Connect

supporting student participation

Thinking about and applying our deep learning

- **Deeper and deeper into learning**
  Rosanna Primary School

- **Negotiating learning in the community**
  Alkira Secondary College

- **Student voice & agency: Successes & challenges**
  Merriang SDS: Early Years campus

- **Your voice: Unite, empower, disrupt**
  Fitzroy High School Feminist Collective

- **Hope! -** *From the archives: 1983*

- **VicSRC:** *Congress 2019 + Report on 2018 Priorities*
  Student Voice Workshops
  Student Participation in Curriculum Planning
  VicSRC staff - new team members
  VicSRC: members/partners/Executive

Resources:

- **International Conference on Student Voice, Agency and Partnerships:**
  Melbourne: 9-11 December 2019

- **Audit of Student Council Practices**

- **NSW Student Participation Conference 2019**

- **In-Camera Time for Student Councils**

- **Students on School and Education Boards**

- **Victorian Students' Parliamentary Program**

- **WISA: Wellbeing and Student Voice Conferences**

- *Students as Partners* **network**

- *Student Voice Research and Practice* facebook group

- *Connect* ... available on-line ... on *facebook* ...
  archived ... access to other on-line resources

Connect

Cover:

Student Voice & Agency about **Deep Learning**
Rosanna Primary School: Photo by Jeff Jackson

Why does *Connect* exist?

Connect has been
published bimonthly since 1979!

It aims to:
• **document student participation
approaches and initiatives;**
• **support reflective practices;**
• **develop and share resources.**

Connect:

This Issue:

In this issue of *Connect*, there are many important and challenging ideas - and some exciting news.

The exciting news first: we are making the first announcement here of the **International Conference on Student Voice, Agency and Partnerships** that will be held in **Melbourne** over **9-11 December** this year. The initial details are on **pages 32-33** of this issue - and further information will be in the next issue of *Connect*. But if you are active and involved in these areas – as a *researcher*, a *student*, a *teacher*, a *policy-maker*, a *school leader* – contact us for an **Expression of Interest** to participate.

The continuing work at **Merriang Special Development School** *(article on page 17 of this issue)* explores ideas about student voice and agency that challenge us ... and that have implications across all areas and levels of education. What does 'student voice' mean for students who are non-verbal? How do teachers listen to diverse voices and ways of expression? How do we challenge assumptions of incapacity – and affirm all students' agency?

The broader implications go directly to our professional responsibility to listen to all voices and to understand, learn and grow. In many cases (not just for students who are non-verbal or with learning differences - but in all our situations) this may be challenging. Not all voices will be 'respectful' or easy to listen to. But from both perspectives of 'rights' and also from the need to build effective and inclusive partnerships, such **listening**, **responding** and **changing** is an essential part of what we do.

Drawing a distinction between *'student voice'* and *'student noise'* is particularly unhelpful – even dangerous and arrogant in its assumptions that someone else can interpret what a student says as worthless. One may disagree, but not dismiss.

If you are hearing 'student noise', you're not listening! And if you're not listening to all students, you're not understanding and you're not learning.

In this issue, we're also presenting a third and (perhaps) final tool: an **Audit of Student Council Practices.** This is based on the Audit in the **VicSRC's** *Represent!* kit, but is slightly updated, and cross-referenced to resources. **Again, we'd love you to try it and feed back advice about its usefulness.**

Other articles in this issue profile exciting developments in co-construction of deep learning at **Rosanna Primary School**, applied learning in the community at **Alkira Secondary College**, and student led and/or focused conferences at **Fitzroy High School** and in **New South Wales**. There are also **Resources** provided here about Student Council practices, about students on School Boards and about opportunities for participation in conferences and workshops. And a glimpse into the not too distant past, as we focus on the need for *Hope!*

Next Issue ...

We've had contacts about a possible story from research in Germany - and an extended report on the recent *International Conference on Student Voice* in Pennsylvania, USA. But we also relay on you for stories of developments 'at the chalk-face' *(or is that metaphor outdated!?!).*

Don't hesitate or ask. Write ... reflect ... share!

Roger Holdsworth

Deeper and deeper into learning

It was 2016 when **Rosanna Primary,** in Melbourne's north-east, began exploring student voice. Students were happy to learn, staff eager to teach, with school NAPLAN results everyone could be proud of. Amidst the investigations around the school's **Strategic Plan**, a challenge emerged for the whole community.

As leadership sat with students discussing the next step for Rosanna Primary, a common message was shared. Students, and later teachers, were eager to take the next step forward and develop a passionate engagement arising from student inquiry and voice.

Over the next year, students were challenged to ask, *'What is Student Voice?'* It simply made sense to ask students. The school's **Junior School Council (JSC)** was an expert in leading fundraisers, but this question invited them to take the lead in opening a discussion that has stirred students and teachers ever since.

Student representatives were thrust into brainstorming workshops. The JSC worked in areas of the school to conduct workshops with classes. They gathered information from rating scales, created human sculptures to represent student voice and held surveys. It was quickly clear that student voice was already present in classrooms at various levels. Students were having a say in co-constructing class expectations or designing events or reward systems but students felt there could be more. With the push to gain a clearer understanding of the level of student voice, the JSC used data from these forums to design the **'Voiceometer'.** The full story of this can be found in **Connect** 228, December 2017: pages 9-11. This unique tool prompted classroom discussions and brought consistent language to describe student voice across the school.

Regular **Student Voice Awards** were introduced, a suggestion box was initiated to gather student ideas. The JSC representatives held more regular meetings and were held accountable to listen to their class peers, gather their perspectives and return to the JSC to share their findings. The establishment of a chicken coop was one example of how student ideas came to life and was put into action.

By early 2018, RPS had been awarded **JSC of the Year** by the VicSRC and the JSC had shifted from its traditional role in fundraising to a group grappling with understanding and sharing their voice with this community. **The next step was to harness student voice to benefit teaching and learning. This significant step was the shift from voice to agency.**

The Next Step

In 2018, with support from the **Department of Education's Professional Practice Unit**, a group of teachers from across the school became known as the *'Learning Lab'.* Participants were challenged to take the next step in listening to students, amplifying their voice and engaging in a change project.

With lessons gleaned over the previous years, teachers from the *Learning Lab* team recognised their first responsibility was to listen. Each member set aside an hour to speak in depth with a student about their experience of life, learning and school. This intentional conversation, shaped by curiosity, explored student perspectives and raised several common themes. These common themes included the students' perceptions of a huge gap between life at home and school, as well as the need to become better at reflecting on thinking and learning (metacognition).
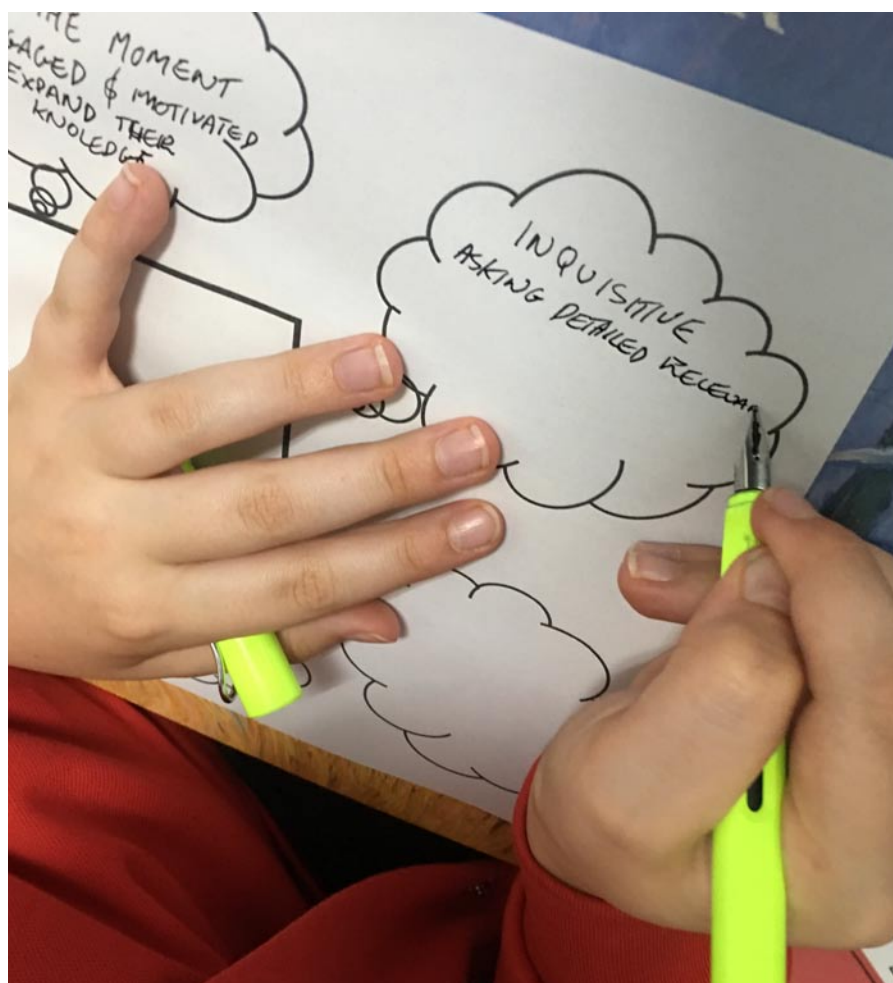
As educators, it is easy to get busy, whisked up into shaping engaging lessons, differentiating learning and meeting a huge number of demands. The ethnographic study reminded me of the centrality and complexity of students in our school. It humanised learning and humbled me. (Teacher)

The *Learning Lab* team met and agreed that the next step for learning would be to seek the support of students and focus on discovering their understandings of what great learning was, to set some guides to thinking and learning at the school.

The development of *Learning Protocols* was seen as a chance for students to be involved in establishing shared understandings of what learning should look like for the whole school. Developed by students for the whole school, it would provide an agreed language and focus for shaping and discussing learning in the classroom.

An outline of the consultation process was developed and refined by the *JSC Executives* and *Learning Lab* team.

Fishing

Teachers initially developed a metaphor based on fishing to help students understand effective learning traits.

They spoke of some people who like to fish with a handline. They dangle their line from a hand reel over the edge of a wharf. Some more serious people like to fish further from shore, a little riskier, but with the opportunity to land larger fish. But the truly great fisher people venture out on trawlers and land the truly huge fish.
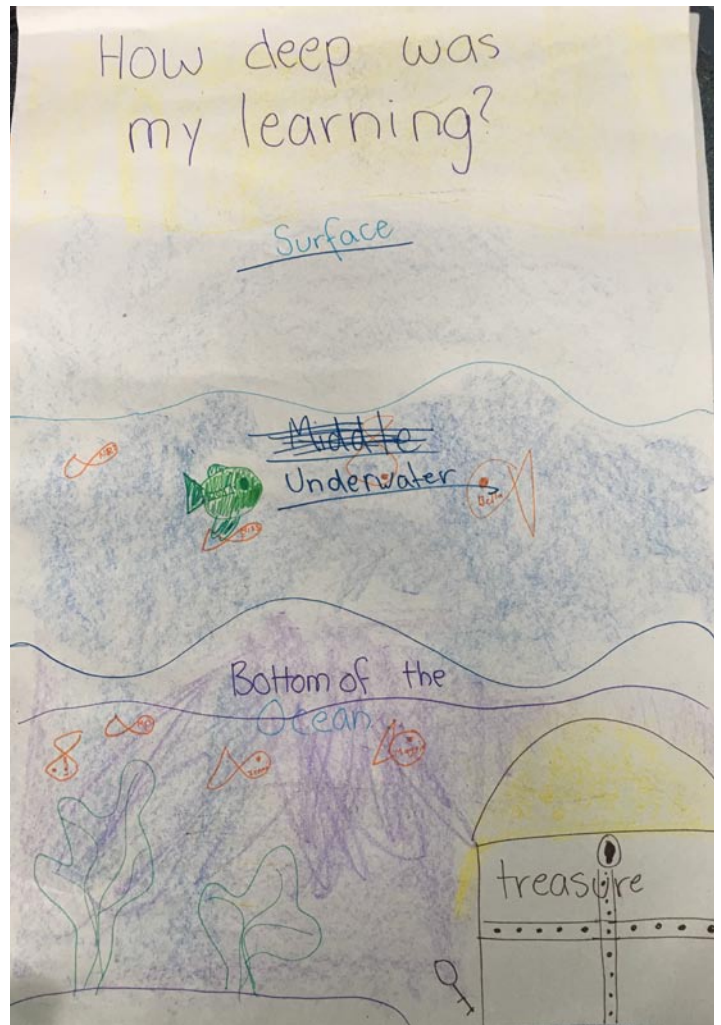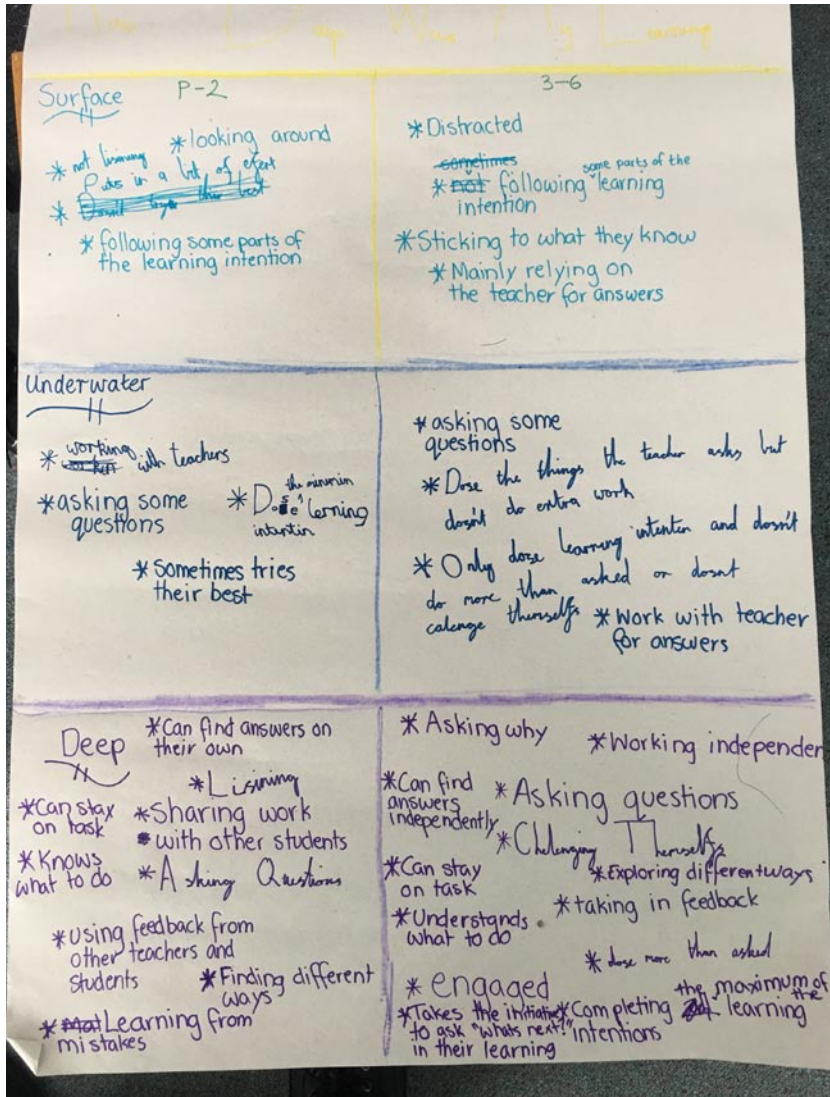
We thought the students would really understand and find this analogy really helpful, but when we shared it with our student leaders there was a strange silence; it clearly didn't fit. Then they began to unpack their own picture that made sense to them. It was then I realised I was the student and they were the teacher!

Swimming

Students spoke of learning being more like swimming.

Some stay at the edges, chasing the wash of the waves up and down the beach. One student explained, *"in the shallows, you are just dipping your toes into the rock pools".* As learners become more adventurous, they head out into the waves and learn to put their heads under water. Then, there are those who wear suits and explore the depths of the seas.

One student emphasised, *"You see! That is where the real treasure is!"*

Another continued, *"there is a sense of accomplishment at the bottom, when you are exploring, when you discover the treasure!"*

Students more clearly described learning as shallow, underwater and deep. The *Learning Protocols* were rephrased as diving into *'Deep Learning'.*

Rosanna Primary School
Deeper Learning Protocols

	Engagement	Learning with Others	Risk Taking	Thinking	Being Positive	Persistence and Determination	Being Curious	Independence	Best Effort
	Being present	Collaborating with other learners	Stepping out of your comfort zone	Thinking about thinking	An open mindset	Never give up on learning	Inquisitive	Self-motivated	Giving 100%
Shallow Dipping a toe in the water.	• Focusing on learning • Doing your work • Listening	• Distracted • Just listening • Watching what others are doing but not contributing	• Teacher suggest new activities • Taking very safe risks • Risks are supported by the teacher • Teachers encouraging risks	• Use some thinking tools	• Having fun • Giving it a go	• Following instructions • Having a go • Teacher direct/support	• Asking closed questions • Listening to other peoples questions	• Waiting/needing teacher prompts	• Begins to attempt their best work • Meets minimum job • Needs some encouragement
Underwater Getting our head under water.	• Hearing and understanding • Asking questions to clarify	• Offers some ideas • Invites others to contribute • Shares roles • Active listening	• Learning from mistakes • Attempts for more difficult learning • Sensible and relevant risks • Students seek approval • Encouragement to taking risks	• E.g. rephrasing, compare and concentrate • A range of different thinking tools • Thinking about what is coming up	• Enjoy learning • Proud of accomplishments • Open to ideas and new understanding	• 'never' say never • Trial and error • Rethinking and adjusting approach to each attempt	• Open ended questions • Thoughtful questions •	• Asking some questions • Owning responsibility for learning • Begin to take risks	• Redrafts and revisits learning to improve
Deep sea Discovering the richness of learning	• Offering feedback after listening • Taking on feedback to improve understanding • Taking on learning and apply it to real life	• Creates new learning with others • Goal focused • Honest and open discussion • Challenge one another's thinking • Responds to the ideas of others	• Reflecting on risks and adjust future risks • Support and encouraging peers to take risks • Retrying when unsuccessful independently	• Able to activate what is going on in your head • Challenge assumptions • Solving different problems using thinking • 'out of the box' thinking • Think about thinking • Teaching others • Identifying others thinking processes	• I don't know yet.. • Hopeful in difficult times • Understanding others •	• Enthusiastic on areas that challenge you • Inclined to complete learning experiences • Following through until learning attention is achieved • Giving in receiving feedback creates new questions	• Question self and others • Involve questions over time/redrafting • Giving in receiving feedback creates new questions	• Own decisions over learning • Choosing effective approaches (e.g. prior knowledge, resources, etc)	• Enthusiastic pride • Owns learning accountable • Strive to give their best ways • Redrafts and revisits learning to improve multiple times

Deep Learning

The JSC shaped three key learning experiences to gather student opinions:

1. **Live Word Cloud:** this activity saw students in the Year 5/6 area use key words and phrases to build a word cloud that represented the class' thoughts around effective learning. Students typed words into an online site to have it graphically presented back to them. This created a great deal of reflective discussion in classrooms.

2. **Look/Think/Feel Chart:** in the Year 1/2 area, students discussed a range of engaged learning experiences and described *Deep Learning*, asking what it felt like.

3. **Secret Snappers:** this activity saw students take a photo prior to the lesson and place it on a sheet with thought bubbles. Students were encouraged to consider what would be going on in the mind of students who were diving deep into learning.

The **JSC Executive** trained the other student representatives during several sessions, ensuring that their presentations were scripted and students were supported. One student noted:

> *It's good that students teach students because students have a different perspective from a schooling point of view.*

A prototype of the consultation process was trialled during term 4 in 2018. It included the **JSC Executive** training the **JSC Representatives** to deliver the age specific experiences and to collect ideas about what effective learning was. The activities were trialled in three classrooms by a team of **JSC Representatives**. Ideas from student workshops and teacher interviews focussing on what effective learning looked like, were written on sticky notes. Students collated the data by bundling ideas into central tenets, forming a picture of what *Deep Learning* might look like.

Upon reflection, it was clear that further detail was needed to clarify the shallow, underwater and deep learning levels. Students and teachers were convinced that they had to find out what students were actually doing in the shallows, as well as in 'the deep' of learning. This would need to be included in the whole school consultation.

5/6D

What does deep learning mean to you?

thinkingoutsideofthebox
challengeyourself workinghard
alwaysfocues listentoclassmates
yourself
challengingyourself
takingonfeedback
100/effort
giveitatry challenging willingtolearn

Idea Gathering About Learning

In 2019, a new **JSC Executive** and team meant that the prototype and concepts of *Deep Learning* were reviewed. During the first term, the whole school was consulted as the **JSC Representatives** ran idea-gathering sessions with teachers and classes from Levels 1 to 6 (10 classes). Older students were grouped with younger students for support in presenting the activities.

> *The whole idea of deep learning is a complex concept, but once you have an understanding of what it means and the skills you need to be a deep learner, it became easier to explain it to other students.*
> *(JSC Representative)*

In reflecting on the experience one **JSC Representative** explained:

> *Some students understand what deep learning is, but don't really do it. While we deliver the lessons, we're helping them get better at it.*

Once completed, the **JSC Executives** collected all the students' ideas onto sticky notes again. Laid out throughout the hall they bundled the data into central themes and formed descriptors of what each theme looked like at different levels. Once the themes and descriptors had been identified, the **JSC Executives** ran a professional development session with staff, inviting them to contribute to the final version of the *RPS Deep Learning Protocols*. The central themes that

were identified by students were *Being Present, Learning with Others, Taking Risks, Thinking About Thinking, Never Giving Up, Being Curious, Independence* and *Giving Your Best Effort*. A range of descriptions help provide examples of the depth of learning of each one of these protocols. A JSC Representative noted that these *Deep Learning Protocols*:

> *... can be explored in a whole range of different ways and in different areas of learning like sport, maths, writing, etc.*

Another student simply stated:

> *Deep learning enriches our learning.*

The support of the *Learning Lab* workshops enabled a collaborative and supportive community to question and challenge itself. Tools and resources for the ethnography and prototyping have been invaluable. DET funding and dedication of school staff enabled release from face to face teaching responsibilities and collaboration between students and staff that drove this process.

One of the teachers, reflecting on the changes said,

> *The **Amplify** document initially challenged me to consider how to raise the volume of student voice and become a better listener. After participating in this project, I now understand it differently. Being part of this project has now amplified my understanding of the diverse ways in which students need to be heard and included.*

Another staff member said,

> *Although we now have our **Learning Protocols**, I can see that this is only the beginning of a much bigger story.*

As *Connect* goes to print, members of the Junior School Council have met with a graphic designer to help them create a shared poster (*infographic*) to describe their concepts of deep learning to the whole school. Treasuring the value of having students continuing to be central to the shaping of the protocols, one teacher pointed out:

> *We need to make sure we don't laminate them. We want them to change, to be reshaped and reworked. We want everyone's voices to continually reshape it.*

Students are planning to create an interactive version that will encourage student and teacher contributions. Further student led workshops investigating these protocols are being discussed by the JSC Executive.

The challenge was made clear by one of the JSC Executives:

> *I believe that most students are underwater but we need to push them further and go deeper. It takes more effort but that is where we are going.*

Another JSC Representative looked ahead and said:

> *We want students to automatically engage in **Deep Learning**, when we don't think about it, we just do it.*

Students and staff are eager to see the latest data on attitudes to learning. The outcomes will not change the fact that student agency has been instrumental in shaping classroom practice and will continue to contribute to school improvement practices.

Jeff Jackson
Assistant Principal
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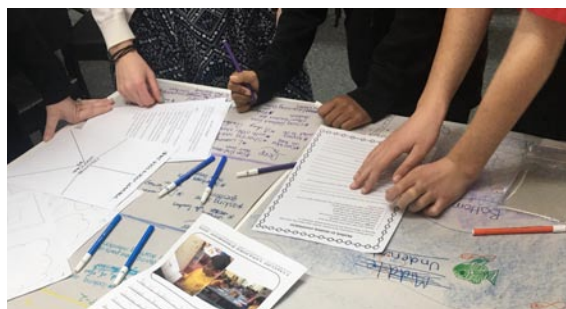
Negotiating learning in the community

Students at **Alkira Secondary College**, in Cranbourne North in Melbourne's south-east, provided feedback and suggestions to teachers that they wanted more authentic learning – where they could learn through external partnerships and develop '21st Century' skills. In response, the VCAL team implemented a program that places greater emphasis on authentic learning, where students of all levels can learn through real-life working partnerships as volunteers in the community, in a way that directly builds on their personalised pathways.

The **Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)** is a hands-on option for students in Years 11 and 12 in Victoria. It provides practical work-related experience, as well as literacy and numeracy skills and the opportunity to build personal skills that are important for life and work. Like the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), **VCAL** is an accredited secondary certificate. See: https://bit.ly/2X20pUM

The multi-faceted program at **Alkira Secondary College** is being introduced in stages and it is expected to take another 12 months to fully introduce. It will enable students to:

1. Establish sustainable community partnerships with external stakeholders;
2. Set up, manage and run a business;
3. Design, produce and market products/services.

Stage 1: Establishing partnerships

The first stage of the program was introduced in 2018. The VCAL team knew we had a huge task of finding and establishing sustainable community partnerships with external stakeholders who would work with us in creating an ongoing program for students to succeed.

Students within the VCAL course were given the intended *Work-Related Skills* outcomes and, in small teams of four students and then as a whole class, were advised and guided in brainstorming ideas on possible organisations or schools we could approach with this idea.

This culminated in a vote to volunteer for local primary schools. Students also wanted to do something with gardening or wildlife, and this was initiated by some work they did in a *Year 10 'Pre Cal'* on Alkira's Memorial Garden.

In term 1, the students managed to find a community organisation (**Berwick Chase Primary School),** and an external stakeholder (**Cardinia Catchment Land Care - CCLC)** in order to establish a sustainable community partnership**.** The students set up meetings for VCAL teachers to liaise with **Berwick Chase PS**, managed emails, and discussed and negotiated what sort of projects we could create to engage Grade 5 and 6 students.

They explored the viability of a range of ways to work with the primary schools and, with the support of their teacher, contacted the schools to offer

their ideas and services. The students surveyed the primary schools to establish a design brief and sought feedback from all stakeholders, which was incorporated in their reviews.

Working with Mr Christopher Short, Principal of **Berwick Chase PS**, the students came up the great idea of re-establishing native Indigenous plants throughout the community, especially in the school. Students were then tasked to explore the viability of a horticulture project that could be used not only for a beautiful display but also as an educational tool to educate younger students.

They came up with the idea to produce **nesting boxes** as they agreed that a 'horticulture' project could benefit all students, no matter what their chosen pathway.

Stage 2: Understanding, designing, producing and marketing products and services

Once the overall idea was agreed upon, students were asked to pitch their ideas and plans. They displayed designs of garden beds and added the idea of creating nesting boxes for protected endangered native animals. This is where the program really took off in terms of engagement.

The class had also made contact with the local **Cardinia Catchment Land Care (CCLC)** group, who facilitated three workshops based around garden and nesting box design. The **CCLC Group** is an organisation that is keen to spread the word about the importance of looking after our environment, has the expertise and the desire to educate the community – and they always conduct themselves in a professional manner in all circumstances making them perfect role models for our young people. (When students were asked whether they'd recommend this collaboration to future

VCALs, the response was a resounding 'yes' from all participants – with some hoping to continue the partnership with the **CCLC Group** into their Senior VCAL year.)

In the three workshops with **CCLC**, students learnt about the significance of Indigenous plants, land management, the importance of sustainability and of course, wildlife. They studied maps of planting sites, and explored key elements to effective nesting boxes. **CCLC** and **Berwick Chase PS** were very excited about the idea of helping native wildlife and placing these boxes in the Indigenous Garden at **Berwick Chase PS**, but more importantly in surrounding wetlands and parks.

Provided with materials and tips for garden design techniques, small teams of students designed their section of the gardens. Referring to the resources provided, the students came up with their own plant lists that **CCLC** sourced for the planting day. Students were taught specific OH&S considerations for gardening and prepared their own risk register with the support of **CCLC**. Students were also introduced to *'CAD'* where they worked on a 'bird's eye' view of their site.

The **CCLC** brought in a range of nesting boxes so students could visualise and understand key elements to an effective box for wildlife. This prepared the students to choose appropriate patterns and to understand why nesting boxes are important. **CCLC** members mentored students on the planting day where students learnt planting tools and techniques and types and suitability of plant guards depending on context.

Students also attended a series of *'Entrepreneur'* classes run by Alkira's Business Management teacher where, among other things, they considered business ideas on how to apply their knowledge of proposal writing, website design, high impact logos and communication.

Student feedback indicates that this stage was the most enjoyable. Students were able to develop or further develop

vital hands-on skills such as using woodwork tools and machinery as well as horticulture tools to create something that is their own and something they will remember.

A Spin Off

There was another spin off from this, as another small team got an idea during the training on how to apply their knowledge, and negotiated, planned and organised the replacement of the College's outdoor chess set. This *'Chess Set Team'* undertook proposal writing, website design, high impact logos and communication.

This **Chess Set Team** applied for local funding but learnt that the grant was no longer made available to schools. So, with advice from VCAL staff, they researched other funding sources and successfully negotiated access to the Department's *Advance for Schools Program* (see below). They ordered the chess set, liaised with a range of stakeholders on how to assemble it, and discussed secure storage ideas. The school community now enjoys playing chess in the yard.

Stage 3: Carrying out hands-on days

The last stage of this project was, in the eyes of many of the students, the most beneficial, as they experienced first-hand how planning, designing and carrying out a project like this can make you feel. Many students were very proud of their achievement, as none of them had done anything like this in school before. By this stage, the students were active and fully engaged and were demonstrating skills they did not believe they had. Student were, with the help of the **CCLC** President Glenn Brooks-MacMillan, organising dates to run excursions to **Berwick Chase PS** and other areas of the community.

Students took it upon themselves to understand the OHS regulations in terms of the multi-faceted excursion and were displaying confidence in everything they were in charge of. The planting days were mainly run by Alkira's VCAL students, who took all their design plans, plant lists and planting instructions along so there were few issues on the day. Having received 100% positive feedback from students on the day and with the partnerships with **Berwick Chase PS** and **CCLC**, it is clear that this sort of learning is extremely powerful and valuable for all student growth, VCAL or not. The passion demonstrated by teachers and students involved was immense as we all share a passion and responsibility for a sustainable future.

Stage 4: Ongoing and new partnerships

Throughout this whole experience, the aim was to get the VCAL students out to experience the highs and lows of real work. In fact, the original plan was just for a large planting day at **Berwick Chase Primary School** and this was the first established partnership; Alkira thanks them dearly. However, parents also starting talking about the new VCAL project and, in no time, **Clyde Primary School** contacted the VCAL team with extreme interest. **Berwick Chase** had printed photos and written a page about the project in their newsletter so it then became a huge multi community based project.

Outcomes

The VCAL program's ethos and curriculum aligns with the goals of the *Advance for Schools Program*: https://bit.ly/2w5TKxd The community projects provide myriad opportunities for students to learn and practise skills in all strands: *Work Related Skills (WRS), Personal Development Skills (PDS), Literacy* and *Numeracy*.

The **Indigenous Planting and Possum Box Project** fully addressed all *Intermediate WRS Unit 2* outcomes as well as some outcomes from *Unit 1*. Students reviewed ICT and other technology used during the project and evaluated their own performance along the way, assessing their teamwork, communication, planning, technology, leadership and OHS understanding and application. Research, reporting, proposal writing accounted for *Literacy* outcomes and garden design required numeracy skills.

Very important extra-curricular outcomes such as networking and connecting with the community were a significant gain from this program for all students.

The feedback received from the primary schools and **CCLC** attest to the positive impact these students have had on primary school communities, **Alkira**'s community and the local environment. A total of 400 indigenous plants are now being nurtured at two primary schools and the schools have expressed the strong desire for this project, and the relationships it has promoted, to be sustainable well into the future. Student survey feedback indicated that 100% of participants recommend this project for future VCALs.

Some quotes by the VCAL students are: *"I could use this (CCLC) feedback by boosting my confidence as I now know that we are good workers and we can maybe have a career as a CCLC member", "Glenn was very informative on his work and gave us an insight on how this sort of project works."* Chris Short, **Berwick Chase PS** Principal said: *"It was a great working partnership and as our school expands, more gardens would be greatly appreciated."*

The VCAL students have been locally recognised numerous times in the newsletters of **Alkira Secondary College, Berwick Chase Primary School** and **Clyde Primary School**. The *Chess Set Team* received a Principal's Award. Students are recognised in speeches at staff briefings and staff often drop by and congratulate them.

In recognition of their efforts, students participated in a celebration where their achievements were rewarded. Participants were presented with *Advance* program certificates as well as with certificates presented by the primary schools. The **CCLC** President also recognised their work in his speech, telling them he hopes to see them again when they are qualified, and inviting them to work with **CCLC**.

A common benefit of student led projects such as this is that students establish new ways to achieve outcomes. A pair of students negotiated, organised and managed the celebration event, including putting together the menu and following up food allergy requirements. Having a passion for the welfare of others, they commissioned catering by the **Asylum Seeker Resource Centre**'s catering social enterprise. They liaised regularly with the **ASRC** and their teacher to develop a run sheet, generate purchase orders, coordinating the event and providing feedback.

Conclusion

Now in 2019, **Alkira's VCAL Program** has won the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority's (VCAA) *VCAL Partner Award*. **Alkira**'s VCAL is now implementing and refining the business stages of the program, and looks forward to implementing the next phase of this program.

<div align="center">

VCAL stands for:
Vibrant Community Authentic Lifelong

</div>

*(Adapted from the school's 2018 **Advance** end of year report).*

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Laura Henderson & Jarryd Pack and the Intermediate VCAL students

Photo credit: **Reece MacKaskill**
Intermediate VCAL

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ALKIRA SECONDARY COLLEGE

Our Cardinia Catchment Land Care Project

The **Cardinia Catchment Land Care Project (CCLC)** that we did was a planting project for **Berwick Chase Primary School** that we planned out to have done. It involved us going to **Berwick Chase** with **CCLC** and planting about 250 plants into the set area that the **CCLC** set up for us and that we planned to use. It came out with the planting looking quite nice and looking like a nice and formally set up planting area.

For us to get to this point we started planning out what the area was and what plants we would use and how many we would plant in that area. In the planting stage we went to the school and started planting with all the plants we chose and dug up a hole close enough to the soil to the point the Hamilton digger could make a easy hole for the Tubes. Then it was just closing up the holes, making a cage to cover and support the larger plants and watering them.

We designed the garden by getting a selected few of plants and by drawing out the area we had designated to us for planting, and sticking a set amount of plants in that area and filling it up with the plants we had chosen. We chose the plants on our own accord by choosing things we thought would look nice and help the environment in our own way. We demonstrated our planning skills by planning out the planting and finally finishing and going through with what we planned out. We learnt the planting skills on the day by them showing us how to plant them in a very simple manner, quick and easy. We installed guards by hammering bamboo sticks a few inches away from the plant and placing the mesh around the two bamboo sticks opposite each other then sticking a third bamboo stick to get the mesh to be a tight and non-moveable mesh... We planned the planting day at **Alkira** 10 weeks ago and planted at **Berwick Chase**.

We partnered with **Cardinia Catchment Land Care** which was Glenn and Maree, and with the principal of **Berwick Chase PS** Mr Short. The people who helped us along the way were **CCLC** (by helping us plan and choose the plants and the area with **Alkira**'s help), **Berwick Chase** (giving us the opportunity to plant on their school ground and give us that experience) and *Advance* (by giving us the money we needed to pay for the planting and the soil and all the materials we needed to get the job done).

The reason we agreed to do this project with **Berwick Chase** is for the experience in doing this and to give the land some wildlife and show the children what can be done if you put together a working team and create that planting area.

The way we chose our teams to start doing this work was by choosing people you'd work well with and people that you can understand and agree with things on.

Feedback

Principal

The comments from Mr. Short were nice and great to hear. He gave nice comments and loved what we did on the day, telling us that he thought what we did looked amazing, and that he didn't have anything for us to improve upon, and that we were very sensible in what we were doing and got it done. In the future, we should do the same thing since he didn't ask for any improvements: there wasn't anything for us to change about it. Future VCAL students could use this to understand what we did and see how good a job and how much they enjoyed what we did.

CCLC

The positives of their feedback were that we did a good job for planting, and that the final product was quite nice and done well even in the windy conditions. The improvement that was suggested was to whinge less, listen more and be prepared to take on new activities and ask questions to things we don't understand. I could use this in the workplace to learn how to communicate and talk to the people at my workplace.

Summary

Alkira VCAL should continue working on this type of project. It would be good to make connections with other schools and let the children at the other schools see what can be made.

Keanu

How does your Student Council rate?

This **Student Council Audit** tool is intended for use by students, teachers, and schools. You can use it to examine your **Student Council**'s practices in building student voice, agency and participation. Use it to **recognise** your existing practices (and to see what you are already doing well); use it to **challenge and extend** your practices.

This tool is based on the **Audit** tool that was originally included in the VicSRC's *Represent!* Kit. This Kit is available on-line and can be downloaded in sections at: **http://www.vicsrc.org.au/resources/represent** . The original **Audit** is **Section 1.7** in **Part 1** on pages 45 to 49. This specific **Audit** about **Student Councils** is also based on the more general and broader *Audit of School Practices* that was published in the previous issue of *Connect* (#236; April 2019).

In responding to the items, first think about **how often** each activity happens in your school: does it happen *'always', 'often', 'sometimes', 'seldom'* or *'never'*. Then secondly, think about **how important** it is to you that this activity **should** happen in your school: *'high', 'medium'* or *'low'*.

If you don't know what something means or it's not relevant to you, feel free to skip that item.

Ask different people to complete this **Audit** - students from different levels and different groups, teachers, school leadership and so on; they may have different views about what is happening or what is important. Compare their responses and see what is agreed and what is different. Then ask *'why?'* This could start a conversation that helps to understand what is actually happening in your school: where your **strengths** are, and what you can **develop further**.

Look for patterns: eg the practices that are seldom or never occurring, but that you think are highly important.

For each item, a section of ***Represent!*** or an issue of ***Connect*** is suggested, where you will find some information and activities to help you address your needs.

(As with the *Audit of School Practices*, you can also calculate a *score* for each practice. For *'how often'*, score these as +2, +1, 0, -1 and -2; then for *'how important'*, score these as 3, 2 and 1. Multiply these together and write the **score** [from +6 to -6] against each example. The larger positive scores are the practices that you think are important and that are happening a lot; the larger negative scores are the important practices that are ***not*** happening as often as they should.)

Practice	How often does this happen?					How important is this?			Represent! or Connect Reference
	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	

1. The Student Council meets regularly:

Practice	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	Reference
1.1 The Student Council has a clear timetable for meeting									*Represent!* 2.5 pp 70-75; *Templates* T4 p 150
1.2 The Student Council lets all its members (and other students) know when the next meeting it to be held									*Represent!* 3.5 p 96
1.3 There is a good attendance of Student Council members									*Represent!* 3.1 pp 77-80
1.4 The Student Council meets in various groups and ways eg as a whole council, in subgroups etc									*Represent!* 1.4 pp 25-32 *Connect* 228 pp 23-24

2. The Student Council has clear structures and processes:

Practice	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	Reference
2.1 There is a clear and known process for a student to become a member of the Student Council through election or appointment									*Represent!* 1.5 pp 33-36
2.2 There is a written and known constitution describing how the Student Council works; this is reviewed regularly									*Represent!* 1.4 p 32; *Templates* T1 p 145 *Connect* 170 p 20 *Connect* 164-165 pp 18-19
2.3 The Student Council has internal structures and processes that are appropriate to its work (eg chairing, recording decisions, subcommittees etc)									*Represent!* 1.4 pp 25-32; *Templates* T6, 7 pp 153, 155 *Connect* 203 pp 22-23 *Connect* 170 pp 3-9
2.4 Student Council meetings are well run, effective (productive) and enjoyable									*Represent!* 3.5 pp 94-103 *Connect* 171 pp 16-19

Practice	How often does this happen?					How important is this?			Represent! or Connect Reference
	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	

3. The Student Council is broadly representative of students :

Practice	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	Represent! or Connect Reference
3.1 Students are elected or appointed through democratic and representative processes (by election, or from volunteers, or by other agreed processes)									*Represent!* 1.4 pp 35-40 *Connect* 220 p 3
3.2 There is a range of students on the Student Council – in age, ability, school engagement, ethnicity, gender etc – who are broadly representative of students in the school									*Represent!* 1.4 pp 37-40 *Connect* 218 pp 13-14 *Connect* 169 p 11
3.3 No significant group of students is, or feels, over-represented or under-represented on or by the Student Council									*Represent!* 1.4 p 40 *Connect* 213 pp 15-16 *Connect* 197 p 18
3.4 Being a member of the Student Council is a desirable outcome for a broad range of students									*Represent!* 1.1 pp 13-17; 1.5 pp 39-40

4. The Student Council reports to and gets advice from students:

Practice	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	Represent! or Connect Reference
4.1 The Student Council uses a variety of ways to report to students and others									*Represent!* 3.3 pp 83-86; *Template* T5 p 142 *Connect* 173 pp 18-21
4.2 Time and opportunities are available for Student Council members to report back to other students and to get advice from them									*Represent!* 3.2 pp 81-82; 3.3 pp 83-86 *Connect* 218 pp 10-11
4.3 Student Council representatives get advice and support from other students in different ways									*Represent!* 3.3 p 85; 3.4 pp 87-93 *Connect* 179 p 20 *Connect* 172 pp 14-17 *Connect* 169 p 9
4.4 The views of other students are considered and taken seriously by the Student Council									*Represent!* 3.3 pp 83-86 *Connect* 169 p 3

Practice	How often does this happen?					How important is this?			Represent! or Connect Reference
	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	

5. The Student Council deals with a range of issues:

Practice									Represent! or Connect Reference
5.1 The Student Council is aware of the different things that a Student Council can do									*Represent!* 1.2 p 18 *Connect* 205 p 5 *Connect* 194-195 pp 20-21 *Connect* 169 pp 14-16
5.2 The Student Council actually does a range of things: putting forward student views (eg on curriculum, rules, uniforms, facilities etc); advocating for students; organising events; supporting agreed causes									*Represent!* 1.2 p 25; 2.2 pp 58-61; Template T3 p 149 *Connect* 234 pp 10-11 *Connect* 219 pp 3-6 *Connect* 191 p 31 *Connect* 169 p 7
5.3 The Student Council controls the time that it allocates to different issues and topics, making sure that one or two things don't dominate; it sets up appropriate internal structures to deal with different issues eg working groups									*Represent!* 3.5 p 98 *Connect* 174 pp 17-21 *Connect* 169 pp 5, 6 *Connect* 151 p 3
5.4 The Student Council is effective in implementing and working on a range of issues; it completes its plans and achieves what it sets out to do									*Represent!* 3.6 pp 104-105; 3.7 pp 106-108 *Connect* 224-225 p 12 *Connect* 217 p 25 *Connect* 211 pp 18-19

6. The Student Council is trained and networked to be effective:

Practice									Represent! or Connect Reference
6.1 Appropriate training events are organised within the school and made available to all members of the Student Council									*Represent!* 1.2 pp 21-22; 2.1 pp 51-57; 2.2 pp 58-61; 4.1 p 121; 4.4 pp 133-138; 4.5 pp 139-141
6.2 Members of the Student Council get follow-up support and informal training in the skills needed to do their work									*Represent!* 2.1 pp 51-57; 2.4 pp 64-69; *Template* T2 p 148 *Connect* 169 p 8
6.3 The Student Council has access to inter-school and statewide networking opportunities									*Represent!* 4.1 p 121; 3.10 pp 116-117 VicSRC web pages and *Workshops* *Connect* 169 p 10
6.4 The Student Council's school is a Partner School of the VicSRC									*Represent!* 4.6 p 142 VicSRC web pages *Connect* 168 p 12

Practice	How often does this happen?					How important is this?			Represent! or Connect Reference
	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	

7. The Student Council has time to do its work and gets credit for its work:

Practice	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	Reference
7.1 The Student Council meets at a time that is convenient to all members									Represent! 3.5 pp 94-95
7.2 Time is provided, as part of the school's curriculum, for Student Council members to do their work									Represent! 4.3 p 129
7.3 Credit is provided for Student Council members in ways that recognise members own learning and their contribution to the school									Represent! 4.3 pp 129-132 Connect 174 pp 7-14
7.4 The Student Council is publicly recognised and acknowledged for its work									Represent! 4.3 pp 130, 132

8. The Student Council is connected to the school's decision-making:

Practice	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	Reference
8.1 Students are represented on the school's decision-making body (eg School Council); there are links between these representatives and the Student Council									Represent! 3.9 pp 111-114 Connect 229 pp 5-13 Connect 230 pp 9-13 Connect 231-232 pp 28-29
8.2 Students are represented on other committees within the school (eg uniform committee, canteen committee, curriculum committee, facilities committee etc)									Represent! 3.9 pp 113-114 Connect 211 pp 3-5
8.3 The Student Council is asked for its views on all important matters									Represent! 1.2 p 21 VicSRC Principals Guide (on website) Connect 169 p 4
8.4 Student views are heard and considered seriously in all school forums									VicSRC Principals Guide (on website) Connect 220 p 4 Connect 196 p 17

Practice	How often does this happen?					How important is this?			Represent! or Connect Reference
	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	

9. The Student Council has teacher and principal support:

Practice	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	Represent! or Connect Reference
9.1 There is at least one Student Council support teacher who has time release to support the Council									*Represent!* 1.6 p 41 *Connect* 187 pp 8-9
9.2 This teacher supports and advises the Student Council without taking over									*Represent!* 2.1 p 56; 2.4 pp 68-69 *Connect* 184 pp 18-19
9.3 There are regular meetings of the Student Council with the principal and other appropriate members of the school administration/ leadership									VicSRC *Principals Guide* (on VicSRC website)
9.4 The views and suggestions of the Student Council are seriously considered and discussed									VicSRC *Principals Guide* (on website) *Connect* 236 pp 12-19 *Connect* 235 pp 17-21

10. The Student Council has the resources it needs:

Practice	Always	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	High	Medium	Low	Represent! or Connect Reference
10.1 The Student Council has a budget that it controls and allocates									*Represent!* 4.1 pp 120, 123-124; *Templates* T11 p 162 *Connect* 169 p 12
10.2 The Student Council has access to practical resources such as printing, photocopying, mailing, phones etc									*Represent!* 4.1 p 121; *Template* T10 p 161 *Connect* 201 p 23 *Connect* 172 p 17
10.3 The Student Council has a dedicated Council notice board that it controls									*Represent!* 4.1 p 121; *Template* T10 p 161
10.4 The Student Council has a space of its own eg an office, a filing cabinet etc									*Represent!* 4.1 p 120; *Template* T10 p 161

Student Voice and Agency:
Successes and challenges

Early in 2018, the leadership team at **Merriang Special Developmental School (SDS)** approached me to start a **student voice group** and to participate in a Department of Education and Training (DET) Learning Lab initiative aimed to amplify student voice and agency across the school. Our campus is Grades P-6 with all of the students having a low cognitive ability and over 70% with a diagnosis of autism. Throughout my professional career in education, I have always been very passionate about empowering students in their learning, so I accepted the roles and immediately wondered what I had got myself into.

I began to search for a plan that I felt would be effective in setting up a Student Voice Council and, initially, too many questions and not enough answers began to overwhelm me. Student Voice in a Special Developmental School (SDS) seemed such a new concept and I didn't have a lot of historical data or knowledge from other schools or examples to draw from.

- How does our school support voice and agency in students with limited or no verbal skills and varying levels of cognitive function?
- How do we support authentic interactions between students – with students, staff, school leaders, parents and the school community – without leading the students or speaking for them?
- Does the staff have a shared understanding of what student voice is in our setting?
- Time and resources loomed large: How was I going to fit this into my already demanding schedule?

These were all very daunting questions – but I decided to jump in anyway.

Ideas did start to reveal themselves and I quickly decided that I needed to begin where I always do with students in my classroom: focus on the power of connection. What this meant in the context of starting a Student Voice Group and supporting staff to explore and support voice and agency in their classrooms, was building relationships with students in the group and building a shared understanding with staff about what these concepts mean in a special needs setting.

Overcoming barriers

Initially I selected the Student Voice Group in consultation with our leadership team. We looked for students who we thought would fit together well as a team, have high energy and varying abilities – both verbal and non-verbal – and a few students who had a higher level of confidence to help support and provide peer modelling to the other students.

Our first meeting was great but also confusing for students. It was a change of routine for them, and they wondered: *"Why are we here?"* Answering that question involved discussions about what it meant to be a part of a community, what it meant to be a student and a friend. We used picture cards, voice output devices, and keyword signing to communicate about having a voice, sharing ideas, being friends, helping each other and team work. It was a great first session!

Identity and belonging

During our first meeting, one student asked: *"What are we called?"*

Leading up to this first meeting, I had spent some time thinking about this and had thought that the common terms SRC or Student Council would not be meaningful for our cohort.

So, how do I support them to choose a name that is meaningful to them? We had already thought about 'voice' so I made a whole heap of word and visual cards and threw them in the middle of the circle and we played around with ideas until three solid suggestions came up. My favourite was *"Merriang voice in the world of schools"* and we ended up with **Merriang Student Voice (MSV)**. The group voted for this out of the three options.

MSV badges were then made and presented to the students at our weekly assembly by the local Mayor of Whittlesea. I believe these instantly became an important artefact and a symbol of school pride and honour.

Democracy

The process of choosing a name made me aware that teaching the MSV to decide and vote was very important. Empowering students to make their own choices was a really big deal. I wanted to really listen and I began asking for them to come up with ideas – but they were very stunned by this. If I asked: *"What do you guys all think about ...?"* they all looked at me with blank stares and confusion – at first!

I knew voting needed to be an achievable action so that each student could participate equally. So voting became thumbs up for *'yes'* or thumbs down for *'no'* – pretty simple. To build confidence and authenticity, they needed plenty of practice, so we began voting on everything: what name, what games, what colour, what sticker, what song, what actions etc. Slowly and surely, voting changed from looking to see what your mate was doing, into something very personal and powerful. A year later, after lots and lots of practice, staff asked the MSV if they wanted to participate in a Prep Pod mentoring program. One of the students actively voted *'No'*, even though the rest of the group voted *'Yes'*. I really celebrated his resounding *'No'* and gave him a high five and thanked him for being brave and honest. I felt I had really just experienced a significant authentic moment.

Linking in

I also felt that I needed to link the MSV into whole school initiatives as it was another way of building the MSV presence at school and giving them opportunities to be involved in planning, providing feedback and peer modelling.

Our students are generally invisible in the outside world so I felt it was very important that the MSV members were very visible to the whole student, parent and staff body as well as to the broader community. If we really wanted to change perceptions and expectations of what our students can achieve, and create a culture of agency, we had to get involved in as much as possible. I remember sending a letter home to communicate to the parents that their child was selected to be in the Student Voice Group. The next day, a very apprehensive mum called the school and asked me: *"How can 'A' possibly be included in this group when she has no voice?"* I had a great chat with her and I told her that 'A' has lots of communication skills even though she cannot speak: she is very emotionally expressive, she's an amazing artist, she can use keyword signing and a voice output device – she has many voices. This conversation made me aware that there was a lot of work to do to change this perception of what 'voice' and 'agency' could be.

Whole School Assembly

It so happened that the staff body had decided to start a weekly assembly at the beginning of 2018. The MSV were invited to conduct the *Acknowledgment*

of Country and *National Anthem* at the beginning of each assembly. They voted *'yes'* unanimously and then went on to write their own version of the *Acknowledgement* to make it meaningful to our cohort of students by adding keyword signs and actions. Initially their involvement in the assembly started with the *Acknowledgement of Country* and signing the *National Anthem*. It has now grown much bigger than that and they are now setting up the PA, resources and microphone, creating playlists on *Spotify* for assembly activities, helping to dress students in our *School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)* Avatar costumes for student awards, dismissing each class at the end of Assembly to ensure safe departures, and accepting donations and presentations from community groups on behalf of the school.

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)

The MSV have also spent time discussing the SWPBS expected behaviours such as Be Safe. The students shared what made them feel safe at school using the same bank of resources and said things like: *'get help', 'be kind', 'sit on the bus', 'looking after each other'.* Our meetings minutes are sent to our leadership team to provide feedback about how the students feel safe at school, and this informed PBS planning.

The MSV also created a *Student Guide* Video, which was presented to the school in our SWPBS whole school launch show bags. The guide will be used long term to assist new families and students to learn about our school values and expected behaviours, as well as to provide a tour of the school grounds, which can be helpful to a new student with special needs to settle in and feel comfortable in an unfamiliar setting. I really enjoyed putting this together with the group; they were very passionate and proud of this project.

Shared understandings, Learning Labs and Metacognitive strategies

Our next step was to start to develop a plan where we could amplify student voice and agency throughout our school. Our involvement in the Department's *Amplify!* Learning Labs, was a great way to develop a proposal to extend student agency and

voice throughout school, in all classrooms. Our first step was to meet with staff and discuss what 'voice' and 'agency' is for our cohort. This was a very important step for our community to establish a shared understanding of what voice and agency looked like for our students. We discussed voice and agency as body language, choice making, communication systems, eye contact, independence, artistic expression. We realised very quickly that we were doing a lot and there was lots more to do.

Each teacher conducted ethnographic research in every class, which involved interviewing students about their view of themselves as learners. The staff developed metacognitive strategies such as a feedback chart that we plan to embed into students' learning; this journey was a reminder that what we think is working well and suits the students may not be the same for them. Student feedback charts will be completed with each student after each learning task and are still in development to ensure that they are differentiated and suitable for as many students as possible.

What's next?

I feel like we have only begun our journey with our students and have a long way still to travel. It is a big commitment and it is great to see student engagement and outcomes improving. As a school community, we will continue to integrate the MSV into as many programs as possible and plan to try to have a representative from every class. The staff are committed to develop ways in which students can provide feedback to teachers about their learning. Furthermore, our Professional Learning Communities will focus on observation and evidence-based practices:

- *How are we listening to our students?*
- *How will we use their voices to inform our teaching and planning?*

There is lots of work still to do but it's well worth it!

<div align="right">

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Your voice: Unite, empower, disrupt

On February 22nd, the **Fitzroy High School Feminist Collective** held its sold out *Your Voice* conference at RMIT University's city campus, with 300 secondary school students and their teachers in attendance.

The conference -- programmed for and by students -- was the first of its kind in the country. The idea for the event began to take shape almost two years ago, in response to a growing demand for the *'Femco'* to visit or be visited by other schools for advice on how to start a feminist collective. It was also a response to the desire expressed regularly by other students and schools to create a sense of community and connectedness amongst young people interested in gender equality, and to explore the issue in an Australian context.

The event was opened with a beautiful *Welcome to Country* by **Uncle Ian Hunter**, and was followed by a performance by incredible First Nation musicians and dancers. Vice Chancellor of RMIT's School of Education **Belinda Tynan** then addressed the congregation, before keynote speaker **Clementine Ford** spoke skillfully to the conference's key themes of ***Uniting, Empowering and Disrupting*** in the historically pertinent surrounds of Storey Hall.

The conference consisted of three sets of four parallel sessions, featuring everything from workshops run by

Clem Ford on the alternatives to *'toxic masculinity'*, to panels on *'Women in Leadership', 'Feminism as a Person of Colour'* and *'Feminism and the Queer community'*, to sessions on self-defence, *'How to Start Your Own Feminist Collective'* and *Mindfulness*. Dr. Debbie Ollis (author of *Building Respectful Relationships - stepping out against gender-based violence*) and **Dr. Leanne Coll**, both from the Faculty of Arts and Education at Deakin University, ran a popular student-centred session entitled

'What they don't teach you in Sex Ed'. The atmosphere on the day was magical: there was a powerful and positive sense of community and togetherness, which was one of the key aims of the conference.

The **Feminist Collective** put in an inestimable amount of work to pull the conference off, but it also would not have been possible without the unflagging support of our school leadership and School Council, and our ongoing research collaboration with **Deb Ollis** and **Leanne Coll**. We would not have had a home for the conference without RMIT lecturer **Emily Gray**'s advocacy for our work, and the generous contributions of our region's *Respectful Relationships* team (especially Project Lead **Brigitte Walker**). Our tireless

team of unflappable event volunteers, drawn from our friends and family, did everything from 'bribing' RMIT students to print directions to workshop locations, to attending our merchandise stand for hours on end.

We were also very lucky to have esteemed designers **Adrian Wood** (https://www.adrianwood.com.au/) &

Beci Orpin (http://beciorpin.com/) donate their valuable time to design our fabulous conference poster and tote bags respectively. Our beautiful limited edition totes are still available via our website: **http://fhsfemco.com/**

It seems fitting to give the final thoughts about the day to **Feminist Collective** student **Eve**, who said:

"The conference was such a wonderful experience and it was such an honour to be a part of it. The Feminist Collective was surrounded by such inspiring young people. The day was filled with ground breaking conversations: 'Your Voice' was a triumph!"

Briony O'Keeffe
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Participation Conference 2019

In a post Royal Commission world, the **Office of the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People (ACYP)** held a conference on 28 February at NSW Parliament House that focused on the importance of listening to the voices of children and young people. The event looked at meaningful engagement with children and young people as well as examples of practice when NGOs, government and other bodies involve children and young people in their organisations.

Children and young people told ACYP they would like safe spaces where they feel comfortable to come together and collectively share their ideas and thoughts on topics important to them and so, this feedback informed the planning of the conference. On the day, a children and young people's conference took place *'Count Me In to Have My Voice Heard'* which involved 96 children and young people who came together from seven schools in NSW.

At the same location, a second conference, *'Count on Us to Have Your Voice Heard'* brought together Commissioners from around the country, academics, NGOs, government and children and young people themselves.

Conference: Count Me In to Have My Voice Heard

The young people's conference began with a *Welcome to Country*, an introduction by members of the **NSW Youth Advisory Council** and the **NSW Advocate for Children and Young People**, Andrew Johnson. The children and young people were then presented with Advocacy training which outlined helpful information for preparing for interviews, applications, meetings and presentations.

The day then moved into consultation sessions where the young people were given questions and worked together to respond. Questions included:

- *What is meaningful participation?*
- *How does your school facilitate participation?*
- *What training and supports do you need to help you participate?*
- *How do you want to be shown that your participation has value?*

The children and young people collectively worked together to discuss their own experiences as they decided on answers.

The responses were collated and representatives presented this feedback to the attendees at the *Count On Us to Have Your Voice Heard* in the Theatrette. Representatives included one young person from each of the schools that attended as well as two members from the **Youth Advisory Council**.

Conference: Count On Us to Have Your Voice Heard

The *Count on Us to Have Your Voice Heard* conference commenced with introductions and welcomes from young people. The **NSW Advocate for Children**

and Young People Andrew Johnson welcomed guests and discussed the history and importance of child rights, examples of meaningful participation with children and young people and ACYP's detailed findings from over 20,000 children and young people. The first panel of the day involved children and young people who each discussed their experiences of when they felt they were listened to or had a good participation experience. They also shared examples of when participation did not work well. The panel suggested their top tips for adults and engaged in questions from the audience.

Commissioners Panel

The second panel involved Commissioners from around the country: Colleen Gwynne – *Children's Commissioner Northern Territory*, Colin Pettit, *Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia* and Helen Connolly, *Commissioner for Children and Young People South Australia*. The panel shared information on what is happening in their state around children and young people's participation, the essential elements to meaningful participation and how their office involves children and young people.

Academic Experts Panel

The third panel involved academic experts who presented their key research and findings into children and young people's participation as well as where their research is currently heading.

Panel members included: Professor Anne Graham AO, *Director, Centre for Children and Young People, Southern Cross University*; A/Professor Philippa Collin, *Western Sydney University and Stream Leader, Wellbeing, Health & Youth Centre of Research Excellence* and A/Professor Tim Moore, *Deputy Director (Practice Solutions), Australian Centre for Child Protection, Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia.*

Our Local Launch

Attendees were then invited to attend the launch of a new website portal: *Our Local*. *Our Local* was called for and co-designed by children and young people to provide information on opportunities, activities, services and events around NSW. *Our Local* was officially launched by Glenn King, *Secretary, Department of Customer Service*.

Streams

The afternoon involved three streams where panel members addressed their experiences, work and key projects.

Stream 1 was a panel discussion around involving children and young people in the design, implementation and monitoring of programs. The Panel Chair was Julie Hourigan Ruse, CEO FAMS. Panel members included: Susannah Le Bron, *CEO, YMCA NSW*; Helen Lunn, *National Child Safe Lead, Mission Australia*; Justine Perkins, *Founder, Touched by Olivia* and Fraser

Corfield, *Artistic Director, Australian Theatre for Young People.*

Stream 2 involved a panel discussion on involving children and young people in policy-making processes. The Panel Chair was Zoe Robinson, *CEO, Yfoundations* and panel members included: Andrew Johnson, *NSW Advocate for Children and Young People*; Katie Acheson, *CEO, Youth Action* and Judith Murray, *Engagement Manager, AbSec.*

Stream 3 brought together panel members who spoke about involving children and young people in all aspects of schools and the education system. The Panel Chair was: Joanna Quilty, *CEO, NCOSS*. Panel members included: Paul Owens, *Principal, Kirawee High School*; Margaret Mulcahy, *Principal, Eagle Vale High School*; Darcy Moore, *Deputy Principal, Dapto High School* and Robyn Bale, *Director, Student Engagement and Interagency Partnerships, Department of Education.*

Children and young people's feedback

Representatives from the children and young people's conference provided feedback on the questions they had been working on together during the day. They spoke about a variety of answers and some of these included wanting to be actively involved, the need for respect and the importance of inclusion.

Drawn from the on-line report at:

https://bit.ly/2Qie47V

Hope

I have chosen **'hope'** as the theme for my discussion today. On first hearing, this might not sound like what we could be talking about in education. Let me give you a bit of my background so you know why I am concerned with this.

Much of the work that I have done in the past is concerned with young people who in the States might be called *'trouble makers'.* Here we might call them *'no-hopers'.* In working with this type of young person, being in schools and talking with them, the thing that I have learned is that they incorporate in their view of themselves a view of *'no hope.'* If you talk with them, you realise that they see themselves as academically incompetent and worthless as far as who they think they are in the world. They see themselves as not fitting into the school. One of the most important things is that they feel absolutely **powerless** to deal with the school and with their position in the school.

A funny thing happens when people think they are powerless. **They stop acting.** If you believe that what you do doesn't make any difference, there is no sense in doing it. One of the most tragic things that happens to a lot of students is that they get the message, correctly or incorrectly, that there is **no hope**.

If there is **no hope**, there is **no reason**, and if there is **no reason**, there is **no action**. They become consequently apathetic, unmotivated, with apparently low educational aptitudes.

The intriguing thing is that this is what we teach students. The way you can demonstrate this is to reverse the process and allow young people to participate. In some of these programs that we might call **youth development** or **youth participation** projects, you can see students change almost overnight and become very active, hopeful and confident young people.

A starting point for solutions is to look at the problem both short-run and long-run. I am going to talk a little about short-run solutions and then build up from there.

In the short-run, one thing we can do is to involve young people in a wide variety of *problem-solving groups* and *service-providing groups*.

Two or three kinds of illustrations can be offered. One of the things that was tried in one town was to create a series of drug education teams. Teenagers in grades 11 and 12 were

Faced with concerns about issues from the global to the local – climate change, gun violence, safety, break-down in relationships and so on – what is a school's curriculum and pedagogical response?

What should we learn and teach? And how?

*This address was by **Professor Ken Polk**, then from the University of Oregon, but now long-time resident in Australia, to a seminar around **'Work experience and out-of-school activities'** in Melbourne in March 1983.*

*It was first printed in **Connect** 21, June 1983 ... and remains highly relevant today.*

formed into teams and travelled to all 6th grade classes in the district with a student-based drug education presentation. We didn't assume that students had the technical competence to know what the particular dangers of one drug or another are. They may not know that heroin is derived from opium or that cocaine is not. They can't be expected to know the technical details of biology and physiology. They will, however, know the language of young people and how and where to best communicate about such problems.

A similar problem-solving group in which the issue of young people's language because obvious, was a group concerned with sex education.

There are also service kinds of activities that young people can do. Young people are very good at giving many kinds of human services. They often like working with old people. Many like working with young children. A common illustration of these programs is **cross-age tutoring**. Tutoring is often a good starting point because it is an activity we know something about: it is a form of teaching. Tutoring can very quickly give those doing the tutoring a sense of competence and confidence. Young people come to realise that they know something more than the students know who they are tutoring. They gain confidence from being a teacher. They also begin to sense that they belong in schools; that they are a part of the teaching enterprise.

Young people begin to feel that because they are doing something important - that they are worthwhile human beings.

What I am suggesting is that when we think about work experience and work oriented programs, if we think in terms of youth involvement or youth participation along the lines of problem solving and service, we can begin to give young people a real sense that they have something to contribute. By doing it right, we can give young people a sense of hope about themselves.

Now, in terms of check points about these sorts of programs, I will offer the following points:

1. Develop small group structures:

Organise around small groups. It is very important that young people work together in groups so that they can support each other in the activity they are doing. By working in groups, they begin to develop skills for working in coalitions. Small teams are very important and, by small, I mean that the group should be no more than 7 or 8 people – if you want a size of group where the students can relate together and be in touch with each other, give support and hold each other accountable and know what is going on.

2. Organise around competence:

Believe in the competence of the young people you are working with and organise around competence. Avoid organising around some problem. Don't focus on such categories as 'delinquent', 'truant', 'slow' or 'emotionally disturbed' young people, because the category adds more to the problem than the problem itself. Instead, assume as your focus the things that define people's competence.

3. Ensure mixed ability groups:

A rule that is built into the youth participation program is the idea of mixing to involve a range of levels of ability. Try to mix in older folks too. It is very easy to work with a parent or two or an adult from the community. It is a way of breaking down the age segregation that is characteristic of this society.

4. Pay the participants:

If possible, see if you can get pay for the young people. There are lots of reasons for this. An important one is motivation for the young people. Pay provides an initial reason for their participation. However, the most significant reason is that we need to develop models of responsible employment activities for young people. The pay issue forces the participating institutions to think differently about young people. Youth affairs, youth service agencies should consider having a very significant part of their budget for the employment of young people so that their employment policy can be a model for the rest of the community. The community needs to know how to involve young people and employ them.

5. Credential the program:

If you can, find ways to improve the educational credentials of the students. In one of our tutoring programs, a third of the students' day was taken up with seminars. These seminars were organised so that they could contain such subjects as Psychology, English, Sociology, Child Development. We were able to give the students high grades in these courses. We lifted them out of the non-College track and put them in a higher strand. By doing this, they were on the University bound track, and getting A's.

6. Participants to volunteer:

A program should always be voluntary. You go out and ask people who are interested. In one case, we were paying students in twelve positions we had available in one junior high school and we had over 150 applicants. What we did was to have what they call a stratified form of sampling. We made sure that a good percentage of our students were drawn from the lower strand and a higher proportion of people in the program were also drawn from the lower strand. What we were able to do was to have lots of other activities happening at the same time, so a good percentage of the people not picked for the first activity were able to do something else.

One problem is the double failure problem when picking randomly. What we were trying to do with this program was to draw from the low strand rather than the high strand in the educational system. However, then you have the problem that the lower strand young people won't apply unless you go and ask them. They have such a lot of experience with failure that they don't volunteer to experience it again.

7. Have a political approach:

Another rule I would have is to approach the program politically. All change is political. Working in a school and trying to do something different involves bringing about change.

Avoid what are called zero-sum games. Try to avoid having wins that are someone else's losses. Try to make your wins the wins of other people. If you take money and resources away from an established power group in the school, they will remember. Avoid arguments with people on the same side as you. You need as many friends and as few enemies as possible. Don't fight dumb battles.

You also will want to go to the media. You need the community newspapers, the television stations, to obtain the widest distribution of the good things you are doing. If you have a good youth participation program, advertise it.

8. Ensure adult involvement:

Get adults involved in your programs. They can serve as a constituency group for your program. They can put pressures on schools. For example, in a drug rehabilitation program, we involved nurses and physicians and a couple of policemen. You will have to organise the program so that the main service providers are young people and that the adults are there to provide a resource for the group. I would suggest that at least three quarters of the group are young people. When adults are included, make very clear what their role is. Prepare the adults so that they do not patronise the young people.

9. Evaluate:

The final rule is evaluate. You will want to be able to tell the story – what you accomplished. You need to give some kind of evidence that you had some effect on the young people involved.

We have been talking about short-run things, things that you can do in the short run, programs that give young people an idea of where they can go and a sense that they are partners in some sort of enterprise. However, let's not underestimate the importance of long-run programs. Long-run activities have to do with full employment economies, a completely changed nature of the world of work, transition programs and so on.

The activities discussed today are short-run ways of involving young people in useful kinds of activities. They begin to provide the community with important examples or models of how young people might usefully participate. The programs are a way of widening the community awareness of what young people can do and how work might be organised for young people. These are a vital base to build from.

Our society doesn't know or believe that young people can be competent, that young people have something to contribute, that they can really be a part of education, recreation, welfare, housing, ecology or environmental discussions and programs.

They can be partners.

Professor Ken Polk
March 1983

CONGRESS

WE DON'T MAKE CHANGE ALONE 2019

Hey there! If you're new to the **VicSRC Congress** – no stress! Welcome! We're excited to introduce you to the concept.

Congress is basically a student-led and student-focussed conference. It brings together secondary students from Year 7 to Year 12 from all types of schools and all around Victoria.

It happens on **9th, 10th & 11th July** this year, during the school holidays, and is based at **Ormond College, The University of Melbourne**. Around 200 students come together to talk about the systemic issues that affect all levels of the education system and come up with new, exciting, innovative ways to tackle them ... together! These issues become central to VicSRC's advocacy work as we take them straight to the Minister for Education and work with him on implementation.

It's a bit hard to put the magic of **Congress** into words; so here's what some of our past attendees had to say about it:

"I was a little unsure of going to Congress first, but after being here for a day it completely changed me."

"I want to engage my SRC a lot more. I want us to make more active changes in the community."

"I would like to help build my school's representative council into an organisation that will make change for the school and community now and deep into the future."

The first day is all about diving in, defining the issues; you'll organise yourselves into **Action Teams**, with each team focussed on one issue suggested by **Congress** delegates. Then you'll get straight to work and spend the second day thinking and talking and planning your solution to the issue your group has chosen. On the third day everyone comes back together and presents their ideas at **Congress Open Morning**. Ideas are presented not only to the rest of **Congress** but also to some of the biggest decision-makers and allies you'll find in education (like teachers, Principals and the Department of Education and Training).

But **Congress** isn't all about work! You'll also attend fun, fresh, skill-building workshops, meet all kinds of other students and attend our **Gala Dinner**, a themed dress up dinner party complete with dancing and delicious dining!

Sound good? Great! Check out more info below and if you have any questions please get in touch.

Are you a student that wants to attend Congress or a school that wants to send delegates? See the further information on *page 31* of this issue.

For any questions please get in touch with our **Programs and Events Coordinator** at programs@vicsrc.org.au

https://bit.ly/2HPPily

Student Voice Workshops 2019

VicSRC's **Student Voice Workshops** are continuing to roll out in 2019! These secondary school workshops explore representational leadership: what it means, and how we can do it better – using the VicSRC's **ALTER Model of Action** for student-led change.

In the Workshops, students and teachers share experiences in student-led change in their schools, including the challenges they have faced and ways they have overcome these challenges.

Participants have said:

"This made me excited to go back and improve the school. Thank you."

"Just want to thank you for the help you provide to school councils; it really helps. You are more than welcome to come back to our school (trust me, I speak for the principal!)"

"Really good collaboration."

Dates and Locations *(more coming soon!)*

Thursday 20 June: **SALE:**
Wellington Library

Friday 28 June: **BAIRNSDALE**:
Gippsland TAFE: Bairnsdale Campus

Thursday 18 July: **SOUTH EAST MELBOURNE:**
Emerald Secondary College

Workshops are suitable for all school leaders (secondary students, teachers and principals) who want their voices heard.

To host a Student Voice Workshop, get in touch with the VicSRC at: **events@vicsrc.org.au** with your school name and location.

Contact us at: events@vicsrc.org.au or **0447 691 300**.

Register at:
https://bit.ly/2IXu2zp

Student Participation in Curriculum Planning

Young people have experienced the Victorian curriculum first hand, and are now being given the opportunity to have a say in its planning and operation.

At the annual VicSRC Congress, students from all school sectors in the metropolitan and rural regions of Victoria discuss programs and ideas that they believe will improve Victorian education. We aim to find ways for education to work more effectively for us as students. On the Open Morning, the final day of Congress, action teams present their refined ideas to education stakeholders.

Transforming VCE

One of the top six priorities that came from Congress 2018, was called 'Transforming VCE', and centred around greater student involvement in decision-making in the area of curriculum. We proposed that there should be representation of young people on the **Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)** Board to enable student voice, engagement and empowerment. Similarly to the VicSRC's campaign to have students on School Councils, we believe that young people should be involved in the decision-making processes that affect them in this Board.

Student Representation on the VCAA Board

The VCAA is a statutory authority of the Government of Victoria, responsible for the provision of curriculum and assessment programs for students in Victoria. Through having young people's representation as part of the Board, the VCAA will be closer to providing a curriculum that reflects the views of Victorian students. This offers great benefits to students: we will now have a point of liaison between the board and us, meaning our voices and opinions will become part of the VCAA's decisions.

The VCAA Board is made up of 8 to 15 members appointed by the Governor-in-Council on nomination by the Minister for Education. The VCAA is now calling on young school graduates to apply to become members of the Board!

This is no longer a hypothetical concept. If you have recently graduated from secondary school within the past two years, and would love the opportunity to represent the views and values of Victorian students in the VCAA's discussions, you might just get the chance!

Watch for developing news.

Wren and Zaituna
VicSRC Executive

In-Camera Time for Student Councils

In-Camera Time isn't about being photographed at meetings! *'In camera'* here is a Latin term that means *'in private,'* so, in a corporate setting, this is where, for a period of a meeting, only board members are present. That is, staff or others (eg visitors) are not present. The purpose of **in-camera time** is so that confidential but honest discussion can occur, particularly regarding the operation of the leadership team within a board.

So how does this apply to the context of a student council? Often in student councils where teachers are present, students may feel uncomfortable addressing specific concerns that question decisions of the school that the teacher liaison may be involved with, or similar issues. Therefore in-camera time can often help students to address issues that may relate to staff or to the decisions made by teacher-liaisons in regards to the student council.

In Executive meetings of the Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC), in-camera time is generally always set in the agenda. Staff are the automatically absent from in-camera time, allowing the Executive to discuss any issues that surround staffing, or issues that they may not want to express in the presence of staff.

At a school level, this might be useful to have meetings without the support or liaison staff member to allow

In camera sessions can sometimes be called a 'closed meeting' or an 'executive session'.

free and open discussion. However, it's not just staff who can be excused from in-camera times, but student leaders within a student council. Sometimes, this student leadership may be excused, so that the remaining student council members can discuss issues around their conduct and the governance of the council.

It is also important that in-camera time is conducted with strict and sensitive procedures. The VicSRC Executive has recently adopted a detailed policy about such conduct.

Some examples of procedures for a student council could be:

- Minutes taken during in-camera time should be written separately from minutes sent to everyone else, maintaining the confidentiality of the in-camera time session
- Chairs for in-camera time should be designated to collect items to be discussed and ensure timings and discussions are on track
- In-camera time sessions could always be set in the agenda, regardless of whether they are requested. This allows students to avoid being uncomfortable in requesting in-camera time: where those excused may be worried why the in-camera time is being requested.

Ultimately, in-camera time sessions aren't to exclude people from meetings, but rather to support confidential discussion around sensitive issues and in a comfortable environment. It allows students to freely discuss any concerns they may hold, without fear of being judged. It also allows for constructive criticism to be raised, and ensures that students are able to work collaboratively in dealing with sensitive issues.

Aaran
VicSRC Executive

Vic SRC Partner SCHOOLS

Schools in the state of Victoria with primary, secondary or some mix of students can become **VicSRC Partner Schools**.

Schools that were VicSRC Member Schools as at August 2018, are automatically Partner Schools until 31st December 2019! New Partner Schools can join for $150 + GST for a full year of partnership (discount or cluster partnership options may be available).

Partner Schools get:

- The VicSRC as your *constant companion* on the road to student voice super powers!
- Advice and referral for student voice at our e-mail address: **info@vicsrc.org.au**
- Eligibility to enter the *Student Voice Awards*!

- Discount codes for all *Student Voice Workshops* and *Student Voice Awards* tickets.
- Access to bookings for *Teach the Teacher* and *Congress* tickets.
- A monthly *Partner Bulletin* featuring resource highlights and best practice student voice.
- A subscription to *Connect*.
- A school membership of the *Student Voice Hub* with ten teacher accounts, access to restricted resources, private forums and more!
- Eligibility to *feature in VicSRC work* including blogs, videos and spotlights.
- A sweet *VicSRC Partner School logo* for all your newsletter, website and email signature needs!

Become a Partner School at: https://bit.ly/2TL848K

Once you sign up, you'll receive an invoice to your nominated email address. This is an automated process and the invoices will come out yearly on this date to make maintaining your partnership easier.

At the start of the school year you'll receive a quick survey prompting you to update your details. This is to make sure we've got the best and most up to date contacts for all your student voice needs!

More details at: https://bit.ly/2HXH2aI

VicSRC Executive work on 2018 priorities

The current **VicSRC Executive Team** of 15 student representatives was elected at Congress 2018 to represent students across Victoria. Their work in 2018-19 has been focused on the top five Congress *priorities*.

VicSRC
VictorianStudent
RepresentativeCouncil

These *priorities* each began as an issue pitched to Congress delegates on the first morning. **Action Teams** were then formed around the top priorities. Over the three days of Congress, these **Action Teams** worked together to discuss their issues, and develop solutions that addressed the issues. On the final day, **Action Teams** presented outcomes to Congress and delegates voted for the Congress *priorities*. These then became the VicSRC Executive's focus for the next twelve months. **Working Groups** were then formed within the VicSRC Executive team to focused on developing action on the specific Congress *priorities*.

These, together with the article on page 27 about **Transforming VCE**, are some of the **Working Group** reports that will be presented to the 2019 Congress:

Student Rights

Students are unaware of their **rights** – both as a student and also as an individual in society; and both for themselves but also for those surrounding them: from peers to school staff.

Solutions

We aimed to create a **statement of student rights** to be implemented and endorsed by all schools across Victoria but also by all members of the school. The aim of the statement is to:

• To inform and empower students of the rights they currently possess;

• To address the lack of information regarding students' rights in schools;

• To assist students in resolving disputes and asserting their rights;

• To provide information that supports student voice and empowerment in schools

So far ...

A **draft statement** has been developed for consultation with students. We will continue to distribute and discuss this, and hopefully have it endorsed by the Department of Education and Training (DET) as the basis for schools to implement initiatives and build a culture of empowerment in schools.

The written statement itself was relatively quickly achieved, however the consultation process is taking time before the overall aim of having the final statement can to be achieved.

Discrimination

Many students experience **discrimination** in schools: a place where they have a right to be safe. This discrimination negatively impacts on their lives throughout their schooling experience and later on in life.

Combating discrimination starts with targeting the perpetrator as they are the source of the problem, rather than just focusing on consoling the victim. We aim to fix the issue from its root, hoping to eradicate discrimination and bigotry in our schools with our plans.

Discrimination affects everyone. It has a wider impact on school and community culture, and impacts a variety of other issues - particularly inclusion and student mental health.

Solutions

Our aim is for embracing school communities that allow each student to thrive and reach their maximum potential during their time at school.

A program could be developed to educate perpetrators and support students and groups that are targeted. Teachers, students and other young people as a whole could be educated about the cause and effects of discrimination. A widespread communications campaign could be developed including posters, videos and ways for people to share their experiences of discrimination in a safe space.

We aim to raise awareness around discrimination and its negative effects so that all students can learn in a safe environment and work with each other to succeed.

So far ...

A *'wall',* where people could share their thoughts on discrimination and their experiences, was made for the Congress 2018 **Open Morning**. This wall was not a permanent wall, however it showed that many people share similar experiences and show that we should be one.

We have looked to **partner** with organisations who already have programs and resources that align with our solutions. We have also raised awareness around all types of discrimination through our *Student Voice Hub* and our VicSRC Communications.

The **Discrimination Working Group** will continue to raise awareness of the different types of discrimination that occur, through the sharing of relevant resources, via the VicSRC's *Student Member* and *Partner School Bulletins*, as well as the VicSRC's social media pages. Discrimination is a complex issue. But we can focus on advocacy around it, working with several groups who face discrimination.

Opportunities and access for rural and remote communities

There remains a lack of equal opportunities for rural and regional students because of their location far from the metropolitan area. Students lack opportunities in various areas – such as lack of professional teachers, access to the full range of VCE subjects, technologies and resources.

We believe that every student, no matter where they live, should have equal education and opportunities to access resources at school. All VCE and other curriculum options should be available for rural and regional students.

Solutions

We would like to facilitate partnerships between rural and metropolitan schools, and have additional funding available to students for transportation.

So far ...

The VicSRC has been working to get a better idea of how to fix these issues and promote improved opportunities for remote students.

The Working Group carried out a consultation on the revamp of **Virtual Learning Channels** for schools and about improvements and experiences that students have had.

The Department of Education and Training (DET) has announced funding of around $22 million for school in regional areas so they are able to ensure that VCE subjects are available for rural students. There is also a separate funding scheme for partnering between regional and metropolitan schools to ensure they work closely to deliver every VCE subject, and also with other country education partners to improve virtual learning.

This funding will continue to be available from the DET, but it will take time for these funded partnerships and programs to really mature. Hence we aim to do an evaluation and produce case studies on those initiatives and make that accessible to those who want ideas. We will also consult with the DET on any improvement or growth of these programs.

After Congress 2018, the Working Group began planning and drafting applications and submissions to the DET around our solutions. The DET then announced that they were going to fund all or most of the initiatives we were suggesting. Our work then became one of advocacy, investigating and asking about the funding schemes and how we can promote them.

Transparency in the school system

At state and local levels, there is a lack of **communication, collaboration** and **comprehension** about school decision-making processes and this leads to confusion and keeps students from getting involved.

In order to create change, we need to have transparency of processes. Without this **communication, comprehension** and **collaboration**, decision-making processes will not be effective nor understood by the stakeholders.

Solutions

We were initially suggesting a specific section for students on the DET website that explains, in student-friendly language, relevant topics about decision-making, including information on how School Councils work.

Locally, information about School Council decisions that concern students – about learning, the curriculum, the learning and physical environment, and so on – should be fed back to the Student Council (SRC) and the wider student body.

Local Members of Parliament could meet at least once a year with the Student Councils in their area to talk about the school, how decisions are made, and any ongoing issues.

Success would be shown by the three 'Cs': **communication, collaboration** and **comprehension**. And that would mean a **clear, concise** and **consistent** education system.

So far ...

Prior to Congress, the VicSRC was a central part of the movement for getting students as elected members on government secondary School Councils. We lobbied for the importance of having students working with adults in making decisions that affect the school.

We have continued to lobby and have had conversations with representative from the Department of Education and Training (DET) about the experience of students on School Councils, as well as about the provision of training for them. We have been working in partnership with the DET's **School Council Training** team to shape the new training modules for School Councils.

After discussing a proposed *'For Students'* section on the DET website with DET representatives, we realised that reformatting the DET's website would prove to be an arduous task. Instead, and to fulfil the proposals from Congress 2018, the **Transparency Working Group** has created their own resources in student-friendly language, and these can be found on the *Student Voice Hub*. However, the VicSRC will continue to discuss with the DET about the addition of a *'For Students'* page on their website.

We have advocated for student-to-student training and encouraged student members on School Councils to work closely with their Student Councils/SRCs, who can feed this information back to the wider student body.

Ongoing work side by side with the DET is a priority in ensuring that students' voices are heard in this area. As a result, we can expect to see improved training modules as well as a student network for those representatives on School Councils.

Transforming VCE

The **VCE** takes a 'one size fits all' approach. The current VCE also creates stress and anxiety, negatively impacting on the mental health of students. It does not adequately prepare students for life after school.

We want a more diverse and adaptive VCE system that caters for the needs of students and adequately prepares them for the future.

Solutions

We proposed to get a young person on the **VCAA Board**, have the chief assessors consult with VCE students immediately after the examination to accurately review their experience, and add VCE exam-related questions to the annual *'Attitudes to School'* survey.

So far ...

The Working Group met with **Dr David Howes** (Chief Executive Officer of the **VCAA**) to discuss a young person being on the **VCAA Board**. He has seriously considered this and is currently looking to work towards representation of students on the **VCAA Board**. There will be an alumni on the **Board**, rather than a student, given a potential conflict of interest. We have been following the progress of the proposal and note that achieving student representation on School Councils was a previous similar action.

Further consultation should occur with the young person on the **VCAA Board** and involve consultation with a broad range of VCE students to ensure that this young person can effectively voice and contribute the views of all young people.

Join the VicSRC Executive

The **VicSRC Executive Committee** (or **Executive**) is made up of 15 students who are completing secondary education in Victoria. These **Executive** members are elected by their peers every year, and their job is to govern the VicSRC and act on the advocacy priorities identified by Victorian students at the annual *VicSRC Congress*.

Until now, the elections for **Executive** members have been held during *Congress*. The **2018-19 Executive** are leading one of the biggest changes the VicSRC has seen in recent years, and we are now taking the **Executive** elections online!!

The **VicSRC Executive** are excited about the opportunities this change will create.

*"In the past, any secondary school student could nominate to join the **VicSRC Executive**, but only students who attended Congress could vote,"* said Julia, *2018-19 Returning Officer. "Taking our elections online means that a wider group of students can now nominate and vote for their peers who will lead the VicSRC, the peak body representing school-aged students in Victoria."*

Michelle, *2018-19 Returning Officer*, added, *"The **VicSRC Executive** are excited about this step as it helps us to be more representative of all students across the state".*

Long-time friends of the VicSRC will realise that this means the **Executive** term is shifting by a few months! Nominations for the **2019-20 VicSRC Executive** will **open in July**, with **voting** to follow **in August**. All *Student Members* of the VicSRC who are in Year 7-12 (or equivalent) are eligible to vote and will be sent information about voting via email. (See details in this issue about becoming a *Student Member*.) The incoming **Executive** will be announced to the public and will officially begin their term at the *VicSRC's Student Voice Awards* in **October 2019**.

More information about how to nominate for the **2019-20 Executive** team will be shared via email and on social media in the coming weeks! If you're a student interested in nominating, make sure you're signed up as a *Student Member* so you get all the information first!

The VicSRC Executive Committee; one year that will change your life!

# Meet some more VicSRC Executive members

Tafara

"The best preparation for tomorrow, is doing your best today."

My name is **Tafara**, I'm in Year 11, from Bendigo. I play volleyball and field hockey, partake in debating and public speaking competitions and work tremendous hours. I live for science, especially biology and physiology.

From a young age I have been passionate about student culture and environment. I believe all schools should be a safe environment to learn, express ones individuality and make connections with peers and staff throughout. I nominated for this role, because I believe that students should be overseers of their own education, that decisions made should be made by the students and for the students.

My heart is with VicSRC to carry out our goals and visions for the future, for student voice to be embraced and utilised for the next generation of world leaders.
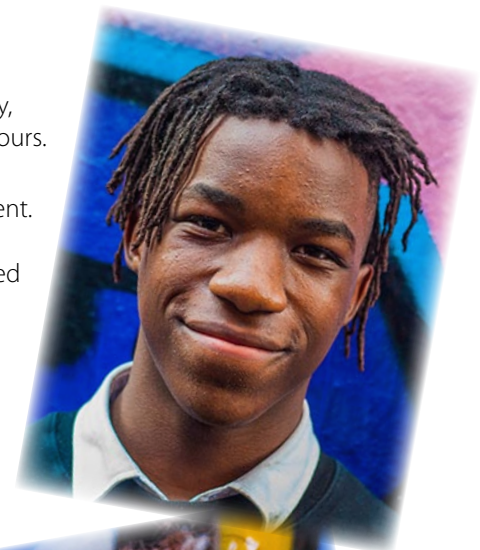
Wren

I'm **Wren**, a Year 12 student from the Yarra Ranges with the passion to shape positive change. I believe we all have the capacity to influence the world around us, and that it's when one becomes aware of this potential within themselves, that real change is able to be sparked and harnessed. It's important that our voices as students are heard and subsequently acted upon, as education is the key to growth with young people at its core.

Leadership and public speaking are two things that I have always held in high regard, along with writing and the study of philosophy. I like to challenge my own world view and those of the people around me, because I believe learning enables us to move forward. I want our education system to reflect progress, and hope that the rest of the Executive and myself will all be part of helping shape progressive change over this twelve months.

Zaituna

Greetings!!! My name is **Zaituna.** I'm an outgoing, compassionate person from Melbourne, currently studying Year 12. My passions are human rights and advocating and amplifying student voice. I aspire to travel the world and have a career where I am helping others and making real change in the world.

As students, we are the stakeholders of our own education. So, that being said, why shouldn't we have a say in our schooling experience? Most us may feel as though we don't have the ability to speak out about issues, because we not 'highly educated' but that's the start of real change. We are the voices of the future so we might as well take a step forward now. As one of my favourite quotes from Albert Einstein suggests, we should: *"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning."* So don't shy away from your potential, because we are all capable of making real change.

VicSRC Staff: *New staff join the team*

rear: Nina Laitala *(Executive Officer)*; Kirsty Fromholtz *(Digital Projects/Student Voice Hub)*; Evrim Şen *(Sponsorships and Partnerships)*;
Nell MacColl *(Communications)*; Alyssa Shannon *(Administration)*; *David Trevorrow (Operations)*; Ian Johnson *(Finance)*
front: Benita Bruce *(Student Engagement)*; Hayley Allen *(Program & Events)*; Tom Nice *(Programs & Events)*

Evrim Şen

Evrim Şen has joined the VicSRC team as the **Sponsorships and Partnerships Officer** in 2019.

As a previous Congress volunteer, Evrim's involvement with the organisation has grown to assist in the search for funding and building partnerships with schools across Victoria!

Evrim is super talented with communication, a proud nerd and also a creator of a monthly podcast! This busy bee continues to amaze us every day. Welcome to the team Evrim!

Alyssa Shannon

Alyssa Shannon first became involved with the VicSRC when she attended as a delegate at the 2015 VicSRC Congress. She was then voted to be the Executive's Secretary for the 2017-2018 year.

Alyssa is currently the VicSRC's **Administrative Assistant** and is completing a Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Teaching at Deakin University.

She has a family of goldfish called Penny, Pablo and Pedro and her choice of coffee is a skinny chai latte.

Tom Nice

Tom Nice joined the VicSRC in 2019 after defecting from being a classroom teacher, where he supported student voice at his school. Working at the VicSRC was the next logical step.

Tom has the most fun job at the VicSRC, running all of our *Student Voice* and *Teach the Teacher* workshops across Victoria.

Out of the office he tries to surf as much as possible and is the lead singer in a band. Tom has dislocated his shoulders eight times but still thinks that playing ice hockey is a good idea.

CONGRESS 2019

WE DON'T MAKE CHANGE ALONE

When and where:

Congress 2019 will take place on the 9th, 10th and 11th of July 2019 at Ormond College, 49 College Crescent, University of Melbourne, Parkville

Tickets:

There are a few kinds of tickets you can get!

Delegate tickets:

Delegate tickets are available to *VicSRC Student Members* and students who attend a *VicSRC Partner School*. The cost is **$210** per delegate.

Delegate ticket price includes accommodation, meals, delegate pack and t-shirt. There is also additional fun Congress swag available for sale before, during and after the event.

Sale of Delegate tickets close on 25th of June.

Each school in Victoria can have a maximum of **three** students attending Congress. These are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, whether the ticket is booked by a *Student Member* or a *Partner School*.

Partner School ticket registrations must include the student's name. *Partner Schools* cannot hold places indefinitely and, if a registered student withdraws, the ticket will be cancelled and the spot will go to the next student on the waitlist.

Student Member tickets cannot be paid for by the school.

Any tickets paid for by the school must be booked as *Partner School* tickets.

Open Morning tickets:

The price for **Open Morning** tickets (venue to be advised) is **$30** per person. But *VicSRC Student Members* and one teacher per *Partner School* are able to attend for **free**.

Open Morning tickets include morning tea and entry to all **Open Morning** sessions. (For more info on the **Open Morning**, check: https://bit.ly/2IgRWqO)

Contact the VicSRC to make payment via Invoice, Cheque, Credit Card or Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Details at: https://bit.ly/2ZdkKYd

Are you a VicSRC Partner School?

Partnership discounts

Did you know that you can receive discounted event prices if you have a VicSRC Partnership?

If you are not yet a **Partner School** and would like to take advantage of discounted ticket prices to VicSRC events, simply select *'VicSRC Partnership (Annual School Partnership)'* at the start of your online registration. Or check about Partnership on-line at:

https://bit.ly/2KpgGjr

Vic SRC
VictorianStudent RepresentativeCouncil

To sign up to the VicSRC online e-newsletter ... visit:
http://www.vicsrc.org.au/

VicSRC VictorianStudent RepresentativeCouncil

International Conference on Student Voice, Agency and Partnerships

An **International Conference on Student Voice, Agency and Partnerships** is planned for Melbourne for **9-11 December** this year (2019). This relatively small and focused Conference, sponsored by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, will bring together stakeholders who are active locally, regionally, nationally and internationally in the areas of student voice, agency, participation, partnerships and leadership.

The University of Melbourne Victoria, Australia *9-11 December 2019*

Conference Program and Expressions of Interest:

A detailed program for the Conference is being developed, including different forms of presentation and participation.

The Conference will enable participants to discuss current directions and issues in student voice, agency, participation, partnerships and leadership, particularly around areas of:

• The purposes and practices of education and learning, including curriculum and pedagogy;
• Student agency in learning, including flexible learning;
• School and education governance.

This **International Conference** is intended for those already actively involved in these areas. It will invite and be of central interest to:

• **researchers/academics:** in the areas of student voice, agency, participation, leadership and student-adult partnerships;
• **primary and secondary school students, and student representative bodies:** who are taking leadership roles at local, regional, national or international levels to further the role of students in learning and school decision-making;

• **teachers/practitioners:** actively working to elevate student voice, agency, leadership, participation and partnerships in learning and school improvement initiatives;
• **school and educational leaders and policy makers and government:** committed to integrating student voice, agency, participation and partnerships into school decision-making and teacher education;
• **NGOs/support organisations and advocates:** with a mission to amplify student voice, agency, participation and student-adult partnerships in education redesign.

Advance Notice: Save the dates

Are you interested to *attend* the **International Conference on Student Voice, Agency and Partnerships** in Melbourne in December?
Are you interested to *present* at this Conference?

Expressions of interest will open soon. Initially make contact by e-mailing *Connect* at: r.holdsworth@unimelb.edu.au We will then send you further information, including guidelines, and a response form to complete.

Organisers:

The Melbourne Conference is sponsored by the **Youth Research Centre, Melbourne Graduate School of Education**, and organised by a **Steering Committee** of individuals interested and involved in areas of student voice, agency, participation and leadership. There are representatives on this from: **University of Melbourne** staff and higher degree students, **Victoria University** staff, **Deakin University** staff and higher degree students, **Monash University** staff, the **Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC)** staff and students, the **Foundation for Young Australians**, school teachers (University HS, Mt Waverley SC), and the *Connect* journal – *supporting student participation* (convenor).

Background:

There have been international conferences/seminars in these areas in recent years in **Cambridge (UK)** (2011-2015), **Vermont (USA)** (2016-2018) and **Pittsburgh (USA)** (May 2019). These have been organised by individuals and organisations with active involvement in the area. Information is available in a blog by **Bethan Morgan** from Cambridge: https://bit.ly/2jXWw38 and by **UP for Learning**, Vermont: https://bit.ly/2MfmTAP

The 'defining feature' of these events has been the deliberate involvement of people from different areas: research, policy, practitioners, students, support organisations etc. This was encapsulated in conference titles such as: *'Bridging the Divide'* and *'Strengthening Links Across the Lines' (UK)* and *'Amplifying Student Voice & Partnership' (USA).*

The events have focused mainly on voice, agency and partnerships at primary and secondary school levels, though some participants have also been interested in work in Early Childhood and Further/Tertiary Education.

Student Voice: Deepening Relationship between Youth Research and Practice

As this issue of *Connect* was being put together, a further International Conference in this series has just been held at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education (May 28-30, 2019), under the title: **Student Voice: Deepening Relationship between Youth Research and Practice.** We hope that the next issue of *Connect* will include a summary of discussions and outcomes; the photos on this page show Conference sessions and are from **Dana Mitra** and **Kay Augustine**. Information about this Conference, including the program schedule and a link to a google drive of useful research documents, is at: **https://bit.ly/2EMiUpm**

Victorian Students' Parliamentary Program

The **Victorian Students' Parliamentary Program** is an exciting opportunity for primary and secondary students to engage with parliamentary process and debate.

- By **participating** in the parliamentary conventions, students gain a greater understanding of parliamentary process through direct participation.
- By **speaking** in Parliament House at the State Conventions, students can develop greater confidence and public speaking abilities.
- By **engaging in discussion** with students from around the state, delegates develop a greater understanding of the issues debated as well as an appreciation for hearing different views.

Some may say Parliament is an odd venue for welcoming a diversity of opinion, but it is exactly the place for that to be happening. The formality of the event, held in the **Legislative Assembly of Parliament House**, makes for an amazing event.

Local Schools' Parliamentary Conventions

Ten additional **local schools' parliamentary conventions** will be held across Victoria for secondary students, each hosted by a local school. This year those schools are:

Mater Christi College, Belgrave	*17/06/2019*
Forest Hill College, Burwood East	*21/06/2019*
Lalor SC, Lalor	*21/06/2019*
Wangaratta HS, Wangaratta	*17/07/2019*
Scotch College, Hawthorn	*23/07/2019*
Notre Dame College, Shepparton	*26/07/2019*
Monivae College, Hamilton	*12/08/2019*
Braemar College, Warrnambool	*15/08/2019*
Mornington SC, Mornington	*23/08/2019*
Irymple SC, Irymple	*26/08/2019*

You don't need to attend the convention closest to you if the dates don't suit.

Contact **David Mould** at *Second Strike* for more information or to get involved:

david.mould@second-strike.com
03 9071 1813

Teachers

Teachers are not forgotten. We have a few professional development activities for you too as well as a host of interesting resources.

The Parliamentary Conventions are open to all schools across Victoria, Government, Independent and Catholic – and participation is ***free***.

Places are very limited, so we are working on an extension program where students can run a parliamentary convention of their own back at school.

*This long running program is supported by the **Victorian Department of Education and Training**.*

*The **Victorian Students' Parliamentary Program** is also supported by **Catholic Education Melbourne, Independent Schools Victoria**, the **Parliament of Victoria** and the **Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority**.*

Primary Schools' Parliamentary Convention

Tuesday 6th August!

Parliament House, Spring Street, Melbourne

Topic:

"Should athletes and celebrities use their popularity to influence political and social issues?"

Head to **www.second-strike.com** to register your interest to attend.

Secondary Schools' Parliamentary Convention

Tuesday 3rd September!

Parliament House, Spring Street, Melbourne

Topic:

"Should we abolish the Legislative Council (Upper House) of Victoria?"

Head to **www.second-strike.com** to register your interest to attend.

SAVE THE DATES!

2019 CONFERENCE CPR

Connect Protect Respect

WE ARE COMING TO YOUR STATE

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Melbourne 8 August

Perth 16 August

Sydney 30 August

Canberra 6 September

Brisbane 20 September

A DAY OF INSIGHTS

▶ **Keynote Presentations**

▶ **Student Workshop Stream**

▶ **School Staff/ Broader Community Workshop Stream**

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

Connect. Understanding lived experiences of student voice (in)action.

DR JENNA GILLETT-SWAN

Protect. Being safe, healthy and ready to learn!

DR. ANDREW WICKING

Respect. School transformation through student voice, agency and participation –International best practice.

ROGER HOLDSWORTH

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SPECIAL PRICE FOR STUDENTS

$50 Student Price

$315 Single Registration

$570 School Team of 2

$1050 School Team of 4 – 5

CONTACT

Get in touch with Linsey if you want to find out more about the upcoming conferences via email Linsey@wisawellbeing.com.au

WISAWELLBEING.COM.AU

WISA

Students as Partners

Students as Partners is a network of initiatives within Universities and further education, coordinated by **Kelly Matthews** at the University of Queensland.

Their latest on-line newsletter is at: https://bit.ly/2X9Mk7V and has articles about:

- *"Feeling precarious and moving beyond buzzwords: Strategies for getting started with partnership in partnership";*
- the **Annual Students as Partners Roundtable** (2 August in Sydney);
- the **International Students as Partners Institute** workshops (July in Adelaide);
- *"Talking about student partnerships in governance and decision-making";*

- *"Engaging Students in International Education";*
- *"Becoming: Realizing selves through participating in pedagogical partnership";*
- a video on *"Talking about power in partnership";* and
- a plug for *Connect*.

Six startling facts about students on School Boards

The US-based **SoundOut** organisation is concerned about the absence of students on school boards in school districts and state boards of education across the United States, as well as in Canada, Australia, and around the world. Engaging students as decision-makers is a key to ensuring **Meaningful Student Involvement** for every student in every school all of the time.

It has produced a set of information resources, mainly directed to US practices, to argue that students are already on some State and District Boards of Education - some with voting rights though others with speaking rights only – and that there are clear roles for students on School Boards.

The website contains a list of facts related to students on school boards and links to further documents. Each is linked to its source, too, in order to ensure accountability. These are the facts, and just the facts; check the rest of our Students on School Boards Toolbox for research, tips, examples and more.

Details are at:

https://bit.ly/2ELh5sU

Michigan students are joining School Boards

In the USA, the **Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB)** has been building roles for students in school district policy-making statewide. *SoundOut* has been supporting them with resources and training.

Information and resources can be found at: https://bit.ly/2JHnqtl . This includes:

- **Students on Boards webpage:** press releases, newsletter articles and more;
- **Students on Boards toolkit:** Co-written by *SoundOut* for boards who want policies, tips and tools for launching forward: https://bit.ly/2HGFKR7
- **Students on Boards podcast:** *SoundOut*'s **Adam Fletcher** talks with MASB executive director **Don Wotruba** about the successes, challenges and nuances of engaging students on boards: https://bit.ly/2YTauEk
- **Students on Boards training:** guiding boards into student voice and detailing how, when and why students on boards matter.

There is background information at: **https://bit.ly/2YVrf1D**

Donate to support *Connect*

Connect now has no income except donations and sales of literature (see page 42). By supporting *Connect* with donations, you keep us going. Even though we are now solely on-line, there are still costs associated with publication. 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.

Connect on facebook

*C*onnect has a presence on *facebook*. Find us at:

http://ow.ly/L6UvW

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

Student Voice Research and Practice facebook group
www.facebook.com/groups/studentvoicepage/

This open **facebook** *group was initially established by Professor 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.*
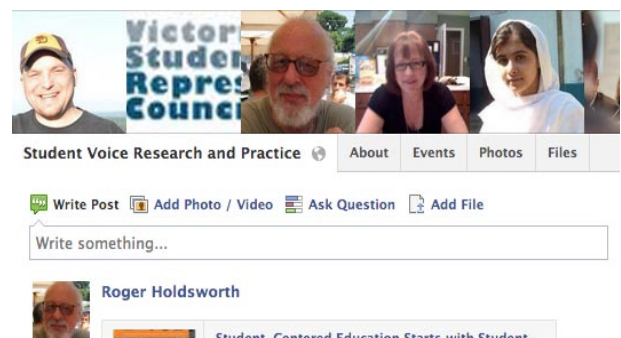
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To: *Connect*, 12 Brooke Street, Northcote VIC 3070 Australia
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Simply provide your e-mail address (below or by e-mail) and name and phone number (in case of bounces).
There is no cost; however donations to support *Connect*'s work are appreciated and acknowledged.

❐   **I enclose a donation to support the work of *Connect*.**

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... copies	*Switched On to Learning* (maximum of 10 copies per order)	$ 6	$ 5*	$ ....
... copies	*Democracy Starts Here*	$ 6	$ 5*	$ ....

Publications available from *Connect*:

		normal price	*Connect* subscriber price	
... copies	***Foxfire** 25 Years*	$20	$10*	$ ....
... copies	*Sometimes a Shining Moment* (1 available) §	$20	$10*	$ ....
... copies	*A **Foxfire** Christmas* (1 available) §	$20	$10*	$ ....
... copies	***Foxfire** 9* (1 available) §	$10	$ 5*	$ ....
... copies	*Students and Work* (maximum of 10 copies per order)	$ 6	$ 5*	$ ....
... copies	*SRC Pamphlets Set* (2 sets available) §	$ 6	$ 5*	$ ....

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

B: Total for publications: $...........

NOTE: all amounts include postage/packaging within Australia (GST not applicable - input taxed)

(**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*.

ASPRINworld:
the Connect website!

www.asprinworld.com/connect

Connect has a website at *ASPRINworld*. The *Connect* section of the website is slowly growing, with information about subscribing, index of recent back issue contents (hyperlinked to PDFs) and summaries of and order information for *Student Councils and Beyond*, *Student Action Teams*, *Reaching High* and *Switched On to Learning*.

Connect is also archived and available electronically:

research.acer.edu.au/connect

All issues of *Connect* are archived through the ACER Research Repository: **ACEReSearch**. *Connect* issues from #1 to the current issue 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

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.

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

www.asprinworld.com/connect
&
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 and we'll work something out.

Australian:

Ethos (Social Education Victoria, Brunswick, Vic) Vol 27 Nos 1 & 2: Terms 1 & 2, 2019

Research Developments (ACER, Camberwell, Vic) April 2019

SEV Newsletter (Social Education Victoria, Brunswick, Vic) Vol 16 No 2; Term 2 2019

Talking about student partnerships in governance and decision-making (Kate Walsh, Student Voice Australia Pilot, NSW) *Students as Partners*; 2019

Why not ask them? Mapping and promoting youth participation (Brian W Head; University of Queensland, Qld) *Children and Youth Services Review* 33 (2011): 541-547

International:

In search of voice: theory and methods in K-12 student voice research in the US, 1990-2010 (Taucia E Gonzalez, David I Hernandez-Saca & Alfredo J Artiles; University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Northern Iowa & Arizona State University, USA) *Educational Review* Vol 69 No 4: 451-473; 2016

Student-Driven Research: When students gather and analyze data about their school, everyone learns something (Makeba Jones & Susan Yonezawa, University of California, San Diego, USA) *Educational Leadership* December 2008/January 2009

Student participation in the design of learning and teaching: Disentangling the terminology and approaches (SE Martens, S N E Meeuwissen, D H J M Dolmans, C Bovill & D D Könings; Maastricht University, The Netherlands & The University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK) *Medical Teacher,* May, 2019

Student Voice in Secondary Schools: The Possibility for Deeper Change (Dana Mitra, Penn State University, USA)

Three dimensions of student-centred education: a framework for policy and practice (Louise Starkey, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand) *Critical Studies in Education* Vol 60 No 3: 375-390; 2019

UP for Learning (Montpelier, Vermont, USA) April, May 2019

Using Linkage Theory to Address the Student Voice Organisational Improvement Paradox (Marc Brasof, Arcadia University, USA) *JEEL* Special Issue 1; March 2018

Connect On-Line!

All issues of *Connect* from 1979 to the present (that's now over **39 years**!) are freely available on-line! Thanks to the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), all the issues of *Connect* have been scanned or up-loaded into the ACER's Research Repository: *ACEReSearch.*

You can find these issues of *Connect* at:

http://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!
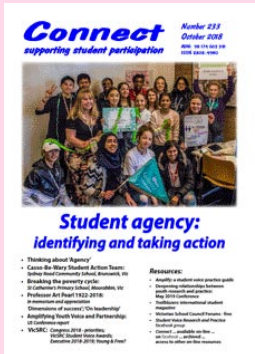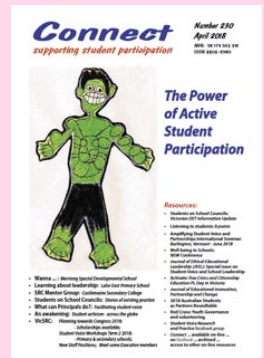
Let us know

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Most importantly, please USE this resource.

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

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