What is the Morayfield Teacher Education Centre of Excellence (MTECE)?

The Morayfield Teacher Education Centre of Excellence (MTECE) is a Department of Education and Training initiative operating across the state in partnership with a range of Queensland universities.

Background

A key reform embedded within the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership Agreement is the establishment of school “Centres of Excellence”. The centres are designed to address some of the recommendations in the Queensland Education Performance Review and the Review of Teacher Education and Induction. The Queensland state school’s model focuses primarily on the attraction, recruitment and development of high quality teaching graduates and secondly on developing the capability of the existing school workforce.

What is the purpose of the MTECE?

Research suggests that the most effective teacher education programs have an extended clinical curriculum as well as a theory-based curriculum strongly linked to practice. It also suggests that quality teacher education is a partnership between schools and universities. Centres of Excellence enable sustained partnerships to be fostered between schools and higher education providers to embed a clinical approach to preservice teacher education and to provide preservice teachers with extended experiences in school environments.

Centres of Excellence provide high quality field experiences and professional development for preservice teachers through their engagement with the centre, their base school and their expert teacher mentor. Teachers within the base schools also benefit from additional professional development opportunities and the opportunity to develop collegial relationships with their preservice teacher and a network of teacher mentors across the state.

The MTECE:

- attracts the best quality preservice teachers for employment as state school teachers;
- provides quality supervision, mentoring and support to preservice teachers;
- strengthens linkages between preservice education programs and the transition to employment as teachers;
- develops a comprehensive, sustained induction system that supports educators to become highly skilled, committed and caring professionals;
- provides ongoing professional development for teachers;
- promotes schools as professional learning communities with a culture that expects educators to be reflective and collegial about their practices, providing a more personalised learning environment for students.

The unique focus of the MTECE is literacy and numeracy in low SES schools through sustained mentorship and induction.
How will the MTECE operate?

The MTECE, while having its base as a cluster of schools in Morayfield, operates throughout the state. Preservice teachers in their 3rd year of study of any Bachelor of Education course at any university in Queensland may apply to the centre during semester 1. Applicants must meet the criteria published by the centre and complete all elements of the application process successfully in order to be considered for acceptance into the centre. This is a rigorous process including a high GPA, submission of previous practical placement reports, referee statements, an interview and observation of classroom practice.

Once the preservice teacher participation group is decided, schools will be approached by the centre to act as partner base schools. These schools will be required to act as a ‘host’ to the preservice teacher for their final year of study by providing an expert teacher mentor, a school contact and liaison person, access for the preservice teacher to professional development opportunities and facilitation of university practical placements for their preservice teacher. The MTECE will provide to these partner base schools access to additional professional development opportunities for their teacher mentors and all teaching staff, support for teacher mentors from the Head of Mentoring and publicity through centre publications.

As a minimum requirement, all teacher mentors must complete a full day of Mentor training and it is desired that they complete the Framework for Understanding Poverty. This training is provided free of charge to teacher mentors throughout each year.

The preservice teacher and their teacher mentor engage with the program for a period of three years. Participants engage with the centre for one year as a preservice teacher in an intensive program and for a further two years as a beginning teacher through a comprehensive induction program and on-going support from the Head of Mentoring and teacher mentor. Teacher mentors provide the on-going classroom experience for their mentee during the first year and then act as a point of contact and support in a tapering capacity for the next two years as the beginning teacher successfully transitions to their new school context.

The program is individualised to meet the needs of the preservice teacher. Teacher mentors will facilitate experiences and mentoring discussions using the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and the preservice teacher’s individual learning plan. The program structure will include an intensive summer and winter school where all participants come together to engage with professional development workshops delivered by experts in that field. Some of these workshops will be made available to teacher mentors and other teaching staff from the MTECE base and cluster schools.

Teacher’s at each school participating in the Centre of Excellence initiative will have an opportunity to volunteer to participate in the delivery of the program as a teacher mentor. They will undertake the expression of interest process as outlined by the centre. Teacher mentors will be required to fulfil the role as outlined in the DET and QTU Memorandum of Agreement. Teacher mentors will be entitled to appropriate non-monetary incentives that balance each school’s service delivery obligations and the need to recognise and reward teachers’ engagement in the program. This compensation is also outlined in this Memorandum of Agreement.

How do schools get involved with the MTECE?

Schools can register their interest in being a partner base school directly with the Head of Mentoring. More information about the centre is available at www.tecmorayfield.eq.edu.au

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