COBDEN TECH: High Fliers *(remarkable!)*

PLUS: Shepparton - SRC, Forum, Publishing

TEACHER NETWORK MEETING: OCTOBER 2nd - See Page 11
This Issue

Two longish and interesting articles have forced us to hold over material on the Council of Peer Educators (COPE) and on the involvement of students in local government until the next issue. But there’s news here (page 22) of peer education developments in the youth affairs sector, and an example in Shepparton (page 19) of one style of involvement of students with local government.

Our major articles this issue revisit Cobden Technical School and student governance in Shepparton. Long time readers of Connect will remember earlier articles about curriculum approaches at Cobden - the Studebaker project, a visit to Bathurst Island etc. (Recent subscribers may care to hunt out back issues for these inspiring accounts!) Almost ‘out of the blue’ we received an up-date from Merv Edmunds, about their 1992 project - a project that combines student development of useful curriculum materials, student enterprise and the exploration of senior curriculum flexibility. As Merv has said for years: remarkable outcomes ... but only if we expect and support remarkable approaches!

The other major article grows from a recent training day for students from schools in and around Shepparton. This account serves to summarise the outcomes of that day for the schools, and to do so in a public way that might be useful to many other schools in similar positions. These schools share their achievements here ... and their problems. They also grapple with solutions to these problems and would be interested to hear from other schools who have tried similar things.

Teacher Network Meeting

We also draw attention to the Victorian Teacher Network meeting on October 2nd - the last day of the Victorian school holidays. A special invitation is extended to those who attended last year. Come and share what’s happened in the last twelve months! But a general invitation is also extended to all who are interested to work with others to develop exciting, rigorous, democratic, participatory, community-linked, hands-on classroom approaches. Come along!

Next Issue

The promised article on young people and local government will form a ‘lift-out’ to this issue. Plus more from you - by the end of September please!

Roger Holdsworth

COVER

Cobden Technical School students are high fliers with their plastics package - modelling a modern ultra-light aircraft. See pages 3 to 7.
It is ten years since Connect first published an account of the student cooperative at Cobden Technical School in Victoria. Over the years we have followed its development (see issues 17, 20, 25, 30 and 43). Youth participation programs of this nature are often not noted for their long life, so it was a pleasant surprise to discover that the program at Cobden continues. Connect spoke with Merv Edmunds, the originator of the program, and asked him for an ‘anniversary article’. This is his response.

Cobden Technical School

KIDS STILL DOING REMARKABLE THINGS!
(and still given remarkable things to do)

For those of us who remember the heady days of Transition Education (TEAC), there is much about the present setting that is like the past revisited.

A period of reactive instead of visionary change, alienated young people and the resultant and misguided expectation that schools can fix the problem if they finally get their act together. Any imposed educational-based response to youth unemployment carries the implication that schools are not adequately responding to the needs of young people. Schools, generally speaking, can respond readily to the needs of their students, but what they cannot respond to are the confusing, competing and often mutually exclusive agendas set by tertiary, vocational and industrial interests.

Thinking about the big picture can all but overwhelm you; better to have a focus on a small part that provides a sense of achievement and satisfaction - a part that the audience closest to you seems to still appreciate.

The student cooperative has been appreciated. It started out as a program which could prepare young people for self-employment, an outcome which was never taken up. This year could well be different, because the product they are producing is proving to be very much in demand, a demand that may entice these young people to keep the enterprise going under some suitable arrangement with the school. We intend to support their activity somehow, and it could be that we are able to provide an appropriate response to youth unemployment, ten years after our first attempts. It may prove that we were before our time, or that the wheel has done a full turn and we were ready to catch it this time around. Who knows? - not that it matters.

I think youth participation programs prove one thing that is not properly or widely appreciated, and that is that young people want to work, and that they have the capacity for lots of it if they find it intrinsically satisfying. Work tends to be satisfying if it provides real and immediate rewards, and if our role in it is clearly defined and absolutely necessary. Art Pearl used to say that if the program can continue without the involvement of all kids, then it’s not youth participation at all. So I guess we have been able to preserve these essentials over the years. If the notion of working together didn’t fit with the group, then we had what I call a dud year. We didn’t have a ‘sort of participation program, because the essentials either applied, or they did not.

We have not been able to run a program every year. I had a couple of ‘dud’ years, and decided to direct my energy into building a boat, got six months’ leave and took my family sailing the Queensland coast. Then we had some uncertainty about fitting the essentials of our past programs into the VCE, but this all changed when we were invited to test the flexibility of the VCE. Imagine that! Actually being invited to run a youth participation program by the accrediting authority! How could I refuse? Especially after all these years of running them as a sort of educational appendage, kids doings amazing things and getting a certificate which nobody took seriously. I hated being ‘king of the vegies’, and used to say that running a successful T-12 program was like rearing an illegitimate child in a Quaker’s home - the more adorable the child was, the harder it was for others to accept it.

So the VCE has changed all that. This year’s group is doing a full VCE - CATs and all. Some of them do one day a week work experience. And they have developed a curriculum package as part of their course work that may prove, on early indications, to well exceed their wildest expectations. Two unit 3 and
4 sequences (English and Technology Studies) are taken by the one group of students and taught by the one teacher, and most work requirements relate to their project. I am not sure what VCAB had in mind regarding flexibility, but it says something about the limited perspective of those learned critics who bemoan the VCE as 'too rigid and tightly structured'.

I don't know what an 'anniversary article' should look like, but this is beginning to look like a real trumpet-blowing fanfare. Didn't I say something about the audience closest to you ...

Merv Edmunds
Cobden Technical School
Students develop innovative plastics package

A group of Cobden Technical School Victorian Certificate of Education students have developed a plastics curriculum package suitable for secondary schools with limited experience and facilities for the teaching of modern plastics.

The package has been designed by the students for students. It represents a special opportunity for schools to extend their curriculum offerings and for staff to gain new teaching skills.

The package gives the students a chance to experience a range of modern plastics and the opportunity to make a scale model ultra-light aeroplane.

Teachers are given the opportunity to complete a course in modern plastics in the form of a professionally produced instructional video and set of comprehensive teaching notes.

The topics include introduction to the world of modern plastics, fibre reinforced plastic (including exotic fibres), foam sandwich composite construction, plastic casting and flexible moulds, vacuum forming, forming expanded poly styrene, forming acrylic with heat and pressure, injection moulding, synthetic rubber and heat shrink plastic film.

From the package the school gets a complete class model, a set of moulds, tempsets, assembly jigs, material for twenty aeroplanes and basic equipment including vacuum former, filament wider, injection moulder, expanded poly styrene facility, dispensers, brushes and rollers.

Students at Cobden Technical School have run a manufacturing and marketing enterprise since 1981 and it has become an integral component of the VCE Technology Studies course for 1992.

According to staff member Marev Edmunds the enterprise provides a reason for the group to work together, to make decisions, to resolve conflicts and co-operate as a team. It also involves young people in adult world situations and provides the means to earn money.

"Although the venture is clearly profit orientated, all monies are used to finance group travel such as a visit to three host schools in West Coast and Central USA in 1983, Australia's first off-shore sailing excursion (secondary students) to King Island in 1985, a work party to Bathurst Island, Northern Territory in 1986, and a yacht charter among the Whitsunday Islands in 1989. This year, a group of Year 12 students has chosen to visit the USA again," Mr Edmunds said.

"The students enterprise has been successfully incorporated into four VCE units and in addition to a complete certificate, the students can look forward to an exciting reward for outstanding performance.

"The school has good reason to believe the motto: Kids Can Do Remarkable Things, If They Have Remarkable Things To Do.

"Cobden Technical School has a history of innovation. In addition to its experience with students enterprises, it has developed several programs using a range of plastic materials and processes. The school has a fully equipped plastics workshop and the VCE Technology Studies students have used this facility and range of plastics for their manufacturing operations.

"They have developed a curriculum package in response to the widespread demand for student activities related to plastics. This school has demonstrated the enormous potential and particular relevance of plastics as a learning medium and in a unique co-operative arrangement, the students are marketing their expertise and the opportunity for other schools to include modern plastics in their technology studies."

Mr Edmunds said the package was designed on the assumption that the purchaser had had little or no prior experience with these materials and that the facilities will be limited to standard practical or art/craft classrooms.

"The purchasing school may choose to consider assisted ventilation, but exhausting systems are not necessary. A stove with an oven, an electric iron and a vacuum cleaner are the only other necessary items. It is envisaged that some packages will be available for use during semester two this year and the remaining production run available in November," he said.

"A number of schools have already expressed interest in purchasing the package and while the indications are for VCE curriculum material, this plastics package is seen as having considerably better application at Years 9 and 10.

"If taken then, the students will be able to enter their VCE Technology Studies options with a sound working knowledge of plastics. Their understanding of the materials and processes will provide a basis for undertaking other Technology Design and Development or Materials and Technology units and they will have opportunity to extend their experience in modern plastics.

"The Cobden students will be considering a range of marketing approaches, but they will make these decisions after details of the packages become more widely known."

Year 12 students Matthew Garlade, Paul Dunn, Paul Ellerton and Jason Symons studying the mould plane that can be made as part of the plastics package.
TOWARDS RESPONSIBLE AND ADAPTIVE YOUTH: A COBDEN TECH VCE RESPONSE

The fundamental task of modern education, particularly during the students' post-compulsory years, is the development of responsible and adaptive young people: responsible in the sense that young people understand the consequences of and accept ownership for their actions; adaptive in the sense that one of the certainties of this age is continuing and rapid change, and young people need to be equipped to consider options and practise responses that secure for them a useful and satisfying place in society.

What strategies then are likely to provide for the development of responsible and adaptive young people?

Firstly, young people need to participate fully in the learning process. They need to have some say in the nature of the tasks to be undertaken, and also participate in an appropriate process of assessment of their own and each others' performance. In other words, they need to practise taking responsibility for their learning and gaining ownership of their actions in a social context.

Secondly, young people work much better with each other than against each other. They view school as primarily a social experience, not an intellectual one, and consistent with recent studies of the workplace, who they work with is more important to them than what they work on. While many adults disagree with the young person's perspective of school, they would do well to recognise it and, if for no other reason, accept it in the knowledge that young people also work better with teachers than against them. Competition is fine in sport, but schools should be about making every kid a winner.

Thirdly, young people need real-world experience during their school years if they are to succeed in it. They need practice at making decisions, at evaluating the results, and at exploring alternative responses. If poor real-world decisions can result in loss of freedom, of income or of opportunities, then these situations should exist in school. And, by the same token, sound decisions and good performance should result in economic as well as intellectual profit.

Simulation games are for children; 17 year olds need the stimulation of reality.

Students at Cobden Technical School have run a manufacturing and marketing enterprise since 1981, and it becomes an integral component of the VCE Technology Studies course for 1992. The enterprise provides a reason for the group to work together, to make decisions, to resolve conflicts and cooperate as a team. It also involves young people in adult-world situations and provides the means to earn money.

Although the venture is clearly profit-oriented, all monies are used to finance group travel such as a visit to three host schools in West Coast and Central USA in 1983, Australia's first off-shore sailing excursion (secondary students) to King Island in 1985, a work party to Bathurst Island in the Northern Territory in 1986, and a yacht charter among the Whitsunday Islands in 1989. This year, a group of year 12 students have chosen to visit the USA again.

The student enterprise has been successfully incorporated into four VCE units and, in addition to a completed certificate, the students can look forward to an exciting reward for their outstanding performance. The school has good reason to believe the motto:

KIDS CAN DO REMARKABLE THINGS, IF THEY HAVE REMARKABLE THINGS TO DO.

Cobden Technical School has a history of innovation. In addition to its experience with student enterprises, it has developed several programs using a range of plastic materials and processes. The school has a fully equipped plastics workshop, and the VCE Technology Studies students will use this facility and range of plastics for their manufacturing operations. They are developing a curriculum package in response to the widespread demand for student activities related to plastics. This school has demonstrated the enormous potential and particular relevance of plastics as a learning medium and, in a unique cooperative arrangement, the students are marketing their expertise and the opportunity for
other schools to include modern plastics in their technology studies.

**Modern Plastics: The Package Described**

Many schools have used acrylic sheet as the basis for their study of plastics. The VCE course development material focuses on this plastic almost exclusively, but as a material it is somewhat limited and it represents only a very minor part of the world of modern plastics. A study of plastics should include raw materials where possible, and provide opportunity for students to work with a wide range of plastic materials and manufacturing processes. It should enable students to experience something of the scope and diversity of modern plastics. The Cobden package provides for this experience.

There is a tendency for technology study courses to focus on process often at the expense of product. In some instances this is appropriate - the learning process can often be an end in itself. With the development of the Cobden package, however, the several manufacturing processes are all directed toward a single product which the student takes home. The product, a scale model of a modern ultra-light aircraft, represents a clever blend of valuable learning process and interesting student-centred product.

The model incorporates the major manufacturing processes including laminating in rigid moulds, vacuum forming, injection moulding, casting in flexible moulds, filament winding and heat/pressure forming. A variety of materials, representing the major groups of plastics, is used in the model, and they include: epoxy and polyester resin, reinforcing such as Kevlar, carbon fibre and glass in various configurations, heat-shrink plastic, acetate and acrylic sheet, synthetic rubber, rigid polyurethane, polystyrene (moulded), polypropylene, and additives such as fillers, pigments and catalysts. Many of these materials are used in composite, and the completed model is constructed entirely from these plastics and related synthetic materials.

The materials of course are only part of the complete curriculum package. In addition to comprehensive teacher notes related to safety considerations, history and development of plastics, basic chemistry, classification and product guides, the package includes a video to complement the individual processing and construction tasks. All moulds and patterns are included, as well as the basic vacuum former, injection moulder, filament winding machine and heat press to enable the students to make the components. The package also includes a class model, complete material sets in multiples of twenty, and all necessary tools, quantity lists, templates and assembly jigs. The provision for the package to be demonstrated by the students is being considered and may be included in the purchase price for schools.

The package is designed on the assumption that the purchaser has little or no prior experience with these materials, and that the facilities will be limited to standard practical or art/craft classrooms. The purchasing school may choose to consider assisted ventilation, but exhausting systems are not necessary. A stove with an oven, an electric iron and a vacuum cleaner are the only other necessary items. It is envisaged that a production run will be available in November.

A number of schools have already expressed interest in purchasing the package, and while the indications are for VCE curriculum material, this plastics package is seen as having considerably better application at years 9 and 10. If taken then, the students will be able to enter their VCE Technology Studies options with a sound working knowledge of plastics. Their understanding of the materials and processes will provide a basis for undertaking either Technological Design and Development or Materials and Technology units, and they will have opportunity to extend their experience in modern plastics.

The Cobden students will be considering a range of marketing approaches, but they will make these decisions after details of the packages become more widely known. Such innovative youth activities tend not to go unnoticed by the press, so this media attention will serve to promote their product.

The activity will probably receive attention for another reason. The VCE has not escaped considerable negative publicity, and young people are seen as the ultimate losers.

This project presents the VCE as a working example of responsible and adaptive senior schooling, and it presents young people as winners.

*For more details of the plastics package, and of the classroom processes that led to it, contact: Mervyn Edmunds, Plastics Department, Cobden Technical School, PO Box 106, Cobden 3266. Phone: (055) 951 202.*
STUDENT PUBLISHING AT WANGANUI PARK

It took guts, determination and courage - not to mention a DSP (Disadvantaged Schools Program) grant - but we made it. Wanganui Park Secondary College finally managed to launch a Student Publications class in order to produce a magazine about the community, for the community.

The idea had been put into practice before by others (e.g. the *Foxfire* magazine in the USA) but never yet have we at Wanganui had the opportunity and funding to do so.

The major aim of the project was to provide students with the authority to control their learning, whilst giving them the opportunity to become independent of their teachers.

We, as members of the class, discovered that motivation is the key to success. In order to gain experience from the class, students must want to learn. Without such determination, the class will not get off the ground - as was the case with ours for the first few weeks. A certain degree of cooperation is also required, which encourages a team atmosphere, for if one person is slack, everyone suffers the consequences, as it will reflect upon the end result.

To us, the most positive aspect of the class was that it helped develop our communication skills by giving us the confidence to confront members of the community. This may not have been the case for other groups, but by the end of the class we found no difficulty in making conversation with people on the spur of the moment.

One stumbling block we came across at the beginning of the class, however, was the problem of deciding which age group the magazine was to be directed at. This resulted in much conflict until finally we decided on an open audience, which we found to be good as it involved no limitations on the maturity and broad topic range of our writing, knowing that each person was at their own level.

However, at times we seemed to struggle in finding specific topics for stories, and many of us began to feel disillusioned as to which direction the project was heading.

We all showed lack of responsibility during the first term, and it was at this point that we decided, as a group, that we needed a driving force to help us work toward our goal. This came in the form of a series of deadlines which were enforced upon all groups.

Nevertheless, we survived and the magazine is now well on its way toward an end result, with less than 6 months' work ahead of us before publication. So far it has been an enjoyable experience for us all throughout the semester and one which will not be forgotten in a hurry.

On behalf of the class, we would like to thank Mr Michael Short (the class teacher) for his determination and high-spirited outlook on the project. It would not have been made possible without his guidance. Thank you Mr Short.

Overall, we believe that, with the right people and the right attitude, any school can undertake a project such as this, no matter how big or small the group may be. Rather than closeting our work, the class allows our writing abilities to be displayed throughout the community at large, an attribute which surely must be taking us a step in the right direction.

Kim Warrick and Meagan Stagg
Student Publications Class
Wanganui Park Secondary College
A VIEW FROM THE INSIDE

The idea for the prospective magazine walked into me one day.

While passing through the office, en route to the staffroom for the morning sabbatical cuppa, the Vice Principal grabbed me. Kath Gale from the Shepparton District School Support Centre was at Wanganui Park seeking recruits. Would I like an all expenses paid trip (a free car ride) to Wangaratta in my own time to muse on the orations of Eliot Wigginton?

Eliot who? ‘Wig’ was on loan to the Ministry of Education from Rabun Gap Consolidated High School, situated deep in the Appalachian Mountains in Georgia, USA. His claim to fame is that his English classes have been running a continuous local community magazine for 25 years. **Foxfire** will have a familiar ring to the regular readers of **Connect**.

This sounded like something! Students creating work that had an audience outside the school (or even beyond the teacher)! Students not ‘playing’ but doing. It worked in America, so why not here?

A DSP application was posted and we were able to convince the appropriate authorities that we - Rob Robson, the Communication Faculty Coordinator, and myself - were completely sane.

The outcome of that trip has been the magazine class. We started at the beginning of 1992 with the barest proposal: we should put together a book of student writing from the class.
for publication. We could write about anything - and we did! Stories about local industries, community groups, local tourism (does it exist?) etc. Titles of stories include: Tarcoola (the local retirement village), Goulburn Valley Environment Group, Bonlac, and a schools-based writing competition. Diverse! Some personal work emerged: “My Grandfather’s Role in World War 2”, “Beach Bums” (what really happens in summer?) to name a couple.

We got the grant from the Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) to put the book together. A semester on has not blunted my enthusiasm. The book is lurching towards publication. It doesn’t have a title yet, but we are debating possibilities.

The scheme does not suit all. Some will bludge and some will revel. Most are somewhere in the middle. The major things that I have learnt (so far) are that you have to be honest - I mean, really honest, no bullshit - and imaginative. This subject is really an advanced problem solving course. The process really is a big leap into a large, dark pool. At the moment we are dog-paddling. I can’t wait until the free-style.

Michael Short, Wanganui Park Secondary College
Parkside Drive, Shepparton
Phone: (058) 213 988

NEWS FROM FOXFIRE:
Introduction to Foxfire 95

This magazine is the last of an era in some ways.

No, it is not the end of publication for us. We still think that this magazine is important. The students seem to attach a lot of importance to it and that is the most important consideration in many ways. Of course, it is not the only one. When it comes down to the bottom line, it costs money to do a project like this and the Foxfire organisation has pumped tens of thousands of dollars per year into this publication for a number of years. Reality has come to roost and that amount of money is just not there any more. But let me tell you a story:

I graduated from high school in 1971. In my senior year, those of us who did the magazine were trying to raise enough money to keep the magazine from dying. Business folks in the community probably hated to see us coming, but they contributed because they believed in what we were doing, and so the magazine survived. We believed that it was ours. All of us, including those who contributed their money, felt that ownership.

When the first book came out and began to sell beyond our wildest dreams, there was suddenly money. Wig’s threat that I would one day come back to Foxfire to work full time came true. We had the money to do all the things we used to talk about doing as we sat up nights in Wig’s cabin putting issues together. But something happened as we got all of that money. We determined to make it easier for the students and we moved the book-keeping and the subscriptions into the hands of paid professionals so that the students could concentrate on creating articles and meeting the folks, like Aunt Arie, we had all enjoyed working with so much.

I guess that it was somewhere in there that the student interest in the magazine began to fade. It was not something that we noticed at the time, or I guess if we did we just said something like: “kids are just different now”, and went on. But here, lately, as some of us have talked and wondered about what we were going to do now that we were not quite so rich any more, we began to ask ourselves if we had taken the ownership away from the students and made them feel like they really did not have a magazine but were simply writing research papers. Students could not talk knowledgeably about anything except their little article (thus appearing uninterested) because we had kept them isolated from the reality of a magazine.

I can shorten the rest of this to a few words. When we asked them, the students said: give it all back - everything. They want to handle correspondence with interested readers. They want to see the subscriptions. They want to see the books and keep track of the expenditures. They want to make decisions about spending and raising the money. They want to take on all of that work and responsibility.

Sometimes I cannot believe that they want to do all of that but, in clearer moments, I tell myself that I just should have known.

Mike Cook

PS: As this magazine (Foxfire Issue Number 95) goes to press, Foxfire 10 (compilation book) is on its way to New York. It will be a year before it hits the market, but the work is done. More about that project in later issues.
If Connect readers would like more information about Foxfire, you can subscribe to the magazine for US$9.00 for one year, US$16.00 for two years or US$23.00 for three years. Write to:

Foxfire Fund, PO Box B, Rabun Gap, GA 30568 USA.

Connect also has several books by and about Foxfire available for sale, including the most recently available compilation, Foxfire 9. There is also a video about Foxfire available for loan - either from Connect or from the Victorian Country Education Project. See the order form on the back page of this issue for this material.

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**VICTORIAN TEACHER NETWORK MEETING**

**FRIDAY OCTOBER 2nd 1992; 10 am - 4 pm**

Youth Research Centre, Alice Hoy Building Annexe,
Institute of Education, University of Melbourne
(Enter through Gate 5, Swanston Street, Carlton)

An invitation is extended to all teachers interested to explore and learn about student participation and Foxfire-type approaches for classroom use to attend this meeting.

This network began in late 1991 as a follow-up to the visits of Eliot Wigginton, George Reynolds and students from the Foxfire project in 1990 and 1991.

At this ‘annual’ network meeting, teachers are encouraged to bring examples and stories of classroom practices to share with others. Though principally a teacher meeting, it may be appropriate to think about attendance of active students.

Learn what has happened since *Times Have Changed* (Nathalia SC), see what Bright SC has produced, how Wanganui Park is progressing, what’s happening in Casterton, at Sherbrooke Community School, in Melton and all round Victoria.

For more information, contact Lyn Loger at Nathalia Secondary College on (058) 662 331 or Roger Holdsworth at Connect on (03) 489 9052.

Supported by Connect, Country Education Project and the Youth Research Centre.
Wandiligong Primary School Students

We have been interviewing people around our district since the middle of last year. So far we have interviewed about fourteen people and we hope to interview lots more. We started interviewing older people who came to our school earlier this century, then we got more interested and started interviewing other people.

Wandiligong is a good place to interview people because the older people are still here.

About September last year (1991) we had two people, Scott Cameron and George Reynolds, from America visit us. They told us about their Foxfire interviewing which they were doing near the Appalachian Mountains and they asked about what we were doing. They explained to us that they had troubles with questions that answered "yes" or "no" so we now try to ask questions that give information. Usually we start our questions with "can you tell us about .......?"

For an interview we go in groups of two, three or four. We work out our questions before, and take a camera, a tape recorder and some chocolate biscuits for afternoon tea. We do the interviews during school time or out of school. Sometimes a parent comes with us or we do on our own.

The interview with Vic Attridge was very good. We got a lot of information and it was fun. Vic is 89. We did two interviews with him. The first was about going to our school. In the second interview he told us about working in the goldmines at Harrietville and taking cattle to the high plains. He also told us about the 1939 bushfires and salt for cattle. We transcribed his interview and made it into a nice booklet and gave it to him. He loaned it to someone else and they kept it so we gave him another one.

Over the holidays we were invited to go to the Bright Historical Society information night to talk about what we are doing. The Historical Society wants copies of our tapes.

We did most of the things ourselves. We like interviewing people and hope other schools can do it as well.

TEACHER'S NOTE: Wandiligong is a small community spread out along its valley six kilometres from Bright in North East Victoria. The school is a rural school with forty-one pupils. Children involved in the program — twenty of them — are in the grade levels 3-6.
STUDENT TRAINING DAY
IN SHEPPARTON

Students from the Student Representative Council at Shepparton High School and the Student Forum at Wanganui Park organised a training day at the start of August in Shepparton, Victoria. Student representatives from Shepparton South, Mooroopna and Cobram Secondary Colleges were also invited to attend.

In an introductory exercise, students from two of the schools met in several small groups. In each group, students talked about the formation and operation of their own student body, using different sets of stimulus questions. They then reported to the whole group - on what they'd heard of the other's structures and achievements. The notes of their reports - with gaps filled in by each group reporting on its own operations - provide a useful description of the operation of secondary student representative organisations:

1. How is the SRC/Student Forum made up?

Shepparton SRC consists of 43 members. Early in the school year, each form group elects one representative who is responsible for voicing its views at SRC meetings.

The SRC meets approximately once a month and those in attendance are expected to report back to their form groups regarding significant developments.

Student Forum at Wanganui Park is made up by having a representative from each (vertical) home group. There are 32 representatives - a couple of groups have two reps as one is on the executive and the other is a younger one "learning the job". Each home group votes for their representative, who can be of any year level. They have mainly years 8s to 11s. The School Captains are also members of Forum - that is a designated part of their job. There are slightly more females than males on Forum this year.

Forum tries to meet every two weeks, alternating meetings between lunchtime and classtime. All member of the student body can have their say through their home group representative. Each meeting agenda has a spot called 'Home Group Concerns' in which any matters raised by students can be discussed and hopefully answered by Forum. Ideas for major projects have always been decided by a survey of the whole student body through voting in the homegroups.

2. How do meetings run?

At Shepparton High there is a President, a Vice-President, Minutes and Correspondence Secretaries and a Treasurer. The President runs the meeting, but the support teacher also has a very active role.

They have considered issues of uniforms, curriculum, canteen and School Council.

About 25 people usually turn up to meetings and, while there is a very active SRC, it often takes too long to make decisions.

The usual meeting rules apply - courtesy for others and listening when they talk.

At Wanganui Park, they have a President, a Vice-President, two Secretaries and a Treasurer. The President or Chairperson runs the meeting and the Secretaries take it in turns to write the minutes. The executive always meets with the support teacher before the meeting to put the agenda together.

There is an official constitution, normal rules of courtesy apply, and formal meeting procedure is followed. Representatives are often seated according to home group numbers, rather than with friends if the previous meeting has been rowdy or delayed by chatter. The support teacher sits up with the executive at the meetings and gives explanations and advice when needed.

3. What does the support teacher do?

Shepparton's support teacher is in regular contact with the SRC executive to discuss pertinent issues and assist in preparing an agenda for the next SRC meeting. He has also assumed responsibility for determining when SRC meetings will be held.

Perhaps most significantly, the support teacher at Shepparton acts as a liaison between the SRC and the school's staff.

The support teacher at Wanganui Park attends all meetings - meeting times are decided in consultation between her and the executive so that they fit with her spare periods. She types up the minutes of the meeting and makes sure they are distributed, meets with the executive before meetings, gives help and advice and
encouragement during meetings, advertises the next meetings, and liaises with other staff on behalf of the Forum. She also organises meetings with all the sub-committees of Forum when they come into existence and assists with much of the organisation for fund-raising events and so on.

4. What are the main things you’ve worked on this year?

In the last twelve months, Forum at Wanganui Park has worked on a number of different things. Many fund-raising events have been put on, including out-of-uniform days and the “Wanganui Cup”: teachers auctioned off as horses, and a subsequent handicap race. The money raised has been spent on the purchase of a gold pay-phone for the students’ use. Forum runs the school photos and receives a commission from these, which is a nice boost to the bank account at the start of the year. They sold off some radio equipment that they owned and bought books for the library with the proceeds.

Through constant nagging, complaining and pushing, Forum has achieved a change in the girls’ uniform (shorts in summer), a Coke machine in the canteen, an improvement in the food quality and quantity being sold in the canteen and improvements in the school environment, more bins being placed around the school and the gardens/seating being redesigned. As well, Forum contributes to the general decision making within the school through representatives on all committees.

All these ideas come from the students - not just the representatives on Forum.

At the moment, Student Forum is working on a major project of expanding and improving the bike sheds. More fundraising is needed to get money for building these, which is hoped to have been done by the end of the year. They are looking for different ways of getting money together.

Shepparton High SRC has also raised heaps of money and has built a sheltered walk way. They have got new bins and an after-school study room. They were going to organise a fete, but this did not happen. Last year, changes to the school uniform and bus shelters were also achieved. At the moment, the SRC is working on getting drink taps, blinds and more bus shelters.

These ideas have come from the students and teachers.

5. What are the main problems met?

At Shepparton High, the main problem has been the time for meetings - they’re not long enough. They don’t get to finish the meeting or discussions. People come late to the meetings or want to leave and go to class instead. As a result, there have been few meetings this year.

Also, people don’t really listen. They’re too busy complaining when things are reported. Year 7 representatives don’t start until half-way through the year.

The main problem met this year at Wanganui has been a lack of enthusiasm from members to commit their time to help get things off the ground. This has meant that a lot of good ideas are put forward and discussed, but don’t get much further than this. They haven’t tried very seriously to overcome this apart from normal threats and pleading etc.

Other problems have been:

- meeting times: older students don’t like missing classes and younger students don’t come during lunchtime;
- lack of training for new representatives: younger students are not sure of what’s expected of them and don’t know meeting procedure, and so tend to mess around in meetings.

6. How are other students involved?

At Wanganui, meetings are every two weeks and run for about two periods. Every Tuesday the Forum representatives then report to their home groups. After every meeting, ideas are brought back to the Forum. Representatives get folders in which to keep their Forum notes.

Other students have been involved in the activities organised by Forum - out of uniform days and other fundraisers.

Some students couldn’t care less about what the Student Forum is doing.

At Shepparton, other students have the opportunity to get involved with SRC issues by presenting petitions/requests to their respective form group’s SRC member. They are also welcome to address an SRC meeting, providing they gain the president’s permission well prior to the event.

Fund-raising activities, such as out-of-uniform days often involve the entire school body.

7. How do you follow up decisions?

At Shepparton High, the SRC takes decisions to School Council and Curriculum Committee. This might also mean taking a survey to go to School Council. Everyone helps out on the action to be taken.

The SRC also reports to other students, to staff, the Principal and School Council about its discussions. It is important to communicate with everyone.

While it is important for students to have their say about the school, some students don’t listen to what the representatives come back with. Part of the problem is also that some things take a while to get going.
At Wanganui, after a decision is made, decisions about what action needs to be taken are done at the meeting by the executive with suggestions from other members. They try to get volunteers to do things in between meeting times - write letters, find out information. However, this is often not done. The only people who really do the work are the executive and some of the older students.

The minutes of the meetings are given to each homegroup and the representative should then give a report to that group’s students and staff. Minutes are also put into the School Council correspondence and reports.

8. How is the SRC/Forum linked to other committees?

The SRC at Shepparton High is linked to other Committees through the appointment of student representatives to these committees. Mainly it is the President, Secretary and other executive members who go on these committees.

These representatives raise student complaints and queries. They’re listened to if their reports are interesting.

Students tell these representatives their views in the form groups and, in turn, the representatives report back to the SRC.

While some students don’t turn up to meetings, those who do experience stimulating responses from committee members.

At Wanganui, every committee within the school has at least two representatives from Student Forum. They are chosen by nomination and election at a Forum meeting. They are listened to and taken notice of. The school seems to have an unwritten policy that students should always take part in decision making and so, even for the temporary committees, students are involved. Examples are: School Council, Welfare, Canteen, DSP, Home Group, Grounds and Buildings, Curriculum, Year 7 Review, Reporting and Assessment etc.

These representatives often come to Forum with questions from their Committee and get answers. If it’s a big question, they will take it back to the home groups to get an answer. They have a spot on the meeting agenda to report what has happened at each of their meetings.

9. What do other students think of the SRC/Student Forum?

The older representatives generally take the Shepparton SRC seriously, while the younger ones sometimes use it as an excuse to get out of classes.

Other students take the SRC seriously because they see that it is active within the school. Students know what is happening in the SRC through their form assemblies. While other students respect the older representatives, there are more problems with the younger representatives.

At Wanganui, the answers vary enormously between students. The older students take Forum seriously but a lot of the younger ones join up (or want to go on it) to get out of class. The older students of the school seem to have a lot of respect for the older members of Forum and realise the importance of having a body such as this.

How much students know about Forum depends on what home group they are in. If they have a good representative, they will know a lot; if not, then very little. The representatives have time in home group to report back to the rest of the group about what was going on and to get any concerns or talk about an issue that needs an answer.

10. What do you get out of being a representative?

For Shepparton SRC representatives, there exist opportunities to be actively involved in making their school ‘better’. Most also enjoy working as part of a team in projects they see as worthwhile. On an individual level, SRC membership enables students to develop leadership skills such as public speaking and organisation.

At Wanganui Park, there are also various motives for becoming an SRC/Forum representative:
- to have a say;
- to get out of class (less so since meetings have alternated between class and lunchtime);
- because other friends are on it;
- it looks good in a reference/job application.

People expect different things from being on the SRC/Forum. Some would say it has lived up to hopes, and some would say no. Some get on with no expectations but are pleasantly surprised and become motivated members.

The hardest thing about being a representative also varies according to the type of person. Some things can be:
- giving up time;
- actually getting up and having a say in front of people;
- getting ribbed by other students for being a ‘suck’ because of SRC/Forum.
Naming and Solving Problems

Later in the training day, students were asked to identify the main problems faced by the SRC/Student Forum. They came up with the following list:

1. Meeting time - when and how long
2. Too few active participants; irresponsible SRC/Forum members - we need more commitment
3. There’s not enough respect for the SRC/Forum from others - we need to increase the profile and importance of the SRC/Forum
4. Not enough general discussion
5. A lack of interest from outside the SRC/Forum
6. Finishing things off and the slow speed of achieving things
7. Understanding meeting procedures
8. Not doing enough - need action, not talk
10. All representatives need to understand things

Here are ideas students came up with around some of these problems:

1. Meeting time

When to meet is important. Lunchtime is hard as people go home for lunch; class time is particularly difficult for VCE students because of missed work.

Perhaps one way is to vary times between class time and lunch time. Representatives should be surveyed to find out the best time - so as not to miss out on work.

The formal parts of the meeting should be condensed and got over quickly. For example, representatives could tick names off a list when they arrive so that an attendance roll doesn’t have to be called.

An agenda should be circulated before the meeting, and this should contain specific points. Definite motions should be put forward to focus discussions.

Meetings should be held more frequently.

2. Meeting Procedures

Meetings take time because there is no procedure.

There should be a meeting procedure in-service day at the start of the year for representatives about the SRC/Forum and how it runs. Also, a handbook at the start of the year about meeting procedures for all representatives would be a good idea.

In meetings, specific topics should be listed in general business. People should see the secretary and have these put on the agenda before the meeting.

There could be more detail on the agenda about the items, including a summary of points in the reports. This would also save time in talking about these reports - only key points would need discussion.

3. All to understand

The executive needs to explain better to all representatives what is going on, and not exclude others in favour of their own little group. If they asked other representatives how they would like to help, they would be more than happy to do so.

Perhaps junior representatives need their own meetings to talk about matters that concern them. Also, there could be junior assistants or deputies to the major SRC/Forum jobs. For example, if the Secretary is a senior student, there could be an Assistant Secretary who is a junior student. That way, jobs would be learnt, and the SRC/Forum kept going.

4. More commitment

The SRC/Forum should aim for smaller goals instead of large projects in order to get more recognition from the whole school community.

There should be some sort of advantage for being on the SRC/Forum - perhaps some sort of certificate.

More things should be organised for meetings of the SRC/Forum: more to do in meetings, get-to-know-you games, BBQs etc.

We should look at the way we support each other and, in particular, make more of an effort to explain things to younger students.

5. Lack of interest

On the whole, there is a lack of interest in the SRC/Forum throughout the whole school. This is true inside the SRC/Forum too. Why? Maybe people don’t like the representatives, or there might not be enough committees to get everyone interested and involved, or perhaps the older students dominate, or maybe it’s because meetings are held at lunchtime.
In meetings, we could:

- have an open meeting to show others how we work;
- show year 7s what the SRC/Forum is about;
- put up posters around the school about what the SRC/Forum has achieved;
- have an opinion/suggestion box;
- do a survey of students;
- set up sub-committees;
- classes could sit in on meetings;
- we should go out to classes;
- we should praise people for achievements!

Back at school, we should now:

- make people aware of the SRC/Forum through newsletters etc;
- talk at assemblies;
- make posters in our English classes;
- know who is being elected;
- have more formal meetings to report back.

6. No respect or cooperation

The SRC/Forum needs to advertise itself more through newsletters, posters and flyers. Posters should show what we have achieved, and these should be put up in places where everyone can see them.

There should be an SRC/Forum noticeboard with times of meetings and agenda put up there.

There should be presentations of SRC/Forum representatives at school assemblies to increase their profile. A suggestion box should be put out, for people who are too shy to raise issues with the representatives.

The SRC/Forum should have an open meeting so that people can come in and see what is going on.

Students from Shepparton High School and Wanganui Park, Moroopa, Shepparton South and Cobram Secondary Colleges.

SUPPORT TEACHER REFLECTIONS: SHEPPARTON AND WANGANUI PARK

The teachers who support the SRC at Shepparton High School and the Student Forum at Wanganui Park, also provided some background information and their own reflections on the respective student organisations. This provides some context for the above discussion, and also some further views on these support roles.

STUDENT FORUM AT WANGANUI PARK SECONDARY COLLEGE

History of Forum

Student Forum has been running at Wanganui for the last ten years. I took over as 'teacher in charge' of Forum at the beginning of 1991. The couple of years before that it had slowed down and its relevance was being questioned by some members of the staff.

The 1990 Forum executive had realised that a lot of their problems stemmed from the size of meetings and so made a constitutional change to representation. There are now approximately 35 members, one representative from each home group (32 groups), plus a few doublings because of roles on outside committees or in the executive.

I can’t remember having a meeting where all groups actually had a representative there.

Forum’s Role at Wanganui

All school committees have student representatives on them. These students are selected from/by Forum and they get the opportunity to report back at every meeting (usually). Forum also provides four representatives on the Shepparton Junior Council. The Forum representatives can raise issues that have been discussed in their Home Groups at Forum, to get answers to questions or suggestions for things that need to be fixed around the school.

With the reduced size of Forum in 1991 and a very keen and determined executive, Forum became much more high profile within the school. A number of subcommittees were formed to achieve certain goals. We sold some equipment that was never used and used the money to buy a number of books which were presented to the library. Funds were also raised by Forum but on a whole school basis to buy a Gold Payphone for the students’ use.

Forum in 1992

This year Forum has new executive members. Some of these are not so committed as last year’s group and did not realise all the work involved when accepting nomination. Our
meetings are alternating between classtime and lunchtime so that we can have them more regularly. However, attendance at meetings is always better during the classtime meetings. We are also having trouble getting any representative from a couple of the Home Groups.

The students on Forum have a lot of good ideas about what could be done, but when it comes to actually volunteering, there are very few prepared to commit themselves.

We need a bit of inspiration to get the students to realise what they can achieve and that commitment of time can actually be valuable and worthwhile in the long run. Some representatives need to learn that they do actually represent all views of their Home Group and not just themselves.

We have chosen a major project for this year and have some money in account. Ideas for fundraising for the rest of the year have been good, but nothing has got off the ground yet. This is where we are, as of July 1992.

Cathy Macvean
Wanganui Park Secondary College
Parkside Drive, Shepparton 3630
Phone: (058) 213 988

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL AT SHEPPARTON HIGH SCHOOL

History of the SRC

The SRC has been running at Shepparton High School for approximately 12 years. In that time, it has operated with varying degrees of enthusiasm and success. It experienced a slight revival in the mid-80s, but in recent years has lacked visibility on the school campus.

Major SRC achievements have generally been of a fund-raising nature. The most ambitious of these was financing the construction of a large bus shelter (a student initiated project). Regular donations have also been made to a variety of social welfare organisations in the Shepparton region.

Each Home Group at Shepparton High School provides one representative to the SRC, giving it an overall membership of approximately 50. Members are responsible for voicing the views of their respective Home Groups at monthly SRC meetings, and reporting back on significant developments.

Most school committees have student representatives on them, including School Council (two students) and Curriculum and Policy Committee (three students).

SRC in 1992

The SRC has made a reasonably encouraging start to the 1992 school year. This can be attributed primarily to a committed and enthusiastic executive. Unfortunately, the same level of participation is not evident from all SRC members. Some students seem to have been 'volunteered' by their Home Groups rather than elected after presenting themselves as willing candidates, and consequently attendance at meetings is often poor.

Apart from a lack of motivation from some members, another significant problem influencing the SRC at Shepparton High School is a 'fund-raising mentality'. While raising money is a valid aspect of the Council's role, much of the school is running without a student share in the decision making.

The fact that students do have a voice on major school committees needs to be reinforced. Students also need to be encouraged to consider ideas pertaining to rules, administration and curriculum.

Glenn Bennett,
Shepparton High School
Hawden Street, Shepparton 3630
Phone: (058) 214 322
The Shepparton Junior Council consists of two year 9 and two year 10 students from each of the six secondary schools in Shepparton. It has been in operation since 1968.

The Council aims to foster a better understanding of the operation of local government and municipal administration, to create an active interest in local affairs generally, and to create and foster a sense of civic pride among students of secondary school age.

Meetings of the Junior Council are held monthly in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Offices. So that there isn’t a conflict with the same school classes, where possible these meetings are held on different days of the week. Meetings run from 10 am to 3 pm, with a bus provided by the City Council to transport students.

The year 9 students remain as Junior Councillors for two years; as the year 10 students ‘retire’ at the end of a year, two more year 8 students are then appointed for a two-year term. Four other students from each school, who are not Junior Councillors, may also attend meetings as observers. This is a way for year 8 students to find out about the Council before they elect their representatives.

Agenda papers for the meetings are prepared by each school in rotation. Items are sent by other schools to this rostered school two weeks in advance of meetings; papers are then circulated and classes discuss the items before meetings.

For experience, each student from the rostered school takes minutes for that month. The Junior Councillors then meet back at school to prepare a good copy which is sent on to all schools. The rostered school for each month also follows through action by writing any correspondence arising from the meeting.

The Council also sets up subcommittees which, ideally, should be from one school. This way it is much easier for students to meet together at lunch-time or after school, without it being necessary to travel from schools to the Council Office for meetings.

Junior Council office-bearers are elected at the second meeting. The positions are then held for the year. They are:

Junior Mayor: responsible for chairing meetings. A Deputy Junior Mayor is also elected. The Junior Mayor must be a second year Junior Councillor.

Junior Town Clerk: responsible for condensing and reading reports at the meeting, for condensing and reading minutes at the meeting and for reading necessary correspondence.

Junior City Engineer: responsible for researching any topics brought up at Junior Council that relate to the Engineering field - footpaths, roads, bicycle paths, street lights etc, and for answering any queries put to the meeting in these areas. It is necessary for the Junior Engineer to liaise closely with the Engineering Department of the Council.

Junior Councillors have a responsibility to attend all meetings, contribute agenda items each month, and attend SRC meetings and bring to Junior Council any relevant issues raised at these meetings. On the rostered month, they must also prepare the agenda and distribute copies, record minutes and distribute copies, and prepare correspondence arising from the minutes.

Each school is also requested to appoint a staff member to the position of Junior School Coordinator. This person attends meetings, liaises with the students in preparing agendas and correspondence, briefs Councillors before meetings, supports and guides members and acts as a liaison between Junior Councillors and Council.

Areas that are handled by local Councils can be discussed in classes. These classes can then be asked if they have anything they would like their Junior Council representatives to raise at a meeting. Teachers might then bring the class or several students to observe a meeting.

Shepparton City Council appoints a Junior Council Coordinator who liaises between Junior Councillors, Council and the schools, and coordinates preparation and follow-up of meetings.

For more information on the operation of the Shepparton Junior Council, contact:

Janene Andrews, City of Shepparton,
PO Box 989, Shepparton 3630.
Phone: (058) 329 700; Fax: (058) 311 987.
Perhaps your Student Representative Council (SRC) or Junior School Council (JSC) runs as smooth as a whistle, or perhaps it doesn’t. Don’t be discouraged: you can make it work! Be patient and stick to it. There is always time - perhaps next term or the following year.

Many students who attended the Student Forum at the Waterdale School Support Centre on Tuesday June 23rd 1992, will remember how interesting and uplifting it was. If you weren’t there, then there’s always the next one.

If you are an SRC/JSC representative who has an extremely important position within the group, but feel miserable about the lack of student enthusiasm, or just the way things are going, here’s something that is sure to be of interest.

Remember - it is feasible! If you try to make it work, it will!

You will recall that on that day, we worked out the five principles for:

An Ideal SRC/JSC:

1. An ideal SRC has at least one student representative who is both in the SRC/JSC and in the School Council. This helps maintain good communication and a strong link between students, parents, teachers and other various subcommittees of the School Council. This also helps relay information to and from the SRC/JSC directly and therefore in a more civilised manner rather than indirectly.

So, try to arrange for an enthusiastic, concerned person who is willing to do this for a period of time. It’s important for students to be represented at the various levels within the school. The SRC/JSC offers an excellent opportunity to do this.

2. An ideal SRC/JSC is organised and has a proper structure. There is a clear distinction between executives who form the ‘core’ of the group and SRC/JSC representatives, proper meeting procedures, minutes at every meeting, a treasurer’s report, some sort of guidelines to follow, an agenda etc. In addition to this, have clear goals perhaps for the month, the term and the year, followed with action plans. A great deal of patience is needed to help establish some sort of purpose and focus.

3. Perhaps one of the most important principles is to have money. You can’t get anywhere without money. So it’s absolutely essential to fund-raise to ensure that there is money in that bank account owned by the SRC/JSC. Or perhaps you receive financial support by the various facilities of the school.

4. It’s important for the SRC/JSC to be seen as influential but not as an overpowering body within the school. It is a body that does consider the concerns of students.

So, in summary:

1. at least one student rep to be both in the SRC/JSC and School Council for communication - a convenient and easy way for information to be passed on from one group to the other; a strong link;
2. organisation/structure: minutes, action plans, purpose, patience, clear goals;
3. financial support: fundraising activities;
4. support from school associations: teachers, parents, other students, committees;
5. influential, but not ‘bossy’.

We also talked about the five principles (extended to seven) for:

An Ideal SRC/JSC Teacher:

The role of the SRC/JSC teacher is also important in helping to coordinate an effective SRC/JSC.

1. The SRC/JSC teacher supports the group but does not dominate. The executive or leaders have a ‘superior’ role.

2. The SRC/JSC teacher relays information and queries to other staff and committees. This is a fast and reliable means of communicating with other faculties of the school.

3. The SRC/JSC teacher is very supportive and defensive ie is ready to go into battle for the SRC/JSC.

4. The ideal SRC/JSC teacher aids the personal growth of the SRC/JSC members. The teacher is there to help SRC/JSC reps eg with problems they may be having with peers.

5. The ideal SRC/JSC teacher helps students get an overview of the school community.
He/she has specialist knowledge on how the school runs and can advise and make suggestions eg the most appropriate committee to which to take a particular concern.

6. The ideal SRC/JSC teacher provides guidance in the political process. He/she can have input to the most appropriate way of getting a task done.

7. The SRC/JSC teacher acknowledges and rewards the good work of the SRC/JSC.

In summary, the ideal SRC/JSC teacher has the following characteristics:

1. supports but does not dominate;
2. efficient means of communicating to other staff committees;
3. supportive of SRC/JSC’s suggestions;
4. aids personal growth of SRC/JSC members;
5. link to how school operates;
6. guidance in political process;
7. acknowledges and rewards efforts of SRC/JSC.

Margherita Bucchieri
SRC, Preston Girls’ Secondary College
Cooma Street, Preston 3072

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Junior School Council Network
ACTION PLANNING

The Junior School Council Network in the Preston/Reservoir area in Melbourne has produced and circulated its JSC action plans for 1992.

The second issue of their newsletter contains Action Plans from eight schools in Melbourne’s northern suburbs. These were developed at a JSC training day earlier in the year. The August training day is dealing with training around skills identified by the schools: Resources (where to find them); Letter Writing; Public Speaking; Telephone Skills and Report Writing. The final training day, later in 1992, will be a report-back on the achievement of the Action Plans.

What are the JSCs planning?

Rosebank JSC is concentrating on communication in the school - telling the grades about what the JSC does, developing a suggestion box - and between schools - producing the newsletter for the group. They are also continuing the canteen, run by grade 5/6.

Bell JSC is fundraising for a grade 6 student who is competing in the National Football Championships, for a new sandpit and for new basketball rings. They are also informing other children about the JSC role.

Preston East JSC aims to improve the appearance of the school yard through tackling the litter problem. This means getting and placing new bins, setting up a house system and developing a poster about pride in the yard.

Merrilands JSC will approach the SRCs of local Secondary Colleges to discuss through traffic. They will find a solution to a possible car park move, help design playground equipment and assist with fundraising.

Reservoir East JSC plans to arrange activities for the whole school such as discos and a sausage sizzle. These will raise money to buy sports and playground equipment. They will also make the playground pleasant with plants, and look after other children, stopping fights etc.

Gowerville JSC is writing their own Code of Behaviour in term 3. It organises and runs the Monday morning assemblies and supports the personal development curriculum. They will also be selling healthy fruit. With the Buildings and Grounds Committee they will be reviewing plans on use of the playground space and equipment.

Preston South JSC has responsibility for developing a quiet activity area in the playground, and getting a major piece of play equipment, chosen by the JSC.

Norris Bank JSC is re-electing its JSC - ongoing activities include waste management in the school environment, and support for a child in a third world country.

To find out more about the development of these action plans and of the training day program supporting their JSC, contact the JSC at Rosebank Primary School, Ramleh Road, Reservoir 3073; Phone: (03) 460 6427.

Delivering the Newsletter.

connect August 1992
AARE: Family and Community Participation in Education

A new Special Interest Group in the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) has been formed - around "Family and Community Participation in Education". Izabel Soliman, the group coordinator, points out that "family" does specifically include students.

The AARE Conference will be held this year at Deakin University on November 22nd-26th. It will include two two-hour symposia coordinated by this special interest group.

For more information, contact:
Dr I Soliman
Department of Social, Cultural and Curriculum Studies
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Phone: (067) 733 158

HIV/AIDS STD Peer Education Project

The Ethnic Youth Issues Network in Victoria has begun a peer education project with and among Cambodian, Lao and Vietnamese young people. This will develop peer education information, facilitate a team of peer educators and conduct a community education program. At the end of twelve months, there will be a team of young people trained as peer educators, and a package of information on HIV/AIDS and STD issues.

For further information, contact Soo Lin Quek at:
Ethnic Youth Issues Network
Suite 1, 250 Gore Street
Fitzroy 3065
Phone: (03) 419 9122

A Message From Iceland

"My Icelandic 'son', Dori, wishes to renew his Connect subscription. He says in his last letter to us that he likes reading the articles about Sherbrooke Community School (where he was an exchange student in 1991) and thinks it is a good way to keep up with educational issues in Oz. Connect certainly reaches far and wide!"

Keith Payne
Ferny Creek 3786
Local and Overseas Publications Received

**CLEARINGHOUSE**

**Local and Overseas Publications Received**

Connect receives many publications directly or indirectly relevant to youth and student participation. We can't lend or sell these, but if you want to look at or use them, contact us on (03) 489 9052:

**AUSTRALIAN STUDENT PUBLICATIONS:**

Get Wise (Victorian TAFE Students and Apprentices Network)


Rave (Nunawading Youth Residential Centre, Vic) Nos 48, 49; April, July 1992

**OVERSEAS STUDENT PUBLICATIONS:**

Foxfire (Rabun Gap, Georgia, USA) Vol 24 No 3/4, Vol 25 No 1; Fall-Winter ‘90, Spring ‘91

**OTHER PUBLICATIONS:**

Options (Youth Bureau, Canberra, ACT) June, July 1992

Collective Notes (COSHG, Vic) Nos 74, 75; July, August 1992

Network News (Surry Hills, NSW) June 1992

Education Quarterly (DSE, Vic) No 5, May 92

Hands On (Foxfire, USA) No 40, Summer ‘91


Up2Date (AYPAC, ACT) 17 July 1992

International Newsletter (1 M T E C Foundation, Norway) June 1992


Education Alternatives (Caulfield East, Vic) Vol 1 No 5, July 1992


**Articles:**

The articles listed in this column are of general background value or otherwise not appropriate for reproducing in the columns of Connect. However they are available on photocopy for research purposes. The length and cost (copying and postage) are listed. Please order by code number. (A fuller list is available in Connect 46/47 - to October 1987.)

**Code** | **Description/Pages/Cost**
--- | ---
374 | Constitution and Rules of Procedure: Yarraville Primary School Junior School Council (3 pp; $0.70)

375 | Action Plans in Action: JSC News 92: Rosebank PS, August 1992; plus JSC In-Service Outline for 18/8/92 (13 pp; $1.30)

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