easter all line up.

The daily rate paid to schools has since 1999 been \$21.20/per student /per day paid directly to the school instead of individual teachers. The rationale being that having KBC students in the school is a school commitment and because we have always encouraged our students to use the school and staff as a total resource, the school payment was negotiated. Schools invoice the faculty for mentoring consultation services.

In 2006 we have adjusted the daily rate in accordance to school placement increase costs to \$22.70.student/day. A KBC 1 school therefore would invoice the Faculty of Education in the following way as an example:

4 students @ \$22.70 per day X 18 days = \$1634.40

KBC 1 total cost to Faculty of Education (Based on 2005 student numbers)

24 students X 18 days = \$9806.40

KBC 2 & 3 students spend the same amount of time in schools as that allocated to all 2nd & 3rd year primary students.

KBC 2 = 15 days

KBC 2 total cost to Faculty of Education (Based on 2006 numbers)

19 students X 15 days = \$6469.50

KBC 3 = 30 days

KBC 3 total cost to Faculty of Education (Based on 2006 numbers)
22 students X 30 days = \$14982.00

The difference in the KBC program is how we allocate this time in school.

KBC 2 = 2 days / week for 5 weeks + a 5 day block (if calendar / Easter makes possible otherwise the 2 day pattern continues)

KBC 3 = 10 bank days used in school term 3

The attendance pattern is negotiated at each school site - to ensure that our KBC students get the best possible teaching days (term 3 is notorious for its amount of extra curricula activities which often sees many students partaking in out side school / classroom events)

= 4 weeks full time teaching weeks 1-4 in school term 4

School-Based Mentoring Costs

When the program was initially set up, the schools were allocated a number of release days from the DET (Curriculum & Support Directorate) depending on the number of KBC 1 or 2 students they had in their school – KBC 3 students or 4th year interns did not attract release day funding. This cost now falls on the Faculty of Education resources to manage. The release days are used to provide in school mentoring sessions, report writing or attendance at stakeholder meetings. The average number of release days was 4 per term per teacher (usually 1 used for stakeholder meetings).

43 students x 3 release days x \$250 per day = \$36000

Note: This cost is not fixed in that the program has often found ways to work with schools to reduce this cost and still include a level of direct mentoring to our students.

The Stakeholder Meetings Costs

One of the most essential components of the KBC program was the involvement of school-based staff at the planning and debriefing meetings held at the beginning and end of each university year. After the first session of KBC 1 was completed in 1999 the 4 participating schools were each invited to send two representatives to a 'wash-up' or reflection and planning meetings. The meetings would include representatives not only of teaching/mentoring staff, executive school staff, DET representatives either from the local or Ryde offices but also included student representatives from each of the cohorts.

These meetings had several purposes:

- i) To allow the stakeholders to feel an integral part of the program and give them the opportunity to have input and a say
- ii) Discussion surrounding the shape and details of the KBC program.
- iii) Discussion and adjusting where necessary the KBC 1, 2 & 3 models
- iv) Discussion was always aimed at developing shared meanings about the nature and details of the mentor / school role for each level of KBC

The meetings were always productive and school staff often expressed how they looked forward to attending them. Timing would normally be a November and February meeting with the November meeting designed to look at the KBC year in review.

The February meeting was designed to share with schools how we had implemented the suggestions made at the November meeting, welcome new mentoring staff, share with school personnel any changes to the KBC students' schedule i.e. different subjects that students were now undertaking etc.

I look forward to attending the KBC meetings because it is a great opportunity to hear how other schools implement the KBC program. Schools are such busy places that we don't often have the chance to talk with other teachers and these meetings are a great way to do this. The meetings reinforce what we are doing and provide new ideas that we will then attempt. The lunch breaks are social and I have met new people and been able to share and discuss not only KBC matters but also a whole host of school based issues.

(MT, KBC Mentor 2001)

These days were funded through the DET release days program that subsidised the KBC in the early years of the program but are no longer available to the University. We have not had DET funding for release days now since November 2003.

The schools were allocated a number of release days from the DET (Curriculum & Support Directorate) depending on the number of KBC 1 or 2 students they had in their school – KBC 3 students or 4th year interns did not attract release day funding. The release days were used to provide in school mentoring sessions, report writing or attendance at stakeholder meetings. The average number of release days was 4 per term per teacher.

The KBC program was (and to a certain extent still is) a tripartite relationship – and the stakeholder meetings allowed for our participating schools to come together in a community atmosphere, since the erosion of this feature schools are working in isolation.

To bring 12 schools' personnel together for ONE meeting could incur the following costs:

2 staff members from each school 24 X \$250 release fee = **\$6000**

(This figure could be less if schools send a non-teaching deputy or principal as one of their representatives.)

Sample Summary of Additional Costs (excluding academic teaching costs and staff school visit costs) compared to mainstream program)

KBC 1 total cost to Faculty of Education (Based on 2005 student numbers) 24 students X 18 days school based learning	\$9806
KBC 2 total cost to Faculty of Education (Based on 2006 numbers) 19 students X 15 days school based learning	6469
KBC 3 total cost to Faculty of Education (Based on 2006 numbers) 22 students X 30 days school based learning	14982
One stakeholders' meeting	6000
School-Based mentoring Costs (43 students	32250
Total	<u>\$69507</u>