

LEADING SCHOOLS FUND

Stage 2

Application



BENDIGO

SENIOR

SECONDARY

COLLEGE



LEADING SCHOOLS FUND

STAGE 2 APPLICATION

BENDIGO ON-LINE LEARNING PROJECT OVERVIEW

Bendigo Senior Secondary College in partnership with the other five Secondary Colleges in Bendigo aims to use Information Communication Technology to re-engage young people with education. The target group are those post compulsory school age students (15 to 18 year olds) who have not completed secondary schooling, are no longer enrolled at a school (and may not have been enrolled in formal schooling for some considerable time) and *who believe they cannot return to a formal school setting.*

The project target will be to re-engage ten young people who have been outside formal schooling for some years through six months of home based study with a learning mentor. These young people will then re-integrate into traditional schooling or continue their on-line study through an On-line Learning Centre (to be established under this project) or other education or training provider. Of these 70% are expected to make the transition to another form of education after six months. Through the On-line Learning Centre students could complete a Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) or equivalent certification after two years.

Through the On-line Learning Centre an additional 20 young people will be enrolled in a school delivered curriculum: VCE, Vocational Education & Training (VET), Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) or Year 9/10 as appropriate. Of these 70% are expected to successfully complete their enrolled programs within two years. As well as completion of certified programs this 'success' could involve re-integration into traditional school or education settings, successful pathways to work or further training.

The project will deliver success for all involved through re-engagement with education. Given that the target group is currently not attending a school the following measures represent success for the students concerned: participation, attendance, achievement, on-line access and log-on time, use of on-line forum, financial accountability and reporting to partner organizations.

Through the use of curriculum delivered on-line this project will deliver the following outcomes for students:

- ◇ provide a relevant and engaging curriculum which offers students the chance of education success,
- ◇ improve student retention and learning outcomes ,
- ◇ develop improved literacy, numeracy and independent learning skills,
- ◇ provide students with a level of individual and welfare support to acknowledge their high risk factor backgrounds,
- ◇ re-integrate students to mainstream school where possible and appropriate,
- ◇ promote the development of on-line teaching skills and embed on-line teaching in schools,
- ◇ promote the development of on-line teaching skills and on-line learning materials by the staff of the schools involved.

Each year of the program would expect to deal with 30 students; this number could increase as high demand is likely.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

Bendigo Senior Secondary College proposes to use Information Communication Technology in an intensive way to re-engage young people with education. The target group are those post compulsory school age students who have not completed secondary schooling, are no longer enrolled at a school (and may not have been enrolled in formal schooling for some considerable time) and *who believe they cannot return to a formal school setting*. The project will involve two stages in the re-engagement process. In the first stage students will work from home using an Information Communication Technology hardware package and internet connection; in the second stage (some students will enter this stage directly) students will attend an On-line Learning Centre to access curriculum supplied from one of the Secondary Colleges in Bendigo.

Bendigo Senior Secondary College (BSSC) proposes to establish an On-line Learning Centre located centrally in Bendigo to deliver post compulsory courses including Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), Vocational Education & Training (VET) and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) courses to post compulsory age students. This facility will involve a partnership between Bendigo Senior Secondary College and one or more of the 7-10 colleges in Bendigo. It may also involve partnerships with Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE and Central Victorian Group Training Company to facilitate the delivery of VET modules.

Phase 1 Students (10 students working from home for six months)

Some students who have low level skills will initially work at home provided with a computer, computer peripherals and an internet connection. They will be encouraged to research an area of interest with the aim of building their learning skills through the production of relevant work. This work will not necessarily be part of any formal school curriculum but the projects undertaken should be able to be recognized under the VCAL Personal Development strand. Students will be supported in their research in an area of particular interest by a learning mentor (volunteer) who has expertise or experience in the student's interest area, a buddy (young person-undergraduate) to support and encourage the students and staff at the On-line Learning Centre. Students, mentors and buddies will communicate on-line; students will be provided with an on-line forum for publication of their work and communication with others in the group. Those students in this phase of the program should graduate to attendance at the On-line Learning Centre or re-integration to formal schooling, education or training after six months.

Phase 2 Students (20 students attending an On-line Learning Centre)

An On-line Learning Centre would aim to cater initially to a cohort of 20 students; this number could increase at later stages of the project. Students will attend a centrally located facility where they will be supported in daily organization and study approaches by tutors. Tutors will provide specialist literacy or numeracy support. They will administer assessment tasks provided by the student's school based teachers. Students may also use community facilities such as the Bendigo Public Library and internet facilities at the planned B Central youth services complex.

Targets

- ◇ 70 % of Phase 1 students will move from home based program to the On-line Learning Centre within 6 months.
- ◇ 70% of students participating in the On-line Learning Centre will complete nationally recognised qualifications (VCE, VCAL, Certificate courses).

Curriculum Provision

Each student will be enrolled at a Bendigo Secondary College. Curriculum will be provided on-line via teachers at BSSC or a 7-10 secondary college. These teachers maintain email contact with the students; they also assess work submitted for assessment. Curriculum can be accessed via the Goldfields Schools Cluster Curriculum portal; this software has been developed by Bendigo Senior Secondary College and all Bendigo Secondary Colleges are involved in this curriculum sharing project.

Welfare Support

Welfare support will be provided via Department of Education & Training district staff or community welfare agencies. Students will need high levels of tutor and welfare support as they often have a compromised learning potential due to a range of factors such as: learning difficulties; mental health problems; emotional problems; inappropriate learned behaviour; alienation; history of substance abuse/drug and alcohol abuse.

Technology

The computing and network structure will need to be geared towards a high level of computing resources per student. Based on estimated enrolments; twenty (20) computers will be required at the On-line Learning Centre. Ten (10) computer/computer peripherals packages will be required for the Phase 1 students working at home. Learning mentors who do not have a home computer will need to be supplied with one. The computers at the On-line Learning Centre will be networked into a Local Area Network. The network will incorporate suitable server capacity for authentication and file storage. Appropriate cabling, racking, power supply, and backup facilities will also need to be supplied. The network will require a good connection to the Internet and dependant on location of the centre this may be best served by an ADSL connection. Phase 1 students working at home will need 24 hour internet access; learning mentors will need internet access; all schools participating in the project will need internet connection to the On-line Learning Centre.

Community and School Partnerships

Bendigo Senior Secondary College has undertaken an extensive community consultation process leading up to this application. This process has been undertaken in partnership with the Goldfields Local Learning and Employment Network. Through a series of meetings involving groups of education providers, community welfare groups and Bendigo business and industry groups, this project has gained wide spread community support. Appendix A lists the groups who have expressed support for the project.

Bendigo Senior Secondary College and the Bendigo 7-10 secondary colleges (Flora Hill SC, Eaglehawk SC, Kangaroo Flat SC, Golden Square SC, and Weeroona College) are the participating partners in this project. There is agreement that each of the schools will enrol students as appropriate and provide curriculum on-line. In the case of Bendigo Senior Secondary College all students enrolled at the College can directly access on-line curriculum

provided by staff in all subjects in which a student is enrolled. In the case of the 7-10 secondary colleges, the student's curriculum can be accessed by the staff at the On-line Learning Centre through the Goldfields Schools Cluster Curriculum Portal. This project uses software provided by BSSC (which is modelled on the school's internal curriculum management software). The portal allows all Bendigo Secondary Colleges to share curriculum materials across all year levels of secondary schooling.

Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE and Central Victorian Group Training Company have expressed support for the project and offered to allow students enrolled at the On-line Learning Centre to access VET modules through their organizations.

A number of community welfare agencies including St Lukes, Bendigo and Bendigo Community Health have expressed strong support for the project and it is expected that welfare worker and program support will be provided through a number of agencies which will form partnerships with the project.

Bendigo Community Telco (BCT) and Telstra Bendigo have expressed a strong wish to be involved with the project, and Telstra Bendigo has indicated a strong willingness to provide internet connectivity and data between students and learning mentors, students and the On-line Learning Centre and schools and the On-line Learning Centre. BCT has also expressed a willingness to provide technical and other appropriate assistance to the project.

Bendigo Senior Secondary College is currently working with the Goldfields Local Learning and Employment Network to identify suitable premises in central Bendigo for the establishment of the On-line Learning Centre facility.

Bendigo Senior Secondary College is currently in consultation with Multi Media Victoria regarding the provision of 30 computers and research funding under the *Providing Computers for Disadvantaged Students* program in order to support this application.

Mentoring (both learning mentors and buddies) for students in Phase 1 of the project will be provided by community volunteer mentors. *Lead On* (a community youth organisation sponsored by Bendigo Bank), Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE and the Goldfields Local Learning and Employment Network have all committed to support the provision of mentors to work in this project.

Governance

A clear and effective governance structure will be established for this project. The governance structures will be in two tiers. The first tier, or Project Council, will be responsible for policy development and the strategic direction of the project, together with monitoring the outcomes of the project and ensuring the accountability requirements are met.

This forum would have representation from the key stakeholder groups.

Education

Bendigo Senior SC

Representation from the 7-10 colleges

ACE and TAFE sectors

Welfare

St Lukes

Bendigo Community Health

Community

City of Greater Bendigo Youth Services

Lead On

Bendigo Plus (Industry link)

Goldfields Local Learning & Employment Network (GLLEN)

Project Management

Key project staff

The second tier Project Co-ordinator/On-line Learning Centre manager level would handle implementation of policy, operational procedure and deal directly with staff employed in the project, researchers, mentors, students and parents. It would be the responsibility of this group to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Leading Schools Fund implementation plan including financial accountability, research requirements and regular reporting to the first tier - Board of Management level.

RESPONSE TO SELECTION CRITERIA

CRITERION 1

Deliver whole school improvement through establishing or building upon programs that have a distinctive focus or theme.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project focuses on the use of Information Communication Technologies to engage young people with learning opportunities. It builds on Victorian Government and DE&T e-Learning strategies. As a truly community based project it enhances the concept of schools working with and within their school networks and communities to meet the learning needs of all young people; it promotes the concept of community responsibility for and ownership of the issue of youth retention and education.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project will improve performance across all secondary colleges in Bendigo in the area of post compulsory age retention, retention of rural and regional students, and the engagement of students with a relevant curriculum and the development and promotion of on-line teaching skills. All schools involved will benefit through the development of more diverse and flexible approaches to teaching and learning by all staff involved, particularly in the area of dealing with and developing learning pathways for disengaged students.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project aims to use Information Communication Technology to re-engage post compulsory age students with learning and education by meeting the following outcomes for students:

- ◇ providing a relevant and engaging curriculum which offers students the chance of success;
- ◇ improving student retention and learning outcomes for all students enrolled by re-engaging students with education:
 - 70 % of Phase 1 students will move from home based program to the On-line Learning Centre within 6 months,
 - 70% of students participating in the On-line Learning Centre will complete nationally recognised qualifications (VCE, VET, VCAL, Certificate courses);
- ◇ providing students with high levels of support to develop literacy, numeracy and independent learning skills;
- ◇ providing students with a level of individual and welfare support which acknowledges the possibility of compromised learning potential but supports students to have success;
- ◇ maintaining a connection with a 'home' school and re-integrating students to mainstream school where possible and appropriate;
- ◇ promoting the development of on-line teaching skills and embedding on-line teaching in the practise of the schools involved;
- ◇ promoting the development of on-line learning materials by the staff of the schools involved.

CRITERION 2

Develop a program delivery model that assesses current performance, identifies students' current and future learning needs, and identifies targets and strategies for meeting these needs and improving performance.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project will address the needs of 15-18 year olds across Bendigo who are currently not in work, education and training and who do not believe that a formal school setting is suitable for them. Australian Bureau of Statistics data on the Goldfields Local Learning and Employment Network region indicate that in 2001, there were 9,137 people in the 15-19 age range; 1909 people in this age range were not in Secondary School (government or Catholic) TAFE, Adult & Continuing Education or private education. Of the 9,137, 14% (1279) were unemployed. The labour force region's unemployment rate for the year ending 2001 was 8.0%. The data suggests there may be 500 or more 15-19 year old people in the Goldfields Local Learning and Employment Network region who are unemployed and who may not have completed secondary schooling. (This Australian Bureau of Statistics indicative data was accessed from the LLEN website www.llen.vic.gov.au, last updated February, 2003.)

Current Bendigo Senior Secondary College Managed Individual Pathways data indicates that in 2003/4, 99 Year 10 students did not complete the transition into Year 11 at Bendigo Senior Secondary College. In 2001 and 2002, 225 and 217 students respectively exited from Bendigo Senior Secondary College before the completion of the academic year; of these approximately 100 each year were listed in the 'marginal' category of post school destinations, part-time work, unemployment, personal (reason given for not supplying destination data).

Current aggregate data supplied by Centrelink Bendigo indicates that there are approximately 800 16-18 year olds in the Bendigo region who are unemployed.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project aims to return the Phase 1 students to formal education or an On-line Learning Centre after six months of work/study at home. Of the students enrolled in Phase 1, 70% should successfully make the transition to education at a traditional school, the On-line Learning Centre or another education or training provider after six months of supported home study.

The project aims to deliver a relevant/certifiable curriculum to students who attend the On-line Learning Centre -VCE, VCAL, VET, Year 9/10 curriculum will be provided on-line. Pathways to work, study or further training can be clearly established for all students in the program. It is expected that 70% of students enrolled at the On-line Learning Centre will successfully complete their curriculum in two years. Some students may plan to spread a curriculum over more than two years.

The On-line Learning Centre environment will provide, in addition to on-line curriculum, tutors and welfare support workers who will address the compromised learning potential of this cohort. Assistance with literacy, numeracy, organization, motivation, and the development of independent learning skills are essential support areas. This cohort is predicted to have high welfare needs; the provision of welfare crisis and program support is essential to the success of these students.

The teachers from all schools involved in providing on-line curriculum to students at the On-line Learning Centre will significantly improve their skills in on-line teaching and learning and gain enhanced understanding of re-engaging young people with education. The close work with tutors from the On-line Learning Centre, community welfare workers and school

staff will considerably improve the understanding of school staff in areas of dealing with disengaged youth, provision of flexible and diverse pathways for students, risk factors experienced by young people in this region. Whole school and school system new understandings will result from this project.

CRITERION 3

Make connections between the proposal and the achievement of the Government's targets.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project will improve student retention and completion rates in the post compulsory age group. It will improve the number of students in the Bendigo Schools Network area completing Year 12 or equivalent. It will improve the number of people in the 15-19 age range in regional and rural Victoria who are engaged in education or training. The project will provide literacy support to all students enrolled thus improving literacy levels for all students in the project.

It is reasonable to set a target that the Phase 1 students remain in the program for six (6) months. They should then move on to the On-line Learning Centre or re-integrate to one of the Bendigo Colleges or other education or training setting; it is expected that 70% of these students will make a successful transition to another education setting. Remaining in the project, developing an individual learning plan, producing publishable/measurable learning outcomes, learning mentor contact levels, buddy contact levels and re-integration to formal education or to the On-line Learning Centre will all be used as measures of success for students in this phase of the project.

Students of the On-line Learning Centre will be enrolled in a range of curricula, all of which could lead to a certified outcome. It is expected that retention rates of 80% in On-line Learning Centre enrolment can be achieved. Experience suggests that students can be very successful in this kind of program in terms of completion of certified programs and levels of achievement within those programs. Whilst time enrolled in the program will depend on the nature and extent of the student's individual program, it is not expected that students would automatically take longer to complete the curriculum than their peers attending a 'normal' school. Time enrolled in programs, participation in the program concerned, completion levels, attainment levels, literacy levels and progression to work, training or higher education will all be used as measures of success. It is expected that 70% of those enrolled will successfully complete their chosen curriculum.

CRITERION 4

Use co-operative strategies such as educational provision and sharing effective practice in order to improve curriculum provision and student outcomes.

Some data regarding the target group discussed under Criterion 2 should be referred to here; it outlines the potential size of the cohort within the target group for this project.

In the Goldfields Local Learning and Employment Network region in February 2002 there were 3,731 students in Years 10-12 attending Government schools; 547 students attended Catholic schools. Data is not given for students attending private schools; however the region has only two small private schools providing Year 10-12 curricula - Girton College, Bendigo and Highview College, Maryborough. (www.llen.vic.gov.au, last updated February, 2003)

This data indicates that a very significant majority of students in the region attend government schools. The Bendigo On-line Learning project clearly targets the needs of those young people who may have exited early from these schools and who are not in education, training or work.

As discussed under Community and School Partnerships in the introduction section, Bendigo Senior Secondary College has undertaken an extensive process of consultation with a range of education, welfare and business groups in planning this proposal. This process has included the five 7-10 secondary colleges in Bendigo. They have participated in sharing ideas about the initial proposal and the process of further refining the proposal. This proposal is consistent with the mission of the Greater Bendigo Schools Network which shows a clear commitment to a shared school responsibility for student outcomes for all students across the Greater Bendigo Network schools. The On-line Learning Centre proposal will result in improved access to and success in education pathways for all students across the Greater Bendigo Network schools and improved understandings within schools about effective strategies to cater for students disengaged from education.

All schools involved in the project will use the curriculum software developed by BSSC and shared through the Goldfields Schools Cluster Curriculum Portal to provide student curriculum materials to the staff at the On-line Learning Centre.

All schools involved will share best practise in on-line teaching through sharing curriculum materials through the Goldfields Schools Cluster Curriculum Portal and through the delivery of joint professional development programs for staff involved in on-line teaching. Staff at the On-line Learning Centre and community welfare staff supporting students attending the Centre will share experience and strategies with school based staff. This will considerably enhance school based teacher understanding of appropriate strategies and programs that are effective in dealing with disengaged youth in the provision of education.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project will create a model of supported on-line education delivery which will be able to be replicated by other education communities and systems to address the needs of disadvantaged students.

CRITERION 5

Identify the schools they wish to partner and develop mentor relationships with.

Bendigo On-line Learning Centre has the support of the five 7-10 secondary colleges in Bendigo - Flora Hill Secondary College, Kangaroo Flat Secondary College, Eaglehawk Secondary College, Golden Square Secondary College and Weeroona College Bendigo. Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE and Central Victorian Group Training Company have also offered to support the project through the inclusion of On-line Learning Centre Students in VET module classes where possible and appropriate.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project will also involve a significant number of community partnerships within and beyond the Bendigo community in order to provide a variety of services and resources *as listed under Community and School Partnerships in the introduction section of this application.*

CRITERION 6

Develop appropriate strategies, programs and resources to support teachers and build leadership capabilities.

Students working at home will be supported by an On-line Learning mentor (a community volunteer), a buddy (a community volunteer) and staff at the On-line Learning Centre if necessary in areas such as literacy and numeracy skills, organization and motivation.

School based staff will be supported by staff from the On-line Learning Centre and DE&T or community based welfare staff.

Leadership capabilities for staff working in the project will be enhanced through the development of on-line teaching skills and the delivery of professional development to other teachers in the area of on-line teaching. All schools and staff in the project will gain enhanced skills and experiences in the provision of alternative pathways for all students, including the disengaged cohort. All staff involved in on-line teaching would be expected to participate in jointly run professional development which will involve staff from the On-line Learning Centre and community welfare agencies directly working with the students at the On-line Learning Centre. In turn these school based staff would be expected to run professional development and information sharing workshops for all staff in their schools with the aim of disseminating their experiences widely through all secondary colleges in Bendigo and beyond. It is expected that schools involved in the Bendigo On-line Learning Centre project will use conference forums such as the NAVCON conferences to share their experience with other educators.

Staff involved in this project will be working within a truly community based project and involved in considerable community liaison and consultation as a consequence. Research findings from the project will inform the teaching and leadership planning within all of the schools involved in the project; such findings may prove invaluable in the planning of Managed Individual Pathways programs across all Bendigo Secondary Colleges.

The 2003 data from staff surveys at Bendigo Senior Secondary College suggest that this College has a strong leadership capacity to undertake and sustain this innovative project. Strong results in measures such as Goal Congruence 3.84 (benchmark 3.47), Supportive Leadership 3.40 (benchmark 3.30), Professional Interaction 3.74 (benchmark 3.53) and Professional Growth 3.84 (benchmark 2.98) all suggest that there is a positive and supportive culture at the school; one in which staff feel confident to engage in the risk-taking that innovation and change necessarily entails.

The experiences gained from working with this cohort of disengaged young people will allow secondary colleges across Bendigo to develop best practice strategies in the area of engagement with education. The learning from this project will make an invaluable contribution to system wide understanding of education disengagement and the role which can be played by ICT in the re-engagement process. In this area, the proposed cooperation between Multi Media Victoria and the Bendigo On-line Learning project will be a valuable vehicle to promote understandings in this area across education in Victoria.

CRITERION 7

Integrate current Information and Communications Technology (ICT) resources to deliver enhanced learning opportunities for students, and demonstrate how ICT resources will be incorporated into future innovative educational delivery.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project is a technology intensive project designed to use technology to re-engage young people with learning and to provide access to curriculum for students who cannot attend traditional school settings. It will provide a wide range of teaching staff with the opportunity and challenge of teaching in an on-line environment. It will build on existing skills and experience of Bendigo teachers in the on-line teaching area.

Much of the detail of the Information Communication Technology requirements of this proposal has been discussed under Technology in the introduction section of this proposal.

The Phase 1 students will be provided with a computer and peripherals package by the school with whom they are enrolled. Thus it is vital that each student is fully funded by DE&T for each semester in which they are enrolled at a school. It is expected that these packages will be re-used every six months as the student makes the transition to the On-line Learning Centre or other education/training setting. Learning mentors would generally be expected to have their own computer. Internet connectivity and data will be supplied to students in Phase 1 and their learning mentors. This is expected to be sourced from either Telstra or Bendigo Community Telco (see below).

Students at the On-line Learning Centre will need access to approximately 20 computers initially. However it is envisaged that students will not all work concurrently at the On-line Learning Centre but will also use facilities such as the Bendigo Public Library and the internet facilities at the new B Central project (this is a City Council sponsored youth services central facility). Community business and industry groups have expressed support for the project, including Apple Computers and ACER computers; discussions are continuing with these groups with the aim of securing necessary computers and peripherals (or sponsorship commitments) for the On-line Learning Centre, the Phase 1 students and learning mentors.

Both Telstra Bendigo and Bendigo Community Telco have expressed strong support for the program; Telstra Bendigo has offered to provide broad band connection between all students, mentors, schools and the On-line Learning Centre. Bendigo Community Telco has offered to provide technical and other appropriate support to Phase 1 students and to the On-line Learning Centre.

The On-line Learning Centre premises will need to be connected to a Local Area Network with appropriate server storage for administration and student work back up.

The Bendigo On-line Learning Project will provide all students involved with improved outcomes through re-engaging them with education and providing a model of education provision which will allow the students to experience success in education and to complete their secondary education when they may have felt that such completion was no longer possible. The use of Information Communication Technologies will provide a flexible model of curriculum delivery which allows students access 'anywhere, anytime'. The model supports students in the development of independent learning skills and encourages them to undertake responsibility for their own learning outcomes. As such the project models for other schools and systems a model of an alternative education pathway which can be effective for a particularly educationally disadvantaged group of students.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project model can be replicated in other communities. As a partnership between schools and community business and industry, and community welfare groups, the model is built on existing community infrastructures and programs. The project recognizes that each of these groups has a vital role to play in creating an effective education project. The co-ordination element which in this case is supplied from Bendigo Senior Secondary College can be supplied from any school. School Networks across Victoria have a shared responsibility for the education outcomes of all students across their networks. This project provides a model for promoting access to education by those who have previously rejected schooling for a range of reasons. As such it provides an on-line vehicle which allows schools to fulfill their responsibility to cater for all young people in their communities. However this model acknowledges that the issue of disengagement from schooling and the creation of meaningful pathways for young people is a community responsibility which will draw on the resources of schools and the communities of which they are a part.

CRITERION 8

Identify the resources required over three years to implement the initiative.

Because of their intensive needs these students require approximately \$12,000 a year to resource. This is a realistic figure that can deliver a creditable program.

Given that the costs per student exceed School Global Budget funds provided, alternative/supplementary sources of funds are essential to the success of this proposal. Sources of such funding might be: Innovation and Excellence for those schools yet to be involved, the Goldfields Local Learning and Employment Network, Bendigo City Council and community and service organizations.

The Bendigo On-line Learning project will seek additional funds from the local community and the group of schools involved in the project.

1. Funding sought through the Leading Schools Fund

On-line Learning Centre Project Manager senior role with accountability community relationships, agency protocols and data collection (This position may be based in one participating school)	1 teacher
On-line Learning Centre Staffing Coordinator operations – Parent liaison / Staff Management / school liaison / accountability /data collection	1 teacher
Student mentors/coaches/literacy support – ratio 1:10	2 teachers
Networking infrastructure	\$19,000

2. Services to be provided through community partnerships

On-line Learning Centre premises (leased premises)	
Lease costs / utility costs / insurance	\$80,000
Premises Fit Out - first year only	\$20,000
ICT Infrastructure - computer student ratio 1:1.5	\$20,000
Data Costs	\$12,000
Technical Support and ICT PD Support	\$10,000
Welfare Agencies	
Pastoral care support and psych services	\$20,000
School Based Staff	
Teachers / On-line curricula / technical support for curriculum development - cost borne by participating schools	
Student Co-ordinator Support in each participating school	\$3,000
Staff Development - first year cost would reduce thereafter	\$20,000
Administration staff / support	\$10,000

CRITERION 9

Monitor and evaluate the project and its effectiveness in improving student outcomes.

Evaluation of the Bendigo On-line Learning project will have two purposes: it will seek to evaluate the re-engagement and education strategies used in the project with the aim of determining their effectiveness and making necessary adjustments as the project proceeds (this level of evaluation will include accountability under the Leading Schools Fund project implementation plan, financial accountability and reporting to partner organizations); the second and more external purpose of evaluation will be to conduct research into all elements of the model with a view to determining its effectiveness and recommending the degree of transferability to other communities and settings.

La Trobe University, Bendigo have expressed strong interest in supporting the project through the provision of research students at Masters or PhD level; in particular involving students in Social Work degrees with practicum experience in the project. Multi Media Victoria has made a commitment to support the project through an application for research funding under the *Providing Computers for Disadvantaged Students* project.

At all stages of the project it will be necessary to gather data through both quantitative and qualitative methods. The individualized nature of the student's likely risk factors and teaching and support programs suggest that quantitative survey data will need to be supported by qualitative data gathered through individual and group interview processes; some case studies should be included.

The following areas will be included in the research evaluation:

- ◇ Student cohort profile: school (including factors in student disengagement/reasons for early school leaving), personal (literacy and numeracy testing, learning style testing such as Myers-Briggs indicators) and family history.
- ◇ Student outcomes: participation, attendance, retention, achievement levels, on-line access and log-on time, use of on-line forum, development of effective pathways beyond Phase 1 and Phase 2 study (further education, training, work).
- ◇ Staff outcomes: effectiveness in teaching on-line, success in sharing strategies with colleagues, On-line Learning Centre staff effectiveness in supporting, motivating, organizing students, effectiveness of numeracy and literacy support.
- ◇ Parent evaluation of student outcomes/the project model.
- ◇ Partner organization evaluation of project outcomes - this includes all schools, other education providers who become involved, business/industry and community welfare groups.

Data related to most of the measures discussed above can be collected on a semester or an annual basis and evaluated and reported on annually. It will be important to use this data to make adjustments to the model in implementation. Two years of data collection will be required to evaluate the success of most students in completing certified curricula and moving into pathways of further education, work or training. The major evaluative report for all of the elements of the model (as outlined above) will be produced at the completion of year two or year three of the Bendigo On-line Learning project according to the state-wide framework established for research conducted under the Leading Schools Fund.

APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION and SUPPORT

In partnership with the Goldfields Local Learning and Employment Network, Bendigo Senior College has conducted a series of public and private consultations.

The following organizations have stated their support for the project:

Education and Training Providers

Bendigo Secondary Colleges (5)
Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE
Central Victorian Group Training Company

Business and Industry Groups

Bendigo Bank
Telstra Bendigo
Bendigo Community Telco
Apple Computers
ACER Computers

Community and Welfare Agencies

Lead On
St Lukes
Bendigo Community Health

Government

City of Greater Bendigo
Centrelink Bendigo