Department of Education
Learners first, connected and inspired

Professional Learning Institute (PLI)
1. **Message from the Principal Leader**

Welcome to the Professional Learning Institute (PLI).

The PLI is an exciting development in the history of the Department of Education. The PLI team is dedicated to providing outstanding professional learning that is targeted, grounded in research and responsive to feedback from participants. The focus of the PLI in 2012 will be on leadership development with an emphasis on school leadership.

During 2012 consultation will take place across the agency to ensure appropriate professional learning is developed for all members of the Department of Education.

I look forward to working with you as we grow and develop the Professional Learning Institute.

*Dr John Ewington*

2. **Beliefs**

The work of the Professional Learning Institute is integral to the sense and mission of the Department and will be guided by the following seven beliefs.

The Institute team believes that professional learning is most effective when it is:

- Focussed - on the needs of the learner.
- Connected - to both the daily relational work of employees and to the future-focussed aspects of school improvement.
- Evidence-driven - based upon learning data and grounded in current and best-available theory and research.
- Collaborative - involving individual reflection, collective inquiry and the sharing of knowledge and skills.
- Sustained - is consistently supported through follow-up processes that scaffold new learning opportunities, developing personal and collective capabilities.
• Evaluated - uses multiple sources of information to measure the effectiveness of learning as part of a cycle of continual improvement.
• Valued - at the individual and collective levels through recognition, sharing and celebration.

The Professional Learning Institute will work towards these outcomes by:

• Fostering the growth of sustainable learning networks across the agency.
• Contributing to the improvement of student learning outcomes.
• Developing a culture which has a collective responsibility for continual learning and improvement.
• Building leadership capacity in the design and support of professional learning.
• Using professional standards as a reflective tool.

3. What we do

The Professional Learning Institute will, in partnership with others, ensure the realisation of the Department’s vision of a successful, skilled and innovative workforce. The work of the Institute will be guided by the principles developed in line with the Department’s 2012-2015 Strategic Plan.

• Design and develop professional learning programs based upon:
  o using learning data
  o accessing and using professional standards
  o action research, inquiry and feedback processes
  o mentoring and coaching
  o active learning practices (participation, observation, demonstration).

• Implement leadership programs that support and meet the needs of established and emergent leaders (current principals, aspirant principals, teacher leaders, administration and executive staff).

• Work collaboratively with the Network Leaders and school leadership teams, as well as expert providers of professional learning, to connect employees to contextualised and meaningful learning.

• Foster leadership capacity in others by facilitating professional dialogue.

• Engage current research.

• Promote organisational learning that is quality assured.
4. The PLI Team

Dr John Ewington - Principal Leader, Professional Learning Institute

John has had 36 years of experience working for the Department of Education starting as a Mathematics/Science teacher at Smithton High School. John has been a Principal of three schools: Smithton High, Ulverstone High and Sheffield District High. He worked as a Cluster Coordinating Principal and has been the Program Manager of School Leadership Development for the past three years. John spent some time on secondment to the University of Tasmania lecturing both undergraduate and post graduate students.

A member of the inaugural executive of the Tasmanian Principals’ Association, John also represented the TPA on the Australian Secondary Principals’ Association National Board. He has been a National Director of the Australian Council for Educational Leadership for fifteen years and is a Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL).

John holds a Master of Education degree and a Doctor of Philosophy. His master’s research was into change in schools which led to more extensive study of school effectiveness for his PhD. He has authored and co-authored several papers on school leadership and has presented papers at national and international conferences.

Stephanie Hickey - Professional Learning Leader

Stephanie Hickey started down her teaching pathway with the Department of Education Tasmania in 1987. Her early career postings had a very distinct rural flavour: Tarraleah and Wayatinah Primary Schools, and then postings at Ringarooma Primary and Winnaleah District High. When Steph moved to Hobart for the 1998 school year, she bought with her a diverse range of teacher-learner experiences K-10, a growing knowledge of school management practices and a strong sense of being connected to a community. Steph continued in teaching and leadership roles in the northern-suburbs schools of Hobart until August 2010 when she moved to Learning Services South in a Project Officer’s role.

Steph’s post graduate studies have included a specialisation in Teaching Mathematics and more recently, Professional Learning and School Improvement. She has also completed studies in Growth Coaching and Cognitive Coaching.

Steph continues her focus in school improvement and quality teaching through professional learning, program development and sustainable practices.
Bernadette Howard - Professional Learning Leader

Bernadette Howard has over 25 years of experience in education in Tasmania. Her leadership and professional learning roles have focussed heavily on coaching, mentoring and collaborating and improving professional practice. Most recently she was principal at Cooee Primary prior to joining the Institute.

Bernadette’s post-graduate qualifications include an accredited Agency Trainer for the Centre for Cognitive Coaching and a trainer in training for the Centre for Adaptive Schools. She has coached principals, leadership teams and adults from diverse workforces.

As an educational leader, Bernadette is renowned for her passion for developing self-directedness and belief in distributed leadership. She brings with her significant experience in growing this culture in educational settings.

Max Drummy - Professional Learning Leader

Max Drummy comes to the Institute after years as an ICT teacher, leader, and innovator. His teaching journey began in Victorian High Schools, and then took him to Southern China for 3 years, where he worked in an International Baccalaureate School in the industrial city of Guangzhou (formerly Canton).

Upon return from China, Max was drawn to Tasmania by the educational leadership opportunities the Department of Education presented. He has been an Advanced Skills Teacher and Assistant Principal for 8 years, completing an M.Ed. in 2009 and both GROWTH and Cognitive Coaching accreditations.

In 2011, Max moved into a professional leadership role across the north of the state, where the focus was to provide ICT-based professional learning and strategic advice to schools. He extends this role as a part of the Professional Learning Institute. Besides being passionate about family life and tinkering in the shed, Max is highly committed to exploring how effective education systems lead and educate for future generations.

Ruth Radford - Principal Project Leader, PiTE

Ruth Radford has had leadership roles in a number of the Department’s professional learning initiatives. She was General Manager of the Tasmanian Educational Consortium and later Assistant Director, Leadership and Learning supporting the state-wide professional learning team for the Essential Learnings Curriculum. Currently she is the Principal Project Leader for the Partnership in Teaching Excellence (PiTE), a Department scholarship program for pre-service teachers.

Ruth has a Master of Education, is an agency coach for the Centre of Cognitive Coaching and an accredited Growth Coaching coach. She is passionate about learning and the place of professional conversations in building meaning and supporting the continuous improvement of teaching and leadership practice.
Ruth brings to the Institute a determined curiosity about how to design and facilitate professional learning that makes a profound difference to student learning.

**Carol Bellchambers - Business Manager**

Carol Bellchambers previously worked in the private sector for Price Waterhouse and was seconded from TAFE to the Department of Education in 1994. She has considerable business and corporate experience, particularly within the Department of Education, where over a period of eighteen years she has held a variety of positions including Executive Assistant – School Leadership, Data Management Officer and Human Resources Officer.

Add to this extensive experience Carol's qualifications include Advanced Diploma Accounting and Associated Diploma Business which equip her for this role.

Carol is enjoying the challenge of this exciting new role as the Business Manager at the Professional Learning Institute and working with the team across all Institute operations including, programs, marketing and finance in addition to assisting the Principal Leader and Professional Learning Leaders.

**Jan Bower - Executive Assistant - Teacher Learning Centre**

Jan's working life has been that of continual learning, as evidenced by the variety of roles undertaken: Personal Assistant, Research Officer, Electorate Officer, web publisher and developer and event co-ordinator. Her experience within State and Federal agencies has included the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Australian Government Ministerial Service, NSW Department of Tourism, Mental Health Commission, Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources and the Department of Education.

As a member of a team, Jan has co-ordinated State-wide professional learning programs for teachers, conferences, seminars and official functions. Jan also assisted with the development and production of Essential Learnings print publications and the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Guide online resource.

Since its establishment in June 2009, Jan has managed the operations of the Teacher Learning Centre. She also provides executive assistance around the Partnerships in Teaching Excellence Program.

Jan's qualifications and professional development include business administration, project management, website content design and management, and graphic design.
5. **Contact Us**

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