"... it is how we run our schools, rather than what we teach in them, that will determine levels of active citizenship... Changing curricula is difficult enough; developing genuinely inclusive and democratic systems of school governance even more so."

(David Owen)

Students as Active Citizens

In this issue:

- Active Citizenship: Student Councils Report
- Puget Sound Community School, USA
- Class Projects on the Internet: Energy
- Kids as Global Scientists
- IRC: Internet Relay Chat
- The Together Two Thousand Campaign
This Issue

By definition, Connect has been exploring issues of active citizenship for the last 16 years. That is not citizenship restricted to a concept of learning about how parliament operates, or even just of the occasional vote for student representatives. Rather our view of citizenship encompasses a broad vision of action in a democratic society, a democratic school, and a democratic classroom. It talks of "the array of roles that individuals play in forming, maintaining and changing their communities" as David Owen says in a forthcoming article in *Youth Studies Australia* - profiled on page 3.

With schools as an important community site for many young people, that means negotiated learning, inclusive and participatory structures, curriculum projects that recognise that "young people are already valuable, and valued, citizens".

This issue continues that exploration with reports from eight schools in the Southern Association SRC in New South Wales. Structural changes in that state pose challenges for the continuation of the highly developed Student Representative Council organisation that has linked students from school to state levels. The NSW State SRC asked questions of their Assistant Director General and this discussion is included in this issue.

The last issue of *Connect* profiled projects and possibilities for meaningful and valued student participation using the Internet. As a result of that publication, we were recently contacted by two further schools - one in Seattle, Washington (USA) and the other in Deal, Kent (UK). They've written about initiatives in these schools. In one case, this is in a largely traditional school, where the internet has opened up possibilities for the international dissemination of a year 8 science class's research, and which has, in turn, begun challenging teaching approaches elsewhere in the school. The other is in a small alternative school where formal and informal democracy is at the heart of the school's operations. Puget Sound Community School has indicated an interest in sharing more about other aspects of its program with *Connect* readers in future issues. They approached us initially to write about their students' work in providing internet expertise to other areas of alternative education in the USA (they have assisted the Alternative Education Resource Organisation - AERO - in setting up a site), but in writing a general background article, the connections with the more formal aspects of students as citizens within their schools' governance also emerges.

The international nature of internet communication means that it is just as easy for *Connect* to include some articles from the USA or the UK as it is from Australia. To what extent are the experiences transferable?

David Owen reports on a very significant US study (see page 3). As Australian resources and courses develop around 'active and informed citizenship', we are noticing a strong resurgence in interest about ways in which the core of this learning can be in "opportunities for participation (and therefore learning) in the processes of school governance".

Roger Holdsworth
Dilemma #1 – when does a young person become a citizen?
If citizens are those of us with equal standing and protection within our community, with the right (and obligation) to vote, to stand for political office, to serve as part of a jury, and so on, then it becomes difficult to understand why citizenship should be viewed by young people as other than something that will happen 'later'. This view of citizenship necessarily pushes us toward redundant pedagogies that focus on training people for future roles, rather than equipping them with skills and understandings that can and must be given expression immediately. It reduces young people to either non-citizens or, at best, apprentice-citizens. Neither status is likely to provide an appropriate starting point for learning.
If, however, our concept of citizenship goes beyond the legal status and focuses on the array of roles that individuals can play in forming, maintaining and changing their communities, then young people are already valuable, and valued, citizens to the extent that they participate in those roles. This means recognising that eligibility to vote, serve on a jury, etc. derives not from citizenship as such but from a combination of citizenship and adulthood. We should still engage in debate about just what adulthood is and when it should apply, but this must not stand in the way of a recognition that young people must be understood as citizens.

From: 'The young, active citizen: Dilemmas and opportunities', by David Owen; in Youth Studies Australia vol. 15 no. 1 (forthcoming, 1996). This issue contains articles on:

- ‘Citizenship Education: Research findings on the perceptions of Western Australian Youth’, by Harry Phillips and Wally Moros, Edith Cowan University
- ‘The young, active citizen: Dilemmas and opportunities’, by David Owen, University of Tasmania & ‘Citiz-speak’ (the language of citizenship) also by David Owen
- ‘Schools as public institutions: students & citizenship’, by Marie Brennan, Central Queensland University
- ‘What do we mean by Student Participation’, by Roger Holdsworth, Youth Research Centre & Connect
- ‘Adulthood: Just a question of age?’, (research on young people’s perceptions of the ages/markers of childhood, youth & adulthood) by Terry Ryall, Youth and Community Officer, West Sussex UK

Plus: a ‘Study Starters’ sheet with classroom ideas for activities and discussion on civics and citizenship.

References:

David Owen is with the Centre for Citizenship Education, Department of Education, University of Tasmania. The Centre for Citizenship Education undertakes research on the nature, development and practice of citizenship in Australia, promotes effective civic education for a democratic society, develops and evaluates new forms of public deliberation and civic participation and sponsors the professional development of teachers in the area of civic education.

Additional information about the CCE can be obtained from the author on (002) 20 2742 or D.Owen@educ.utas.edu.au
In August 1995, the NSW Minister for Education and Training, Mr John Aquilina announced a restructure of the Department of School Education, which began immediately and to be fully in effect by December 1996. The following information was made available to Student Representative Councils in the state, through the State SRC.

The original document released states there are two objectives:
- The first is to contribute to elimination of the Government deficit of over $700m, and to assist in achieving a balanced budget in 1996/7. In achieving this goal, the Department states the needs of schools are paramount. So far as is possible, savings will be/have been made in areas which will have minimum impact on schools.
- The second objective is to take the available resources once the savings requirements of Government have been met, and to shape them into a new form of administration which is driven essentially by educational rather than financial purposes.

School Districts

Forty districts have replaced the ten regions, each with a district office, a district superintendent and district support staff. Education Resource Centres (ERCs) and clusters will no longer exist as a formal part of the structure, although groups of school within a district may choose to maintain or initiate a cluster identity.

The new administrative arrangements will be implemented in tandem with the Government’s strategy for information technology, which includes the linking of all schools to a single computer network by the end of 1996.

District Offices

District Offices are neither large clusters nor smaller regions. The district office is not a separate layer of administration between the principal and the State Office.

District Offices will be responsible for functions currently performed by regions in relation to curriculum, training and development, and professional support. Quality Assurance will operate through the district offices and will gather school reviews and monitor other processes. District offices will advise and support teachers and schools in meeting the needs of students and implementing state-wide education priorities.

District Offices will have an average of 20 staff including:
- a District Superintendent;
- at least four curriculum consultants, including consultants in English and Mathematics;
- a QA school review team leader;
- a district guidance officer;
- a technology adviser;
- a home-school liaison officer;
- special education support staff;
- an officer responsible for teacher welfare;
- a school buildings and maintenance officer.

Additional consultants, such as Aboriginal education consultants, will be placed in areas dependant upon the needs of the district. Consultants in other key learning areas may work across districts.

District Superintendents began in their new position at the beginning of Term 4, 1995. District superintendents will:
- ensure that specified standards are being achieved;
- provide professional support for schools in achieving those standards;
- monitor educational and financial audit processes;
- plan and manage the provision of public education within the district.

State Office

There will be five state offices locations across the state. These offices will operate from: Inner Sydney (Sydney and Ryde); Western Sydney (Blacktown); Wollongong; Bathurst; Newcastle.

The existing functions of State Office will be retained, as will its current structure. State Office will now oversee staffing in schools and will manage areas of finance, capital works and other related areas. Principals will relate directly to State Office regarding matters concerning their school.

Implementation

The change process has begun, and will be implemented over a period of seventeen months in full consultation with affected parties and other interest groups.

The ten positions of assistant director general (region) have been reduced to six: three have been disestablished, and a fourth position has been temporarily converted to a State Office position to assist in the implementation of the new structure.

Staff in regional offices will be advised on options available to them. Most positions created under the new structure will be filled by existing staff. The district superintendent positions will be filled by existing Director of Schools, regional directors and QA directors.
Throughout 1996, regions will be steadily phased down as their functions are transferred to State Office and the districts, although significant change will not occur until after the school year has begun successfully. Current indication is that the new structure could in fact be fully in place as early as September 1996.

**SRC Support Staff**

In each district, there will be a Student Welfare consultant and a Student Services/Equity Officer who will be partly responsible for student leadership activities including Student Representative Councils. In State Office, a Senior Education Officer - Student Welfare and Child Protection position has also been created. Once again, they are partly responsible for SRCs at a State level.

**Consultative Meetings**

Dr. Ken Boston - Director General, invited the NSW SRC to provide feedback on the restructuring after the "Proposed District and State Office" - September 8 and "Proposed Organisational Structure and Staff Positions" - October 18 documents were released.

The NSW SRC met with Dr. Alan Laughlin - Assistant Director General on September 14 and recommended to him that a position with responsibility for student leadership as part of the duty statement be allocated at district and state level. A new SRC format would have to be developed to come in line with the restructure and would be left for the 1995/96 NSW SRC to complete.

The NSW SRC was invited to attend a second consultative meeting on October 24 once again with Dr. Alan Laughlin. A "Questions and Answer sheet" was produced and is attached to this overview.

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**New South Wales Student Representative Council**

**Questions and Answers**

On October 24th 1995, the NSW SRC met with Dr Alan Laughlin - Assistant Director General regarding the restructuring. The NSW SRC put the following questions to Dr Laughlin who answered them. The NSW SRC would like to thank Dr Laughlin for his attendance and his support.

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<tr>
<th>Q. How would relief for SRC Teacher co-ordinators be allocated for 1996?</th>
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<td>A. For 1996, the relief days will be allocated to the current regions and divided between program areas as usual. There will also be a relief day allocation to districts. A review regarding relief allocation for the new structure will occur but no decisions have been made to date.</td>
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<th>Q. How will the restructuring improve/benefit the priorities the Department claims to support?</th>
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<td>A. Mathematics, Literacy, PD/H/PE, Student Welfare and Technology are all gaining support within districts. These are the current strategic areas; other areas such as Science may feel disadvantaged in this cycle but will be probably be picked up later on. These strategic areas are to be focused at Primary/Secondary schools. (K - Year 8)</td>
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<th>Q. Will the current funding for SRCs remain the same. If so, how will it be accessed and distributed?</th>
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<td>A. Dr Laughlin said that the details of this would need to be clarified as funding issues are still being considered.</td>
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<th>Q. Will SRC Teacher coordinators have access to training and development funds at school level?</th>
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<td>A. The new Senior Education Officer (CEO 1) and Student Welfare consultant will need to co-ordinate SRC teacher training and will offer training and development programs for those teachers using school funds. A tiered inservice program could be offered - at state/district level then district/school level. Dr Laughlin suggested that when the training of these support staff begins, the NSW SRC would give input during the training period on the needs of SRCs. He feels that this would improve that efficiency of staff coordinators.</td>
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<th>Q. When will the positions be filled?</th>
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<tr>
<td>A. Most positions will be filled by mid 1996. Dr Laughlin recommended that students on the NSW SRC should be involved in the training of the new student welfare consultants.</td>
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<th>Q. Could students be involved in the selection process for these positions?</th>
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<td>A. Dr Laughlin will put the question to the Personnel and Employee Directorate.</td>
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<th>Q. Who will co-ordinate SRCs at a district and state level?</th>
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<tr>
<td>A. The Chief Education Officer (CEO) in the Student Welfare Directorate and the CEO 2 Student Welfare position in each district will have student leadership as part of their duty statements and will oversee the NSW SRC and State Conference. Christine Jones and Susan White will continue in their positions during the change process while introducing new people. Once complete, they will hand over. The Student Welfare consultant in each district office will oversee the SRC in this area.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Q. Once the restructuring is in place, what role will students play in the decision-making process within the Department?</th>
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| A. A submission should be made requesting regular meetings with the Minister for Education and the Director General.
1995 was a productive and hectic year for SRCs in the Southern Association, NSW. Many initiatives have been successfully implemented ensuring effective student involvement in schools. These included:

- active participation in school committees/teams;
- the enhancement of knowledge and skills to better equip SRC representatives for their many responsibilities;
- the provision of additional resources for students;
- many successful fundraising activities for community and charity concerns.

Please find following Annual SRC Reports from numerous Southern Association Schools. It has been my pleasure to coordinate the Southern Association SRC over the past ten years. I have met many talented and gifted students who bring such credit to the schools they represent in their position on the Southern Association body. This is in no small part a reflection of the commitment and dedication of the school SRC advisers who so willingly give their time and energy to the students.

As I leave my position of Southern Association SRC Coordinator, I feel certain that the network of SRCs in the Southern District will continue to flourish in the years ahead. I extend my very best wishes to students representing their schools in an SRC position, and my sincere appreciation for their tireless efforts on behalf of their school student body. The support of staff and students throughout the Sutherland Shire has made my role much easier and very rewarding.

DAWN NORTHEY
Southern Association SRC Coordinator

CARINGBAH HIGH SRC

Caringbah High's SRC has been busy throughout 1995, representing the students and achieving goals to benefit them. We have attended the Anzac Day Dawn Service, and have sent members to both regional and state SRC conferences. In early December, we will be represented at the United Nations Youth Conference by a member of our SRC, and have had a member elected to the Satellite City Cultural Renaissance Centre For Youth Advisory Body. Throughout the year we have advised the school community on the opinions of the students in regards to the plans for Caringbah High to move into one site only. We have also participated in our school's quality assurance review.

The winter of this year saw a new option added to the girls' winter uniform. Whilst girls had previously worn a green tunic or skirt, the girls were given the choice of wearing black tailored pants, a white shirt and the school tie. This proved a popular and progressive adaptation to the uniform, and Caringbah High's SRC can take credit for initiating and partaking in the negotiation of the new uniform, as well as surveying the entire female student population to do so.

Earlier on this year, we raised funds in the form of a combined Caringbah/Woolloomaree High disco, which was a great success. We later continued to liaise with other SRCs by an inter-school barbecue that we hosted, with representatives from all local schools invited. This social liaison between schools is something Caringbah sees as a priority, and we wish to continue and extend this as part of our goals for next year.

As the year progressed, we looked at ways to benefit the school community with the funds that we had raised during the year. We have offered financial assistance during the year to the school dance group, aerobic and hockey team, innovative technology challenge group and other individuals representing Caringbah High at state level or higher. Some projects we are considering spending our
funds on include purchasing some outdoor furniture, recycling bins, and the setting up of a perpetual annual school leadership award. We also wish to arrange a common room for year twelve students, that will hopefully include tea and coffee making facilities, a fridge, microwave and couch. We are also researching the feasibility of introducing a swipe card system for year twelve. We have supported a disadvantaged child overseas through World Vision, and organised an anti-nuclear testing petition, as well as donating money to Greenpeace.

As you can see, we have had what we consider a busy and prosperous year in 1995. It is something that now, during election time, we are evaluating and assessing, as well as setting new goals and aspirations for 1996, which we hope will bring as many achievements as 1995 has. 1996 will also bring changes to our SRC, with our teacher adviser, Mrs Murphy, being replaced by Mrs Munns.

ENGADINE HS SRC

Engadine High School’s SRC has worked consistently and powerfully throughout 1995. Below we list some of our accredited achievements:

- Due to the lack of past Dance Parties, Discos, Band Nights etc, our reincarnation has proven to be a true success!!
- We have communicated fluently with our foster child;
- We have successfully built up the reputation of the SRC and have become known throughout the school;
- Members of the SRC also took an active part in the running of our Wednesday school assemblies;
- We have now gained access to a regular room and are currently holding meetings once a week;
- Due to student complaints, we have successfully changed the function of the toilet taps and have provided a few randomly selected toilets with high quality toilet paper dispensers;
- Due to suggestions from other schools, our SRC has provided the students with a suggestion box;
- We run a radio station, which plays music provided by the students, and has also acted as a reminder for SRC organised functions, such as mufti days or Dance Parties;
- With a few members of the SRC also being in the School Council, we have a knowledgeable link. With this link, it has allowed us to strongly contribute to uniform changes and overviews;
- We have volunteered for a number of fund raisers for various causes;
- We have also encouraged the school to provide parking areas to those students who drive to school. As of next year, passes will be issued and parking available;
- Mufti days;
- Members of our SRC are also on our school magazine committee. Due to this we have been able to publicise the SRC to all members of the school as well as our surrounding community;
- We have put forward the suggestion to provide all classrooms with a recycling tray, to encourage them to consider the environment;
- We have successfully arranged a number of subcommittees within the SRC;
- The SRC has provided the school with a bottle machine;
- Due to involvement with the school newspaper, we have also been able to provide the school with a profitable outcome due to advertising with local shoe shop, Knockout Shoes.
GYMEA TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL

As we draw near to the end of the 1995 school year, we at Gymea Technology High School thought we would take time to reflect the accomplishments that the SRC have achieved this year.

The projects that Gymea has achieved this year within the SRC have been both exciting and diverse. Thanks to various local company support and a local artist, we now have a colourful mural depicting the Past, the Present and the Future of our society and world facing the Princes Highway. This project was not simply an SRC development but a project supported by our entire school community. It brought out the creative and talented students within our school, giving everyone from year seven to year twelve the opportunity to leave their mark on Gymea.

A breakthrough in the uniform regulations was achieved as well with the introduction of black tailored pants as a part of the girls’ winter uniform. This was a project that the SRC had supported for quite some time and it was a relief for the female students during the cold winter snaps and a reminder for the SRC representatives that our long hard fight had been worth it in the end.

Another pleasant change to our school grounds was the construction of BBQ facilities and shade areas located in the back fields. The Barbeques have proven to be excellent fund raisers which have been and will be assisting us for many years to come. Activities have also been the focus around the BBQs this year with every type of function being held there from Year Twelve BBQs to the new Year Seven introduction days.

The summer heat is upon us now and in time for it the SRC has recently cleared that plain black caps are now permitted to be worn in contrast to the black GTHS baseball caps. This initiative, supported by the SRC, is hoped to protect some of our students from burning their skin in the harmful UV rays.

In conclusion, a successful year has been held at Gymea Technology High School by the SRC. Our fundraising using the BBQ resources has been overwhelming and our mufti days for charity have also been pleasing. Projects for beautifying the school grounds have been accomplished and the additions of shade areas will please many students come mid-summer. Gymea’s Student Council hope for another eventful year in 1996, as 1995 has been. Thank you go out to Mrs Dougall and Mrs Street for their cooperation this year and we all hope to see everyone in 1996.

HEATHCOTE HIGH SCHOOL

Throughout 1995, the Student Representative Council has worked hard to represent the students’ interests, opinions and suggestions. To achieve this, the SRC has developed and maintained student facilities, coordinated school-based community activities and raised funds for school and community needs. The SRC represented Heathcote High at many events out of the school and assisted in upholding the school’s reputation. Representatives attended an annual Regional Environmental Expo as instructors and guides, attended an Alternatives to Violence conference, represented the student body on a school cultural exchange to Warrawong High School, and SRC members also attended the annual SRC Metropolitan East Student Leadership Conference held at Arcadia over a period of three days. Representatives have also attended Southern Association SRC meetings throughout the year. Heathcote High School also currently has a student elected onto and representing the Metropolitan East SRC on the NSW SRC - Adrian Pattra - which is a first for our school and an excellent achievement.

The Coke machines, one being a Coke bottle machine, are organised and filled by SRC members. It is through these machines that the SRC receives its funds. These funds have helped the SRC in numerous sponsorships and purchases, such as the continued sponsorship of a dolphin and dolphin research, continued sponsorship of an African child, Eric, and the sponsorship of three animals at Taronga Zoo - a koala, a bilby and a snow leopard. Additional garbage and recycling bins and more seating for the school were purchased by the SRC, along with the funding for improved speakers for the school radio. This was done in response to a survey of the student body on student needs conducted by the SRC. Also in response to this survey, a bike rack enclosure has been built around the side of C Block for better protection of the bikes for those who choose to ride to school. The cost of this enclosure, $2,100, was completely funded by the SRC. The SRC has also paid for the paving of the steps leading into A Block. Donations to charities such as Stewart House were also made on behalf of Heathcote High.
Fundraising has also been a part of the SRC’s achievements. The Red Cross Calling was extremely successful, with over $3,000 raised. The SRC supported the Save the Children Fund in memory of Mr Colvin and raised money by holding a multi day. Through the organisation and participation in Daffodil Day, $1,200 was also raised for the NSW Cancer Council. Bandage Bear Day was another fundraiser that Heathcote High School was involved in this year, through which $600 was raised. Recently the SRC participated in MAD Day, selling Melanoma Awareness Day Badges and raising $300 towards research into skin cancer.

The SRC has also played an active role on relevant school committees. As education is at its most basic level about educating students, our input into the Welfare, Uniform and Canteen Committees has been vital in the successful development of a number of initiatives, e.g. the evaluation and modification of the school merit program, even to the range of foods available at the school canteen. The SRC has also been involved in other activities such as assisting in the School Talent Quest, representing students at Community Anzac Services and running the school assemblies.

Another major success was the Leadership Training Day, held at Kareela Golf Club in Term Four. During the day, SRC students were involved in discussions which considered effective leadership and participated in workshops on Effective Meetings, Team Building and Power through Communication. These were competently run by Adrian Pattra, Michael Kelly and Emma Norval.

We would like to thank all those SRC representatives who held a position in 1995 and will not be continuing in the year ahead. Particular thanks go to our Year 12 representatives and especially to our School Captain, Kendall Parkinson and School Vice Captains, Karen Goddard and Brad Gilbert for their superb leadership. Government House visits and dawn Anzac Service Ceremonies were among their duties and all were carried out with true ambassadorial skills.

We have enjoyed our year, as has Mrs Northey, the SRC coordinator, and the SRC look forward to 1996, anticipating a year ahead that will see even greater success in responding to the needs and achieving the goals of Heathcote High School students.
THE JANNALI HIGH SCHOOL

What an amazing and successful year 1995 has been for The Jannali High School Student Representative Council. We have had the pleasure of completing many tasks on behalf of the student body.

At the beginning of the year, as representatives of the students, we felt that we should have an input into the formation of Students' Rights and Responsibilities in the school. Together with teachers from the school, the SRC worked to formulate the policy. In conjunction with the formation of these rights and responsibilities, we welcomed a new merit system which we feel will encourage the students to achieve to their maximum potential and be rewarded. As well as this, we decided to also recognise students who excel in sport with the award of an engraved school medallion.

Students who represent the school at regional or state level often need to pay a considerable sum of money in travel expenses, uniform purchase or levies. The SRC decided to assist these students with a contribution of 25% of their total cost.

The financial success of last year's first SRC Fun Run enabled us to purchase a portable school volleyball net this year. We intend to use it at school functions such as the end of school year picnics, seminars and organised staff versus students lunchtime games. From the Fun Run funds we also assisted with the purchase of the school 'shade sails' now found in the quadrangle. With the excellent response to this first Fun Run last year, it was decided to repeat it again. The 1996 figure raised was a total of $8,070. The SRC will spend one third of this on new seating and greenery and the remaining two thirds was donated to the charity 'CanTeen' to assist teenagers with cancer.

The SRC took on the responsibility of running school assemblies for the first time this year. The Year 12 SRC members were chosen to perform this task as a means of establishing a higher profile for the SRC as well as giving them the experience of speaking in front of their peers.

After the tragic loss of a year 11 student in 1994, the SRC decided to award a Year 12 student this year an Art Prize of $200 in his memory. This award is not the only one of its kind. The SRC did not want to forget one of our other students who lost her battle against leukemia and an award in her memory will be given in 1996 to a Year 12 student.

This year, The Jannali High School trialed periods of 75 minutes in place of 40 minute ones. The SRC felt it was necessary for all students to express their opinion on whether this new system was better. We conducted a survey of the entire student body and presented the results to the coordinator of the evaluation of longer teaching time. The results of this evaluation thus reflected the views of both staff and students.

Lots of discussion took place at the beginning of the year concerning the need for school hats. The SRC evaluated many different styles and finally selected one they thought was the most suitable. This hat is now on sale at the school.

The SRC was approached by senior students about the need to update the lighting in the school hall. They expressed concern about its inadequacy, especially during examination periods. With the assistance of the Principal, we were able to ensure the lighting was adequate in time for their trial Higher School Certificate.

The SRC had the pleasure of visits from a number of our local primary schools this year. They attended one of our weekly meetings and observed meeting procedures in a relaxed atmosphere. They were able to ask questions about our role in the school as well as our election process. It was a valuable experience for all of us.

The one thing which probably stands out most this year, is the involvement of the SRC with Mr Marslew and the Enough is Enough campaign. Our school SRC was the first school to show its support when we joined early in the year. We felt so strongly about the campaign that we encouraged all of The Jannali High School students to join by holding a mufti day. We now have over 600 members in the school.

Throughout the year, the SRC have held numerous fundraising activities - school socials, Band Nights, Raffles and Mufti Days to name a few. Money raised is used to assist charities as well as to increase SRC funds which are used to support the school and its students.

At the conclusion of each year the SRC farewells our Year 12 representatives at a luncheon at Sizzler. We then welcome our newly elected members for next year and farewell and thank those representatives for this year at a Christmas barbecue in December.

The SRC of 1995 has successfully worked together to complete a year of wonderful achievements and we hope that the SRC of 1996 will continue the good work on behalf of our students.
KIRRAWEE HIGH SCHOOL

During 1995 the Kirrawee High School SRC has continued to represent the students of Kirrawee High and has accordingly acted successfully upon many of their requests.

Apart from many multi days, we have achieved:
- the first school disco in 3 years; this was a major success;
- looking into shade areas for the playground, something that has been referred to the P&C;
- Daffodil Day, a major fundraising achievement, using our new delivery method;
- installation of a phone for student use;
- donated funds to various charities, school teams and achievers;

We have enjoyed a fulfilling year in most of what we set out to achieve, at the same time trying out many new ideas.

We did reach the conclusion, however, that meetings needed greater organisation to ensure attendance, and that they needed to be better followed up. By doing this, we ensure that work is divided equally and this prevents others from off-loading their responsibilities to the same group of people.

Many of the ideas we had at the beginning of our term, we believe were lost either by being put in the ‘too-hard basket’ or simply ran out of steam through too much talk and not enough action. Through greater planning and clearer communication channels we hope to fix this.

We intend to capitalise on these problems by learning from them. The new SRC already have made many changes to ensure this and is looking forward even greater successes in 1996.

MENAI HIGH SCHOOL

The MHSSRC has once again had a very busy year. We have been committed to working on different types of work throughout the year and have partaken in many different assignments. We have worked with the school administration, school staff, and of course the student population, who are of course the most important and the people we most listen to and provide help for throughout the year. We have been a part of different projects both minor, major, weekly to once a year activities, and catered for the help of one person to the whole school. To go through a year is difficult, so we have arranged the following report chronologically from term to term.

Term One was an interesting and challenging term. It saw us engage in many committees within the school. Examples of committees we were on include: Strategic Planning, Curriculum, Finance, School Environment and Image, Uniform, and Policies and Procedures. We were able to give our opinions on all of these committees and they ran through the entire year. We were able to achieve changes in the uniform, by adding warmth to the female garments whilst the male students will have a wider choice of garments next year. First term also saw us start the weekly assemblies which we run and also saw us co-ordinate our termly multi-days and disco.

Term Two was the term in which we created a sports and excellence fund. This fund was designed to give financial support to people that are representing the school or a school region abroad. This fund was used extensively throughout the year by cricketers travelling to Wagga Wagga, softballers making the journey to Brisbane and enthusiasts attending a UN camp run to help with Legal Studies. Term Two also saw us look into the toilet facilities and the seating around the school and we were able to make improvements to the way the schools facilities were.
Term Three was a term when we had a look at the merit system that is working within the school. We recommended different changes so that the system worked better and the school looked at and liked our recommendations, and change was made through compromise. The third term also let us look at the learning centre that will be implemented in the school in 1996. It will be a centre that allows students who have extra time to look into areas that they are studying in greater depth.

Term Four saw us participate in our annual training day that allows us to focus on specific areas of interest and also to let us get to know our newly elected SRC. The focus area for this year was Conflict and Conflict Resolution which will help us in our attempts to become peer mediators in the future. Term Four also was the term that saw us finalise our committee work and see what we should do in regards to them next year and beyond. We were also able to organise the Year 12 final assembly and have the upcoming presentation night to run in the final week of term. Term four has seen us look at the assessment and reporting ways of the school and we have encouraged a small amount of change for following years.

WOOLOOWARE HIGH SCHOOL

1995 marked the beginning of a new timetable system at Woorooware High School which has greatly affected the running of our SRC. Senior students have begun their day at 7.30 am and finished at 12.40 pm, the beginning of lunch, and so have not been available for lunch time meetings. This has meant that meetings have been held rather unsuccessfully during 15 minute recesses, not leaving us sufficient time for discussion or decision making. We are hoping the timetable will accommodate us better next year.

We started the year enthusiastically, with a combined Caringbah/Woolooware High disco which was a good fundraiser for both schools, and an opportunity for students from both schools to work and socialise together. It has not been decided yet where this money will be spent, but undoubtedly it will go towards our greening the environment projects at school.

Another major event in our calendar was a double fund raiser in June for the Salvation Army and for an ex-Woolooware High School student, now a doctor in Zambai who needed equipment for his clinic. We were able to raise enough money to buy and present to him an Ultra Sound machine.

The SRC members have, as usual, received many requests over the year to assist at special events as hosts, ushers or serving supper. These include concert nights, parent-teacher interview and meeting nights. An unusual request to serve supper at a cluster meeting held at our school was met courteously and efficiently by three of our year nine members.

Student Council members have been asked this year to contribute to the Uniform Policy and the Fair Discipline Policies, and senior members successfully negotiated to add long pants to the girls' uniform.
Seattle, Washington, USA

Puget Sound Community School

The Puget Sound Community School is a unique alternative school for middle and high school students. Our program has been built around a strong, shared vision. One focus is respect—respecting students as learners and directors of their own education. Teaching, in conventional settings, has a lot to do with motivating students to learn things that others think are important in order to prepare them for their future. In contrast, at PSCS, we believe that people are learning all the time, and will learn best when engaged in pursuits that they find valuable, whether to prepare them for some future goal, or to enhance the quality of their lives in the present. It is always possible to learn new things, and people who have developed inner motivation and confidence will find ways to learn what they need to, when they need to learn it.

So, students direct their own education at the school. Classes are offered at the beginning of each quarter, and students prioritize them based on their interests. Those classes that draw the most interest are then scheduled. Students create their own schedule, sometimes having to choose between classes that interest them due to scheduling conflicts. The end results are as varied as the students - some have full schedules which keep them in classes throughout the day, others take only one or two classes a day and use the rest of their time to pursue other interests.

Students are learning all the time, whether in or out of class, and we work to create an environment that offers many diverse opportunities for learning. The choice between classes is one example of such an opportunity. This structure of schedule creation encourages students to consider their priorities and make choices that fit for them.

The environment at PSCS is unique in other ways as well. We are a school without walls. We don’t have a site, but rather meet in places like community centers, libraries, and parks - public spaces that are often going unused during the days. Classes are held in a different city each day of the week. We have regular meeting sites in three different cities, and the sites in each city are within walking distance of one another. We encourage members of the community to offer classes at these sites, providing students with the opportunity to learn from diverse individuals who greatly enjoy a particular subject or activity. With this set up, students are out in the community daily. They are part of what’s happening in the world, instead of being isolated in classrooms.

We interact with the wider community in a number of other ways as well. Each student in the school has a personal internet account, and are exchanging e-mail, exploring web sites, and interacting on VEEs (virtual education environments), MUDs and MOOs with people all over the world. Our PSCS internet team has even begun developing web sites for organizations in the area, often as a trade for classroom space.

Community service is another aspect of the program which takes us beyond the school community. We have a community service class, and service opportunities are regularly offered as Friday field trip options.

Each Friday, at least two field trips are offered to the students. These might be anything from movie discussion groups to trips to local businesses to hikes or boating trips. They vary widely each week.

Thursdays are unique days as well. On this day of the week, students have the opportunity to participate in an apprenticeship, working one-on-one with someone in the community. Students indicate their interests and we work to find community members willing to work with them. Students are pursuing many diverse activities - from juggling to HTML programming to playwriting.

Community is another of our program focuses. We interact with the wider community, and interact within the school as a community. Getting to know each other as people is very important, and we have regular gatherings which encourage interaction among students, staff, families, and facilitators. Students and staff interact at the school as people supporting, encouraging, and learning from one another. Decision making at the school is shared. Students are included as board members; this year, the students elected four representatives to the 12 member board. In addition, decisions regarding the school are routinely brought to the group as a whole. For example, we were considering mid-year enrollment for some families who had requested it, and brought the question to the students. Through group discussions, we decided not to increase the size of the school any more until next year.

This introduction gives you a broad overview of the program at PSCS. We hope in future articles to focus on different aspects of the program in more detail. For now, we’d like to share some of what we most enjoy about our school.
My name is Elizabeth Collier. The Puget Sound Community School is the very best school I have ever been to. I love that students are allowed to go at their own pace, and we all get to take part in any decision making that takes place. The best part, though, is that there are a whole bunch of really, really, really cool classes we can take, and if there is a class we want to see offered, then we can either facilitate it ourselves or suggest it to Andy, our Director, or Kim, our Program Facilitator.

My favourite classes have been Beadwork, Drama, and Writing for Publication. We do lots of cool projects in Beadwork, like amulet pouches, necklaces, earrings, and decorative things, all using glass beads mostly. In Drama, we all worked on monologues, memorizing and performing them for the class with lots of good suggestions from our teacher, Tina (an actress and founding member of Empty Space Theatre's Children's Outreach Program). We did improvisations and created scenes from scratch for two people, or a small group. We played games to improve our acting skills, and to help with focus. Writing for Publication is a class for people who want to get their writing critiqued. We contributed stories, poems, essays, etc., and everyone in the class gave us suggestions, opinions, and praise. Last quarter we compiled all of our writings into a literary magazine which we sold to family members.

Anyway, I hope you can see why I like school so much.

Bonney Lake Rope Course, September 1995
"I'm floating!"
Helping each other get across the wire

My name is Christine. I'm a student at PSCS and a grungy chick of Seattle. I'm going to tell you about my average Wednesday.

Well, my mother drops me off at the Good Shepherd Centre which is a community centre in Seattle and once she leaves I run to get a bag of m&m's, shuffle through them all and gobble down the blue ones (that was big news for me when they added the blue), while waiting for group gathering. When that class finally starts we discuss mostly classes and field trips for the coming Friday.

After that ends at 9:15, I have a science class titled The Brain, which to me sounds like some lame movie that no one bothers to take the time and money to see, but it has been a fun and interesting class.

After that I go to Poetry (a big highlight of my day). Poetry is great. It's groovy for me to be able to read my poetry to a group and get comments back.

Then, I have from 12:00-2:00 to walk to University Heights and get lunch. So today, I walked to the poster shop looking for a silverchair poster. (I really like silverchair, but that's off the Wednesday subject.) So of course with my luck they didn't have one.

So, I finally go to Taoism and that class is cool except for the fact that today one kid kept interrupting with comments.

So when that ends at 3:30, I walk with a few people to someone's house for Sewing Basics. It's all right.

Well, now I'm at my mother's school. She's a student of alternative medicine and she is over in the corner getting a massage — she's really quite normal around her friends at school.

If you have any questions for the school email us at: pscs@speakeasy.org If you have any questions for me: ccalines@speakeasy.org
I'm Kim Casey, and I love my job as program facilitator at PSCS. What I like best is interacting with these wonderful, amazing students. I love being a part of all that they are doing. I also love the fact that I can offer whatever classes I want to teach and that students sign up for classes that interest them, so I am continually working with motivated, interested groups. Finally, I love being part of a supportive community of learners. I am learning and growing in innumerable ways this year, and I have the school to thank for that.

My name is Aaron Rabin, and I'm 12 1/2 years old. I'm going to talk about a day in my life as a Puget Sound Community School student. On Monday, I wake up at about 7:00 a.m. and groggily stumble out of bed and jump into the carpool on its way to Bellevue. I get to school and sit in class meeting for an hour where the two teachers, Kim Casey and Andy Smallman make announcements for future field trips and such. I stay in the same room at the Blakemore House, a teen services centre, for my next class - the History of Intolerance in America where we study racism, sexism, discrimination, and intolerance in America for the last 2 to 3 hundred years. It is very interesting except it can get you down really easy.

Next, we go across the street to a teen centre called Ground Zero. There I have a small class called Poetry that has only four students in it. There we read fairly private poems but we have sort of a bond there so it isn't as hard.

After that is lunch!!! Free to roam the streets of Bellevue with my friends and go anywhere I want as long as I'm back on time for my next class. I usually go into the huge Bellevue mall and look around, occasionally window shop, and usually sit down to a nice lunch that I buy with my allowance. I walk back to Ground Zero and play pool for a moment or two before I walk downstairs to start Writing for Publication. This is a class for people who want to have their work reviewed by students in the class who want to, at some point, put their stories, essays, or poems up for publication, and for those who want to put together our next literary magazine.

Last, I have a class taught by Kim Casey called Storytelling. I just joined this class because I quit the other one that was offered at the same time called Child Care Team. That is one of the best things about this school. You can quit a class if it doesn't work out, if you just plain don't like it, or if you would like some free time at that particular time.

This school is one of the greatest things I have experienced in my life and I hope sometime it will be just as large as public school so that everyone will have the chance at this experience. I am very happy I was able to write this for you so that you can get a taste of what it is like in this wonderful environment.

Christine Calmes,
Kim Casey,
Elizabeth Collier,
Aaron Faber and
Aaron Rabin

February 1996
CLASS PROJECTS ON THE INTERNET

My year 8 class researched a project on Renewable Energy as part of their science course. The project looks at the many different ways that electricity can be produced without using fossil fuels. The results of the students' research were then made available as a series of pages on the World Wide Web. All the pictures and text on these pages was produced by the pupils themselves in their own time as well as during lesson time.

A Class Project?

My original motive behind creating some web pages was to provide a way of distributing packs of my worksheets to other internet users. Once a basic set of web pages was up and running, I tried to think of ways of using the site that would involve some of my students. I had just finished an induction course with our year 7 students which involved using the computer suite to type up some work and produce some pictures. I took some of this work home on disk and put it onto the school pages. I dubbed this The Virtual Corridor, since it was the cyberspace equivalent of pinning good work up in the school corridors for visitors to see.

Last year, as part of a topic on energy, I organised a class project on renewable energy sources. The idea behind this was that the class was split into groups, each researching a different topic. The finished pieces of work were then combined into a booklet. The activity provided the students with the chance to practise a number of skills; these included:

- To increase their knowledge of renewable energy sources.
- Working as a group and having to delegate the various tasks themselves.
- Using the library, CD-ROM, and my own resources to collect relevant information.
- Using word processing software to produce the finished pages.

With hindsight, I became aware of a number of drawbacks with presenting the project as a booklet. Many of the students used PC Paintbrush to produce some great pictures, but these lost a lot of impact when printed on our black and white printer. The other limitation was that, even one year on, very few people have actually seen the book. So this year I wanted to repeat the activity, but to find another medium for presenting all their hard work. It seemed like a logical step to take the files that they had written on the computer and turn them into a series of web pages.

I passed round a questionnaire asking the students how they felt when I first told them about the project going onto the Internet. Comments I received included: “I was amazed that we were going to be on the Internet”;

- quite a few were “excited”; one was “delighted”; one girl wrote: “I felt happy and excited because the whole world could see our work”; and one commented: “I felt surprised that our work would be good enough!”. The general opinion was one of interest because most of them had heard about this thing called the Internet, but most had never had anything to do with it. I felt that this provided a very good motivator to many of the students.

Starting the Project

Over the next six lessons the project began to take shape. The students were given free reign as to the content of their specific section. I provided some guidance if they were stuck for things to write, but on the whole everything was up to them. By the end of our sessions in the computer room, each student had produced at least one piece of text or a picture. The files were saved onto the network computer and then transferred onto a couple of disks for me to take home.

Then came the unenviable task of going through each file and pasting them together into a logical order. This was not helped by the seemingly random filenames that some of the students gave their files! Once this was done, all the pictures were converted from bitmap files into .gif files so that they would be able to be
read by any type of computer. Finally the pages were coded into HTML (Hypertext Markup Language). HTML is basically a plain text file, but it contains special codes that produce all the text effects when viewed with a web browser program. For example: <B> this would be printed in bold text </B>.

There are also special codes to insert pictures and links to other pages. I code my pages by hand since I have yet to find an automatic web-authoring program that I like!

It would have been possible to create the whole project as a single document, but this would have been cumbersome. To make it easier to read, it was divided into seven pages; one page per energy source plus an introduction page. The introduction page described the rationale behind the project and gave the names of all the students involved. A special link was included that let the viewer send a message to the students by e-mail.

The six energy sources that we looked at were: Solar, Nuclear, Tidal and Wave, Geothermal, Wind and Hydroelectric. Each page consisted of information about the given energy source plus a number of computer-drawn pictures. At the foot of each page were links so that the reader could choose which page to visit next.

Responses

The end result was put onto the school pages just before the Christmas holidays and messages were posted onto many Usenet education newsgroups to bring the site to people's attention. I was overwhelmed with the response. In the first three weeks over 200 people had visited the site and many of these have sent me messages to say how good they found it.

The site has been used by some teachers as a source of information for their classes tackling the subject of energy. I have even heard from a teacher in Italy who was using it to help her students to learn English (this was one use that had not occurred to me). Messages came from as far away as Palm Springs, Sydney and Seattle. Not bad for a small school stuck in the far south east of England! I passed these messages to the students, many of whom were amazed that somebody in Australia or America would be interested in their work. One lad has asked me for a copy of the messages so that he can show his mum!

Evaluation

I asked the students to evaluate the project themselves. I asked them if they enjoyed working on the project and all but two said that they did. When asked what they liked about it most said that they enjoyed working on the computer. I felt that this was important because quite often many students do not get enough practice at using IT. Quite a few enjoyed using PC Paintbrush, and many were quite adept at using it. One student told me he enjoyed researching in the library, and another thought it would be good to be able to work as a group. Dislikes were few; one student said she did not enjoy the topic she had been asked to do.

Every student was pleased with the way the project looked; "better than I thought", said one. All the students thought it was a good idea that the project could be seen by people all over the world. One said that it was good "because other people could use our project to learn", showing that a few were realising that they were doing something worthwhile and that they had something to offer other people.

On the whole I was very pleased with the way the project was received. I had no idea when I started that so many people would respond so well to it. I will certainly try to repeat the process with a different group and another topic. There is not that much that I would alter if I could do it again. I think it may be help to give the students more guidance at the start so that they know what sort of information they could be providing, but then again the fact that the whole direction of the project was left up to them lends the project more of a student-centred feel; it becomes less like a text book.

What Now?

I have also put the seeds of ideas into the heads of my colleagues in the science department who are keen to make more use of the school's IT resources. Other departments have also shown interest; look out for some history projects in the near future.

If you have access to the WWW and would like to visit our site, our address is:

http://www.rmplc.co.uk/eduweb/sites/dcastle/index.html

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I am a Science teacher at Castle Community School, Deal, Kent, CT14 9BD, UK. You can contact me by e-mail at danny@nicholson.demon.co.uk You can contact the school directly at dcastle@mail.rmplc.co.uk

Danny Nicholson

February 1996
IRC: INTERNET RELAY CHAT

Some of the teachers in the ACT have been using IRC (Internet Relay Chat) for evening discussions and informal chatting (both locally and globally) and connecting our classes during the school hours. IRC allows users to ‘talk’ (typing talking) in real time.

A worldwide network of IRC servers allows people to type talk with each other across the globe. The problem for schools is that this forum is too open and unfortunately the lunatic fringe can cause problems by making unsavoury remarks.

IRC is, however, a very valuable Internet service and so the ACTEIN program has addressed this problem by installing a closed IRC server on Freenet. By closed, it is meant that it is not connected to the worldwide network of IRC servers. Thus users connected to the worldwide IRC server network cannot see the IRC channels that are created on ACTEIN’s IRC server.

The ACTEIN IRC server is up and running now thanks to Michele Huston (Coordinator ACTEIN Program) who has provided us with this safe meeting place for educational purposes.

My colleague Margaret May (Charnwood Primary School) and I would like to invite anyone to join us for informal chats through our new server.

If you have a Macintosh, the Homer client is a good one to use. You can download this through ACTEIN’s ftp Site on their homepage http://actein.edu.au - Mac/Homer 0.93.4 TCP Folder. For PCs get WS_IRC.

If you are using Homer, you will be prompted for some information the first time. This is what I have entered in mine: (you would use your own name or nickname - Margaret uses ‘megny’)

Server Address: actein.edu.au
User ID: janh
User Name: janh
Nickname: janh
Server Port: 6667

When you are in, go to File - New Channel - and when prompted type: (don’t forget the #) #actein

A web page describing IRC can be found at:

One of us is usually logged on to channel #actein from home after school. We keep it in the background while we work as Homer has a talking option which tells us when someone joins the channel. We welcome you to log on.

If you would like to arrange a specific time, please send us an email message. We will be happy to talk you through your first session and if you are using Homer, teach you all about its functions.

We have also started to connect our classes here in the ACT. We are usually on from 9 to 10 am and 11.30 to 12.30 pm (ACT time) on school days.

We look forward to chatting with you soon.

Margaret May
E-mail: Margaret.May@CharnwoodPS.actein.edu.au

Jan Henryon
Special Education Teacher
Chisholm Primary School
Hambidge Crescent
Chisholm, ACT 2905
Ph: (06) 205 6055; Fax: (06) 205 6056
E-Mail: Jan.Henryon@ChisholmPS.actein.edu.au
Web Pages: http://actein.edu.au/ChisPS/home.html

HomerPaint

One of the really neat things about Homer on the Mac is the associated HomerPaint program that enables collaborative drawing (in colour) over the Net. A fun thing for kids.

Also, for those who do not have a dialup TCP/IP (SLIP/PPP) connection but who are restricted to plain serial dialup, there is a serial version of Homer that provides the same interface.

Available by anon FTP to cleo.murdoch.edu.au in the directory public/dialup_access/comm5_mac/irc_client/Homer93_IRC/


Michele Huston
CNIP Outreach Officer
The Centre for Networked Information and Publishing
The Australian National University ACT 0200 Australia
Coordinator ACTEIN Program

IRC for PCs

The IRC client for the PC that we use here at ACTEIN is called nscat. It is a Netscape client and, while it doesn’t have a paint program, if you run Netscape at the same time you can send web pages back and forth.

It is a very easy to use client. You can get a copy of it from the ACTEIN ftp site.

Geoff Rehn
Murdock University
rehn@cleo.murdoch.edu.au
http://cleo.murdoch.edu.au/


Connect 97:
KIDS AS GLOBAL SCIENTISTS

A software, curriculum, and resource package for middle school atmospheric science

We are about to begin the fourth year of organizing a diverse group of middle school classrooms (ages 9-14) around the world who would like to participate in an organised information exchange on topics in atmospheric science. Our project is titled: KIDS AS GLOBAL SCIENTISTS, and we are funded by the US National Science Foundation to develop materials and organise telecommunications exchanges using the Internet. If you are interested in finding out more information and possibly becoming a participating site for an exchange in early Spring 1996 (February 26-April 19), please send us answers to the questions below. If you are not affiliated with a K-12 school, we would appreciate you passing on this information to a school or teacher you know who may be interested.

For those of you who have participated previously, we welcome your continued participation! We plan to continue with our cluster approach to organizing correspondence groups, forming groups of approximately 10 schools each. The schools in each cluster will be selected to maximize diversity of location and ethnicity, but will provide a smaller pool for correspondence (hence greater accountability). We will also try to select schools with similar spring break schedules, to reduce "down time" during the exchange.

We will continue to offer 4 topics in Atmospheric Science: Winds, Precipitation, Clouds and Humidity, and Temperature and Pressure. After an introductory phase focused on getting to know their fellow participants via e-mail messages, your students will work in small groups to become local experts in their topic of choice. We encourage a multi-faceted approach, using Internet-based resources, peers, and professional mentors in addition to traditional research methods. Our curriculum packet will provide you with ideas for classroom activities, including on-line exploration of data and information.

A coordinated two-week data collection period will provide an opportunity to work with first-hand data, as well as form the basis for exchange of information with peers. Analysis and comparison of data, in addition to developing rich content knowledge is the goal of this phase of the exchange.

Schools with direct connectivity or 14.4 modem access to a SLIP/PPP account will be offered the option of using BlueSkies, software developed by the University of Michigan's Weather Underground, as an easy interface to real-time data, as well as a means to post student-collected data for others to view. Those without this option will be assisted in exploring other sources of real-time data, including FTP sites on the Internet and the Weather Channel. Our goal is to provide a quality educational experience for all classrooms; direct connectivity is NOT required.

Please don't hesitate to contact us at the KGS office if you would like more information before applying.

kgs@spot.colorado.edu

Additional information about the project can also be obtained from our WWW Homepage at: http://stripe.colorado.edu/~kgs/html/Home.html

Questions for Potential Participants in the 1996 Kids as Global Scientists Exchange

1. Can you dedicate one hour per day of classroom time from February 12-April 5 1995 for an Internet-based global science information exchange with students around the world? (If your Spring Break or other holiday falls during this time, when is it? We will try to match schools with similar break schedules.)

2. Do your students have access to electronic mail and the Internet, either through a connection at your school (modem, direct connectivity), or through teachers or cooperative parents or support staff?

3. How do you access the Internet? Please describe the machine(s) you use, what you know about the interface you use, how your mail connects with the Internet, and any other relevant information you know about access. If you do not currently have access at the school, do you know of a temporary access situation which may be available during the time period mentioned?

   a. Do you have direct connectivity? If not, what speed modem do you use? Do you have access to a SLIP/PPP account on your server?
   b. Do you have a colour monitor?
   c. Is your computer a Mac or IBM?

5. What are the ages and characteristics of the students you work with/think should participate? What is your community/school like? What languages are the primary languages spoken in the homes?

6. Please write out your correct email address here.

7. What is your postal address, and telephone number? Please include the ZIP + 4 code for your school location.

8. Do you have access to a CD-ROM drive at your school? If so, is it IBM or Macintosh?

Thank you.

Holly Devaul
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http://stripe.colorado.edu/~kgs/html/Home.html

February 1996
Australian Listings in UK Education Mag

Lib Ed is a UK-based magazine linked to ideas of alternatives and freedom within education. They include an international directory of related groups and schools, and are currently updating that listing.

If you are interested to be listed by Lib Ed, contact David Gribble, Open School, West Aish, Morchard Bishop, Crediton, Devon EX17 6RX. Fax: +44 1803 866676.

Alternative Report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child

National Workshop

Australia’s Report as a party to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CROC) was released in December 1995 and tabled at the United Nations in January 1996. It is likely to be scheduled for pre-session discussion in October and formal consideration at the Committee’s 14th session in late 1996 or early 1997. This gives time for Australian non-government organisations to prepare an Alternative Report which will be submitted for consideration alongside the Government Report.

The Alternative Report will critically examine Australia’s progress in implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It will report on breaches of the Convention and areas of law, administration and policy which do not adequately protect children’s interests.

Defence for Children International has undertaken to coordinate the NGO response, and will launch the project at a national workshop in Canberra. Young people’s organisations and other NGOs and peak bodies concerned about issues affecting children or young people, are invited to participate in the workshop and contributed to the report.

The Workshop will be held on:
Tuesday 14th March, 9 am - 5 pm
at Parliament House, Canberra

Six working groups will be formed to plan the content, direction and main recommendations of particular chapters of the Report.

Funding for the project has been provided by the Commonwealth Attorney-General and the Save the Children Fund Australia.

For more information, contact:
Defence for Children International,
PO Box 383, Dickson ACT 2602.
Phone: (06) 247 9395; Fax: (06) 247 0278

Summerhill School

A New View of Childhood
by A S Neill

First published in the United States in 1960, Summerhill School became a bible for progressive education in the ’60s and ’70s. It has sold over 4 million copies and continued requests from parents, teachers and schools have made it necessary to update this book for the ’90s. Completely revised by Albert Lamb, over half of the material in the new paperback edition has been revised. This updated version is a classic that has spread the message that children are special, should have the right to choose what they want to do with their lives, and that they have the ability to govern themselves in a democratic community.

The structure of Summerhill is based on the idea of self-government and is democratic in every aspect. Decisions about issues are made by voting, and each member of the teaching staff, houseparent and child has one vote. A child’s vote carries the same weight as a teacher’s vote. Small fines are paid when a rule is broken, and children make their own choices regarding what they eat, what they study, and the activities in which they participate.

There is fresh material discussing the role the corporation has in shaping the mind of a child, dictating commercial choices, and the effect of commercial products foisted upon children as young as two or three years. With the multitude of problems such as drugs and violence that affect our schools today, a radical change may need to be made; Summerhill School is one of the most influential books about schools and education in the twentieth century.

Author, A S Neill, founder of the Summerhill School, was a pioneer of 20th-century radical education. Editor, Albert Lamb, a former student, is currently on the staff of Summerhill School.

Summerhill School, St Martin’s Press;
ISBN 0 312 14137 8
FROM ALIENATION TO ENGAGEMENT
OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFORM IN THE MIDDLE YEARS OF SCHOOLING

During 1994-95, a Commonwealth Project of National Significance conducted studies in schools in South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia around the theme of student alienation in the middle years of schooling.

This three volume report provides documentation and resources emerging from those studies. It is divided into section on 'Key Findings and Recommendations', 'Theoretical Constructions' and 'Teacher Action'. It is probably the latter of these volumes that will be of most direct interest and use to teachers and students.

The report captures student, teacher and researcher voices on issues that span the senior years in primary schools and the junior years in secondary schools. "We don't have class meetings in secondary school. In primary we had them but now we don't." "We don't get listened to as much as in primary school." "Teachers feel powerless to do things the way they would like due to the structures, traditions, inertia, scale or organisations and lack of support mechanisms. They feel a lot of their workload is taken up with meaningless, low value irrelevant tasks (to students and themselves)."

So, if there is a common complaint, and possibilities for student-teacher collaboration, how do we break out of those constraints?

Much of the report is concerned with starting points for strategies to move "from alienation to engagement". A selection of these are included under the headings:

- Curriculum - Relevance; Negotiation; Integration;
- Pedagogy - Participation; Empowerment; Diversity;
- Organisation - Teaming; Flexibility; Unity;
- Environment - Respect; Commitment; Care.

Separate pages each present a teacher narrative with a dot-point summary of the key strategies employed. It is intended that these pages could be copied for use in professional development and training - to promote small group discussion and critical reflection.

Some of the material could also be extremely relevant for use with students. The language of 'teacher development' and 'student free days' can easily lock students out of productive partnerships for collaborative curriculum review and development. Here, the pages describing practice and strategies on 'negotiation', 'participation' (implementing classroom meetings at Paralowie R-12 School, SA), and 'empowerment' in particular, could form the basis for the creation of further shared research in any school.

Volume 3 goes on to spell out study implications for further research and development in areas such as: cultural innovation - new approaches - engage teachers in action research, promote democratic processes; productive partnerships; dynamic leadership; sustained support. Again, separate pages provide starting points for discussion and debate.

The outcomes of the study strongly reinforce the need for changes in curriculum structures and approaches. "Students in the middle years need to be encouraged, trained and supported to accept greater responsibility for their own learning and achievement in order to function autonomously and to contribute effectively to society." "By genuinely consulting with students and acting on their ideas and suggestions, teachers can make the middle years of schooling a more productive and rewarding experience for all."

This implies substantial shifts in the structures of schools, in the ways in which learning is perceived and in the way in which students are regarded. The study doesn't imply that that will be easy. In recognising the real barriers to participation and empowerment that exist within schools and within systems, the report provides a valuable resource for getting that change on the agenda of schools, and for getting serious examinations of practices under way.

As noted above, it's also essential that this process 'practises what it preaches'. The report places student voices in a central position. It's important that the school discussions and action research that this report supports, also include the students as active participants in the change process.

Roger Holdsworth

From Alienation to Engagement is published by the Australian Curriculum Studies Association, PO Box 884, Belconnen ACT 2616. The three volumes are available as a set for $36 or separately.

February 1996
The Together Two Thousand Campaign

The Together Two Thousand Campaign (3TC) will be launched officially on a national scale in June of this year and will run until 2001. I am currently floating the idea past others involved with work with young people. (For more details about Youth Services, our homepage address is HTTP://gil.ipswichcity.qld.gov.au/~jake/.) The aim of 3TC is to be the catalyst for young people to establish full and active participation in Political and Corporate Australia.

The objectives of the project will be to:

- identify key barriers to participation for young Australians in Government, Private Business, the Education System and public matters;
- write and promote publications discussing these barriers;
- develop models of best practice that will assist Governments, corporations and other organisations to involve young people in planning and development; and
- establish a number of programs that will ensure the continues full participation of young people in Australian society.

By the year 2001 the Australian community will see through 3TC:

- the further development of the Young Peoples Youth Policy Advisory Council of Australia (as already established by YSP);
- the bi-monthly publication of “The Voice - Youth Journal”;
- the production of a major research document reporting on all the findings of the research undertaken through 3TC, plus numerous preliminary publications over the years;
- the production of seven documentaries on the seven key barriers identified in early research, made by a team of young film makers from each state and territory of Australia;
- the production of plays, musical theatre, dance performances and art expositions by emerging artists;
- the production of a touring youth opera on one of the key barriers for non-participation by young Australians;
- the development of a number of ‘Young Peoples Place(s)’ (as already initiated by the Youth Services Program);
- the launching of the ‘Invest in Australia’s Future Portfolio’;
- the production of hundreds of discussion papers, documentaries, docu-dramas and short films by young people discussing young peoples issues - such as unemployment, suicide, drug use, sexual expression, safe sex, gender issues, etc.; and
- hundreds of other regional peer projects, developed by young people, facilitated by young people for the benefit of their entire community.

These endeavours will be achieved through a three-pronged approach over a five year period: Research; Publications; and Program Development.

The Together Two Thousand Campaign is an initiative of the Youth Services Program and will achieve its goals through the combined efforts of this association and:

- the Federal Government of the Commonwealth of Australia;
- all State and Territory Governments of Australia;
- all regional authorities, Local and Shire Councils across the nation;
- the major churches and religious organisations of Australia;
- key community welfare organisations;
- Corporate Australia; and
- the young people of this nation.

This is a very ambitious project and I believe with the combined efforts of our team and other organisations both within the youth sector and general community it can be achieved. I am still very interested in gaining others thoughts about the scheme - we have no intention of embarking on this project alone .... we will depend on this concept of combined support.

I can be contacted by e-mail or post:

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CLEARINGHOUSE

Local and Overseas Publications Received

Connect receives many publications directly or indirectly relevant to youth and student participation. We can't lend or sell these, but if you want to look at or use them, contact us on:
(03) 489 9052 or (03) 344 8585

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS:

Australian:

Student Representative Council: Annual Reports 1995 (Southern Association SRC, NSW)
The State of the Planet - I*EARN Australia Student Forum - papers; Melbourne, 15 December 1995
Icarus (I*EARN Australia/Broadford SC, Vic) Vol 1 No 5, December 1995
The Journey (I*EARN Australia/Broadford SC, Vic) 1995
War and Peace (I*EARN/Lake Bolac SC and others) December 1995
Water World (I*EARN Australia, Vic) Issue 1, November 1995

OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

Australian:

The Big Link (Innovative Links Between Universities and Schools for Teachers Professional Development, C/o Murdoch University, WA) No 4 Dec 1995
Network News (Surry Hills, NSW) December 1995
YACSA 12th Annual Report (Youth Affairs Council of SA) 1994/5

Young Australians - Making the Future Work:

Newsletter (Social Justice Research Foundation, SA) December 1995
Ethos (VASST, Richmond, Vic) 1994

From Alienation to Engagement: Volumes 1, 2, 3

(ACSA, Belconnen, ACT) 1996

Other Ways (Alternative Education Resource Group, Vic) Issue 66, December 1995

Rural Education (RERDC, James Cook University, Qld) Vol 6 No 2 December 1995

Rights Now! (NCYLC, NSW) Vol 3 No 4 and Index, November 1995

Promoting youth participation: a rights perspective (NCYLC, NSW) Discussion paper; December 1995

Orana (ALIA, Qld) Vol 31 No 4, November 1995

STAR Newsletter (DSE, Vic) Issue 1 Nov 1995

Truancy and Exclusion from School (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, ACT) - report, January 96

YES (Youth and Education Services, Red Cross, Vic) Issue 1, December 1995

Overseas:

Options in Learning (ALLPIE, USA) No 15, 1995
UNIK-Base (Bagen, Sweden) October 1995

The Summerhill Journal (Summerhill School, UK) Issue 13, Christmas 1995

Education Now (Nottingham, UK) No 10, Winter 1996

AERO-Gramme (AERO, New York, USA) #17, Winter 1996

Documents

The documents listed in this column are of general background value. A photocopy is available for research purposes. The length and cost (to cover copying and postage) is listed. Please order by code number.

A full, computerised list of these documents is now available from Connect for $3; this can be accessed and printed by topic, key-word etc or simply sequentially.

Code Description/Pages/Cost

423 Building School-Community Consortia for Active Connections, Katherine Hooper-Brier and Hal Lawson; paper at ACHPER Conference, January 1996.

(19 pp; $1.90)

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• Students and Work - 1985 Connect reprint booklet #5 ($5) $ ...........
• ‘Youth Radio’ issue of 3CR’s CRAM Guide (1985) ($1) $ ...........
• Democratic Decision Making in Schools - Victorian PEP (1987) ($3) $ ...........

• Sometimes a Shining Moment (Wigginton) ($25) $ ...........
• Foxfire 9 (Doubleday Anchor) ($25) $ ...........
• Foxfire: 25 Years (Doubleday) ($25) $ ...........
• A Foxfire Christmas (Doubleday hardcover) ($25) $ ...........
• Shining Moments - Foxfire video (1 hour) (loan for 1 week: $5) $ ...........

• SRC Pamphlets Set (6 pamphlets; Youth Affairs Council of Victoria) ($5) $ ...........

• Photocopies of the following documents:

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