

# Editorial

There is a rich variety of topics in this issue of *set: Research Information for Teachers*, with research reported from junior primary to senior secondary, and with themes intersecting these sectors: the use of ICT, literacy learning, and student engagement. These themes are particularly topical in the current educational environment.

There are forward-looking articles evaluating the increasing use of technology in classrooms to promote both learning and student engagement. Magdalene Lin and Rachel Bolstad report on a study into virtual classrooms, where secondary students at different locations are the “class”. Their analysis of this innovative approach to schooling makes fascinating reading and points directions for 21st century learning. The value of ICT at all levels of schooling, and its multiplicity of uses, is becoming apparent as more studies emerge. In their article, Ann Harlow and Bronwen Cowie show how the use of the interactive whiteboard has enhanced learning in the junior primary school.

Literacy learning is always of concern to teachers. Three articles highlight ways of achieving improved skills. Pauline Smith outlines an approach that sees young readers engaging in self-monitoring to identify errors. Her three-step process will be of much interest. Annette Tate and Maree Jeurissen describe a programme in which oral language development based around one-on-one conversations about books is achieving promising results. Most encouragingly, the article by Mei Lai and others reports on their study that shows that the benefits of interventions can continue after the intervention programme has finished. Good news indeed!

There are also some interesting pieces on student engagement. Charles Darr reports that some New Zealand Council for Educational Research survey results may be showing links between nutrition and attitudes to school. Children who normally eat breakfast on a school day appear to have more positive feelings towards school. Jean Harold and Louise Keown report on an intervention in which direct teaching of social skills had spin-offs for children’s enjoyment of school and their achievement.

It’s exciting to read about so many positive developments in our classrooms. We’ve enjoyed putting this issue together—we hope you find it useful and affirming.

*Bev Webber*  
*Managing Editor*