

**Networking Young Citizens:**  
**Learning to be citizens in and with the social web**

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# 1: Introduction to the Research Project's Context

Many claims are made, both in the popular press and the professional education literature, about the significance of the social web in enabling civic participation. However empirical evidence supporting these claims is sparse and contested rather than strongly-indicative. The Monash University pilot research project, *Networking Young Citizens*, relates to the discussion about the ways in which the social web might support the civic participation, especially of young people, by examining the ways in which Web 2.0 was integrated into teaching and learning in the school, and any other processes of civic socialisation that were consciously adopted in three schools.

This research examined general school administrative practices that could be construed as being supportive of the development of a school community and citizenship behaviours, and also teacher engagement with their students in terms of explicit Civics and Citizenship curriculum and activities. The research was predicated on the view that both of these strands of educational work have potential for inducting students into citizenship dispositions and civic behaviours, and also the norms and practices, rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship. The research also examined the young people's experience of Web 2.0 and other social media platforms (Google, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) and shared content sites (such as flickr, blogs, discussion forums) and sought their views and understandings of the potential of these processes for broader civic engagement.

Specifically, we investigated the use of the social web in schools and its implications for enhancing young people's civic learning and citizenship engagement. Our key research questions were:

1. In what ways are Web 2.0 technologies effectively used in teaching and learning, and administration, in schools, and specifically in civics and citizenship education programs?
2. How do schools' policy and practice reflect their view of a school's role in supporting active citizenship?
3. In what ways do school students use Web 2.0 technologies in their social/ informal community based networks?
4. What are the similarities and significant differences in young people's use of social networking technologies in their schooling, compared with their use in personal settings?
5. How do young people perceive their personal use of Web 2.0 in relation to supporting enhanced citizenship participation and engagement?
6. What are the implications of these different applications of Web 2.0 technologies for Civics and Citizenship learning and for political socialisation generally?

The research methodology was designed to develop evidence-based hypotheses and arguments about ways in which young people's civic socialisation might be better mediated by Web 2.0.

## **Justification for the underlying orientation of the research**

These six research questions were developed for this project. Underpinning them is a view about the importance of civic engagement as being critically important to the ‘health’ of a democracy, and the view that social networking has a potentially (and increasingly demonstrated) significant role in that civic and democratic engagement. Consideration of the possible roles of social media in civic engagement is additionally important because social media may well dramatically alter the more conventional established traditional practices of political and civic engagement, which, for most citizens in Australia, is confined to voting in elections. The citizens who are most likely to exercise social media in their participation with democratic process are those who are already the most active users of social media - that is those under 30 years of age.

This project is a manifestation of the belief that it is important to better understand the changing context of civic engagement by young citizens and ways of supporting their civic learning. It also conveys the hypothesis that Web 2.0 and social networking may play a significant role in this learning, and possibly, by implication, in young people’s future engagement with active civic participation, through social networking.

The project focused on schools since the primary concern is how students might *learn* to be engaged citizens – both in their present and future lives. Three factors were identified as key drivers supporting student learning about engagement. These factors contribute to students learning how to act as engaged citizens in their present circumstances, and may be potentially significant to the likelihood of them acting similarly in their adult lives.

The three factors are:

1. The contribution of Web2 technologies and social media in student learning and engagement.
2. The role of a school’s culture in student learning and engagement.
3. The role an explicit Civics and Citizenship course plays in student learning and engagement.

These three factors impact on students’

- sense of self,
- sense of school community/belonging,
- efficacy in decision-making / governance,
- learning and knowledge generally including skills development.

These factors are examined in the selected research literature review.

## 2: Selective research literature review

This section of the report is a short literature review of key research writings which influenced fundamental aspects of the research premises and thus frame the project.

### Learning

It pays to recall that learning is cumulative; that deeper understandings are built upon what has already been learned. This apparently- simple maxim is frequently lost in the educational literature, but it remains the basis of all teaching and learning.

Consistent with findings in cognitive psychology that the development of expertise involves not only the development of extensive factual and procedural knowledge, but also the development of the need for assessment reform schemas for organising and making sense of that knowledge, a considerable body of educational research has focused on students' conceptual understandings, which include their mental models of subject matter and the way these models change as students develop more sophisticated understandings of what they are learning

... Other research is providing insights into the nature of *learning progress* within particular learning domains. This research is answering such questions as: What is it that develops as individuals become more expert in a domain? What new knowledge, skills and understandings do they typically develop? What are common sequences and pathways of development? What are prerequisites for further learning? How does new learning build on and extend existing learning within the domain?

*(Masters, 2013, pp.18-19)*

This project is predicated on the view that participatory learning, or gaining the disposition to engage, is no different from other learning domains, in that provision of many appropriate learning opportunities, affirmation of achievement and reinforcement, through modelling and other pedagogic and cultural processes, are important because they actively support the learning.

### Web 2.0

The history of the term 'Web 2.0 is described in Wikipedia as follows:

The term Web 2.0 was coined in 1999 to describe web sites that use technology beyond the static pages of earlier web sites. It is closely associated with Tim O'Reilly because of the O'Reilly Media Web 2.0 conference which was held in late 2004. Although Web 2.0 suggests a new version of the World Wide Web, it does not refer to an update to any technical specification, but rather to cumulative changes in the ways software developers and end-users use the Web.

A Web 2.0 site may allow users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue as creators of user-generated content in a virtual community, in contrast to websites where people are limited to the passive viewing of content. Examples of Web 2.0 include social networking sites, blogs, wikis, video sharing sites, hosted services, web applications, mashups and folksonomies [ie. 'collaborative tagging'].

*(Wikipedia)*

This text was taken as an adequate definition of what was understood by pilot project's researchers as to Web 2.0. Reference is made in the quote to elements of Web 2.0 that are crucial to its value in school-based learning: to it being user-generated, to its collaborative nature, to it operating in a virtual community and to the contrast to the static characteristics of websites.

The first published use of the term 'Web 2.0' is ascribed to Darcy DiNuzzi, an electronic information design consultant, in January 1999. This date should remind us how recent an 'invention' is Web 2.0. Researchers should not under-estimate the challenge this 'invention' represents for those educational practitioners for whom this technology occurred part-way through their professional life, and it may assist researchers to a fuller understanding of the attitudes of those practitioners who show a reluctance to become fully-engaged with the technologies.

The Web we know now, which loads into a browser window in essentially static screenfuls, is only an embryo of the Web to come. The first glimmerings of Web 2.0 are beginning to appear, and we are just starting to see how that embryo might develop. The Web will be understood not as screenfuls of text and graphics but as a transport mechanism, the ether through which interactivity happens. It will [...] appear on your computer screen, [...] on your TV set [...] your car dashboard [...] your cell phone [...] hand-held game machines [...] maybe even your microwave oven.

*(Darcy DiNuzzi, 1991, p.322)*

DiNuzzi's predictions as to how Web 2.0 might develop in the future, demonstrate her prescience, since all of these uses are now in place, (a mere 14 years later). They are a reminder to educational practitioners and researchers as to how much more change to their pedagogy may be required in the future, as the technology develop still further. There is no future in schools denying the importance of these new technologies, and rejecting the power of social media to engage students. Survey results of low (16% ) teacher support for students being allowed to access social media sites at school, (*Australian Teacher Magazine, Technology in Education Supplement*, 2012) demonstrate doomed attempts to keep separate the worlds which their students' inhabit. This is the Canute approach, and it will not work.

As a side comment, it is important not to forget that technology has traditionally played a part of teachers' pedagogic practice. The old technologies however were static and were generally teacher-controlled. The relationship between those who taught and those who learned was characterised by two way traffic, which did not generally occur in both directions at once. Teachers spoke or used books charts, blackboards, films or more recently used interactive whiteboards and other technical equipment to convey whatever was considered by the teacher to be relevant to the planned learning. Students used books, worksheets, writing tools and technical equipment specific to the curriculum at their desk, and in their classrooms, for measuring and preparing their work; calculators have been endemic for some years. Students were able to indicate their level of understanding, by answering or asking questions and writing or acting in ways that demonstrated they had learnt what they had been taught. Discussions within classrooms need to be managed by teachers (supplemented by 'self-management' by students) so that views could be shared

amongst all participants. Extension' activities, generally set by a teacher, could involve creative responses to that learning, and were able to be 'assessed' as indicative of the degree to which the students had taken on board the requisite learning and made it their 'own'. These learning processes were not necessarily experienced as oppressive, but they limited the roles and learning of all parties. Under these models of learning, curriculum could be written with greater certainty than can be done now, and opportunities to experience a spontaneous unwritten curriculum and assessment regimes were limited by the operational issues associated with the tool sets teachers and students had at their disposal.

The new technologies have changed all teaching and learning. They are not static technologies; communication traffic is multi-dimensional, not under the control of any single person or institution. Teaching and learning with new technologies utilises recent understandings about how the brain works (*Masters, 2013, pp16-19*), incorporates the social learning students acquire outside classrooms and school, and has radical effects on what can be a legitimate learning 'space'. Additionally, and crucially, its usage is interactive – the 'conversation' now can go in many directions at once. So the skill-sets, attitudes, knowledge and creativity required for effective teaching and learning have grown exponentially.

However, as with the more traditional paradigms of teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of schools and teachers to ensure students can develop the relevant skills and attitudes to actively learn. The data students now can access, regardless of their school or teacher mediation, is almost limitless - encompassing the world. Global education requires world-wide knowledge and understanding. How is this knowledge and aptitude to be provided? Experiencing programs which develop empathy, a sense of audience, of how to 'read' and 'present' one's views in a civil manner are skills which are especially important when one acts outside one's own world. Since the social networking interactions between students are, or can be, invisible to their teachers, trust between parties and modelling by informed adults of how to behave within the technologies becomes an ever more significant capability. Having the technological skills and awareness of the impact on others of one's own interactions has never been greater. These 'skills' are the high-level outcomes of civics and citizenship and engagement with the new technologies, and there is a synergy between them, as is demonstrated in one of the case study schools in this project.

## **Learning with social media and Web 2.0**

Kathryn Moyle is an Australian educationist who has published extensively in the fields of technologies and their implications for school reform, curriculum, assessment teaching and learning and school leadership. The title of her 2010 publication *Building Innovation: Learning with technologies*, signals her view of the potential of adopting a creative approach to teaching and learning with technologies. She introduces her case as follows:

Technologies offer educators and students alike opportunities for creating meaningful learning environments. Technologies enable different types of social interaction, provide ready access to information and can overcome some of the difficulties presented by time and space.

Students can create new materials, artefacts and new knowledge with the media tools now available to them. These tools are constantly evolving as individuals and companies create and refine new software. The futurist Alvin Toffler is reputed to have predicted some 30 years ago that ‘... *the illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn*’.

(Moyle, 2010, p. 4)

She reminds schools of the broad scope of pedagogic changes required to achieve optimal learning with technologies, and also affirms the value of rethinking professional practice:

Including technologies in teaching and learning requires a re-conceptualisation of the curriculum and how it can be taught. Using technologies to simply replace blackboards with whiteboards and pens with computers and word processors does not constitute a re-conceptualisation of teaching and learning, nor the nature of school education. Such an approach will not support students to ‘learn, unlearn, and relearn’.

Studies over the past decade have tended to show that using technologies to improve students’ learning outcomes is difficult to demonstrate. ... Other studies point to the potential of technologies to address the complex set of challenges facing the world: addressing issues such as climate change and feeding the planet (Puttnam, 2009). Rather than simply trying to slot technologies into the curriculum, however, educators are now afforded an opportunity to rethink the ways in which they carry out their work.

(Moyle, 2010, p. 4)

However, Moyle warns schools and teachers that:

This shift calls for more demanding professional pedagogical repertoires than those that have been required in the past (Johansson, 2000).

(Moyle, 2010, p. 4)

Additionally, Moyle makes the case that technologies will radically change the learning experience, empowering both teachers and learners to be fulfil their creative potential, and act more meaningfully in their worlds, currently and in the future.

Building innovation with technologies and placing the learner at the centre of education offers many creative opportunities for students and educators. But challenges abound. There are tensions between the economic purposes of education, driven through national and international forces, and the ways in which teaching and learning can be constructed to build students’ general capabilities. In the 21st century the school education sector, as a whole, faces the challenge of determining what constitutes teaching and learning, of deciding what does and will truly build students’ innovation and creativity capabilities. Technologies are seen as a way to radically alter traditional learning and teaching patterns. Such approaches to learning place students, not as passive recipients of information, but as an active author, co-creator, evaluator and critical commentator (Redecker, 2008). But currently young people’s uses of technologies differ between home and school, with children and young people often ‘powering down’ for school and ‘powering up’ at home (Project Tomorrow, 2009). It is time that educators construct learning with technologies in sufficiently complex ways for students to feel they are not only ‘powering up’ in their personal activities with technologies, but for them to also have a similar sense about learning at school.

A challenge for all Australian schools then, is how to make real the promise of blended learning opportunities, where classrooms make optimal use of both the face-to-face and the

virtual environments available to them, so that viable and meaningful learning with technologies is achieved for students and teachers.

(Moyle, 2010, p. 60)

## **School culture, student identity and becoming**

Johanna Wyn has published broadly on the links between the meaning of education to young people, the changing structures of schooling, the importance of students forming their identity and a sense of the future they are seeking to achieve. She sees school-based learning as often constrained in structure and purpose and as contributing to an inequality of learning and life outcomes. In the 2009 publication: *Touching the Future: Building skills for life and work* she argued that the policy trend which over-emphasises education as a tool for economic development, was a 'false binary'. Rather she supports the view that:

... there is an increasing convergence of thinking that educational policies need to consider wider priorities. These priorities include meeting new global challenges associated with the pace of social, technological and environmental change, in which Australia has aspirations to be a leader. In the face of evidence that inequalities in educational outcomes have not significantly improved over the last 20 years, education will, in the future, need to play a more proactive role in addressing social disadvantage. Changing expectations of youth will increase the expectation that education plays a greater role in creating actively engaged, critical citizens who are well informed about civic life. These aims transcend the binary of educating for life and/or work.

(Wyn, 2009, p.42)

Her interest in supporting learners to be better prepared for life and work leads her to seek a broad but explicit approach to learning. She argues that 'identity work' is critical to this.

The fact that young people are learning about 'becoming' tends to be implicit within educational literature. Questions of identity construction, identity work and learner identities are quite central to the project of creating educational processes that will equip them for life. And yet it is rare for these processes to be explicitly addressed in planning or practice.

... Identity work is increasingly acknowledged as central to education. It is often hidden work done by students, but not acknowledged by their teachers... The role of identity work in learning for life is an important consideration because it addresses the way in which all the other partners in education see young people and *their* role. If young people are to be seen as partners in learning, it is important to provide them with opportunities to be active partners and so to shape identities that are premised on belonging, making decisions and having the capacity to influence their own learning. The issue of identity tends to be overlooked in discussions about the skills and capacities that young people need in order to live well and successfully.

Perhaps now, more than ever, schools need to acknowledge the integral relationship between identity and learning and to acknowledge that schools too have a significant role to play in supporting students to do the identity work that they require in order to be successful. This involves having a sense of one's self as a successful learner, knowing how to balance being in the present with preparing for an uncertain future, and gaining confidence in making decisions about the options before them in a context of uncertainty. New patterns of inequality of outcomes based on class, gender and geographic location are formed as some groups are more able to draw on cultural and economic resources than others to secure success (Wyn, 2007). This is perhaps the most important point to draw from the discussion of education and identity. If schools are to contribute to greater equality of outcomes, the work of identity development

needs to be explicitly acknowledged, and opportunities for young people to practise successful, engaged and critical identities need to be provided.

There is an emerging consensus that identity has increasingly become a project that individuals do and need to actively engage in. ... In many countries, including Australia, a majority of young people are both workers and students, establishing a pattern in secondary school that they will continue throughout life (*Stokes & Wyn, 2007*). Individuals have no choice but to take personal responsibility for managing uncertainties and risks that derive from this situation. One of the ways in which individuals manage this is through an intense focus on 'becoming': watching, practising and learning the mix of social skills, knowledge and practical skills that are required to achieve success. They can be supported in this endeavour in school. Indeed, identity work should be actively supported in schools, with acknowledgement given to the way in which learning and identity are intertwined.

(*Wyn, 2009, pp.48-9*)

Wyn is talking here about the role of schools in supporting their students through much more than the content of their curriculum. She is focussing on the ways in which schools can adopt and promote a school culture which will actively assist students to manage their learning, to create an environment in which they can learn, unlearn and relearn, without excessive personal cost. She is acknowledging the importance of the individual in their learning, as well as the role of 'belonging' in individual and community identity formation.

Research on the role of school climate in supporting learning does not commonly establish measures on *how* the management of school climate contributes to students' sense of belonging or their academic outcomes, nor does it find direct effects. The multi-factorial and interconnected nature of a school climate results in considerable difficulty in measuring the mechanisms by which a school climate can have a positive impact on academic or other outcomes. However, recent on-going work being undertaken in Australian Capital Territory (ACT) secondary schools, by Australian National University researchers, is investigating the relationships between school climate, school identification and academic achievement. Specifically the researchers are investigating the role of social identification (that is a person's sense of belonging or connection to a group) as a mechanism through which school climate impacts on academic achievement. Unlike much pre-existing research in the field, this team is using a national assessment measure – NAPLAN (the National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy). Building on work by Bizumic, Reynolds, Turner, Bromhead & Subasic (2009), the researchers are engaged in action research with staff. They are investigating the impact of adjustments to pedagogy and other manifestations of school climate on subsequent achievement and the students' sense of school identification.

Initial results, in an as yet unpublished paper from this intervention research project, do not indicate a direct effect of school climate, but they reported the following.

An interesting and important finding, however, in terms of understanding the impact of school climate effects was ... the significant indirect effect of school climate on achievement through school identification. This indicates that counter to previous expectations, where there is a direct significant relationship between school climate and academic achievement, simply perceiving a positive school climate may not be enough to improve academic outcomes.

Instead it seems that the creation of a sense of belonging or connectedness with the school is necessary for a positive school climate to have a positive effect on academic achievement.

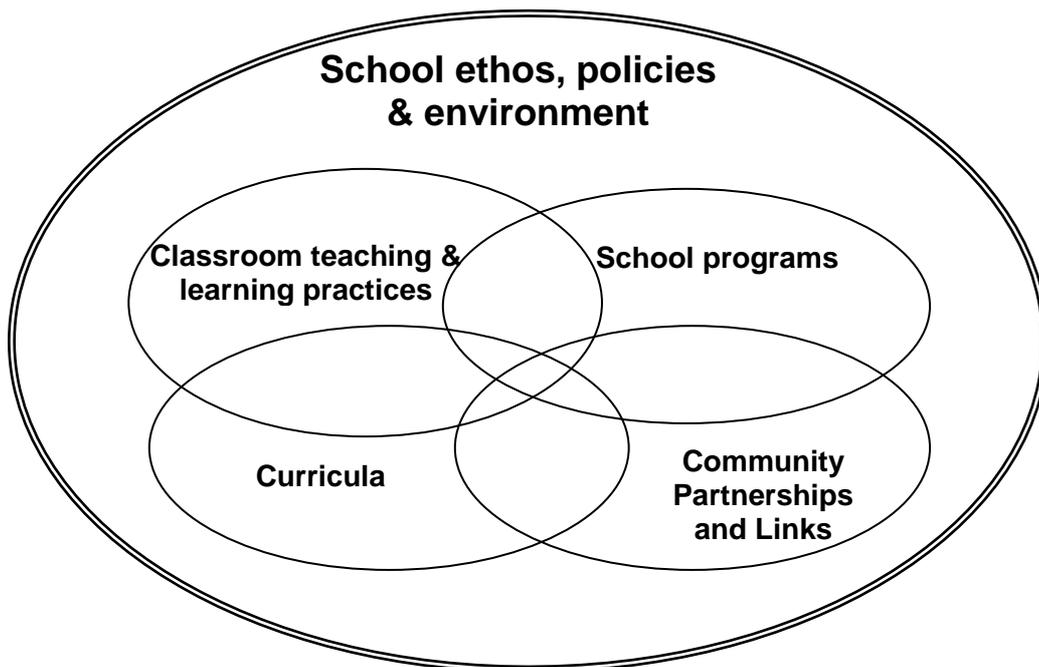
Finally, the authors of this intervention research study conclude that

...in order to build shared identification within the school, these school-level interventions may need to focus on perceptions of congruence between the goals, values and priorities of teachers and students, motivating students to be active members of their schools.

*(unpublished paper by Turner et al, p18)*

Creating and managing an environment or climate in a school which will actively support the students' sense of self and of belonging, requires a school prioritising knowledge, attitudes and skills that enable students to learn the importance of having evidence to make a case, not just assert a view, to explore and form views on dilemmas associated with their interests and their futures actions, and that will support productive relationships between students and between staff and students. It includes prioritising ways in which school structures can provide encouragement for all students to deal with identity issues (theirs and those of others), to experiment and practice their skills in decision-making, especially with a view to considering the context of the views of others. Civics and citizenship curricula explicitly deal with these matters, thus developing a disposition for engagement and participation in individuals and in the institution. Active engagement of all participants becomes the underlying modus operandi of the whole school community. The figure below is a diagrammatic representation of the conceptualisation of the inter-related elements of such a school culture.

**Figure1: A Conceptualisation of a School Learning Culture Supportive of Student Engagement and Active Participation**



Variations to this figure have been used by this report's main author over many years, according to the context of the work. In a school which values and operates within such an integrated model of ethos, policies and environment, congruence exists in the delivery of all the four sub-elements identified in Figure 1. In a school culture which foregrounds engagement for students all these key elements will operate in an integrated fashion, with each explicitly referencing the goal of supporting active engagement.

How schools might use civics and citizenship curriculum to create and deliver on such an engagement and participation ethos has been the subject of some research (*Kennedy et al, 2003; Holdsworth & Mellor, 2004; Mellor, 2008*), but how a school delivers is necessarily subject to its particular goals. These goals need to include student goals, that is, the ones students espouse. The importance of the school affirming students' participation in their school life or in their particular interests, can be encouraged and supported by explicit linkages being made between school programs and the community partnerships and links the school has put in place, or which students make their own. In the interests of supporting the students' 'becoming', so the range of student engagements can be widened. But affirmation of student interests, engagements, participations by the school, a key community to which students' belong', is essential. Modelling of participatory behaviours, in and out of classrooms, across all the elements represented in the whole school culture figure, by other members of school is also useful to learners.

## **Civics and Citizenship Education (CCE) in Australia**

Since the publication in 1994 of the Civics Expert Group report *Whereas the People ... Civics and Citizenship Education*, there has been an on-going concerned discussion in Australia about the levels of civic knowledge and the capacity and preparedness of young people to engage in democratic activity. That report identified what the Civics Expert Group saw as a 'democratic deficit', in the population at large and in students in Australian schools. Publication of the Australian national report in the 1999 *IEA Civics Study* (*Mellor, Kennedy & Greenwood, 2002*) where Australia achieved only a middle ranking when compared with the 28 participating countries, confirmed the perception that more was needed to address the 'deficit'. National and jurisdictional policies relating to Civics and Citizenship teaching and learning, underpinned by the National Goals of Schooling, initially in the *Hobart Declaration* (*MCEETYA, 1989*), then in the *Adelaide Declaration* (*MCEETYA, 1999*) and again re-affirmed in the *Melbourne Declaration* (*MCEETYA, 2008*), included the development and dissemination of system-wide curricula, the publication of extensive resources and programs associated with civics and citizenship education (CCE). The premise of these policies is that civic engagement is central to democratic governance and that civics and citizenship education has an important role in achieving civic engagement and participation, especially of school-aged citizens, and thus in their subsequent involvement in democratic governance.

The national assessment program in Civics and Citizenship (NAP-CC) has been conducted over three cycles in Australia (in 2004, 2007 & 2010) and has provided standardised measures of achievement in CCE. The associated professional learning and resources programs as well as the reporting of achievement of a national sample of Yr6 and Yr10 students has provided a rich source of analysis of the content and pedagogies associated with the field. The publication *The Digest: Civics and Citizenship Education*, prepared by ACER staff, (Mellor et al, 2010) for the NSW Institute of Teachers, provides a succinct summary of the provision and national assessment of CCE in Australia over the previous a decade. (MCEETYA, 2006b & 2009, ACARA 2010) *The Digest* also surveys examples of case study research into active citizenship programs, professional learning and pedagogical practice undertaken in the field in Australia over the previous 15 years.

In Australia, over the last two decades, a number of initiatives have attempted to increase knowledge and interest in the processes of civic participation, and to assist schools in their role of supporting students to become active and informed citizens. Research findings from national and international assessments of civics and citizenship, and from school case studies of civics and citizenship activities provide useful insights about effective approaches to supporting students to develop the attributes of active and informed citizenship.

The Australian conceptualisation of civics and citizenship education developed over time, and was especially influenced by the publication of the findings of the 1999 IEA Civics Education Study. The Australian view of civics and citizenship education is one which affirms the distinctions between civics knowledge and citizenship participation, but also sees them as complementary. This duality has been consistently referenced in all the research work undertaken in Australia and also informed international work in the field.

(Mellor et al, 2010, p.5)

*The Digest* quotes the definitions for the terms *Civics* and *Citizenship* from the Assessment Domain, developed for and used in the first two national assessments in CCE (at Yr 6 and 10 in 2000 & 2004). It comments upon the terms, drawing the following definitional distinction between their inherent natures.

The most succinct description of the difference [between Civics and Citizenship] is that Civics is cognitive, whereas Citizenship is dispositional in nature.

(Mellor et al, 2010, p.5)

**Civics** was defined in the NAP-CC Assessment Domain as:

Knowledge and Understandings of Civic Institutions and Processes and involved ‘knowledge of key concepts and understandings relating to civic institutions and processes in Australian democracy, government, law national identity, diversity, cohesion and social justice.

(MCEETYA, 2006, pp.98-102)

This apparently simple definition refers to knowable facts, but also indicates there are contestable, interpretable concepts which will need to be explicitly addressed, analysed and unpacked during the teaching and learning of civics. The notion of how democracy works depends very much on where one sits in society, as one’s interests and capacity to influence vary accordingly. But knowing how the ‘system’ works is a pre-cursor to citizens feeling they might take opportunity to both exercise their democratic rights as well as their civic responsibilities. More than this civic knowledge is needed however.

**Citizenship** was defined in the NAP-CC Assessment Domain as:

Dispositions and Skills for Participation and involved the development of *'the skills, attitudes, beliefs and actions that underpin active democratic citizenship*  
(MCEETYA, 2006, pp. 98-102)

Taken together these concepts constitute a rich and complex set of understandings, and are based on both civic knowledge and conceptual grasp of all the elements mentioned in the definitions. They also reference that the provision of opportunity to practise civic competencies is essential for effective citizenship education. The Assessment Domain indicates that without civic knowledge, plus a disposition to engagement, a person cannot demonstrate the required citizenship skills or effectively practice citizenship.

(Mellor et al, 2010, p.5)

## **Civics and Citizenship learning and assessment**

In the context of the above published research, civic learning and citizenship participation are processes of political socialisation which depends upon formalised teaching and also informal induction into the social and cultural practices of responsible and active citizenship. Prior identified six dimensions of CCE learning:

**Dimension 1:** Civic knowledge:

(ie. understandings about political organizations, decision making processes, institutions, legal requirements)

**Dimension 2:** A sense of personal identity:

(ie. a feeling of self-worth, belonging efficacy, resilience)

**Dimension 3:** A sense of community:

(ie. locating oneself within a community(s), some perhaps imagined communities).

**Dimension 4:** Adoption of a code of civil behaviours:

(ie. civil and ethical behaviour, concern for the welfare of others)

**Dimension 5:** An informed and empathetic response to social issues:

(ie. environmental issues, social justice, equality and equity).

**Dimension 6:** A skilled disposition to take social action:

(ie. community service, active participation in community affairs)

(Prior, 2006, p.6-10)

Prior's conceptualisation of the dimensions link civic knowledge to citizenship action and links identity to belonging. This dimensional framework has been refined over time, and has proven useful in a number of different research and practitioner contexts (Prior, 1999, & 2006). In the third iteration of the framework, in reporting work done for the World Bank (Prior, Mellor & Withers, 2001), Prior proposed its use by schools as an auditing tool when reviewing the effectiveness of their whole school policies and practices, specifically their CCE programs.

The learning outcomes sought for those educated in a rounded CCE program is that they will be able to confidently act as individuals in decision-making within their communities. For this, both civics education and the disposition to engage are required.

Our analysis is informed by an understanding of citizenship which affirms what citizens *do* as the primary concern in citizen formation. Authentic citizenship is the ‘power to act’ in a certain capacity, in particular contexts, in ways which can enhance the individual and society. Authentic citizenship is motivated primarily by a sense of the ‘common good’, mediated variably according to the person’s civic values. Underpinning this power to act as citizens is the civic knowledge that it is both lawful and appropriate for citizens to act in these particular ways. It encompasses the possession of a civic competence which is born of civic learning in the broadest sense. Additionally, the power to act will only be taken up by those with civic competence who are dispositionally inclined to do so, and this disposition to engage as a citizen is also born of civic learning and experience in the broadest sense.

(Seddon & Mellor, 2006, p. 191)

The political socialisation of young citizens is happening today in changing contexts that not only change people but also the way they feed back into and transform contexts. Change has diversified practices and sites of learning and the ways in which learning is supported and enabled. Learning is no longer locked up in schools, colleges and universities but is dispersed and increasingly recognised for qualification purposes. These learning trajectories connect up with ideas about lifelong and life-wide learning, which occurs informally and non-formally as learning that supports self-work, as well as in more formalised arrangements across industry, government, communities and transnational networks, projects and initiatives that exist as more or less electronically mediated workplaces. It means that many different people contribute to teaching, learning and improving education. These people include but also extend well beyond those who are formally identified as ‘teachers’, and support activities, such as, professional development, workplace learning, health education, community action, coaching and mentoring, personnel management

(Seddon, 2004).

The NAP-CC reports on the three assessments of student achievement in the field have provided much data about the strength of student knowledge, student dispositions to engage and how these two variables relate to each other. One set of findings from the 2007 Assessment related to the effect on student achievement of students participating in school governance and other civics and citizenship-related experiences in school, and also of student participating in citizenship activities outside school. The findings applied to students at both year levels. The set of findings were:

- Significant cumulative effects in achievement were demonstrated to operate as a result of participating in civics and citizenship (C&C) related and school governance activities, in school
- Significant cumulative effects on achievement derived from participating in C&C-related activities, outside school
- Parent occupation also had a significant effect on achievement.

(MCEETYA, 2009, p.99)

These three variables were able to be disaggregated by analysing the survey data, as the discussion in *The Digest* summarises.

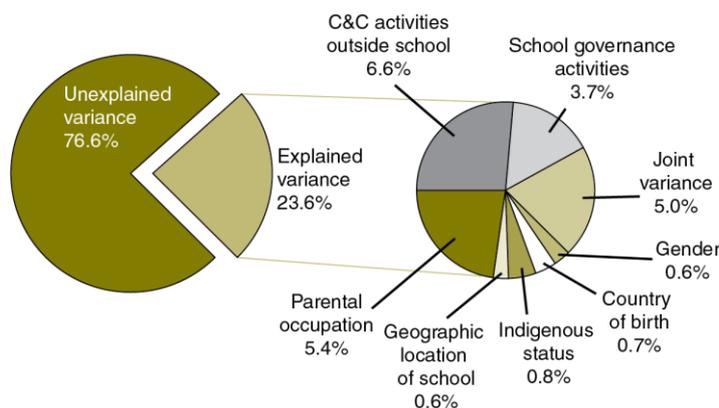
... almost a quarter of the variation in achievement can be explained by a combination of student’s parental background and participation in civics and citizenship activities. This is a considerable effect. However for schools a significant element of this finding is that only some of this effect directly relates to school provision. That direct effect derives from the civics and citizenship related and school governance activities, which were

found to be very significant for those students who had experienced them. The 2007 survey had asked students about their actual participation in these civics and citizenship and governance activities. Three quarters of year 6 and two thirds of year 10 students had voted for class representatives. Approximately one third of year 6 and one fifth of year 10 students had served on a student representative council (SRC), and of those, approximately three quarters believed they had ‘contributed to school decision-making’. Less than a third of students reported that they had contributed to school decision-making in non-SRC ways. Variable numbers said they had participated in peer-support programmes, helped create a school newspaper, represented the school, or participated in such activities outside school. These responses indicate that only a minority of students were actively engaged in such activities (other than voting for class representatives), but when they were engaged they felt they ‘had made a useful contribution’. Students who had had these opportunities felt positive about them, but only a minority of students in primary and secondary schools in Australia had had such opportunities.

(Mellor et al, 2010, p.8)

The impact on student achievement of these participation and other effects are shown in Figure 5.8 from the 2009 report on the 2007 NAP-CC program. These known variables provide an explanation for almost one quarter of the variation in student performance on the 2007 NAP-CC.

**Figure 5.8: Disaggregation of Variance and Explained Variance in Student Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Scale by Student Background and Civic Participation Variables, 2007**



(MCEETYA, 2009, p.99)

The discussion of these findings in *The Digest* demonstrates the value of having data, as opposed to mere hypotheses, about the significance of school learning culture in CCE.

There was a significant correlation between schools where the mean student achievement score was high and students reported high levels of actual participation in these activities. Similar correlations occurred between schools with low mean achievement and low levels of student participation in these activities. Additionally the effects of participation were cumulative – that is to say, the more of these activities participated in, the greater was the effect on achievement. The inescapable conclusion is that schools which provide their students with such opportunities are more likely to have students who are more knowledgeable and are more skilled at participation and have a greater disposition to engage, than schools that do not.

(Mellor et al, 2010, p.9)

It was evident from analysis of 2007 data that in a few schools the student cohort, sometimes across both year levels, gained average achievement scores that were significantly higher above the proficiency standard than the rest. So it was not just individual students who were manifesting these effects. These cohorts achieved highly on both the variables of activities outside school and governance activities. Additionally, the *cumulative* nature of the effect identified in these data analyses and findings, suggested that the positive impact of a school culture and of pedagogies which emphasise engagement on both knowledge and disposition, can be significant to CCE learning, especially in relation to current engagement and participation by students in social issues, and potentially in the future.

This finding is similar to that of the previously mentioned ANU intervention research study, which reported the following:

These results of the sequential regression analyses show that this variable [i.e. social identification mediating academic achievement and school climate] added additional significant explanatory power over more traditionally studied variables in school research, such as age, gender, years at school, parental education ... and school climate.)  
*(unpublished paper by Turner et al, p18)*

The singular and powerful indicative finding from the NAP-CC 2007 report contributed to the genesis of this pilot research project. This finding prompted further questions about the ways in which schools exploring different modes of engagement, including Web 2.0 and social media, might have an effect on CCE learning, especially in relation active participation via social media. Indicative answers to some of these questions have been realised in this pilot project.

One underlying assumption of this pilot project, and much of the research associated with the broader topic of the links between social networking and engagement of young people in civic action, is the belief that if they are already pre-disposed to using social media for connecting with their own world, then they will be similarly-prepared to engage, via social media, in a wider world, possibly in an active civic manner. The IEA assessment studies: *CivEd (1999)* and *ICCS (2009)* ( reported in *Torney-Purta et al, 2001, & Schulz et al, 2010*) adopted a similar approach to incipient behaviours, connecting the use of old media and student participation in school governance to the expressed intention of young people to subsequently vote as adults. There was no explicit assessment of student engagement with social media, however it is understood that work is being done on this matter, in preparation for ICCS 2016. The NAP-CC 2010 assessment included test items about student online use to express opinion, and findings were reported (*ACARA, 2012, Ch 6*).

Researchers investigating interconnections between civic engagement and the use of social media continue to ask key questions. For some, the focus of their research interest is in the role of schools. For others the interest is on the kinds of civic engagement undertaken by young people, as part of the investigation of the low levels for their participation and possible reasons for why many young people appear disengaged.

The authors of 'Four questions about the educational potential of social media for promoting civic engagement' (Davies et al, 2012) represent both strands of research. They are open about the contestations about many aspects of their research questions. Their objective is to better understand how the engagement of young people in civic participation can be facilitated.

Civic engagement is involvement in the public sphere, incorporating participation in constitutional politics as well as less formally constituted activity. Social media are relatively new forms of technology (principally, but not exclusively social networking sites) that allow users to interact.

(Davies et al, 2012, p.29)

The four key questions asked here relate to civic education and civic engagement, but the research insights underpinning them are more broad-ranging.

Question 1: is the current extent and nature of usage of social media likely to allow for the development of education for civic engagement?

Question 2: What does civic engagement mean and is it congruent with social media?

Question 3: What educational processes and outcomes could be experienced by students and teachers when using social media for civic engagement?

Question 4: what new directions need to be taken by educators who are interested in using social media for the purposes of learning about and for civic education?

(Davies et al, 2012, pp.294-9)

Each of these questions has a research base, which is explored in the article. The authors of this article concluded

We need to know what motivates young people to use social media for civic engagement, what they do when so engaged and what perceived and actual impacts occur as a result. And to do this there is a need for some consideration of fundamental issues concerning educational change and relationships that exist between new technology and attempts at democratization. That research should lead to clear recommendations for professionals and others who seek to enhance education for civic engagement through using social media.

(Davies et al, 2012, p. 301)

The researchers involved in this pilot project agree with these sentiments and it is for these very reasons that we undertook the project.

### **3: School and Student Samples**

#### **Selection of School Sample**

The three schools, A, B and C, located in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, were selected as suitable for the study as they asserted on their website they had an interest in ICT teaching and learning, and also as having a program at Yr 9 which encompassed some explicit Civics and Citizenship Education.

Taken together, these 3 schools encompass a range of school types: State/government and private schools, relatively-recently and long-established schools, single-sex and co-educational, student cohorts from different socio-economic backgrounds and different locations within Melbourne.

#### **Student Sample**

The selected grade sample was Year 9, where the majority of students (in Australia) are aged 14 years. In part this year level was selected as other assessment research work had been conducted in Australia with this age group, enabling this project to be conducted within this context, and allowing for possible comparative additional research to be subsequently conducted.

This year level is the same as was surveyed in the 1999 IEA Civic Education (CIVED) Study (Torney-Purta et al, 2001), the Australian national report for which was published in 2002 (Mellor, Kennedy & Greenwood, 2002). The more recent (2009) International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) also used this cohort as its sample (Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr & Losito, 2008). In the *National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship (NAP-CC)*, conducted by ACER in 2004, 2007 and 2010, for the Australian Government (MCEETYA, 2006b & 2009, ) & ACARA, 2012), the students assessed were in Years 6 and 10, these being the concluding years for Australian students in primary and compulsory secondary schooling. Although the year levels of the *National Assessments* are not identical to those in the *Networking Young Citizens* pilot project, the student civic and citizenship knowledge and understandings demonstrated in these assessment reports, and the associated commentary on that student knowledge, can be taken as indicative of the learning and knowledge context of the sampled cohort.

For this project the school visits were conducted over a 2 month period in late 2011. Two of the sampled schools provided access to Yr9 students. The third school made a class of Yr8 students available to be interviewed, and the data indicates that their life and school experiences are, unsurprisingly, less complex than those of students a year older.

## **4: Report Framework, Data Collection & Analysis**

### **Substantive context of the data collection process**

Interviews were scheduled with one teacher for each school, selected by each of the three schools as the one most appropriate to represent the school's position vis a vis the project outline and objectives. Two were classroom teachers of the students who were subsequently interviewed and the third teacher had a pastoral role with the interviewed students.

In each school, the teacher was first interviewed and then the students.

The same two interview schedules were used, with different questions for the staff and students, in each of the three schools. The two interview schedules are attached as appendices to this report.

The researchers had four main areas of interest. The first three provided context for a consideration of the outcomes – that is as represented by the students' responses. The data provided in this report is descriptive, drawn from the interviews.

1. Researchers were interested to collect data from the teachers as to the school's institutional structures, the policies relating to social media use, the approach taken at the school to manage social media use by both students and staff, and any resources provided to support ICT based teaching in the school. Similarly, details of any formal CCE curricula at Yr 9 were sought.
2. Researchers were interested to collect data on the pedagogies employed by that teacher and peers in their teaching, the degree and ways in which social media was incorporated in the teaching and learning in the school, whether they and the school provided extension and classroom activities which facilitated Web 2.0 provision and the use of social media.
3. Researchers were interested to collect data on the 'culture' of the school, either manifest either through formal or informal means/policies, or which allowed students to locate and express their individuality/sense of self and their sense of belonging, or which encouraged their active participation in decision-making with peers (and/or with others) at the school. These data could reflect on learning or non-classroom activities, which did or could facilitate the students' sense of belonging to the school community.
4. Student views on the role of the school culture, how it was manifested, and the impact of certain policies on their learning, and achievements, especially in regard to the roles of ICT/social media and civics and citizenship opportunities, was actively sought by researchers.

The variations in interviewees' responses indicate the different ways the participants understood the questions and reflect the differing experiences, knowledge, attitudes, and values, in their different schools. These between-school variations can be telling, and are the subject of the discussion following the presentation of the case-study data and the general findings which complete this report.

## **Methodology of data collection & coding analysis**

The project interviewees' responses were noted, and full audio tapes of all interviews were taken and reviewed in terms of the three interpretative elements of the report framework. These three elements encapsulate the main areas of interest in the project and frame the discussion undertaken throughout the report.

## **Report framework for interpretation of case study data**

1. Role of school culture in development of students'
  - sense of self,
  - sense of school community and of belonging,
  - efficacy in decision-making / governance,
  - learning and knowledge, including skills development.
  
2. Contribution of Web 2.0 technologies and social media to students'
  - sense of self,
  - sense of school community/belonging,
  - efficacy in decision-making / governance,
  - learning and knowledge generally including skills development
  
3. Role of explicit Civics and Citizenship course in developing students'
  - sense of self,
  - sense of school community/belonging,
  - efficacy in decision-making / governance,
  - learning and knowledge generally including skills development.

## **Mapping of teacher and student response data**

4. Teacher and student responses mapped to the three elements of the data analysis framework, by school.

## **Discussion of data in terms of the following:**

5. Identification of significant similarities between the three sets of variables, by school.
6. Develop hypotheses as to differences within and between schools and possible causal relationships.
7. Report main findings

## 5: The Case Studies

### School Data, Analysed by Framework, & by School

This report uses the three key elements of the framework in reporting and analysing the data drawn from the school data and interview discussions.

The 3 key elements in the analysis and reporting framework are:

1. Role of School Culture in development of students'...
2. Contribution of Web2 technologies & social media to students' ...
3. Role of explicit Civics & Citizenship (C&C) course in developing the students' ...

Each key element of the framework has the same subset of 4 inquiry orientations

- Sense of self (identity work)
- Sense of school community and of belonging
- Efficacy in decision-making/governance
- Learning and knowledge, including skills development.

Due to the interwoven substantive relationships and purposes of these headings, and the differing levels of integration in how schools implement their policies relating to these headings, the allocation of interview data and quotes to particular headings in the reporting can appear somewhat arbitrary. Ironically, the arbitrariness increases the more cohesively integrated the schools policies are. In the report, the text in italics is always a direct quotation from the interviewees, or the school documentation.

### School A

#### **Background data**

School A is an established private fee-paying (though it also attracts government funding) primary and secondary school for boys. It has an overall student population of population of around 1200 students, about 1000 of them at the secondary level. This school has several campuses but the main one, which was the one visited for this project, is in a well-established suburb of Melbourne, not far from the city centre.

The school's website refers to the school having a '*unique caring culture*' which '*celebrates a nurturing, caring relationship between students and staff*', and, states that it '*value(s) the positive relationships that develop between students*'. There is an explicit Civics course, delivered to Yr 8 students, but it was not able to be examined despite researchers' queries about it.

The Headmaster's Message on the website referred to the school as a *'thriving in its vibrant, supportive, educational environment, founded on the enduring qualities of goodness, truth, service and justice'*.

The male teacher interviewed had a senior administrative role which included across-school pastoral responsibilities, and involved mentors from the Old Boys network. He was in charge of, and also taught, the Personal Development program (one period per week) to all Yr7 and Yr8 students. The size and age of the group (25 Yr8 students) meant that decorum was an issue in the interview/discussion that ensued. This limited the exploration of student ideas.)

### **School A data, mapped to the analysis framework**

#### **Role of school culture (at School A)**

- Pastoral care programs are integrated into the school organisation. The school is structured into horizontal and vertical networks, through the year level and house system. This results in year groups of about 120. *'This cross-age arrangement leads to cross-age friendship groups.'*
- The staff is focussed on helping students *'become self-managing'*.
- Personal knowledge of the students is also important: *'I talk to kids because I work with the kids at Yrs 7 and 8... and you just know...That's one of the great things about teaching all Yr7s and all Yr8s, you do get to know them you get it through the kid directly ... I get a lot of kids coming to me...and you'd have a bit of a chat. 'We've got a great counselling team up there and they're really approachable too.'*
- There is close monitoring of students and identification of those who may be having problems. *'We have these things called referral meetings pretty regularly (where staff sit around the table with the counsellors... there's this referral process where things tend to get picked up pretty regularly.'*
- Community engagement, outside the school, through activities for students, is not organised by the school at Yr8. The teacher reported that *'We do community service at Yr9. They have to find somewhere where they're going to do that and that can be at a primary school or a nursing home... they organise themselves.'* *'Yr10s do Work Experience.'*
- Pastoral care and belonging are linked through the curriculum. The interviewed teacher manages the Yr8 program mentioned on the website which addresses friendship groups, peer pressure, leadership and personal development, with Year 10 boys assisting in the program.

It includes *'topics such as substances, drugs, self and exploration of where they are going, which includes depression, sexuality and so on. It is 50/50 exploratory (where student opinion is sought and discussed) and informational, and delivery varies according to the teacher.'* *'On drug use, we're more harm minimisation rather than zero tolerance, it's not the way it's written down, but that's the way things are in organisations like this.'* *'It's a good school - we're open to all ideas.'*

- There is an additional pastoral program - a structured leadership program - which involves a week's camp for Yr8s in which they are mentored by Yr11 and Yr12 students, plus *'Old Boys are employed for a week during this program'*. *'Normally a Yr11 who has looked after 12 kids all week (on camp) ...gets ... Facebook friendship requests. Those boys are now networked to their Yr11 mentor and the Old Boy, and now that they're networked to that one, then they're open to all those other ones... they tend to build up quite a connectedness with the senior boys that way.'*
- The school has prefects, house leaders and leaders of particular (eg: particular sports) groups. They are appointed by the staff. In terms of participation, students may come up with ideas (for example new sports uniforms) and put them to the leaders of any of these groups. *'They'll have to go through committees and put it to panels and so on.'* *'The deputy principal runs administrative sessions with members.'*
- According to the teacher, the students get ideas and are informed of school events through assemblies; 2 per term for Years 7 to 12. *'Otherwise there are student-run assemblies for 2 year levels at a time where students from leadership groups, or who have been previously been involved in past activities, lead a discussion'*. None of the student discussion related to any governance or leadership options within the school structures they thought might have been available to them. Nor did they express views about their experiences of student governance within the school. It was not on their wave-length.
- Students' sense of belonging to the School A community was said to be encouraged by staff. *'We talk about the School A family, the School A community, and that sort of stuff... as does the Headmaster.'* But in the student interview/discussion, despite prompting, there was little expression of a sense of belonging to the school community.
- The students referred to their identity solely in terms of outside-school activities, none of which were school related. The most common joint activity they undertook outside school was *'I go shopover with my mates.'*
- One student had an interest in biking and in purchasing bike parts *'so I order it online and it's so much cheaper. I just know lots about what I'm getting... I do a bit of research. Sometimes you mightn't be able to get something in Australia, or it might be cheaper in America or the UK or Europe.'*

- Another student spoke of how he belonged to a Facebook group associated with ‘*a sport that I do (outside school). We have mentoring sessions for the next game and (through Facebook) that’s how we plan things. Mostly everyone joins in, because everyone’s on Facebook most of the time.*’ He further commented that he learnt how to be a responsible user/planner through the mentors/team leaders in his online sporting group: ‘*There’s a few like 20 year olds and 25 year olds, in the group, they’re like the responsible adults. And we work together because we are all in the team.*’

## **Role of Web 2.0 and social media (at School A)**

- The school website stated the following: ‘*Each boy from Year 5 to 12 has a tablet computer, providing access to network resources such as email, the internet and the School intranet via a wireless connection. A tablet computer package is organised by the School, with most students upgrading their notebook every three years. The package includes a portable wireless tablet computer, school licensed software, insurance and technical service. Students do not use their tablet for every lesson, but have it on demand to service the activity of learning when required. All hardware and software issues on machines purchased through the school program are handled on site at the Technical Centre. (Curriculum in Information Technology is BASIC).*’ The teacher commented ‘*We run an intranet... you can put stuff up on it, but there’s not enough (support) staff...*’
- Web 2.0.0 technologies, (such as for example collaborative wikis mentioned by interviewer) were said to be too demanding in terms of time for teachers to set up and use in class, although the use of these would be permitted. ‘*That takes time and teachers don’t have time.*’ ‘*That’d be so time consuming to set up and manage and oversee... you don’t get that sort of time...though that interface process would fine because it’s not Facebook...*’
- The interviewed teacher could see advantages to broader Web 2.0 use in communicating with students. ‘*Currently I will send an email to a student, which is not very different from sending an IM, but at the moment the rule says no. When I think of my Yr12 class - gee it’d be much easier to just set up a Facebook group and just post to that and then you’d have an ongoing dialogue - people would have a place that they went to.*’ ‘*But that’s not the way the rules are (at this school) at the moment and so that’s the way it is.*’
- Teacher said Web 2.0 technologies were not used to support assemblies or the activities discussed at them.
- Both teacher and students indicated there was no expectation that students would use Web 2.0 or social networking to create or present their work using Web 2.0. However students commented that ‘*With computers sometimes you do work... and you can talk over Skype, and it’s free too.*’

- This school has detailed policies regarding social networking, and the Deputy Principal has charge of the monitoring of student use of student social networking, as the school sees it as an issue 'to be managed'. *'Processes are in place. 'Students have access to an open internet but are aware that usage is monitored. 'We have an open internet so no sites are blocked. 'That creates that ... openness, we've treated you the right way... we're checking on you, but we're trusting you at the same time.'* *'The kids also know that.'* This has meant that use in class requires teacher monitoring: *'It's looking over shoulders. You go around and you look at the status bar... and you know that that means that they've got Skype loaded. A canny teacher will know that sort of stuff.'* *'The kids know we're sort-of out there.'* Old Boys and older students are (also) involved in some monitoring and reporting of incidents.
- There had been problems with Facebook in the past, particularly of bullying, but they had been dealt with effectively. *'It only takes a couple of those groups to be dismantled at school through the compliance processes, to develop more 'self-managing... .'* *'Cross-age connections help – the older boy who sees it might just message that person and say 'you probably should just delete that comment'... Simple things like that... Students learn.'* In terms of how the situation at School A compared with other schools, the teacher felt that it was not very serious: *'We get issues, but we don't tend to get the crazy sort of issues that you get in some other communities.'*
- The teacher had changed his way of communicating with the Old Boys involved in his leadership program, to accommodate the way they used social networking for communicating. *'I set up a FB page for that event. It used to be that I'd just set up an email group, but you get days when nothing happens. If you want something to happen quickly, then Facebook is it, because they are there... that's their space.'*
- The teacher remarked that there is a shift over time to how students use Web 2.0. *'When they hit that social age of Yrs 9 and 10, that's when they become more fascinated with the other people who are on the network and they are building networks with girls and so on... so they start a few conversations there ...before then it's just silly comments with friends and photos of the footy and I'm a member of this silly group...Even by Yr12 Web 2.0 use is limited to friendship groups. It's all about social connectedness. Some of the students will use Skype but that will be more for chat'.*
- The students didn't distinguish between the internet and Web 2.0.0 technologies. Their comments focused more on the purpose or function. They also used platforms other than computers: *'We also use phones, like text messaging...maybe like Facebook on your (smart)phone, you've got an app for it, stuff like that.'*
- As School A is a laptop school where all students purchase one and it is networked to the school's server.. *'With computers sometimes you do work... and you can talk over Skype'.* This arrangement can require significant adjustments for new students: *'I went from a school using no computers to a school where I have a laptop everyday ... I'm still kind of getting*

*used to it, using the computer everyday ... and yeah I feel more comfortable talking on Facebook and my typing's getting better'.*

- Learning was often organised in collaborative groups. *'We've had several projects where we work in groups so you can use Google docs at home.'* *'Me and Chris did our project over Skype. You can share your screen on Skype so you can show them what you've written down and stuff and you can send your documents through it... it's really handy. If you need to do homework with someone, you can do it over Skype, so it's basically just like being in his house.'*
- Teachers communicate with them via email. *'Teachers often send us work by email and you also get project work and you can use the internet for that.'*
- The students knew the necessity to make judgments as to what they read on the internet: *'Wikipedia: there's a lot of factual stuff... if they think it's not legitimate at the top they've got a banner that says some of this information isn't true.'* *'You can also check it from books.'* *'That's why you have more resources than one.'* They used a small variety of technologies when doing schoolwork at home.

### **Role of explicit Civics and Citizenship education (at School A)**

Since 2005, School A has run a civics course in October for the whole cohort of Yr8 called Mock Election, which is built around students conducting an election, with campaigns, and presentations to staff. It has the stated aims of addressing the following:

- **Civics and Citizenship Education (VELS Domain).** *Do they boys gain knowledge of political parties, issues, how campaigns are run and how voting operates?*
- **Interpersonal Development (VELS Domain).** *Does the Mock Election give the boys experience and skills in working in teams and in demonstrating leadership?*
- **Engagement.** *Does the Mock Election engage the boys in a different type of learning program?*

There was no evidence of these perspectives in the student responses when interviewed about their learning and the existence of social or political engagement options they may have had at school, despite prompting from the interviewers. The course may well proceed as a 'leadership activity' rather than a CCE one. The students appeared not even recall it having recently been conducted, though the interviewed teacher knew it had been conducted.

- The teacher said the school's education is based on the principle of *'don't treat people badly'*. The vertical grouping works to *'minimise bad treatment'*. He described the general context at the school as one of *'treat others as you wish to be treated'*. The latter part of a student comment about one advantages of social media, could be interpreted as illustrating such a principle: *'Sometimes if people call you on Skype you decline them because it gives you a sense of empowerment... Like in real life, you have to say yes, it's kind of awkward if you just walk away from a conversation.'*

- In the view of the teacher (and perhaps the school) there are very few implications for Yr8 students from Web 2.0 technologies for socialisation to issues beyond their peer group. *'Year 8 kids don't communicate outside with external social or issue-engaged groups (eg, GetUp) because their friends aren't there. If they were interested, and a group had a Facebook page, they would link to it via that – maybe by Yr11.'*
- The students did not have any links with outside organisations (other than the two personal interest groups quoted) and had no idea that social issue sites, and links or memberships existed. They did not have a sense of social issues. Their engagement in all things is personal.
- Social media has raised their consciousness about the need for trust to be the basis of their use of online..... *'It's all about trust, especially Facebook, you get your friends lots of people don't like adding randoms. If you're just adding any your friends around you and people that you actually know, it could be like quite a safe community if you actually know them.'* *'Trust, that's the good thing about Skype, because you can actually see their faces. Some people can make accounts like people's names, someone could make it like a person that person knows, so they could make that account and pretend to be that person talking and on Skype you can actually see their face.'* *'It's like talking to them, you can see their face and you can interact.'* *'It's better than a phone call. If you can see their face... you can see if someone's being sarcastic or not.'* *'If you see their face you actually know it's them.'* *'If someone's talking to you on FB you can think they're being nice to you and they're not, but over Skype you can see someone's reaction.'*
- But there was still much to learn *'Heaps of websites you just have to give your email address you don't have to give them any other information... if you wanted to go into an environmental support group and you just wanted to give them your email address and not anything else, I don't see the harm in that.'*
- There were anxieties: *'If a girl sends a picture of themselves to a boy it doesn't matter how old he is, he can be 15 or something you'd get arrested for child pornography but he's done nothing, he's just received the photo.'*

## **School B**

### ***Background data***

School B is a recently established co-educational government school, servicing new outer-urban suburbs of Melbourne, with a modern spacious architect-designed campus. (Student enrolment is determined by their living within the school's designated catchment zone). Currently the student cohort extends only to Yr 9. The school website and logo referenced the learner in the many contexts they inhabit: family, school, including peers, local

community, broader community of Australia and the world. It also indicated that developing a strong sense of self within these contexts, by personalised learning for all and respect for the individual learner. The teaching and learning environment is designed with a wide range of different learning spaces and is described as ‘ICT-rich’.

Humanities teacher was interviewed. She taught the Yr 9 class, from which the 5 male students who had returned their signed permission letters (thus a self-selecting sample) were interviewed, as a group.

### **School B data, mapped to the analysis framework**

#### **Role of school culture (at School B)**

- According to the students interviewed, teachers expect them to be independent learners, (but) *‘If we need help, it’s not like throwing us into the deep end of the pool and trying to swim this lap, it’s see how you go and if we need help then we’ll be there for you.’*
- When asked if they had the sense that this place allowed them to explore who they were, the students replied ... *‘A little bit’.*
- Students noted the role of peers in ‘belonging’ and to ‘giving help’ ... Sometimes you get help from friends. *‘During lunch and after school, you can go, they have a library. There is a study group where you’re able to use computers, read the books.’ ‘And on Wednesday, we have a homework club after school because we finish early... If the kids are behind on like English work they can go into the library after school.’ ‘We’re all there to help each other I guess.’*
- Student achievements both inside and outside the school whether they participated in sports or volunteered in the community were collected and logged on the school database.
- Teacher believed the students’ view of their identity in the school and in the wider community was constrained by being part of a very new social community and this sense of constraint ran over onto the school community. The Yr 9s lacked more senior students as models. She also argued that the school’s low SES community cohort was still learning about the power of education, and that skills and attitudes to learning were underdeveloped. *‘We (teachers at the school) have to put so much in front of them... Without senior students...I think we’re missing that layer of modeling... There’s only so much teachers can encourage students to do. They need to see their peers doing things.’*
- Students are allocated to houses *‘we are sort of like a family within a family, I guess’.* Students can apply for positions of house captains, but they are appointed by teachers. The

students elect house representatives to the SRC, which can take up issues raised by students (through an anonymous suggestion box) direct to the Principal. One student reported, achieving success on a recent occasion. *'I was elected to the SRC not long ago and we discussed the (most frequently suggested issue from the box) and we found a solution and we had to talk with the Principal and we tested our idea for a couple of weeks and it went good so we decided to keep it... it felt good because now we don't have to worry about the problem.'*

## **Role of Web 2.0 and social media (at School B)**

- The suburb/region was reported as having the worst broadband and wireless access in Melbourne, which inhibits the use of Web 2.0 and social media in teaching and learning ... The school appears to be saturated with Web 2.0 in the form of blogs, wikis, and other applications.
- The blogs are outward facing (the public, including parents, can see them) *'I have been pushing the Web 2.0 technologies in the school, we've got blogs going for the year levels and some of the houses have blogs as well. For example I have set up a blog for the humanities domain and we use it as our front door for the school in term of the domain. Parents can go there, there's no passwords required, so there is access to see what the curriculum is, broadly what they are going to look at each term plus lots of links to resources, interactive games and other kinds of alternative learning tools.'*
- The humanities blog is *'open to all humanities teachers to be contributors, but not students.* The reasoning behind this is that *'because we are a new school, and we started with such young children, one of the risks of putting them out into cyberspace, that putting out unedited work, very very embryonic work ... public criticism ... can actually inhibit whether they continue to do that. We also have a duty of care with young people and the internet.'*
- The teacher also reported that she and others used wikis which were private. The space seems to be primarily teacher-centred in which they *'allow discussion forums to happen'* which speaks against the development by students of their independent / socially responsive identity, previously-mentioned. *'Closed wikis. You have to be a member to join. You can only be a member if you belong to our school group. We put assignments up there, and resources, and we allow discussion forums to happen. Although students haven't taken to it initially well. Some kids do, some students never go on.'*
- There were two additional online tools used at School B - both providing some opportunities for peer-peer interaction.  
(a) Collaborize Classroom: *'You can post work, questions, opinion polls. Students can engage then with the work. You can actually put up the homework questions... they can then respond and have an online conversation'...* *'they did for a while but then the interest dropped off.'*

*(b) Edmodo: 'This is what we call 'Facebook teaching.... it looks and acts a little like Facebook. You get a wall. As a teacher you can go in and create groups for each of your classes. You can post anything you want, questions, comment, a bit of advice, resource links, assignments, due dates, polls, all sorts. Students can get it from anywhere because it is web technology. They don't have to be logged into the school network. They can actually respond and reply to each other and I have found that they (students and staff) have really taken to it. I have only come back from PD on it three weeks ago and it is already gone like wildfire through the school. Last week I ran a remote lesson. I was at home ... so I was able to get online when I knew my Yr 9s were on and start talking to them about the work they were doing. .. It's like instant messaging, posting on a facebook page... I would post up a question and wait for someone to respond to it because I know they have it up while they're doing their other work. I try to book laptops for my kids as often as possible. Obviously this is only functioning if you've got laptops in the class. But it's also good for homework or for students that are absent. We've got kids out on other activities and they really get concerned about missing about so if you post the assignment or the lesson activity up there on Edmodo, then they can come into it at any time of the day, go in and see what they were supposed to do then go off and do it. So that seems to be working quite well.'*

- The teacher identified that it was important to students that they can control their own representation online – their avatar or gravatar [globally recognised avatar]. *'The most important thing for students, the first thing they need to do, is get their gravatar set up, they need their image. Why so important? – 'It is about their online identity I think, who they are.'* Because we make them use a username - a name which identifies you as a classroom. So there is a transition period of them getting used to doing that. We have to allow that to happen. Edmodo does allow you to lock students out if they're mucking around or give them read-only access if they are posting inappropriately...

When asked if students were using Web 2.0 technologies to create, the teacher responded *'Unfortunately not as much as you would like simply because of lack of access. There are not enough laptops to give them. I think that in the technology areas (such as maths, science etc) that can happen more often since there are permanent bookings for technology. They (students) have got to have the tool in front them all the time. You can't have it once a week and then do three or four paper lessons or traditional style lessons and keep that flow of creating and I find that a little frustrating that we don't have the gear to do the job... As teachers you've got to plan two different lessons, because if your technology is not working on the day or if someone else has priority you've got to think, well, what can I do, what's my alternative?'*

- The teacher said that *'Some are starting to use Edmodo at home but not nearly as much as you would like and I think it's partly to do with the fact that we're still getting them to get their heads around the amount of homework they need to be doing. There's a lot of kids who still think they can get away with no homework.'*

- Students reported that the (mis)behaviour of some students can be an interference to learning and the school was operating a web-based behaviour modification program through its online database (which the students call the 'interface') *'We can also use that [the interface] to check behaviour points and citizenship points... We have a system where if you get minus 100 points you get an after school detention and you can get plus points as well. Staff control it - for students it's 'read-only'. 'There's a warning system, like step 1 is just a warning to let you know you've done something wrong. Step 2 is she'll probably take points off for that... in a class, and Step 3 is that's enough, stop there and you are going to get points taken off. Step 4 is 'go the vice principal'. 'Only the really bad kids get to step 3 or 4. Yeah, we've got a couple of doozies in our class .. I think we've all got to step 1.'*
- Researchers had a subsequent discussion with a Maths teacher and observed his class, which demonstrated one Web 2.0 program, including assessment, had been instituted at the school. *'Our maths work is based around the computers, so we have what's called an interface where we can access what work we need to do, where we need to improve on to get to the standard level we need to be at...It's very interactive, the interface, it lets us control our learning in a sense, so, especially with the maths, we can control how fast we want to go, what we want to learn...what dimensions we want to improve in.'*
- Students felt safe on Facebook, if care was taken. The students were careful about Facebook privacy settings and control. *'I checked my privacy settings and it's set on friends only.'* *'Got to know the person before you let them have access to your profile, you don't know what kind of sicko is out there.'*
- Students treat YouTube and Facebook as a place to share their achievements. They put up Media videos – *'Media is a subject and we made a couple of videos. We thought we'd chuck it on YouTube and Facebook to spread it a little bit. A couple of people liked it.'*
- One interview exchange indicated an individual's skill in using social media for learning as well as an interest in assisting others was provided by one of the students said that he was involved in organising a group on Facebook for another Science class. *'I don't mean to take it away from wikispaces, but a friend of mine and I organised a group on Facebook for Science ... cause the girls were having a lot of trouble with the science work, they didn't understand ... so ... now students can post their question up and we can reply to it as necessary... We do that a bit with wikispace as well, we can see what the teacher's set, what the teacher wants and we can also ask other students while they're in the wikispace, like if they don't understand and you can get it from another student's perspective, I guess so you can ask what they think it is and you can get help... so it's like your own little poll, I guess... 'We can control what goes up there and kids can ask 'I was away for this day ... can anyone send me an email of the worksheet we were given'. 'Me and my friend (in the other class) can control what goes up there and we can remove anything which is inappropriate.'*

When asked if any teacher is a group member, the student replied *'I don't think teachers are allowed to contact students within Facebook... that's why I think they have created their own websites.'*

- Some enjoyed external recreational interests and used Facebook and the internet to extend those interests. They understood that membership of a group outside school which had an external website entailed obeying the site's rules. But students rarely accessed such sites. Engaging with others in outside interest groups on line was thought by students to be (potentially) risky. *'Privacy is the biggest thing in that. You don't know what could go on in there... If you set up a messaging thing you don't know what people would say on it. You don't know what would happen, what information would be passed on. Instead of trying to fix the problem, you just don't have the problem.'*

### **Role of explicit Civics and Citizenship education (at School B)**

- There is no explicit civics and citizenship curriculum in the school *as there was no staff to run the civics course referenced on the school website. However, 'Citizenship is woven through many of the things we do, we have the sports academy where they lead a lot of sports activities... we have our leadership group, we have the house system schools within schools model and here is a citizenship as part of the house group what your role is as a red house student... so that there is that kind of citizenship. So it is a little bit more embedded and more spread rather than a specific (unit). And pastoral care too is a good place for that kind of thing.'*
- There is pressure from overcrowded curriculum: *'One of the things I have noticed teaching Humanities is that we get the civics and citizenship curriculum, but really it is not entirely clear how we can deal with that. ... ..but you have also got Geography, History, Economics and you have a lot to pack in.'* *'So one of the things we have been looking at is pushing CCE into a wider framework...'*
- An example of how this wider CCE framework for is construed at School B is some of the ICT behavioural teaching and learning. *'I think teaching students how to speak to each other politely in normal face to face conversation is really, (which we've just transferred that online – how do you type to one another, what sort of things are appropriate. ... So we have to teach them those kinds of things. It is more about how do you behave out in cyberspace, how do you protect yourself. It is part of the whole cyber-bullying thing, how do you protect yourself and your friends, how of you do the right thing out there in the way you would do the right thing face to face with other people... it's a learning process for all of us as teachers as well. ... it's all experimental, to see what kinds of behaviours we need to jump on, what kind of behaviours we need to encourage.'*
- When asked about whether the school informed students about outside opportunities to engage with the wider community and social issues, and/or encouraged such engagement,

the teacher responded was that the teacher who had been most interested had left the school and the momentum had disappeared. ‘... a few of them did the 40 hour famine ... I think they are just starting to explore what these options are, and there’s not a lot. We’ve put things under their nose just to see the take up rate ...

- The idea of using Facebook or email to become involved in a broader social concern drew blank faces and laughter from students.

## **School C**

### ***Background data***

School C is an established government co-educational secondary school of approximately 1500 students, in a long-established mid-suburb of Melbourne (student enrolment is determined by their living within the school’s designated catchment zone). The buildings are fairly modern, though variable in quality. Full broadband services exist.

The school’s Charter comprises two parts: *Beliefs and Values + Powerful Learning*. Under *Beliefs and Values* are listed as Personal Identity, Personal Development and Sense of Community.

Under *Powerful Learning* are listed Classroom Environment and Relationships, the Learning Process and the Learning Programs.

The Charter refers to a very high value being placed on learning (across all learning areas and for all students) and on active participation in interest groups. Student learning and participation is to occur within a community framework.

It is a Google Apps school and website has an IT page:

Teacher of Humanities and ICT was interviewed. Recently appointed to the school, due to his specific expertise, he taught an explicit in a CCE course, compulsory to all Yr9 students in medium-sized groups, which required students engage with Web 2.0 in their own project presentation. Eleven of these students attended the interview/discussion.

### **School C data, mapped to the analysis framework**

#### **Role of school culture (at School C)**

- Asked about the reference in the school charter to identity and belonging, the teacher said ‘*The whole school’s teaching and learning environment and culture and the Civics and Citizenship course have an explicit identity focus*’.
- ‘*Students have the responsibility to participate, to engage and manage their learning*’.

- *'Students are all expected to read the newspapers: the world is their learning context.'*
- The teacher reported that there was considerable diversity in the school population - *'our students belong to many communities – it's part of who they are. They are not racially homogenous but harmonious'*. School has a pastoral care programs which involve 'home groups'. Class assemblies are weekly. School assemblies are monthly. *'Kids are known.'*
- Student engagement covers a multitude of interests and participations. Students report at house and school assemblies on their group's activity- *'you don't have to win or anything'* and the *'school photographer is always present, snapping away, and these pics are 'uploaded onto newsletters and a video resource'*. Swift, frequent, public and high-profile recognition of all student participation is given at whole school assemblies, which the Principal routinely attends. Any C School community person can inform the school of student participation or success for recognition in this public manner.
- School celebration of extra-curricular activities accords with *'every opportunity (being) given for students to try something'* in or outside of school; *'staff and kids talk up trying'*.
- School's emphasis is on students being responsible for their *learning and in participating in the life of the school in a positive, broadly-defined way. Teacher referred to there being endless opportunities to learn... 'students should take them all & sort out which ways are best for them'*
- The students all expressed a clear view about their sense of self (identity) *'When you ask yourself who you are, you feel like you want to know yourself better. It's about finding the relationship between what you do, why you do it and who you do it with.'*
- Students' outside school activities spill out from school ones – there is a *'porous boundary there'*. Students protested that they had *'all sorts of sports and non-school activities, Duke of Edinburgh, umpiring, volunteering/working for organizations, class tasks too – filming etc.* Their disposition to engage in what interested them was based on their initial experience of exploring and trying things out at school, and then outside school and they expected to continue that process to a wider range of adult issues. *The sky's the limit!* Plus they learnt managing skills. *'You have to organize your own (school) activity – Wednesday afternoons. 'We do have LIVES!'* (This plaintive comment was followed by much loud laughter...)
- The teacher affirmed that *'Decision-making is explicit in students' responsibilities for making arrangements for a range of their learning and other activities, and the students are responsible for ensuring they function well.'*
- *'Accepting individual responsibility & accountability for their own actions, and for a group if in a governance role'*, were standard expectations at School C.

- The teacher reported that in regards to *teaching and learning*, the ‘mainstream attitude is the very high value placed on learning – for all students & all learnings’.
- Teachers were described as having the responsibility to ensure innovative pedagogic and content options are provided to unengaged students. ‘Staff have the responsibility to make it (the curriculum) a real fit for kids’. ‘Teachers need to innovate if first attempts at engagement [of students] don’t work.’
- The school and its’ staff were said to have an awareness of the importance of lifelong learning. ‘The curriculum & its’ delivery are structured to facilitate links to futures & future learning students might want to have’.
- This collaborative approach extends to the ‘assessment & program evaluations being routinely undertaken, with all stakeholders actively involved’.
- The students’ summary of the teaching and learning philosophy of the school was succinct. ‘They (the staff at School C) want you to do well, but they want you to find yourself and your interests too’
- The school adopts ‘an inclusive pedagogy’, commonly requiring that ‘students work together’, in & outside school.
- Emphasis in teaching and learning is placed upon on the importance of having *quality specific knowledge*, and the need for it to be verified, before advancing an argument or position on anything. The students knew ‘opinion is not enough’. They were well aware of the need for facts and skills and for a *case* to be made – that’s what they are taught and what they seek to practise.
- The school insists that ‘the focus is on being articulate about what they have learnt & how their ideas have altered/progressed.’ (and the students keep a record of their learning so they can review it) *over time – over the years.*’
- Students were confident about how they gained their learning; ‘you can learn from doing anything.’
- There was explicit recognition from students that they could do or be who they wished, and that ‘... to explore, and to find out where and with whom you fit, is a responsibility and an obligation’. Responses from both teacher and student perspectives also conveyed the view that contributing to and participating in groups was ‘...more fun than learning/acting alone’.
- School and extension activities provide opportunities for engagement with potential futures and the rest of the world. The teacher referred to the school’s intention. ‘At this school you can decide to belong – and most do feel that, especially to some part of it.’ The students’

reckoned that *'You can involve yourself as much you want in the extra-curricular activities, depends on what you're interested in as a person, get your friends to come along – it's more fun then.'* Though the students also understood that *'Some people don't operate that way ...'*

- Students have many 'belonging' options in the school, which can be based on any of their interests and *'the students report on their group activities, past and future.'* They know they will be affirmed at the small and large school assemblies and on the school website, *'which the students support and can upload to too'* Student views on belonging were *'If you want to contribute you can, but no-one forces you to take on a public role.'* When reading *'in a newspaper article about the school you feel connected to it and positive, feel proud about it'*.

### **Role of Web 2.0 and social media (at School C)**

- Introducing the approach to Web 2.0 in teaching and learning the teacher reported that *'School C is a Google Apps school and has an IT department of 8-9 technical support staff who will support anybody with anything they want to learn or do or make.'* *'Teachers understand that you can't just chalk and talk anymore, there's an expectation of teaching staff, of everyone, that they will use the technologies' in teaching and learning.'*
- (For students and staff) *'...accessing a computer is never an issue'*. Web 2.0 is *'recognised as a powerful interchange. Most teachers use Web 2.0 to tailor almost-individualised instruction'...* *'Web 2.0 portal tools are commonly-used to facilitate individual learning and whole class learning.'* The school's expectation is that students will also be using these Web 2.0 portal tools in their work, *'and they do'*. Parents, students and staff all believe it is the students' role to seek to catch up if a class is missed, but equally teachers are expected to have resources and planned instruction available to them. *'There's a YouTube channel for keeping up.'*
- The School C students were totally at ease with Web 2.0 and social media technologies, both for learning and for personal use. *'Technologies have personal, social and academic uses – and they overlap.'* *'Computer use is just part of everyday life. (We) use them for reading the news (and not just sport or personal interests!), watching TV, social networking, gaming, entertainment, talking with others, homework, especially planning.'*
- As they explained to the interviewers, using laptops and social media was second nature to them. *'If you weren't brought up with modern technology your lives would not revolve around Facebook and social networking technology as much. You'd just have to learn how to use it – for us it's just part of the range of (communication) tools.'* *'As soon as you learn words you are typing those words on the computer.'* *'Touch typing, (learnt by some at primary school) means you just write really quickly. It's no big deal.'*

- Students articulated that they have a range of personas/identities, and according to context that they use social media differentially. *'With friends it's different – you share things with them, and with family it's different too – depends on your relationships.'*
- Students were open-minded about using any social media process for their learning *'You can use Skype ... it can be good for collaborative work, though not everyone has a webcam'*
- *'IT staff are always trialing new things - iPads, whiteboards with laptops/usbs, social media to some extent, channels where we put teacher stuff for students, or where their stuff goes up for watching (by others) - creating sites and portals for many subjects and groups.'* Plus *'... wireless is coming.'*
- Cyber safety remains a significant issue, with the school providing instruction to parents and students. *'Constant alertness that Web 2.0 can open the school up too much to outsiders',* so *'no photos are put up'*.
- The Web-based tools are also available to facilitate students' interests. *'There are clubs and societies in the school which have Facebook pages/groups... School C Radio, internet, has been set up and students talk about what is coming up.'*
- The school affirmed the merit of using *'various audio-visual technologies... a video resource is being created to add value'*, especially to student work.
- The ways that in which ICT could support active, joint and creative engagement in learning were understood by both parties, and the students affirmed that accessing ICT based tools provided important learning skills and increased satisfaction and efficacy in learning. *'It introduces interest into your work. If you interpret in your own way and make a video, it suddenly becomes more interesting, you put your own twist on it (the topic) - (also) it's more interesting (for you and others) to watch.'* (Students demonstrated a highly-developed sense of the importance of audience, and this was fostered by the video assessment product they had to create for the Civics and Citizenship course.)
- School C also uses Web 2.0 tools in a monitoring and student self-reflection process. *'Students keep a digital portfolio of their work over the year, are encouraged to reflect on themselves in an audience-appropriate manner.'*
- Students thought some Web 2.0 tools were no use for learning – or it seemed for anything else! *'Twitter is for celebrities'* and *'no-one wants to show or listen to your everyday thoughts.'* They were not comfortable with it *'... can stalk with Twitter'* and people who use it *'are old people who think they are hip.'* (This last comment was amusing to researchers, as the teacher had despaired of their refusal to exploit its capacities for expressing and exchanging views.)

- School C students knew that Web 2.0 technologies can be used to locate other organizations, whose perspective could be used as a source of information about what is happening in the wider world. But they had a limited engagement with such internet sites, mainly for school work, but also in following up personal interest areas. They knew about the ‘Arab Spring’ and had opinions about the role social networking had played in it. They had not engaged with any sites that had an explicit intent to create social change.

### **Role of explicit Civics and Citizenship education (at School C)**

- The new explicit Civics and Citizenship curriculum at School C is viewed as a manifestation, in a broader social context, of the school’s Charter expectations regarding joint student and school responsibilities and accountability. The interviewed teacher, the course’s developer, charged with its’ delivery, affirmed that *‘the course and school environment have an explicit identity focus, and it operates within a culture where voting on a range of matters within the school is common’*.
- The explicit civics and citizenship curriculum is compulsory for half a term for all Yr9 students, and is conducted in half-class groups. It is a multi-media course and links citizen engagement and civic process ... *‘Auzzie Democracy’ is a taster course in civics/citizenship, and will provide students with context for their politics study in Yr 12. It demonstrates that policy is formed by people who care. It has explicit socialisation objectives. It requires rapport-development, extends sense of self. It teaches kids to become wary of spin.’*
- Students selected an issue which was a live political one at the time of Federation and which was still politically current as an issue, for example, Immigration (boat arrivals) and Defence (support for a war, financing etc) . The explicit CCE course *requires a developing & testing of students’ own ideas. It gets students to discover and clarify their interests and think in terms of their futures. Many of them start thinking/deciding what careers/ futures they want to follow in their lives...It helps them work out more about their identity, about who they are ...’* When asked if some students didn’t closely engage with this curriculum, the teacher was emphatic. *‘No kids don’t switch onto the course and it’s requirements. We help them find an issue they care about and it works because ‘it shows them how the outside world is relevant to them’*.
- The course *‘models negotiation, and allows students to experience and question governance, decision and policy-making, exterior to the school’*.
- Students researched the historical and current context, and formed a policy view on their issue topic. They then interviewed their local federal member and an education journalist on their interest topics and afterwards *‘each wrote and created and videoed a maiden speech, trying to adopt a politician persona’*.

- Students reiterated the importance of trust in the use of social networking, both when using it in a personal space, for example with peers, and also when using it as a learning and exposition tool, for example in making of their videos . *‘Online you have to imagine the emotion, you can misinterpret – sometimes the conversation has to go for a bit more/longer before you can be sure ... because you can’t be sure of boundaries’*, that is of the other’s opinion/positioning on an issue, vis a vis ‘you’.
- Teacher intended *‘to put videos onto a website - praps a blog- for internal audience’* (for personal affirmation). The student videos were watched and critiqued by the class group, and with texts, *‘will be sent to ABC Open for uploading there’*.
- Students have a clear view about the difference between participating in conversation face-to-face and online. *‘You behave differently online than otherwise – You feel like you’re speaking in a different voice’*. *‘Compared to the phone you can’t hear intonation.’* *‘Things seem more literal.’*
- Students had a precise view of the governance options available to them at the school and adult decision-making within the school. However their experience was that when students their age were in charge - the process was seen as chaotic. *‘There are too many opinions, they can conflict.’* Decision-making processes were known and understood theoretically but the Yr9 students had not been able to effectively negotiate or implement them in the context of the SRC. *‘Needed someone to organize things... an adult, and now we think if we try to organize things we think that bad things will happen along the way, and so we just don’t bother.’* The students expressed frustration that they were unable to resolve the many conflicting stances on the issues students had brought to the SRC, which had meant they needed adult mediation. The decision-making processes available were clearly understood, but they did not yet have the skills to effectively exercise them.
- Students knew school was not a fully functioning democracy and why it could not be. *‘There are constraints on what you can do –school is not like Australia, it’s not so much a democracy.’* But participating had felt good, and they all knew the choice was there, and they thought that another time they may well take up active engagement in an issue that interested or concerned them. *‘Plus school’s pretty good, we have good teachers, programs, curriculums and we don’t need much to change to make it perfect!!’*

## 6: Discussion of Case Study Data, by School & Framework,

The selective literature review in this report identified and examined the main conceptual elements of the framework used in this pilot project: the contribution of a school's learning culture, of Web2 technologies and social media, and of an explicit C & C course, in developing the students' sense of self, a sense of belonging to the school community, efficacy in decision-making and their learning and knowledge.

This pilot project was primarily about learning, about what kinds of learning are valued and how certain learning outcomes can be made more likely to occur in schools. The teacher and student responses across the 3 schools reflect the differing ways in which a learning culture can impact on individuals' learning.

The integration of varying factors in a school learning culture, and the pedagogic demands placed on teachers are also amply, though differently, demonstrated by the responses reported as made by the interviewed teachers. Through the reporting of the case study data the importance to student learning of modeling in a supportive learning culture, by adults and peers, is made manifest. The value of a school having high expectations of its students in these two areas of learning is differently realised in the 3 schools, according to the existence or otherwise of a number of factors. But most evidently in this project the difference relates to the degree to which a school believes that using Web 2.0 and social media in teaching and learning and of having students engage in the wider world is part of its brief.

Figure 1, the *school learning culture* figure, illustrated the interconnected nature of the input choices exercised by a school, since, for an effective learning culture all parts of the Venn diagram need to be present, and to resonate across all parts. It indicates the critical nature of the role of the school's overall learning culture, the main aspects of policy which can be brought to bear on what and how the student learn. Learning outcomes are achieved by virtue of the learning experiences offered, the expectations with which schools challenge their students and the opportunities they have to practice skills and exercise intellectual exploration. It further indicates how the implementation of these policies requires the adoption of a coherent approach by all professional staff. All these school culture factors impact on the learning of students.

In addition to the school learning culture figure, Prior's *Dimensions of Civic Learning* and Moyle's quoted comments on *learning with social media and Web 2.0* are useful in identifying the main substantive factors at play in these 3 schools. Each of the schools publicly articulated the view they want their students to be able to actively engage in the wider world with a sense of autonomy. Their websites indicate the school's intention of using ICT methodologies in the teaching at the school to help achieve this purpose.

## **Discussion of School A responses**

School A appeared to have no expectation that teachers use more than the narrowest range of ICT in their teaching, including to communicate with students through email if necessary. Similarly the expectation appeared to be that students would use the internet to source information and to use their laptops to do their work, sometimes together through Skype. There was great concern about cyber safety generally, and about the negative potential of Facebook in particular, for the bullying of peers. A system of regulation which drew on traditional forms of authority controlled students' use of internet use, and codes of decency were taught and maintained. All these approaches served to create an environment where Web 2.0 and social media were not exploited for their creative possibilities and induced passivity rather than active self-management in student use. However most students used Facebook outside school and it was a big factor in their social lives. Although they were conscious of need for care in its use, they had incorrect knowledge of how to stay safe. The students articulated simplistic views on their sense of identity and expressed no sense of belonging to the school or to a community of their school peers. The interviewed students showed no sense of being part of the world beyond their family, school attendance and individual friends and social interests. No evidence was offered that the school actively attempted to address issues of advancing a 'sense of self' for this cohort or of 'belonging' to the school community, such as providing students with active participation or engagement options, which can act as models of how they might relate to or engage with the outside world. The school community assemblies were infrequent or did not appear to students to involve any participation options to them. The leadership options referenced by the teacher were not open to these students, and the mentoring by older students and at camps by outside former students did not seem realistic to the students. Leadership programs are often conflated with civics and citizenship education, but they fail to achieve most of Prior's *Dimensions* and do not usually have as their goal the benefit of the 'common good', but rather the exercising of control or authority. It should not be assumed that generally-decent people, or all leaders, are necessarily citizens for whom achieving the common good is the paramount value. The relative youth of this student cohort must be considered a factor in their responses regarding these latter matters.

## **Discussion of School B responses**

School B demonstrated a different approach to some aspects of the key elements and models referenced earlier. Teachers were expected to adopt pedagogies that incorporated a range of Web 2.0 and other ICT approaches and they expected that student work would indicate a firm use of a range of technologies. The attitude to ICT was that it was more than a tool, that it could be used creatively to learn differently from what was possible within the traditional paradigm. Students were expected to work independently, managing their learning through a range of Web 2.0 apps and programs.

The students interviewed were a small sub-group of the whole class, those who had been organised enough to return the parent permission form. They demonstrated they had learned new ways of communicating with teachers and other students, and this had led new knowledge and a capacity for students to create new products, initiate new programs and exercise some self-monitoring. Their learning environment challenged them in a variety of ways and those interviewed understood the pedagogic and learning options being offered them and they felt supported in their learning and believed that such learning outcomes were not possible through the traditional paradigm.

Not all the teachers were equally ICT competent, but all seemed to accept that using Web 2.0 approaches in their pedagogy was the new norm for teaching. Professional learning programs were in place and staff appeared to actively support each other professionally. The ICT ethos was clear, but the implementation of ICT across all elements of the *school learning culture* figure was hindered by a lack of adequate logistical resourcing. A shortage of hardware, software difficulties and poor broadband delivery all made full implementation impossible. The teacher interviewed was sanguine about these difficulties, confident that such problems would be resolved. She believed the commitment to the school's ethos in relation to integrating ICT approaches was already securing quality learning outcomes for some of the students and that they would be improved over time. The student responses indicated that for them the school's use of Web 2.0 and social media had enabled them to work creatively with a very wide range of ICT approaches and languages, and they felt they could self-manage their learning. This was despite, or perhaps even because the intermittent logistics meant they had to be resourceful and adopt creative learning initiatives when technological chaos descended.

School B's CCE curriculum was not being delivered, as the teacher responsible had left the school. Such a curriculum was not seen as critical to the general learning outcomes. The teacher reported that a sense of the importance of engagement had been instilled in students through staff's high expectations that students work hard and actively engage with their learning, with teacher support. It was said that attempts to develop strong notions of self and community were difficult to achieve due to the students' family and educational backgrounds and also the lack of senior students to act as mentors. The newness of the suburb was another reason the school believed there was a need to actively try to build a sense of belonging. Formal attempts at developing a sense of community, such as having 'houses' lacked conviction, and the students reported they did not feel attached to them.

However the school ethos and pedagogic approaches had impacted on the way some students worked together and thought independently and they looked out for each other and responded to calls from peers for mentoring and assistance. They had been taught appropriate codes of communication, especially through avatars etc and how to deal decently with staff and peers. The school had adopted a web-based program to monitor and record student behaviour against known criteria, and punishment was automatically metered out if necessary and the interviewed students viewed it as fair and equitably administered.

The interviewed students appreciated the stunning architecture and environmental surrounds of the school. They recognised this school was providing them with opportunities which they should take up. They had some opportunities to practice both rights and responsibilities outside their school work. Opportunities to engage in school governance were in place, and success in resolving one annoying issue was celebrated by the student involved in this SRC experience. Researchers sensed that the interviewed students (who may well be the successes of the school's Yr9 cohort) had the skills and the participatory dispositions and attitudes to engagement to actively engage in other worlds when it occurred to them, but that so far they had not done so. These students had achieved more than a modicum of all Prior's *Dimensions*.

## **Discussion of School C responses**

School C demonstrated the most complex and best integrated *School learning culture*, of the three schools, with also the most explicit use of Web 2.0, social media and civics and citizenship program supporting student learning. Pedagogies using ICT approaches, including Web 2.0 and other aspects of social media, were ubiquitous and both staff and students were strongly supported by a very well-resourced IT department, members of which regarded as part of their brief the delivery of IT professional learning and facilitating the production of student materials in ICT modes. Students learnt using Web 2.0 processes and demonstrated their learning using a wide range of these ICT-based tools, adopting creative delivery modes at every turn.

As part of the School C's learning ethos, students were expected to take control of their own learning, and to be actively engaged in as many aspects of school life as they possibly could be. Teachers had the responsibility to engage students; it was not solely the student's role. Students were tempted, cajoled and encouraged to adopt their 'take' on what interested them in every 'topic' of learning, and equally in their personal areas of interest. There were innumerable opportunities within the school for students to practice engagement in anything in which they were interested. The general style of the school was one where effort and outcomes were shared, celebrated, even assessed, but not judged. Deciding to do something, then organising it and trying to do it well was actively encouraged and valued. Getting your peers to join in was also actively supported. So the school culture was one of student-led significant activity, where expectations from everyone were high. The energy levels and instances of participation were very high indeed. The place buzzed, the students and staff were self-motivated and collaboratively hardworking. There was a strong sense of high activity, which was, for the most part, well-managed by students and staff. There was no sense of chaos, rather a lot of focussed energy. School C was teaching participation and engagement. This school demonstrated the way a learning culture which says *'it's better to try than to fear failure'*, can skill and prepare students to participate in anything they chose.

Research into learning and curriculum research indicate that new learning is built upon what is already known and has previously been practised. This school demonstrated that if a sufficiently broad set of learning opportunities have been offered, if learning support has been provided, and when the philosophy is that students should pursue their interests, students *will* engage in what seems important to them. In the case of this school, ICT generally and Web 2.0 options in particular are ones with which the students regard as the norm, and they utilised them at will. Some of them already confidently utilised them in relation to communities and activities outside their school lives. The border between school and the wider world was a porous one for these students. This was in part because the school regarded the students' outside-school lives as being important aspects of those students' identities, and as a legitimate focus of school learning. They were not treated as adults at school, but as respected citizens of the school, as well as citizens with other identities, which were noted and respected by the school. Most of the interviewed students already had established community roles in their external lives; roles such as umpires, sport and music players. These roles were specifically prompted by, and were thus congruent with, their current interests, and they used their Web 2.0 skills to participate in all these fields.

In terms of this research project, the big question was whether these students' general interests and skills currently had a specific external social issues perspective, or even perhaps an external political action perspective, and for most of them, the answer was no. The CCE course the students had done in Yr9 had given them insights into how the political process worked - that is, they had acquired civics knowledge. The course was also intended to show students that political policy is developed by people who care about social issues and want to make a difference - it was to demonstrate to the students that there are explicit connections between the political world and their lived world. The course' principal purpose was to afford students an experience of the ways in which social issues in Australia could be linked over a century in time, how the political processes had been managed and how these processes might work to address such issues in the present and future, and what role individuals politicians and journalists had and could play in such processes. Students had been encouraged to engage with the political process, and with political actions, but it was at one step slightly removed, as observers. But then they had had to manage the assessment task, which involved developing a personal policy perspective on their chosen issue and creating a video in which they themselves put that policy perspective, in the format of a 'maiden speech', prepared for a political or civic audience. (Note that the assessment task had multiple aspects and objectives, and encompassed several mediums.) Another purpose, in this learning institution, was for the course to act as a 'taster' course for Yr12 Politics.

The CCE course appeared not to have stimulated them to immediately adopt a more demonstrably active citizenship, by actively involving themselves in broader, external social issues, not yet anyway. But in Prior's terms, their citizenship dimension 6 had been extended beyond what they had previously had acquired from the general school culture. It is critical to recall that this CCE course was operating in the context of a school community where participation in that community's life was expected of and practised by all students. Already by Yr9 these capacities were developed and even somewhat refined. An example of

this is the explicit focus on the appreciation of ‘audience’ which was built into their learning and assessment tasks. These students, as a result of their active management of, and engagement in, their own learning, and through their activities in relation to their public participation in decision-making roles in their school, already had a well-developed knowledge of how a democracy could work, and of how individuals could participate. The CCE course gave them the opportunity to work in an external policy setting, with a politician, (who expressed to the teacher his surprise at the acuity of the questions he was asked about his roles and motivations), and with a political journalist, whose modelled analytical skills and approaches they used in developing their presentations. Without this whole school culture context, this six-week course could have just been another activity, with little potential of deepening of the learning - such as appeared to have been the case with regard to School A’s CCE activity. At School C the students incorporated the CCE course into their broader learning. **This is the kind of outcome that.....**

It is worth re-iterating that the purpose of school-based learning is to create in all students the greatest range of options for life-long learning. It is not to create action of any particular kind in the immediate time frame. School C appears to have developed skills and deep understandings in relation all of Prior’s Dimensions and in a myriad of Web 2.0 applications. Thus these Yr9 students are well-placed to exercise active participation in social issues, especially using social media. Given that in Melbourne since late 2011 there has been a bursting of public engagement in social media action sites, and a significant growth in community-based action, generated mainly through social media outlets and sites, it is a reasonable proposition that these (now Yr11 ) students will have joined in such activities. Researchers can only wish they could re-visit the school and talk again with the students originally interviewees.

## 7: Generalised Findings, by Framework Elements

### Generalised Findings on School Culture

- The responses in this report demonstrate that a strong learning culture can encourage, even demand, independent and group participatory learning by relatively young learners.
- As the selected research literature revealed, school culture is commonly disregarded, or is at least commonly under-examined in school-based research. But this study demonstrates how some schools do recognise the importance of adopting a school ethos such as conceptualised in Figure 1. Such schools see it as part of their brief and do try to instil in all their students a pro-active approach towards learning and to foregrounding identity-formation for their students, as an educational goal. Evidently it was a matter of considerable interest to this project to note what kind of culture schools think will best suit their students. Additionally it was interesting to note *how* schools develop and implement policies which actively support students to explore and construct their identities, especially in relation to the lifelong effect of the identities and capacities they help their students develop.
- That students had a sense of ‘belonging to the school community’ was asserted by each school in the project, though the certainty with which it was asserted was in inverse proportion to the efforts that went into policies of actively developing the students’ sense of social identity. (School C was reluctant to assert this whereas School A was very certain of the students’ sense of school community.) When ‘membership’ of a community is deemed automatic, (for example by virtue of attending a school or being born in a country), there can be no authentic sense of community identity without it being actively developed by the community and then by membership opportunities being taken up by individuals. Generally schools presume that over time students will gain a sense of being part of the school community, of having joint identity.

But other schools recognise that the starting point of identity formation needs to be how the students feel, not how the institution feels. When the institutional motivation is for members to feel they do really belong, there is a concomitant institutional recognition of an obligation to allow the members to join in the activities of the institution in a way that makes sense for them, naturally, without compromising the rights of others. Schools are unique institutions - because in schools, the membership comprises unequal cohorts - adults (parents and staff) and young learners. This ‘inequality’ is inherent to the make-up of school communities. Those schools that see their task as preparing young people for their futures (which may well be unknown in the precise sense, but undoubtedly will include them becoming adults, with adult social responsibilities) the task is one of allowing them to be individuals but also to develop their knowledge, skills and interests in such a way that these can be used to lock in the student’s connection to their school community. Members of institutions who don’t want to belong can make life hard for other members. In schools, such members fail to learn as well as they might and they prevent their peers from learning too. So it is in the schools’

interest, to have everyone wanting to learn and to belong. Teaching and learning are the legitimate work of schools, not prescribing identity-formation. When schools support active, authentic, interest, skill and knowledge development for all their students, they are supporting both learning and identity formation.

- Where participation in non-curricula activities, within or external to the school, were affirmed by the school, students more readily engaged in them (in and outside school). Pride and pleasure in having actively- participated, expressed in terms of the consolidation of their individual and community-based sense of identity, their sense of ‘belonging’ was frequently commented upon, in very positive terms, by those students (in Schools B and C).
- Where student learning is positioned as a self-monitored responsibility, where it includes the challenge to relate their learning to their future and to excel, where it is supported by quality teaching and well-resourced, and when celebration of engaged effort resonates through the whole community, students are actively engaged in their learning. In such a culture teaching is an all-encompassing activity, with the professional responsibility to explore and offer every pedagogic option that can increase students’ active participation in their learning. In such cases, the School Learning Culture figure (see Section 2) is fully implemented and without any damage being done to student identity or school identity.
- One major finding demonstrated in the case studies is the way a school with a pro-active participation culture is able to integrate ICT (including the use of Web 2.0 and social media) and CCE in teaching and learning. They are complementary elements in such a School Culture, because they are predicated on an engagement-base, and encourage a view of all participants as having rights and responsibilities (as in School C, and to a lesser extent in School B.)

### **Generalised Findings on ICT (Web2 and social media)**

- Resourcing, both in the form of training of teachers in the pedagogic possibilities of Web 2.0, and also of having Information Technology (IT) staff to support learning and manage technical difficulties within the schools, is both essential and expensive. Where schools had implemented a formal approach to such resourcing, and had made it a school priority, a broad range of Web 2.0, other software and social networking options were incorporated into the teaching and in learning, via both new pedagogies and in student work. Creativity in learning, of the kind identified by Moyle, occurred in such environments (in School C and to a lesser extent in School B). Where either or both forms of the resourcing (ie training or IT staffing) were lacking, other reasons, such as lack of time were given by staff for the lack of such teaching. However demonstrations of such pedagogies and of student-initiated Web-based work, indicate that it when it is possible, it happens, and it is advantageous to learning.
- It must be noted that the provision of reliable IT services, especially internet services, by governments and commercial companies, is essential if access through a school-based

network is to be readily available. This is a problem for schools in poorly-serviced areas of Australia – and these are not only in remote areas of the country (School B). The National Broadband Network is yet to be rolled out across Australia, and is some years away as yet.

- There was a strong awareness amongst all staff and students in each of the schools of the importance of cyber safety, though some students (in School A) still had inaccurate views on how to keep safe. The use of photos of students on school websites, for example, was wisely, restricted, for this reason. Anxious policies associated with restricting Web 2.0 and social media use, both within and outside the school, commonly act as a further and serious constraint on teachers and administrators in schools. This is particularly the case where staff are ignorant of the possibilities of Web 2.0, having insufficient grounds on which to critically review those policies for using such approaches, is generally shut down. The cyber safety discourse is a hard one to reject when conducted in ignorance, so professional learning must be provided.

However the negative impact of Web 2.0 and social media policies which constrain the use of them in learning was equally likely to be noted in schools where those who believe there are positive teaching and learning possibilities associated with using Web 2.0, though for diametrically opposite reasons. In schools where teachers and administrators believed Web 2.0 approaches should be more widely-available to staff and students in their school, staff and administrators' frustration at these policy-based constraints were palpable and freely-expressed. They were professionally frustrated by these constraints, but were, perforce, resigned to them. (Note: It appears that in recent times, even since this research was undertaken, there has been a shift in the approved use of social media in Victorian government schools. *The Age*, 22 April 2013, p14: 'Global village of students, teachers and families unite on blog site'.)

- Use of, or access to Facebook (FB) was officially universally banned in all the case-study schools. However in School C the authorities had been able to relax, though still limit, student access to FB, with no apparent detrimental effect on students or the teaching and learning in the school. The Yr 9 student response to this relaxation was generally reasonable and successful – it was part of the school culture that such accommodations should be respected, and utilised to everyone's benefit, though they recalled that there had been a learning curve required to achieve this situation. School B students referred to a similar, though less developed situation.
- Facebook (FB) was ubiquitous in students' lives out of school, used by all but two of the students interviewed (in two different schools). Students were well aware of the need to take care, that trust was essential, and that it had to be demonstrated before trust was reciprocated. They could generally demonstrate the ways they could confirm their between known friends personal uses of FB were safe. However, the degree to which they understood other aspects of FB use was limited.

- All students knew that one internet source was insufficient to support any argument or case, they all knew that information found in one source needed to be corroborated through reference to other sources. Student reliance on particular or limited sources was not mentioned as a problem by students or staff. It appears that reliance on single sources is no longer the problem with students that it was pre-internet times.
- Peer support and peers being a source of information on how Web 2.0 sources worked was significant. Students commonly learnt about sites, software and usage options from each other, rather than staff. (This was particularly the case with FB.)
- ‘Surfing’ the net was not common for these students, hence randomly coming up against social action sites was not likely, and this had rarely occurred. Probably such interaction would occur in time, and students indicated that if they came across sites dealing with issues in which they had an interest, then they would engage. Students from School C, and possibly some from School B would certainly know how to – both technically and in terms of knowing their own views on a matter. Their preparation for engagement had been achieved.

## **Generalised Findings on Civics & Citizenship**

- Researchers were told by teachers in two of the schools that students had not been provided a course in CCE, despite it being a state and national curriculum requirement for that year-level. Explicit CCE courses should comprise both civics and citizenship. School C actively addressed both civics and citizenship through its Yr 9 ‘Democracy’ program, described in Sections 5 and 6 of this report.
- Being taught about notions of ‘democracy’ and its variants are useful to students when they are trying to understand their world(s). When students had been provided with relevant experiences in class, they indicated their interest in exploring the characteristics of democratic behaviours and modes. They wanted to adopt and realise the skills and democratic modes within in their lives. The connection between civic knowledge and its relationship with their developing sense of the power and responsibility associated with being a class or school representative was strongly-articulated by those students who had had the opportunity to experience it.
- Where the school provided opportunities to develop and practise civic knowledge/action inside the school community (for example work on student-led decision-making committees), there was less student complaint about being patronised by adults. They readily-articulated their new realisation that decision-making was more complex than they had previous thought. In such schools, students did not have unreasonable expectations of how their individual wishes should be realised within that community, nor did they believe it appropriate that they could legitimately complain that they were not listened to, or that their voices were not heard. The students comprehended why the school could not operate as a ‘full’ democracy.

- The between-school differences in the provision of civics and citizenship learning, and on the practising of such knowledge and skills within the school was replicated by the differing provisions within the school cultures. There is an evident and explicative parallelism between these two aspects. For School C, given its conscious policy on school culture, implementing its innovative civics and citizenship course was an easy and necessary provision decision. For School B the need was not so evident and it was allowed to lapse due to lack of staff. In School A there was less possibility of students practising such knowledge and skills yet, and no formal civics and citizenship course was provided, though it is thought a week long ‘political campaign’ activity had occurred for these students, though the students did not comment on it when questioned about it. (Being a younger cohort may have played a role in the school’s decisions as to what CCE and school governance opportunities to offer students, although this approach was not followed in Yr8 by either Schools B or C.)

## 8: Conclusions

### Introductory comment

This pilot case-study project examined how student participatory learning could be supported and managed by schools through using pedagogic approaches associated with CCE and ICT (including Web 2.0 and social media). The approaches to participation/engagement in learning and the curricula (especially in School C and to a lesser extent in School B) can be described as being a citizenship model of learning. Although still students (and therefore not generally regarded as ‘full citizens’ of society), the students’ descriptions of their learning processes at school, indicated how their behaviours and those of those around them, in those communities of which they are full members, enabled them to experience rich teaching and demonstrate many diverse learnings. These students articulated explicit connections between the civic characteristics of the value of participation, social media and Web 2.0-based learning. Student responses demonstrated how such participating experiences can enrich and enhance their learning processes, strengthen their sense of self and value (and that of others), and increase their skills in living and learning. These learnings proved to be a parallel path to growing up (becoming adults), being responsible for the outcomes of their actions and actively participating in the world they currently inhabited. Their articulation of their learning models enabled them to view with some comfort how they might engage in the future, in the ever-widening world. The ‘CCE and ICT/Web 2.0 curriculums’ acted both as tools in, and as a model for, achieving effective learning outcomes, both currently and for the future.

1. These areas of learning are amongst the most difficult to measure. Measuring personal growth (including variables that reference the development of a sense of self and autonomy for participation) and the use of ICT both as a tool and also as a way of seeing and acting within the world and (the integration of Web 2.0 and social media in learning) are fiendishly complex matters. However three cycles of the NAP-C&C and NAP-ICT programs have been conducted and reported on, so it is possible and it has been done. It is not reasonable to argue the case that assessment of these knowledge, skills and attitudes is too hard.
2. Significant factors to a school providing a rich experience of learning to be a citizen are the cultural, economic, and symbolic resources available in a school. A full complement of these factors is required to ensure the full implementation of all elements of the School Learning Culture of Figure 1 (see Section 2). Sometimes a school lacks an explicit ethos or culture or policy which emphasises engagement/participation in the school community, and so does not prioritise and model those values in all the elements contained within the figure. Thin resources in any of these 3 domains impacts negatively on the CCE and Web 2.0 experiences that are offered in the school, also influencing whether they are taken up by students and if so, which ones.
3. Schools need to become much more actively engaged in using Web 2.0 and social networking in their teaching and in their administration. Professional learning is as critical,

as is appropriate resourcing. Schools' level of use of Web 2.0 clearly related to teacher perceptions of, and capabilities with, ICT and the school policy re Web 2.0 as a learning medium (see Conclusion 3). When creatively and extensively utilised, Web 2.0 and social networking are powerful factors in developing student independence and having a positive view of the world, their place in it and their capacity to engage with it. Where Web 2.0 approaches were employed in a school - for teaching, learning and presentation of student work, for students and other stakeholders to connect to the whole school community, through the community partnership links - the benefits of such engagement were very clear. The benefits were increased participation in that community and an increased sense of belonging. In some school learning cultures, Web 2.0 is primarily used in teacher-directed learning activities, and this is disappointing. Surprisingly there was no evidence of schools encouraging students to participate in inter-school partnerships, for exploration of inter-student views on issues. That students already have such a positive and personal connection with the medium makes for significant ease in its more widespread utilisation in teaching and learning practices. What's not to like?

4. Where there is a high level of integration in school policy between the three policy areas that were the focus of this study (that is, school culture, ICT (Web 2.0 and social media) and explicit Civics and Citizenship education) there was little dissonance between the interview responses from students and staff and the students were more engaged on all fronts. Such congruence indicates an alignment of views about desirable learning goals held by staff and students, and that an explicit and meaningful dialogue about the achievement of learning outcomes is underway. This is evidence of a productive and efficacious learning culture.
5. A common thread in the responses from students in all three schools was the ubiquitous nature of social media in their out-of-school life, of their smart phones, which were used mostly for social purposes. For those who attended a school where Web 2.0 was commonly utilised as a means of identity-construction and communication - using their smart phones to participate in the wider world is not so big a step. Students in School C affirmed they would have to first become specifically interested in a particular aspect of an issue in the outside world, and if that happened, then having previously practised engagement within a social culture and having had some civic and citizenship education, they would readily and confidently participate. (Social action sites have gained much greater prominence worldwide and in Australia since 2011. Researchers fervently wish they could re-visit School C in 2013, to witness the current levels of engagement, through social networking sites, being undertaken by the students interviewed in 2011 who are now 16 year olds and in Yr 11.)
6. Researchers noted that Schools A & B rarely seemed to suggest students work together, especially at after-school work, via Skype for instance. There may be several, non-ICT reasons for this, including assessment-based concerns regarding distinguishing individual contribution in the work. Despite agreeing on the benefits of jointly preparing homework tasks, students rarely appeared to routinely work jointly after hours, though peer-referencing, for queries and seeking opinions, was common in School C and less so in School B. However in-class work was more frequently jointly produced, for example with YouTube

being a favourite medium at School C (and mentioned in School B) for demonstrating their ideas about issues, along with uploading text and ideas onto the school intranet.

7. Where a school provided opportunities to make explicit connections between civic knowledge and the potential of social media use, there was less complaint from students about school governance processes, and a greater understanding of students' capacity to actively engage and 'make a difference' in the school community, and on their own terms. If teaching and learning 'improves' when there is less disruption and distraction within classrooms in a school, then this is a benefit for all stakeholders. Students and teachers in each school mentioned the importance of reducing student disruption to learning, and especially in School B the teachers and students commented on the positive role of Web 2.0 and other media in achieving this. It could be argued that this advantage adds yet another practical motivation to having these pedagogies more-widely adopted in schools.
8. This study suggests that Web 2.0 and social media, when combined with CCE curricula opens up significant education options for lifelong learning, by supporting self-motivated and self-monitoring learners across the full breadth of the school population. Again, this is largely due to the congruence between self-expression and belonging that is inherent in social networking, the participatory objectives of CCE and the substance of the concepts and concerns of civic and citizenship learning. This is a notable finding and it complements and supports the NAP-CC07 findings, described earlier in this report (pp17-18).
9. In conclusion, schools would do well to consider the benefits to all stakeholders of more intensely implementing ICT (including Web 2.0 and social media) and CCE approaches, both to whole school cultures (as in Figure 1: the School Learning Culture) and to classroom pedagogies, across the full curriculum. This study suggests the connectedness between pre-existing and new applications in students of explicit and deep knowledge of engagement and action will predictably result in increased engagement of young people in a range of participations during their school lives, and confer personal, pedagogic and social identity benefits to many parties, both during their school years and also subsequently as adults.
10. This pilot study raised as many questions as it explicitly addressed. More explicit follow-up research can be funded. Some issues for further consideration should be the following:
  - (i) More research is urgently required into the potential of Web 2.0, social media and CCE models of effective pedagogy and learning, across the curriculum.
  - (ii) Schools should develop taxonomies, across these modes, with explicit descriptors of the types of behaviours and attitudes associated with active in-school student engagement.
  - (iii) Gender differences in learning associated with social media and CCE has been tangentially researched to date, but more closely focussed work may be revealing.
  - (iv) Another field of research which could lead to rich findings is a deeper consideration of the long-term effects of having experienced teaching and learning which incorporated various models of social media and CCE on post-school community engagement and participation. There is a lot we don't know about the long term impact of such learning at school.

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## 10: Appendices

### Networking Young Citizens: Learning to be citizens in and with the social web (Pilot Project: Monash University)

#### APPENDIX G: School educator interview documentation & schedule

##### Participants:

This semi-structured interview will be conducted by researcher/s with individual teachers and/or principals in the selected schools.

The statement of the substantive context and the interview schedule indicate the sequence and range of questions & issues to be addressed and discussed with interviewees.

##### Substantive Context:

Findings from the National Assessment Program-Civic and Citizenship reports (see [http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/resources/NAP-CC\\_2007\\_Report\\_16Feb07.pdf](http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/resources/NAP-CC_2007_Report_16Feb07.pdf)) showed that students whose schools offer them opportunities to engage in school governance and other civics and citizenship-related activities achieved higher scores and showed more interest in engaging as citizens in their broader communities than those who had not had these experiences.

This research project is seeking to explore the role Web 2.0 technologies might play in the learning of secondary students in general, and in particular the role they may play in developing students' sense of citizenship and in their experience of school governance and other civics and citizenship-related activities. [The interview will be a semi-structured discussion - the following questions will serve as a prompt throughout the discussion, but the questions and discussion may deviate according to the participant's responses.]

##### Interview Schedule

*(Q1 is to establish what we mean by Web 2.0 and to ensure that all participants are using the terms in the same way and appreciate the distinction between school-based learning and social uses. While the responses might be no more than nods or comments of agreement, if they are not actually part of the Interview Schedule any clarifications that are required would not be fully recorded and some data significant to the interpretation of the discussion text could be lost.)*

**1a.** Research identifies that secondary students use a variety of Web 2.0 technologies (for example: facebook, twitter, myspace, skype, flickr, blogger) in their learning.

**1b.** Research also identifies that secondary students use a variety of Web 2.0 technologies (for example: facebook, twitter, myspace, skype, flickr, blogger) in their social life.

**1c.** They use these technologies to accomplish the following things (for eg: to establish a sense of identity, especially within defined groups, to clarify their ideas, to check the acceptance of their ideas,)

**2.** Are these findings supported by what you have experienced with your students?

**2a.** What kinds of Web 2.0 technologies / websites are you aware of that students use in their learning at school?

**2b.** What kinds of Web 2.0 technologies / websites are you aware of that students use outside of school?

**3.** What do you think are the pre-dominant perspectives on the use of Web 2.0 technologies in this school, as demonstrated by the school / your departments / all or some of your colleagues?

**4.** Do you acknowledge to your students the existence of Web 2.0 technologies in your/their lives and do you use Web 2.0 technologies in your classes, or in your engagements with students?

**4a.** In what ways is this acknowledgement or use demonstrated?

- Do you talk about this with your students? And how do they respond?
- Regarding any teaching strategies, what was your goal?
- Who did you work with? Do you engage with others online?
- How was the technology used?
- Who was your audience, and what was your outcome?

**4b.** Do you have any lesson plans/resources linked to a particular class activity you have planned or implemented which illustrates teaching which includes a specific use of Web 2.0 technologies?

**4c.** Do you have any examples of student work which include specific reference to Web 2.0 technologies they used in researching or preparing the work? (*We are looking for examples of student work which demonstrate learning outcomes that were generated as a result of experiencing a class activity which used/encouraged Web 2.0 technologies.*)

**5.** In this school is there any specific civics and citizenship education curriculum/program?

**6.** In this school are there any specific school-governance or civics and citizenship-related education activities/programs that support active citizenship engagement by students?

**6a.** Have Web 2.0 technologies been used in teaching civics and citizenship, or in support of school-governance or civics and citizenship-related education activities/programs?

**6b.** What roles and how important are Web 2.0 technologies in social and political activity? (For example, in school elections, informing students of resources?)

**7.** In what **other** ways do you think Web 2.0 technologies **could** be used to **effectively** support active citizenship, in school-based civics and citizenship-related education programs?

**7a.** How do you think Web 2.0 technologies can be used to increase knowledge and the capacities/competencies/dispositions to be a more effective citizen?

- Eg:
- i. As a school and/or local community citizen
  - ii. As an Australian citizen
  - iii. As a citizen of the world (ie globally)

**8.** What do you think are some implications for political socialisation, political activism, and civics and citizenship in general of Web 2.0 technology use by young citizens?

**Networking Young Citizens: Learning to be citizens in and with the social web**  
**(Pilot Project: Monash University)**

**APPENDIX H: Student focus group discussion / interview documentation & schedule**

**Participants:**

This semi-structured interview will be conducted by two researchers (Henderson & Mellor) with a group of students from one class in the selected schools.

The statement of the substantive context and the interview schedule indicate the sequence and range of questions & issues to be addressed and discussed with interviewees/discussants.

**Substantive Context:**

Findings from the National Assessment Program-Civic and Citizenship reports (see [http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/resources/NAP-CC\\_2007\\_Report\\_16Feb07.pdf](http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/resources/NAP-CC_2007_Report_16Feb07.pdf)) showed that students whose schools offer them opportunities to engage in school governance and other civics and citizenship-related activities achieved higher scores and showed more interest in engaging as citizens in their broader communities than those who had not had these experiences.

This research project is seeking to explore the role Web 2.0 technologies might play in the learning of secondary students in general, and in particular the role they may play in developing students' sense of citizenship and in their experience of school governance and other civics and citizenship-related activities. [This is planned as a semi-structured focus group discussion. The following questions will serve as a prompt throughout the discussion, but the questions and discussion may deviate according to the participants' responses.]

**Interview Schedule**

1. Do you think of yourselves as having more than one identity?
2. What might some of them be? (Egs)
3. How are these identities created or where do you believe they come from?
4. Do you think of yourselves as being 'citizens'? (of what group/s?)
5. Is 'having a sense of belonging' important to you? (Why?)
6. Can we start with you identifying any particular activities that you undertake at school (inside or outside classrooms) that you believe help you confirm your identities?
7. From your own experience, **in brief**, what kinds of Web 2.0 technologies / websites do students use outside of school? (Eg. facebook, twitter, myspace, skype, flickr, blogger)
  - 7a. What technologies do you use?
  - 7b. When? /Where?
  - 7c. How frequently?
  - 7d. For what purpose(s)?
  - 7e. How successfully? (that is, did they achieve your purposes?)
  - 7f. How do you decide which technology is best for your purposes?

**8.** To explore some social networking usage options ... Have you heard of students/young people using social networking (Web 2.0) technologies in their social/ informal community based networks to achieve **non-school goals** in ways similar to the following?

**8a.** Using Facebook, MySpace or Blogger to organise events such as parties?

**8b.** What kinds of groups do you join on facebook, or which blogs/tweeters/rss feeds do you follow?

**9.** In what ways and how important are these technologies in developing your sense of identity?

**10.** To further explore some social networking usage options ... Have you heard of students/young people using social networking (Web 2.0) technologies in their social/ informal community based networks to achieve **school-related goals** in ways similar to the following?

**10a.** Using technologies like Skype or Messenger or Facebook instant chat to work on homework with others?

**10b.** Have you taken online polls or joined websites associated with some social issue – with the intention of contributing to, or achieving a broader than local social outcome or goal?

**11.** How important, and in what ways, do you think these technologies might contribute to you developing a sense of your identity? (*Note different formulation to 9... preference?*)

**11a.** Might they, for instance, simply because they offer ‘learning’ options which open doors to the world which would not otherwise be opened for you, make a difference to what and how you feel about yourself in relation to other groups and issues?

**11b.** What would you **miss out on** if these options were not available to you (& others)?

**12.** In what ways and how important do you think these Web 2.0 technologies (regardless of your current usage of them) can be used to increase your civics/citizenship knowledge and thus your ability to be a more effective citizen?

**12a.** As a citizen of your school or more broadly in your local community?

**12b.** As an Australian citizen?

**12c.** As a citizen of the world? (ie globally)

**13.** What opinions/views do you have about how your (current) personal use of Web 2.0 could be deployed/used to enhance your citizenship participation and engagement?

**13a.** What sorts of people or places or knowledge/information would you like to have, or think you need to have, to help make you a more effective citizen?