



# North Sydney Demonstration School

Bay Road Waverton 2060

ABN 58 879 437 250

Telephone 9955 2822 9955 4242

Facsimile 9956 6801

Email

[nthsyddem-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:nthsyddem-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)

15 August 2014

*Dear Parents and Carers*

Please find attached an information sheet and a permission note which explains the ***Real Engagement in Problem Based Learning Project*** that students from Years 1 – 6 have been undertaking over the past 18 months.

World renowned educator Dr June Maker has been supporting the school with this project and has been assisting us in collecting data from across all grades in the school. The data will be used in a research report that will be published in educational journals and that will inform how our school facilitates student problem solving and, critical and creative thinking.

We received signed permission from most parents/carers in 2013 however, we would like to keep this permission current and therefore request that you sign the attached permission note again.

If your child is in Year One this year or started at North Sydney Demonstration School within the last 12 months then parents/carers will not have signed this form previously.

I ask that you return a signed permission form to the school office by **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August**.

If you have any questions about this project please do not hesitate to contact me directly at [myra.janes@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:myra.janes@det.nsw.edu.au).

Kind Regards

Myra Wearne  
Principal  
North Sydney Demonstration School

Co-operating school with  
The University of Sydney



## CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS IN GROUP A CLASSES

**Research Project:** Real Engagement in Active Problem Solving: Differentiation for Diverse Learners in Regular Classrooms

I (*print name*) \_\_\_\_\_ give consent to the participation of

my child (*print name*) \_\_\_\_\_ in the research project described below.

TITLE OF THE PROJECT: Real Engagement in Active Problem Solving: Differentiation for Diverse Learners in Regular Classrooms

CHIEF RESEARCHER: [junemaker@email.arizona.edu](mailto:junemaker@email.arizona.edu) or [junemaker@hotmail.com](mailto:junemaker@hotmail.com)

CO-RESEARCHERS: Myra Wearne (Janes), Principal, NSDS , 9955 2822

[myra.janes@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:myra.janes@det.nsw.edu.au)

Laetitia Kilpatrick, Teacher, NSDS, 9955 2822 [laetitia.kilpatrick@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:laetitia.kilpatrick@det.nsw.edu.au)

In giving my consent I acknowledge that

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I have read the Parent Information Sheet and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my child's involvement in the project with the researchers.
3. I have discussed participation in the project with my child and my child assents to their participation in the project.
4. I understand that that my child's participation in this project is voluntary; a decision not to participate will in no way affect her or his academic standing or relationship with the school and my child is free to withdraw his or her participation in the research (analysis of test results) at any time.
5. I understand that my child's involvement is strictly confidential and that no information about my child will be used in any way that reveals my child's identity.

6. I understand that my child's test results will be analyzed to determine the effects of a special program, and that these test results will be stored in a place and in a way that protects my child's anonymity.
  
7. I understand that audio recordings will be made as part of the study if my child is selected for an interview. These recordings will take place during the school day and in a quiet area of the classroom. Other children will be in the classroom, but not interfering with my child's interview.

Please cross out any activity that you do not wish your child to participate in.

**Signed**.....

**Name**.....

**Date**.....

Any complaints about the research may be registered with the Director Educational Services,  
Talavera Road, MACQUARIE PARK NSW 9886 7000



## PARENT/CAREGIVER INFORMATION SHEET

**Research Project:** Real Engagement in Active Problem Solving: Differentiation for Diverse Learners in Regular Classrooms

You and your child are invited to take part in a study being conducted by Dr. C. June Maker, Dr. Robert Zimmerman, and Mr. Randal Pease, of the University of Arizona, USA, and Ms. Myra Wearne (Janes), Principal of NSDS.

It is part of a project designed to adapt, modify, and test the effectiveness of an educational teaching program developed in the USA.

We are asking you if it is okay for you and your child to take part in this project.

We are trying to find out how the teaching program needs to be changed (if at all) to make it more useful and appropriate in Australia, and to find out if the use of this teaching method can increase students' creativity (general, scientific, and mathematical), their understanding of science concepts, and their achievement. We want to know if the use of this approach helps teachers differentiate their instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners, especially those who are gifted.

The information from the study will be used to decide whether to use this teaching method in the North Sydney Demonstration School (NSDS), how to adapt or change it to fit our school community, and whether to teach others how to implement it. We will report the results to you at parent meetings and will distribute a report to you. We also will report the results in educational journals, at educational conferences, and in teacher workshops.

We will ask your child to take some educational tests that are very similar to tests they usually take in school: a test of general creativity in which they will complete an incomplete picture; a test of scientific creativity in which they will identify science problems and design ways to solve them; a test of mathematical creativity in which they will solve several math problems and create math problems; and a concept mapping exercise in which they will draw diagrams of the ways science ideas are related. The tests will take approximately 2 hours (over a period of one week) and will occur twice each year. Your child also will take the usual tests of learning progress given at certain times during the school year.

Because your child is in a class with a number of students who are on Individualised Learning Plans, your child also will experience the new educational method, which will include solving real life problems individually and in groups. These will be part of the normal teaching of all subjects, but may be used mostly in science classes.

Participation in the classes and the educational program is a normal part of your child's education, but your child's participation in the research is voluntary. Your child will take the tests as part of the normal gathering of information about children's abilities, but the researchers will analyze the results of your child's tests only if both you and your child agree. If you decide not to take part, it will not affect your child's results or progress at school, and if you or your child change your mind about taking part, even after the study has started, just let the teacher and the school principal know, and any information already collected about your child will not be used in the research. Please notify the principal, Myra Wearne, and your child's teacher if you wish to withdraw your child from the project.

If you and your child decide to participate, no one will be able to identify you or your child from the results of the study. Only the researchers will have access to this information, and it will not have identifying information about you or your child. The test scores will be stored on a password-protected computer and all test materials will be stored in a protected file in the primary researcher's office. These scores and materials will be kept for as long as the project lasts.

Six children from each classroom will be interviewed about their experiences as part of this program. They will make drawings and will talk about their drawings. Audio recordings of your child's responses will be made. As soon as they are transcribed, the audio recordings will be deleted. The transcriptions will not have your child's name on them. Only the interviewer and the individual who transcribes the recordings will hear your child's voice.

These recordings will be collected on a date to be specified, and the researchers will interview your child individually in a quiet area of the classroom while other children are present. Only the researchers will have access to the transcriptions of the recordings and the child's drawings.

We will use the recordings to find out how children think and feel about their participation in the new educational program. We believe that the children's perceptions are important in making decisions about the value of new teaching methods.

If your child is selected for an interview, we also will want to interview you about your perceptions of your child's participation in the program. Audio recordings of your responses will be made. As soon as they are transcribed, the audio recordings will be deleted. The transcriptions will not have your name on them. Only the interviewer and the individual who transcribes the recordings will hear your voice.

These recordings will be collected on a date to be specified, and the researchers will interview you individually in a place that is quiet and comfortable for you. Only the researchers will have access to the transcriptions of the recordings.

We will use the recordings to find out how parents think and feel about their child's participation in the new educational program. We believe that children's and parent's perceptions are important in making decisions about the value of new teaching methods.

You also will be asked to respond to questionnaires about the use of the new teaching method. When questionnaires are distributed, by responding to the questionnaire, you will be giving your permission for your responses to be analyzed by the researchers.

If you would like to check that you are OK with the information or recordings from the study, or if you have any questions, please ask the principal, Myra Wearne (Janes), about the process.

When you have read this information, Dr. Maker or Ms. Wearne (Janes) will be available to answer any questions you may have at this time. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact:

C. June Maker, [junemaker@email.arizona.edu](mailto:junemaker@email.arizona.edu) or [junemaker@hotmail.com](mailto:junemaker@hotmail.com)

Myra Wearne (Janes), 9955 2822, [myra.janes@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:myra.janes@det.nsw.edu.au)

This information sheet is for you to keep.