



HIGH SCHOOL SETS TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR THE STATE

25 August 2004

Port Lincoln High School is setting up an electronics hub that could grow into a higher centre of learning for students and teachers across South Australia.

Principal David Roberts and teacher Gary Pelletier said the hub could be set up in cooperation with industry, the government and the Education Department.

David is an electronics engineer while Gary is one of three teachers in the State who can teach this course.

Mrs. Penfold said "We can take this opportunity to set up an electronics hub that could grow into a centre of excellence in electronics for the whole of the state and that would be a model for the rest of Australia and even the world."

Mr. Pelletier pointed out that the electronics program is based around problem solving and building intelligent robots as part of the course. For instance, these robots could be turned into the small rover robots that go out from the mother robot on Mars to gather sample to deliver to the mother robot.

"Our students will be able to program microchips which control the robots that normally take a highly paid and experienced engineer to do. They use the award winning CoreChart graphical program developed by eLabtronics in South Australia which is used in state-of-the-art real life applications in the automotive, telecommunication, bio-technology, defence and advanced manufacturing industries," Mr. Pelletier.

Students and teachers can take home eLabtronics CoreChart for free for 30 days to enable them to build and to program small robotic vehicles.

Mr. Pelletier said even now the course is opening doors to industry and jobs and this knowledge is being applied in the local aquaculture industry with a vocational education training course in electronics being planned for next year.

Through the Port Lincoln Electronic Hub our students will have access to leading edge learning technologies such as CoreChart which metropolitan students access through the University High School Robotic Peer Mentoring Program that won the Premier's Science and Research Funding.

The school's current budget of \$300 was doubled by a \$300 contribution from the Member for Flinders Liz Penfold. Other sponsorship that has been given to the hub include \$1000 from eLabtronics in the form of CoreChart Master training at eLabtronics. Flinders Ports have agreed to help with travel expense up to \$1000 and local firm West Coast Security are providing batteries for use by students.

Mrs Penfold asked for other businesses and individuals to donate to the school's electronics program in order that the potential of this once-in-a lifetime opportunity be realised.

“This is the type of modern technology where distance need not be a handicap because of the use of information technology and computers. Using CoreChart the Port Lincoln Electronic Hub students will soon be able to program robots sitting at, for example, the Investigator Science & Technology Centre in Adelaide. The program will also build on the school’s successful entry in the National Solar cycle challenge last year and the fine reputation and profile that this gave our High School,” she said.

Donors can contact the high school on 8682 3677.