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Contents:

3  FOCUS: Sherbrooke Community School
   Foreword
   Morning Meetings
   Areas of Learning
   Workshops
   Case Study: Playground
   Assessment
   Making School Policy

10  SURVEY: Metropolitan West Region (NSW) Keith Ison
   Student Participation in School Decision Making

13  LIFT-OUT: Student Participation Contract, Worksheet, Report and Assessment

17  Drawing Up a Contract/'Credit and Support'

18  The Making of Y.B. City

22  Crookwell Student Help Push Political Awareness

23  NEWS AND REVIEWS: Municipal Journal/TAFE Student Network/Richmond Writing/Delta Report/
   Student Writes/Getting Real/Youth Affairs Conference/Brunswick Youth
   Week/Radio Network Directory/Youth Training Camp/Really Good Friends/
   Ascolta Radio Group/Festival Manual/Schools and Radio/Shaping Futures

26  LETTERS

27  MATERIAL AVAILABLE/FRIENDS OF CONNECT

28  SUBSCRIPTION AND MATERIALS ORDER FORM

Cover:

From Getting Real: Sherbrooke Community School students at work; cross-age tutoring in action. (Steve Moyle)

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Next Year?

We've received a couple of offers about publication of Connect next year (last issue, we indicated plans to be O.S. ... O.T. ... whatever ...). We're following those up. Any other offers?

To begin organising this, we invite all interested people to the inaugural

CONNECT MEETING
Saturday 20th June 1987
2.00 pm
12 Brooke St., Northcote 3070

Top of the agenda will be arrangements to ensure publication in 1988.
Those not in Melbourne and interested are asked to contact us before this date—H: (03) 489.9052; W: (03) 419.9122.
The following articles are re-printed, with permission of the school, from Getting Real, the Victorian PEP produced book outlining student/parent/teacher cooperation at Sherbrooke Community School. The full booklet can be obtained from the Parent and Student Participation in Curriculum Development and Decision Making Schools Resource Program (PEP, 416 King Street, West Melbourne 3003).

Foreword

Colin Hollow (School Coordinator)  
Viv Petrzelka (Parent)

During 1986, Sherbrooke Community School was involved in the Participation and Equity Program's Schools Resource Program called Parent and Student Participation in Curriculum Development and Decision Making.

The guiding principle of the Sherbrooke Community School program is that the school is a cooperative endeavour, involving students, parents and teachers in all aspects of decision making and in all aspects of the school - the daily school program, beyond and out-of-school experiences like camps and excursions, cross-age tutoring, working in community facilities, the School Council and community meetings.

The school community has developed the following beliefs about education:

* education should be accessible and rewarding for all students at all stages;
* education should be concerned with practical life skills, current issues and knowledge which has always been important;
* students should be able to develop a personal view of their society and of their place in that society;
* school experience should be based on cooperative group endeavour in which every person is expected to participate and is respected for their unique contribution;
* interaction between younger and older students is important;
* students of all ages are capable of taking a responsible role in their school;
* close links between school and community, school and home, help to make a school worthwhile;
* a school should be a happy place.

In keeping with Sherbrooke's view of schooling, this booklet was a cooperative endeavour. A group of twelve students, one teacher, two parents and the SRP coordinator formed a timetabled workshop, met twice a week for one semester and worked together to document and prepare this publication and its accompanying poster.
MORNING MEETINGS
Student, Parent and Teacher Participation in Daily Decision Making

Printshop Workshop

At Sherbrooke, students, parents and teachers are all able to state their opinions. We get a say in everything that goes on in our school. Teachers listen to student problems and concerns and do their utmost to help.

A normal day at Sherbrooke Community School begins with the Morning Meeting. Morning Meetings at Sherbrooke Community School are meetings of the whole school. They are very different from teacher-run school assemblies. Anyone who is a member of the school community and in the school at the time, can join in. They are compulsory for all teachers and students.

The meetings begin at 9 am every morning but can run longer than the ten minutes set aside on the timetable because we try to reach agreement by talking rather than voting.

At the beginning of the meeting, a minute-taker and chairperson are called for. (At the moment, homegroups are taking it in turns to provide these two people.) The chairperson then asks students who want to be on the agenda to call out their names.

Because teachers tended to talk too much and take up all the time, if they have notices they now write them on the blackboard. We have found that the meetings work best when they are student controlled.

The purposes of the meetings are to inform everyone in the school of what is happening, to raise issues that have emerged the day before, to suggest action, to report back from other meetings and to share the good and bad things.

Some of the topics discussed this year were fund-raising, smoking, a graffiti board, behaviour and vandalism.

Primary Students and the Morning Meeting

This year Sherbrooke Community School has primary as well as high school students. At first, the primary kids didn’t say much in the meetings but now the younger students are beginning to speak up.

The primary kids also have their own Morning Meetings which are a bit like the bigger kids’ homegroups.

The primary students have been responsible for raising the more difficult topics eg behaviour on the bus, vandalism and smoking. They see the Morning Meetings as an opportunity to bring forward things that trouble them. While older students are more likely to hide their feelings of right and wrong because of peer-group pressure, younger kids are more likely to say what’s on their minds.
Most kids are very supportive of the school and are continually reminding each other that they are one school although during the year we had trouble when the younger kids wanted to go on the school camp. We all talked about this at the Morning Meetings and it was eventually decided that the 'Primes' would go. After the camp, everyone agreed that it was a great idea.

This year as well as having the younger kids, we have moved to a new location and built new buildings. Because of these changes, we have had to make sure that all our ways of doing things (policies) were talked through thoroughly as these policies will give us the guidelines for the future. As well as making decisions at the morning meetings the whole school community - parents, teachers and students - went to Flinders one weekend to work out these policies.

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**PARTICIPATION AND AREAS OF LEARNING**

Andy Moffat (Teacher)

In most schools, students don't get much say in what they learn, especially up to year 10. At Sherbrooke, what is learnt and taught, how it is learned and taught and how it is to be assessed is worked out by parents, teachers and students.

It was agreed that learning at Sherbrooke would be active and cooperative. Teachers, kids and parents agreed that certain areas of learning were important for everyone, at least to year 10.

These 'Areas of Learning' aren't subjects, but broad areas like Social and Cultural Studies and Creative and Performing Arts.

The Areas of Learning are:
* Social and Cultural Studies
* Health and Physical Development
* Science and Technology
* Language and Communication
* Creative and Performing Arts
* Maths and Computational Skills

At Sherbrooke, we think that these areas of learning are linked. So we like to show them as inter-connected rings:

![Diagram of interconnected areas of learning](chart)

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Teachers and students try really hard to get a balance across these areas of learning so that possibilities for study are left open for as long as possible up until year 10. This gives students an opportunity for realistic and considered choice at the year 11 and 12 level.
Below is how one of the students worked through the problem of trying to achieve a balance in his time-table:

"When I had a good look at my time-table, I noticed that I had a problem. In first semester I had chosen too `Team Game' Workshops as my selection from the Health and Fitness ring, one Music workshop - `Instrumental Ensemble' - and one Drama workshop from the Creative and Performing Arts ring, but my timetable was missing out on something from the Science and Technology ring and the Social and Cultural Studies ring, so I had to make sure that I went into `Electronics' and `One World' in second semester. I am also doing 'Printshop', 'Logic and Fantasy', 'Singing', and `Careers'." (Nick Vandeer)

As you can see, the curriculum balance may not be achieved over six months but student and homegroup teacher ensure that it will balance over twelve months.

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STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND WORKSHOPS

Printshop Workshop

At Sherbrooke, teachers don’t tell kids what they can study. Instead, kids in homegroups and Morning Meetings begin by talking about what their learning needs are.

We think that kids should have a say right from the beginning. Kids work out with other kids what the workshops should be so everyone knows what they are broadly letting themselves in for when they choose a workshop.

About one month before the end of the semester, in both homegroups and workshops, we begin to look at the balance of our curriculum. We might say, for example, "Well, last semester I did too much in the Creative and Performing Arts area. I did workshops in `Logic and Fantasy', `Sound and Radio' plus `Drama' and only `The Human Machine' in Science and Technology. Can I get other kids interested in a Science Technology workshop which combines my interest in the environment with actively doing things outside?"

In either homegroups or workshops we write up a description of what we want to learn.

All these suggestions are posted around the room and if they are interested, people write their names under the description. People can add bits to the description if they want to or combine suggestions into one potential workshop.

Nick wanted to do some more music and thought that maybe he could link music with electronics.

"I put up a description of what I wanted on the year 8/9 wall and got together some other kids who were interested. I wanted to learn howamps etc worked, how to make them and how to repair them.

"Between then and the actual workshop, we had to change what I originally wanted to do because we didn’t have a teacher who could teach it. The workshop became a straight electronics course."

The whole school decides what can be done, that is, if we have the resources. If something is not possible, then all of us - students, teachers and parents - work out a way of combining workshops.

We have five blocks fo workshops and a workshop is like an elective, which means we are able to choose between them. However we do have to be careful that we get a balance across the areas of learning.

As well as workshops, we do the compulsory core areas: Fitness, Reading, English, Maths, Home Groups and Morning Meeting.

Workshops:
* go for one single and one double period a week for a semester;
* have no more than 14 students;
* mean that students value their work more;
* allow you to work with kids of different ages and ability levels;
* allow you to work on your own thing;
* mean that the whole school appreciates what you do;
* are doing things more than just sitting in a classroom.

When the workshops and the core get going, kids and teachers talk about how they are going to do them, how long each bit should take and how they are going to evaluate what they have done.
The primary students constructed models of their plans for an adventure playground.

Doing things cooperatively.

Case Study: Playground Workshop

Bob Shepherd (Teacher)

As we said in the foreword, actually doing things is a great way to learn, so everything we do at Sherbrooke is practical in some way. For instance, in a workshop like 'Playground Construction and Design', kids did practical things like designing models, making up survey sheets, communicating with School Council, testing to find out what kind of soil and vegetation our school site is on and much, much more. At the end of the workshop, the kids in the workshop had created a useful, attractive playground and fitness track for everyone to use.

Initially this workshop idea came from the primary kids when we were deciding about Capital Works in the School Council.

The year 7 kids were interested in researching the viability of creating a playground. I suggested that maybe we could create a workshop that incorporated the skills of metalwork and woodwork. Teachers and parents conferred and then designed a survey sheet.

Plans then came back from Council for a fitness trail which everyone could use. The kids made models and took these to Council and to the Morning Meeting. Before this, Betty (a parent) and I suggested to Council that we would make a start.

Working from the students' ideas, we researched materials and methods. Parents found appropriate materials like car tyres and timber poles, and so the project progressed.

The students were empowered through an understanding of where the money came from and the plan of action which related to their models.

The best thing about the workshop was that it was a mix of concrete and abstract, meaning that it worked beautifully for a vertical, mixed ability group.

If we run such a workshop again, we would like much more time; perhaps a suspension of the program for those kids in the workshop and a larger work space. We found that the weather can be a problem so we would try to make allowances for this.
Assessment at SCS is a joint process. At Sherbrooke, assessment and reporting are areas where students and parents make contributions. Our assessments aim to encourage cooperative learning.

Assessment is goal-based, non-competitive and designed to promote each student's improvement.

Because homegroup and morning meeting discussions decide the broad outlines for workshops, kids know pretty well what they'll be doing in workshops, that is, what material they'll be covering and what skills they will be attempting to learn. There is also discussion at home with parents about workshop outlines.

Specific goals are not set until the workshops actually start. There are different expectations for different students and there are goals for the group to achieve.

Kids write self-assessments and these are very important. The kids take two weeks at the end of each semester to write these reports. In looking back on their semester's work, they are very honest and sometimes quite hard on themselves if they feel that they haven't 'put in'.

Kids are always aware of their own progress and achievements because they are in control of their own learning. There are rarely any surprises for kids at report time.

Parents also write assessments, if they have been part of a workshop and, of course, teachers write student assessments.
The Student Contribution to the Development of Sherbrooke Community School's Smoking Policy

Nicki Garden, Chloe Schauble and Sarah Kolb

The subject of smoking came up in the first week of the school's operation in 1985. Someone was sitting on the steps having a smoke before school started.

One of the students asked for smoking to be put on the agenda of the next Morning Meeting, then it seemed like it was discussed at every Morning Meeting for ages.

At first those students who smoked disagreed with everything that anyone said against smoking. Several people said that they got asthma from breathing the smoke and other kids said that they were worried about the school's reputation.

After this, the subject of smoking was put on the School Council's meeting agenda.

During the discussion, parents wanted to know whether or not the school was going to allow students to smoke. One parent defended her son's right to smoke, saying that he was over 16 and had parent permission. While some parents were strongly against smoking in the school, other parents were willing to compromise and suggested that the kids could have an area where they could smoke. There was general agreement at that meeting that Sherbrooke Community School would be a non-smoking school.

A debate on smoking was held during a student meeting. The kids who smoked presented their case saying that their smoking didn't cause an increase in smoking at the school and that being prevented from smoking interfered with their rights.

This was countered by the non-smoking students who said that smoking interfered with their rights. They also said that smoking had doubled since the beginning of the year.

Although students at the meeting decided not to make a rule about smoking, they decided that something should be done to help the smokers.

Someone suggested that anti-smoking videos should be shown to students. After having seen some of these videos, the students who did not smoke said they found the videos boring. They did say that they felt the videos gave them some support so that they didn't feel so pressured to go down the back of the school and join the smokers.

We also participated in some tests to see how much tar you took in when you smoked. These tests were really interesting.

After showing the videos and conducting the tests, Lyn and Viv, two parents at the school interested in the smoking program, decided to talk to the smokers. One student said that he would be more likely to give up smoking if he were given support. This was an encouraging sign as this student was one of the heavier smokers and he had decided to do something about his smoking. He was a peer group leader and his decision to quit smoking would help to influence the other smokers.

What we try to do now is to get the hard-core smokers to set goals, to set limits on the number of cigarettes they smoke in a day, e.g. cutting down by half, having a quit day, handing in cigarettes on quit days or having cut-down days.

This is how some students feel about the smoking program:

* It's been really good having Viv and Lyn counselling the smokers. They are really trusted.

* It's better when the people who counsel the smokers are parents because the kids here are more likely to feel they should quit when a parent is concerned.

* These parents are special parents. It wouldn't be any good having a parent who didn't have any patience.

Betty in the Playground – drawn by Don Deany
STUDENT PARTICIPATION
IN SCHOOL DECISION MAKING

One of the three themes for International Youth Year (IYY, 1985) was participation which was about young people "having a meaningful say in family, school, work, government and in other aspects of their lives". Teachers and school administrators hold the key for determining whether students will have the opportunity to have a 'meaningful say' in school affairs. The manner in which a school enables its students to participate in decision making is part of that school's hidden curriculum. Educators are generally aware that a school's hidden curriculum can be a more powerful influence on the development of a student's attitudes and values than that school's intended curriculum. In fact, the hidden curriculum affects not only the students but other members of the school's community.

Whether or not a person feels valued as an individual or as a member of a group is partly governed by whether the person or group has the opportunity to influence decisions which have an impact on the person's life. As the schooling process is of utmost importance to students (and their parents) it is reasonable to expect that schools would, with benefit, provide means for their participation along with teachers and other staff members in school affairs.

During IYY, the Metropolitan West IYY Committee conducted a survey among the public high schools in the Metropolitan West Region (NSW) to gain some information concerning the extent and nature of formal participation by students in decision making in their schools.

What follows is a summary of responses to the survey:

The survey was sent in April 1985 with a covering letter to Principals and IYY Coordinators at all targeted high schools. A follow-up letter with a further copy of the survey was sent in July to those schools which had not responded at that date.

Completed surveys were received from 42 schools which represents a response rate of 82.4%.

Student Representative Councils (SRCs)

Is there an SRC?

Yes: 33 (78.6%) No: 9 (21.4%)

It is obvious that in most schools the concept of an SRC is supported, however it is worth noting the following comment made by the Principal from one school without an SRC:

'We have had a students' council in previous years but this year I have not been able to induce a teacher to accept the duty of coordinator etc, otherwise we would still have a council.'

Number of members and distribution among grade levels:

The number of members varied from 10 to 86 with a median figure of 28 and a mean of 31.2. In later years there will probably be a slight increase as five of the schools don't have all grade levels enrolled yet. Grade level distribution patterns showed great variation from school to school. Once again, as the developing schools move towards their full enrolments, changes will ensue.

A number of schools give greater weight to the senior school (years 11, 12) than to the middle school (years 9, 10) and to the junior school (years 7, 8). The middle school also has greater proportionate representation than the junior school. Mean representation by grade level is shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th></th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Representation:</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only three schools give equal weight to each grade level. One school with a 24 member SRC has students from years 9 and 10 only. One school with two representatives from each vertical roll group did not provide a breakdown of grade level distribution.
It is likely that older, more mature students would have greater influence in an SRC because of their age and maturity. The relative powerlessness of younger students would then be compounded when they are also at a numerical disadvantage.

Note: At one school which has an SRC with 18 student members, the council nominates three teachers to become members of the council.

Method of election/selection:

In all cases, elections were held to determine SRC membership. In almost one third of schools, staff took part in the election of some or all of the SRC members. In two cases, some students were appointed to the SRC:

- **Election by students:** 21 (63.6%)
- **Elections by students and staff:** 10 (30.3%)
- **Appointment:** 0 (0.0%)
- **Some by election and some by appointment:** 2 (6.1%)

All students whose groups were to provide representatives to the SRC are given the opportunity to vote. This also means that in those cases where a grade level has no representation, the students do not generally have a say in who will be SRC members.

Staff veto on membership:

In 19 schools (59.4%) staff members do not have the power of veto over the election of an individual student although one response was qualified by the comment 'not usually'.

In some of the 13 schools (40.6%) which indicated that they had the power of veto, one added the comment 'never exercised'.

Note: the percentages shown for responses to this question are calculated on a total of 32 schools as one school with an SRC neglected to answer this question.

Frequency of meetings:

Meetings generally take place regularly with every two weeks or twice a month being the most common:

- **Weekly:** 8 (24.2%)
- **Twice a month or every two weeks:** 13 (39.4%)
- **Every three weeks:** 1 (3.0%)
- **Monthly or every four weeks:** 10 (30.3%)
- **Twice a term:** 1 (3.0%)

Some schools indicated that SRC committees also have scheduled meetings.

Role of the teacher patron:

The following were mentioned by one or more schools as the role of the teacher patron:

- Adviser/Supervise, motivate, guide/General consultant/Convenor, organiser/Guide business agendas/Guidance in meeting procedure/Chair the meetings/Guide in development of specific roles eg chair, minute secretary/Maintain relevant discussion/Accept or reject recommendations (the Principal was teacher patron at this school)/Seek out suitable goals/Direct activities in line with school policy/Coordinate activities/Suggest fundraising activities/Help with general organisation of activities/Help with projects eg tree planting, fundraising/Run elections/Develop leadership skills/Encourage SRC morale/Liaison of SRC with Principal, executive, staff, parents/Contact person for outside bodies.

At one school, the SRC nominates three teachers as members of the Council.

Decision-making powers and/or recommendations:

As might be expected, SRCs have very limited powers of decision making, although they are able to make recommendations over a large range of school matters. Items mentioned by schools are as follows:

**Decision making:**

- Entertainment/Charities/Assemblies/ Elevation of student representatives to school committees/DSP submissions/ Expenditure of money raised for school by SRC/Clothing for school/School grounds/Guest speakers/Organise special functions after gaining executive approval/Submitting student ideas for consideration.

One school stated 'school policy' and another 'all aspects'. It is thought that in these cases the questions may have been misunderstood.

**Recommendations:**

Other structures:

Other questions were concerned with other structures which enabled students to have formal participation in school decision making.

A statistical analysis is not possible because many schools misunderstood the question and although stating that they had specific structures, the answers to the follow-on question indicated that they were referring to informal means of gathering student opinion.

Slightly fewer than half the schools (20 schools, 47.6%) have what might be considered as formal processes for student participation other than through the means of an SRC. When this occurs, it is generally in the form of a prefect body or committee. In some cases, students are involved in school committees together with parents, teachers and other staff members.

The following lists indicate specific formal and informal means which have been identified by the schools as providing means of enabling students to participate in school decision making:

Formal:

PEP and DSP committees;
Student committees: social, nutrition, charity, improvement, transport, anti-smoking and hygiene, welfare (all from one school);
School Committees (parent, staff and student members): computing, curriculum, discipline, professional development, primary/secondary liaison, school facilities (all from one school); a new school is planning to have student members on all school policy committees;
School Council: one school has a 'council' of nine with equal membership of students, staff and parents;
Other committees mentioned where overall membership not indicated;
Prefects;
Forums for years 11, 12 students;
'Question and answer' year meetings;
P&C meetings (mentioned by one school but no indication of how students formally participate);
Student surveys in home rooms.

Informal:

Year assemblies; School forum;
Through year patrons;
Personal development lessons when class is visited by Principal or Deputy Principal;
Prefects' weekly morning tea with Principal and/or Deputy Principal;
Surveys;

'Open door' policy by all school executive so that students can voice their ideas;
P&C bulletin accepts letters, opinions;
Each grade has two year 12 students elected as 'year captains' as its representatives;
Suggestion box;
Each class has a prefect as its representative;
Class patrons;
Pastoral Care lessons;
Student publications; Year book;
Daily exchanges with staff enable student opinions to be canvassed;
Discussions with prefects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey responses indicate that schools are generally supportive of student participation and as such would be probably appreciative of specific official assistance.

If accepted as a priority by the Department of Education, the concept could be actively promoted and supported by personnel such as consultants.

Part of a consultant's brief could be to act as a 'clearing house' to gather and report information on student participation in decision making in classrooms and at school level. This information would be concerned with practices and initiatives from within and outside NSW.

Schools could be assisted in providing appropriate workshops and/or training for students to help them fill the roles of committee and SRC members.

Each school could be encouraged to appoint a teacher to be responsible for promoting and supporting student participation in that school. A concessional period allowance could be provided.

In-service courses could be mounted for these key teachers, as well as district or regional seminars or workshops for students.

District or regional SRCs could be formed with representation from individual schools or districts.

More information could be obtained as a follow-up to the survey described here-in. It is suggested that the effectiveness of the formal and informal methods for student participation be explored with a view to determine how to make them more effective. Such exploration should include data obtained from students at all levels as well as staff members.

Keith Ison
Crestwood High School
17 Chapel Lane, Baulkham Hills NSW 2153
STUDENT PARTICIPATION CONTRACT, WORKSHEET, REPORT AND ASSESSMENT.

This profile should assist students in recording their work tasks performed throughout the year.

Any students participating as representatives for other students in their class or school should remember and be thinking about what, how and when they will report back. Also who they need to report too.

The work that is being performed is valued and relevant to students learning. Therefore goals should be set so that your work tasks can be measured as being challenging and rewarding.

Throughout the year this work needs to be assessed and reported on within your total school performance.

Contracted work task.
A brief description of work task.

Student __________________ Support Teacher __________________

Parent __________________ Home Group Teacher __________________

How did I get to do the contracted work task. Please write a brief account of how you came to be participating in your work task.
1. What are you prepared to put into making the work tasks successful?

2. What do you expect to learn and get out of your work tasks?

3. How will you go about achieving your expected work tasks?

4. In what ways will you assess your performance in the work tasks you have taken on?
Work Diary

You may be using your journal or other new documents to record your work. If so, you may choose to use this space as a summary of the things that you have learnt. You may also use it to record your attendance at meetings / lessons / activities.
Assessment
(Do not forget to return to your goals when doing this)

This should be an ongoing activity.

Student Assessment

Support Teacher Assessment

Home Group Teacher Comments
The contract included in this issue of Connect was developed by Bert Van Halen, Principal of Deer Park High School (Vic) and set out by Arturo Richetti (Government PEP Office, Vic).

The need for such a contract has been recognised for some time and various forms have been proposed and used. The particular impetus for this document was the participation of several students from various regions in the planning group for the 1986 Victorian Student Conference last October. It was apparent that these students would be required to carry out much serious work with direct learning consequences over a considerable period, not only in planning the Conference, but also in its management and follow-up.

At the same time, Regional PEP consultants were expressing concern that students involved at various levels should be able to negotiate some form of credit within their curriculum that went beyond a reference.

Subsequently, the form has been used at a school level at Deer Park, both for members of the SRC and for students on the School Council. Though an elected student is President of the School Council there, recognition of learning was available only on a personal and informal basis.

The contract is also adaptable to other uses. Inter-school sporting commitments and involvement in learning experiences outside the school can be negotiated for recognition of learning content and processes and this contract used to organise that negotiation. Rather than regarding commitments as requiring an 'absence' from school, they can be seen as a different learning situation, able to be supported by the school.

Development of the contract requires the commitment by someone to work with the student to complete the form. In the case of the School Council, this may be the in-committee 'tutor' of the student representative (not necessarily a teacher); for an SRC representative it might be the home-group teacher.

This contract is printed here for reproduction and discussion by schools, students and teachers. It contains space at the top of the first page for the school letterhead, crest etc. There is also nothing fixed about the format. It can, and should, be adapted to the needs and circumstances of a particular school or committee. For example, it has already been suggested that a parent could provide an assessment on the last page in place of the 'supporting teacher', as relevant.

We would be interested to hear of developments in such documents. If you improve on the form, let's know about it!

For more information, contact Bert Van Halen, Deer Park High School, 88 Billingham Road, Deer Park 3023.

Credit & Support

Further information about practical strategies for providing students with credit for a range of participation in decision-making structures will be contained in Credit and Support, due to be published by the Victorian Government Participation and Equity Program. For information on the progress of this valuable kit, contact PEP at 416 King Street, West Melbourne 3003. Phone: (03) 329.5677.
The Making of Y.B. City
Youth Participation in Local Government

However, it was decided that any approach should aim to maximise the participation of young people in the area, not only in providing views, but in carrying out the investigation. Why not approach local schools to see if a group of students (probably around years 10 to 12) were interested to carry out the research, to work in collaboration with the youth workers to discover what other young people in the area thought? That model of investigation was refined over the next few hours.

Formal invitations (and informal contacts in local restaurants) resulted in a small group of teachers and education consultants interested to pursue the idea. Eventually, a tentative decision was made to offer the research as part of Moreland High School's senior curriculum. Julie McCormack, General Studies teacher in the senior school (years 11 and 12) was interested to be involved with the project. "I was interested because of the previous involvement of a youth worker in my Social Studies classes at Braybrook High. I could see how this would make the school more community oriented." And, she said, "I'm a frustrated Politics teacher. Few of the students wanted to do a formal Politics course and I could see this as a more relevant way of learning about politics!"

The final decision rested with the students. Moreland High has a weekly 'big meeting' of all students and staff in the senior school and Andy and Vicki spoke to this meeting, outlining the proposed project. Reactions were mixed, and certainly were coloured by students' perceptions of 'different' outsiders. Initially, many saw it as a strange idea, not what 'school learning' was about. A couple of boys thought that the project would offer them a chance of getting out of class and avoiding serious school-work (they withdrew from the project fairly early in its operation).

Jennette saw the research as fitting in with her career choice (with the police) — giving her an opportunity to "become involved in the community and learn about it." Mary was already interested and involved in areas of youth work, intending to do extensive work experience with Andy and Vicki as part of her course. Julie McCormack saw the project as "a way of getting Mary accreditation for all that other work." Jeni and Teresa were also enthusiastic, Jeni in particular seeing links with her outside school involvement with the Express Australia media group. On the other hand, Rosemary at first thought the idea sounded "boring — I don't know why", but joined to be with friends. She subsequently grew to enjoy the experience.

Two other boys, Arkie and George, weren't interested at first, but later joined the group to produce a poster. They again had career interests in mind.

Under way

So, five girls and two boys elected to undertake the research project. They met Monday and Thursday afternoons at the school throughout terms 2 and 3. Vicki and Andy came to the school on the Mondays and Julie worked with the group on Thursdays. The first introductory meeting took place towards the end of Term 1, where some 'holiday reading' background was given out.

It was initially intended that a set of three posters would be produced to provide factual material about the Council — its responsibilities, its funding, its structure. Difficulties with grants for these posters, and then with the suitability of proposed designs, meant that they were never produced. Instead, Arkie and George from the school were approached to join the project team to work on a more general poster about how young people see the Council working.

So, in the absence of those information posters, the early stages of the research involved the team in learning about what the Council does. Eventually that development in their own knowledge would show them, by comparison, how little other students knew about the Council.

The first steps were bus trips around the area, visiting aspects of the Council's work, meeting Council employees and officials. As well as providing information, this served to weld the group together. "It was a good time", remembered Vicki, "a time outside of school, a getting-to-know-you session." Subsequent class discussion was both about the functions and operation of Council, and about how that information would be conveyed to other students.
The group broke fairly naturally into two teams — the boys worked on the poster, and the girls worked on surveying other students. While the poster went ahead in fits and starts — a lot of mucking around and anguish at first, then a final burst to get it done, and finally increased excitement and respect at the final product — the contact with the other five schools in the area was more consistent. The intensity of this work even demanded that students worked through the school’s curriculum day.

How would the group communicate with other students? How would views on the Council be obtained?

Very early on, the group of girls decided that a questionnaire was not appropriate, but that they wanted to approach schools to talk with classes. This closely agreed with the intention of having a group of students carry out the research. A visit to Brunswick Technical School was arranged. The students prepared their approaches, negotiated access to years 10, 11 and 12, presented ten-minute sessions and evaluated reactions between classes.

They were somewhat dismayed at what they saw as a negative reaction — as much to issues of local government as to their work. However, a follow-up series of visits was planned and negotiated with the school, and a poster designed as pre-information advertisement for this. Unfortunately, the follow-up dates coincided with a period of work experience at the Technical School and no return visit occurred. However, the girls came away with increased confidence and understanding of the issues and with an increased awareness of how little other students knew and of how
difficult it was to motivate interest in the area.

By this time, pressures of deadlines for school assessments and for presentation to Council were becoming evident. The time line suddenly appeared most difficult. In a fairly intense session, it was decided that, despite continuing strong doubts about the method, a survey of about 10% of the school population of the city was the only possibility. The methodology and questionnaire were designed, teachers contacted, sheets run off and delivered, and surveys administered with the six schools.

This meant, as the group later realised, that they lost much more control over the validity of the responses. There was clear evidence that the sheets were not filled out seriously by all students responding, that they may have been done as some form of casual ‘class exercise’ in some schools, rather than as a serious return from each randomly sampled tenth student on the school rolls.

**Writing the Report**

Some time was then spent compiling the survey results — a straight counting of responses to each question.

This enabled the group to discuss their interpretations of responses and enabled Andy to feed the information into a computer for presentation in tabular and graphic form. Increasingly, the students felt alienated from this process and, while recognising the external time constraints that meant a report had to be prepared for Council, later criticised this as work done away from ‘their’ classroom time. On the other hand, Andy and Vicki understood that they had agreement from the group to carry out this work — these criticisms weren’t stated to them.

Part of that external commitment was the requirement that the Council receive a report by a certain date. Andy put together an interim report drawing both on the students’ research and on other sources (for, after all, Vicki and Andy were working with other groups of young people in the community — not just students) which indicated that the full research report would be presented by the students at the next Council meeting.

In the meantime, the group continued to work through the results, question by question, writing responses, interpreting data, writing about the project — the research and the poster. They eventually approved a final report and wrote an introduction:

“This report was done by year eleven and twelve students from Moreland High School. It is the report of a research project that was done as part of our S.T.C. studies for second term 1986. The research was done at the request of Brunswick Council’s Youth Services Workers, who had been directed by the Council to consult with young people about their participation and involvement in Local Government.

“We named the project Y.B. City, which stands for Youth of Brunswick City.

“The way we carried out the research was firstly to find out what Brunswick Council does. We did this by visiting the various Council departments. We then went and talked to some people about what they knew about the Council, which was not much.
“Because this all took a lot more time than we thought, we decided to do a questionnaire to survey young people. We distributed it to all the Brunswick secondary schools, and aimed to survey 10% of the students. Unfortunately we didn’t have time to go through it with the students, so we had to rely on them and their teachers understanding it. As can be seen from the answers, not all of them did. It can also be seen that not everyone answered every question. The total number surveyed was one hundred and thirty.

“Part of the way through the project two more students joined it, and designed a poster, aimed at involving young people in the project.”

To finish this report required more time than that time-tabled for the project’s classes. Even though this “got us in bad with other teachers”, as they said, this final writing of the report restored much of their ownership.

**The results**

The project’s final report presented data in tables, graphs and descriptions around the topic areas of:

- knowledge of Council responsibilities;
- knowledge of Council personnel and processes;
- need for facilities in the area;
- sources of information about Council;
- interest in future involvement with Council.

The report concluded:

“...most young people have limited knowledge of the Council and what it does. We recommend that Council address this problem by using young people to design and provide information about Council to other young people. We also recommend that Council make sure that the information provided about Council to schools, the local paper and other sources be up to date and accurate, so that young people are correctly informed.

“We have also concluded that young people want to have more of a say in the Council (and other organisations which affect them), but that they don’t feel they have any legitimacy and are not taken seriously. Also the structure and ways of operating are alien to young people and don’t encourage participation.

“We believe that a survey of this type is not the best way of getting young people’s views. We support the recommendations made by Council’s Youth Services Officer, that Council run a Youth Conference in 1987. We recommend that young people be involved in all aspects of this conference, and that it involve young people not at school, as well as those at school.”

And Arkie and George wrote:

“We designed the poster in ‘Texta Graphic — Graffiti’ style. We thought this was a very good way of communicating with young people because it is a specifically youth art form.

“We tried to include in the poster the facilities offered to young people by the Council. We hope that young people will recognise the poster as being a commitment by the Council to young people.

“We also hope that young people will look closely at the poster and realise what the Council has to offer.”

**Presenting the report to Council**

Before the Council meeting at which the results were to be presented, Vicki, Andy and Julie worked through the report and likely questions with the group. Specific strategies to deal with any hostility were rehearsed — “ask them to repeat the question so you’ve got time to think... don’t get angry with them”. Pre-match tactics...

Dinner with the Council was a new and challenging experience all round. The students were specifically welcomed to the meeting, but nervously fidgeted through much of the pre-meeting discussions and speeches.

The Councillors had received the report over dinner and had had little time to examine it closely. However, many had a chance to at least glance through it quickly before the formal meeting got underway.

“It was really important that the students presented the report themselves”, said Andy — important for the students, and important for the Council to see that results were owned by the student group. So while Julie sat in the gallery as an observer and Vicki and Andy sat at the other end of the Council chamber, the students “had the floor”. “Don’t look at us”, they’d been briefed.

They presented the report well. Jeanette giving an introduction and Arkie talking about the poster. They then all fielded questions for about half an hour. “Do you think Councillors should visit schools?” “Would you be the voice of young people to advise us?” (No) “What actually do young people want?” Some questions had direct answers: the idea of a Youth Conference was supported; the need for production of information for young people was stressed. In other cases, the students turned the questions back on the Council: “What do you think of the report and its conclusions?”

The presentation concluded to applause from the gallery. The students left, elated and slightly hysterical with the release of tension. And, as Julie noted, with an increased understanding of their ability to exercise political power.
What do we learn?

All that may imply that the project always went smoothly. That was far from the case and there were many frustrations over communication, misunderstandings, differing expectations and "whose project it was". Unfamiliar with classroom disruptions, Vicki and Andy at times doubted their perceptions and began to "think we're going crazy!" Faced with youth workers reacting as they normally would in the outside community, the students criticised their "lack of patience". Schools often have a different culture to that existing in the "real world". Youth workers do not have access to the more traditional forms of school discipline and control. Dealing directly with students and attempting to negotiate work and behaviour with them without recourse to this structure was a new and difficult experience for all.

Some of the discoveries can be made as quite explicit statements:

Structures
- The school timetable is a strongly limiting factor on allowing students to work consistently on projects. Students often can’t just drop other commitments and keep working on ‘urgent’ tasks.
- The size of the group is important. The ability of a youth worker to take a small group while the teacher works with other students should be utilised. However, the project should equally be aware of the danger of such a project establishing itself solely as a way for disenchanted students to "escape from school" — a student expectation of the project which can become disabling.
- The structures within which each party operates should be clearly understood by all participants.
- Adequate time must be given to the project — to develop, to do its work, to meet deadlines. Andy and Vicki thought it should operate for the whole year.

Communications
- Expectations of the amount of work involved, its detail, the time to be spent, other competing demands and assessment requirements should be made clear at the start. Because all may be unfamiliar with this style of project, these details may take some time to work out.
- All members of the group need to understand clearly about responsibilities for following up class work and for reporting back about difficulties in achieving these. Students are often prepared to report these difficulties to a teacher, but are unsure of the teaching role of youth workers — especially at the start.
- Similarly, clear communication needs to exist about when classes are on or off ("we forgot to tell you about the correction day!") and when the "outsiders" can or can't attend.
- A regular meeting time, preferably with all relevant teachers, is a necessity. While there should be a principal contact person, the active involvement of all those with a role to play should be encouraged.
- Adequate time must be given to discussions — both teachers and youth workers saw the meetings as rushed and squeezed in between other school engagements, and this led to mutual frustration.

Expectations
- Adequate knowledge of the group is required for expectations to be realistic. Both Andy and Vicki and the class recognised how that initial expectations as to the knowledge of the students, their ability to articulate and the amount of time they could spend on the project, were too high. (Equally, they found out that other students also knew little about the issues involved.)
- The project involves one subject area among many. It may not be the major pre-occupation of the students, let alone their only active involvement.
- There is thus a danger that the project looms larger in the work of the ‘outsider’ than it does in the work of the students. There’s the temptation to keep working on the project between sessions and this removes considerable ‘ownership’ of the project from the students.

Other
- It would be valuable for the youth workers to meet with the group for all the sessions (not just some) and in larger blocks of time. "I was often unsure about what I was supposed to be doing in the other lesson", said Julie. It would often be valuable to take students out of the school into 'real' situations.
- Funding is needed for the operation of such a project, even if it is just for things like travel. An agency can't expect students to pay to do research work for them: here, the project was able to provide for cabcharge, lunch expenses, hire of the school bus etc.

Where to now?

For the school, the project has provided the impetus for further similar developments within Community Studies.

A new and much broader Community Studies project has been developed at Moreland High School for 1987. This involves all year 11 and 12 students (a total of approximately 150) actively working with and researching for community organisations. These organisations (Councils, ethnic groups, primary schools, homes for the aged) will use student skills in areas like graphics, catering and publicity.

Julie talks of students ‘on placement’ with these local ethnic associations and with other community agencies. The school’s horizons continue to widen. In addition, the project has thrown light on a process of school curriculum development, that involves its more substantially in a productive relationship with its community.

Through this project and through the new projects envisaged for the future, student skills, confidence and knowledge of their community are enhanced. In a move that further linked the students with their community and enhanced the reputation of the project, Jennette was presented with a Rotary leadership award for her participation.

"Despite the enormous time considerations," Julie sums up, "the project developed as a model for active, as opposed to token participation of school students in community groups and organisations." She adds, "we are very expectant about our 1987 projects. It’s time schools started really reaching out to embrace their local community!"

The issue of young people and local government is still alive in Brunswick. Funding has been allocated to a Youth Conference and a steering committee for this is being set up. An Information Advisory Group is aiming to involve young people more actively in the production of community information materials. Formal arrangements for local youth participation are still open. While Jennette said, "the idea of a Junior Council is not necessarily rubbish", her views on this will have to be argued against others at the Conference.

At least, the project has resulted in a group of young people who can now argue about such issues with some knowledge of local views and implications.
Crookwell students help push political awareness

Students from Crookwell High are writing a case study as part of a national curriculum project devised by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC).

The 15 students, members of the Crookwell Junior Council, have been selected along with Campbelltown school students to prepare material for an AEC electoral education booklet.

To be included in a section headed Democracy and Citizenship, the Crookwell students’ submission will be based on the Crookwell Achievement Program, a youth project initiated in 1980.

National Curriculum Project Officer, Ms Lyn Holihan said the AEC project, started in 1986, was designed to increase political awareness among secondary school students.

"The aim is to teach them about how the electoral system works. It’s all about making them more political articulate," she said.

"At the same time, it’s giving young people an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process and to develop communication skills."

Crookwell Junior Council co-ordinator, Mr Bob Ross, said the council had responded enthusiastically.

"The students were keen to do it from the moment the idea was first put to them. A visit to the Electoral Education Centre in Canberra and meetings with AEC officials gave them an idea of what was required, and they are now putting together a piece on youth involvement in the community," he said.

Even before the Crookwell Junior Council was established in 1983, Crookwell students were actively involved in youth projects.

In 1980 they started the Everything Crafty Association, which sold items made by students at the school.

Since 1981, they have attended annual State youth forums at Bathurst and, more recently, Sydney. During the last several years, they have organised their own youth forum, which will this year be held at Wombeyan Caves.

Since its inception, the junior council has organised the Crookwell Country Weekend in 1983 and 1984 and is currently involved in organising other activities for youths in the district.
Municipal Journal

The Australian Municipal Journal, in its October 1986 issue (Vol 66 No 998), highlighted activities of Victoria’s Youth Participation Week (September 1986). The six-page story outlines examples of activities from Wangaratta, Castlemaine, Sale, Berwick, Keilor, Hamilton and Morwell, as well as providing ideas for youth participation in local councils.

Copies of this issue are available from Rob Murphy, MAV, 468 St Kilda Rd., Melbourne 3004. Ph (03) 267.5266.

TAFE Student Network

TAFE students from several Victorian College SRCs and Unions came together on Saturday 11th April to consider the need for coordination. It was decided to set up a Victorian TAFE Students Network and a working group has been established to draw up a constitution to put to the next meeting.

For more details, contact Trudy Falconer, TAFE Students Network, C/o RMIT SRC, RMIT, Swanston Street, Melbourne 3000.

Richmond Writing

A workshop for students and teachers from Richmond High, Technical and Girls’ High Schools in March 1986, held at the Richmond Community Education Centre, produced an enormous amount of writing about issues of concern to participants. This writing has been collected into a small and smartly presented booklet called Richmond Writing and published by the RCEC.

John Polesel acknowledges in the introduction that "both the comments of the students at the workshop and their writing indicates that it was the need to communicate which really led to the production of this booklet - the need to say what it's like having no friends; understanding only half (or less) of what the teacher is saying; crying because a teacher is screaming at you and you don’t know why; shaking when you try to speak up in class ... and the need of the students to say it now."

"I hope .. that it will also encourage teachers to foster writing in their classrooms and to encourage all students, not just those from non-English background, to make sense of new experiences through writing."

Richmond Writing (Book One ... and one hopes there will be many more) is available for $3 plus postage from Richmond Community Education Centre, 123 Church Street, Richmond 3121.

Delta Report

In 1986, Delta Annexe of Mawson High School (SA) visited alternative schools in South Australia and Victoria to look at models and practices of parent participation. A report of these visits: "Parental Involvement in Alternative Education..." has been produced by the Annexe. Case studies of schools and summaries of discussions are included, which throw interesting light on issues of participation - both parent and student - in these small schools. Contact: Roger Anderson or Emily Di Cesare at Delta Annexe, Mawson High School, Colton Avenue, Hove SA 5048. Phone: (08) 296.2014.
Student Writes

Student Writes was a brave and ambitious project based at the Humffray St. Primary School in Ballarat (Vic).

Flowing from the 'Student Press' project of 1985 and its success in the Central Highlands Region, a CEP project was funded to develop Loftset Press.

"Loftset Press is the trading name of the Student Publishing Program - established with Community Employment Program funding to act as a publishing service to schools in particular."

During the period of funding, Loftset has published a wide variety of material as well as separate monthly newspapers for the secondary and primary divisions.

"Collections of primary student writing, school histories, newsletters, booklets, advertising leaflets, posters and a range of off typesetting and design jobs have been carried out by the staff during this time."

"Unfortunately it has been impossible to generate sufficient income to achieve viability and Loftset Press, in its present form, closed its doors at Easter.

"Avenues to allow continuation of regional student publications in some form or another are still being explored - your vocal and written support for such a publication would be very much appreciated."

Contact: Loftset Press, C/o Humffray Street primary School, Humffray Street North, Ballarat 3350.

Getting Real

Sherbrooke Community School is a small Government P-12 school in Sassafras (Vic). Getting Real has been written by students, parents and teachers from the school to outline 'parent and student participation in curriculum development and decision making'. The publication has been supported and published by the Schools Resource Program, Participation and Equity Program.

The extracts in this issue of Connect highlight aspects of student participation within the school. The full publication goes on to give more detail in these areas (eg 'Homegroups and Decision Making') as well as substantial accounts of parent participation in workshops and school policy determinations.

Getting Real can be obtained from the PEP Clearinghouse or from Leanne Filipovski at PEP, 416 King Street, West Melbourne 3003. Phone: (03) 329.5677.

Youth Affairs Conference

The Youth Affairs Conference (comprising the Office of Youth Affairs, State Youth Affairs Bureaus and Divisions and the Youth Affairs Council of Australia) noted at its meeting of 19-20 February 1987 the continuing development of the Australian Network of Secondary Students (ANSS) and indicated its support for the further development of secondary student controlled organisations as a means of contributing to student and youth participation. The Conference supported the formation of student bodies at school, regional, State and National levels.

Brunswick Youth Week

A Youth Week will be held in Brunswick (Vic) as a direct outcome from the YB Project (see this issue). A huge range of activities is being planned for the week - probably 6th - 13th September 1987. For more details, contact Vicki Cooper or Andy Ingham, Brunswick Youth Services, 10 Dawson Street, Brunswick 3056. Ph: (03) 380.3209.

Radio Network Directory

The Northern Region Radio Network is based at Reservoir High School (Vic) and involves primary and secondary schools in the area. This Directory was issued during 1986 as a summary of contacts and resource material for that network. It provides information about Melbourne radio stations, on further education in radio and youth programs on stations. There is also a wealth of material to be used as part of radio courses: 'The Role of Radio in Schools - Courses', an outline of a Radio Production course, 'interviewing techniques', 'glossary of common terms', 'radio announcing', running and cue sheets and 'using the Marantz Cassette recorder'.

For further information, contact Jeff Cooper or Vivian Stranieri at Reservoir High School, Plenty Road, Reservoir 3073.

Youth Training Camp

The Youth Sector Training Unit at the Youth Affairs Council of Australia is advertising a 3-day training camp for young people in Victoria - at Lancefield from 29th June to 1st July inclusive. Places are limited - contact Jenny Cameron on (03) 419.9122.
Really Good Friends

Really Good Friends is a new film about just that! It is an inspiring celebration of friendships formed between a group of school students and residents of a local community nursing home.

With advice and cooperation from the staff of Southport Community Nursing Home, the remedial teachers from Saint Joseph's Technical School in South Melbourne (Vic) devised a program to accommodate the learning needs of their students with literacy problems.

Really Good Friends is also about elderly citizens using their knowledge, skills and personality in meaningful ways. It shows the elderly providing a valuable learning resource to students with special needs.

Really Good Friends is a refreshing film that documents rare and positive interaction between the different generations. The film shows how the program fosters friendships that provide experiences of mutual benefit. The students from St Joseph's are involved in relevant and stimulating learning tasks that not only increase their competence but also their self-esteem.

Really Good Friends is a film that shows kids actively involved in a community setting where learning becomes meaningful. It demonstrates that students with a history of 'failing' in the school environment gain considerable self-esteem and a sense of achievement in this community program.

Really Good Friends shows the residents of Southport Nursing Home having an opportunity to be involved in activities that require their too-often under-valued and under-utilised time and talents. It documents the concerned and active staff of a nursing home who are determined to provide their residents with continuing experiences that improve their quality of life.

Really Good Friends was made by the students of Media Studies at Victoria College, Rusden Campus. It was made in cooperation with staff from St Joseph's Technical School and Southport Community Nursing Home.

The film is being distributed nationally by Oceania Media Network Pty Ltd. For further information contact Kylie Yates at Oceania Media Network on (02) 264.3529.

OCEANIA MEDIA NETWORK

Ascolta Radio Group

The Ascolta Radio Group in Brunswick (Vic) has been producing radio programs for community radio broadcast since about 1978. Two extensive reports (available from Connect - see back page) document the development and processes of the group.

However, the group still gets constant queries: 'how do you put a program together?' As part of the PEP Schools Resource Program on Education and the Arts in 1986, the Group has produced a six-page fold-out pamphlet entitled "So You Wanna Make A Radio Show?"

"Students are often puzzled or concerned about where to start when making a radio show. It is the intention of this publication to walk through the steps and hopefully act as a guide in the production of a radio program. Let us imagine we are making a magazine show which may include interviews, vox pops, individual opinions, jokes, commercials, readings and music. Magazine shows allow more room for exploring radio production techniques."

The pamphlet goes on to look at: how to choose your topic; researching the topic; conducting an interview; playing back material and editing; running sheets; scripting your program; and making the show.

Copies of the publication from The PEP Clearinghouse, PEP, 416 King Street, West Melbourne 3003. PH: (03) 329.5677
Festival Manual

Youth Festivals - Art and otherwise - have occurred with ever-increasing enthusiasm over the past couple of years. Following on from the experience of the Next Wave Festival (Melbourne) and the Come Out Youth Arts Festival (Adelaide), Andrew Bleby has written a how-to-do-it manual: The 1988 and Beyond Australian Young People's Festival Manual. It's produced by the Commonwealth Department of Education.

The manual covers areas of starting, getting things rolling, creating a program, making it happen, wrapping it up, being part of a festival and getting ideas. There's also a 'dictionary of ideas', a 'festival planner' and a list of 'useful contacts'. For more information, contact: Ms Vanessa McKenzie, Commonwealth Department of Education, PO Box 826, Woden ACT 2606. Ph: (062) 83.7909.

Schools and Radio In-Service

A two-day Schools and Radio Conference is planned for August 17th and 18th in Melbourne. More details will follow in the next issue of Connect (if funding approval arrives) but in the meantime, contact Jane Landman at Tullamarine Regional Office, 90 Lowson St., Fawkner 3060 for more details.

Shaping Futures

A recently released book which Connect readers should be interested in, is called Shaping Futures - Youth Action for Livelihood by Bruce Wilson and Johanna Winn. It examines employment and unemployment patterns and the nature of social division as it has impacted on youth labour markets, explores the views of young people through case studies, various education, training and labour market programs and provides examples of strategies for change in employment and schooling.

Shaping Futures advocates, and gives practical examples of, the active participation of young people in the educational and employment environments, and stresses the need for schools to be directly linked to productive developments in this area.

Published by Allen and Unwin, Shaping Futures has a rrp of $15.95.

Please find enclosed a copy of an article about student participation in the Australian Electoral Commission's National Curriculum project. The Youth and Law project undertaken by youth in Campbelltown, NSW, will also be featured in this section of the curriculum.

I always enjoy reading Connect. It's great to see students learning the skills of participation in decision making. More than that, it's heartening to read about their commitment, vitality and enthusiasm.

Lyn Holdman, National Curriculum Project Officer ABC, PO Box 2201, Queen Victoria Tce., ACT 2600

Connect recently received the following letter. If you are interested and can help, please contact Jim Smith directly:

I got your name from Hands On and I hope you will be interested in starting a Pen Pal Club with our students. We are in the heart of 'The Big Apple' and would like to share the experiences, insights and strengths of our students with students from your school. I know that our kids would love to get personal information about growing up in your area - right from the source - your students. There are ways to handle the mailing to keep expenses down. Hope to hear from you soon about sharing our greatest resource - ourselves!

Jim Smith
James Monroe High School
1300 Boynton Avenue
Bromx, New York 10472 USA

Connect gets better and better! I'd be prepared to do one issue of Connect (next year). This year I have a new position as Director of the Fremantle Education Centre. We have a lot of student participation work going on and I hope you've heard of our Peace Education Project.

As Education Centres are at a critical time in their life, a lot of my energy goes into trying to meet the constant demands from teachers and schools. So, I'm sure we could do a WA edition of Connect. What about other states or areas?

Kath Haydock
Fremantle Education Centre
PO Box 452, Fremantle 6160
Articles:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description/Pages/Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>306</td>
<td>The Northern Radio Network Directory (Vic) 42 pp; $4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>307</td>
<td>PEP Clearinghouse Audio Visual Resources: Annotated Catalogue of Holdings (Vic) 29 pp; $2.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>308</td>
<td>Loddon Campaspe Mallee Student Network 4 pp; 50¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td>RASG March 1987 Package (History, ideas for leadership camps etc) 154 pp; $15.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>310</td>
<td>'Parental Involvement in Alternative Education' - Delta Annexe Mawson HS (SA). 35 pp; $3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>311</td>
<td>'Youth Participation Week: local government participates' - Rob Murphy and Muriel Sullivan from The Australian Municipal Journal October 1986. 6 pp; 60¢</td>
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Publications Received:

We wish to stress that the following publications received by Connect are not for sale. However, they are available for perusal by arrangement. Contact Connect on (03) 489.9052.

AUSTRALIAN STUDENT PUBLICATIONS:

Student Writes (Ballarat, Vic) (Primary, Secondary) Vol 2 No 2, March 1987.

Richmond Writing (Richmond, Vic) Book 1.


Getting Real (PEP, Vic).

Other Sources

'So You Wanna Make a Radio Show?' - Ascolta Radio Group/PEP (Vic), 1987.


ANPA Foundation (Newspapers in Education USA) - kit.


'Parental Involvement in Alternative Education' (Delta, Mawson HS, SA).


National LIP (Fitzroy, Vic) Mar, Apr '87 Network News (Surry Hills, NSW) March 87 Create (VCROSS, Vic) Jan/Feb, Mar/Apr '87

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We rely upon and welcome your letters and contributions. If there's something interesting happening, we want to know about it. Don't ask ... don't hesitate ... just sit down and dash off a brief (or long) description. If you have a photo or drawing, even better. We can't pay ... but we'll send you a free copy!
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