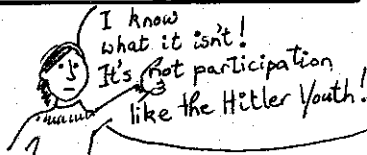


# CONNECT

OCTOBER 1984

No. 29

## STUDENT-PARTICIPATION



What is it?

A pictorial summary of our April in-service Day



So what is it?

Being on the School Council

Having an SRC

Having a say about what + how we learn

Having a say about school rules

Work Experience & Community Involvement  
Cross Age Tutoring

**YES BUT**



.... When do I get my homework done?  
.... My teacher tells me what to do I never get asked what I want to do!  
.... He's become a real pest since he joined the SRC!  
.... What if we have an accident on the way to meetings?  
.... What about kids who don't know what they want?  
.... When do we get time to meet?  
.... How can we negotiate learning?

To enjoy the learning process

To know what's going on in school

To be listened to with respect

To have my opinion valued!

To choose what I will learn

To know why I'm learning

To be treated as an equal

To be concerned for all students

## Student Rights

WHAT DO WE NEED TO ATTAIN THESE RIGHTS ???

encouragement  
**TIME**

Sympathetic  
Staff

AWARE  
INTERESTED  
STUDENTS

MORE  
CONFIDENCE

FABIAN '84

# CONTENTS

3	ARTICLES	Opening the Airwaves: Reservoir HS	Maria Papadopoulos, Megan Johnson, Anna Ninis
9		SRC: Altona HS .....	Lisa Foster, Julie Ahern
5	REPORTS	Student Festival Week - South Central Region (Vic)	
6		Student Meeting In-Service - South Central Region (Vic)	
21		Youth Forum '84 - NSW	
10	FEATURES	Student Support Structures: Student Working Party (Vic)	
11		Student Counseling and Advice Bureau (Vic)	
11		Regional Association of Student Governments	
14		Towards Accreditation: Coburg High School .....	Jill Anwyl
15		Albert Park High School .....	Barbara Gibson
15		Wendouree High Tech School ....	Allen Jones
17		Students as Researchers: 1. PEP .....	Greg Cornish, Garry Coventry
19		2. RAP (Collingwood EC) ...	Michael Metcalfe
4	REGULAR	Friends of Youth Participation	
13		Your Comments .....	Marano, Ziras, Jones, Williams, Surgey
26		News and Reviews: Education for Peace & Disarmament; SABS on 3PBS-FM	
27		Material Available: Articles; Publications Received; Other Sources	
28		Subscription and Materials Order Form	

## NASC Booklets

It was mentioned in the last issue of CONNECT that material had just arrived from the National Association of Student Councils in the United States. We've received the following booklets and these are also available for perusal by arrangement:

### ¶ Student Councils

Parliamentary Procedure Without Stress (Roberta McDow, 1978-80)  
Winning Combinations for Junior High/Middle School Student Councils (Earl Reum 1975-80)  
Student Council Activity Resource Book (James E Ferguson 1980)  
Student Structures: Moving Towards Student Government (Donald F Murphy 1974)  
The Effective Student Council in the 80s (Sheila Dahling 1982)  
Planning and Evaluating Student Activity Programs (Douglas A Christensen 1978)  
Junior High Student Council: Foundation for Leadership (1981)  
Organising a Middle School or Junior High School Student Council (Urma English 1972-83)  
Workshops: Laboratories for Student Leaders (Keith E Akins 1974-80)  
School Activities and the Law (John L Strobe Jr 1984)  
The Spirit of Student Council (Earl Reum 1981)

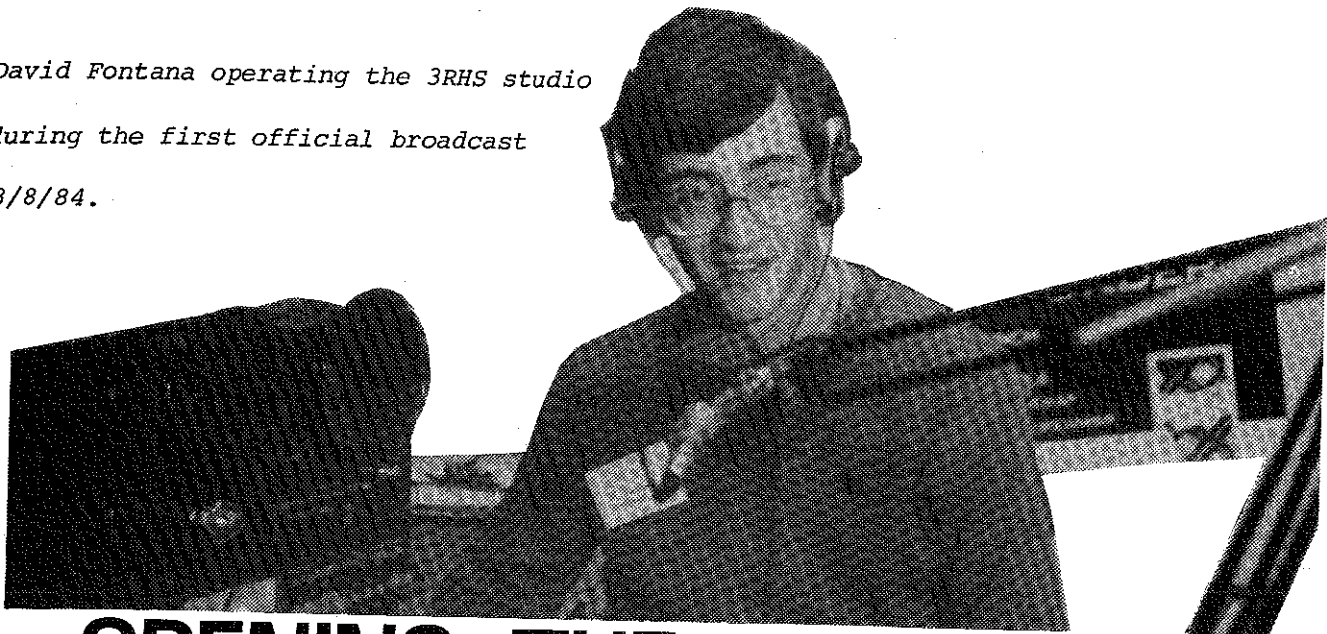
### ¶ Other

Coming of Age: A Musical Drama About Being Thirteen (music and playscript) (1982)  
The Mood of American Youth (1984)  
A Review and Comment on the National Reports (Theodore R Sizer, 1983)

### ¶ Periodicals

The Practitioner: Vol 8 No 1 (October 1981) - "Student Activities"  
 Vol 9 No 2 (January 1983) - "Grades"  
A Legal Memorandum: May 1981 - "Some Alternatives to School Discipline"  
 April 1984 - "Student Press and Distribution Issues"  
Curriculum Report: Vol 8 No 1 (October 1978) - "A Decade of Alternative Schools"  
 Vol 9 No 1 (September 1979) - "A Changing, More Challenging 12th Grade"  
 Vol 12 No 4 (June 1983) - "Learning/Teaching Style"

David Fontana operating the 3RHS studio  
during the first official broadcast  
8/8/84.



# OPENING THE AIRWAVES

## RESERVOIR HIGH SCHOOL

Once upon a time there was a Supplementary Grants Committee which had multitudinous bank accounts. Rather than commit a daring armed hold-up that would rival the Ronald Biggs' Great Train Robbery, the students opted for a more legitimate method. A proposal was put forward to build a production studio. Ridiculed by their peer group and mocked by their teachers, the students persevered - a radio station was born ...

And so, at Reservoir High School on Wednesday 8th August, the school radio station 3RHS was officially opened. Guests included Mr Ray Davis, President of the School Council, Mr Bereson, School Principal, parents on the Supplementary Grants Committee, students and teachers involved with the project.

Also in attendance to mark the event were representatives: Roger Holdsworth from the radio station 3CR; Bill Pinell from 3EON-FM, Chris and Stratos from 3RRR-FM and Brian Wise from 3PBS-FM.

After speeches and the ceremonial 'cutting of the ribbon' (actually we used recording tape) the celebrations got underway. A bounty of culinary delights and a continuous flow of fizzy beverages complemented the scintillating conversation that took place between the mere mortals and the creme de la creme of the radio world.

Overall, the function was a success, thanks to the time and effort contributed by students and teachers.

Behind the radio station itself, there operates a body of committees responsible for organising the successful opening. These committees are now involved in the everyday management of the station.

The ground rules by which the station functions are set down by the Management Group. These include the standard of behaviour expected by students whilst on air, the booking system and the training of students and staff interested in using the station.

There are a number of subcommittees: Technical Committee - involved in the technical maintenance of the station; Library Committee - responsible for the cataloguing of records and tapes; Production Committee - involved in the recording of radio programs; Publicity Committee - responsible for informing the school of the overall development of 3RHS.

Meetings are held on a regular basis by each committee to discuss matters of concern. The secretary of the sub-committee then reports to the Management Group. Any problems or suggestions arising from these meetings are then dealt with by the Management.

Now that 3RHS is almost fully operational, it will be used in the following ways:

- Radio Production electives for years 9, 10 and 11;
- lunchtime broadcasts;
- in classes such as Social Studies, English, History, Maths etc to produce documentaries, serials, ads, creative writing, plays etc;

- production of and exchange of tapes with other schools;
- to train teachers and students in radio operation skills before, during and after school;
- to encourage students to work together, with staff, and participate in decision-making and day-to-day operation of a facility within the school than can be used right across the curriculum.

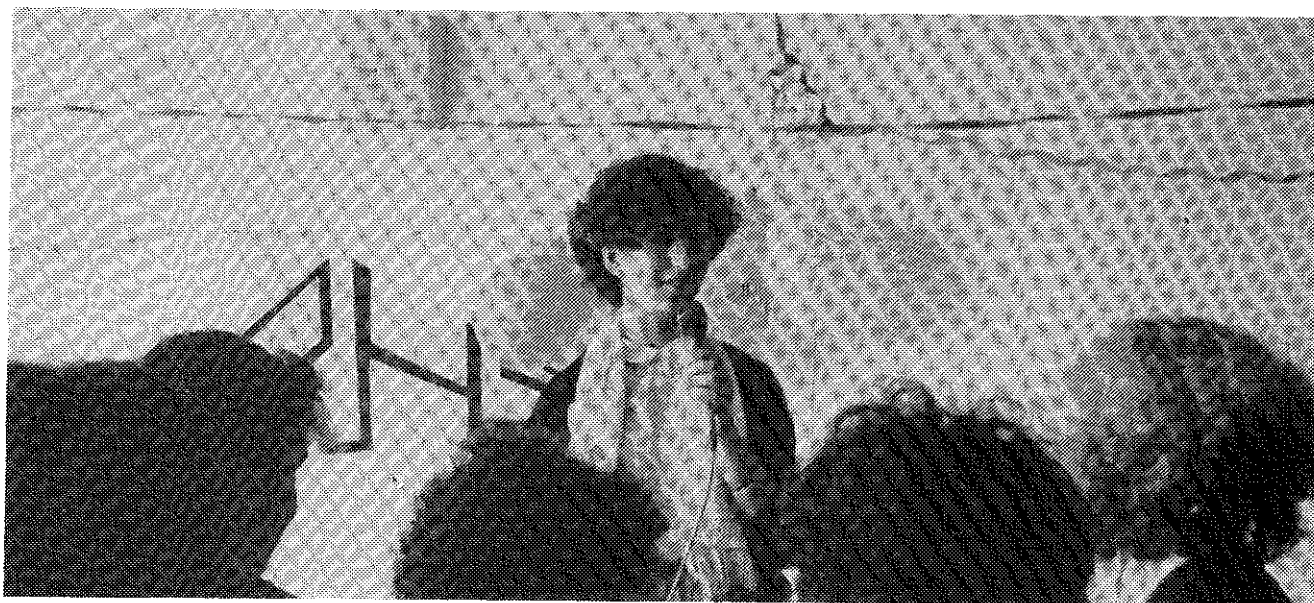
At the present time, 3RHS is able to broadcast to six classrooms either simultaneously or independently, and to four listening posts in the school ground. All these outputs are controlled by on/off switches in the studio. The studio itself consists of an eight-channel mixer, two turntables, cassette deck, reel to reel, two superscopes able to be patched into the mixer, one announcer microphone and two guest microphones. Further equipment has been applied for delivery in 1985.

Even though the studio has only recently become operational, students have already planned, produced and broadcast numerous programs and promotions such as: a 45-minute special to celebrate Maths week; promos for Italian, Greek and International Nights; original plays, stories and comedy sketches, current affairs reports, interviews with members of the school community, local community, rock bands etc. All of the above programs have involved the use of scripting, editing, dubbing and studio operation.

Anyone interested in looking at and/or discussing the possible uses of a production studio such as 3RHS in the school and local community, are encouraged to contact Peter Maddock or Jeff Cooper at Reservoir High School, Plenty Rd., Reservoir 3073.

Ph: (03) 470.3555.

*Maria Papadopoulos, Megan Johnson, Anna Ninis*



*Alex Neskes, a member of the 3RHS management group, introducing guests at the Grand Opening.*

## FRIENDS OF Y.P.

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of the following contributions since last issue:

### SUSTAINING SUBSCRIBER (\$100):

Urban Education Studies Group, Melbourne CAE (Vic)

### PATRON SUBSCRIBERS (\$20 pa):

Colin Hollow (Croydon, Vic)  
 Victoria Triggs (Coburg, Vic)  
 Ross Dean (Reservoir, Vic)  
 VISE (Melbourne, Vic)  
 Les Mayes (Moonee Ponds, Vic)



# STUDENT FESTIVAL WEEK

The Student Festival Week was held in the South-Central Region of the Education Department (Melbourne, Vic) from September 17th to 21st. The last issue of Connect outlined some of the planned activities. While a full report is being produced, the following brief outlines are to hand:

*All of the sessions had student reporters.*

*Monday 17th; 11-12.30 PEP, Thugs, Rock'n'Dole: a play by unemployed youth*

At Caulfield High School hall. There were 108 people in the audience from 5 schools. Three student reporters attended from Elwood High and it was videotaped by students from Waverley High School. The play was well received and staff wanted to hire the group for their school.

*Tuesday 18th; TEAC In-Service on Student Participation*

At Minimbah. There were 60 participants from 9 schools. According to evaluation sheets, students felt it to be very successful: "how articulate students are or can be when given an opportunity" ... "it was easy to express your opinions".

*Learning about producing a school newspaper*

At Albert Park High. Two Baltara students attended but over 50 phone enquiries were received, mainly from primary schools. Maybe this can be repeated next year.

*Workshop for Girls and Parents on computers*

At Ardoch Resource Centre. Twelve participants: students (pre-school, primary through to year 12), parents and teachers, representing 5 schools. People felt they had learnt a lot. Some wanted more sessions and others are taking the issue up in their own schools.

*Wednesday 19th; Education Programs for Unemployed Youth*

At Collingwood TAFE. There were 54 students from three schools sampling EPUY programs such as bricklaying, cottage crafts, typing, photography over a 2-hour session.

*PEP, Thugs, Rock'n'Dole - play*

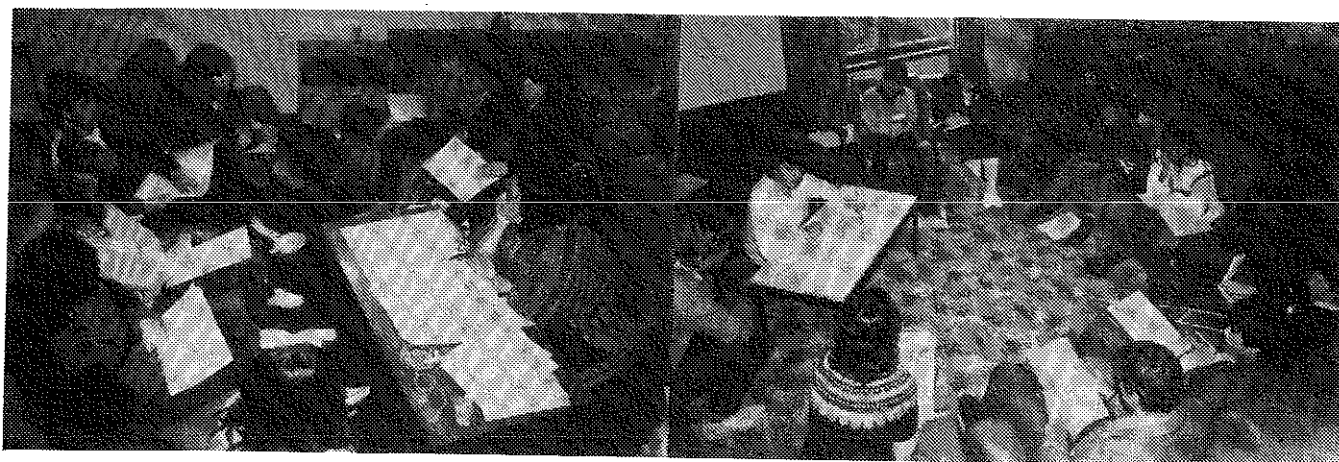
At Collingwood Technical School. This time, 48 students from six schools attended. Good discussion with the students at the end of the performance.

*Thursday 20th; Blackburn Papers - Student Response*

At Albert Park High School. 24 students from years 9 and 10. The session went well and has led to a letter to the Ministerial Review Committee.

*Primary Schools Plays and Discussion*

At Errol Street Primary School. Very successful - feedback comments from 'STARS', students and Burnley Primary School.



### *Girls Start All The Trouble - girls on School Councils*

Participants were 25 students and 5 teachers from 8 schools. A very successful session leading to plans for student exchange visits. A student planning group has been set up - contact Lesley Podesta or Victoria Triggs on (03) 520.7666. The first meeting will be at Collingwood Education Centre. Further girls days and a possible girls camp are being looked at by this group.

### *Songs of Australia - performance by Dennis Gibbons*

At Richmond High School. There were four student visitors. Quite good session.

### *Friday 21st; Student Forum*

This was held at the Urban Camp. Over 46 students attended, together with 10 teachers and 9 group leaders - 14 schools were represented, including three from outside the region and one primary school. There was a student panel on "participation in action" and a range of workshops. A small group of students has formed to look at beginning a regional student group. Contact Victoria Triggs on (03) 520.7666.

Student reporters from Albert Park High School and a student video-taping group from Waverley High School covered the day. More forums were requested by participants.

### *Bungles - lunch by kids for kids*

Twelve students from two schools attended. This will transfer to Holmesglen campus.

## STUDENT MEETING IN-SERVICE

Not a part of the Student Festival Week, but associated with it, was the in-service held in the region on "Student Involvement in Meetings". This in-service was planned by students from Caulfield Technical School, Brighton High School and Albert Park High School. The in-service was held on September 12th at Brighton High School and included: introductory speakers (student, teacher), the film 'Meetings Bloody Meetings', discussion groups and practice meetings.

### *Introductory Speeches:*

1.

*Eva Kafkalas is a year 9 student on the SRC at Albert Park High School. Eva talked about how her attitude to school has changed since her involvement with the SRC. She said that before being an SRC member, she saw school as boring and teachers as unapproachable and superior. Now she felt on a more even footing with teachers and realised how much more complex the running of the school is. She claimed she now enjoyed her schooling a lot more.*

2.

*Mersina Anaipakos is a year 11 student on the School Council at Albert Park High. She spoke about how different SRC meetings were to School Council meetings. Mersina felt that SRC meetings were informal and open, that everyone could get a say and she was not afraid to speak up. But School Council meetings were strictly formal and students had a small time-slot on the agenda. She also felt that up until now she had felt intimidated by adults and had been too scared to express her opinion on matters other than the Student Council report. However, by having some experience in public speaking, such as at this in-service, she hoped she would be more prepared to speak up in future meetings. (Since then, Mersina has become a student representative on the state-level Student Advisory Group to the student representative on the PEP Committee.)*

3.

*Prue Bermingham is a teacher at Albert Park High School.*

When Dora Kambas, one of my year 9 students, asked me at school whether I'd give this talk today, it occurred to me that I'd never before spoken to an audience bigger than a classroom or a staff meeting. When I pondered on this, I decided that perhaps one of the reasons I'd managed to avoid public speaking in my adult life had a lot to do with the fact that I hadn't been adequately prepared for this role while at school

and that I'd never taken part in decision-making processes while at school beyond whether to do French or German the following year. I think that leaving school without having developed confidence in such areas as public speaking, organising meetings and acting on your opinions, makes it harder in adult life to get involved in all sorts of important social issues.

#### ACTIVE MEMBERS IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

Hopefully, students being involved in bodies like SRCs will help them acquire these important skills, because I think we do need training to become active members of a democracy. We supposedly live in a working democracy, but I certainly find myself asking questions like:

*How much does the average person really think about all the issues affecting their lives eg: the nuclear debate;  
the funding of private schools;  
and (according to one writer in last Saturday's Age) the serious problem of the quickly deteriorating state of Australia's soils (which was something I certainly hadn't thought about before).*

How much do we say to ourselves: *Well, I'll let someone else fight about that or I'm just too busy with my personal commitments or Politics! That's just for power hungry people and I can't be bothered with all that.*

Is it enough to reach voting age and fill in your form correctly? Or does being in a democracy involve thinking deeply about a lot of issues, discussing them with other people, perhaps writing letters and forming action groups, letting your MP or local council know just what you feel about something? All this, of course, takes time and effort and commitment and I'm the first person to confess that it's all too easy to find excuses. Very often, it is lack of confidence and lack of knowledge about how things work that make people reluctant or apathetic about getting involved.

*How can we change our society so that it is considered a normal thing for people to be concerned and active in the issues that affect their lives? It's said that schools reflect the sort of society we live in. Perhaps if we want our society to be a genuine democracy then the preparation for that has to begin in school and that means making it possible for students to take a greater part in school government.*

#### THE SRC AT ALBERT PARK HIGH SCHOOL

Up until this year, the SRC at Albert Park High School has been mainly involved in fund-raising for discos, sports equipment etc. This year the SRC has become involved in the decision-making processes of the school. The main area in which this has occurred has been in reviewing the school rules. The idea of this is that if students are just told what the school rules are and have had no say in formulating them, then they are more likely to break them, to say they are not relevant or simply not think about them at all. If students have a chance to look at the existing rules, discuss their usefulness or irrelevance, discuss why we have rules in the first place, what the school would be like without them, and then take part in formulating a new set of rules, then perhaps students will see them as worth respecting.

With this idea in mind, a Code of Behaviour Working Party was set up. A lot of work at different stages had to take place. Firstly classroom discussions, then a general assembly, more classroom discussions and then electing a representative from each class to be directly involved in the Working Party. Then followed a series of meetings where the Code of Behaviour Working Party members had to discuss in depth all the existing rules, what purpose they served, what students thought about them and so on.

The Working Party is now at the stage of having produced a draft proposal for the staff and then the School Council to consider. It is interesting to note that this new Code of Behaviour is not radically different to the old one. The students have simplified the old code and deleted certain rules. They have not suggested any new ones.

#### CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Some rules are still in the midst of controversy. For example, at present smoking is absolutely forbidden, but would the school be better off providing an official smoking area with the idea of preventing all the secret smoking that goes on in the toilets? One of the difficulties of being involved in the democratic process is that very often in-depth discussions can reveal as many problems as it solves. The smoking issue, for example, is a very complex one. What would parents think of a permitted smoking area at school? What would the general community think?



## RULES

Many of the rules, for example "fighting and acts of violence and brutality are absolutely unacceptable" are much the same as the original rules, although an interesting fact to emerge from discussions was that students' perceptions of a violent act may be different to teachers'. For example, some students did not see verbal harrassment of a girl walking down a corridor as a violent act. Clearly discussions like these raise all sorts of interesting issues.

Some rules, for example "bicycles at present may not be brought to school" have been accepted on the condition that the school tries to solve the problem of not having adequate space for bike racks.

Some rules have been partially changed. Whereas before, students were forbidden to bring any valuables to school, now it's suggested that valuables be their own responsibility but that they not be taken into class.

The students have also recommended certain sorts of punishment for rule breaking:

Vandalism: students should pay for major damage;

Disruption: students who persistently disrupt lessons should have their parents brought up to the school.

Students have also shown a concern with prevention. The school should have an active non-smoking campaign twice a year.

As ideal as this sounds, however, to have students involved in all these processes, how has it really worked in reality?

Firstly, a lot of kids didn't really get involved in the initial class discussions about the rules and their purposes.

Secondly, some of the Working Party members found it difficult to keep up the commitment to lunchtime meetings. After all, lunchtimes are a break and an important social time in school life. Meetings, week after week, require commitment, can become tedious and in fact some students lost interest. Teaching staff also found it difficult to become involved in yet more lunchtime meetings. Some staff members felt that not enough staff had shown overall support to the students.

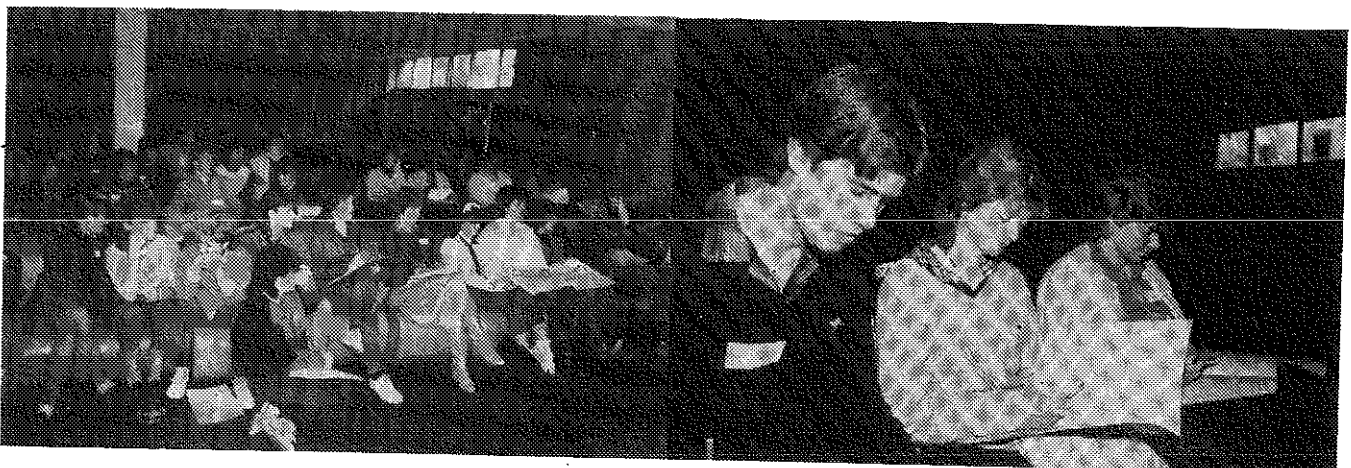
And what does it reveal that the new Code of Behaviour is not that much different to the old? That the initial set of rules were pretty good to begin with? Or that students didn't really get to grips with new ways of perceiving things? Or that perhaps teachers and students agree on a lot of things, but of course students haven't had a say before? And in the end, will the students' proposals be accepted or will the power of the school bureaucracy and the teachers prove too strong?

## IT'S A START

My own feeling is that this process is very much at the initial stages. There is the danger that only motivated students will get involved and that those who do, will lose interest if issues drag on for too long. And if students' ideas are not taken seriously then it is understandable if they lose faith in the whole process. The problems in fact seem very much like problems in the wider democracy of society.

## HOW WILL TEACHERS REACT?

As a teacher, how does it feel to have students who are asking more questions, wanting more of a say and so on? I think it can put more pressures on the teacher. For example, students who do not fear your authority and feel that you have just given a series of irrelevant or boring lessons or that you are setting too little or too much





homework or that you favour certain kids over others, may not be afraid to say so. Providing this takes place in an atmosphere of mutual respect then I can only see this as a good thing. To be accountable for what we do, to be open to criticism and praise, to be prepared to change - these are difficult things for anybody to do, and it is always easier to hide behind a mask. But if students are to become more responsible, more mature, more thoughtful about everything happening around them, then providing the appropriate learning opportunities means breaking down the more formal student/teacher structures. How you do this while at the same time retaining the conventional order of the classroom is, I can assure you, a difficult challenge for any teacher.

#### A BETTER WORLD

If we are to change our world into a better place to live in, then adult members of society have to be more critical, more thinking and prepared to act on their beliefs. I don't think you will get this happening until schools provide learning opportunities, not just of the strictly academic sort, but which lead to the development of skills and confidence that enable people to take part in self-government. Albert Park High School has made a beginning. Is it a sham, will it flower into something better or just fizzle out? It's always nice to end a talk on an optimistic note but I feel that if we accept the premise that schools reflect the society we now have, then there is a long way to go before schools become learning centres in the deepest sense of the word and students emerge with confidence and skills to tackle a pretty difficult world. Hopefully more involvement in school government will give students these chances.

Prue Bermingham, Albert Park High School,  
88 Graham St., Albert Park 3206

A full report of this in-service includes the program, reports of discussion groups on meeting procedures and evaluation comments. A copy is available from Suzane Fabian, South Central Regional Office, PO Box 88, Balaclava 3183. Ph (03) 520.7666. It is also listed by CONNECT as photocopy #191 (\$1.00).

---

## SRC: ALTONA HIGH SCHOOL

In term 2 1983, a meeting was called of interested students from all levels of the school, to discuss the changes to the new School Council. Student participation on the new Council would increase from two to three members. In order for these representatives to be effective voices for all students, it became clear that students needed an organised way of collecting ideas and opinions from students, and also of relaying information from School Council meetings back to students.

Interested students began to meet regularly as a Planning Committee to plan a structure that would enable students to have an effective organisation. Considerable discussion amongst staff and students led to the present Committee which is outlined in the constitution. Briefly, it is composed of three elected representatives at years 7 to 11, two elected representatives at year 12, and the co-option of the three student members of School Council.

Over the last 12 months, the Planning Committee has gone to considerable efforts to inform students of the purpose of an SRC. Publicity days, discussion forums and fund-raising entertainment have been organised to educate and involve as many students as possible before the elections, which were held at the end of term 2, 1984. The elections were administered by staff and voting was compulsory for all students. The calibre of students elected to the SRC in terms of their interest, personal time commitment, abilities and enthusiasm indicate the genuine support of the SRC by the student body as a whole.

#### TERM THREE 1984: THE FUNCTIONING OF AN ELECTED SRC

In term 3, 1984, the SRC is meeting regularly to organise and plan for its effective participation in the running of the school, with parents, teachers and the community. Its first tasks have been to elect office bearers and to ratify its constitution. Students now have a considerable task before them, to educate themselves in the running of the school: how to have an effective involvement in decision-making, how to run the committee effectively. Naturally, considerable support is needed from teachers in these tasks and staff have passed a motion giving their unanimous support to the SRC.

Whilst Miss Ahern maintains a direct involvement in and responsibility for the day-to-day running of the SRC, many staff are also involved through class discussion, meeting with SRC members and discussing ideas and strategies.

As a new Committee, the SRC has a great deal to learn in order to be an effective voice in the decision-making process of the school community. State ALP Youth Policy in Education stresses:

1. That post primary schools should be structured in such a way that students will take increasing responsibility for their learning during the secondary years. This would involve creating mechanisms which would ensure their participation in the development of the curriculum.
2. That young people should be encouraged to participate in school level decision-making on both educational and administrative issues through membership of School Councils, Student Representative Councils and other processes of school government.
3. Financial assistance should be provided to student organisations to support research and publication.

In order for students to participate as an effective group, it is vital that they receive financial assistance, so that their time and energy is not absorbed in merely fund-raising and in order to survive as a legitimate body. A Treasurer has been duly elected by the SRC. This student, with the assistance of Miss Ahern and another student from the SRC, will be responsible for maintaining a ledger book with all expenditure recorded. The SRC has opened an account with a small amount of money raised through publicity activities. The Bank has offered to meet with students and inservice them on the maintenance of financial records, book-keeping etc.

The running of the SRC is a program aimed at involving students in decision-making on both educational and administrative issues. It is a program that will potentially affect the total student body. By giving financial support to this program, the School Council would also be indicating its commitment to the philosophy behind it.

*Lisa Foster (Treasurer)*

*Julie Ahern (Pupil Welfare Coordinator)*

*on behalf of the SRC, Altona High School,*

*Civic Pde., Altona 3018*

# STUDENT SUPPORT STRUCTURES

Support structures for student participation in school decision-making are growing up in several areas. Some of these have become largely or completely student operated. We highlight two such network structures in Melbourne:

## SWP

The Student Working Party is a representative body of students from secondary schools in the Western Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.

The Student Working Party began in 1983, organised through the Supplementary Grants Program (Disadvantaged Schools Program). At this stage, it operated as a much smaller group of interested students, teachers and administrators, meeting to discuss problems related to student participation.

At the beginning of 1984, with the support of the Student Action Project and the Western Metropolitan Regional Office, the Student Working Party expanded to invite all secondary schools in the region to be represented. The running and organisation of the Student Working Party was handed over to the students.

The objectives of the Student Working Party are two-fold. One: to represent students from the Western Metropolitan Region on education decision-making structures (regional and state committees). Two: to provide student-based support for student participation in decision making at the school level. The Student Working Party enables students to have a collective voice in issues that concern them and breaks down the isolation which exists between Student Representative Councils. The Student Working Party has student representation on Curriculum Committees, the Transition Education Committee, State Participation and Equity Program Committee and the Regional Multicultural Committee.

The Student Working Party is run by students. There is no formal executive or membership. Meetings are organised and run on a rotation basis with different schools taking turns to host monthly meetings. The host school for the month is responsible for sending out invitations, chairing and documenting the meeting. The process works well, in that a wide range of students are involved in the organisation of the group and gain experience in running meetings. Also, it ensures that the working party operates on a cooperative rather than hierarchical structure.

Although membership of the Student Working Party is open, the aim is to have each of the 40 secondary schools in the region represented. So far, over 30 schools have attended meetings, with numbers at each meeting ranging from 30 to 80. The age range of students involved is considerable, covering years 7 to 12.

Although the Student Working Party receives support from the Student Action Project, the Western Metropolitan Regional Office, teachers and administrators, it as yet has no independent administrative base or money to operate.

For more details, contact: Steven Mifsud, Kealba High School, Driscolls Rd.,  
Kealba 3021. ph (03) 366.3903

## SCAB

The Student Counselling and Advice Bureau is being established in response to requests from students (together with parents and teachers) in the Tullamarine Region, for an independent student-run service to provide:

- (a) information and advice on matters concerning them, such as: the Participation and Equity Program, use of student grants, the School Improvement Plan, the Supplementary Grants Program, the Equal Opportunities Program etc, as well as providing advice and practical help in writing submissions for projects;
- (b) coordination of student participation in decision-making at the school level, and provision of information on student participation and Student Council contacts within individual schools;
- (c) initiation of the establishment of a 'student working party' in this region and administrative support for a 'student working party' once established;
- (d) access to duplicating and typing facilities for student newsletters and other publications;
- (e) a publicity and public relations service aiming at "increasing community awareness of, and support for, the value and purposes of secondary education for all" as stated in the PEP Guidelines.

For more details, contact: Peter Ziras, Lynall Hall Community School,  
178 Victoria St., Brunswick 3056.  
Ph: (03) 380.9837

## RASG

Another network - the Regional Association of Student Government (RASG) has existed for some time in the Western Region of NSW:

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF RASG: TO AUGUST 1984

In the late 1970s, a number of schools in the Western Region of the NSW Department of Education were developing student governments and councils. These included Nyngan, Canoblas High, Bathurst High and Boorowa Central. However, West Wyalong High had a system far more developed and effective than others.

In 1980, students from West Wyalong made a presentation at Youth Forum in Bathurst (a state-wide forum for secondary students). Their topic was Student Government,

Rights and Responsibilities. As a result of this, members of the Schools Commission encouraged West Wyalong High School (WWHS) to put a submission for the development of a regional association of student governments.

This was done and a grant of \$7600 was received. During 1981, WWHS developed the basis for an association. Together with the Youth Affairs Council of NSW, they surveyed student representation in Western Region schools. They published four newsletters, a student handbook for their school and "The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to Student Government - a Manual for Teachers".

Most importantly, they conducted training workshops for student group leaders, who then ran the first annual camp. The aims of the camp and those succeeding it were to develop leadership, decision-making and organisational skills necessary for student government and for later life as well.

The first camp ran for five days, involved 110 students and 20 teachers from 21 high and central schools. Part of the camp involved the inaugural meeting of the regional association which was from this point to be known as the Regional Association of Student Government (RASG).

During the meeting, an outline of a constitution was developed and a new executive committee elected. This was based at Dubbo and involved all three high schools, Delroy, Dubbo South and Dubbo High.

Their task was daunting. They had to establish structures of RASG, raise funds, write the constitution and organise a camp. They applied for and received a further Initiatives Grant from the Schools Commission for \$1000. Funds were raised locally through the business community and their own efforts. Three newsletters were published.

The second camp was held at Wambangalang Field Study Centre near Dubbo in October. Prior to this, three leadership workshops were run to prepare student leaders to run group activities at the camp. Teachers came from the three Dubbo schools, Parkes and Bathurst High.

At the camp, the constitution was formally accepted and a new executive elected: Bathurst High. The camp was attended by 70 students from 15 schools plus ten teachers. However, due to Departmental restrictions, the camp ran for only three days, including a weekend.

There were many problems faced by the 1983 committee, the main one being funds. Communication in such a large region is expensive and the committee had to produce newsletters, information and enlist support from schools. The grant funds were no longer available and in a drought and recession, the business community was reluctant to support RASG.

It was up to the students themselves. After initial grants from the Law Foundation of NSW, Bathurst High P & C, and membership fees from schools, over \$1000 was raised through BBQs, roller discos, cake stalls, activities and concerts and the sales of T-shirts and badges. However, when trying to run RASG, this was the bare minimum and involved compromises in many areas, especially in the quality of printing, the quantity of content and the availability of newsletters.

The third annual camp was held at Lake Burrendong Sport and Recreation Camp in November. Three leadership workshops were held before the camp with leaders from Bathurst, Kelso, Cowra and West Wyalong High Schools. The camp involved 70 students from 10 high schools and 12 teachers. One feature of the camps is that 90% of the program is run by student leaders. The adults function purely as a support group in cases of need, which are very few.

As a result of the camp, Kelso High became the new executive. Action plans were developed to promote RASG, solve problems of specific schools and help communication. A committee was formed to develop a plan of action to send representatives to the USA in 1985 as part of International Youth Year (IYY) to attend conferences and leadership camps run by the National Association of Student Councils (NASC) with which RASG is affiliated.

A proposal was moved and accepted that, in future, camps be run in term 1 so as to better enable those attending to carry out action in their schools during the year.

During the first half of 1984, two more newsletters were printed. Now retired Western Region Director of the Department of Education, Mr Doug Rickard, accepted the position of RASG patron. West Wyalong High was elected as the host school to organise the 1985 Leadership Camp, and plans for a Junior Camp for years 7 and 8 are well under way. Cowra High is organising the latter for November 1984 and response from schools as far away as Broken Hill has been most encouraging.

In late March, a successful leadership camp was held at Lake Burrendong. Organised by the 1984 Kelso High RASG Committee, it was attended by 110 students and 11 teachers from 14 schools. Student leaders from Bathurst, Kelso and West Wyalong ran the program.

They ranged in age from year 8 to year 11. Two year 11 students (from Bathurst and West Wyalong) who had been group leaders at previous camps, functioned as adult advisers, thus increasing still further the amount and sophistication of young people's management of their own activities.

The RASG IYY Subcommittee (90% staffed by students) was recognised by the NSW IYY Secretariat as the first self-organised IYY committee in the state. Its project to take 20 Western Region students to the USA in June-July of 1985 has been linked to a proposed project of national significance which would connect RASG with youth participation groups in other states to send fifty students to represent Australia abroad.

Among other aims, the project is meant to strengthen the already existing affiliation between this organisation and the NASC in the United States. RASG now has its own IYY logo ("Help Make IYY Fly") and has had an article about its project published in the NSW IYY Secretariat Newsletter distributed to about 1000 individuals and organisations in the country.

The successful realisation of this innovative and potentially influential project depends upon the necessary funding and administrative support being found by the end of 1984.

Members of the Kelso High RASG Committee and the Bathurst High members of the IYY Subcommittee both made highly-acclaimed presentations at the 1984 Youth Forum held at Mitchell CAE in Bathurst from the 14th to the 17th July. They projected a very positive image of students and the role of RASG and student councils and student governments in our schools. Their highly entertaining and informative presentations can be revived on request for presentation to interested groups.

Requests for information and support from RASG have come from many NSW schools, and from schools and government departments in South Australia, Victoria and Queensland. To help meet these requests, more copies of "The Hitch-hiker's Guide to Student Government" are being printed and it is hoped that a supplement to this, plus more newsletters, can be made available by the end of the year.

Thus, in a mere two and a half years, an active network of involved schools is pursuing significant educational projects to meet the demands of our changing society and to influence an educational system which demands to be changed. At present, RASG is unable to fulfil adequately the needs of its own Western Region schools, much less cater to the needs of other states which have been generated by the successful RASG example.

Funding, teacher support time and matriculation credit for students actively involved in RASG and/or student governments in their schools, are all areas that need attention if RASG is to become the active, innovative and resourceful organisation it has the potential to be.

For more details, contact: Charles Kingston, West Wyalong High School,  
Dumaresq St., West Wyalong 2671

---

## YOUR COMMENTS

---

It was a pleasure meeting with you regarding International Youth Year during your visit to Washington DC in June.

Please know that the National Association of Student Councils which is sponsored by the DSA (Division of Student Activities of the National Association of Secondary School Principals) is in full support of the proposal to have 50 students from Australia join us next June for the 49th NASC conference in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania near Pittsburgh. We also feel that the other components of the proposal which include: student leadership, students in media and curriculum participation projects are also valuable.

I have recently been elected to the US International Youth Year Commission Governing Board and will work from this end to coordinate arrangements for the visit. Our association urges support for the proposal by the Australian government and private sector in your country so that this important visit may be realised. We feel that both the Australian and American students will benefit greatly from this experience. Hopefully, it will culminate in planning for an American visit to Australia.

Please keep me advised of how plans are progressing.

Rocco Marano, Assistant Director, Division of Student Activities,  
NASSP, 1904 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia.

# STUDENT ROLE IN DECISION MAKING

What we want:

Negotiation of students' ability to make responsible and informed decisions concerning their education. The right and opportunity to be part of the decision-making processes within schools, such as School Councils, curriculum planning, committees etc.

Staff counseling, support and explanation of the processes involved in school governance, access to information regarding the governance of schools. Clear guidelines outlining the extent of student powers and responsibilities within existing and/or pending government regulations, as well as an explanation of the regulation in terms which we can understand. An opportunity to be consulted on all areas relating to the governing of a school, covering such areas as:

- \* intake and exit policy and procedures for both students and staff;
- \* access to school facilities such as telephone, duplicating and printing machines and office staff time;
- \* paper for student publications and newsletters;
- \* consultation on aims, directions and rules of the school.

We need/want time to meet and discuss among ourselves before going to meetings, such as School Council etc. We need/want to have things explained, such as meeting procedures, jargon used etc. Adults need to develop an awareness of all these needs and must be conscious of student needs.

Peter Ziras, Vicki Jones, Joanne Williams, Sascha Surgey  
Lynall Hall Community School, 178 Victoria St., Brunswick 3056

## TOWARDS ACCREDITATION

*This collection of short articles: "Towards Accreditation" recognises that students are being asked to sit on committees both in their own schools and in broader forums (at Regional and State levels). This poses a number of questions. While it may be broadly accepted that such involvement is educationally justifiable (for the individual as well as for the committee), how is that involvement to be recognised in the student's education? After all, he/she may be missing classes, faced with a burden of pre-meeting preparation, required to report back to students and so on.*

*The ideas advanced here are the beginnings of a sharing of approaches being developed in schools. Some of the questions being faced are:*

- \* *If the student misses classes to serve on a committee, must class content be 'caught up'? Are there alternatives?*
- \* *What structural changes can happen to school organisation to make such attendance less personally disruptive?*
- \* *Should student representatives be required to present a formal report that can 'count' against course requirements?*
- \* *Who can/should attest to 'performance' on committees? In what terms?*
- \* *Can goals of involvement be specified that enable assessment to be negotiated?*
- \* *If some form of accreditation is negotiated is it best as a new/separate unit or incorporated into other subjects (eg English)? How about other subjects?*
- \* *What are the implications of such accreditation for the way one (teacher or student) approaches all other classes? eg class committees? negotiation?*

*It is essential that methods develop further. It is essential that we share ideas!*

## Coburg High School

Students are increasingly becoming involved in school and regional committees. They are now (in Victoria) members of such committees as Student Representative Councils, School Councils and Supplementary Grants Proposal Committees within the school, and on Regional Committees as well. Giving credit for student involvement on these committees poses some problems.



Some courses automatically accredit students for their involvement. Courses such as STC have year 12 committees where students can report back from other committees and discuss issues that have arisen. This is also encouraged in a number of subject areas where experiential learning is promoted.

It is possible to use English classes for reporting back and therefore building the students' roles on the committee into the curriculum. This can be done with an SRC over a whole year level. Two elected members from each of the English classes meet together as the SRC at that level. Reporting back is done on a regular basis once a fortnight or once a month during English classes. The reporting back becomes the basis for class discussion and action. The assessment of this activity can be done by teacher and students together saying what has been learnt and discussing the skills acquired in the process.

The notion of this activity as 'work' needs discussion, as does the kind of learning taking place.

It is also possible to build either regular or single committee involvement into a course that is appropriate. In the middle school, a subject such as Social Studies is ideal because the student can report back to the class and explain what being on the Committee actually taught her and be involved in discussion with the rest of the class. This means that 'credit' can be given to the student for involvement and once again the involvement can be built into the curriculum.

The whole issue of student participation is one which students themselves have a vested interest in. Teachers need to find ways of making this involvement a valued and recognised part of the learning experience.

Jill Anwyl, Coburg High School,  
Bell St., Coburg 3058

## Albert Park High School

**Proposal:** A unit called "Student Government" should be implemented as a one-off situation for the rest of term 3.

**Purpose:** To allow those students already involved in this area (School Council members and some SRC members) time to learn and apply the skills required in this voluntary role. Some of these students are giving a lot of their own time to attending meetings and seminars and are finding that they are very pressured by their responsibilities.

**Content:** This would be a contract-based commitment of either two or four hours per week. Students would use their time in preparation and action for their committee roles: in learning about how to operate in formal meeting situations and disseminating this learning to their fellow students.

**Assessment:** Would be goal-based. A report form that includes space for comments on community and committee involvement exists.

For more details: Barbara Gibson,  
Albert Park High School,  
88 Graham St.,  
Albert Park 3206

## Wendouree High Technical School

Representation has been given to students and student groups in education programs and school structures. But how effective can students be as decision-makers?

Well, students need to be able to make decisions on School Council and Education Committee. This indicates that we have to be able to make decisions. It is assumed that we have learnt this. But where do we learn to do this?

We have some student groups at Wendouree High Technical School, but how effective can our learning be during a rushed lunch-time? The lunchtime is too short to make decisions because of the hassles in cutting off discussion before the next class.

There is the need for the school to give students the opportunity to develop the skills of organising meetings, report writing, research and communication. If we could do this, it would improve our ability to make effective decisions.

A module would improve the situation because it would provide the necessary time and learning situation. It would allow us time for meetings, to arrange to go to other schools (even for schools to visit us) and develop values and skills. We need

these skills to improve our ability to make decisions and time to communicate with the students/staff/community and so on.

By having a module, it would mean that the school values the contributions of students. It would also mean that all the skills involved in this module must be seen as a part of the total school curriculum. A benefit would flow to other subjects in the curriculum by improving skills. Of course, it would also fall into the idea of a vertical age group module as the 1982 restructure hoped to develop.

The aims for this module are:

\* to promote citizenship:

- by providing a forum for student opinions, interest and desires that these might be understood by the entire student body, faculty, administration and community;
- by honestly reflecting and interpreting the student viewpoint;
- by supporting and further developing democracy as a way of life;
- by involving students in meaningful, purpose-oriented activities;
- by helping each student develop a sincere regard for law and order appropriate to this democratic society;
- by leading each individual in developing a sense of personal responsibility and earned self-respect;

\* to promote scholarship:

- by encouraging highest standards of positive student involvement in learning and thinking;
- by providing experience in genuine problem-solving procedures;

\* to promote leadership:

- by utilising the ideas and support of students in relevant school problems;

\* to promote human relations:

- by providing organised services to the school in the interests of general welfare;
- by communicating purposes, activities and other positive elements of school life through mass media to the entire school community;

\* to promote cultural values:

- by sparking school loyalty, pride and individual student development;
- by selecting projects and activities which seek to achieve purposes which are significant in the life of the school community.



The module should include:

- Knowledge:
- democratic procedures (eg elections, majority rules, parliamentary procedures, representation of conflicting views, minority rights);
  - committee management (eg group dynamics, chairing a group, roles of committee officers);
  - groups in the school community;
  - channels to go through for the accomplishment of goals;
  - groups in the wider community (eg law, government departments, local government, businesses).
- Skills:
- public speaking; leadership of groups; discussion techniques; note-taking, record keeping and report writing; accounting - book-keeping, budget-planning and management; organising self and others in activities; surveying opinion; diplomacy; dealing with different age and ability levels in the school community; decision-making; recognition of and use of respective strengths of different individuals; flexibility; foresight.
- Attitudes:
- confidence in one's self;
  - responsibility for one's action;
  - responsibility for representing views of others;
  - tolerance of other viewpoints;
  - perseverance and patience;
  - willingness to initiate projects;
  - recognition of one's limitations and the limits of power and position;
  - enthusiasm for the accomplishment of worthwhile aims;
  - loyalty;
  - confidentiality;
  - cooperation.

For more information, contact: Allen Jones, Wendouree High Technical School,  
Forest St., Wendouree 3355.

# STUDENTS AS RESEARCHERS

## 1. PEP

The participation of students throughout the various structures evolving under the umbrella of the Participation and Equity Program (PEP) has been widely voiced. Of particular significance is the stated intention of PEP that students should be actively involved in the decision-making structures of their schools.

At issue is how these major changes for schools can best be achieved. In other words, efforts to ensure that student participation is a concrete part of PEP are required. Attention, therefore, must be directed at matters such as the nature and type of student participation, the need for representative participation, which structures are most suitable for different forms of participation and the effectiveness of student participation. A clear examination of such matters will assist in moving student participation beyond mere attendance at a range of meetings towards the desirable outcome where students are actively and realistically involved in the making of decisions which affect their school lives.

How can this be done? PEP has recognised the need for student participation in schools and has incorporated student participation into its own structure. However, PEP has not defined how participation may operate within schools. Clearly, decisions regarding student participation in individual schools will differ and should be the major responsibility of school communities. Students in each school must have a say in these issues. If students are to take responsibility in participatory decision-making, then the purposes, activities and ways in which real student participation can occur, should be a negotiated process involving students and others of each school community.

Organising student research teams in schools is a program which is proposed as a method to identify and develop school structures which facilitate real and active

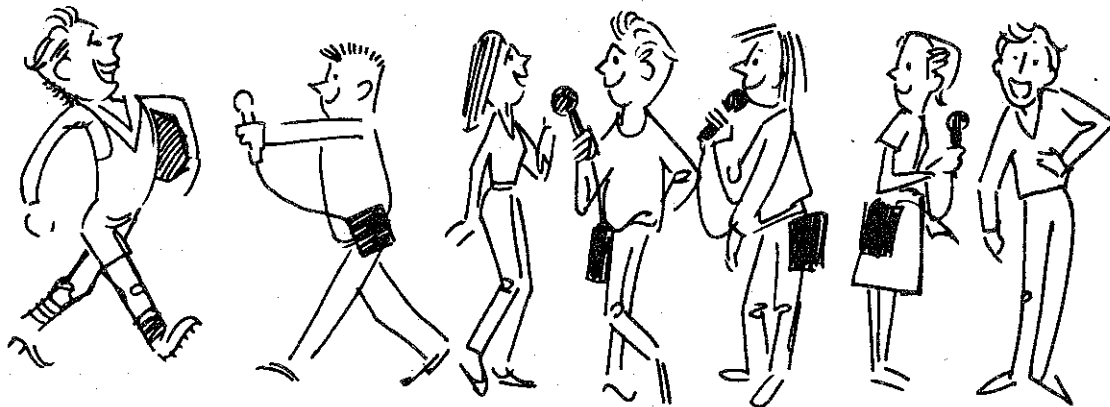
student participation representing all students in schools. Further, it is a program which would enable student input into the purposes and activities of participation in order to design effective strategies and to monitor the operation of these strategies.

Briefly, the approach for involving students in the design and implementation of student participation strategies both within schools and across schools may be described as:

1. Establish student research teams in each PEP school.
2. Each team would have the responsibility to investigate questions such as:
  - (a) What are the present decision-making structures of the school?
  - (b) To what extent are students involved in these structures?
  - (c) How do students, teachers and others regard the present level of student involvement?
  - (d) What type of involvement do students, teachers and others see as appropriate?
  - (e) What are the constraints for student participation in decision-making?
  - (f) How can the effectiveness of student participation be determined?
  - (g) What structures (or changes) are necessary for effective participation?
3. Students recruited into these teams should be representative of all students in the school in terms of 'academic', social, age, gender and other relevant characteristics. To ensure mixed membership it may be necessary to recruit some students to join the team who may not normally respond to an open invitation to participate.
4. The team notion must emphasise cooperative activities and not competitive or individualistic ones.
5. The size of research teams in schools should normally be about 5 to 7 students, although given the nature of the activity many other students would be involved in specific planned tasks. Small teams enable a setting where students can review problems that emerge, plan tasks and come to agreements with peers about the cooperative and successful completion of the research activity.
6. Membership of the teams should not be considered as fixed but periodic reviews are to be encouraged to replace positions.
7. Given that the teams would consist of students from different year levels, it may be difficult to timetable the work of the student research team in the traditional manner. However, the research program should be regarded as part of the educational program of participants and, consequently, the students working as researchers should be given full credit for their involvement and should not be excluded from entry into later educational programs, including specific subjects.
8. The student administered grant from PEP funding could be used to facilitate the research activities by providing funding for computer time, stationery, travel, student conference costs, consultants etc.
9. The student research team within each school should be linked to other groups (eg teacher team, parent team) within the same school. In addition, this research team might commission other student teams within the school to carry out specific tasks.
10. To assist both individual schools and PEP, it would be desirable for networks of the student research teams across schools to be developed. Representatives from individual schools could regularly meet to share information and ideas as well as to provide feedback and support on a school cluster or regional basis.
11. Research endeavours require external support. It is proposed that student research teams are supported by nominated teachers within schools as well as by other groups (eg PEP staff, research staff with experience in the area of student participation).
12. Research teams should be organised on the basis of both short-term and long-term project outcomes. Reports relating to research questions (eg see 2 above) should be regularly prepared and presented to the student population in the first instance, and subsequently proposals relating to student participation within the school should be negotiated with school staff, the School Council etc as appropriate.
13. Central research teams of each school responsible for undertaking and/or coordinating activities concerned with student participation should provide a summary report of their findings, proposals and evaluation of such proposals to appropriate PEP committees.

The notion of students as researchers is not new. Programs in which students investigated such topics as vandalism, truancy, school discipline and community history have operated in Australian schools. This proposed program is based on a set of curriculum and organisational principles consistent with the concept of youth participation, youth action or youth advocacy and with goals of PEP. As such, implementing student research teams for the purpose of improving student participation in decision-making is a curriculum initiative. For further details, see Occasional Paper No 3 and Student Perspectives on Truancy available from VISE.

Greg Cornish, Garry Coventry,  
Victorian Institute of Secondary Education (VISE),  
582 St Kilda Rd., Melbourne 3004 Ph (03) 51.9921



## 2.RAP

The TEAC-funded Research and Participation (RAP) Project commenced at Collingwood Education Centre (CEC) in second semester.

RAP was placed into the year 10 syllabus in the block containing four science electives, Science being a compulsory subject in first semester - so it gave students a choice of activity. Students were informed of the 'new' subject in a meeting late in first semester. The meeting was poorly attended as exams had just finished and a two-week work-experience program was about to start. Initially, twelve students took up the challenge but two changed their minds before the classes started three weeks before the end of term 2.

It must be emphasised that support from the school's administration was crucial in setting up the project. RAP had to be slotted into the syllabus and this meant approval from the secondary curriculum committee and the Centre curriculum committee, timetable rearrangements and redeployment of three staff members.

In the first two weeks, the students were introduced to the content of the course and the methods to be used. The research component was to investigate problems within the school, ones that as year 10 students, they would have some awareness of. A group of year 12 Economics Group 2 students had already started an investigation into early school leavers (1983 and 1984) as part of a unit of work on 'work'. There have been discussions about the school's retention rates, reputed to be very low, and about the mobility of students at CEC, reputed to be very high. This latter point has particular relevance to CEC, as it has several P-12 programs operating. The third area of research was to be looking at the attitudes the school community (parents, students and staff) had to the school. The RAP class agreed readily that the school did not have a very good image in the area.

In a pre-test given in the first week, it was revealed that the students had very little experience in decision-making, negotiating the curriculum and self-assessment and knew little about Youth Action Programs, retention rates and mobility. But when these were explained, the students came up with some excellent hypotheses to explain why some schools had higher retention rates than others, what characteristics schools with high retention rates would have and why CEC's retention rate was rumoured to be so low.

In the initial three-week period, the students negotiated to cover six areas of research working in small groups (one group had one member). These areas turned out to be:

1. Collecting data on retention rates at CEC;
2. Collecting data on mobility of students at CEC;
3. Surveying student attitudes to the school - in particular, looking at

- curriculum offerings at years 10 to 12;
4. Surveying parent attitudes to the school;
  5. Surveying the attitudes of the staff;
  6. Visiting other schools characterised in the students' eyes as high, average and low retention rates. The students compiled a series of questions aimed at finding out why students stayed at school. The targeted schools were Methodist Ladies College, Redan College, Preston East Technical School, Kensington Community High School, Albert Park High School and Footscray High School.

The participation idea was put to the class. They would be responsible for planning how the research was to be done, who would do it and how the information gathered would be passed on to the rest of the school. They, too, would do the organising of school visits and be in charge of their own assessment. In discussion, they couldn't hide their amazement that there would be no exams, no essays and no passes/fails on their end of year reports. In an atmosphere quite different from most classes they experience, the students were very happy to talk about the problems they had in the school and outline their plans for the future - most of which involved leaving school before completing year 12. In turn, I was amazed how quickly they responded to the course. A trip to Preston East Technical School was organised within three days, a female teacher teed up to accompany us, transport arrangements made with the precision worthy of an Army transport officer and a survey planned and pre-tested concerning attitudes to school. The students wanted to be active, to do things.

When term 3 started, other students rushed to join the class. Currently, at the end of September, there are 17 in the RAP class - one left during the holidays and eight joined. This has meant a lot of back-tracking so that all students know what is going on. This is a problem because some of the old hands feel frustrated, but on the other hand they have been most helpful in explaining what the project is about. To date, the following has been accomplished:

**Mobility:** Two students have started surveying all students in years 10 to 12. This may be extended to the whole Centre, depending on time. The survey simply asks how long the student has spent at the school and it is hoped that the information can be stored on a computer at the school. A program is being devised (unfortunately not by the students involved) that the students can use to retrieve information.

**Retention:** Problems have arisen here as the group working on retention has changed personnel and getting data from school records has proved to be more difficult than imagined.

**Student Survey:** Year 11 students have been surveyed on their intentions for 1985 - where they intend doing year 12, what they will do as an alternative to study, why they may choose to study elsewhere and which subjects they would choose to do at CEC on their return. This information is to be used by teachers in their 1985 planning.

**Parent Survey:** This has been written and tested and is currently being typed. The students in this group are rapidly realising the problem of a multi-lingual school and are seeking assistance from teacher aides and others with translations.

**Teacher Survey:** This group is basing its survey on the other two, so that some cross-examination of attitudes can be done. Little progress has been made here.

**Visits:** No separate group was formed for this purpose, but students volunteered to arrange visits in turn. MLC requested that a formal letter be written outlining the purpose of the visit, Redan said no and Albert Park couldn't agree to a mutually satisfactory time. We are going to Footscray on October 3rd and other schools are yet to be contacted.

Participation has been the big growth area. The eight new students have come to the class through the power of bush telegraph and the students themselves now identify as 'the RAP class'. Their confidence in approaching others is great - other schools, teachers, administrators and visitors (Swinburne Tech students investigating how students make subject choices). At present, planning for 1985 includes RAP at both year 10 and year 11, the year 10 project to incorporate Work Experience and careers guidance.

Michael Metcalfe, Collingwood Education Centre,  
Vere St., Collingwood 3066.



# YOUTH FORUM '84

Each year since 1979, hundreds of young people from schools and associated groups in New South Wales, have gathered at Bathurst for Youth Forum.

Youth Forum was initiated in the International Year of the Child. It is "about empowering young people to speak and act on their own behalf on issues which concern them." Over the five years of its existence, Forums have dealt with topics such as discrimination, students' rights, planning local action, unemployment, peer pressure and education. In 1984, topics centred around Education, Morality, Freedom of Speech and Youth Crime.

The Youth Committee of the Forum, elected annually at the previous Forum, is largely charged with running Youth Forum. In their own words: "While you may see this effervescent mob of demi-gods performing their craft with supernatural ease, they were not always as you see them now. The Committee begins as a group of raw, untrained recruits, with no more than a desire to help. They attend training workshops, and, ably assisted by a group of benevolent elders, learn a multitude of skills and techniques that they use at the Youth Forum Conference. In the end, they are, as they always were, enthusiastic, capable young people."



*Official welcome, Saturday night*

This year, Youth Forum 84 took place at Bathurst (Mitchell CAE) from the 14th to the 17th July. Approximately 200 students attended from close to 50 schools. In addition, approximately 50 adults were present, either as teachers from those schools or as Resource Adults.

Over those four days, a packed program involved the participants in "getting to know you" groups, presentation sessions, action plan workshops and whole group organising and social occasions. Each of the 50 groups made presentations within the four theme areas (approximately seven presentations ran concurrently) and then followed these up by developing action plans arising from the issues considered, to be taken back to the school.

This year, groups from Victoria and South Australia also attended. Funding for their attendance and for the Forum generally was obtained from Esso Australia Limited, the National Australia Bank, the Commonwealth Schools Commission, the New South Wales Department of Education and the Law Foundation of NSW.

## Presentations

Examples of presentations were: "Changing Society or Changing With Society"; "Morality - a Pragmatic View"; "Education = T(S+P)-F"; "Clique Crusher - an Answer to the Impersonality of Big Schools"; "Student Action in the West"; "We Are What We Are" and so on. Some groups presented drama skits around the chosen topics. Generally these were less successful than those group where students sat and talked with the audience about topics that concerned them - it is very difficult for a skit to be anything but trite (and some verged on the simplistically offensive in stereotypes). What was also missing was any official dialogue between groups presenting in a similar area eg some form of panel comparison.

A number of these 'constructive criticisms' emerged in feedback sessions late in the Forum, and in a follow-up day involving members of the Youth Committee, Resource Adults and the inter-state groups. Comments are fed on to the in-coming Committee for consideration in plans for 1985.

The follow-up also took these plans for '85 further. Much discussion centred on a proposal for a National Youth Forum for late in 1985, to follow state and regionally based forums and conferences. An interim steering committee was formed and the NSW Youth Forum asked to initiate discussions towards organisation of such a National Youth Forum. CONNECT will keep you up-to-date with these plans.



Saying Goodbye: Robby Meyer in foreground

## School Reports

To gain some idea of the plans being considered, it is valuable to look at the progress from Youth Forum for some of the schools involved. Records remain incomplete, but some of the groups have returned 'Action Progress Sheets' or have been followed up by Committee members to obtain 'Action Report Backs'.

BATHURST HIGH SCHOOL, under the title "The Restless Youth Day" planned at Youth Forum to hold a seminar day where youth would speak on youth - on any issue concerning or interesting them. There would be liaison between Kelso and Bathurst High Schools. This would "make people aware of our views, our ideas of what the problems are and how these vary in a group stereotyped as being all the same."

Followed up later by a Committee member, it was found that nothing had yet happened but that the day was planned for later in term 2. Students found loads of commitments and hadn't been able to meet to discuss and finalise the day.

WEST WYALONG HIGH SCHOOL had aimed to set up DALEC: District Arts, Leisure and Educational Centre, run by young people with a constitution allowing for membership fees which will attract members of the community. They saw this as a place where people can come to relax, that would keep crime off the streets, give youth somewhere to go and give them a variety of skills for use within the community.

The group later reported that they had contacted the local community officer who was keen to have them incorporate with the IYY Committee. Students from West Wyalong, St Mary's and two unemployed young people have outlined the project and formed the basis of a committee. They've approached the West Wyalong Services Club about premises for the Centre. Early in term 3, a public meeting was planned to get others involved. Some misunderstanding was encountered in both adults and young people, particularly around the degree of involvement of adults and young people. The group is now looking at sources of grants.

MAROUBRA JUNCTION GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL planned to make teachers, parents and students aware of the sexism in the coeducational classroom. "They need to realise that generally girls are disadvantaged because boys dominate the classrooms and demand the teacher's attention." Subsequently, the group gave their presentation to a statewide conference of teachers of special programs for girls. "It was a most successful presentation, with a number of teachers asking for further details of Youth Forum. Kids' ideas were well accepted by all present." Two students introduced the presentation and talked about Youth Forum.

BURWOOD GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL, under the name "Poongo Pops" planned "Operation Grass". "At the rear of Burwood Girls High School is a long-standing vacant brick pit. We propose to use this piece of land for the purposes of a recreational area. This will be under the supervision of BGHS, but will be open to the public on application to the school."

Since Youth Forum, they have talked with their Principal regarding the use of the brickpits, discovered that there is a vacant building that the school could also have, held discussion on possible uses for this building and have taken the matter up with the Department of Education. They hope now to finalise a decision from staff and students about what is wanted and acquire and use the building. There have been few frustrations except for "time pressure from school commitments and waiting for the authorities to look and decide on this matter".

CROOKWELL HIGH SCHOOL planned a campaign around "Uniting Crookwell for Peace". Their aim was to "create awareness in Crookwell and the surrounding districts of nuclear armaments and make it possible for an individual to participate and learn about the nuclear arms race". They aimed to form a SNAP - Students for Nuclear Awareness and Peace - group.

They reported later that such a group had been formed from the whole school. They organised a film to be screened at the school for all students on nuclear arms and the dangers, organised an information display and sold badges, T-shirt etc at the plaza at the Crookwell Country Weekend and also planned to screen films at night. An adult group was also planned, but they hadn't had time for that yet.

PLUMPTON HIGH SCHOOL had three groups of students at Youth Forum. Two groups have combined in action to plan a Regional Forum of students in the outer western suburbs. "These forums are designed to basically increase communication between the youths of the areas. This communication would not only aid us to solve problems of the area, but also to present a 'united front' to the outside world, in particular to the media. This 'united front' means that we have a coordinated plan to improve the reputation of the area." Later they expanded on this plan: "To go to the seven local high schools in our area and organise a regional committee to a) sponsor a Youth Forum; b) develop school interaction in our area and solve any problems common to us; and c) if ever such an issue as the Bidwell Riots starts again, an active responsible student body will be ready to meet accusations."

So far they have gone to all seven schools, spoken to the school assemblies and the Student Councils and aroused interest in the plan and in Youth Forum. In term 3, they planned to return to the schools and collect names of interested people, in order to have a meeting of the students in Mt Druitt. They also reported a lack of time to repeat presentation in front of local teachers, students and the P&C, due to exams.

GOULBURN HIGH SCHOOL intended to establish a half-hour radio program "to provide a service to the youth of our city; to communicate information to the youth about youth affairs, activities and IYV; to provide entertainment for youth by the inclusion of music not normally heard under the present radio format; and to provide 'hands-on' experience of radio broadcasting and techniques to the volunteers involved in the program."

So far, the group has held three 'informal' meetings to work out strategies, contacted a Resource Adult to find out about local radio stations, increased the size of the student group and talked to the local Community Service Officer connected with the local council. They are now working on preparing a thorough and detailed presentation for the station, but are finding time and exams a barrier.

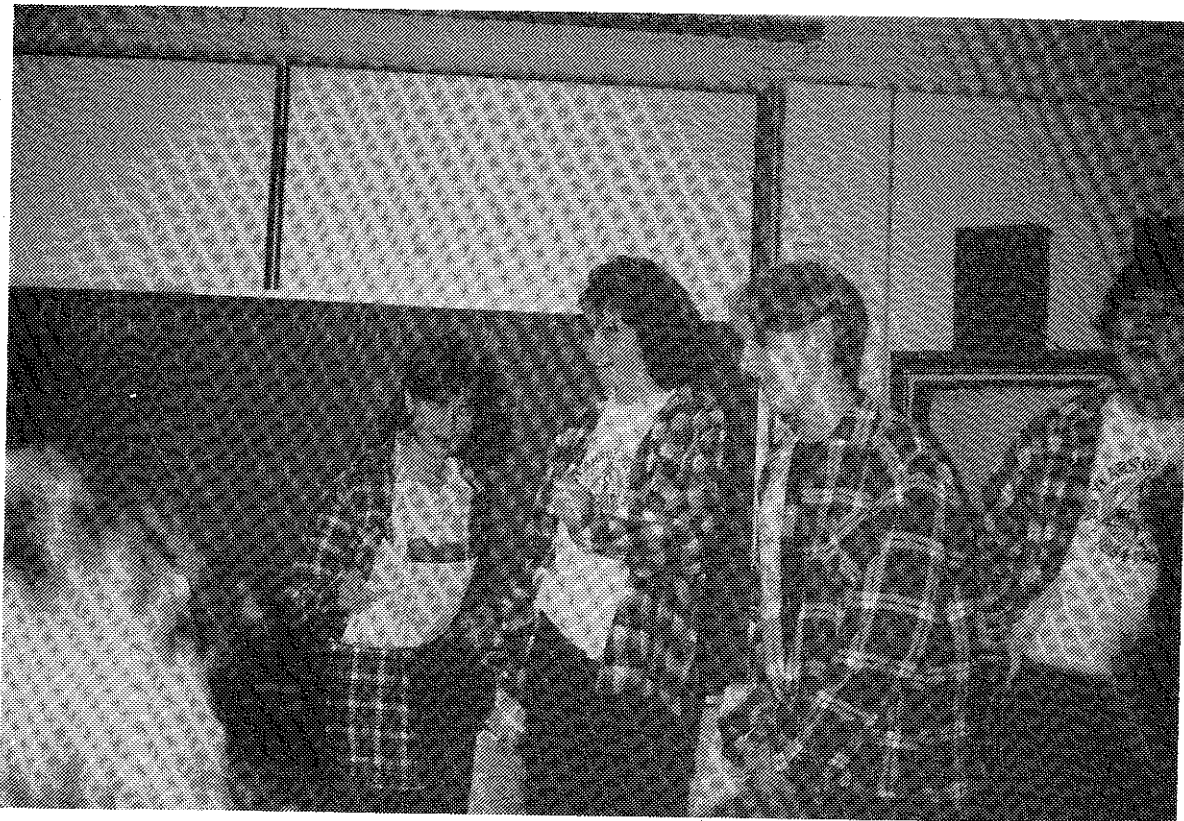
BLACKTOWN BOYS HIGH SCHOOL aimed to set up a youth group in the local area and to get more youth involvement in local government. They were aiming to get together with other local schools.

Later, they reported: "We now have a group of students on the board of a sub-committee of our local council which has organised many things for the local area. We have sent

letters asking for more information to set up a youth group. 'We haven't been able to go any further with our action plans due to exams and the returning of correspondence from various groups.'

MAITLAND GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL planned: "We intend to mobilise the youth of Maitland by initiating a Youth Council and creating sufficient interest, community support and publicity in order to employ youth officers to coordinate services and entertainment designed specifically for youth. This Youth Council's objectives will be, by creating greater organisation within the youth community, to extend activities in Maitland with the aim of offsetting boredom and subsequently, by providing youths with options, hopefully help (fight) crime in the area."

They've spoken to the *Maitland Mercury* on Youth Forum and their hopes for Maitland youth, spoken to the *Newcastle Herald* and "caused a minor scandal", visited several youth groups in order to tell them about Youth Forum and spoken to a YACS Officer. Now they plan to speak to Rotary. They've reached the conclusion that a youth group is needed to represent all the youth of Maitland.



Presentation by Maitland Girls High School

MT PENANG TRAINING SCHOOL, under the title "Youth Awareness of Crime" aimed to achieve: "Better education on the consequences of crime in schools; raising the amount of the dole and decreasing the age for receiving the dole; creating more positive employment schemes; supporting the opening of remand centres in each district; payment of work in institutions."

They've written a three page letter to the Minister for Youth and Community Services to gain interest in Youth Forum 85. The letter contained arguments for decreasing the age to get the dole and for increasing the amount of the dole, as well as about paying boys in institutions for their work. They've been on local radio and had an article in the local paper. They report "We have done everything that we wanted to do."

MATRAVILLE HIGH SCHOOL intended to get the school facilities in use after school, so as to deter crime in the area. This would involve professional volunteers in running activities.

The group reports on their activities: "We've talked to the Principal many times ... talked to Student Council, talked to 'masters' about improving the Student Council and tried to get the Principal to tell us how he felt about what the masters said to him." They've identified a need to improve the Student Council which they'd hoped would run the after-school activities, and a need to talk further with the Principal.

With regard to Youth Forum, they note that more emphasis should have been placed on the Action Plan. "As a new school, we took it only semi-seriously and were not aware that help was available and plans would be followed up by Youth Forum."



MONTE SANT ANGELO also planned to have a Regional Youth Forum in association with schools in the North Sydney area. They also intended to re-present their presentation to teachers' colleges and teachers at their school.

A first meeting has been held with other schools. They discussed the aims of the regional Youth Forum, recorded the meeting and wrote up the major points for further discussion. The next meeting was due early term 3. Also, the presentation has been done for teachers and the P&F. Delays have occurred because of trials and exams.

With regard to Youth Forum, they note "If we had had more time with the resource adults instead of five minutes, we could have got a lot more done, as the ideas and comments they put forward in the short time we had with them, were extremely useful."

QUEANBEYAN HIGH SCHOOL - "Sounds Unlimited" sought: "better relations between local school bodies (ie organise socials and other functions between the two high schools in Queanbeyan); better relations between youth in our local area; improving the school council".

"So far our group has approached the Junior City Council and asked them to help us in our project. We have also published two articles in the *Queanbeyan Age*, one of which described Youth Forum 84 and the other tells of our action plan and invites any youth to join us if they're interested. Also, we have put posters up around the school inviting youth to join Junior Council and have spoken to the students at our school in an assembly about our action plan." Aims now? "We hope to work through the Queanbeyan Junior Council to achieve our goal, and to spark up some enthusiasm for IYY." But "there is a lack of enthusiasm with the youth in Queanbeyan to participate in our action plan."

KIAMA HIGH SCHOOL: KEE: Kiama's Education Extended. The group wanted "an education fun day. This will 'educate the community about education' and involve students and members of the community in an activity which will increase awareness about IYY."

Later they reported, "Our action plan of having an open day to 'educate the community about education' has begun well, with support and permission from our Principal. Teachers have been informed and are cooperating. Other schools in the area have been asked to contribute to displays, but replies have not been received back yet. We will be applying to PEP for funding, basically for advertising. The date for the day has been set for the 19th of October. We will write to other schools who attended Youth Forum in the local area and see if they would like to come. The major problems we are finding at the moment are: a) lack of enthusiasm from other students, which in turn is beginning to dampen our own enthusiasm; b) an order to go about things - we always have things to do but not quite sure what comes first.

There were many other plans produced - getting a gym, starting a weekly column in the local paper, securing funding for an administrator for a student group and so on. If they're operating we will try to bring up to date reports.

Making eggs fly!



# NEWS & REVIEWS

## Education for Peace and Disarmament

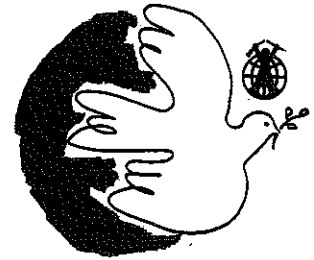
The Australian Teachers' Federation is sponsoring a National Symposium on "Education for Peace and Disarmament - Action at the School and College Level - Curriculum Development - Gaining Support".

The Symposium will be held at Melbourne CAE, 757 Swanston Street, Carlton 3053 from 26 - 28 October. The Symposium is also supported by the Australian Council of State School Organisations, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Federation of College Academics, the U.N. Association of Australia, the Independent Teachers Federation of Australia, the Congress for International Cooperation and Disarmament, the Movement Against Uranium Mining, the Peace Education Task Force, People for Nuclear Disarmament and the Victorian Association of Peace Studies.

All participants are to be endorsed by their teacher, parent or trade union organisation. Endorsement can be arranged by the Melbourne organising committee - contact: Barbara Allen, VSTA, PO Box 1124, North Richmond 3121.

The Symposium is being addressed by Senator Susan Ryan, Federal Minister for Education and Youth Affairs and Mr Cliff Dolan, President of the ACTU. Workshops will look at the issues raised in peace and disarmament education and the practical implications for teaching/learning in schools and colleges.

It will be important to raise issues of youth participation in the teaching/learning process on these issues. To teach in ways that do not value the experience of young people, can be as oppressive as the approaches that peace education seeks to combat. On the other hand, such education gives an ideal opportunity for the active involvement of young people in tackling real social issues, in having their voices heard, and in their development of a liveable world.



## Student Access Breakfast Show: 3PBS Radiothon

CONNECT sponsors and operates the Student Access Breakfast Show on 3PBS-FM (107.7 MHz) every Sunday morning from 7 - 10 am. As well as some great (and diverse) music - PBS is basically a music station - you can hear news and information from young people between 7.00 and 7.30am.

The show provides the opportunity for primary and secondary students to present their own programs, researching the background of the music they're interested in, or presenting information about their schools and communities. The information time-slot is used by groups such as the *Ascolta Radio Group* in Brunswick, who cannot make it into the studio at that time (yawn!) but who pre-record programs.

On the weekend of October 26-28, 3PBS-FM will be having their annual radiothon fundraiser. Being a public radio station, PBS relies on subscriptions (\$30 pa if you're working; \$20 pa if you're not) or donations to keep broadcasting.

And the Student Access Breakfast Show (and CONNECT) relies on your support for PBS to stay on the air. During the Radiothon weekend, we will be on air between 6 am and 8 am on Sunday morning 28th October. Listen and phone up and donate: (03) 537.2433.

REMEMBER: STUDENT ACCESS BREAKFAST SHOW during the PBS Radiothon:

SUNDAY OCTOBER 28th 6 - 8 am Phone: 537.2433

DONATE DONATE SUBSCRIBE DONATE DONATE SUBSCRIBE DONATE DONATE SUBSCRIBE





# MATERIAL AVAILABLE

## Articles:

Code	Article/Description	Pages	Cost
185	"Not The IYY Age" - Vol 1 No 3	4 pp	50¢
186	Spiral Educational Resources: Secondary Catalogue	5 pp	50¢
187	YACA Briefs No 8 - Youth Affairs Council of Australia	4 pp	50¢
188	"Emphasis on Youth" - article on Youth Forum 84 in <u>Perspectives</u> (NSW) Vol 7 No 8	1 p	30¢
189	"Student Participation in Decision-Making: A Personal Reflection of Practices Undertaken and Processes Developed to Support Student Participation in Western Metropolitan Region 1983-4" Mike Fogarty	15 pp	\$1.50
190	"Student Revolution?" Pamela Ward and Michael Roda - on the Student Working Party - from <u>Community</u> No 1 September 1984	2 pp	40¢
191	"Student Involvement in Meetings: A Report" South Central Region student in-service, September 1984	10 pp	\$1.00
192	"South Central Region TEAC In-Service Report: 17.4.84 on Student Participation"	11 pp	\$1.10

## Publications Received:

We wish to stress that the following publications are not for sale. However, they are available for perusal by arrangement: contact CONNECT: (03) 489.9052.

### AUSTRALIAN STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Between the Lines (Williamstown HS, Vic) No 2 September 1984  
Student Voice (Waverley HS, Vic) 1984?  
Just Where Do You Think You're Going? (Waverley HS, Vic) 1982?  
Leisure (Waverley HS, Vic) 1983?  
Two Off (Exhibition HS, Vic) 1984  
Glamis Gazette (Strathmore HS, Vic) Vol 1 No 1 August 1984  
Network (Hurstbridge Community/Schools, Vic) September 1984  
Winlaton Rave (Winlaton Youth Training Centre, Vic) No 21  
Ascolta (Brunswick schools, Vic) Vol 11 No 4 August 1984  
KIC (Caulfield HS, Vic) Issues 3,4,5 June, July, August 1984  
Phoenix Bull(etin) (Wendouree HTS, Vic) Issues 1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9,10 1984  
Profile (Sunshine schools, Vic) Vol 7 No 3 September 1984  
Panorama (Westall HS, Vic) Vol 3 No 3 September 1984  
The Mallacoota Mouth (Mallacoota, Vic) No 338 24 February 1984

## Other Sources

Update NIE (Newspapers in Education, USA) Vol 10 No 7 August 1984  
NIEWEEK (Newspapers in Education, USA)  
The Fringe Bugle (Fringe Network, Vic) September 1984 No 26  
YACA Briefs (Youth Affairs Council of Australia) No 8 September 1984  
Not the IYY Age (Youth Affairs Council of Vic.) Vol 1 No 3 September 1984  
Media 3 (Rusden College, Vic) No 22 August 1984  
Other Ways (Alternative Education Resource Group, Vic) No 18 August 1984  
Network News (Sydney, NSW) August 1984  
Transcript (TEAC State-level Program, Vic) Issue 2 October 1984  
Community (EMPLOY, Vic) No 1 September 1984  
The Fringe Bugle (Fringe Network, Vic) No 27 October 1984

See also listing on page 2.

# PHOTOCOPY: COMPLETE: RETURN:



PHOTOCOPY this page; COMPLETE all the details; RETURN it:

To: CONNECT, The Newsletter of Youth Participation in Education Projects,  
12 Brooke Street, Northcote 3070 Victoria Australia

From: NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....

.....Postcode: .....

SUBSCRIPTION: \$5 for a 1-year subscription ..... \$ .....  
\$20 to become a PATRON SUBSCRIBER (for one year) ..... \$ .....  
\$50 to become a SUPPORTING SUBSCRIBER (for one year) .... \$ .....  
\$100 to become a SUSTAINING SUBSCRIBER (for two years) ... \$ .....  
\$1000 to become a LIFETIME SUBSCRIBER (for ever) ..... \$ .....

DONATION: I enclose a donation of ..... \$ .....

LITERATURE: \* Back issues of CONNECT (circle one/s wanted) ..... \$ .....

1 (\$1) 2 (\$1.50) 3 (\$2) 4 (\$2) 5 (\$2) 6/7 (\$3) 8 (\$1.50) 9 (\$1.50)

10 (\$1) 11 (\$3) 12 (\$3) 13/14 (\$5) 15 (\$2) 16 (\$2) 17 (\$2) 18 (\$3)

19 (\$2) 20 (\$2) 21 (\$3) 22/23 (\$3) 24 (\$3) 25 (\$3) 26 (\$2.50) 27/28 (\$4)

\* As We See It (\$3.50) - Brunswick students' writing ..... \$ .....

\* Leaving School (\$3.60) - Moreland School-Work Program .. \$ .....

\* Cultural Journalism Workshop Report 1979 (\$2) ..... \$ .....

\* Adelaide Conference Magazine (\$2) - August 1981 ..... \$ .....

\* You And Aunt Arie (\$10 + postage) - "how to" book ..... \$ .....

\* Lynall Hall Community School 1982 Yearbook (\$1.50) ..... \$ .....

\* Riff Raff Soundtrack Album (LP) (\$8 but need to collect) \$ .....

\* The Fitz-Coll Directory (\$1.50) - Fitzroy HS students .. \$ .....

PHOTOCOPIES: Copies of the following articles:

Numbers: .... \$ .....

INDEX: To "Articles Available" and CONNECT to issue 17/Oct 1982 (80¢) \$ .....

TAPES: Various tapes - Art Pearl (6 tapes); SRC Day (\$4 each/\$2 + tape) \$ .....

TOTAL ENCLOSED: ..... \$ .....