

# *Connect*

*supporting student participation*

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## ***Children & Young People – Valued Citizens & Learners***

## ***Authentic Participation & Voice in Learning Settings***

## ***Children & Young People's Views – into Meaningful Action***

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## Connect

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## Why does *Connect* exist?

**Connect** has been published bi-monthly since 1979.

*It aims to:*

- document student participation approaches and initiatives;
- support reflective practices;
- develop and share resources.

### **Connect:**

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## This Issue:

That *Student Voice* and *Student Participation* are global approaches was brought home to me forcefully through attendance in the last couple of months at both the 2014 Cambridge Student Voice Conference, and then at the 2014 VicSRC Congress.



In Cambridge, we heard from researchers, teachers, students and others from all around the world about the exciting initiatives that encourage and support students' voices to be heard, and students to be recognised as active partners in decisions about their education. The report in this issue captures some of the sessions from that Conference - and the important note is that there is a commitment to hold a further Conference in Cambridge in June 2015.

I was particularly interested in the sessions where students from England and Denmark met face to face, and two students from Victoria *skyped* in to take part in the discussions. And then students from Ontario, Canada, also presented via a video from their **Students as Researchers Conference**. Their exciting work is also highlighted in an extensive report in this issue.

The ease with which it was possible to communicate globally at such meetings was promising for future initiatives.

Then I returned home and took part in the VicSRC's annual Congress - a much bigger event than in previous years. The range of issues debated were both local and global - issues of concern for the young people resonated from the international, down to the impact on conditions and curriculum in our individual schools. Hence environmental sustainability, gender identity, relationships, and social and economic justice remain issues of vital concern.

Such issues of concern aren't limited to schools, of course, and the initiatives in South Australia remind us that **all** young people - from the youngest of ages - are active citizens with valuable views and ideas. How we respond to include these young people in decision-making, within schools and within communities, is an indicator of an inclusive and democratic society. The video resources from this project remind us, as the front cover summarises: that "children and young people are valued citizens and learners"; of the need to focus on "authentic participation and voice in learning settings"; and, most importantly, of the importance of "translating children and young people's views into meaningful action".

### Next Issue ...

The next issue of *Connect* will be produced early in October - with a deadline for copy of the **end of September**. There are already promises of articles about maths assessment in a Victorian primary school, and about students leading a school's computer upgrade in South Australia; as well as reports from the 2014 Junior School Council Congress in Melbourne. And more from you ...

Roger Holdsworth

**Next Issue: #209: October 2014**

**Deadline for material: end of September, 2014**



# Empowering Children and Young People's Participation in South Australia

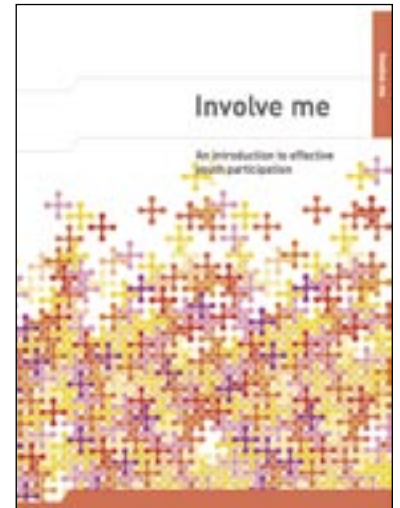
In late 2013, approximately 1,000 children and young people – from the ages of 3 to 18 years – were engaged as valued citizens in three South Australian communities: **Campbelltown, Gawler and Onkaparinga**. They undertook an 'asset audit' of the 'child friendliness' of their communities, exploring information within their education settings for two terms. This was then analysed by educators, in partnership with community steering groups, so that local decision-making on community projects included children and student's views. The collaborative process included the proposals for action that were developed by the local steering groups being checked and validated by the children and young people to ensure that the action taken truly reflected their opinions.

This project was the latest in a series of initiatives that aimed to include young South Australians in decision-making about their communities. These included a review of South Australia's **Strategic Plan**, development of a local government **Social Plan**, consultations into new legislation for children, and development of whole of government policy. The projects have been led by the **Department for Education and Child Development (DECD)** and the **University of South Australia** through a unique research partnership.

The 2013 initiative aligned with South Australia's six **Better Together Principles**

**of Engagement**, which are principles that are applicable to any respectful engagement process, regardless of the age of participants. Most notable connections to the principles include:

- recognising and clearly articulating children and young people as the key informants;
- working in collaboration with partners to understand the history and local circumstances of each community;
- beginning early, both in terms of the young ages of children involved and the participation of children and young



people in the decision-making process, right from the earliest opportunity; and

- engaging children and young people through creativity and multi-modal approaches, depending on individual interests.

## Resources

As part of South Australia's ongoing commitment to children and young people's active and valued participation, a series of resources have now been





developed to empower similar initiatives being led across the state. These include:

- The **Involve Me** resource, developed by **Liz Browne** of the *Engagement and Inclusion* team and available at: [www.decd.sa.gov.au/studentvoice/files/links/DECD\\_InvolveUs\\_online\\_Inv.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/studentvoice/files/links/DECD_InvolveUs_online_Inv.pdf)
- **Children's Voices: A Principled Framework to Children and Young People's Participation as Valued Citizens and Learners**, developed by Professor **Pauline Harris** of the University of South Australia, the *de Lissa Chair in Early Childhood Research* and **Harry Manatakis** of the Department's *Strategic Initiatives* team, and available as an online resource with a complementary documentary series at the following YouTube playlist: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdaFVJCF2gHPzEDXeDHZQAG6jkdXGxA6g>



The documentary series referred to above is in five parts and, through case studies, provides insights into:

- **Part 1: The Participation Process** - explores consultation with young children at Ocean View College Children's Centre informing the Review of South Australia's Strategic Plan;
- **Part 2: Children's Views about their Communities** - explores children's views about their community from Ocean View College Out of School Hours Care, informing the Review of South Australia's Strategic Plan;
- **Part 3: Children and Young People as Valued Citizens and Learners** - explores the evidence base and benefits to the whole of society of children and young people's participation in community decision making;
- **Part 4: Authentic Participation and Voice in Learning Settings** - explores links to Australia's *Early Years Learning Framework* and the *Australian Curriculum* in engaging children and young people's participation as valued citizens and learners;
- **Part 5: Translating Children and Young People's Views into Meaningful Action** - explores the post consultation process of translating children and young people's views into meaningful action, providing feedback and involving children and young people in the implementation of strategies aligned to the community issues they have been consulted about.

The internationally recognised, innovative model of children and young people's participation developed in South Australia is being embedded in Australia's first accreditation framework for *Child Friendly Cities*, also being developed by South Australia in partnership with **UNICEF Australia**. The children and young people's views from the three communities involved in last year's project will contribute to those cities striving to be the first three UNICEF Australia-recognised *Child Friendly Cities* in 2015.

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# Students leading students in the conversation about student wellbeing

As adults, we can sometimes grapple with the accurate words to use when describing themes around mental health and wellbeing. However, when students are given the opportunity to speak about their insights, they are loud, confident and remarkably articulate.

If you have been following previous **Connect** editions, you will know that KidsMatter Primary hosted a conference in May. During this time a group of primary school students from government, special and Catholic school settings were posed questions such as: *'How can parents and families work together to support mental health and wellbeing?'* The response was put simply: *'As a school we can respect all members of the school community (and visitors) so that everyone feels comfortable in sharing their opinions and feelings.'*

The KidsMatter Primary 'Partners in Wellbeing' Conference saw around 400 people attend a range of presentations across a two-day period on the 5th and 6th of May. With the aim to bring student voice into the conversation about mental health and wellbeing, a session was run titled *Voices from the playground: A world café session for students by students*.

In the lead up to this event, a group of secondary students from Methodist Ladies' College and Castlemaine Secondary College were trained in the seven principles of the World Café collaboration conversation style ([www.theworldcafe.com/about.html](http://www.theworldcafe.com/about.html)). This includes practices such as encouraging everyone's contribution and connecting diverse perspectives in order to explore questions that matter. The questions used on the day were based on the four components of the KidsMatter Primary framework.

The secondary student 'table hosts' did an outstanding job leading senior primary school students from the following schools: **Alphington Primary School, Ashwood School, Our Lady of Lourdes in Bayswater and Killara Primary School**. Armed with new knowledge and perspectives gained

from their inquiry units into *'what makes good mental health and wellbeing?'* back at their schools, the participating students were well versed to write, sketch or draw key ideas, actively listen and build on each other's contributions.

In the final phase of the activity, students 'harvested' their conversations, initiating a period of sharing discoveries and insights in a whole-group conversation where patterns were identified, collective knowledge was developed and possibilities for action established. Below were some of the emerging statements defined by the students:

*'As a school we can get through tough times by taking time out to calm down and talk to family.'*

*'As a school we can make sure that we have good mental health and that everyone feels like they belong to a positive school community.'*

*'As a school we can help and support each other through communications via teachers, parent and students. Also ones in need.'*



One group decided to go one step further during the final discussion. Following the creation of their statement: 'We as a school can be kind to achieve positive teamwork and therefore we can have spectacular friendships', the group recorded an explanation of '**spectacular**' being: 'a friendship which includes honesty, trust, kindness and respect'. The students then decided to sign the following statement: 'We - Aidan, Daniel and Alex - promise to continue to support what our statement says'. This led to an interesting conversation on the creativity students bring to taking this powerful message back to their schools.

After all statements were shared, the students were integrated into the larger forum of the conference. The adults had participated in the same activity whilst the children were carrying out theirs, with both groups' final statements displayed in the central foyer. Symbolically this represented children's voices being of equal value to those of the adults - health professionals, teachers, educational leaders and parents.

It was a wonderful experience for all involved: a unique opportunity for the individual and collective perspective and planning for actions of students, led by students, in the context of mental health and wellbeing in schools.

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## Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School, Bayswater, Vic

# Student Voice at OLOL

At Our Lady of Lourdes, in Bayswater (Vic) we believe that it is important for all students to have the opportunity to develop their student voice with their learning and in their vision for our school. Every student participates in regular class meetings and is represented by their SRC members at whole-school SRC meetings.

This year, in meeting the needs of our school and in providing further opportunities for our senior students, we have formalised our Student Action Teams, focusing membership of the SATs within five specific areas: **Wellbeing, Spirituality, eLearning, Phys Ed** and **Sustainability**.

Term 2 was a very busy time for the **Wellbeing Student Action Team**.

As a **KidsMatter** school, the **WSAT** was registered to participate in the student forum at the **Partners in Wellbeing Conference** at Melbourne Park Function Centre in May.

In preparation for this forum, the team undertook a student-led inquiry into mental health and wellbeing at our school.

The key questions investigated were:

1. **What is a positive school community?**
  - What does a positive school community look/sound/feel like?
  - Why is it important?
2. **What are the skills I need for wellbeing?**
  - What we need to know about ourselves?
  - What do we need to know to develop positive relationships with others?



3. **How can families and schools work together to promote mental health and wellbeing?**

- What should families know about good mental health and wellbeing?
- How do schools and families help each other to make this possible?

4. **What makes it easy to get help?**

- What do we need to support us when we are having difficulties with our mental health?
- Who can we access in the community to help us?

The students collected data to be recorded under the four components of *KidsMatter*:

**Component 1:** *Positive school community*

**Component 2:** *Social and emotional learning for students*

**Component 3:** *Working with parents and carers*

**Component 4:** *Helping children with mental health difficulties*

At the conference the students had the opportunity to participate in a World Café experience and shared their findings with three other schools. They were also able to collect information on good practice in other schools. Armed with their iPads, the students were constantly taking photos and recording ideas.

Following this valuable opportunity, the **WSAT** shared their experiences at a whole-school assembly. This was followed up by attending an after-school staff meeting and sharing an overview of mental health and wellbeing at Our Lady of Lourdes with all staff. They also extended their sharing to include their hopes and dreams for our school. What a powerful experience for all concerned: students who were enthusiastic, engaged and passionate, and staff who were thoroughly impressed by the leadership and vision displayed by the students!

The **Wellbeing Student Action Team** will use this whole process as a basis to plan and implement *Wellbeing Week*, which will occur towards the end of Term 3. A World Café opportunity will be offered to all year levels with parents also being invited. As a *KidsMatter* school, our current focus is

on 'Knowing me, knowing you, and getting along too', which focuses on the importance of social/emotional learning. The investigation through the world café experience will break open the five SEL competencies: *self awareness, self management, social awareness, responsible decision-making and relationship skills*. The **WSAT** will facilitate this activity and the Spirituality, eLearning, Phys Ed and Sustainability Action Teams will plan, organise and run other activities throughout *Wellbeing Week*.

This whole experience has given the **Wellbeing Student Action Team** an opportunity to have a voice and to lead the school in practices that support their mental health and wellbeing.

Students in action can definitely be leaders of change and we are looking forward to seeing where this can lead.

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# Accomplishments, Dilemmas and Aspirations

This year's **Student Voice Conference** (building on the work of the three previous seminars) brought together about 80 researchers, teachers, students, policy advocates, teacher trainers and others from around the world. Over two and a half days, there were intense discussions, sharing of information/perspectives and work generated from previous seminars, and planning for future initiatives. This year's participants hailed from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, England, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Poland, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, and the United States.

Two of the delegates shared what they appreciated about the conference:

*"Getting insight into the inspirational projects around the world and getting pointers of useful research to turn to; having the time to have lots of conversations with different people and get immediately to a deep level; connecting with people who 'know what I'm talking about' so they can really be helpful." (Rachel Roberts, Director, Phoenix Education Trust, UK)*

*"(1) The variety and richness of individual experiences and voices. (2) Not having to explain why student voice is important. (3) The level of critique among colleagues and helpful suggestions for moving work forward. (4) This group contains many colleagues who I have networked with effectively in order to undertake research, writing and funding focused on student voice. It is an exceptionally helpful way of connecting with like-minded individuals across sectors from around the world." (Dr Catherine Bovill, Senior Lecturer, Academic Development Unit, University of Glasgow, Scotland)*

The Fourth Annual Student Voice Conference was entitled: **Accomplishments, Dilemmas, and Aspirations**. It was held from June 24 to 26, 2014, at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, England.

With support from funds from Jean Rudduck's legacy, this year's gathering was planned and facilitated by **Alison Cook-Sather** (Jean Rudduck Visiting Scholar at Homerton College, University of Cambridge, and Mary Katharine Woodworth Professor of Education at Bryn Mawr College, USA), in collaboration with colleagues **Dana Mitra** (Associate Professor of Education at Penn State University, USA), **Bethan Morgan** (Teaching Associate, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, England), **Lena Bahou** (Doctoral Student, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, England), **Jane McGregor** (Education Researcher, Cambridge, England), and **Roger Holdsworth** (**Connect** editor, and Research Associate, Youth Research Centre, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne, Australia).

*"I find these conferences particularly energising because of the calibre of people it draws to them, the focus and commitment people have, and the very respectful nature of these events."*

*I do believe [Alison's] leadership style has a lot to do with the success of these meetings, and her willingness to engage with ideas from around the world, grappling with the diversity and inclusiveness of our common agendas. The Faculty of Education at Cambridge has amazing facilities, and staff at the Faculty have clearly played a huge role in ensuring the work of Jean Rudduck continues. I am grateful for this because it enables the momentum to grow. Thank you so much for playing such a pivotal role."*

*The key areas I found most useful were: discussion groups around papers where we could discuss ideas and share common dilemmas; the ability to forge work programs that excited us into action; fostering joint research partnerships." (Roseanna Bourke, Educational Psychology Internship Director, Faculty of Education, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)*

Each year this conference has been organised somewhat differently, but every year the underlying goal is to afford participants an opportunity to share their work in interactive forums and to provide much-needed time for conversation and networking. The conference included opportunities for participants to meet in small groups for presentations of research and practice, to talk in small and larger groups about themes and common





issues, and to network informally with colleagues from around the world.

This mix of activities and approaches was useful to participants:

*"I enjoyed the meeting. The network itself is very worthwhile and has helped me in my work through learning from others and through cooperation. I was glad we had prepared presentations during the program as well as time for conversations. I value hearing in-depth presentations. In the more communication-oriented sessions a lot of time is spent on introducing each other to what we are doing. I must say that this has given me new leads to follow and people to contact. On the other hand, it is also a kind of shallowish way of exchanging thoughts. But it has led to some results as we heard in the last sessions."*  
(Jeroen Bron, Senior Curriculum Developer, Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development, Netherlands)

For more conference details, including photos of various sessions, visit: <http://cambridgestudentvoiceseminars.wordpress.com> (Bethan Morgan's wonderful collection of accounts and resources from all four conference) and a storify of tweets (put together by Bethan) at: <https://storify.com/Blodwen123/cambridge-student-voice-seminar-2014-2015>

## Day 1

The Conference started on Tuesday with a welcome and overview from Alison Cook-Sather. She started the conference noting that there was 'an intended rhythm - with space... to enact in a way that works for you.' (Which it surely did for participants. The timetabling, arrangement and facilitation of the sessions was most efficient – especially given the complex type and number of presentations.)

Roger Holdsworth then led a loud and interactive 'ice-breaker' to encourage delegates to meet each other, before introducing the **Commissions of Inquiry** sessions that ran throughout the Conference. In these, delegates met in functional groups (researchers/evaluators, supporters of

practice, developers of student partners' capacity) to review actions and plan future developments.

The take up of this idea of **Commissions of Inquiry** and the possible core questions for the sessions worked very well, especially given the amalgamation of nine working groups from last year into three Commissions. The conceptual base felt robust throughout. There was also plenty of time to come together as a whole group and catch up with old and new colleagues and friends.

The first round of workshops was presented under the heading of '**Explorations of Research and Practice in Diverse Settings**'. There were four sets of presentations:

### a. Building Student-Led Organisations for K-12 Students

In this session, there were descriptions and discussion from the following student organisations and their supporters: "**Building a Student-Led Organisation: Possibilities and Pitfalls**": Bridin Walker and Sammy Chapman, **Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC)** (Australia) via *skype*, with Roger Holdsworth; "**Plans and Challenges for 'Student Voice': A Project Supported by the Phoenix Education Trust**": Yasmin Rufo and Ife Grillo from **Student Voice UK**, with Rachel Roberts from **Phoenix** (England); and "**The Danish Association of Students**": Miranda Dagsson and Sandra Harpoeth from **Danske Skoleelever** (Denmark).

Participants observed that this session was "excellent – I am very glad that I attended. It was great that 'real students' attended both physically and virtually and the technology enhanced the later discussion..."

The members of the **Danish Association of Pupils** spoke clearly and passionately about the Government funded research project on the **Effects of Co-production** - a major topic today in a whole variety of social areas. The students from Australia were patient and articulate on *skype*, but the support both of these groups were receiving contrasted with the current difficult situation re support and funding for student organisations in



England, as described by those from Student Voice UK. It was reassuring that they all agreed on the major challenges – such as reach, communication, advocacy in schools and preventing the ‘*pretence of consultation*’.

#### **b. Preparing for and Participating in Student-Faculty Partnership in Higher Education**

Two papers were presented: “*Training and Preparation for Student Partnership Working: A Space for Exploration of Individual Concerns or a Joint Collaboration?*”: Catherine Bovill, University of Glasgow, Scotland, and Karen Könings, Maastricht University, Netherlands; and “*Student Voice in Higher Education – Utopia or Reality?*”, Ulrika Bergmark and Susanne Westman, Luleå University of Technology, Sweden

#### **c. Diversity and Inclusion in Student Consultant Programs in Higher Education**

The two papers in this session were: “*Student Voice in a Hong Kong Context: Developing a Student Consultant Program at Lingnan University*”: Meredith Goldsmith, Ursinus College, USA, and Elizabeth Ho, Lingnan University, Hong Kong; and “*Approaching Inclusion in Student-Faculty Partnerships in Higher Education*”: Peter Felten, Elon University, USA

#### **d. Student Voice in Hegemonic Contexts**

Three papers addressed: “*Emergent Education in the Homogenised World: The Significance of Integrating Indigenous Knowledge, Cultural Practices and Skills Towards Future Education in India*”: Pallawi Sinha, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, England; “*Student (Dis)engagement with Learning in Postwar Lebanon: Student Perspectives on Obstacles and Pathways*”: Lena Bahou, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, England; and “*In Which School? In Which Country?*”: Eleni Demosthenous, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, England

After lunch, delegates met in a series of round-table discussions on ‘Continued and New Directions for Practice and Scholarship (Part I)’.

We then came together as a whole group for a panel of presentations on **Students as Researchers (StARs)**. This involved presentations from Bethan Morgan and Emma Smart about a project in Bedfordshire, England; from Jean Courtney (with students on video) about the *Speak Up!* and *Students as Researchers* program and conference in Ontario, Canada; and Roger Holdsworth (with students on video) about developments within *Student Action Teams* in Victoria, Australia.

The session on **Students as Researchers** involved the video of students from the wonderful Ontario project. It is great to see an instantiation of a project/relationship started at the last seminar between Bethan, Jean and the students and teachers. The importance of the technology should not be underestimated and, with the modelling and gentle encouragement provided by Bethan, there is an exciting basis for further developments.

*“I was extremely lucky to be able to attend the second day of the conference. The people that I spoke with, and the workshops I attended, provided me with an invaluable source of information and ideas. I left the day feeling reinvigorated (I literally described my mood as ‘buzzing’ later that day) about using student voice in my own research, as well as committed to adapt Jean Courtney’s Speak Up program in some way in my school. The day was an amazing experience and something that I wouldn’t usually have access to. The networking and knowledge I gained will make me a better teacher and researcher. I hope to attend the conference again next year, and have no suggests for improvement other than to ensure that the program doesn’t stop!” (Krista Carson, SUPER [Schools Education Partnership in Education Research] MEd, Soham Village College, England)*

The day concluded with a further round of planning meetings of the **Commissions of Inquiry**.

*“What a great pleasure it has been to ... attend the 4th Student Voice Seminar. I am saddened that I was not able to come to earlier versions; I learned so much and met some great people.” (Susan Groundwater-Smith, Honorary Professor, Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney, Australia)*





## Day 2

The second day of the Conference started with four concurrent presentation sessions about Explorations of Research and Practice in Diverse Settings:

### a. Critical Questions about Methods and Impact across Contexts

The papers were: *"How and When Do We Elicit Student Voice?: A Critical Exploration of Methods"*: Kate Wall, Durham University, England; and *"How Do We Judge the Impact of Co-created Learning and Teaching?"*: Catherine Bovill, Cherie Woolmer, and Vivienne Baumfield, University of Glasgow, Scotland

### b. Power and Pitfalls in Accessing Young People's Perspectives

This was addressed in two papers: *"Accessing Young People's Voices: Engaging with Schools in Times of Uncertainty"*: Julian Brown and Cristina Devecchi, University of Northampton, England; and *"Power Relations within Classroom-based Student Voice Initiatives"*: Emily Nelson, Teacher Educator, Eastern Institute of Technology, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand

### c. Student Voice and Well-Being in Early Education and School-Aged Children

Two very geographically diverse presentations on: *"The ArctiChildren project — A Good Example of Giving Voice and Space to Students in an International Cross-border Network"*: Catrine Kostenius & Ulrika Bergmark, Luleå University of Technology, Sweden; and *"Using Visual and Participatory Methods to Develop an Understanding of Learning Agency in a Chilean Early Education Program"*: Daniela S. Jadue Roa, Post-doctoral Researcher, CIAE, University of Chile, Faculty of Education, Cambridge University, England

### d. The Challenging Task of Creating and Sustaining Productive Student-teacher Partnerships and Practice Over Time

The two papers looked at on-going approaches: *"Bridges over Troubling Waters in Education: Mapping the Complexity of a Four Year Students as Co-researchers Project"*: Susan Groundwater-Smith and Eve Mayes, with Kadek Arya-Pinatyh, University of Sydney, Australia; and *"Strategies for Communicating School Redesign through Partnership to Reshape Cultural Norms"*: Helen Beattie, UP for Learning, Vermont, USA



Helen and Susan presented stimulating sessions on adult-student partnerships and raised important points such as *'transcending the celebratory'*.

Delegates then contributed questions that were challenging them: *"Deep Dilemmas"* – which formed the basis for quickly formed Round Table sharing on the themes.

*"We were very pleased with the way in which the conference was structured, and were able to meet many interesting and engaging people. An important theme in our organisation is student voice, and how pupils are heard and involved in the education. The democratic processes and resources found in pupils hold great importance, and we felt that the people we met at the Fourth Annual Student Voice Conference were equally engaged in this idea. The days were very interesting, and we gained a lot from participating."* (Miranda Wernay Dagsson, President, Danish Association of Pupils, Denmark)

Susan Groundwater-Smith from the University of Sydney, Australia, led the whole conference in considering dangers inherent in our work: *The Appropriation and Distortion of Student Voice*.

*"What I valued were the opportunities to hear a range of perspectives on student voice; to exchange thinking and practice; to engage in deep questioning and reflection in a respectful manner; the opportunity to hear from people whose work I have been referring to, such as Alison Cook-Sather, Susan Groundwater-Smith, Sara Bragg and others, and to listen to presentations by early career researchers from diverse contexts. The international nature of the conference led to really interesting*



*discussion. All of this has been immensely helpful in relation to my own research as a student."* (Juliet Hancock, Teaching Fellow, Moray House School of Education, The University of Edinburgh, Scotland)

The Round Tables on *'Continued and New Directions for Practice and Scholarship'* continued in the afternoon, followed by a discussion session discussing *'How Do We Problematiser Our Work?'* and a further planning meeting within *Commissions of Inquiry* meeting – aimed at drawing together threads to present to others the next day.

In the *Research and Evaluation Commission of Inquiry*, for example, a large number of very helpful suggestions were made and discussed in the last session. After splitting into smaller groups, people took responsibility for particular strands. The like-level groups were helpful

- balancing a slight feeling from last year that we were 'heavy' on Higher Education research. One of the joys of the Student Voice seminar has been the sensitive isostatic balance - a dynamic equilibrium with research, practice, socio-economic context and policy with different voices.

### Day 3

The final day began with reports from the **Commissions of Inquiry**, leading into a broad-ranging plenary discussion about **'Where Have We Come From? Where Are We Going?'** - before the conference concluded.

*"If we were to have another conference next year, I would like to see some themes built up prior to the conference and we have working tables of these areas: ethical dilemmas when working with children and young people; seeking diversity of voice and action; methodological approaches etc."* (Roseanna Bourke, Educational Psychology Internship Director, Faculty of Education, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)

### Outcomes

The experience of spending three days together was generative in and of itself, but participants also identified desired outcomes. Among the outcomes of this year's conference are plans to:

- publish a co-edited volume that feature examples of student voice work across educational levels around the world;
- think about how to provide better support for practitioners of student voice work;
- develop a collection of essays on marginalised groups and the challenges of developing student voice efforts in contexts not as conducive to this work;
- launch a new online journal focused on student voice work;
- co-offer a course on student voice across institutions;
- form a graduate student community/support network;
- develop an annotated list of student voice projects;
- continue to explore what terms we might use for this work (student voice, participation, engagement etc).

### Participants reflected on their overall experience. Some of their comments were:

*"Last year ... was my first time to attend the annual gathering ... I thoroughly enjoyed the conference then and it was a great pleasure to meet like-minded researchers and practitioners. However, my experience of the conference this year far surpassed expectations. It was packed full of exciting and stimulating presentations, workshops, discussions and thought provoking opportunities for individual and group reflection. Once again, I found it such a wonderful pleasure to be in the company of a broad range of people with a common passion and goal. It was such a positive and affirmative experience for me...."*

*I loved every minute of this conference and frequently felt quite emotional and inspired by the passion, integrity and commitment of participants from all over the world. Last year, I realised that my attendance was a terrific networking opportunity and kept in touch with some of the participants, one of whom generously provided a tremendous publishing opportunity for me. This year, the sense of networking was replaced with an overwhelming sense of being at home with an international community and I am delighted on this occasion to be the one who can support and advise some of the participants who sought my advice and for whom I may now be in a position to facilitate further research partnerships and perhaps also, some publishing opportunities.*

*I particularly enjoyed the discussions that took place during the 'Commissions of Inquiry' and also the break up into like-minded groups within educational settings. I was delighted with the groups I chose but it was interesting to feel that I could have enjoyed and contributed to some of the other groups also, which further emphasises the sense of commonality in focus as well as the sense of collegiality within this conference grouping.*

*One of the great strengths of the conference is the manageable number in attendance. It was easy to meet people and strike up a conversation with anyone. Although I am certain that the number in attendance will consistently grow as colleagues share this experience and recommend it to others, it would be great I believe to keep the number of participants as close as possible to the number in attendance this year and if possible not to extend beyond 100 maximum."* (Dr. Paula Flynn, Assistant Professor of Inclusive Education, Trinity College, University of Dublin, Ireland)







*"We had spoken about including workshop/s on practical tools (and methodologies) applicable in practice such that teachers, practitioners and early researchers may be able to take it away with them. Also, I am excited about working with the group on marginalised voice." (Pallawi Sinha, Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, England)*

*"I am very interested in continuing to pursue the notion of the voices of children and young people beyond the classroom. Just in the short time since the conference I have been contacted by several of our cultural institutions*

*attached to our Coalition of Knowledge Building Schools, including the State Library of NSW, the Maritime Museum and Sydney Living Museums. They all see great benefit in ongoing consultation with young people (beyond audience research!) who can help build a picture of engagement in learning in sites other than schools. So perhaps I can continue a dialogue on this via the blog." (Susan Groundwater-Smith, Honorary Professor, Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney, Australia)*

### ***"Participating in the Student Voice Conference in Cambridge is a unique experience for a number of reasons.***

*The conference is **interdisciplinary** yet the participants are united by their passion for student voice. This allows an incredibly positive ethos to develop right from the first session. As participants work in contexts where perhaps they are the only person who privileges student voice, participation in the conference gives each of us an annual boost to continue the work.*

*The conference **welcomes a diverse range of participants**. Alison's leadership results in an atmosphere where all voices are heard and valued. Whether you are a student, a teacher, an academic or work in one of the many other roles where student voice might be promoted, your voice is heard and valued. On a personal level, it can often be intimidating to speak up as an early career researcher in the presence of experienced researchers but the atmosphere at this particular conference is conducive to taking those initial tentative steps and articulating your thoughts in a positive, encouraging atmosphere.*

*The conference is **thought provoking**. There is a mix of presentations of and dialogue surrounding early tentative ideas for future work, presentations of work in process and work already completed. As the participants come from a range of disciplines and contexts, the presentations and discussions challenge your conceptual understanding of the notion of student voice. On a personal level at the recent conference, whilst committed for many years to student voice in primary and secondary school settings, I was challenging to think differently about how student voice is heard and enacted within my University.*

*The conference is **productive**. The conference provides a unique opportunity to make connections with a range of other people working in student voice so that plans for future activities are initiated, followed up through the year and brought back to Cambridge for further dissemination.*

*The title 'conference' is perhaps misleading as I prefer to think of the Cambridge meeting as a space: a space that is open to all, a space where connections can be made, a space where ideas can be explored and a unique space to further the work of student voice." (Mhairi C Beaton, University of Aberdeen, Scotland)*

### **Looking Forward**

On-going participation in the community supported through these Conferences can occur via the **Student Voice Seminar blog** set up by Bethan Morgan. This blog aims to support seminar participants from 2011 to 2014 – and anyone interested in student voice research and practice. It can be found at:

**<http://cambridgestudentvoiceseminars.wordpress.com/>**

There is also the *facebook* page (**Student Voice Research and Practice**) set up by Dana Mitra, which now has over 400 members (see also page 29 of this issue):

**<https://www.facebook.com/groups/studentvoicepage/>**

Although people are, almost by the nature of their work and passion, extremely busy, we would like to keep following up on pledges made such as about an online journal, and have a session explicitly on these. Some of the 'deep discussions' might also provide a springboard. The use of facilitative technology and the presence of students was inspiring and should continue. Maybe there is also a need to return to some of our conceptual roots and arguments? For participants, these seminars have been described as "one of the highlights of my year!"

There are already commitments and plans for a further gathering next year and dates of **June 22 to 24, 2015** have been tentatively put aside. Keep them open in your diary.

Further details from: **Alison Cook-Sather:**  
**[acooksat@brynmawr.edu](mailto:acooksat@brynmawr.edu)**

*(This account was put together by Alison Cook-Sather, Jane McGregor and Roger Holdsworth, using some of the reflective comments from participants. Photos supplied by Dana Mitra and Bethan Morgan.)*

# Student Voice UK at the Cambridge Student Voice Conference

**S**tudent Voice UK is a student-run organisation that aims to be a representative body for secondary school students by representing young people's views on education and schools. Recently, we had our **Student Voice Conference** where we elected a new National Executive who will continue the work of **Student Voice** and ensure we grow better and stronger!

**Student Voice** is looked after by the **Phoenix Education Trust**, which seeks to promote democracy in schools. This means everyone having a say, and weight been given to the views of the most important stakeholders in our education system - the students.

In June, representatives from **Student Voice** attended an International Conference at the University of Cambridge to discuss how student voice was being carried out across the world.

In groups we tried to look at different problems that student voice is currently having, which included the lack of a framework, the tokenisation of student voice and the Government's lack of appreciation for how important student voice is.

We spoke to people from the Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC) and the Danish Pupils Association and recognised that the amount of support and funding they had from their governments was significantly higher than we have in the UK. Things we all recognised was trying to make sure that the people involved in student voice weren't all just from one background and that everyone felt included and welcomed.

We also felt that, as a student-run organisation, it was hard **not** to align with one particular party – but staying apolitical is essential if you want a truly representative body of students. Funding and support may change when new parties come into power, so student voice must be recognised to be a essential part of education, not something that should change per party.

Finally, we discussed how student voice needs to be holistic and ingrained in education and not just have one member of staff leading it. The UN CRoC was massively discussed as a way of ensuring student voice in education and it was interesting to see different groups' and workers' responses to it.



*Yasmin and Ife at Cambridge Student Voice Conference, June 2014*

It was great and important to meet with other people around the world who are aiming to promote student voice. We will definitely take back what we've learnt and include it in our own organisation. The conference was fantastic and we'll continue to defiantly work so every secondary student in the UK has a voice that is heard.

**Ife Grillo**  
*Student Voice Executive*  
ife.grillo@gmail.com



*Danish and Australian students at Cambridge Student Voice Conference, June 2014*



*Student Voice UK Conference, July 2014*



# English Student Voice Conference

On Monday 7th July, **Student Voice** held its very first conference where over 200 students, teachers and workshop professionals came together to help shape the future of **Student Voice**. The day consisted of workshops ranging from voting and discussing democratic engagement with regards to the voice of the youth and in particular whether rules in school infringe upon our human rights. We had a real variety throughout the day with the added edition of a policy café.

The policy café was the opportunity to shape what **Student Voice** does over the next year. We had the chance to discuss two of eight discussion topics, ranging from supporting the provision of school nurses to a debate on whether **Student Voice** should be in favour of the GCSE reform, which will be used by the newly elected National Executive to decide the main priorities.

The day was very useful with a lot of information and ideas that students and teachers can take back to their school to ensure that students' voices are heard when it comes to decisions about their education and establishments.

To round off the day we held the first **National Executive** elections where 25 students stood to be their respective region's representatives or director. After brilliant speeches from all candidates, a vote took place. It was an anxious wait for all of us as the results were being counted and emailed out. However, this isn't the end for people who weren't elected!

We hope everyone had an amazing day and learnt something that they can take back to their schools or education providers to make a real impact on getting young peoples' voices heard.

The new **National Executive** is as follows: **Yasmin Rufo** (Director); **Dylan-James McCaughey** (Alternative Education Provision); **Ciara Brodie** (North West Region); **Hannah Stephenson** (Yorkshire and the Humber); **Rebecca Caffery** (West Midlands); **Richard Ferreira** (East of England); **Chloe Lintern** (South West Region); **Ellie Emberson** (South East Region); **Ife Grillo** (London); **George Deller** (Open Space); **Jayh Karia** (Open Space); **Thea Smith** (Open Space).

## Quotes from students who attended the conference

"SVUK14 was a real success in bringing together a range of organisations, strategic leaders and young people concerned with the democratic input that young people have in their schools and the wider education system as a whole. Collaborative long-term projects such as **Student Voice** play a unique role in our society, and the fact that it is both



student-run and student-led makes it all the more meaningful" - **Craig Bateman**

"A really enjoyable day. I had the opportunity to meet other youth and talk about the issues that matter to us" - **Ellie Emberson**

"A brilliant day that allowed young people to exercise their democratic right, inspiring the youth of England" - **Jayh Karia**

"Thanks to everyone for making Monday so successful and run relatively smoothly. Good luck to the new **National Executive** and I hope **Student Voice** can evolve to be ever more democratic, transparent and grass-rooted in the future." - **George Downs**

**Chloe Lintern**  
*Student Voice Executive*  
pinkchloe98@live.co.uk



Student Voice UK Conference, July 2014

# I'm More Than an Ant in a Building!

In 2008, at a Student Forum held in Toronto at the Ontario Ministry of Education, Canada, students were asked: *What barriers lay in the way of achieving greater student engagement in your learning environment? How do you suggest overcoming these obstacles?*

They answered:

- [Have students] choose their projects, choose their research...
- ...give them more creative projects...
- ... Lots of group work across different grades...
- ...in my class, they gave us more responsibility...
- We need more interaction where students are teaching each other and even teaching the teacher...students caring about students.
- The Minister of Education doesn't have a chance to meet with us all the time, so struggling students need to be talked to.
- If people were speaking in their own classroom with peers, this would accomplish more than the provincial committee. Then all the classrooms bring their ideas to a central committee that takes it to [the Minister of Education].
- Ask students what they want to see changed at the school and respond to it.

And they had questions of their own:

- Do we trust a committee to reflect everything that everyone said?

- Not everything works for all situations so do we need a variety of strategies? Are there any other strategies?
- People will choose not to engage; how do you reach these people?
- How do we give different people a chance to engage?
- We need to do more to engage everyone, not just the "high achievers." How do we engage across school communities? How do we engage students who are generally not engaged?
- Students have to be the diversity they can't just represent it. Even students here today are not fully representative of students. How would you get a fair representation? (Lewis, 2008)

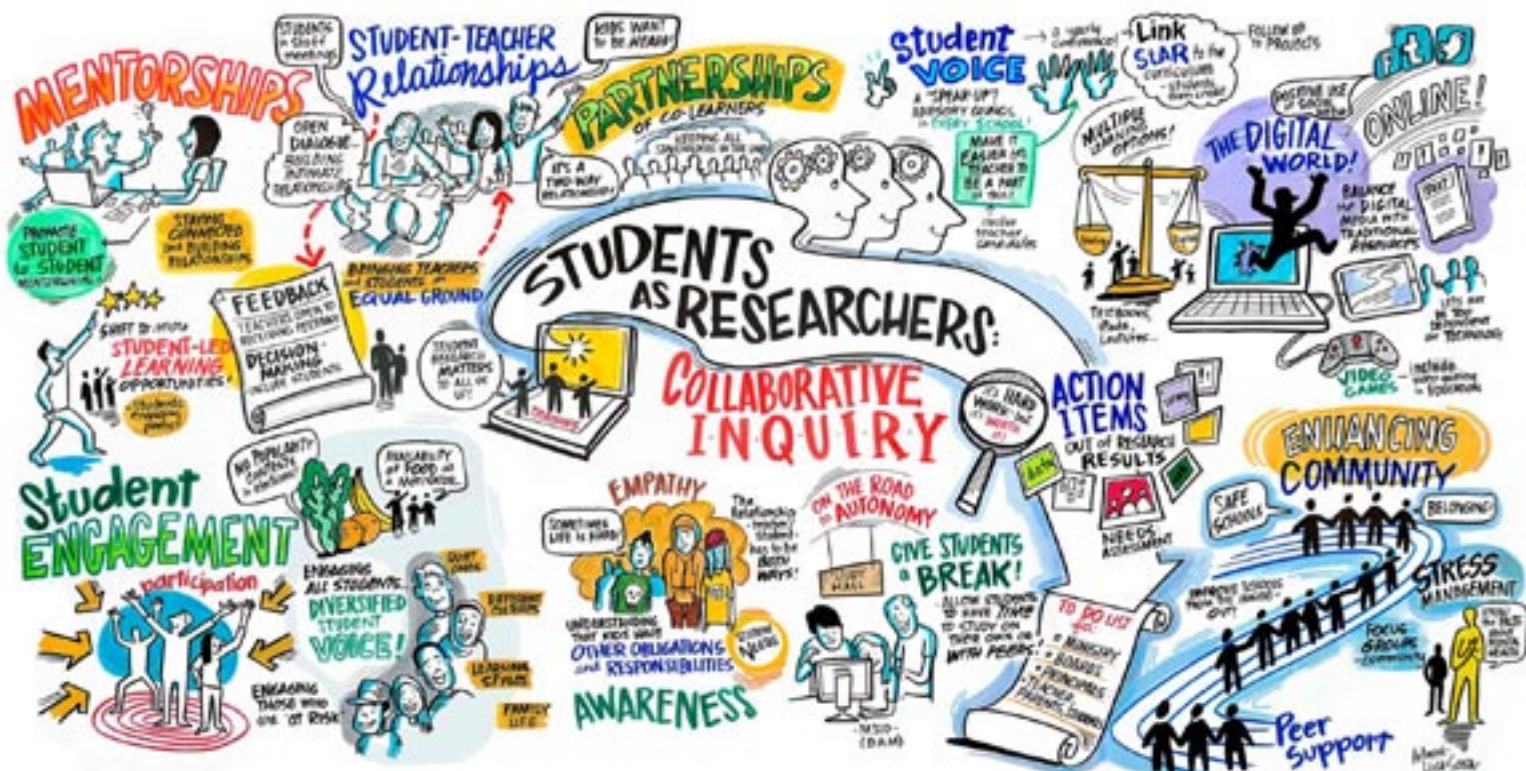
As a result of the information gained from the Student Forum, in February 2012 the Ministry collaborated with a community health centre to pilot the Ministry's first **Students as Researchers Conference**<sup>1</sup>. More than 100 students and 30 teachers (grades 7-12) participated in the event, which included an introduction to basic



research methods (**Students as Researchers Toolkit**) and post-forum supports to help **Students as Researchers** teams plan and conduct ethical research involving their peers. This pilot was successful, with 20 teams completing projects.

In the fall of 2012, additional training sessions resulted in 68 student research projects. In the fall of 2013, 80 more teams were trained and are currently conducting collaborative inquiry on questions (eg well-being, student engagement, inclusion, mental health, times of transition throughout school, relationships between engagement and achievement etc.). On April 28<sup>th</sup> 2014, 28 schools attended and presented at the first **Students as Researchers** conference, where they shared their research findings with their peers, educators, policy makers and educational researchers.

The summative graphic (below) was illustrated during the conference:





## Background

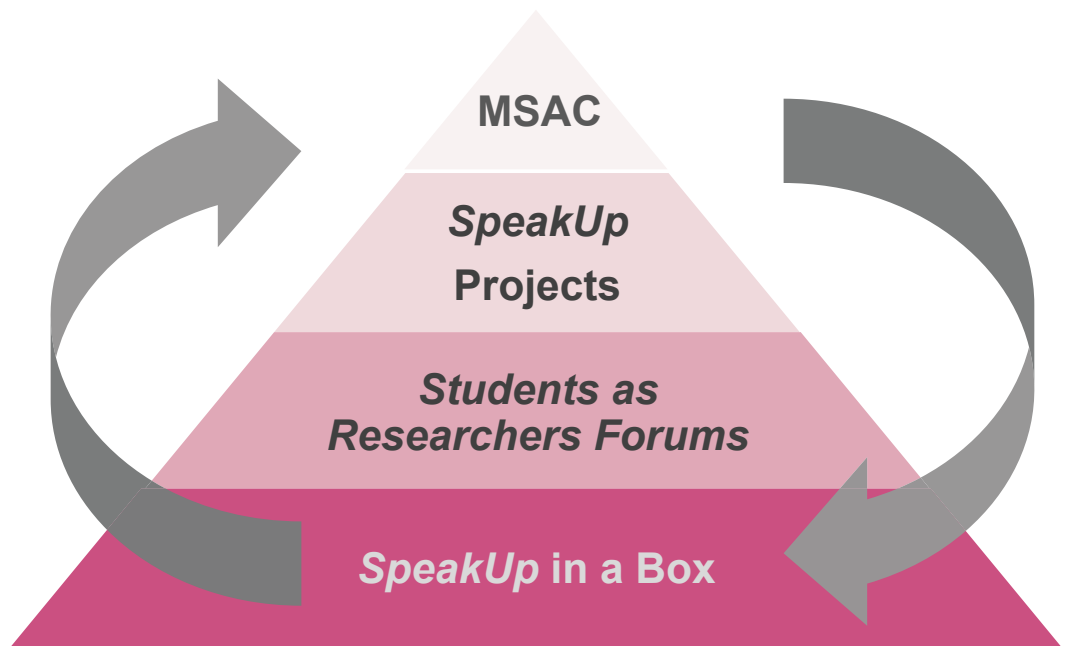
Ontario is committed to giving students flexibility and ownership of their learning<sup>2</sup>, which necessitates listening to students' voices and responding to them.

In 2003, the Ontario Ministry of Education launched a province-wide strategy that helps students in grades 7 to 12 tailor their education to their individual strengths, goals and interests and ensures that every student is provided with the tools they need to successfully complete their secondary education and pursue their post-secondary goals, whether those entail further education in college or university, apprenticeships or employment. This **Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategy (SS/L18 Strategy)**<sup>3</sup> has five key goals:

1. Increase the graduation rate;
2. Support a good outcome for all students;
3. Provide students with new and relevant learning opportunities;
4. Build on students' strengths and interests; and
5. Provide students with an effective elementary to secondary school transition.

In 2008, the Ontario **Student Voice Initiative**<sup>4</sup> was started, and created a variety of ways to listen to students, to learn more about what strengthens their engagement, in order to develop policies and programs that will help the Ministry achieve the goals above. In this vein, the Ontario's **Student Voice Initiative** aims to:

- Re-engage students and close the gap in achievement by learning more about what helps students learn;
- Ensure that all students feel a sense of belonging and are able to participate in decisions impacting on their learning; and
- "Involve students meaningfully in articulating what would help to strengthen their belonging in both academic and social learning environments" (*Education Amendment Act - Learning to Age 18*, 2006)<sup>5</sup>



The key components to Ontario's **Student Voice initiative** include:

- **Minister's Student Advisory Council (MSAC):** A body that enables the Minister's direct access to a range of youth perspectives; more than 60 students representative of the province's diverse student population are appointed annually.
- **Regional Student Forums/Students as Researchers:** Student-teacher teams are trained in collaborative inquiry and conduct research on questions they have on their learning (eg student engagement).



- **Speakup Projects:** Micro-grants are available to students who are invited to design and implement school specific projects that meet the goals of Student Voice.
- **SpeakUp in a Box Kit:** Everything students need to host a forum in their school with 30 of their peers.

**SpeakUp in a Box**

SpeakUp in a Box contains everything needed for 30 students to discuss:

1. What helps you engage in your learning?
2. What holds you back from engaging in your learning?
3. What can adults do to improve how education looks and feels?
4. What can students do to improve how education looks and feels?

Students may request a kit by emailing: [studentengagement@ontario.ca](mailto:studentengagement@ontario.ca)

For more information please visit [www.ssfaii.ca/speakup](http://www.ssfaii.ca/speakup). Thanks to Speak Out Alberta for sharing their idea.

## Just ask the students: How Students as Researchers started

A growing body of research has examined the potential role of increasing student voice in schools. Student voice – also known as student participation, active citizenship, or youth leadership – describes the many ways in which young people share the school decisions that will shape their lives and the lives of their peers (Mitra, 2006). Disengaged students attend school less, achieve less academically, and are more likely to drop out of school (Ferguson, 2005).

**Students as Researchers** is based on the understanding that students and adults participate as partners in opportunities to conduct inquiries around questions of interest to students, and that active engagement of students will be supported. Through this partnership, students have the opportunity to become change agents who, along with teachers, affect school cultures and norms, and develop a sense of shared responsibility for the quality and conditions of teaching and learning, both within particular classrooms and more generally within the school community<sup>6</sup> (Fielding and Bragg 2003).

As a Grade 12 student said, when addressing his schoolmates: ***"You are not just an ant in a building; you are a person who can actually change the community and what is going on in the school. You are an avid member of the school, not just any student who happened to walk into Harbord. You are a member of it and you matter."***

Students and teachers are given the training and tools<sup>8</sup> by the Ministry

of Education to lead student research projects that collect evidence about their school's policies and directives, and issues of importance to the student body. The research methodology for **Students as Researchers** has its roots in community-based research (CBR), which can be described as:

*a transformative model of research grounded on principles of community empowerment, collaboration, and social change in which the community of interest participates not as research subjects but as research collaborators and agents of change. In CBR, research is a means for empowering community members as partners in knowledge production (along with academic, community agency partners, and other stakeholders) geared at generating evidence and mobilizing change on issues that are important to the community.<sup>9</sup>*

Students are advised and supported by teachers in their school on research methods and considerations with an emphasis on ethics for research projects that necessarily involve consultation with their peers who include those from vulnerable communities. The process through which students develop their evidence-informed recommendations engages them in learning how to influence decisions at school and in their communities as well as challenging the school's administrative structures to adapt and be responsive to students' research findings. They can select any research topic of their choosing, which have included health and well-being, the importance of extracurricular activities, and bullying.

## I am member of it and I matter

Curtis, Samuel, Kaylan and Trisha, currently seniors in high school, presented their **Students as Researcher findings**<sup>10</sup> at the **Ontario Educational Research Symposium** in February 2013. Samuel opened with this statement:

*"I'd like to start off this presentation by talking about change. Every person will go through change at one point in their life, whether it's moving from a small town to a city or just transitioning from high school to university or college. Change can be an amazing experience that can help you grow to full potential or change can be a struggle with lifelong consequences. **Students as Researchers** and the **SpeakUp** program have granted us the opportunity to delve into the topic of change but more specifically the transition that First Nation students, much like ourselves, have experienced and continue to do so today."*

Curtis, Samuel, Kaylan and Trisha had travelled great distances from their First Nation community to attend a publicly funded high school. This transition meant leaving the support of their family and adjusting to a new environment on their own. They wanted to learn more about this topic and created this question: ***What are the experiences of First Nations students as they transition from their First Nation communities to publicly funded schools?***

Their recommendations about the supports (Family, School and Community) that First Nation students need have led to the organisation of their school's first **Anishinaabe** Olympics as well as







other cultural events. Another initiative that began in their board as the result of their research, the **Aboriginal Youth Advisory Council (AYAC)**, is active and membership continues to grow. Two students on the AYAC worked with a local college and its senior administration to organise the first Aboriginal Leadership Camp in August of 2013.

The students developed skills, including leadership, communication and advocacy. They discovered new strengths and career paths (eg Samuel's desire to become an ethno-anthropologist). Kaylan, Samuel, Trisha and Curtis have expanded their network of support to include former Prime Ministers, Chiefs of First Nations and the Ontario Minister of Education. Samuel closed their presentation by saying:

*"You have seen our research and how it affects aboriginal students, culturally and academically. You have seen our plans for the future and how we are going to help change and shape our fellow aboriginal peers' lives for the better by motivating students and helping them feel comfortable in their learning environment."*

In May, 2013, Samuel was appointed to the **Minister's Student Advisory Council**.

The graphic (above) was created during the keynote addresses at the 2013-14 **Students as Researchers** conference. DSBONE reflects Curtis, Samuel, Kaylan and Trisha's research findings.

## Conclusion

In Oldfather's seminal work (1995), students were described as being the only authentic chroniclers of their own experience. Student voice has proven to be a crucial dimension in building a sense of membership, changing teacher-student relationships, and helping to construct an agenda for school improvement that reflects students' experiences and concerns.

Through the **Student Voice Initiative**, Ontario has demonstrated its commitment to student voice, and the efforts of **Students as Researchers** has done much to provide a space for students to articulate within the community of the school what is important to them within that learning environment. Its ongoing effort will contribute to understanding what works for large systems when embedding a process for engaging student voice in the arena of a Ministry, district, school and classroom.

**Jean Courtney**  
Education Officer,  
Ontario Ministry of Education



## Notes

- 1 [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/students/speakup/research.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/students/speakup/research.html)
- 2 [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/renewedvision.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/renewedvision.pdf)
- 3 [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/studentsuccess/strategy.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/studentsuccess/strategy.html)
- 4 [www.ontario.ca/speakup](http://www.ontario.ca/speakup)
- 5 [www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills\\_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=339](http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=339)
- 6 [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/students/speakup/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/students/speakup/index.html)
- 7 Grade 12 Student, Focus Group, *Speak Up*, Harbord Collegiate Institute, Toronto, 2010
- 8 [www.edugains.ca/newsite/studentVoice/student\\_researchers\\_toolkit.html](http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/studentVoice/student_researchers_toolkit.html)
- 9 [accessalliance.ca/sites/accessalliance/files/CBR\\_Toolkit\\_Jan2012.pdf](http://accessalliance.ca/sites/accessalliance/files/CBR_Toolkit_Jan2012.pdf)
- 10 Please email to: [studentengagement@ontario.ca](mailto:studentengagement@ontario.ca) for a copy of the 2013 **Students as Researchers** PowerPoint presentation

**Jean Courtney** is an educator and the team leader for Ontario's Student Voice initiative, which is administered through the Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategic Implementation, Innovation and Support Branch of Ontario's Ministry of Education.

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## International: SoundOut, USA

# 10 things you can do to advocate for student voice

1. **Learn about Student Voice.** Did you know that Student Voice is more than classes voting or school-wide meetings? Learn about student voice from the *SoundOut* website ([www.soundout.org](http://www.soundout.org)), through *Wikipedia*, or through a number of books.
2. **Brainstorm what your school can do to change.** The power of your imagination is a terrible thing to waste! Brainstorm different ways your school could engage student voice more, and make a list.
3. **Talk to other students about Student Voice.** Ask your friends if they know about Student Voice. Share your ideas about which changes your school can make, and ask if they have any ideas themselves. Challenge them to ask you hard questions, and see if you can answer them, or tell them you'll get back to them after you learn more.
4. **Find an adult ally.** Create a learning partnership with an adult to help your efforts. Engaging an adult ally can make planning more effective and connections with other adults easier.
5. **Create a Student Voice plan for your school or community organisation.** Maybe your school or the neighborhood nonprofit needs more Student Voice. Work with your friends to make a plan for who, what, when, where and how Student Voice can be used.
6. **Hold a Student Voice workshop.** Invite other youth and adults in your community to learn about Student Voice by facilitating a hands-on demonstration workshop. Research Student Voice learning activities and use them to help participants learn by experiencing democracy in education.
7. **Present your plan to school decision-makers.** Who makes decisions about how teachers should teach in your school? Teachers, principals, assistant principals, district administrators and district board of education members can all affect Student Voice. Share your plan to them one-on-one or make a presentation to the school board.
8. **Present your plan to community decision-makers.** Who chooses which nonprofit organisations get government funding? Present your plan to them, as well as neighborhood association presidents, local businesspeople and youth organisations' leaders.
9. **Organise!** If your efforts to work with the education system aren't working, organise. Find other people who care about Student Voice by sharing the idea every chance you get, and ask them to join you in promoting the concept in your school or community. Then determine a goal and take action to put Student Voice into action for everyone!
10. **Find allies online.** Having a hard time finding other youth and adults who care? Look online through websites like [www.soundout.org](http://www.soundout.org). People you can partner with are everywhere, and sometimes it's just a matter of asking!

Adam Fletcher

[www.soundout.org/publications.html](http://www.soundout.org/publications.html)







[www.vicsrc.org.au](http://www.vicsrc.org.au)

## **VicSRC Congress 2014**

# **Over 150 Passionate Voices - Debating & Deciding**

The VicSRC's annual **Congress** has just been held from the 15-16 of August this year. Over the past year, VicSRC Executive members worked tirelessly on their portfolio areas that were developed at Congress 2013 last August. This preparation finally came to its head, and Congress enabled the 150+ delegates who attended, to brainstorm and develop ideas to mould our future.

While undertaking their work, the past Executive also saw the organisation soar to greater heights. Within each portfolio, students undertook multiple meetings and consultations with key stakeholders on their resolution, including discussions with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the CEO of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). There was immense media attention surrounding the issue of non-gendered bathrooms and this lifted the public profile of the organisation.

**Congress 2014** was to be something new and different for all of us. It was the first time the location of it had changed

(to Lord Somers Camp), and the first time for its organisation by an almost brand new Executive and Coordinator. As difficult and daunting as this might have been, the outcome was not only productive but also very enjoyable.

The Executive members (and its crew of volunteer supporters) were both the organisers of Congress and facilitators throughout it. Though it was sometimes hard to grasp everything that was happening in a short time, the experience ultimately became one of

our greatest achievements. It was really rewarding to know that, not only were people satisfied with what they got in the two days, but that they left looking forward to next year.

### **Congress activities**

On the first day, after an early 9 am arrival (buses were provided for delegates to travel from their meeting point in the city), delegates were welcomed into their colour groups, each with a crew and Executive member. Throughout the camp the delegates participated in colour group games and activities to get points for their team.

All delegates then moved into a quick introduction from the VicSRC about the organisation, the intentions and process of Congress, and a report from



  
**CONGRESS**  
**2014**  
**LORD SOMERS CAMP**



the Executive about their work over the past year.

**Workshop 1**, an **Issues Café**, enabled the delegates to brainstorm and talk about issues that had been prioritised at the 12 **Regional SRC Conferences** held earlier in the year by the VicSRC (see page 24 of this issue of **Connect**). Delegates each decided on an issue that they were most passionate about and formed groups around these topics. This took them into the next sessions. In these **Workshops 2 and 3**, each issue group decided on a specific proposal and also decided who would speak for the proposal in the formal Congress session. The four people chosen had to speak about *why* they had chosen the proposal, provide three main arguments on the *strengths* of the proposal, acknowledge some *negatives* and solutions, and lastly indicate how this proposal would turn out in the *future*.

After a quick snack break, all delegates went into the first **formal session of Congress**. Here we also had a visit from the Minister of Education, who spoke to everyone and stressed the importance of the work we were doing. He also answered questions from the delegates.

In this first decision-making session, we got through five proposals, agreeing to three of them. Speakers for and against the proposals spoke, and then a vote was held to determine if each proposal were passed or defeated.

The **Gala Dinner** that night was also a 'working' session, with tables decorated by colour groups. An ex-Executive member spoke about her subsequent pathway to becoming a lawyer, and the value of being on the Executive, and public thanks were extended to sponsors, crew and outgoing Executive members. Those intending to stand for election to the Executive for 2014-15 were also briefed on their responsibilities. The evening then concluded with an energetic colour team game.

The next **formal Congress** session was held first thing in the morning of the second day, where we got through a massive *eleven more proposals! Yikes!* This was a long but productive session, with passionate debates, and agreement to a further four of these resolutions.

Between lunch and the final session was **election time** for the VicSRC, where

students interested in being part of the Executive each gave a 30-second speech on why they wanted to be involved. We saw 28 speeches for the 15 positions, all of them exciting; we'll remember 'Yes we Tran!' We voted formally and secretly on who we wanted for the new Executive and also prioritised the proposals that had been passed.

Following lunch, the **final workshop** was about **taking action** on issues of concern. This was both about the resolutions we had passed, but also about the '**Election Question**' process of **OurSay** and was led by this group. In this workshop, all delegates had the opportunity to make and post questions that we would ask the leaders of our community. These had to be based on the most important issues for us in Australia.

Congress finished with the announcement of the **new Executive**, public thanks to the outgoing members and to the crew and supporters, and a recognition of the way that the VicSRC has grown.

When informed of the new funding and service agreement, the smiles could not be wiped from the faces of the





# Resolutions

The following resolutions were agreed to by students at the VicSRC Congress 2014 and prioritised by them in this order. These will form the agenda for the incoming Executive's work in 2014-2015:

## 1. Education Maintenance Allowance

That the VicSRC advocate for the preservation of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) to support financially disadvantaged students, and also raise awareness of other avenues for financial support.

## 2. Gender Identity

That the VicSRC partner with youth service organisations to advocate for youth and create resources about sexual and gender identity acceptance and equality.

## 3. Interschool Collaboration

That the VicSRC resolve to establish links of communication and collaboration between schools.

## 4. Student Wellbeing Counsellors

That the VicSRC advocate for the government to provide extra student wellbeing counsellors for secondary schools and equivalent places of learning when requested for by schools.

## 5. Anti-Bullying Resources

That the VicSRC encourage schools to develop resources that promote anti-bullying and the positive actions and activities schools are taking to address this issue.

## 6. Green Initiatives

That the VicSRC support the implementation of green initiatives in schools. The aim of these initiatives would be to reduce our carbon footprint and to create a more positive environment in terms of sustainability.

## 7. Extra-Curricular Activities

That the VicSRC establish a website/platform to promote and inform both teachers and students about extra-curricular activities within the community, highlighting the benefits of participation in a diverse variety of activities.

# Executive 2014-15

A new Student Executive of the VicSRC was elected at the **2014 VicSRC Congress**. The following students are charged with managing the organisation and implementing Congress decisions for the next 12 months:

**Sabrina Bassal** (Year 11, Minaret College)

**Sammy Chapman** (Year 11, Casey Grammar School)

**Marine Chu** (Year 10, Mac.Robertson Girls' High School)

**Spencer Davis** (Year 8, Footscray City College)

**Natalie Elizabeth** (Year 11, Northern College of the Arts and Technology)

**Ron Garcia** (Year 10, Lalor Secondary College)

**Danai Harawa** (Year 9, Frankston High School)

**Sam Ilobuchi** (Year 8, Frankston High School)

**Demi Irwin** (Year 10, Rochester Secondary College)

**Jordyn Kruger** (Year 11, Mooroolbark College)

**Lucas Muehleisen** (Year 11, John Monash Science School)

**Qais Sadat** (Year 11, Minaret College)

**Kristen Sellings** (Year 10, Yarram Secondary College)

**Tess Shacklock** (Year 11, Templestowe College)

**Margaret Tran** (Year 10, Mac.Robertson Girls' High School)





# VicSRC Regional Conferences: Top Issues

During Term 2, 2014, the VicSRC conducted twelve **Regional Student Conferences** throughout Victoria. Almost 700 students attended these one-day events. During those day, students shared information about initiatives they

were taking, and identified and debated issues that concerned them. Each Conference prioritised the **top issues** for students in that area, and these issues were then reported to and built on to form the workshop topics at **Congress 2014**.

Regional Conference	Top Issues
GIPPSLAND: <i>Yarram: 6 May 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bullying</li> <li>2. Peer Pressure</li> <li>3. Mental Health</li> </ol>
BALLARAT: <i>8 May 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bullying</li> <li>2. Peer Pressure</li> <li>3. Maintenance of school facilities</li> </ol>
BENDIGO: <i>9 May 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Homophobia</li> <li>2. Fitting into friendship groups and acceptance</li> <li>3. Individual student issues, ie bullying/mental health</li> </ol>
METRO SOUTH EAST: <i>Nossal: 20 May 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of participation in co-curricular activities</li> <li>2. Truancy ('wagging')</li> <li>3. Stress and anxiety about school performance</li> </ol>
METRO CENTRAL: <i>Mac.Robertson: 21 May 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More engaging and interactive teaching styles</li> <li>2. Student motivation</li> <li>3. Stress and anxiety about school performance and the future</li> </ol>
METRO EASTERN: <i>Heathmont: 23 May 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Length of school hours</li> <li>2. Lack of respect and engagement by students with their school</li> <li>3. Stress and pressure from schoolwork</li> <li>4. Teacher/student relationships and conflict</li> </ol>
GOULBURN NORTH-EAST: <i>Wangaratta: 26 May 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of engagement at school; lack of student motivation</li> <li>2. Misuse of technology</li> <li>3. Teachers spending too much time with students who are struggling; this does not leave enough time for the rest of the class</li> <li>4. Teachers need more training and knowledge in their subjects</li> </ol>
GEELONG: <i>28 May 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of engagement and student motivation</li> <li>2. Misuse of technology</li> <li>3. Teachers spending time with struggling students, so not enough time for other students</li> <li>4. Teachers need more training and knowledge in their subjects</li> </ol>
METRO NORTHERN: <i>Fawkner: 30 May 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bullying and Cyberbullying</li> <li>2. Stress about school</li> <li>3. Substance abuse and misuse</li> <li>4. Misbehaving and disruptive students</li> </ol>
METRO SOUTHERN: <i>Frankston: 13 June 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of motivation and engagement</li> <li>2. Negative influences at home and in the community</li> <li>3. Pressure to succeed</li> <li>4. Financial issues for students</li> <li>5. Lack of differential teaching styles</li> </ol>
SOUTH-WESTERN: <i>Portland: 16 June 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher/student relationships</li> <li>2. Limited subject choices</li> <li>3. Lack of resources in country schools</li> <li>4. Bullying</li> </ol>
METRO WESTERN: <i>Kings Park: 19 June 2014</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of feedback from teachers</li> <li>2. Disruptive and disengaged students</li> <li>3. Lack of study area and/or misuse of study area</li> <li>4. Bullying</li> </ol>





# Share your story!

The 2014 VicSRC Recognition Awards are celebrating the best examples of SRCs, student voice, student led action and student participation in 2014.

Simply create a 1-2 minute video that captures your story. Our five new categories for this year are:

- *Student leader of the year*
- *Group action award*
- *Outstanding SRC of the year*
- *SRC teacher advisor award*
- *Whole school focus on student voice award*

There is over \$10,000 of prize money available and the best bit is you can apply for more than one category! First place: \$1,500 // Runner up: \$300 // Honourable mention: \$200 // + more!

The Award ceremony will be held on October 22nd and the event will be attended by the Hon. Minister for Education, Martin Dixon. **Applications close on Friday 19 Sept 2014.**

To apply, simply develop a 1-2 minute video showcasing how your school demonstrates the best practices supporting student voice in any of the five categories and then fill out an online form available at our website linking us to your video: [www.vicsrc.org.au/initiatives/recognitionawards](http://www.vicsrc.org.au/initiatives/recognitionawards)



## Recognition Awards



## Events and Communication Officer

The Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC) is seeking a creative, organised and motivated person to join its team as the **Events and Communications Officer**. This 22.8 hour per week position will plan, organise and promote major VicSRC events across Victoria including *Congress, Regional Conferences, Recognition Awards, and Executive camps*. The role will also be responsible for leading VicSRC *online communications, website and membership engagement*.

The VicSRC is the peak body representing secondary students in Victoria. Its vision is to ensure student voices are heard at all levels of decision making and to strengthen the capacity of students and Student Representative Councils to make a difference in their school and across the state.

The VicSRC is auspiced by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc (YACVic) and funded through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Victoria (DEECD). The position will be based at the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, the peak body representing young people and the sector that supports them.

For a full position description with selection criteria, download the position description from the VicSRC website: [www.vicsrc.org.au/aboutus/careers](http://www.vicsrc.org.au/aboutus/careers)

### To Apply

Applicants for the position must specifically address each of the selection criteria as stated in the position description. Send through responses with a current resume to [coordinator@vicsrc.org.au](mailto:coordinator@vicsrc.org.au) with 'VicSRC Events and Communications Officer' in the subject line.

Applications for this position close at midnight on **Sunday 31st August**. Interviews are likely to be conducted on Thursday 4th September.

For any questions, e-mail **Krista Seddon** at: [coordinator@vicsrc.org.au](mailto:coordinator@vicsrc.org.au) or call 03 9267 3744.

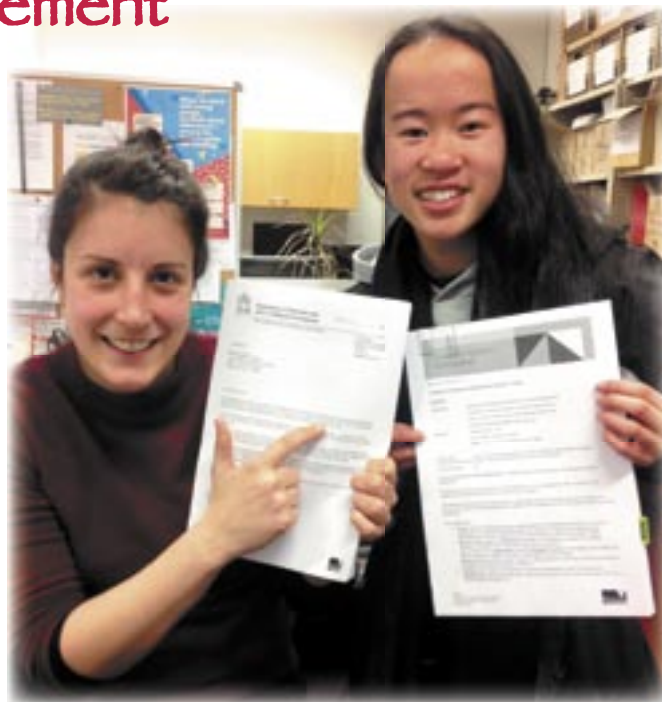


## 3-Year Funding Agreement

The VicSRC (through its auspice body, the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria) has recently signed a three-year funding and service agreement with the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).

This funding will enable the organisation to plan forward with certainty, and expand its operations in the immediate future. In particular, the program of **Regional Student Conferences** will be consolidated through the appointment of an **Events and Communication Officer** (see above) and consultation with students and their school-based organisations extended. A further agreement will also hopefully see the *Teach the Teacher* program continue and expand to include more schools during the next three years.

The VicSRC thanks the DEECD for their ongoing support and congratulates the outgoing Executive and the VicSRC Coordinator for their work, which was vital in achieving this agreement.



A **resource kit** for students and teachers interested to implement a *Teach the Teacher* program at your school has been developed by the VicSRC. It is part of the **Represent! Plus** resources on the VicSRC website: [www.vicsrc.org.au/resources/representplus](http://www.vicsrc.org.au/resources/representplus)

### The VicSRC has rebranded!

To sign up to the new VicSRC online e-newsletter ... visit:

[www.vicsrc.org.au/joinin/maillinglist](http://www.vicsrc.org.au/joinin/maillinglist)

The VicSRC receives funding support from the **Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development** and is auspiced by and based at the **Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic)**. It can be reached there on 03 9267 3744 or, for the cost of a local call from outside Melbourne on 1300 727 176; or by email: [coordinator@vicsrc.org.au](mailto:coordinator@vicsrc.org.au)





## Notice of VISTA Annual General Meeting

Under Part 4 of the Model Rules of the **Victorian Institute of SRC Teacher Advisers Inc.**, notice is hereby given of the **2013-14 Annual General Meeting** of this organisation, to take place on:

**Thursday 4th September 2014 at 5.00 pm**  
**at Abbotsford Primary School, Lithgow Street, Abbotsford, Vic**

The business of the Annual General meeting is to:

- confirm the minutes of the previous Annual General meeting and of any Special General meetings held since then;
- receive and consider the annual report of the Committee on the activities of VISTA during the preceding year - including the financial statement;
- elect members of the Committee;
- confirm or vary the annual membership fee; and
- deal with any business raised by members.

Any member wishing to raise an item of business at the AGM must lodge this by post (to 22 Menzies Grove, Ivanhoe 3079) or e-mail to [vista@srteachers.org.au](mailto:vista@srteachers.org.au) by **Friday 29th August**.

Members who cannot attend the AGM may appoint another member as his or her **proxy**; proxy forms can be downloaded from the VISTA website at <http://srteachers.ning.com>

Members can also attend the AGM **virtually**; please e-mail [vista@srteachers.org.au](mailto:vista@srteachers.org.au) to arrange this. Please **confirm your attendance** by RSVPing to [vista@srteachers.org.au](mailto:vista@srteachers.org.au)

VISTA currently receives no additional funding to operate its programs and relies heavily on memberships to support its programs. Visit us at <http://srteachers.ning.com> or e-mail us at [vista@srteachers.org.au](mailto:vista@srteachers.org.au) for details on how to join.

### **VicSRC Congress 2014 .... continued from page 22**

Executive. Over the past year, the media coverage and social networking of the organisation has doubled, funding has greatly increased and huge changes are beginning to take place. For the first time in VicSRC history, two or even three people will be employed by the organisation, lightening the workload and allowing for further expansion.

The VicSRC is at a stage now where many more initiatives are possible for Victorian students. All that needs to be done is to continue the hard work of past Executives.

Congress was fun, productive, efficient, inclusive, and educational. It catered for the needs of all of the delegates. Executive members looked after their individual groups well and learnt a lot about leading others, as well as how to run activities and sessions and also the general process of Congress. It was an unforgettable experience filled with lots of joy and, more importantly, it was the perfect opportunity to voice our opinions openly. That would probably be the most memorable part of it.

Thank you so much to Krista Seddon for all her hard work this year as VicSRC Coordinator, to Sammy Chapman - our amazing Congress Coordinator, and to all of our

wonderful crew and hard-working Executive. Good luck to the new and continuing Executive members. Next year here we come!

**Bridin Walker, Qais Sadat**  
and **Sophie Williams**



*All photos of the VicSRC Congress 2014 by Crystal Walker*

## **Victorian Junior School Council Congress**

The 2014 **State Junior School Council Congress** will be held on **Friday 12 September 2014** at **Parliament House**, Spring Street, Melbourne. The theme for the 2014 Congress is **'Playing Our Part: Volunteers are essential for building strong communities.'** More information in the next issue of **Connect**.

# Victorian Schools' Constitutional Conventions Program

The Schools' Constitutional Conventions program in Victoria is designed for senior secondary (Years 9-12) students. It consists of a series of *Regional Conventions* that have been hosted by government and non-government schools during the year, a *State Convention* that will be held at Parliament House, Melbourne on **Monday 20 October, 2014** and a *National Convention* to be held in Canberra during March or April next year.

The aims of the program are to provide students with opportunities to explore contemporary political and social issues, promote student understanding of the Australian system of government and demonstrate how the Australian Constitution provides the framework for our democracy.

The program has successfully engaged thousands of students from schools across the state and invites participation of students from a range of backgrounds and interests.

Although this program is perfect for students of Politics, Legal Studies, Humanities and English, it is also a great opportunity for students with a range of other interests – in particular Social Justice and Civics and Citizenship. The program offers a wonderful chance for public speaking and is a natural fit for schools seeking an authentic and meaningful activity for their student leaders.

The important underlying theme of the program is student involvement and host schools are encouraged to involve students across all stages of the program: the planning, organising and running of the Conventions.

## State Convention Applications Open

The topic for this year's State Convention (to be held on 20 October 2014) is *'Australia is in a 'budget crisis' and all Australians must share the burden – directly and indirectly.'* This proposition will form the basis for the proceedings on the day.

The Convention is open to any senior secondary school student who has attended a **Regional Constitutional Convention, Model UN Conference** or participated in related activities such as

YMCA Youth Parliament, VicSRC, Evatt Trophy or is an international student during 2014. A maximum of four (4) students is allowed from any school.

Please click on the following link to access an application for the **State Convention**:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QCFJ9W6>

Applications are due by **5 September 2014**.

Further information, including background research for the topic, is available at:

<http://civics-citizenship.wikispaces.com/>

*The Schools' Constitutional Conventions program in Victoria is managed through collaboration between the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), Social Education Victoria, Catholic Education Office Melbourne, Independent Schools Victoria and the Parliament of Victoria.*

**I**n 2014, Regional Constitutional Conventions have already been held or are scheduled in the following areas:

**3 April:** Glen Waverley Secondary College

Topic: "Is Australia's human rights policy adequate?"

**17 July:** St Catherine's School, Toorak

Topic: "Australia's constitution should be fully amended to reflect our status as good global citizens".

**8 August:** Lalor Secondary College

Topic: "Do we need three levels of Government, and if so, should they all be protected by the Constitution?"

**21 August:** Ballarat Grammar School

Topic: "Should rights, especially those of marginalised groups, be protected under the Australian Constitution? If so, how?"

**29 August:** Mackillop Catholic Regional College, Werribee

Topic: "Is Australia fulfilling its international obligations to asylum seekers?"

**5 September:** Mater Christi College

Topic: "Are the disadvantaged being left behind by Australia's political and economic policies?"

**9 September:** Sunbury College

Topic: "The issue of refugees and Australia's treatment of them is becoming an international embarrassment."





## From the *Connect* facebook pages

Some recent shares/posts to the *Connect* facebook page (see below) that you might be interested to follow up:

**How a Bigger Purpose Can Motivate Students to Learn:** *Ingfei Chen*

<http://blogs.kqed.org/mindshift/2014/08/how-a-bigger-purpose-can-motivate-students-to-learn/>

**Turning Teacher-Student Roles Upside Down:** *Mindshift*

<http://blogs.kqed.org/mindshift/2012/04/turning-teacher-student-roles-upside-down/>

**Student-led computer suite upgrade:** *Australian Teacher Magazine*

<http://www.educationhq.com.au/news/10921/student-led-computer-suite-upgrade/>

**Technology pushes teacher student relationships into new territory:** *Benjamin Preiss (The Age)*

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/technology-pushes-teacher-student-relationships-into-new-territory-20140814-1032x7.html>

**Students' engagement with their school is set by the time they reach the age of 15:** *NCVER*

<http://www.ncver.edu.au>

**"We have a life besides school":** *Bill Ferriter*

<http://www.teachingquality.org/content/we-have-life-besides-school>

**Democracy in Schools 2: A Conversation with Helen Beattie:** *Albert W. Dzur*

<http://goodsocietyjournal.org/democracy-in-schools-2-a-conversation-with-helen-beattie/>

**Students' voices, democratic schooling and inclusion:** *Hugh Busher*

<http://berarespectingchildren.wordpress.com/2014/07/16/students-voices-democratic-schooling-and-inclusion/>



## Connect on facebook

Connect has a presence on facebook. Find us at:



[www.facebook.com/pages/Connect/360372760717566](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Connect/360372760717566)

We've been posting some news and links there to complement what you see in the on-line version of *Connect*. It would be great if you could go there and 'like' us, and watch there for news of each *Connect*'s availability on-line - for FREE - since we started in June 2013!

## Student Voice Research and Practice facebook group

[www.facebook.com/groups/studentvoicepage/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/studentvoicepage/)

This open **facebook** group was initially established by Dana Mitra, and is now supported by the work of academics, practitioners and students throughout the world. It provides a valuable community of people working and interested in the area of 'Student Voice' - in Australia, USA, UK, Italy and elsewhere – as well as access to useful resources and examples, and up-to-date information about initiatives. You can easily log on and join the group at the above address.



All about Student Action Teams, including some hyper-linked mini-case studies, at:

[www.asprinworld.com/student\\_action\\_teams](http://www.asprinworld.com/student_action_teams)

# Connect Publications: Order Form

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... copies	<i>Democracy Starts Here</i>	\$ 6.60	\$ 5.50*	\$ .....

### Publications available from Connect:

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... copies	<i>Sometimes a Shining Moment</i> (1 available) \$	\$22	\$11*	\$ .....
... copies	<i>A Foxfire Christmas</i> (1 available) \$	\$22	\$11*	\$ .....
... copies	<i>Foxfire 9</i> (1 available) \$	\$11	\$ 5.50*	\$ .....
... copies	<i>Students and Work</i> (maximum of 10 copies per order)	\$ 6.60	\$ 5.50*	\$ .....
... copies	<i>SRC Pamphlets Set</i> (2 sets available) \$	\$ 6.60	\$ 5.50*	\$ .....

(\$ check availability before ordering; \* discounted rate for subscribers to **Connect**)

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**NOTE:** all amounts include 10% GST and postage/packaging within Australia

(Postage: **Outside Australia** add \$5 per copy of publications \$.....)

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# Clearinghouse

## Contribute to *Connect*

Anyone may submit an original article to be considered for publication in *Connect* provided he or she owns the copyright to the work being submitted or is authorised by the copyright owner or owners to submit the article. Authors are the initial owners of the copyrights to their works, but by successfully submitting the article to *Connect*, transfer such ownership of the *published* article to *Connect* on the understanding that any royalties or other income from that article will be used to maintain publication of *Connect*.

## Donate to support *Connect*

*Connect* now has no income except donations and sales of literature (opposite). By supporting *Connect* with donations, you keep us going. To make a donation to the work of *Connect*, use the form in this issue or contact us for bank account details in order to make an electronic transfer of funds. We gratefully acknowledge all contributions in *Connect*.

## ASPRINworld: the *Connect* website!

[www.asprinworld.com/connect](http://www.asprinworld.com/connect)

*Connect* has a website at *ASPRINworld*; *ASPRIN* is the *Australian Student Participation Resource and Information Network* ("a cure for your student participation headaches") – a still-emerging concept. The *Connect* section of the website is slowly growing, with information about subscribing, recent back issue contents and summaries of and order information for *Student Councils and Beyond*, *Student Action Teams*, *Reaching High* and *Switched On to Learning*.

There are also links from the indexes of recent issues to their archived PDFs (see below).

*Connect* is now also  
archived and available electronically:  
[research.acer.edu.au/connect](http://research.acer.edu.au/connect)

All issues of *Connect* are being archived through the ACER Research Repository: *ACEReSearch*. *Connect* issues from #1 to #194 are available for **free** download, and recent issues can be searched by key terms. See the *ASPRINworld* site for index details of recent issues, then link to and download the whole issue you are interested in.

[www.informit.com.au](http://www.informit.com.au)

In addition, current and recent issues of *Connect* are now available on-line to libraries and others who subscribe to RMIT's *Informit* site – a site that contains databases of many Australian publications. You can access whole issues of *Connect* as well as individual articles. Costs apply, either by a library subscription to *Informit*'s databases, or through individual payments per view for articles.

[www.asprinworld.com/connect](http://www.asprinworld.com/connect)  
&  
[research.acer.edu.au/connect](http://research.acer.edu.au/connect)

## Local and International Publications Received



*Connect* receives many publications directly or indirectly relevant to youth and student participation. We can't lend or sell these, but if you want to look at or use them, contact us on:

(03) 9489 9052

### Australian:

**TLN Journal** (Teacher Learning Network, Abbotsford, Vic) Vol 21 No 2; Winter 2014

**Youth Participation: A Best Practice Guide** (Rose, Pearson, Hassan, Chiodo, Abell; for Australian Child Rights Taskforce) July 2014

### International:

**Pupil Engagement: The Welfare Potential from Increased Coproduction in School** (Danske Skoleelever - Association of Danish Pupils, Denmark) Report and Overview, 2014

**ReThinking Schools** (Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA) Vol 28 No 4; Summer 2014

**Students as Change Agents** (Elisabeth Dunne and Roos Zandstra, University of Exeter, UK) March 2011

## 'Student Councils and Beyond' On-Line! **FREE!**

We've almost run out of print copies of the first *Connect* publication: *Student Councils and Beyond* (from 2005). And many of the ideas have subsequently been reflected in the *Represent!* kit from the VicSRC ([www.vicsrc.org.au/resources/represent](http://www.vicsrc.org.au/resources/represent)).

So we have made all of *Student Councils and Beyond* (a compilation of articles and resources from many earlier issues of *Connect*) available on-line for **FREE**. It can be downloaded (as one document or in sections) as PDFs from the *Connect* website. Find it at:

[www.asprinworld.com/connect](http://www.asprinworld.com/connect)



Articles from *Connect* are now discoverable through **EBSCOhost** research databases.

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# Connect On-Line!

Free subscription and materials order form: **page 30**

All back issues of **Connect** from 1979 to the present (that's over 34 years!) are freely available on-line! Thanks to the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), all back issues of **Connect** have been scanned or up-loaded and are on the ACER's Research Repository: **ACEReSearch**.

You can find these issues of **Connect** at:

**research.acer.edu.au/connect**

The left-hand menu provides a pull-down menu for you to select the issue number > **browse**; the front cover of the issue is displayed, and you can simply click on the link in the main body of the page to download a PDF of the issue. Recent issues are also **searchable** by key words.

**Connect** has a commitment to the sharing of ideas, stories, approaches and resources about active student participation. We are totally supported by donations!



## Let us know

There may be some gaps or improvements necessary. As you use this resource, let us know what you find. (If an issue of **Connect** seems to be missing, check the issues either side, as **double issues** show up only as one issue number.) If you have any ideas for improving this resource, please let us know.

**Most importantly, please USE this resource.**

All back copies of **Connect** are available on-line ... for free!

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