STUDENT PARTICIPATION:

CENTRAL TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA
THIS ISSUE

This issue departs from previous practice in that particular emphasis has been made on articles from South Australia. We'd be interested to continue this form of focus, but that requires people in each state taking responsibility for getting articles together. Interested?

The concerns and interests of student participation may be common to all states but particular practices will illuminate some of the questions being raised in different ways.

Meanwhile, in Victoria, two events are particularly worthy of your attention and action:

STUDENTS & LEGAL ISSUES

What are the legal problems that face students when they are on SRCs or School Councils? When they visit other schools or meet at Regional Offices? When they have to miss classes or get to and from meetings in or out of school hours? Can students use the school phone or receive mail (unopened) through the school?

These are some of the questions to be explored in a forum and seminar day on Thursday November 27th in Melbourne. The student forum during the day will be a 'speak out' on legal issues that students have experienced. In the evening, a seminar for people with educational or legal backgrounds will look at what developments are possible.

The two meetings will consider work being done by the Personnel and Legal Issues Subcommittee of the Ministerial Working Party on Student Participation in Victoria, and will consider providing information to the Victorian Parliament's Legal and Constitutional Committee.

The forum and seminar are sponsored by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, the Victorian Youth Advocacy Network and the Victorian Council of School Organisations. Information may be obtained from YACVic, 14 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy 3065 or by phoning YACVic on (03) 419.9122.

STUDENTS:

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

The Victorian Ministerial Working Party on Student Participation has published a series of documents under the heading: Students: Partners in Education - Volume 1: Issues Paper; Volume 2: Resource Documents and a Booklet (the latter produced by the Student Research Team). Responses to these documents are requested by the end of November.

The Issues Paper and the Student Booklet may be obtained from the Ministerial Working Party on Student Participation, Special Programs Branch, Ministry of Education, 416 King Street, West Melbourne 3003 or by phoning: (03) 329.5677.

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Next issue is due in December 1986. Deadline for articles, photographs and other copy: end of November.
The South Australian State Council of Students held its annual Conference on Friday, 19th September at the State Convention Centre in Adelaide.

There had been a number of difficulties involved in the organisation; with the event occurring at least two months later than was originally intended. Also, no-one would have deliberately wished for it to be arranged to occur in the first week of term, since horrific difficulties resulted from schools being closed in the period just before the Conference.

Nevertheless, as 9 am approached, students streamed upstairs and out of lifts into the Conference area, threatening to totally overcome the registration procedure so carefully organised. When the dust settled and the queues diminished, at least 200 students were present, seated in the hall, waiting for the Minister of Education (Mr Greg Crafter) to give the opening address.

But therein lies another story, as he had been stricken by a virus, causing him to cancel all his engagements. His staff hunted high and low for a replacement and Mr Terry Roberts, a government back-bencher, found himself faced with the daunting prospect of addressing the assembled multitude. His speech outlined some budgetary assistance in the way of a $5000 grant and time commitment to the central body of ten hours a week and to the Area Councils of a varying allotment depending on their special concerns.

Our leading student representatives Vivienne Bradtke and Greg Prieboenow then moved to the stage. They briefly outlined the birth of the State Council of Students and the topics of involvement over the last 15 months. They also defined the way it was hoped that the network would operate from schools, through Area Councils to the central State body. Then, in looking to the future focus of the State Council of Students, they painted a picture of full consultation with students about all the issues in education. But this would have to be the brief of the next group of representatives, as they were well-advanced into year 12 and long-overdue to move off the scene.

During the rest of the morning sessions, students worked in small groups from the different educational areas there. For a while, they discussed their local problems, how their schools functioned and the successes and frustrations they experienced. Then they looked at what they hoped to do in the period following the Conference, made plans for future meetings, considered dates, venues and agendas and became enthused with the formation of the Area networks so vital to the long-term viability of a State Student Organisation. Also, each area group was given the opportunity to consider matters of a wider youth concern beyond the confines of schools and education.

Lunchtime was a pleasurable opportunity for the young people to informally chat about how the morning sessions had affected them and discuss again the differences between their learning environments. And what a range of backgrounds we had. Thanks to a grant from the Department of Youth Affairs, we had been able to significantly subsidise travel costs for distant students. Some had flown from Port Lincoln and Tumby Bay in the West, Coober Pedy in the North, Mount Gambier in the East, as well as two groups from Kangaroo Island. Also buses and private transport had conveyed a good cross-section of rural students to the Con-
ference as well as representatives from all three educational systems in the metropolitan area.

At least we didn't lose the Minister of Youth Affairs for our first session in the afternoon. Ms Barbara Weise came along to answer seven questions on a wide range of youth-oriented topics put by leading members of the State Council of Students. She commented on the depth and thoughtfulness displayed in the questions and promised to one day inflict the same thing on the State Council of Students by addressing some particularly 'curly ones' to them on young people's issues.

For the final main period of the Conference, everyone met for a plenary session where the main resolutions arising from the morning gatherings could be presented for general approval or rejection. Each area was given the opportunity of presenting issues they felt particularly concerned about and people in the audience given the chance to question reasons or details, before actual resolutions were moved.

By mid-afternoon, the pressure of concentration and thought applied to so many complex issues saw most people mentally drained, yet incredibly enthused about the possibilities for the future.

As the general Conference broke up, those fortunate (?) enough to be elected to steering groups for the ensuing months gathered to plan their next moves and how to gain the utmost benefit from the day's proceedings.

Some went home for a well-earned rest, others got taxis to airports, others looked for a TV set so they could catch the media coverage on three separate channels that reported the day's events. And, typically, two of the hardest workers headed off to the studios of 5AA for a radio interview - but at least the 'hype' of a day that appeared to have been so successful, carried them on. It had been conclusively proved once again, that students were able to conduct successful, efficient occasions.

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**Resolutions Accepted:**

**WA(1)** We call upon SCoFSS Area Councils in the coming year to promote social interaction between government and non-government schools.

**WA(2)** We call upon the Education Department, the Catholic Education Office and the Independent Schools Board to ensure students are educated about the effects and consequences of taking drugs, and the dangers of peer-group pressure in relation to drugs, in classes at a younger age.

**E(3)** We resolve that the SCoFSS should lobby the Education Department/State Government to gain and increase funding for country schools to counter the fact that country students are disadvantaged because their schools are small and isolated.

**N(4)** We call upon the government to realise that members of student governance bodies should be entitled to receive accreditation for work undertaken.
W(5) The State Council of Students calls upon local councils to tackle the problem of racial and religious discrimination in rural and metropolitan districts by encouraging social interaction between different population groups.

W(6) We resolve that the government be encouraged to carry out full and extensive discussions with rural communities (including students) regarding proposed changes to the present time system, noting that many country people have concerns about the change proposals.

S(7) School subject teachers in all years should be responsible for a program pointing out to students methods they can use to study for exams. Some teachers confuse study with homework; they expect that students know how to study through doing homework. This education should be supported by a professional development program.

S(8) Exams should start at an earlier stage in school life. Through years 8-10 most students have tests. Then at the more important years 11 and 12, they are hit with exams and generally don't know how to cope. If exams were introduced earlier, students would learn how to deal with them, and years 11 and 12 would not be as difficult to cope with.

Resolutions to be Reviewed:

WA(1) We call upon the Education Department and the Catholic and Independent sector authorities to see that peace studies become part of school curriculum and that young people are encouraged to research peace topics and take action on them, beginning in this, the International Year of Peace.

WA(2) We call upon the Education Department, the Catholic education authorities and Independent schools to introduce basic sex education for students in years 6 and 7.

E(3) We resolve that SCofS should approach the Education Department about restructuring the curriculum so that students of both sexes have equal opportunity to choose their relevant subjects.

EA(4) We believe that Tertiary Fees are basing future education on economic status rather than academic ability.

The new contact person for SCofS will be Judith Quirk for 10 hours a week at the address below. The new student leaders for SCofS are Scott Krischock and Michelle Tucker.

State Council of Students,
C/o FAI Building,
3rd Floor, 101 Flinders Street,
Adelaide  SA  5000
Phone: (08) 227.2366

Brian Pettman
(ex) Project Officer, SCofS

Student Participation Support People in South Australia

Contact:
Student Participation in Decision Making Project Officer – Anne Buckingham: (08) 256.8111.
Evaluation Project Officer – Noyano Taylor: (08) 227.2366.
PEP, 3rd Floor, FAI Building, 101 Flinders Street, Adelaide  5000  SA
STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Current initiatives to increase student participation in school decision making in South Australia have focussed on:

* research;
* policy development;
* student support; and
* school community in-service.

Research

The Participation and Equity Program (PEP) has appointed a Project Officer for Student Participation in Decision Making to facilitate the research, documentation and evaluation of student participation activities in this state. This position is one of six Project Officers, working within the Inclusive Curriculum Program, to investigate the development of inclusive curriculum in schools through collaborative research.

PEP has also appointed a Project Officer for Evaluation who is presently undertaking research into participation within PEP decision-making groups as part of her role. It is anticipated that this will provide statistical, case-study, narrative and action research based information on the participation of students in these groups. Each of these appointments are for the 1986/7 period.

Other instances of school-based action research into student participation are occurring as part of the ongoing evaluation processes within PEP targeted schools.

Policy Development

The development of policies for student participation in schools has been recognised as a priority of school, area and state levels within the Education Department. The Director of Special Projects has undertaken to initiate the development of a state policy as part of his responsibility for PEP and the Year of Parents and Students in Schools (PASS). The Eastern Area is presently writing an area-based policy within its area management plan. At a school level, the Student Representative Coun-
cil (SRC) of Port Adelaide Girls High School is currently working on a student participation policy in collaboration with the school community. Each of these policies will be written concurrently and provide other schools with policy-writing models.

**Student Support**

A significant development in student government in South Australia has been the introduction of a state-wide network throughout 1985 and 1986. This body, the State Council of Students (SCOPS), has invited two students from each school SRC to attend an area or district council meeting and four students from each area or district council to form a state management group. The purpose of the network is to provide a forum for students to raise issues of concern and a structure for information and skills to be shared. At this stage, several groups within the network are established and functional, while other areas are yet to meet on a regular basis. The network has been the initiative of a group of students who perceived a need for this type of student support.

In each area, students have been supported through a range of conferences, seminars, workshops and training camps, conducted by PEP area committees, field officers, advisory staff and individual schools. Tutoring support has also been given to student representatives on area committees and working groups.

Similarly, in schools, students have been supported through:
* leadership/training camps
* conferences/seminars/workshops
* teacher support.

In some instances, programs are being trialled which provide:
* timetabled meeting time for students and teachers;
* accreditation for student participation on a work-required basis;
* student budget; and
* room allocation for student groups

in an effort to make student participation activities legitimate learning experiences in the context of the total school curriculum.

**School Community In-Service**

It has been acknowledged throughout the state that a great deal of discussion needs to take place regarding student participation, among students, teachers, parents and administrators, to enable effective and appropriate improvements to be made. Opportunities for such discussions have occurred at staff meetings, parent meetings, student conferences, key person seminars etc. Several schools have implemented ongoing in-service programs of this nature. Furthermore, members of school decision-making groups have learned about the participation of students and associated issues first-hand, through student representation on a vast number of committees and working groups. These groups are being encouraged to share their experiences.

Other initiatives in student participation have included the work of the Senior Secondary Curriculum Team (SSC) which has developed curriculum known as Community Studies. In these year 11 and 12 courses, the content and method of learning is negotiated between the student and teacher, assessed on a work-required basis and accredited by the state accreditation body via moderation. Such courses are now widely available to many schools. The SSC conducts student learning conferences in association with these courses.

Similarly, schools have adopted negotiation of the curriculum and work-required assessment at a variety of year levels and to differing degrees. These instances provide examples of students practising decision-making skills in the classroom.

While many of these projects have been introduced and supported by PEP, significant moves are now being made by the Education Department to assume this responsibility. This has been demonstrated in the designation of 1986 as the Year of Parents and Students in Schools (PASS) by the state government. During this year, the following has happened:

* PASS Steering Committee established;
* Hotline phone-in conducted to gather information;
* State Council of Students supported – short-term Project Officer, area/district conferences, committees of advice;
* State policy-writing process implemented;
* Information-sharing forums held;
* Activities documented and publicised.

The year of PASS has endeavoured to build on projects currently underway in schools and to develop a structure for the maintenance and growth of such projects throughout 1986 and beyond.

Anne Buckingham
The Senior Secondary Curriculum Project of South Australia has established a framework and assessment method which is different from traditional academic curriculum. Thirty semester courses were accredited by the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia under the generic title of Community Studies in 1985.

Student participation in these courses is expected to be very high. One of the principles is that "students plan the content and direction of the course". Another is that they "document and critically reflect on their work and the course as they go".

One student, Kerry Tylor from Taperoo High School, wrote this in her journal about her participation in the course 'Catering':

July 11th:

"For the conference luncheon at Adelaide Area Office, Pennington, we prepared a three course meal. The cost we decided would be $4 a head for twenty people. The courses included: Soup (thick vegetable), Entree (quiche), Main course (Chinese Lemon Chicken, Fried Rice, Buttered French Stick, Green Salad), Dessert (Coffee Souffle), Drinks (Fruit cup, tea and coffee).

"The luncheon went very well, as the whole group worked as a team. Craig, Vicky, Jo Anne and Kerry served the meals. Elaine, Cheryl and I did the cooking and served up the meals on the trays ready for them to be served. Before everyone started eating, we all contributed in helping to warm up the food and making up the extras, salads.

"We received feedback from the people having the luncheon on a questionnaire sheet. They will be kept in my folio for further reference. The teachers changed their minds about the number of people we had to cater for. Luckily, we had a few extra meals and everything worked out well, as a few extra teachers arrived without giving any notice."
planned for the luncheon. I don't think anything could have been improved."

Kerry's teacher has learnt a lot this year too, about letting students make decisions. When I spoke to Lesley recently, she told me that now she feels like one of a group of fourteen and not like the 'teacher'.

Lesley has worked hard to let go of all the decision making and to be patient while students learn by trial and error. Eventually students have come to accept ownership of the course and of their learning.

A group of students from another High School were told by their Principal that they wouldn't be able to run the course 'Catering' unless they could answer his questions adequately. The students then decided to write to Lesley to get the information they needed in order to convince the Principal.

Lesley's reply is included below. The students were then able to convince their Principal and the course did go ahead:

"Dear John,

"I must apologise for not contacting you sooner, but as with all schools, we are and have been very busy.

"I am pleased that you are looking at the Catering Company, because I personally believe it to be a worthwhile exercise. All people involved in this course are participating in an excellent learning experience.

"As you are probably aware, the total content of the semester is student/teacher negotiated, and therefore different groups could set the 'Company' up differently. I will try to be general in my statements.

"The difficulties may be:

- no pre-requisites required, therefore varying abilities, experiences and backgrounds of students;
- lack of or even fear of, individuals showing any initiative;
- lack of experience could lead to students having little control of thoughts and actions. Where work is negotiated, flexibility by student/teacher should always be possible;
- the initial information, I believe, should be given to students in a structured form and then the students are able to 'trial and error';
- students must have some pre-conceived idea as to what they wish to achieve;

- someone with the group must become a 'leader' or controller of decision-making sessions, otherwise they could go round in circles;
- everyone must be given the opportunity to contribute to discussions and be able to express an opinion freely;
- rosters must be organised so that 'jobs' are shared around;
- all students must be willing to support each other;
- students are frightened by the contract, but there is no need for this, as the final specific tasks the group decides upon usually fit in with the work required as set down by the Community Studies team. BUT, all students must read their contract very carefully;
- it can be difficult to find an audience, but any of the following can be used: students, teachers, senior citizens groups, sporting groups, parent bodies, youth groups or community groups;
- setting up a budget within the school system. This depends on what is available to you. Ideally, begin with a set amount - $200 - and use that to buy equipment and to finance each function organised (with the intention of making a profit);
- the larger the group, the more difficult it is for them to come to a decision about what they may do and how to go about it;
- all students must give sufficient information in their journals - they must give a clear indication of what they have learnt;
- students must be willing to spend their free time to complete the organisation and management of functions, especially if each lesson is only 50 minutes;
- the quality and availability of equipment is essential for organising functions;
- if organising 'outside' functions, transport must be arranged and can sometimes prove difficult.

"Many of the above difficulties can be solved easily with a little cooperation among the group. Also, the process of 'trial and error' can be put to good use in this situation and the 20-week semester is more than enough to cover all the work required by the Community Studies team - plus the SSABSA certificate gained at the end of the course is an extra bonus to the large number of skills gained by all students."
"I hope this information will be of benefit to you and your group."

If students are really going to be allowed to "plan the content and direction of the course" then the teacher needs to find different ways of operating in and managing the classroom. This isn't easy and, as Lesley and other Community Studies teachers will tell you, it involves taking risks, experimenting, trusting students and being a facilitator, to mention just a few.

Another teacher, Wendy Goodwin of Marryatville High School, admitted to having to physically remove herself to the furthest point in the room while students planned their second semester course. She admitted, like Lesley, that she had learnt a lot about student participation in planning the content and direction of the course. The following is an extract from the journal of Emily, one of Wendy's students. It shows some of the planning she was involved in:

"Today, we got our folders back after moderation.
"Last Wednesday, we sent a letter to Parafield Gardens. It worked out at $3.50 per head for the luncheon, which will consist of 25 people. $112.50 was left for the morning tea as there will be 50-60 people at $1.88 per head. We will have $87.50 for the luncheon.
"Also, during this lesson we worked out our semester plan.
"We changed our Balfour excursion to Monday, week 7, as the original plan was not a reasonable time for them as they had a meeting.
"In week 7 on the Wednesday, we will start preparation for Mr Wilson's Health Education luncheon.

"In week 8, it will be the last day (Wednesday) for working on menus. The actual practical will be on Thursday.

"Week 9 on Wednesday, Mrs Goodwin is planning to have a lady, Mrs Lawrence, to come in and talk about catering opportunities for jobs.
"From week 10 to week 12 on Monday, we will do preparation for Festival Lodge.
"In Term 3 on the week 1, we will .."

Later on, Emily wrote:

"As a group, we planned a timetable for the whole catering semester. We considered what excursion we were going to and what we were going to do over the catering period.
"For Mr Wilson's luncheon, we discussed the planning for making the menu.
"Between Wednesday and Next Monday, we will try to find some recipes.
"On Monday, we will be considering what food we are to make for the luncheon.
"I believe this semester will be interesting and enjoyable as we will be doing many different activities."

Now that Wendy's students have completed the course, Wendy says that she'd use the same approach again, for the only way to involve students in planning the content and direction of the course is to let them do it. She provides the guidelines and support and the students make the decisions.

Chris Stokes
Senior Secondary Curriculum Project
Wattle Park Teachers Centre
424 Kensington Rd., Wattle Park 5066
What's It Like To Be A Student On A PEP Committee In South Australia?

I've just finished writing a report for PEP committees in schools, in Education Department areas and a few other odds and sods.

This report is based on the survey of members and chairpersons of PEP committees which I ran in July and August of this year. The survey questions were designed to find out:

* who is on the committees (eg what proportion of students? how many Aborigines?);
* how members feel about their committees; and
* how the committees are run.

I'm going to follow up this survey by interviewing members of several committees and observing some meetings.

In the meantime, here's a quick look at the results of the surveys - from the students' point of view.

Of the members of PEP committees, 13% are students. Of the chairpersons of PEP committees, none are students.

Comment: Is 13% (about 3 in every 25 members) a fair representation of students? Should groups which have parents, teachers and students have equal numbers representing each group? What's fair - and practical?

There are no student chairs - but a few students (5%) are getting chairing experience because their committees share the position among all members, so everyone gets a turn.

Equity

There were no students of aboriginal descent. 12% of the student members are of non-English speaking background. 19% of the students are Government Assisted Scholars. (We use 'GAS' in South Australia to work out 'poverty' for PEP funding.)

Comment: In the general school population, non-English background students make up 25% and GAS students about 19%. The proportion of aboriginal students varies widely.

So it looks like we're doing poorly in getting aboriginal students and students from non-English speaking backgrounds - but alright with GAS students.

But the students on these committees are mostly from PEP-targeted schools, and schools are 'targeted' by PEP because they have high numbers of GAS, NNSB etc. So we're probably doing worse than it seems here. But to really make sense, each committee needs to know about its own community and whether they are really representing that community.

For 76% of the students, the PEP committee is their first education committee.

Comment: I reckon we can pat ourselves on the back about this. Here is a group of students who most likely wouldn't have had a chance at this level of decision making if it wasn't for PEP.

Representation

Most students (39%) were invited (often by the Principal or their teacher) to be on their committee. 34% were elected as representatives of other groups.

Comment: Who gets invited? Probably not the kid who hasn't been involved in much before. Probably not the kid who's very different. Probably not the kid who's often in trouble.

Problems

98% of students have problems with jargon. 66% have problems because of lack of background information. 41% find the time of day of meetings is a problem.

Comment: (Quotes from students):

"Meetings tend to be very boring and long-winded."
"Being a year 12 student, teachers are quite aggressive towards me missing their lessons."
"The teachers and other staff get too much say."

15% of students said they had no influence on their committee - but 20% said they had a 'fair amount'. Most students felt pleased about the friendliness and good atmosphere in their groups. Many students also liked the way the meetings were run and the involvement of parents, students and teachers together.

Comment: (student quotes):
"They always have time to listen to student input."
"Finally the school has involved students in their decision making."

If you'd like more information, please phone or write to:

Nayano Taylor,
Evaluation Project Officer,
Participation and Equity Program,
FAI Building, 3rd Floor,
101 Flinders Street,
Adelaide SA 5000
Ph: (08) 227.2366

Mawson High School, S.A.

DELTA

Delta is an annexe attached to Mawson High School in Adelaide. The following descriptions are drawn from the Delta general curriculum statement, published in September 1986.

Delta is based on a belief that students should have control of their learning. They should have non-instructional, non-contact or 'free' time - time to talk, to read, to play, to build, to listen or to watch; indeed, time to learn. More regard is paid to students being actively involved in their learning and less emphasis on 'academic' skills and drills and tests and 'bests' and the process of writing.

Fundamentally,

it is the essence of the school's job to show learners what there is to choose from and to give them every opportunity to understand how wise decisions are made and

The point is that decision making is at the very heart of education. It can occur only through practice in making daily decisions about how to spend one's time. (1)

or succinctly:

Let the learner direct the learning. (2)

In Delta, students take charge of their learning and make daily decisions about how they will spend their time. Students have a natural desire to learn and, when this is not stifled by powerlessness, the timetable and lack of perceived relevance of most traditional curricula, then real learning occurs more efficiently.
Control of one's own learning is a powerful motivator, but students are social beings and the quality of the social interaction in the learning environment has direct bearing on the learning process.

In Delta, confident students make decisions on the basis of their interests, needs and abilities and they are real and powerful decisions made in an environment: encouraging trust and concern for others.

Delta aims at:
(a) all students enjoying school and learning;
(b) providing a positive, supportive, non-sexist social atmosphere;
(c) providing a positive learning atmosphere;
(d) involving students in all aspects of their learning;
(e) encouraging parents and the community into Delta and vice-versa.

Course Methodology

Delta courses run for one or more modules. At the end of the course, it may be decided for the course to continue with the same and/or new students. Students are asked to suggest possible courses, to be involved in discussion and then to make a selection of courses.

Having decided to be in a particular course, the student attends a planning meeting for the course. There, the course requirements are worked out, including assessment and a proposed plan of action is drawn up to which each participant in the course needs to agree and record.

The group then meets regularly and a journal record is kept of each week's activities. At the conclusion of the course, there is a discussion of the merits and shortcomings of the course and each person records their ideas on these areas. The topics covered are listed on a subject report form and students write about their participation in the course. This is completed by addition of a teacher/coordinator's comment on that person's role in the course.

Students with expertise are encouraged to act as coordinators of courses.

Assessment Policy

Assessment is related to the model of curriculum used. Delta is based on a student-centred process/research model and in this model, assessment is a practice which serves to advance the learning of the student. The best form of assessment then is direct observation of the student's work.

Delta also emphasises individual differences, catering for the different strengths, weaknesses, interests and achievements of students. This makes comparative or competitive assessment impractical.

Delta emphasises students becoming increasingly responsible for their own learning, with self-assessment and peer assessment vital parts of this process. (Teachers' grades do not contribute to this process.)

Delta emphasises parental involvement and so we provide more information than a grade or score.

Our assessments:
(a) are descriptive, not comparative or competitive;
(b) relate to goals students have helped determine for themselves;
(c) develop students' ability to describe their own achievements;
(d) involve the student, other students, teachers and parents.

The assessments are not influenced by factors such as dress, behaviour, punctuality etc, topics which need to be addressed separately.

Examples of Student Course Evaluation

English:
"I prefer to work in a group because you can put all your ideas together."
"My best piece of work was when I wrote three poems on my own. I chose it because I like writing poems."
"My attitude to English was good because I enjoyed it."
"I like making up poems and stories because I make up good long stories."
"My worst piece of work was my poems. I think I could have done better by not making them rhyme so they make sense."
"I prefer to work individually because you don't have anyone else to blame if your work doesn't get finished. I do more work on my own."
"The best thing I did was my peer group project because I enjoyed doing it."

Public Speaking:
"I like public speaking and debating - that was my main reason for joining this course."
"I wanted to go to the courts and I did and now I know what a court looks like."

Calligraphy:
"I joined this group because in my old school my art teacher showed me some calligraphy and asked me to write up
the poster for the Safety Poster Competition. I then began to do more calligraphy and found it very interesting and fun."

"I enjoyed the course because I'm going to ring up the calligraphy place in the city. I am also going to keep practising because I hope to get better."

Girls' Confidence

"I gained a lot, because it was a balance between practical, listening and group work. The group was pretty good."

"I went into the course because it was compulsory - all the girls had to do it. I wanted to anyway, because I thought it would be an interesting lesson."

"I gained from the course how not to put anyone down because I know how they feel."

"I learnt about contraceptives."

"The group work was positive."

Mathematics:

"I found my maths harder this year but with some help I got through it."

"Maths this module was, I think, a lot better than previous years. This is because I worked out in advance exactly what I was going to do for 10 weeks. I also liked the idea of having a test at the end of every module."

"I think the best part of my maths is Trigonometry."

"I think I have done well in my maths and have found it relatively easy except for percentage. I hope to nearly finish the book by the end of second module."

Why I Came to Delta ... What It Means To Be In Delta

"I came to Delta because my mum and I liked the idea of being able to choose your own subjects, work at your own pace. You stay in the same care group and get to know the people better."

"You get the chance to go on more excursions with the different courses you do, and also get the chance to build things - bird aviaries, ramps, go-carts, outdoor furniture, shadehouse ..."

"I came into Delta because it was similar to my other school in Melbourne. I also needed help with my maths and English."

"I joined Delta because I like working at my own speed and being responsible for my own amount of work."

"I enjoy doing mini-courses and feel more organised without the jumble of changing lessons."

"I came to Delta for two reasons:
a) I came from the R-7 unit at Rose Park (like Delta) and didn't think I could
go to the main stream of a normal school;
b) My brother was in Delta and said it would be good for me to go."

"I get to do more of what I want now. I can pick the English I want to do and that's pretty good. The Delta courses are getting better and more educational eg Money Management."

"I came to Delta because I like the idea of working at your own level and also you can pick the subjects you want to do."

"Delta has heaps of new students and it's still the place where I'd like to go to school. Delta is the best place I know and I wouldn't like to leave it unless forced to."

For more information, contact:
Delta,
Mawson High School,
Colton Avenue,
Hove SA 5048

(1) Moffett & Wagner, B Language Arts,
K-13, p 27.
(2) Holt, J How Schools Fail, p 7.
See also Connect photocopy #297 ($2.60)

NT

Introduction

1986 has recently heralded the fourth Gabfest, the first one being held in December 1984 and two others in 1985, one of which was national.

The original idea for Gabfest came from the Council of Government Schools Organisations (COGSO). Their representative at a National PEP conference had been impressed with the contribution that students had made and had felt that a student gathering would be worthwhile in the Northern Territory. It is now felt that the Executive may wish to invite COGSO to become involved in the organisation of future Gabfests, as it was one of the initiators of the idea.

The aims of Gabfest are:
* to enable participants to gain a feeling of participation;
* to give participants the opportunity to present their views on the needs of students;
* to offer recommendations based on these views;
* to offer information/experience sharing between students from different environments;
* to offer the Territory a student body with the authority to speak on behalf of the majority of the students of the NT.

As in the past,
a) students were to be in control in the setting of the agenda;
b) workshop sessions were conducted by students;
c) adults sat back and listened;
d) recommendations to be acted on if possible;
e) participants were to be selected by the student body of their school.

It is anticipated that future Gabfests will be able to adhere to the above.

In the absence of a student representative committee, the agenda had to be prepared by central office, although there was some liaison with students.

This experience made it obvious that, in future, we must choose the date early in the year and have a pre-Gabfest meeting with the Gabfest Executive to ensure coordination with other school activities.

Gabfest was originally planned for June, but due to the postponement of an inservice earlier in the year, it was held in August immediately after the school break. This led to some organisational problems, as most arrangements had to be made during the school holidays when contact with schools and students was impossible.

Schools were notified first week in June and invited to each send two students. This did not give them too much time, with the end of semester looming, and was possibly the reason for some lack of liaison internally.

The selection of students also highlighted the need to find a way to ensure that the school authorities and students are fully aware of the arrangements for Gabfest and the recommended selection procedures for participants.

The response from schools was excellent with almost all invited schools participating. One school was telephoning as early as April to enquire when Gabfest was going to happen.

The schools from outside Darwin reacted quickly and efficiently with students chosen, travel booked and movement requisitions back to Darwin by the
end of term. This was a great help to the organisers and showed the kind of enthusiasm we have come to expect for Gabfest. Participants from these schools travelled great distances to attend Gabfest from areas such as Alice Springs, Nhulunbuy, Alyangula and all the places in between.

Once on the way, however, there were not too many 'hiccups' and the two days went along quite smoothly. Many of the students were not first timers at Gabfest and were looking forward to another stimulating couple of days, meeting old friends made at previous Gabfests. New members started to find out that it wasn't quite what they had been expecting and comments such as "I thought it would be much more formal", "We thought we would be just listening" and "We didn't realise we would be doing all the talking" were common.

The success of Gabfest 1986 was due to the cooperation of the schools, the broad representation which we were able to get across the community, PEP funding and the tremendous enthusiasm with which students participated, which, after all, is what PEP is all about.

First Day:

Participants were introduced to Gabfest by Roger Holdsworth from Victoria - what it was about, how it operated, where do we go from here etc.

Students then spent some time in a 'braindrain' session, identifying problems that were of particular interest or about which they felt particularly strongly. The problems were then categorised into a list of issues.

The panel discussion appeared to be the highlight of the Gabfest this year, with both panellists and students really getting 'stuck in'. The sessions started off with the panel introducing themselves and what they do: Cheryl Halliday (Coordinator, PEP Office Practices, TAFE), Scott Mitchell (Casuarina HS resident police officer), Frank Jewell (Banyan House) and Bridget Coomb (Family Planning). They then spent some time answering questions posed by the students, after which the group divided into four teams who were able to talk to the visitors individually.

The first day was rounded off with a barbecue at the Darwin Sailing Club and then off for pancakes.

Second Day:

This time, the teachers took the chair and were questioned by the students on a wide variety of issues from 'what are the advantages and disadvantages of vertical timetabling' to 'what do you think of personal relationships between students and teachers'.

A great time was had by all in the afternoon, which saw the Tie Die team at work creating interview environments for the audience. The students joined in the atmosphere and even did a little acting of their own. It was fun, relaxing and educational.
Action was taken on the issues raised the previous day and from all this was extracted a list of specifics on which students felt they could take some action, and by a process of elimination, they came up with the following recommendations:

1. That more counselling and information should be provided for all year 10 students about years 11-12.

2. That a discipline committee (made up of students, teachers and parents) be set up in each school as a way to work out disciplinary procedures.

3. That a five person committee (based in Darwin) be elected to represent Gabfest and act as a link between all Northern Territory High Schools and that there be a Gabfest contact in each school. That this committee become a subcommittee of the Education Advisory Council (EAC).

4. That each SRC elect a students' rights member to keep in touch with each other and make sure that students are made aware of their rights as recommended by the 1985 October Gabfest.

5. That schools include education about drugs, drinking and crime in their curriculum and that this be done through media ads, texts etc that show the real situation and results of addiction.

6. That this Gabfest support community police positions in the Northern Territory High Schools.

7. That students standing for elections into the committee intend to be full-time students (including DIT) next year.

Workshops then took place to discuss in detail some of the recommendations that the students felt that they could do something about immediately. Those five main issues were:

* Publicity for Gabfest (as a major body for the voice of students);
* Crime, Drugs and Drinking;
* Discipline approaches;
* Student rights;
* Counselling for years 10, 11 and 12.

The Minister for Education, Hon Daryl Manzie, paid us a visit and joined in the latter part of these workshops to listen to what the students had to say. Even though the Minister was on a strict time schedule, he was available for discussion and invited questions from the students. A further date was set for him to meet with three student representatives so that they could present the final major recommendations of the Gabfest body.

Then came publicity time. Students chose three representatives to speak to the press and a very nervous three rushed off the prepare themselves for the interview. The press were very sympathetic and a patient Xavier Minnecon (ABC and an ex-Gabfest participant) conducted the interviews.

Elections of the student representatives for the various committees took place. The Gabfest Executive needed five members from the Darwin area (Sue Groom, Stephen Fricker [Nightcliff], Gavin Parish, Alison Holm [Taminmin], Patsy MacFarlane [Casuarina]), the Education Advisory Council (EAC) required three nominees from whom one would be selected (Graham Lawrence [Darwin], Fiona Collins [Nightcliff], Marissa Mack [Dripstone]) and one person was needed for the PEP State Committee (Stephen Fricker [Nightcliff]). In addition, three students were elected to form the
Ministerial delegation (Stephen Fricker [Nightcliff], Patsy MacFarlane [Casuarina], Rachel Ashton [Dripstone]).

That night, the conference dinner was held to wind up Gabfest '86. The evening had a sad air to it as Joy Irvine, Gabfest organiser for three years, was leaving to go to China teaching for one year. Joy has been an inspiration to all who worked with her and to all past participants who had the good fortune to have been in her company.

Student comments on Gabfest:

"As this was my first Gabfest, I wasn't very sure of what was going to happen. I can say truthfully that I thoroughly enjoyed myself especially talking to the panel members."

"I enjoyed talking to the panel and found it to be the most interesting of the first day's events."

"Being my first Gabfest, I have found the whole day and every activity most enjoyable and rewarding. It was also good to know that you are not the only one concerned and having problems. Thank you for giving me this wonderful opportunity."

"This being my first Gabfest, I was very pleased with the day's procedure. Before I came, I was afraid that it would be a very formal conference, but was very pleasantly surprised. I can't wait for tomorrow."

"Issues from the past are coming up again and again ie drugs, alcohol, time-serving etc. Maybe I have been to too many, but I don't seem to be getting much out of '86 Gabfest. It is fun and I enjoy meeting new people, but as I said, we are going over previous issues. Why? Is anything being done? I would like to concentrate on the issues of peace since it is the YTP. I think the Bicentenary Celebrations is a waste of money in our so-called 'economic crisis'!"

Post Gabfest:

A meeting was arranged with the three student representatives elected at Gabfest to meet with the Minister for Education on the 5th September. The recommendations (1, 2 and 5) were presented to the Minister.

A full report of this presentation and of the whole Gabfest is available from Connect: #296 ($1.90).

More information can be obtained from:

Carol Carr-Thompson,
Department of Education,
PO Box 4821,
Darwin NT 5794

Yunnan is the newspaper of Warriappendi School in Richmond, South Australia. As you can see from the illustration, the front cover of issue 20 displays some of the covers of Yunnan over the past four years, including that of the first issue in September 1982 (centre).

The school received a letter from the Minister of Education and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (Mr Greg Crafter) which said:

I have just read through Issue No. 19 of 'Yunnan' and I must say I am very impressed indeed by your school's magazine. The stories are very interesting, the pictures are entertaining and the overall layout and presentation is quite superb.

Corrie Bennett in the Editorial says:

Sometimes new students at Warriappendi are a bit shy and 'shyne' about putting their names to their articles (hence the number of anonymous contributions). It takes a lot of work and effort on the kids' part to write their stories and get them ready for publication.

More information is available from Warriappendi School, 418-422 South Road, Marleston 5033.
During 1984, the Commonwealth Schools Commission funded the Youth Affairs Council of Australia (YACA) to undertake a Student Participation Project, the aim of which was to provide support to student members of the various state government and non-government PEP committees. Various training and discussion weekends were held as a part of this project, including a session held at Katherine in the Northern Territory, coinciding with the Territory meeting of students called Gafflest (see Connect 37/38 (February-April 1986).

At this Katherine meeting, the students present established the Australian Network of Secondary Students (ANSS). The reason for forming this group was to develop a national secondary student body which could provide support to student representatives, liaise with other relevant organisations and express views of secondary students at the national level.

As a part of the National Youth Council of Australia Annual Council meeting in Perth in 1986, members of ANSS met to further develop the network and create links with other young people's organisations. As a part of the Student Participation Project within YACA, the submission for funding from the Schools Commission in 1986 included a proposal (which was accepted) for the establishment of a National Student Consultative Group (NSCG). During 1986, the NSCG met on two occasions in July and August. The first meeting dealt with education policy matters and a broadsheet outlining the discussions and views was produced.

The second meeting of the NSCG dealt mainly with the further development of ANSS, recognising that the Student Participation Project within YACA was unlikely to receive ongoing funding and with the belief that a viable and ongoing structure was important. During this weekend, meetings were held with representatives of the Australian Council of State School Organisations and the Australian Teachers Federation, a constitution for ANSS was drafted and planning was undertaken for ANSS activities for the remainder of the year. This planning included further development of ANSS Education Policy material, production of a leaflet for distribution to student networks explaining and promoting ANSS and preparation for a delegation to Canberra.

The delegation to Canberra was undertaken in October and met with the Minister for Education, the Chairperson of the Schools Commission, officials from the Office of Youth Affairs and the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Youth Affairs and the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. ANSS has been recognised by the ATP, which has extended an invitation to ANSS to send representatives to its next executive meeting and other functions and ACSSE extended an invitation for representatives to observe at their annual meeting in Adelaide.

All members of the NSCG are members of ANSS and that group has been acting as an interim Management Committee for ANSS. This group has held regular phone conferences during 1986. Staff support for ANSS activities has been provided through the Student Participation Project and from within the resources of YACA itself.

It is clear that while sufficient interest and involvement from secondary students has been forthcoming, the very severe constraints of funds has threatened the continuing development of ANSS. The high turnover of secondary students, either due to leaving school or entering other forms of voluntary activity and studies means that while the network has continued to develop and grow, the impending school break for summer means that resourcing issues need to be resolved before the end of the 1986 school year.

Recognising this, the ANSS made a submission to the Office of Youth Affairs Program of Assistance to Youth Organisations (PAYO) as part of the 1986/7 budget round. This submission was made at the suggestion of the Minister, John Dawkins, when he met with the then convenor of ANSS, Joe Clark. The submission was unsuccessful. This submission has been presented to the Schools Commission in the hope of gaining support for the 1987 school year.
Through the influence of the Participation and Equity Program, the International Youth Year and student participation work undertaken by state education authorities, Australia has seen the development of secondary student networks in all States and Territories in Australia. These networks have developed at different paces and through different processes, however the growing trend of student participation and student-run bodies is evident across Australia.

The Australian Network of Secondary Students has contacts and members in each of the states and territories of Australia. Resources and time constraints upon members of the network have unfortunately meant that the capacity to utilise these networks has not always been fully realised. All of the major regional and state networks are tied into ANSS. The following is a report on current activities and bodies compiled by ANSS.

NSW

The New South Wales Western Regional Association of Student Governments (RASC) has been in place for several years and, in 1985 with the support of the State government, was important in initiating the first state-wide conference of secondary students. The result of this conference was the establishment of the State Association of Student Organisations (SASO) (see Connect 40, August 1986). There exist in NSW a variety of regional associations of student bodies. During 1986, SASO held its second conference. The NSCG and ANSS contact in NSW is Melissa Cobby, an active member of the Western RASG and a founding member of SASO.

Victoria

In 1986, at the initiative of the Ministerial Working Party on Student Participation, a state-wide conference of students was held. While a state student-run body was not established...
at this meeting, the conference will be an annual event. The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria has recently employed a Youth and Student Participation Policy Officer who will be providing some on-going support to student networks in Victoria. The NSCG and ANSS contact in Victoria is Mark Ryan, a member of the Tullamarine Regional Education Board and a member of the Student Planning Committee which organised the state conference.

South Australia

During 1985, South Australian secondary students met at a state-wide conference and formed the State Council of Students (SCofS). With aid from the Youth Bureau in South Australia, SCofS hosted the second annual meeting of students in 1986 (see report elsewhere in this issue). The South Australian representative on ANSS and the NSCG is the co-convenor of ANSS, Carolyn Hillman, an active member of SCofS.

Western Australia

There are several regional student bodies in WA, mainly based in Perth. Student participation activity has recently been given a boost through the State Government's support for student participation. The ANSS and NSCG contact in WA is Paul Stevenage, co-convenor of ANSS.

Queensland

There are several regional, though no state-wide, student bodies in Queensland. The Brisbane City Council has hosted a Brisbane City Student Representative Council (SRC) and the Education Department has had some success in the establishment of student regional bodies in other cities in Queensland. The ANSS student contact in Queensland in Tanya Morris, who has regular contact with the Brisbane City Council SRC.

Tasmania

There are no state-wide or regional student bodies in Tasmania though the Youth Affairs Council of Tasmania has been particularly active in promoting secondary student participation within its structures. The Tasmanian contact for ANSS and the NSCG is Anya Stock.

Northern Territory

Students in the NT meet each year at a conference called Gabfest. The particular geographical difficulties and sparse population of the territory have contributed to the absence of an on-going student body, thought the most recent Gabfest did elect a continuing organising group. Chris Goodall, a participant in Gabfest in 1985 and 1986 is the ANSS contact in the NT.

Australian Capital Territory

The Education Authority in the ACT has been active in promoting student participation in the various decision-making bodies of the ACT. Maria Roberts is a member of the ANSS and a contact in the ACT.

As a constant backdrop to these state and regional bodies and meetings, there exists in Australia a very large number of school-based Student Representative Councils (SRCs). ANSS is not directly tied into many of these, however the significance of ANSS is the potential to improve and support the many student bodies at state, regional and school levels.

For more information on ANSS, contact the co-convenors: Carolyn Hillman and Paul Stevenage, C/o PO Box 1108, St Kilda South 3182 Vic. (Prepared with the assistance of the Youth Affairs Council of Australia.)

Friends of Connect

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of the following contributions since last issue:

SUSTAINING SUBSCRIBER ($100):

Bert Van Halen (Nth Melbourne, Vic)

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Trish Britten (Shepparton, Vic)
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VATE (Carlton, Vic)
Victoria Triggs (Coburg, Vic)
Students have rights in education and decision making, such as the right to express ideas and opinions without being humiliated. Even though they have these rights, most students don't know what their rights are or how to use them to their advantage. They are not educated about what legal rights they do have in different aspects of their lives.

Lesley Podesta is a School Council Liaison Officer in South Central Region, working with 200 School Councils in the inner city and suburbs and working on the Ministerial Papers and Government policies. She has particular interest in working with students, who in the last few years have not had much of a say. She said she has found 'youth and their legal rights' a real eye-opener for her.

"Up to now, I've looked at Government policies and thought that things were pretty good for students at school. When I looked at the actual legal things supporting what happens in schools, I can see the few rights kids do have!"

To some extent, students are seen as being partners in decision making with teachers, parents and School Councils, but that's it. They are not encouraged to participate fully in decision making.

Lesley says, "There is nowhere in the legislation that acknowledges students in having a right to do anything. Their only right is to go to school."

"Students are allowed to stand for School Council in a post-primary school, to vote in the elections and that's it. Students don't have the right to actually attend School Council meetings. Their parents can stop them attending once they are elected. I don't think most kids know that."

"Parents are responsible for their children out of school and, when they are in school, teachers are seen as responsible for students' welfare in place of their parents. Nowhere does it say that students are responsible for students' welfare."

Although students do have some rights, they are still disadvantaged in making decisions about where they go or what they are going to do. A good example of this is School Council.

Lesley says, "Most School Council meetings are held at night and it doesn't say anywhere, once a student is elected, that they have the right to attend the meetings. They need their parents' permission. Parents and teachers obviously can (attend) but kids can't. A teacher can't stop you from attending but your parents can, if, for example, they are worried about late hours or safety."

Another classic example is student discipline procedures. "In Victoria we have really progressive stuff about discipline. You can't hit or hurt kids. Kids are not allowed to be made victims in schools and if they engage in behaviour that's offensive or deliberately defy instructions, or interfere with other kids' learning,
then the Principal can suspend them. But they can only do that after going through a whole lot of processes."

Why this is a classic example is because the parents, the President of the School Council and the Regional Director are all notified. The student suspended is not even officially consulted. As soon as kids are suspended their parents are brought into the picture, not the student. The panel is made up of teachers, parents and School Councillors but students don’t have a right to be there, nor do they have the right to nominate someone to represent their interests.

So what are their rights? It seems that young people aren’t really equal in position with everyone else. It is a major problem that legislation does not recognise this.

Lesley says, "So I think that is an issue that a student participation movement has to take up. It is no use saying that you’ve got rights to be involved in decision making, if there’s a whole lot of stuff that cuts you out of what happens in schools."

So, to what extent do students have rights in schools? This can depend on several things, for example, whether some people do it deliberately to exclude students from becoming involved, the school they attend, their teachers, the support of the student body and what the issue is.

Most people, especially from the Education Department, do not have a clear understanding of what student participation is all about. They don’t see kids as being equal partners within the area.

It is no secret that strikes are not welcomed. Students have organised strikes at various schools for good reasons, for example, protesting against staff shortages. Unfortunately, their actions are not met with approval, as those students who help organise are incredibly harassed.

Lesley says, "Yet everywhere in Australia, people are entitled to improve their working conditions but kids aren’t, unless they have a benevolent Principal who will allow them to go ahead with it."

There are many other areas where kids have rights but are still disadvantaged. Most of these problems fall back on the student-teacher relationship.

Some teachers think they are God and think that they know far more than kids about what motivates kids to behave in certain ways.

Most people know that kids in boarding schools get their letters cen-

sored — what they write gets scrutinised by their teachers. It is a real infringement of kids' rights.

Another example: if students write essays that teachers don’t like, for example, if a student wrote an essay supporting the use of heroin or outlawing unions, which challenges things teachers have said or challenges the way schools work or whatever, they might be in trouble for those sort of things. Their freedom of expression is limited in some ways, where it is seen as a threat to teachers.

Students are allowed to have access to their records through the Freedom of Information Act. Lesley says that is something not known by the majority of students. Even if they did know and demanded that they see their records, most kids would be harassed.

Toilets are another example. How much privacy do kids have in toilets? It seems they don’t have any at all, from what Lesley has seen in some Victorian schools.

"There are no locks on the doors and some don’t even have doors on the toilets. Even if you are fortunate to get a toilet with a door and a lock, it is not unusual for a teacher to put his or her head under or over the toilet to see if you are smoking. That is just an infringement of human rights to privacy."

There is obviously a lack of information to kids about what their rights are in schools. "So, throughout the bureaucracy, people say that they will give kids rights, but anything that is too radical, we’re going to censor. Whenever kids are asked to write stuff about student rights, they always want to write about the radical things!"

Lesley also says that there is a contradiction there, because it says that kids have rights to participate in decision making, but will only have those rights which teachers feel secure with!

So it is obvious that the kinds of rights kids will be allowed to have — those that don’t threaten teachers or others or the challenging ones. So what is the best way to get material to students? It is obvious!

Lesley says, "It’s interesting because everyone says that kids do have rights to have a say, but it’s just about some areas of the school."

"Having access to phones is an issue for many students, as teachers can use the phone but students can’t. Even if students do use the phone, they are made to feel uncomfortable. It’s an issue,
but no-one wants to discuss it."

So, as students, what rights are you entitled to have or should have?

One suggestion that Lesley makes is for students to develop a Bill of Rights. "They should take more notice of what the debate is all about. One thing that schools don't do at all or very well, is to train students for being part of a democratic society. Teachers are good at letting students have a say about some things but not about others."

So, where to from here? Lesley says, "It seems important that students begin to take seriously the idea of a student union which can inform other kids, produce material, run conferences and act as a 'watchdog'. Students need to act as a group with resources, otherwise they will never have equal status!"

Carol Fatouras

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**RURAL YOUTH MEET IN MELBOURNE**

As part of this year's Youth Participation Week, a Rural Youth Forum was held in Melbourne on 18th and 19th September. Thirty-five young people from fourteen of the more remote post-primary schools took part. The forum was sponsored by the Country Education Project with assistance from Ken Coghill MP.

The following report was compiled from the experiences of four of the students who attended:

Most students arrived on Thursday evening, except for a few who flew down on Friday morning. Many of us had travelled fairly long distances and there were no planned activities. However, we were pleasantly surprised to be taken to the Spaghetti Theatre restaurant for tea (much to the waiters' confusion). This helped everyone to get to know each other, a very important part of these types of activity. After tea, we went back to the YWCA where we stayed and all went to sleep straight away (go on, believe us!).

Friday morning, everybody was out of bed bright and early, completely rested and wide awake. We had breakfast and then whipped off to Parliament House. Apart from the problems experienced on public transport (such as not being able to get off the underground loop at the right station), we managed to get to Parliament House, even though we were a little late. We started off with a welcome from Mr Don MacLean, Chairman of the Ministerial Working Party on Student Participation. Mr Adrian Stephens from PEP took us through the Students: Partners in Education document.

We split into groups to discuss student participation, learning and decision making, student participation and equity, support for student participation, student representation on committees and accreditation for student participation. Each group then reported back to the main group to share their thoughts.

At this stage, we sent the adults out of the room so we could discuss the matters in our own way. When they left, we did a lot more work. Also, we decided we would get a wider view of the issues if we stayed together in one group. We spent the next couple of hours discussing what good things were happening with youth participation in our own areas. This was really good and a lot of people found ways of solving some of the problems faced in each of our schools relating to student participation on committees. We then listed actions we could take as a follow up from that forum. We also decided that we would go back and try to set up student networks. This was the most enjoyable part of the day.

We then had a tour around Parliament House. The rumours are definitely not true that some (gasp, shock, horror!) fell asleep! After that we departed for home.

It was a great way to meet some really fun people from different areas. We made some new friends and came home with ideas ready to put into action. However, next time an activity like this is held, there should be more student involvement in the planning and organisation because the aim of the week was student participation. All in all, it was a very successful day.

All of us kids (young adults) would like to thank the Country Education Project and especially those involved in organising and running the Forum. Hope there's more to come.

Kim Anset, East Loddon P-12 School
Julie McDonald, East Loddon P-12 School
Stefano Antonello, Marian College, Myrtleford
Jodie Bradford, Beechworth High School
EXPRESS AUSTRALIA

Express Australia in Melbourne continues to be involved with several projects. Examples are:

Richmond Community Youth Forum have commissioned Express Australia to work with a widely drawn group of young people from Richmond to produce a video exploring issues concerning young people in that suburb. The video aims to encourage young Richmondites to contribute to a developing youth policy for Richmond and hopefully become involved in producing further videos.

Young Writers' Project: Express Australia has been contracted by the Victorian Division of Youth Affairs to produce a publication on Young People and Working Life. A group of young researchers, interviewers and writers are working with the project coordinator and an editor to produce this material. Ring Tim Carrigan on 654.8432.

Soundz Reel: The youth-produced radio show is continuing on 3CR, 855 AM, 4-5.30 pm every second Wednesday.

For more information, contact Express Australia, 18 St Andrews Place, East Melbourne 3002. Phone: (03) 654.8432.

GOAL BASED LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

This resource book has been prepared by Marian College (Myrtleford), Marian College (West Sunshine), Sacred Heart College (Geelong) and Padua College (Mornington) in Victoria and published through the non-Government schools PEP.

The booklet deals with assumptions about teaching and learning which lead to key features of goal based assessment as well as providing case studies of the operation of goal based and negotiated course construction and assessment at the schools involved. Practical examples of what approaches mean for classroom lessons and materials are also included for several areas of the curriculum. Finally, parent, teacher and student responses to goal-based assessment and learning are included.

Enquiries to the Victorian Non-Government PEP C'tee, Catholic Education Office, PO Box 146, East Melbourne 3002.

RADIO TIMES

This 'Basic Broadcasting Handbook' is (finally) available. Written by Derek Holmes and funded by the Joint Sector Subcommittee of the Participation and Equity Program in Victoria, the book is designed for secondary school students as a practical 'how-to-do-it' manual. It combines an overview of broadcasting in Australia (including information about the structure of radio stations, the different sectors of broadcasting, broadcasting and the law), technical information (how to set up a studio and use equipment) and practical advice (types of programs, writing, announcing, interviewing, preparing various types of program etc). In each section, information is supplemented by student activities.

For information about the availability of Radio Times, contact Joint Sector, Participation and Equity Program, Ministry of Education, 416 King Street, West Melbourne 3003. Ph: (03) 329.5677

ICEC

The Inner City Education Centre in Stanmore (Sydney) is facing a crisis with all Federal funding due to cease in December. Unless this decision is reversed, the centre will be forced to close.

The ICEC has always been a valuable and active supporter of student participation and has particularly worked in areas of educational disadvantage.

If you would like to support the Centre, send letters to:

Senator Susan Ryan,
The Senate,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600

and send copies to the Inner City Education Centre, 37 Cavendish Street, Stanmore 2048 NSW.

THE DAILY PLANET

The Daily Planet is a broadsheet published by the Victorian Peace and Development Youth Network. $1.25 each or $5 for a year's subscription: C/o Community Aid Abroad, 156 George Street, Fitzroy 3065 or phone Stephen Howes on (03) 419.7111.
YOUTH ADVOCACY NETWORK

What is 'youth advocacy'? 'Youth Advocacy' stands for young people having the fundamental say over all the things that affect them in their everyday lives, both within their local communities as well as in society generally.

Youth Advocacy is about basic human rights. It hopes to create opportunities for young people to understand what their rights are and to encourage them to exercise them in their lives, especially in areas important to them such as education, unemployment, the legal system and health.

Traditionally, the involvement of young people in decision-making processes has been tokenistic and unsuccessful. Greater opportunities for real participation are required.

Youth Advocacy is about developing the skills and confidence that enable young people to gain influence over the structures that affect them.

Local level initiatives are basic to developing real participation. For these initiatives to succeed, links with other areas must be made and the implications for State/Federal bodies followed through.

For more information, contact: Jennifer Clancy, Mark Courtney or John Finlayson, Victorian Youth Advocacy Network, 82 Johnston Street, Fitzroy 3065. (upstairs) Phone: (03) 417.5840.

GO ASK A GIRL

'Go Ask a Girl' consists of a cassette and accompanying booklet from young women in NSW.

"It all started in April 1984 when the Working With Young Women's Group received a grant from Youth Affairs to produce a resource kit for and about young women around Australia. We were then employed by the WWYWG to carry out the project. We decided that the kit would take the form of a cassette and small booklet containing interviews around various topics.

"We contacted young women's groups from all around Australia and the kit is in part a reflection of how young women have been able to organise themselves and why. We travelled from Brisbane to Adelaide, trying to talk to as many young women as we could.

"However, this cassette is not meant to 'represent' girls, as one girl cannot represent a whole class or culture, but rather to introduce girls to each other.

"This was the first time either of us had worked on such a project, and there are going to be further editions of the tape produced by others in 1985. We hope you enjoy it!"

Gillian Flanagan and Liz Nicolau

The tape consists of:

Side A: Searing expose on what girls really think of sex, love,

Side A: Searing exposé on what girls really think of sex, love, parents, sheeepidp and life-saving techniques!

Side B: Mostly about racism and discrimination ... and what country girls think about city girls?!

For more information, contact the Working With Young Women Group, 196 Palmer Street, Darlinghurst 2010 Phone: (02) 357.6270 or 331.6757.

BILL OF RIGHTS?

The Victorian Parliament's Legal and Constitutional Committee is currently investigating the need for a Bill of Rights. Are your rights well protected in all areas of your life? Do you want the laws changed?

The Victorian Youth Advocacy Network is coordinating submissions to the Committee in the area of young people's rights (or lack of rights).

The rights of school students - both generally and in specific relation to decision making - are also being considered.

If you have views on these matters, you can go directly to the Committee: Legal and Constitutional Committee, 19th Floor, Nauru House, 80 Collins St., Melbourne 3000. Phone Deborah Bennett on (04) 63.3406 - by October 31st! or contact the Youth Advocacy Network for advice, information and coordination.

For more information, contact the Working With Young Women Group, 196 Palmer Street, Darlinghurst 2010 Phone: (02) 357.6270 or 331.6757.

SCIP

The School Community Involvement Program (SCIP) has a brochure available with information about the project. It assists schools considering the establishment of a school-based community involvement program or wishing to evaluate or extend an existing program. Contact: Heather Bane, SCIP, Volunteer Resource Centre of Victoria, 15 Spink Street, Gardenvale 3185. Phone: (03) 596.6200.
MATERIAL AVAILABLE

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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:

SOS News (Shepparton, Vic) No 1 July 86
SOSu (Northcote, Vic) Vol 3 No 2 Wint. 86
Whip Around (Heidelberg Network, Vic) Vol 3 Nos 2,3 July, September 1986
Presto (Preston Network, Vic) Vol 5 Nos 3,5,6 (1986)
Rave (Winnaton, Vic) No. 27 (1986)
Focus (Albert Park HS, Vic) Issue 6 September 1986

Other Sources

Express Australia Newsletter (Melbourne, Vic) July-August, 1986
NTE Update (Newspapers in Education, USA) Vol 12 No 7 August 1986
Collective Notes (COSHG, Vic) Nos 17, 18; September, October 1986
Education Change (West Education Centre, Vic) No 4, February 1986
The BEEPAC Papers (PEP, Vic), 1986
National PEP Talk (Canberra, ACT) No 6 July 1986
Pepper (PEP, Vic) Aug, Sept, Oct, 1986
Communication Research Trends (UK) Vol 6 Nos 3,4, 1986
Inclusive Curriculum Program (PEP, SA) March 1986
Radio Times (PEP, Vic) 1986
Goal Based Learning and Assessment (Non-Government PEP, Vic) 1986
Media Bulletin (UK) Vol 3 No 3 Sept. 86
Create (VCROSS, Vic) August 1986
In Future (Commission for the Future, Vic) Issue 2, Sept/Oct 1986

MULTICULTURAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

A Youth Conference around the theme 'The Experience of Multiculturalism' will be held at the Clunies Ross House in Parkville, Victoria on the weekend of 29th-30th November.

Addresses, discussion papers and workshops on many topics will fill the two days.

More information from Tony Martino, IMP, PO Box 512, Carlton South 3053 or phone: (03) 419.6700.
PHOTOCOPY: COMPLETE: RETURN:

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* Students and Radio ($2) - Connect reprint #3 ................. $ ........................
* Students and School Governance - Connect reprint #4 - coming SOON (send no money yet)
* Students and Work ($2) - Connect reprint #5 ................. $ ........................
* Ascolta Radio Group 1983 Report ($2) ......................... $ ........................
* Ascolta Radio Group 1984 Report ($2) ......................... $ ........................
* 'Youth Radio' issue of CRAM Guide (3CR) ($1) ............... $ ........................
* Youth Advocacy Report ($2) - LaTrobe University ............. $ ........................

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