Raising the Standards at Kangaroo Island Community Education

- In the first 2 days of 2011 we met as a leadership group and discussed ways we could "Raise the standards" across KICE. A focus question was developed "How can we as a community build on the capacity within KICE to raise the standards of teaching and learning to exceed state and national bench-marks".

- Leaders discussed expectations across the board (School, Staff, Parents, Students, Community and relevant stakeholders). These ideas were collated and created the Raising Standards Document

- During my professional development meetings with staff we discussed the raising standards document and how we could use section 2.4 of the TfEL document to support this. I also worked with my year 10 class and asked their opinions of the document. What was evident throughout these meetings that there was a lot to do and we needed a place to start.

- I talked to Ian through my own line management meetings about a strategy to begin to raise the standards and this is what we planned.

- Firstly we took one section of the Raising Standards Document which was "To scaffold/increase the skills of students to create independent learners". During a staff meeting I asked staff two questions "How do you do this in your classroom? And what is one way you could improve this" I allowed for group discussion and then staff reported back their thoughts. There was quite valuable feedback however it was evident that some staff had little or no knowledge of scaffolding. So I decided to create a learning team for staff to look at scaffolding.

- During Term 3 learning teams at KICE were developed to enable staff to work together during the usual staff meeting times. One of the teams created was a "Scaffolding team". This team looked at articles around scaffolding and what it meant to scaffold and fed this information back to staff during the last meeting of the term.

- Independently I conducted a data analysis with my year 10 class. I have surveyed them all, using the review tools handbook. I have collated their SBM for the past 3 years as well as their attendance and their achievement in their class. From the results I have found I am experimenting in my classroom using different teaching methodologies and techniques.

- One clear correlation was between student's behaviour in the classroom and their home environment. Of course this is understandable, if a student has not slept because they were looking after younger siblings they are grumpier and have shorter patience in the classroom.

- Another was student expectations. The data showed that if the students had high expectations of what was acceptable their achievement was high, irrelevant of other factors. However, students need to know what is expected of them and that is where scaffolding comes in. I found that if I set clear, concise assessment tasks as well as demonstrating what I expected of them and then giving appropriate feedback the students wanted to succeed and therefore set their own higher expectations.

- I am still currently interpreting the results of my analysis and trying new teaching methodologies to enable students to develop the skills necessary to become independent learners. I am also using John Hatti's research on effect size to analyse my data deeper.

- I plan to share my results with the rest of the staff to model how scaffolding enables students to achieve to the best of their abilities.