

Connect

supporting student participation

Number 224-225

April-June 2017

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Defining the issues that matter

- Student Advisors in Grade 1/2
- Moving towards student voice on transition
- Students active in disaster resilience
- Reflections: *What Evidence?; Voice or Partners?; Beyond the Project; Supporting Support Teachers*
- VicSRC: *2017 Student Voice Workshops; Congress; Policy Platform; Staffing*

Resources:

- A simple guide to taking action to achieve change
- Wellbeing Conferences: Victoria, Tasmania
- Re-imagining Education for Democracy: Queensland
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- Connect ... available on-line ... on facebook ... archived ... access to other on-line resources

Connect

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Why does Connect exist?

**Connect has been
published bimonthly since 1979!**

It aims to:

- document student participation approaches and initiatives;
- support reflective practices;
- develop and share resources.



Connect:

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This Issue:

Apologies once again for this delayed issue of *Connect*. Shortly after publishing the February issue, my hip suddenly degenerated and I was on the path to a total hip replacement. The process of healing and rehabilitation has proceeded relatively steadily, but it was necessary to delay the projected April issue until I was more mobile, and hence combine it into this double issue.



The articles in this issue reflect the **diversity** of what we variously call *student participation*, *student voice*, *student agency*, *student representation*, *student leadership*, *student involvement* and so on. We continue to grapple with the differences in ideas behind these different terms – and the different intentions of our work. So we were heartened to read an article from Kelly Matthews reflecting these same debates within the higher education sector (see page 23).

Here are articles about classroom negotiation, student action teams, Student Representative Councils and local and state networks. Here are stories written by students, teachers, consultants, academics. Here are voices from **early childhood** through **primary** and **secondary schools**, to **higher education**. Some are provocative, some questioning, some proud of achievements, and some pondering limitations.

But many are cast out into the 'great silence'. We hear little in response – supportive or critical. Perhaps some private conversations occur, but it would be wonderful to get some debates going around the topics raised. For example, I'd love some critique of the '*intentions*' ideas I put out there last issue. Do these make sense? Am I way off the track? I've presented these at a couple of different forums (for both students and teachers) and there's a sense that even grappling with the ideas is useful. But public grappling and building on the arguments might be in all our interests.

In this issue's **News and Reviews** section, there is (amongst news of useful conferences, workshops and publications) an outline of a US magazine called *Democracy & Education*. Their structure is to encourage 'conversations' through responses to their published articles: they send some out for responses *before* they are published, and then link these into a discussion. Should we try to do something similar? I'm a little loathe to slow down the writing to publication process – but would really welcome comments that began: "*In response to the article in the last issue of Connect about ...*" – and that then add to or endorse or critique or question the ideas.

Next Issue ...

A consequence of the hip replacement surgery has been that we've postponed travels that we'd scheduled for later this year. The up-side (for *Connect*) is that a planned double issue later in the year (while we were away) will now revert to the regular bimonthly schedule.

There's a lot happening in July: the **Student Voice Seminar/Conference** in Vermont, USA; the **VicSRC Congress** in Melbourne ... and much more. Already, student groups from the UK have promised to write something about their experiences, and **Hayley Dureau** from Mt Waverley Secondary College will be attending the Vermont gathering and writing it up for *Connect*.

However, nothing beats the stories of grounded practice. As always, we want to hear from your classroom, your school, your SRC, your network. Don't wait to be asked; but remember that I'm also happy to work with you on developing your story or idea.

Roger Holdsworth

Next Issue: #226: August 2017
Deadline for material: end of July, 2017

Student Advisors in Grade 1/2:

Student Voice, Learning Motivation and Engagement

In my Year 1/2 class of 21 students last year, we engaged with students as partners in planning their learning and teaching. To do this, we created a group of six 'Student Advisors' to increase the opportunities for student voice within the classroom setting. These Advisors supported student-teacher consultation on learning tasks in order to improve all students' learning motivation and engagement.

The **Student Advisors Program** is based on the *Students as Researchers* approach¹. It provides opportunities for students to have a visible part in shaping their education through engaging students as partners in the planning of learning and teaching activities. Alongside the classroom program, the project also focused on the development of student and staff capacity in the area of student voice. The project found a link between increased student voice opportunities and student learning motivation and engagement. It also highlighted the importance of positive student-teacher relationships, authenticity and inclusion in the successful implementation of student voice approaches.

As **student voice** is a concept often misunderstood by teachers and students, capacity building was also a vital component of this project. So, the first objective was to provide opportunities for students to increase their knowledge and skills surrounding student voice through classroom-based learning activities while also providing opportunities for teachers to increase their capacity and create a common understanding in the area of student voice through professional development.

The project also intended to develop a working model that teachers can use in their classrooms to partner with students on the development of learning tasks through the promotion of positive student-teacher relationships.

Context

I teach in a Catholic Primary School located in the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The school currently has an enrolment of 424 students with over 40 nationalities being represented in the school and 85% of students with a language background other than English. The school has 25 full-time teaching staff and seven part-time teaching staff.

This project involved students from my Year 1/2 Class (eight Year Two students and 13 Year One students). Within the class, I particularly worked with a group of six 'Student Advisors', three from each of the Year Two and Year One students. Parallel with this focus, I worked with 32 teaching staff and the leadership team of the Principal, Vice-Principal (who is also the Teaching and Learning Coordinator and Wellbeing Coordinator), Literacy Coordinator, Numeracy Coordinator and Student Services Coordinator.

The school has had limited authentic student voice opportunities and similarly, a limited understanding of student voice by staff and students. This was reflected in the school's previous failed attempt at a form of student voice through the implementation of a **Student Representative Council (SRC)**. Due to a limited and mixed understanding of the purpose of the SRC, the initiative failed and was eliminated from the school curriculum. Both students and staff had come to view the SRC as tokenistic and inauthentic.

We currently use student learning goals as a way of personalising student learning and enhancing student

voice. However the goals are only used in a limited capacity and referred to during assessment and reporting periods. Students are provided with the opportunity at the beginning of an inquiry unit to 'have a say' on what they would like to learn, however they do not have any choice in the design of the learning activities or curriculum planning, and very limited choice when completing learning and assessment tasks. The current personalised approach to teaching and learning implemented by the school, is focused solely on the development of student learning goals and through the explicit and personalised feedback teachers provided to students on their goals. This limited approach to personalised learning and student voice highlighted an opportunity for the development of teacher knowledge and understanding of student voice.

In addition to this, students at the school were reporting that they were bored with teaching and learning tasks, and this was leading to inconsistent student achievement improvement levels, particularly with the students achieving at standard and above, suggesting disengagement from their learning. The school's concerns surrounding student engagement were confirmed through the analysis of the School Improvement Survey (SIS), the survey designed to provide the school with data from staff, students and parents in order to assist in the understanding of how the school is operating. The Performance and Growth section of the Survey's report showed a reduction in levels across the three spheres of **Emotional Wellbeing, Teacher Relationships and Engagement in Learning**, which highlighted the current areas of highest concern for the school as **student connectedness to school, purposeful teaching, stimulating learning and student motivation**.

My reading of the international literature indicates that successful student voice approaches must be authentic,

1 Fielding, M. & Bragg, S. (2003). **Students as Researchers: Making a difference**. London: Pearson Publishing.

must include the voice of all students and must create a shift in the balance of power between teacher and student. Students must feel that they have a genuine voice, that they will be listened to and that action will follow. Secondly, the literature states that opportunities must be provided for **all** students to participate actively in their schooling experience, not just the students with traditional leadership roles. For student voice approaches to be successful, students and teachers should work in partnership with each other, creating a more balanced level of decision-making and influence.

I was particularly interested in the *Students as Researchers* model developed by Fielding and Bragg, in which students are engaged as education researchers of their school, classroom or curriculum. Through this model, students have the opportunity to research, analyse and create action through critical thinking, and to become active participants in their learning. The *Students as Researchers* model provides students with the opportunity to authentically influence teaching and learning practices by creating student-teacher partnerships and allowing for joint construction of curriculum. This engaging model takes into account students' different perspectives and experiences and allows all students to be included.

This model influenced me to reflect on and ask about my own experience: "What effect does student voice have on student learning motivation and engagement?" and "How can teachers engage with student voice in their classrooms?"

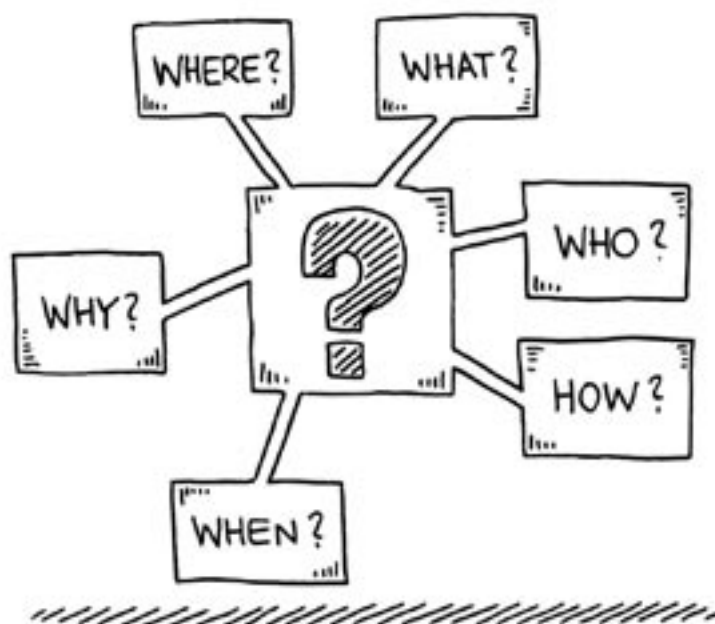
Action

In planning to improve the current situation at the school, I initially intended to focus on the resurrection of the previously defunct Student Representative Council. However discussions within the school and my further reading helped guide us towards the *Students as Researchers* model. This

created an initial timeline, as well as clarifying the questions we would ask, and identified the data to be collected. Working with fellow teachers, we outlined the classroom-based teaching and learning activities for the student group, and defined the focus for a professional learning workshop for the teachers.

It was decided that, in order for action to be successful, a focus must be placed on building student and teacher capacity.

Two action phases ran in parallel: the first involved the student group and the second involved the teacher group. The student component was divided into three distinct stages of action around **Knowledge, Skills** and **Partnership**, while the teacher component focused on **Knowledge** and **Skills**. I'll mainly concentrate on describing the student component here, while recognising the importance of also building teacher knowledge and skills.



Student Component

The student knowledge phase of the plan set out to establish the target group's current knowledge and understanding of the concept of student voice. This involved whole class teaching and learning activities, and the formation of a '*Student Advisors Team*'.

To gain a better understanding of the Year 1-2 students' current level of knowledge in the area of student voice, data was collected through the use of

impact drawings. As the students varied from 6 to 8 years old, impact drawing allowed them to respond creatively without the need for established literacy skills. They were asked to draw a response to the question: "What is student voice?" The drawings were collected and the students were asked to orally explain their drawing; their explanations were transcribed and collated.

These impact drawings and verbal explanations showed that most students saw student voice as an independent action that occurs when a student was singing, talking or acting. Several students also added that all students' voices are different and that everyone has a voice. The data collected from the impact drawings were used to inform the planning of the teaching and learning sequence surrounding the students' knowledge of student voice.

A crucial element of the teaching and learning sequence was the selection of the *Student Advisors Team*, elected by the students themselves, to create a sense of authentic decision-making.

Before the *Student Advisors Team* was selected, we had a class discussion on which characteristics would make a good Student Advisor and created a job description. The students thought that a good Student Advisor would be a student who 'worked well with others', 'listened to others', 'was organised', 'included everyone', 'worked hard' and 'always tried their best'. I outlined the tasks that the Student Advisors would be required to carry out. These included collecting information for

and from classmates, working with the teacher to create learning activities, and presenting information to the class. The students were then asked to nominate a peer who they thought best fitted the job description.

The intention of the *Student Advisors Team* was to act as a channel between the teacher and the students of the class. The Student Advisors would act as the voice of the class when working with the teacher to create teaching and learning activities.

After looking at the impact drawings, we decided we needed to collect further data to gain an understanding of the level of control students felt they had over their learning. We did this through an on-line questionnaire to all 21 students. However the written questionnaire proved challenging for students with low-level literacy skills, so the questions had to be read and explained to them. The questions used were:

- *What do students know about learning that teachers don't know?*
- *How could students help teachers improve learning?*
- *How much choice do you feel you have with learning activities at school?*
- *How much say do you feel you have over homework activities?*
- *Do you think it is important for students to have a say in their own learning?*
- *Why? or Why not?*

The responses showed that the students thought that teachers don't know what they like to learn and how they like to learn, and that school can be boring. The students also stated that teachers could make learning more fun and interesting and suggested more opportunities for group work in order to learn from each other. In addition to this, 16 out of 21 students reported that they felt they had little to some choice of learning activities at school and, surprisingly, 9 out of 21 students reported that they did not think it was important for students to have a say in their own learning.

The student skills phase also focused on developing the skills set of the Student Advisors, as low communication and interpersonal skills were an early concern. We planned for the development of the skills required for group work, leading discussions, questioning and critical thinking. The boxed table (right) indicates the focus of the teaching and learning sequence developed for a lesson every Monday through the 11 weeks of the project.

In order for the project to be successful, it was important that the Student Advisors' initial area of focus targeted an area of the curriculum that would engage the students and that the students wanted to have a say in. Additionally, as this Action Research

Week	Focus	Group	Content
1	What is Student Voice?	Whole Class	Think-Pair-Share: What is Student Voice? Create a class definition. Students draw their understanding of student voice and share with their table group.
2	What makes a good Student Advisor?	Whole Class	Discuss with the class the idea of Student Advisor. Describe their role and collectively create a 'job description'. Discuss the qualities and traits of a Student Advisor. Students nominate Student Advisors using a ballot. Assure students that all class members will be involved in the special project and will work together with the Student Advisors.
3	Data collection	Student Advisors	Take student photos to display around class Student advisors ask their tables: <i>What do you like about homework?</i> <i>What don't you like about homework?</i> <i>How much control do you think you have over homework tasks?</i> <i>How confident do you feel asking questions?</i> <i>How confident do you feel challenging ideas?</i>
4	Designing home learning tasks	Student Advisors	Brainstorm with students the types of learning activities that they enjoy. Provide students with a learning goal. Brainstorm with students the types of activities that could be used to achieve this goal. Students create home learning tasks to meet the goal.
5	Communicating with peers	Student Advisors	Discuss with students different ways to present the home learning tasks to the class for feedback. Each Student Advisor will present new home learning tasks to a small group of peers and collect feedback. Students role play how to ask for feedback.
6	Asking for feedback	Whole Class	Student Advisors each present a home learning task to a small group and ask for feedback.
7	Reflecting on Feedback	Student Advisors	Collate the feedback from the presentation of home learning tasks to the class. Discuss modifications and make necessary changes. Student Advisors create home learning sheet using <i>Microsoft Word</i> and print copies for class. Discuss with student ways to present the homework sheet to the class. Role play homework presentation with students.
8	Presenting home learning tasks to class	Whole Class	Student Advisors present the new homework sheet to class.
9	Reflecting on task	Student Advisors	Ask Student Advisors: <i>How will we know if the students liked the new homework?</i> <i>How can we find out?</i> <i>How can we get new ideas?</i> Devise a way for Student Advisors to collect data.
10	Collect data	Whole class	Student Advisors collect feedback on completed homework task from class.
11	Designing home learning tasks	Student Advisors	Students design new home learning tasks for the whole level.

HOME LEARNING

Project was being conducted in only one of the five Year 1/2 classrooms, it was decided that it would be best to begin with a stand-alone activity, so as not to impact on the pre-planned level-wide Literacy and Mathematics teaching and learning activities.

After a discussion with the Level Leader, it was decided that, while the project was in the early stages, it would be best to focus the **Student Advisors Team** on the area of **home learning tasks**. The students responded positively to this decision and excitedly awaited their first task.

One of the challenges of implementing the **Student Advisors Team** was finding a way to manage the group of Student Advisors while ensuring that the whole class remained on task. I found the key to this was planning for whole class Student Voice time as well as small group **Student Advisors Team** time. The whole class Student Voice time was simple to manage as I just ensured that I included this in my weekly planning timetable; however the small group Student Advisor time proved more difficult. I found it was best managed once the class had started on an independent task; I would then gather the Student Advisors and work with them on a mini lesson and set them a small task.

The student partnership phase of the plan involved the Student Advisors working collaboratively with me and with their peers, to develop a set of home learning activities for the class to complete. In order to be inclusive of the voice of the entire class, the Student Advisors needed to seek the input and feedback of the entire class when developing the activities in order to include the voice of all students; this was reflected in the planned activities.

Teacher Component

The teacher component ran parallel to the student component. We wanted to evaluate teachers' current understanding of the concept of student voice and work towards a common understanding and common language. It is important that all teachers feel confident in their own capacity. We used an on-line questionnaire to establish teachers' current knowledge of the concept of student voice. This was conducted during a staff meeting and contained six open-ended questions and one question using a Likert scale in which teachers ranked their current understanding of student voice:

- *In your own words, describe what is student voice.*
- *In what ways do we currently use student voice at our school?*
- *List some example of student voice initiatives that you have seen or heard about.*
- *What new opportunities for student voice can you see at our school?*
- *What are some challenges surrounding student voice at our school?*
- *How could we improve our understanding of student voice at our school?*
- *How would you rate your current understanding of student voice?*

The data collected through the questionnaire highlighted the varying levels of understanding amongst the teachers in the area of student voice. Many teachers stated that student voice is a way of providing opportunities for students to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. However there was lesser focus on action resulting from this voice. Where

action was mentioned, it focused on 'events and activities' or 'happenings of the school'.

This data led to the creation of a one-day teacher workshop during Term 4, focusing on the improvement of teacher knowledge and understanding of current research in the area of student voice, and the development of skills that can be applied in the school context. It aimed at the creation of a common understanding of the notion of student voice and a common language. It asked: *"What does student voice look like at our school?"* and led to the unpacking of the Student Advisors trial program and the creation of a plan to improve, modify and adjust the program for further use within the school.

We need to plan continued professional development for staff in the area of student voice to improve teacher capacity and to embed the notion of student voice within the culture of the school. We'll ask: *"What would a working model of student-teacher partnership for curriculum planning look like across the school?"* and this question will form the basis of another action research cycle, which will focus on the development and trial of different approaches within different classrooms across different levels of the school.

Finding and Discussion Student Advisors Program

The classroom observations conducted during the **Student Advisors Program** showed that the students within the class actively participated in the project. The students showed higher levels of engagement and motivation on the Student Advisors-designed homework task; most students completed the homework task enthusiastically and to a high standard, with 12 students handing their homework in early and all 21 students completing all tasks within the allocated timeframe.

Throughout the project, students asked to have more opportunities to contribute to the planning and decision-making on additional learning tasks within the curriculum. They wished to participate in more situations within which they had the opportunity to feel engaged and motivated to participate actively in their education.

An unintended outcome of the program was a shift in the culture of

student voice within the class. Initially, as noted earlier, many students (9 out of 21) did not think it was important for students to have a say in their own learning. However, their responses to the same question at the end of the project showed that 19 out of 21 students thought that it was important for students to have a say in their own learning. There was a substantial shift in students' attitudes towards student voice.

Another unintended outcome of the project was the development of trusting peer relationships within the group. New friendships developed within the class; students requested to work with different students, to play with new peer groups outside, and to move seats to sit with new peers. The students showed an increased level of maturity through the ability to support each other, listen respectfully and challenge each other appropriately. Teacher-student relationships were also enhanced, as students described feeling comfortable and safe within their learning environment. They reported a higher level of engagement with the teacher and said that they felt the teachers wanted them to learn.

Students also developed their understanding of the notion of student voice. They now said: "Student voice is when the students plan with the teacher"; "Student voice is when the students get to decide what they want to learn"; and "Student voice is the whole class's ideas". They showed an understanding of student-teacher partnerships, students' level of power in decision-making and the inclusion of all students. They gained the confidence to express their perspective and opinion and ultimately have a voice that was heard.

I also conducted small focus groups of students to explore the topics of learning motivation and engagement in greater depth. The focus groups consisted of four students who were a part of the **Student Advisors Team** and another four students from Grade 1/2. The questions were crafted in such a way as to allow the students to

tell the story in their own words and the focus group was recorded to allow for further analysis. Students were asked:

- *What did you like about the Student Advisors Program?*
- *What didn't you like about the Student Advisors Program?*
- *How did you feel about the homework task that the Student Advisors created?*
- *If we did the Student Advisors Program again, what should we do differently?*

The students found the **Student Advisors Program** to be highly engaging. They reported that they enjoyed having 'a say' in planning the learning activities and expressed the desire for more opportunities for this to occur. They reported increased desire to complete the home learning tasks and that they had a higher level of engagement in these tasks. An interesting outcome of the **Student Advisors Program** was improved self-confidence in relation to academic achievement:

"I really liked helping make the homework activities because sometimes I worry that they will be too hard for me to do but when the class works together to make the activities and we get to talk about them, then I know I'll be able to do them."

Through their participation in the **Student Advisors Program**, students could actively participate in

their learning, develop the skills and language to express their opinions and perspectives, and develop a greater sense of self-efficacy – and this led to increases in student learning motivation and engagement in learning tasks.

Teacher Workshop

Teachers' responses to their questionnaires highlighted their shift in knowledge and understanding. They were no longer describing student voice as merely students talking about their feelings or gathering student opinion on "the happenings of the school"; they now described student voice as a way of engaging students to be co-creators and partners in their schooling experience.

The **Student Advisors Program** was seen to provide opportunities for students to express their perspectives on learning tasks and showed higher levels of student engagement, especially with high achieving students. However, in order for the program to be effective, it was agreed that it should not be a stand-alone aspect of the curriculum, and that further analysis was needed in order to fully understand the skill and knowledge needed at each year level prior to any further trials.

Teachers valued the impact of student-teacher partnership when planning teaching and learning activities, however they were still concerned with the amount of time required for this task and how to ensure that all students' voices were heard and included. Further initiatives will be needed to investigate and unpack these issues.



Reflections

It was vital that I was able to establish a sense of urgency surrounding the project. This was done effectively through the analysis of the school's current situation in the area of student voice and student engagement, and the identification of an opportunity for improvement.

I was then able to form a group to help lead the change effort; they helped guide the focus of the project in the early stages. Creating a shared vision positively impacted on my ability to initiate and lead action. I found that it was important to work closely with others in the development of the vision as this gave a wider group ownership and authorship of the vision.

Effective communication was vital. This was facilitated through regular, fortnightly team meetings; the key to the success of these meetings was their short duration and planned focus. The project was placed on the agenda of the weekly staff meetings, allowing all staff to be updated and informed, questions to be clarified, and support to be provided where necessary. This open communication also equipped teachers with the basic knowledge needed to participate fully in discussions and trial aspects of the project in their own classes if they wanted to.

The project also planned for short term wins. We trialled the approach in one classroom during Term 3. This trial or 'quick win' allowed the wider teaching staff to see the program in action and they were able to gain a deeper understanding of what the program might look like in their classroom.

I was worried that the teaching staff might place the program in the 'too hard basket' before it got off the ground. However, by providing staff with a visual representation of the program I was able to create great 'buy in' from staff. By including the wider teaching staff in the reflection and improvement stage of the program, I was able to facilitate the staff's authorship and ownership of the program.

The school's distributed approach to leadership was evident through the encouragement and support I received from the Principal to lead change. I was encouraged to take on further leadership responsibility and encouraged to share my knowledge with staff.

Impact

Looking back over the project, I can see the impact it had on students and teachers:

1. Through the development of their knowledge and skills, students were empowered to partner with teachers on curriculum design.
2. Students' engagement in teaching and learning activities increased.
3. Students developed lifelong communication, research and interpersonal skills.
4. Teachers were able to provide an enhanced curriculum that took into consideration the perspective of all students.
5. Student-teacher and student-student relationships were strengthened.

Current Developments

We will continue to roll out the program, but further investigation needs to be done into what it will look like in different areas of the school. The involvement of the wider teaching staff would empower teachers to conduct research and collect data in their own classrooms, and this could then develop into a whole school approach to student-teacher partnerships on curriculum design.

In 2017 the program is being trialled within a Year 6 class. The class is following a similar model to the **Student Advisors Program** however with slight differences. The Year 6 **Student Advisors Team** is focusing on the design and implementation of a **Social and Emotional Learning Program**.

Due to the higher skill set of the students, less time has been spent on the development of interpersonal skills, and less class time has been required, as much of the team discussion and information gathering has been conducted on-line through the use of *Google Sites*. Not only has this tool been a way to better manage the group, it has also empowered and enhanced the voice of the students not yet confident in presenting their opinion in face to face situations, and has promoted honest discussion on issues presented. Through the investigation conducted by the Year 6 **Student Advisors Team**, the group is currently focusing on the two issues of 'stress' and 'friendship'. The program is projected to continue throughout the remainder of the year.

Conclusion

It is vital that information surrounding student voice becomes a part of new staff induction so that they are aware of shifts to traditional teacher-student power relationships. As well as teacher development, we will need to consider how to continue to develop the capacity of students, as they will grow to be the driving force of the program – if they are provided with the skills to do so.

This project is a valuable and rewarding approach that can also be applied to a wider audience seeking to enhance student voice opportunities through teacher-student partnerships. Essential elements required for successful implementation are attention to student-teacher relationships, student and teacher capacity, authenticity and inclusion.

Authentic student voice opportunities refer to the degree in which students feel that their values, attitudes, thoughts and needs are being addressed and acted upon. Students must feel that they are given the opportunity to discuss, address and change the things that are important and relevant to them.

The final and arguably the most important factor that schools need to address when attempting to provide authentic student voice opportunities, is that of inclusion. **All** students must feel that they are given the opportunity to participate and be heard. Schools need to provide the support to ensure this.

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*This action research project was initially conducted and reported upon in 2016 as part of the requirements for the **Masters of Education (Student Wellbeing)** subject: **Negotiated Project in Student Wellbeing**, at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne.*



Our SRC Towers of Achievement

As 2017 begins – a new year and a new SRC to be formed – we recap last year and remember all the good times and achievements.

Box Hill High School's **Student Representative Council** had yet another outstanding and highly productive year, representing all students at the highest levels of the school. All of the SRC's towers, that is: the **environment**, **facilities**, **fundraising** and **wellbeing towers**, have been working hard to represent their peers and make Box Hill High School a better place for everyone: students, teachers and parents. It has been a fantastic experience for everybody who has taken part over the past twelve months.

Our SRC is now structured and split into **five** different towers: **Environment**, **Facilities**, **Fundraising**, **Wellbeing** and **Promotions**. Each tower is responsible for an area in the school environment as explained in the graphic below. Each tower has projects that they work on, however interaction between the towers are vital to ensure the accuracy of proposals.

At the beginning of the year, the towers are chosen by each SRC member moving into the tower of your top presence and then some members are moved around for better numbers. This way you are in the area you are passionate about and want to improve. Each tower

also votes on their tower leader who is responsible for organising and keeping the tower on track. The definitions of the towers generally change from year to year; while some things stay the same, there have been changes in towers nearly every year to suit what the students believe is going to be most effective for the year.

Within the SRC is also the **Executive Council**, which includes the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer and Tower Leaders. The President and Vice President chair the meetings. The Secretary is responsible for mail that we receive (eg from organisations and about events coming up) and also organising the agenda, as well as marking the attendance. The Treasurer is responsible for counting the money after fundraisers, and updates and keeps the SRC budget on track.

SRC meetings are held once a week at lunchtime where everyone gathers. The meetings consist of any updates and proposals from towers, and any general comments and news. Everybody then splits into towers to work on tower projects. Members are then dismissed generally at the end of lunch or when everything has been clarified if the proposal is nearly complete.

The **facilities** tower has installed new push and pull signs on doors around Box Hill High School, improving traffic flow and congestion in our corridors. The **facilities** tower have also been working hard to re-introduce summer skirts to our school uniform policy and installing charging stations around the grounds.

The **environment** tower has been busy promoting environmental sustainability around the school by creating posters for classroom, which instruct teachers to turn off lights, computers, heaters and air conditioning as well as closing all windows. In addition, the **environment** tower has been maintaining the highly productive garden behind the music rooms. The tower has also been planning the installation of a Giant Chess Set in the Quadrangle.

The **fundraising** tower has been doing fantastic work over the past year, raising funds for outstanding causes. \$485.80 was donated to the *Royal Children's Hospital Appeal* after the snow cone sales at the swimming carnival. The **fundraising** tower held a sausage sizzle to support Box Hill High School's fencing team, where we raised just under \$315. The SRC Production Sales raised \$1068 for mental health awareness and support group *BeyondBlue*. In addition, almost \$1600 was raised for SRC projects through the fundraising tower's *Gatorade*

SRC TOWERS

PROMOTIONS	FACILITIES	ENVIRONMENT	FUNDRAISING	WELLBEING
Raises the profile of the SRC at BHHS in the school and the wider community	Addresses student issues by introducing and improving facilities and changing school policies	Supports and introduces sustainable projects at school and ensures the school is eco-friendly	Raises money for SRC projects and charitable organisations through event management	Liaises between teachers and students to make BHHS a more engaging and welcoming school

sales, and the cross country and athletics day BBQ.

The **wellbeing** tower of the SRC has also had a productive year, maintaining the VCE Silent Study Room, running both the *Creative Sounds Day* and **Multicultural Day**. Furthermore, this newest SRC tower has also been working on the roll out of walking lanes in staircases and a new '**Chill Out Club**'. This is a work in progress, with the idea being that students have a place to relax at lunchtime, with peaceful music and cushions to rest if they are feeling stressed. The aim of this space is to ensure students can rest and feel their best at school.

Members of the SRC have also attended numerous VicSRC conferences, where members of Box Hill High School's SRC networked with other SRCs and gained handy tips that we used back at school. Box Hill High's SRC was also represented at the VicSRC Congress – a three day event showcasing the best of student voice and leadership from across the state!

Throughout the year, multiple towers facing challenges or obstacles; one example is the **environment** tower, in which the chess board has been an enormous project and they have had to repeatedly present to the administration team, come back, fix some things up and return. Doing this many times, you would have thought they would give up, but they didn't and stayed determined ... and it's now going to be installed in 2017.

In all, it has been yet another fantastic year for your **Student Representative Council**. Together, we have achieved great things and changed Box Hill High School for the better. A huge thank you to everyone who helped makes the SRC's great work possible!

Tom Yakubowski

Environment Tower Leader, Year 9

Christine Tolotchkov

SRC President, Year 11

christinett2000@gmail.com



SRC election season

The leadership process in Balwyn High School begins with the Head of Student Voice and Leadership attending year level assemblies and discussing the various roles on offer for students specific to year levels. These involve SRC members where there are two executive positions for Year 9s and all Year 12 SRC members are considered executives.

The same day as this talk is had in assemblies, the application process begins as the application forms are emailed out. These forms include the student leadership compact that outlines the responsibilities of student leaders in general as well as particular aspects of each role.

Leadership Q&A panel

Due to the initiative of our Year 11 Captains, they organised a leadership Q&A panel before the application process began where current Year 12s in leadership panels were asked questions by current Year 11 students who were interested in obtaining a leadership position in Year 12. This helped inform future student leadership candidates of what possible positions they wanted to apply for as well as giving tips about applying for each role.

Written applications

The first stage of the application process is written applications, which are due in hard copy for each position at a certain day approximately one week after applications first open. It's possible

to apply for multiple positions and these applications are read and either accepted or rejected by the leadership panel which is comprised of the Principal, Head of Student Leadership and Voice and the respective Head of either middle or senior school.

Speech time

Successful applicants are then notified through email and they have the opportunity to make a minute-long speech at a year level assembly in front of the leadership panel and their peers. The entire year level then votes for six people each for the possible eight positions per year level on the SRC.

Yet there is much speculation in the year level at this stage as they are unsure about how much their vote actually matters and whether teacher votes are weighted much more heavily.

The Final Stage

The final stage of the application process is an individual interview that lasts approximately 15 minutes with the leadership panel. This includes questions such as: "What would you

The start or end of the year can see a flurry of election activity, with SRCs locking in their leadership roles. Every school is different - and some don't even hold elections to determine their office bearers. Sarah Goh gives the inside scoop on the end-of-year election process at Balwyn High School.

do in this position to improve student connectivity?" and "How can you contribute to the school in this role?" It takes place in the Principal's office, which sets the tone of the interview as a formal occasion and can add to the nerves.

The chosen SRC Executives (two for Year 9 and six for Year 12) are notified the night before Presentation Night of their success in obtaining the position. They are then announced at Presentation Night, which is a celebration of the students of the school's achievements in various areas such as music, academics, sport and school involvement.

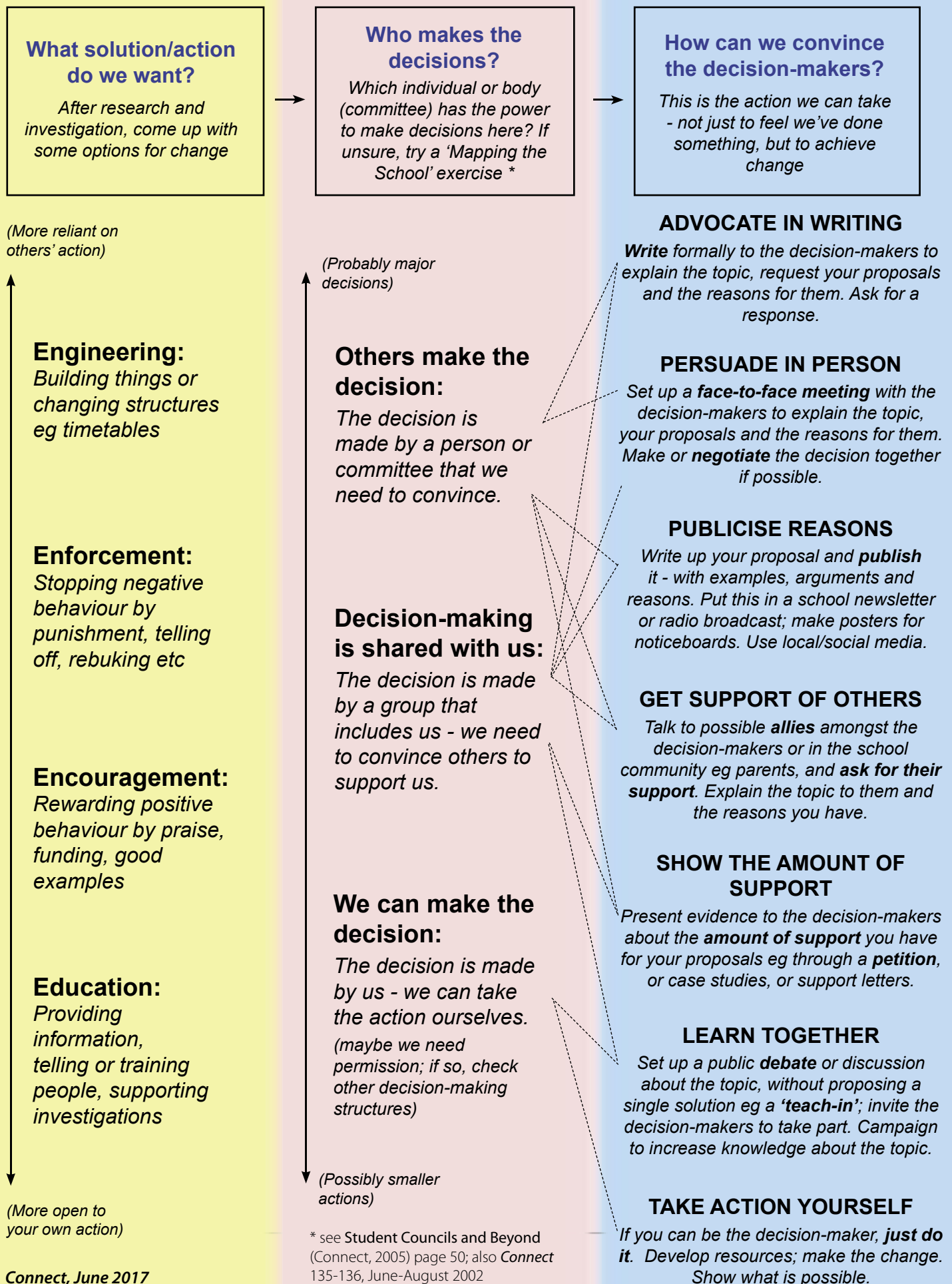
Sarah Goh

#VicSRCvoices is a rolling series driven by the stories and experiences of student representatives. It's about who we are; what we value; what drives us to act; and what fuels our passions to advocate for what we believe in.



Resource:

A Simple Guide to Taking Action to Achieve Change



Voices from across the hill and over the sea

What distance education can teach mainstream schools about raising students' voices

On a tour in an inner city Melbourne suburb at the end of 2016, a colleague in education turned to ask one of us: "And what school are you currently teaching at?"

"The Distance Education Centre Victoria (DECV)," was the proud reply.

"Well, that will look good on your CV won't it?" the colleague chuckled.

The colleague's sarcasm is reflective of a broader perception within Victorian education circles: that DECV teachers are not 'real' teachers, because the DECV is not a 'real' school.

The challenge

It's a perception born out of the fact that DECV students are not a clearly visible part of any defined local community. You don't see groups of half-asleep DECV students crossing the lights to enter the school gates by 9 am. There is no colourful

uniform to notice walking down the streets or on the local buses. You don't hear the voices of the DECV school choir at the community *Carols by Candlelight* or the football team loudly singing their song after a big win at the local ground. But, yet, our students are very much 'real'.

Currently, the 'voices' of students at the DECV are hard to pin point, because they can never all assemble to fill the school hall. There are no bricks and mortar to contain the echoes of all the students coming together: to have a conversation, build relationships, perform and give speeches.

The 'tyranny of distance' means that the DECV cannot function like a mainstream school community; it is much more of a challenge to include the usual daily school routines that build trust, relationships, leadership and a sense of community amongst the students.

Our students could be just as easily 'attending' DECV from their bedroom in Pakenham; their 'home' school in Fitzroy; the beaches of Nauru; or the ski slopes of Canada. Our students are poor, rich, urban, rural, gamers, musicians, elite athletes and travellers. Some of them are academically gifted and some of them have severe medical needs that make their schooling a secondary priority.

As the DECV **Student Voice and Leadership Coordinators**, we are presented with a unique challenge to gather student 'voices' from across





Melbourne, Victoria, Australia and the world so that they can all be heard. We can't call a meeting of students over the PA, give a presentation at assembly, or remind a student of the next meeting as we pass them in the corridor.

Strength in diversity

The first step to overcoming the challenge of developing a genuine StudentVoice at DECV is to recognise what our students can contribute to developing a strong school community. In a word, that strength is *'diversity'*.

In a Year 8 English online lesson, a student from Canada tuned in with 15 of his fellow classmates. Not only did they learn to differentiate a colon from a semi-colon, but they also developed an understanding of the location of Vancouver, how good the skiing was there, and a few perspectives on American–Canadian politics.

When the students from DECV have the opportunity to converse, they are exposed to a wide variety of voices that all have a story to tell or a lesson about life from over the hill or across the sea. *Diversity* is the strength of our student population and the underpinning foundation of our school community.

Exposure to diversity within our school, develops students who are able to get along and collaborate effectively with students from different backgrounds and circumstances. On a recent DECV school camp, where 32 Year 7–12 students met for the first time in Bacchus Marsh, a camp staff member noted: *"I can't believe these students met just yesterday; they are all so loud already."* The food hall was alive with conversation and fun just 24 hours after meeting to catch the train together at Southern Cross station.

Moving forward, a core value of *Student Voice and Leadership* at DECV must be to promote acceptance of diversity and to find ways of having the unique voices of our students heard within our school and within broader community circles.

Diversity is our signature feature and authentically represents what we are as a school.

As *Student Voice and Leadership Coordinators*, we are in the beginning stages of building an on-line blog where students' unique and interesting stories can be placed. We are in the process of trying to get that blog to go live to all DECV students and teachers. We want everyone involved with the school to understand the diversity of our students and how that gives us strength as a school community. When we understand our strengths, we will begin to understand ourselves as a community. And so will the broader education system.

Building the school yard on-line

The most effective tool currently available to bring people, who are separated across large distances, together as a community is the *internet*. At DECV, the classrooms are replaced by virtual whiteboards and an online learning portal. The school assembly hall is replaced by on-line message boards, the *E-newsletter* and *blogs* to recognise student success stories. Now, it is time for the schoolyard to be replicated online at DECV if we want students to collaborate, learn through play, and be creative together.

Students attending mainstream education learn to develop their identity and sense of belonging within their particular school through recess and lunch. It is a chance for students to have agency over their time, discuss ideas, have their beliefs tested, critique the school with their friends, and develop initiatives with the teachers on duty.

At DECV, we are developing equivalent online spaces for our *Student Voice and Leadership* team members to develop their own ideas and suggestions to help build the school community. We are about to go live with new sub-school online spaces that will allow the school to connect students with each other and with their teachers in a more social context. For students to participate and engage with

the school community, they must feel like they are playing an active part in developing its direction.

In the DECV *Online portal*, we have developed a *Student Voice and Leadership* page where the 25 members of *Student Voice and Leadership* have been divided up into five different 'working parties'. Each of these 'working parties' centres on a specific project to develop the student experience at the school and is led by a *Student Voice and Leadership Executive* member. A teacher has been assigned to each of these working parties to develop and monitor progress. The students contribute ideas and initiatives in on-line message forums, meaning that they can contribute to developing the school community from anywhere in the world.

Our intent with developing these online working parties with students is to provide an online space where students could have their voice heard and actively contribute to school initiatives important to them. Students are working on developing projects within the school that include an online peer mentoring service, planning a school social and developing a school sports athletics day.

Visible leadership

Having visible school leaders, whose qualities and skills are on display for the entire school community, is vital for developing a culture where students feel engaged, confident and motivated. Leadership is an important part of Student Voice, because it allows the communities' collective voice to be represented at the table and acted upon. At DECV, the luxury of having such student leaders walk among the people with a badge and a blazer is unfortunately not available.

To make student leadership at DECV visible, we have created a four-member *Student Executive* who meet on-line on a fortnightly basis to represent the student voice at large.

Our challenge as coordinators is to give these students *visibility* within the school, especially on-line, for other students to see.

A big part of our program for Student Voice and Leadership is running the *Duke of Edinburgh Program*. This year we have around 15 students who are participating in the program, through DECV, to develop their leadership skills. Investing time in student leadership helps shape the student community at large, their beliefs about themselves and gives them the power to speak up and be heard. In September, we will participate in a 2-day hike with the Duke of Edinburgh cohort. Our plan is to capture the hike using *Go Pro* footage so that we can make a mini documentary that shows the rest of the student population the opportunities for leadership at DECV.

What the mainstream can learn via distance

There is much that mainstream settings can learn from the current experience of *Student Voice and Leadership* at DECV. The lessons to be learnt are around recognising diversity amongst individuals, focusing on individual strengths, building the on-line infrastructure to engage students and enhance their creativity, and investing in the student leadership required to develop positive school environments.

At DECV, we are proud of the qualities, individual stories and unique attributes that our students display on a daily basis. In the future, we are confident that their voices will be heard all over Melbourne, Victoria, Australia and the world... that the global community will be proud of these important student voices.

Melissa Stansfield and Zachary Healey

*Student Voice and Leadership Coordinators
Distance Education Centre Victoria*

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Moving towards Student Voice

When I was first approached about leading *Student Voice* in my school, I was excited to have the opportunity to build a role that had not previously been an official position there. My mind began racing (as it does) through the many possibilities as to how best to give our students the platform to be truly heard. Because that's what Student Voice is, right?

Pretty quickly, I found myself needing to answer this question by learning more about what exactly Student Voice means and how to *genuinely* achieve it?

Where to start?

This new role of leading *Student Voice* was put under the umbrella of **Student Engagement**. Early into researching for ideas and inspiration, there was a key piece of information that led to the first move. Rather than Student Voice being something that falls under Student Engagement, it became clear that Student Engagement is the outcome of effective Student Voice.

Move #1: Student Voice and Student Engagement join forces to become a team of five teachers rather than lonely old me and my over-active mind.

Straight away, the benefits of working in a team and having people to bounce ideas off became evident. As a team and as a staff, we discussed the findings of our research into Student Voice and Student Engagement and agreed on:

Move #2: to rename ourselves as the Student Voice Team.

Admittedly, not a huge move. 'What's in a name?' anyway? (Someone famous said that once, didn't they?) But what it gave us was a new focus and a new direction in our goal of increasing student engagement in our school: the trusty 'upstream vs. downstream' metaphor for change.

If we wanted to see increased **Student Engagement** (what we wanted to see happening 'downstream') we would first need to focus on increasing **Student Voice** (change what was happening 'upstream' to have the desired flow-on effect).

Looking upstream

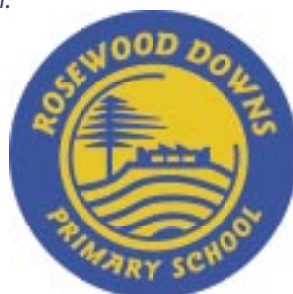
Researching and reading, and then more reading, and then a little more reading about Student Voice unveiled a mixture of reactions: *Student Voice, Student Engagement, student participation, student agency, student representation* and *Junior School Councils*; yikes – there sure is **a lot** of information out there! So how could all of this be transferred into what our team were to do at Rosewood Downs? And how could the many positive initiatives the school was already focusing on offer support and relevance to what we were to do?

If only there was a resource, or a magazine perhaps, out there that addressed all of these things, offering some trialled and tested approaches and overall support for other teachers in our position?!

Move #3: Subscribe to Connect Magazine – and what a good move this was!

The magazine not only offered a fantastic collection of resources and ideas within the realm of Student Voice, but also initiated a valuable conversation with the editor of the magazine, Roger Holdsworth. Subsequent emails back and forth began to pave the way forward for what Student Voice might look like in our school, ultimately leading to:

Move #4: arrange a meeting with him.



Meet and greet

One of the longest-standing advocates for Student Voice, Roger was incredibly humble and welcoming as a colleague and I met him for a coffee and some biscuits one afternoon.

(Move #4.1: eat delicious biscuits.)

With pen and paper in hand to keep note of as much of his wisdom as possible, we quickly formulated a plan to establish our first **Student Action Team (SAT)**. Our meeting with Roger was extremely rewarding, as he talked us through a somewhat step-by-step approach and potential pitfalls to avoid. We discussed the general principles of SATs: whereby it must be a purposeful, productive and communal role for students as they actively bring about change in their school community.

If this is what we could achieve, then the ultimate goal of increasing levels of engagement in our students could finally be reached. It was a goal that could be genuinely and measurably achieved.

We discussed potential topics for our school's first SAT and decided on the ideal topic of **Grade 6 – Year 7 transition**. We were intentionally planning around this with an element of flexibility because, ultimately, we wanted the students to decide on what topic they would like to investigate and change. However, given that we would be working with Grade 6 students, we were anticipating that the hottest topic at the forefront of their minds would be transition.

We concluded our meeting with Roger very thankful for the time, support and resources he had offered us. Upon leaving the meeting, my colleague and I commented on how nice it was to feel so inspired about building something in our school with so much potential for positive change. Back to Rosewood Downs we went, with a pocketful of enthusiasm and notebook of ideas, ready for

Move #5: create our first Student Action Team.

Teachers, subjects and people

When you go to secondary school there will be things that you like and things that you don't like – that's life! It is important to remember that things won't always go your way. Remember that teachers are there to help, just like in primary school, but that doesn't mean you will love them all. Just try to focus on your subjects. There might be subjects that you struggle with, but don't be afraid to ask for help and be willing to learn from your mistakes.



The Transition Student Action Team was formed as part of the Student Voice program at our school. We posed the question: *'How can we better prepare Rosewood Downs P.S. students for the transition to high school?'*

After conducting research through interviews, surveys and questionnaires we have created this brochure to give students as much information as we can to make them feel more confident about moving on to secondary school.

We hope you find this helpful!



TRANSITION STUDENT ACTION TEAM
Top row: Melanie, Clare, Aleksia, Renee, Shasha
Middle row: Vethmin, Zy, William, Basaban

MOVING ON...

A guide for students as they prepare for the transition to secondary school.



Rosewood Downs Primary School
Open For Learning

Student Action Teams

The first step in creating the SAT was to hold a conversation with the Grade 6 students whereby we introduced our role as members of the *Student Voice Team* and how we were working towards improving student engagement and student connectedness within our school. We explained to the students that, as part of the process, we wanted to find out what their 'big issues' were in Grade 6.

As anticipated (and much to our delight), the students identified the biggest issue as their impending **transition** to secondary school. As we discussed their thoughts on the topic, we shifted the focus to what questions they had and what things they didn't know yet. This led us to pose the essential question to our students: *what do you do to find out more about something you're interested in...? Research!*

We then talked about forming a SAT, gaining input from the students as to how best to select team members, whilst stressing the investigative nature of the team and the representative role the selected members would play. We then asked students to submit an expression

of interest to be involved in our school's **first ever** SAT (naturally trying to milk as much enthusiasm out of that as possible). Upon selecting members of the team, we discussed a brief outline of how we envisioned the team would proceed. The students decided to set some clear protocols and expectations for working as part of a team.

It was here that my colleague and I told the students what our role would be from that point on: to be **facilitators** rather than **managers** of the team, and to be there to support the students as they conducted the research and subsequent action into their chosen topic of transition.

Move #6: handing over the baton!

The team conducted research with the Grade 5 and 6 students from our school, and with Year 7 students from a local secondary college. Through questionnaires and brainstorming sessions, the SAT explored what their ideal transition program would look like and what actions would be necessary to get them there.

The output

So what do Grade 5, Grade 6 and Year 7 students envision as the main outcome of their 'ideal' transition program? A brochure, of course!

The team's research and hard work resulted in a brochure, labelled *'Moving On... A guide for students as they prepare for the transition to secondary school'*. It identified five key areas of advice for primary aged students approaching the transition to Year 7:

- uniform;
- getting involved with the school;
- responsibility;
- organisation and teachers; and
- subjects and people.

As stated in the brochure's summary, it was designed to *'give students as much information as we can to make students feel more confident about moving to secondary school'*.

As part of the new and improved transition program, the brochure was distributed to all Grade 5 and 6 students and made available to all parents. Students also presented to the leadership team and in a whole staff meeting.



Uniform

The uniform expectations in secondary school are very high. Your uniform is important - it identifies you and what school you're from. You are expected to wear full school uniform at all times. There is also a sports uniform, which is worn during P.E and sporting events. However, you don't wear it all day. The sports uniform is not to be mixed with regular school uniform and your regular school uniform is not to be mixed with casual clothes. Any non-uniform items may be confiscated and replaced for the day with regular school uniform.

Getting involved with the school

In secondary school, there are many different opportunities for you to become involved in your school community. Many schools have leadership roles that you can apply for and this is a great way to become involved in your school. Sports teams or clubs are a great idea when it comes to getting more involved with your school. There are a variety of clubs and teams such as; basketball, football, netball, tennis, chess club, choirs, bands, sports teams, athletics teams and much more. There will be a lot of opportunities in the performing arts too. If your school has any of these activities on offer, we suggest you go for it – who knows what could happen and what friends you might make there! **DON'T BE SHY!**



Responsibility

In secondary school, you must be responsible for your own learning, belongings and managing your time. This might be tricky at first but it is easily conquered if you have the right attitude and try your best. These are the keys to being calm and collected on your first day. You might be one of the youngest in the school but you must still uphold all of the values and be a role model. Remember, you don't necessarily need a position or title to be a leader!

Organisation

In secondary school, organisation is essential. You must be organised for everything: keeping your locker clean, wearing the right uniform on the right days and knowing what books to bring. It is good to use a diary when you can, to mark important events and know when homework is due. Follow these simple tips to make managing the demands of secondary school easier.

The response the students got from their peers, parents and teachers was overwhelming. Teachers in particular were amazed at the confident manner in which the students presented their work in a staff meeting. The smiles beaming off their faces as they proudly wore their 'professional presenting clothes' said it all. It was an extremely rewarding process for the students and a last legacy for them to leave behind as they completed their last year or primary school.

Challenges and Limitations

As is always the case with most things, particularly teaching, **time** was an obvious challenge. We were, however, quite fortunate in our position of working with the students in the year level I was teaching.

Further to this, Rosewood Downs PS is an open-plan school, allowing for an element of flexibility and support made available to us by our colleagues. Finding the time for a new initiative like this did inevitably creep into a couple of lunch times here or there. I remember something in particular that Roger said when we met with him: **Student Action**

Teams are only sustainable if they're built into how we teach.

Upon reaching the conclusion of our first SAT and reflecting on the process, this certainly rang true. It also offered us a key point of advice to the staff who began the process with the second SAT, investigating how to create a healthy school yard environment. We were able to work closely with the teachers supporting this team and allow them the privilege of learning from our mistakes and improving the SAT process.

Move #7: Learn by reflecting on our actions - and try it all again!

Another challenge was one that took some time to overcome in the initial stages of the process: **how to NOT be the teachers with all the answers;** to completely step back and let the students drive the conversation, the next steps and formulate their own goals. As confronting as this may be to some, it was a process which I personally found extremely valuable.

What a shift in thinking, to not only let the students make the decisions,

but also the mistakes we're so used to protecting them from. Watching the students make these mistakes and experience the setback of things not working out as they predicted, gave way to the powerful conversation of what they could learn from these mistakes and how they could improve in the future.

Simply saying to your students: **"I don't know"**, when we teachers are so used to providing answers, paved the way for students to develop more initiative and investment towards their schooling than they otherwise would. The process proved to be more rewarding for both the students and teachers involved than any of us originally anticipated, leaving us with:

Move #8: Continue to build Student Action Teams into our everyday teaching practice... and enjoy!

Kayla Walker

Kayla Walker is now teaching at Kingswood College and can be contacted at: walker.k@kingswoodcollege.vic.edu.au

Students active in Disaster Resilience

Imagine you are caught in an emergency you never expected to be in. Or, maybe you're getting ready for an expected potential disaster such as a cyclone, bushfire or severe storm. What do you do? How do you feel? What about those around you? Do you know what to expect? What's going to happen and what will it be like afterwards?

These are some of the questions that **disaster resilience education (DRE)** tries to answer. It's not news to anyone that our global climate continues to change dramatically. Or that we are susceptible to emerging epidemics of infectious diseases. And our awareness continues to grow of the dangerous actions of some, and the tragic after-effects on communities and individuals, whether they are directly or indirectly involved, or merely witnesses through the media.

DRE aims to educate people about potential emergency or disaster events by promoting knowledge about specific disaster types and encouraging the development of skills in prevention, preparation, response and recovery from such events. Disaster resilience is about maintaining our way of life, our communities and our environment.

AIDR and DRANZSEN

The **AIDR (Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience)**: www.aidr.org.au – is a disaster resilience knowledge centre that coordinates and promotes the development, sharing and use of information for anyone working with, in, or affected by disaster. Launched in 2015, AIDR is a partnership between the Attorney-General's Department, AFAC (Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council), Australian Red Cross and the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC.

AIDR encourages the development of young people's disaster resilience as a fundamental life skill and as an area in which young people can be community leaders. To this end, AIDR recently launched **DRANZSEN** – the **Disaster Resilient Australia and New Zealand School Education Network** – to support and encourage learning about DRE in both primary and secondary schools. DRANZSEN engages with a diverse range of participants and currently includes educators, emergency response services, researchers, all levels of government and others. There is an

active **DRANZSEN** group in each Australian state and territory.

Student participation and Disaster Resilience Education

There are exciting possibilities for students and young people to be **active participants** in their community's approaches to emergency situations.

- Students can be active in **discussing with and informing professionals** both about their fears and hopes around disasters and their perceptions of safety and need in their communities. They can suggest initiatives that these professionals could take – their **'student voices'** inform professional practice.

For example, the Grades 5/6 students at the **Strathewen Primary School** worked on a joint project with the **Arthurs Creek** and **Strathewen CFA** and their local community to create a *claymation* video to warn children and adults about the dangers of bushfires; see this at: <http://ow.ly/p21n30cjtg>.

- Student groups can themselves be supported to **take initiatives** around disaster resilience and preparation. They might use **Student Action Team** approaches to carry out local research, investigation and inquiry projects as part of their curriculum; they might teach and inform others (including adults and younger students) about their investigations; they might identify unsafe practices or situations and attempt to change these.

For example, in a three-year project – the **Anglesea Fire Education Initiative's "Survive and Thrive" Program** – Grades 4, 5 and 6 students at the **Anglesea Primary School** were supported by the **CFA Anglesea Fire**

Brigade to learn about fire history, fire behaviour and methods of fighting fires. They also learnt teaching methods so that they could develop their own education programs and teach their parents and other primary students in their local area about what they'd learnt: <http://ow.ly/ycAz30cjtog>.

- Students and professionals (including teachers) can **form partnerships** to examine and change local (or broader) practices in contentious or uncertain areas, eg together researching community preparedness. Particularly powerful are student-led programs that are embedded in school curriculum.

An example of **real 'student participation' in decision-making** about disaster risks and a valuable contribution of ideas towards developing a culture of safety, is illustrated through the example of the 'integrated studies' curriculum component in Japanese schools. Especially in regions that have been recently affected by natural disasters or in high disaster risk areas, students map their local neighbourhoods to identify the most dangerous places and those areas where shelter can be sought. This knowledge is not only incorporated into schools' disaster management plans – a good example of the students' power to actually make structural changes – but also enables the local community to be more resilient when disaster strikes.

Such approaches can both develop individual resilience and enable young people to become vital resources and leaders in responses to disasters. A poignant example is provided in the story of Tilly Smith, a young student from the UK, who was on holiday in Thailand with her family when the tsunami took place in 2004. Tilly saved her family, and the hotel guests nearby, when she remembered her recent school lessons on tsunamis: <http://ow.ly/lfb30cjttf>.

Australian Institute for
Disaster Resilience



DRANZSEN Forums

Throughout May, **Liz Tomazic**, AIDR Project Officer, facilitated a series of **DRANZSEN** Forums in each capital city, commencing in Sydney and concluding in Adelaide. Anyone involved in the development and/or delivery of disaster resilience and related educational activities was welcome to participate and there was no cost involved. The Forums provided unique opportunities for teachers, emergency service and non-government agency staff, as well as others, to share ideas and resources about DRE both locally and nationally.

Forum programs varied from state to state, reflecting each Group's interests and needs. For example, some participants were involved in interactive exercises that challenged them to think about what might happen when a disaster strikes. They also listened to panel discussions and learnt firsthand about the personal and community impacts of recent disasters on education communities.

Guest speakers included **Michelle Roberts**, a psychologist, teacher and child disaster consultant, from the Student Incident Response Unit at the Victorian Department of Education. Michelle has worked for over 30 years in the field of children, schools, emergencies, critical incidents and trauma. She spoke about what is meant by DRE and how it assists children and young people, and their communities, recover from the impact of disasters. Such education supports the development of a culture of safety and preparedness which makes for a disaster resilient society. ***"Disaster resilience education strengthens children's skills so that they understand the risks of disasters in their communities and are able to play a role in reducing risks and impacts of potential disasters,"*** said Michelle. ***"Young people are capable of carrying out mitigation and adaptation strategies as long as they're given the tools and opportunities to be disaster resilient."***

Important aspects of DRE incorporate the building of knowledge, skills and the confidence to problem solve and act before, during and after disaster. This can be done in practical, hands-on ways, through which students learn that they can be valued community members in identifying and leading initiatives in disaster resilience.

Michelle emphasised that a resilient person, while looking out for others, also needed to take care of themselves – it was not an indulgence, but a vital strategy to ensure one's own health and wellbeing.

The **DRANZSEN** Forum programs enabled the exploration of several aspects of DRE, one of which is the necessity to assess risks as effectively as possible and to make good decisions about putting appropriate hazard management plans into action. **John Rolfe**, from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, presented such a session which focused on the need to make risk information more accessible to more people so that we can understand better 'what might happen, what can it do to us, and what should we do'.

He referred to the importance placed on disaster risk reduction in documents such as the ***Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*** which, together with the ***National Strategy for Disaster Resilience***, regards the development of knowledge about risk reduction in young people as vital.

John pointed out that, for informed decisions to be made, it's essential to understand how the landscape and weather interact through the earth sciences (such as geomorphology, geography, meteorology, hydrology), the effects this has on the built environment we have placed on this landscape and then, most importantly, sense check this with local knowledge. **This provides the exciting prospect of young people being engaged in inquiry-based learning activities at a local level, in which their knowledge and experience is central and through which they could explore the use of technical and other sources to develop innovative ways of assessing risk and developing their own resilience to potential disasters, as they play a valued role as leaders within their communities.**

Forum participants also learnt about current research projects that were developing easily accessible all-hazard DRE curriculum materials; lockdown procedures for schools; community



development approaches to developing resilience in bushfire-prone neighbourhoods; designing, monitoring and evaluating evidence-based DRE programs; current research into child-centred disaster risk reduction; the Australian Red Cross's school-based *Pillowcase Project*; critical incident management programs for school leaders; and the DRE challenges and opportunities of working in remote communities.

The conversations about current and proposed practices, resources and initiatives, continued well after the sessions' 'official' completion times. It was really gratifying to witness the commencement of new collaborative partnerships and to listen to and be part of participants' discussions about how they could either enhance existing working relationships or combine energies and work on DRE together in the future.

Each of the **DRANZSEN** Groups has identified specific actions or initiatives that they would like to develop in the future. They are also involved in a larger national conversation about DRE and how to best engage in it, through the forthcoming **National Annual DRANZSEN Forum**, which will take place in Sydney on **Thursday 7 September**. As with the state and territory **DRANZSEN** Forums, the event in Sydney is free to attend and will provide unique opportunities for teachers, emergency service and non-government agency staff, as well as others, to share their ideas and resources about DRE both locally and nationally.

Registration is essential and can be completed online at: www.afaconference.com.au/program/post-conference-development-sessions/

If you would like to know more about AIDR, **DRANZSEN** Groups or disaster resilience education resources, please contact **Liz Tomazic** at liz.tomazic@aidr.org.au or on 03 9418 5242.



Beyond the project:

Recognising children's commitment to research as subjects and participants

When engaging with children for the purposes of research, one area that is often overlooked by school communities is the value placed by children on their participation in the process beyond the direct results of a study. When children commit to participation in research, they hold a genuine desire for their contributions to be taken seriously. In reality however, this commitment is often unrecognised by those not directly involved in the project.

For six months, 61 children in three southeast Queensland primary schools participated in a students as researchers project that first involved conceptualising wellbeing and then translating it into practices for school improvement¹.

With a focus on school wellbeing pedagogy, the children discussed and explored their individual conceptualisations of wellbeing in small groups to develop a focus for their student inquiry projects. Each group investigated different aspects of wellbeing at school, with all groups focusing on either school improvement, school sustainability, or an issue affecting their wellbeing at school. Throughout the project, the children were mentored and supported in research skill development by the university researchers.

Alongside the focus of the children's projects, the university researchers were also studying the methodological implications of participatory research with children. Of particular interest to the (adult) researchers were the children's perspectives on their own roles in the process of school improvement and student voice. From the students' perspective, were the views of children

taken seriously at school? Did the students believe they had a voice powerful enough to enact change?

Despite what many schools and teachers say, it seems that, in this and other projects, many children simply don't think they will have any impact: *"Maybe... probably not... like it's a possibility... 50/50... whoever it ends up with. If it ends up with [teacher] there's more chance..."* and *"Probably not, 'cause we're just kids. The other kids might but you have to be someone the little kids know."*



There are two ways that this could be explained. Either the members of the school community don't believe the children can make worthwhile contributions, or they simply are not aware that the children have something to say. Both explanations have problems, but they might also come from the same root cause: small group educational research. Often, children involved in school based research are simply considered 'absent' from class for a specified time with teachers and classmates rarely paying attention to what they are doing during the absence. This is particularly evident when there is a cap on participation numbers or only a few of the children in a given class are participating. As a result, their contributions to research and the efforts of their involvement in a project are often ignored or misunderstood.

But, if no one knows what you're doing while you're out of class why would they be interested in your contributions to knowledge? When children either express their view or demonstrate their capacity it is often in the presence of only a few people: school leaders, researchers or other children. As such, the right forum for demonstrating capacity is often not available in the daily life of a school. As a result, the participants in a project do not feel appreciated by the wider school community.

While there has been significant discussion in *Connect* and elsewhere showcasing the potential of student voice and students as researchers projects, there has been less attention paid to the extent to which the outcomes of such projects are taken seriously and result in lasting change. Initiatives by children in a culture where voice is limited or is not part of the school plan, may never get off the ground.

¹ The researchers would like to acknowledge that this project was undertaken with the assistance and support from the Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE), who funded the project through their Research Grants Program.

Student Voice or Students as Partners?

The language of 'student voice' has been around for sometime and scholars have written quite a bit about 'student voice' with a deeper history in the school sector compared to higher education. The language of 'students as partners' is more recent, particularly in higher education. *What is 'student voice'? How does it relate to 'students as partners'? Why does it matter?*

In 2012 Michael Fielding gave a talk: *Student Voice: patterns of partnership and the demands of deep democracy*. (This is available at: <http://ow.ly/LwGx30bLqc8> as well as in *Connect* 197: October 2012.) He outlined the development of the range of student voice work in many countries across the world since the 1990s. While he has written eloquently about 'student voice' in many papers, this talk is a easy introduction to 'student voice' with an important historical context.

The value for me is how his work challenges the use of the term 'student voice' as I often hear it being tossed about in higher education in contrast to 'students as partners': in competition with 'partnership' – which is better than 'student voice'. In this talk, Fielding relates voice and partnership by outlining **six patterns of partnership**:

1. **Students as data source**: in which staff utilise information about student progress and well-being
2. **Students as active respondents**: in which staff invite student dialogue and discussion to deepen learning / professional decisions
3. **Students as co-enquirers**: in which staff take a lead role with high-profile, active student support
4. **Students as knowledge creators**: in which students take lead roles with active staff support
5. **Students as joint authors**: in which students and staff decide on a joint course of action together
6. **Intergenerational learning as lived democracy**: in which there is a shared commitment to/ responsibility for the common good

He is talking about work conducted in schools. As we delve more into students as partners in higher education, it is seems relevant and sensible (scholarly) to expand from the work of student

voice and partnership in schools while acknowledging the obvious differences between the two educational contexts. Fielding outlines many concerns many of us have been discussing recently (eg equity; appropriation for management agendas; power dynamics). He grounds the talk in democratic principles, explicitly linking the practices of voice and partnership to a theoretical place.

As practitioners, many of us want better learning relationships with our students and we see students as partners as a process to achieve that goal. For students, partnership offers an opportunity for empowerment, genuine engagement, and ownership of learning in an environment that typically makes little space for most students to engage with academics or staff to shape higher education. Even if we don't make the link, the democratic values and principles that Fielding discusses underpin our partnership practices.

In 2006, Alison Cook-Sather published a powerful paper titled *Sound, Presence, and Power: "Student Voice" in Educational Research and Reform*. (This is available at: <http://ow.ly/SHLq30bLqV7> - but it may be paywalled.) Like Fielding, this paper is in the context of the school sector regarding 'student voice' but has clear lessons for engaging 'students as partners' in higher education. She concluded in 2006:

Currently, many people are using the term "student voice" to assert that young people have unique perspectives on learning, teaching, and schooling, that their insights warrant not only the attention but also the responses of adults, and that they should be afforded opportunities to actively shape their education.

In 2017, this sounds a lot like how we are talking about 'students as partners'

in higher education, which is about going beyond a culture of staff 'asking & listening' toward 'students having an active, engaged voice in shaping their learning experiences' in collaboration with staff.

There have been many brilliant opportunities in my National Fellowship on students as partners. Learning more about the historical context of partnership has been one of them and collaborating with scholars like Alison Cook-Sather (who was in Australia in 2016 thanks to the Fellowship and UQ's Visiting Scholars Scheme). We are currently collaborating with a group of students and staff on a manuscripts that explore the 'language of students as partners' and 'theoretical views on students as partners'. Such work matters because making these scholarly links, that underpin our practices, explicit will only sustain our collective efforts to reposition students in higher education in the name of 'students as partners' - a movement that has emerged from the 'student voice' movement.

Kelly Matthews

Australian Students as Partners Network
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This reflection from Kelly is reprinted (with permission) from the latest Australian Students as Partners Network update, which also features:

- **Resources for Practice**: New case studies, advice for getting started, 4 'how-to' guides
- **Research from Practice**: *Australian Stories of Partnership* special issue published + Issue 1 of *International Journal for Students as Partners* available
- **Events**: 2017 **National Roundtable Date** announced (see page 36 of this *Connect*)! + many more events
- **Featured Work**: Spotlight on selected research, case studies, & blog posts
- **Reflections**: Linking 'student voice' & 'students as partners'; student reflections on partnership

The Update can be found at:

<http://ow.ly/UUIU30bLruO>

Flipping thinking on the role of teachers supporting SRCs and Student Voice

We have just completed 86.7% of the VicSRC Student Voice Regional Workshops (in other words 13 of 15 events!). The fact that I can work that out as a percentage at all is testament to the patience and expertise of my high school Maths teachers ... I wasn't a particularly gifted student to say the least.

My Maths teachers were all trained in Maths, assessed at University on their capacity to teach Maths and (I assume) only got better at it over time ... Maths is important. At no time was I taught by a teacher who had never personally done any Maths or who had no real idea how Maths worked. My Maths teachers probably received professional development at least once a year, received time allocation to develop lessons and it was assumed they would teach Maths in lesson time, rather than try and convince students to spend their lunchtimes learning about Maths. This is because Maths is important.

Student voice, agency, participation and leadership are important too ... but SRC teachers and their equivalents are not treated like Maths teachers.

This is my fourth year running the VicSRC conferences, but until this year my time has been spent only with the students. Restructuring of the workshops has meant that I am also now facilitating teacher discussions and have been surprised to learn how little support SRC teachers generally receive – as well as the ways in which some schools see their role. In my discussions with teachers at these workshops I have started to notice a pattern. Passionate teachers who genuinely believed in Student Voice were often weary, frustrated and sometimes overwhelmed by their role trying to facilitate a successful SRC.

In these discussions it was normal for over 80% to have **no time allocation whatsoever** for the role and over 90% had received **no professional development**. Many had **little (or no) budget** and often the role carried **no formal recognition** within the school (ie as a leading or senior teacher).

Under the Victorian *Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)*, Student Voice is enshrined as a '**key component of the Education State**' and many teachers indicated that Student Voice had been chosen and formalised by their Principal as a school-wide priority. Moreover Student Voice is recognised as a valuable tool of engagement which in turn leads to better outcomes for all students (see, for example, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (2015) on *How Young People's Participation in School Supports Achievement and Attainment* at: <http://ow.ly/EDcC30cb5YX> or the report by Toshalis and Nakkula for Students at the Center (US) (2012) on *Motivation, Engagement and Student Voice* at: <http://ow.ly/83IU30cb607>). I was surprised then to see just how common it is for SRC teachers to be completely under-recognised and under-resourced.

If we see SRCs as valuable ... in fact as essential in schools that encourage engagement and excellence ... the importance of the SRC teacher's position needs to be flipped. Rather than being seen as a position of last resort handed out at the end of each year to whichever teacher is new or naïve enough to put their hand up, or to a teacher who has some 'spare time' in their allotment, or to a teacher who has done the job in a limited and unchallenging way for year, the position should be recognised by School Leaders as being a crucial role within a school – a role that requires resources, time and professionalism; a role that requires reflection, renewal and challenge.

The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (from AITSL) (see <http://ow.ly/lpf030cb67S>) lays out a clear pathway from Graduate to Lead Teacher across a range of areas, including working with different types of students and teaching different content. The *Standards* formalise experience and excellence and recognise and reward teachers for the expertise and knowledge they acquire through training and over





time. It is time for a category to be created that also recognises and rewards expertise and professionalism for SRC/ Student Voice teachers and creates a clear pathway for Principals and schools to keep developing this role for the benefit of the whole school.

The teachers I have met and spoken with about SRCs were not whinging. They were genuinely passionate about Student Voice and worked hard to engage students across their schools in the SRC. Some were energetic graduates who had no training or experience but were keen to learn as much as possible (and this raises the issue about what these graduates learn about Student Voice etc during their training); some were experienced teachers with decades under their belt who nonetheless found the SRC support role a whole new challenge and felt overwhelmed. A handful of teachers were well resourced, trained and recognised and these were able to amplify and organise Student Voice in ways that were the envy of everyone at the discussion table.

Maybe it is time to have a discussion about formalising the role, training, resources and support of SRC teachers in the same ways we treat other leading teachers. In the meantime I have made a 'wish list' from conversations with the teachers with whom I spoke - it is not excessive:

- **No. 1 request: Time!**

Time allocation to spend with SRC students (in class time mixed with their own time) as well as time to plan for meetings and events. Time to attend professional development sessions or simply catch up on the

reading and resources that already exist and manage all the other little jobs that come with the role. Time to reflect on the role and plan different approaches. ***Should we include this as part of the formal agreements around teachers' conditions?*** Or could we see ways in which time – for students as well as teachers – could be provided by making the SRC some form of **cross-age subject** within the curriculum?

- **No. 2 request: Training and Network opportunities**

Although some teachers had participated in VicSRC training in the past, the majority were (in the words of one enthusiast!) *"making it up as I go along"*. Training would provide teachers with a network of other staff to discuss and bounce ideas off, access and pointers to relevant studies and resources and, most importantly, confidence in their role. It would enable teachers to reflect on and grow in the role. Such training could even be formally tied to progression through the **AITSL standards**.

- **No. 3 request: Budget**

Enough to support teachers and students to attend relevant events and training without necessarily having to fundraise all year to do so. SRC staff saw that fundraising often became a necessary part of an SRC's job, but preferred students to run fundraisers for issues or causes they were passionate about both at school and in the broader community (perhaps through a

Social Justice group rather than the SRC). Without a school-allocated budget for its operation, SRCs and their support teachers can be **deflected** into this, and away from their core role of representing the views and needs of students in the school.

- **No. 4 request: Support**

This could take the practical form of allocating support to **two** teachers who manage the role between them (a popular idea) or simply taking the time to recognise the role SRCs and SRC staff play, and elevate this within the school culture. Another way of spreading the load might be to form a **Student Voice/Agency/ Participation Working Group** within the school, identifying and engaging several teachers who have aspects of the role.

Over the course of working for the VicSRC I have spoken with numerous students whose lives were literally changed by joining their SRC. I have worked with colleagues whose careers began with their own school SRCs, and have seen the value Student Voice plays in all aspects of student engagement.

Let's recognise both the challenges SRC teachers face and the enormous impact they have, and find a way to build, maintain and recognise teacher excellence in this key area of school life.

Kate Wilde

*The Human Development Workshop,
and VicSRC Student Voice Workshop
facilitator*

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What's the evidence?

This query comes up regularly: *what is the evidence that our initiatives – student voice, participation, agency, representation etc – work? What are the outcomes for students and schools?*

While there is a growing body of research evidence in the field, it has been difficult to pull this together simply to answer this question – because of the diverse nature of the field. The terms 'student participation', 'student voice', 'student agency', 'student leadership' and so on have been used, sometimes interchangeably, and sometimes without recognition of their different meanings and intentions. The nature of the intended outcomes from such approaches (beyond a generalised statement of 'improvement of learning outcomes') are also diverse (both in nature, but also in relation to which students: outcomes for the participants or for all students?), and there is little analysis of the mechanisms by which such outcomes will be achieved.

So there is a need first to be clear about the terms used and the intentions of this work. We can then start specifying possible outcomes more clearly, and look for evidence around these. Some of that work has been done, but much remains un-addressed. Much of the work focuses on outcomes for individual students who are active participants, rather than on system outcomes, or outcomes more broadly for all students.

In terms of inclusive definitions, Professor Michael Fielding's work in the UK about '*Patterns of Partnership*' provides a useful typology that sorts out different approaches. It can be found in an article in *Connect* 197, October 2012 (page 10): <http://ow.ly/uolt30cd2pj>.

I've then worked from that typology to explicitly address the possible intentions of various approaches, in a more recent article: '*Terms and Intentions*' in *Connect* 223, February 2017 (page 18): <http://ow.ly/d5nf30cd2qo>. (To some extent, the current article is one follow-on from that discussion; if we know why we are taking initiatives and what outcomes we intend, it is only then that we can start to look for evidence for those outcomes.)

This provides a context for understanding the nature and limitations of the existing research. It enables us to specify what the primary intention of an approach is (eg "*that teacher practice will be improved by listening to students' views and opinions*"), while recognising that there may also be other outcomes (eg "*that participants' communication skills will improve*" or "*that school practices become more inclusive of all students' needs*").

Even meta-studies and overviews here address aspects of these intentions, but seldom the broad range of practice. They focus on specific areas of practice, or note the absence of research on some areas, such as the impact of student voice (etc) on organisational change. (Some work in this area is being done at the moment eg the VicSRC's evaluation of the *Teach the Teacher* program.)

However, the following reports and summaries may be useful:

A UK report called *Measuring the Magic* was produced by Kirby and Bryson (2002): <http://ow.ly/cbUu30cd2s1>. This report contains a useful and readable summary of research to that date about the strong link between participation and outcomes (health, learning etc) for participants – but less on the impact of student voice etc on changing school practice.

At about the same time, Derry Hannam in the UK was commissioned to do a study into outcomes of participatory practices for schools, and carried out a pilot project contrasting small samples of schools that did and didn't have strong student participation. This study: *A Pilot Study to Evaluate the Impact of the Student Participation Aspects of the Citizenship*

Order on Standards of Education in Secondary Schools can be found at: <http://ow.ly/bpKA30cd2sT>

More recently, an overview piece of research by Mager and Nowack (2012) looked at the overall evidence around participation in school decision-making, particularly through student councils (in the UK, these are called School Councils) – *Effects of student participation in decision making at school: A systematic review and synthesis of empirical research*: <http://ow.ly/bY4u30cd2uc>

There's also a study from Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (2015) on *How Young People's Participation in School Supports Achievement and Attainment*; it's found at: <http://ow.ly/PBa430cd2wY>.

A recent Swedish study by Alerby and Bergmark (2016) on *Participation for Learning* can be found at: <http://ow.ly/w29h30cd2yV>

From the USA, the report by Toshalis and Nakkula (2012) on *Motivation, Engagement and Student Voice*, from Students at the Center, provides a useful overview of much of the literature: <http://ow.ly/pXaA30cd2At>.



Adam Fletcher from the US-based *SoundOut* (<https://soundout.org/>) continues to provide many valuable resources, including research references.

But this is an emerging field, with work constantly underway. Definitions, practice and research developments are shared through the facebook group: *Student Voice Research and Practice*, which may be found at: <http://ow.ly/e5nf30cd2Cp>

Roger Holdsworth



www.vicsrc.org.au

1000 students at VicSRC Student Voice Workshops 2017

It's been 14 Conferences, 4 months and just shy of 1,000 students standing up and speaking out on the issues that matter most – and we're not done yet!

From Mildura to Bayside, Lakes Entrance to Templestowe, Shepparton to Melton, the VicSRC has travelled far and wide to work with group after group of students who care passionately about their education at the **Student Voice Workshops 2017**.

"I learnt that our voice matters and we can make a change."

Student, Ballarat

Real change happens when we work together – and we've seen this time and again over the last 120 days. Over the course of 14 workshops (with one more still to go!), we've brought students, teachers and principals into the same learning space to collaborate on common issues.

Delivered in partnership with **Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership**, the VicSRC's *Student Voice Workshops* help students and teachers to work collaboratively to tackle the 'how' of student voice and agency in metropolitan and regional Victoria. Participants have collaborated, co-created and sparked practical strategies to create change in their primary and secondary schools and learning environments.

"It was inspirational to meet other secondary students; it restored my belief in the future of this country."

Teacher, Mildura

In-depth discussions allowed students to find connections and common ground across schools on a range of key issues. Students also identified some top issues affecting their experience of education across the whole series of workshops, including:

- Student voice in decision making
- Teaching styles
- Equity and facilities
- Bullying
- Student engagement and behaviour
- Classroom management and justice
- Learning styles & opportunities
- Student wellbeing
- Student-teacher relationships
- Diversity & representation (homo/transphobia, racism, etc.)

"Understanding and thinking about who's on top and who's on the bottom of our school Ladder of Listening was really valuable. This enables my school government to focus and bring the bottom up as well as understanding who has the most voice."

Student, year 8, Inner Melbourne

Students are more engaged in their school education when they are involved in shaping their experience. However, the reality is that students are not often given a say in what happens at school or in their education. So creating spaces for students and teachers to meet, co-create and realise how much they have in common is highly empowering.

"The most valuable thing I learnt was that us having a voice and speaking up really matters and can make a difference."

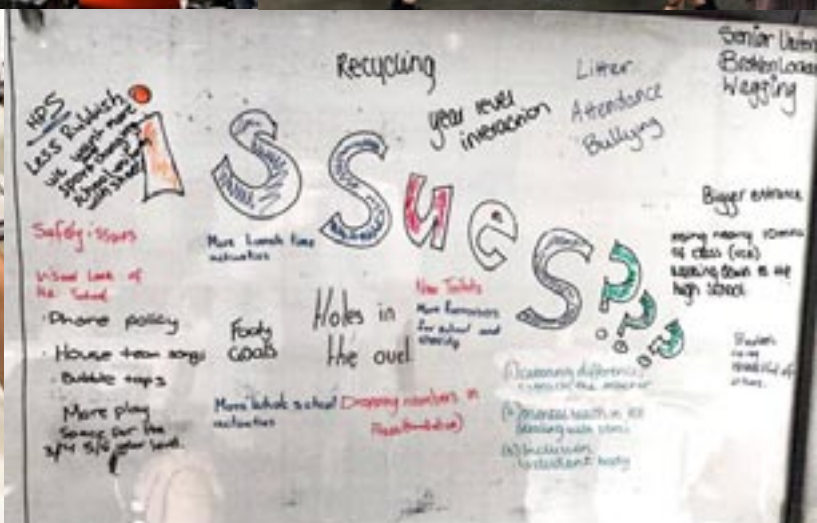
Student, Mildura

We hope everyone who took part in the conferences enjoyed the experience and took away tangible tools to make positive change on the issues that affect your education.

The VicSRC extends an enormous thank you to all the students and schools that took part in the 2017 series!

Want to host a Student Voice Workshop in 2018? If you'd like to get involved, please contact **Kat Daymond**, VicSRC Events Officer via: events@vicsrc.org.au





Fewer than 30 tickets left available!



VicSRC Congress 2017

10, 11, 12 July 2017

Ormond College, The University of Melbourne

VicSRC Congress is a three-day explosion of student voice

Run by students, for students – and attended by the Victorian Minister for Education – the **VicSRC Congress** brings students together from across the state to debate, decide and act on the issues that really matter to their education.

Through interactive workshops and solutions-focussed debate, student delegates determine the VicSRC policy agenda for the coming year, and appoint the **Student Executive** who will implement it.

In 2017, we're mixing things up. Delegates will shape Congress in real time, taking control of the conversation, incorporating a choose-your-own-adventure format. Their passions will drive their voice and choice as students work together to set the agenda for education change. Unlike a traditional conference, where the whole program is determined in advance, parts of the VicSRC Congress program will be decided in real time at the event by the delegates.

These include:

1. **Action Teams** (formerly Issues Groups) on Day 1; and
2. **Workshop** choices on Days 1 and 2.

On Day 1, delegates can pitch their own ideas and topics to the whole group at the **Action Market**. From these ideas, delegates will form 10-12 **Action Teams** based on their areas of interest – letting their passions drive their voice and choice as they work together to set the agenda for education change.

On Days 1 and 2, students also have the opportunity to participate in a series exciting and interactive Skills and Recreation Workshop Streams.

Bookings are open until **Friday 16 June (unless sold out prior)**. We strongly encourage you to book early to ensure your spots: at <http://ow.ly/8Dln30c8Nj5>

Cost*

VicSRC Members:	\$180 per student
Non-Members:	\$200 per student
Day 3 - Open Morning**:	\$30 pp

* **Member and Non-Member** ticket prices include accommodation, meals, delegate pack, showbag, T-shirt and all conference resources.

** **Congress Open Morning** tickets include morning tea, showbag, resources and entry to the Congress Session (see next page).

Who should attend Congress?

- Year 7–12 students from Victorian state, independent and Catholic schools.
- Each school is eligible to bring up to three students.
- A maximum of 165 places is available for delegates.
- **Note:** Teachers are not required to attend.

Speak out, spark change. This is #Congress2017



VicSRC Congress Open Morning

Even if you don't snap up a delegate ticket for the VicSRC Congress in 2017, your voices matter and we want to hear them!

Students, teachers and stakeholders are welcome to the **Congress Open Morning** on the final day of Congress 2017. **Open Morning** ticket-holders will meet the Congress delegates, take part in the solutions-focussed Congress debate and presentation, and witness the announcement of the 2017-2018 Executive team.

Tickets

Book your **Open Morning** tickets online from Tuesday 6th to Friday 16th June at: <http://ow.ly/v8FZ30c8Nha>

Tickets are \$30 pp and are strictly limited so be sure to get in early! The ticket price includes a light morning tea and refreshments, participation in the Lightning Lobby, showbag for students, resources and entry to the Congress Session.

Date: Wednesday 12 July 2017

Time: 10am-12.30pm

Venue: Carrillo Gantner Theatre
Sidney Myer Asia Centre, Swanston Street, The University of Melbourne



Are you a VicSRC Member School?

Membership discounts

Did you know that you can receive discounted event prices if you have a VicSRC Membership?

If you are not a member school and would like to take advantage of discounted ticket prices to VicSRC events, simply select '**VicSRC Membership (Annual School Membership)**' at the start of your online registration. Or check about membership on-line at:

www.vicsrc.org.au/get-involved/school-membership

Need help? Unsure if you **are** a member?

Contact **Kat Daymond**, VicSRC Events Officer on **03 9267 3744** or events@vicsrc.org.au



VicSRC Policy Platform

Backed by over ten years of experience and research, and created with the voices of thousands of students, the VicSRC Policy platform is an essential resource which underpins all our work in student voice and agency - and can be used as a guide to yours.

The VicSRC Policy Platform covers nine focus areas:

- **The future of learning:**
All schools give students a voice in shaping their education, preparing them for a changing world
- **Student voice in policy and program development:**
Students meaningfully participate in policy and program development processes
- **Student voice in school decision making:**
Students are involved in school decision-making at all levels
- **Curriculum and learning:**
All students have a broad range of choices of what and how to learn and these options are equally valued
- **School funding and resourcing:**
All students have access to high-quality teaching, facilities and resources
- **A culture of respect:**
Every student feels safe and respected at school
- **Student wellbeing:**
All students have ready access to the support they need, including mental health services
- **Collaboration and partnerships – working together:**
Schools and their students work together with their communities
- **Sustainability:**
Every school works towards a more sustainable future



Specific goals and targets are attached to each of these areas, and the Policy Platform details why and how you can incorporate the focus areas into your work and environments.

We encourage all students, teachers and schools to use the Policy Platform to guide your approaches to student voice as

we work together to transform our education system!

Download the *VicSRC Policy Platform* in summary or in full at:

<http://ow.ly/sQ8A30c3yk1>

VicSRC Victorian Student Representative Council

Meet some VicSRC Executive 2016-17 Members

Chelsea Hard

Hey! I'm **Chelsea Hard** and I am in Year 12 at St Josephs College Echuca. My passions include photography and making a positive change in the world we live in.

This is my first year on the Executive and I am looking forward to working with other like-minded people to share the voices of Victoria! My other passions include, food, performing arts, creative writing ... Basically anything that is creative! One other thing about me, I sing way too much for the voice I have, but I promise to use my voice to speak on behalf of all **you**!



David Trevorrow

Hi guys! I'm **David**, a western suburbs kid in Year 12 at Braybrook College. To me, education has always been about fulfilling my insatiable curiosity and being on the Executive is an awesome extension of that. Education is the best way to change attitudes and lives.

I value public education as the key to my future and that of every other child in Victoria. Education widens horizons and strengthens the fabric of our community. For me the feeling of success comes solely from what we do, admiring a team's work, not having my name up in neon. I love writing and talking about what I believe in - probably too much sometimes :). We are here to represent every student in the state, so if you have something that needs to be heard, hit me up with an email at info@vicsrc.org.au



Tobias Naylor

Hi! I am **Tobias (Tobi) Naylor**, a Year 8 student at Auburn High School in Hawthorn East. I have three siblings: an older sister who attends Melbourne Girls' College, and a younger brother and sister who attend Richmond Primary School. I live in Richmond, but support the mighty Essendon Bombers.

Being on the VicSRC Executive team is an inspirational opportunity and a chance for me to share the voices of students across Victoria. Although I am new to high school and leadership, I hope I can bring new ideas to the board. I look forward to working with you.



Introducing the VicSRC's new Executive Officer: Nina Laitala!

The VicSRC Executive team is thrilled to welcome Nina to the role.



Exciting times ahead! After a thorough recruitment process, our interview panel – made up of *Executive* students David Trevorrow and Roghayeh Sadeghi, David Mould (Director of *Second Strike*), and Leo Fieldgrass (Deputy CEO of the *Youth Affairs Council Victoria*) – appointed **Nina Laitala** as the new VicSRC Executive Officer in April 2017

Nina joined the VicSRC as Project Officer in May 2016. Motivated by the organisation's vision and dedication to strengthening the voice and participation of young people, she is thrilled to be taking on the role of EO.

"I'm very excited to have the opportunity to lead such an innovative organisation in partnership with the exceptional team of students that have built and continue to build it into the future. VicSRC's dedication as an organisation to youth participation and student agency aligns with my personal ethos and I feel honoured to be taking on such an important role."

Nina holds a Bachelor of Music, a Master of Education and has over a decade of teaching, facilitation and project management experience within Australia and overseas. Using the arts as a tool to increase inclusiveness in education, she has developed and implemented strength-based programs for diverse community and school groups, including recently arrived migrants and refugees, young people with disabilities and schools affected by the Black Saturday fires.

Nina spends her spare time having fun with her family and will take any opportunity to sing and dance in public, much to the embarrassment of her young children.

We are thrilled to be working with Nina in her new capacity. As the VicSRC grows, we look forward to continuing to work with our partners, supporters, volunteers, teachers, schools and – most importantly – students, to strengthen student voice all over the state!

Aisha Trambas, VicSRC Student and Administration Assistant

Aisha Trambas is delighted to have joined the VicSRC team in March 2017. She is a student herself, completing a Bachelor of Arts in Australian Indigenous Studies and Anthropology.

To her new role, Aisha brings her own experience as a young person working for social change. She has been involved in a range of community organising and campaigning projects to support the rights of people seeking asylum, and is a weekly helper at CERES Tamil Feasts.



A young writer and maker, Aisha is passionate about the power of media and creative arts as tools for the empowerment, self-representation, and well-being of young Black folks, and young People of Colour living on this land. She is thankful for the example and achievements of the many communities working tirelessly for change, particularly First Nations, refugee and migrant, and queer communities, and hopes to continue working towards their examples with fellow young people through community arts and organising.

Aisha is always looking for new podcast recommendations to feed her habit.

Mel Gaylard VicSRC Project Officer

Mel Gaylard joined the VicSRC team in May 2017 as a Project Officer with the *Teach the Teacher* program. Mel is a teacher by trade and spent nine years in schools in Melbourne's north teaching English, Humanities, Literature and VCAL. She can see the immense value in a program that empowers student voice within schools and is excited to be a part of that.

Mel spent 2015/16 as a project coordinator with *Safe Schools Coalition Victoria*. In this role she facilitated training and workshops with staff and students all over Victoria, including coordinating the *Stand Out* network in partnership with *Minus18*. She was also thrilled to develop resources to celebrate Victoria's first *LGBTIQ+ History Month*.



In her downtime, Mel likes to car sing, get crafty and cuddle her dog.

Pinchy Breheny VicSRC Casual Facilitator

Pinchy Breheny has been a long time pal of VicSRC over the last couple of years, helping out with administration and events and is super excited to be back as one of the facilitators! Pinchy will be leading the training and delivery of the *Teach the Teacher* program.

Pinchy comes from a background of sociology, youth work and facilitation and has worked for various youth organisations such as YACVic, VicSRC, The Reach Foundation, and also currently works for Brimbank City Council, running a social support group for LGBTIQ young people in Sunshine. Pinchy is passionate about feminism, challenging gendered social norms, puppies, creating a safe space for LGBTIQ young people, and superhero comic books.



Matty Sievers VicSRC Casual Facilitator

Matty Sievers first joined the VicSRC family in 2015 as an Executive member and, in March 2017, has returned as one of the VicSRC's Facilitators.

With him he brings numerous years' experience in facilitation and advocacy for student and youth participation. He will put his skills to good work facilitating the *Student Voice Workshops* in 2017. Matty's drive and passion for youth empowerment began early on when he started to work closely with his local Council in various programs and initiatives relating to young people and issues pertaining to them.



Since then has worked to ensure his peers' voices are heard and advocated for at all levels of education and government, whether running Youth Summits in the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, being president of his SRC or as a member of the VicSRC Executive.

When he isn't fighting for student and youth empowerment, you can either find him making weird noises on his computer that he likes to call music, or taking photos on other people's expensive cameras.

**To sign up to the VicSRC
online e-newsletter ... visit:**

www.vicsrc.org.au/joinin/maillinglist

VicSRC Victorian Student
Representative Council

The **VicSRC** receives funding support from the **Victorian Department of Education and Training** and **Catholic Education Melbourne**.

It is auspiced by and based at the
Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic).

It can be reached there on 03 **9267 3744** or, for the cost of a local call from outside Melbourne, on **1300 727 176**; or by email: **eo@vicsrc.org.au**

News and Reviews



Re-imagining Education for Democracy Summit

13–15 November 2017, University of Southern Queensland, Springfield



Professor Michael Apple
University of Wisconsin, USA



Professor Anna Yeatman
Whitlam Institute, Western
Sydney University



Professor Bob Lingard
University of Queensland



Professor Pat Thomson
Nottingham University, UK

Contemporary education research, policy and practice are complex and challenging. The political struggle over what constitutes curriculum and pedagogy in Australia is framed by quasi-markets and technocratic models of education, where issues of equity, access, fairness and social justice are replaced by an increasing emphasis on standardised testing, teacher quality and comparisons of school performance.

This summit takes up the unfinished project of critical pedagogy as resistance to the de-democratisation of education and growing levels of social and educational inequality. Where are the spaces for change and articulating hopeful alternatives? How might we imagine and produce different futures? What are the opportunities for affirmative interference and how could we produce a more sustainable re-imagining and re-doing of the critical project of education?

Call for papers

We invite submission of a wide range of presentations, including:

- scholarly/research papers (30 minutes)
- symposia, forums and panel discussions (60/90 minutes)
- interactive workshops (60/90 minutes)
- creative performances and installations

Proposals should include the following information:

1. Session title
2. Presenter name/s and short bios (50 words)
3. Abstract (200-300 words)
4. Any specific technical requirements

Please submit proposals via email to stewart.riddle@usq.edu.au

Download a pdf of the call for papers from: <http://ow.ly/lzWc3093iY2>

More information is available at: <http://ow.ly/NgUY3093j0t>



Connect on facebook

Connect has a presence on facebook. Find us at:

<http://ow.ly/L6UvW>

We've been posting some news and links there since June 2013, to complement and extend what you see in the on-line version of *Connect*. It would be great if you could go there and 'like' us, and also watch there for news of each *Connect's* availability on-line - for FREE.



For people who can't think of two more important things.

Democracy & Education

There may be no more vital moment for pausing to consider the intersection of **democracy and education**.

View the newest issue online at:

<http://democracyeducationjournal.org/home>

It features the following articles:

- *Teaching for Toleration in Liberal Democracy*, by Betto A.F. van Waarden; with a response from John B. Tillson
- *Empowering Young People Through Conflict and Conciliation*, by Jane C. Lo
- *Examination of the New Tech Model as a Holistic Democracy*, by Jill Bradley-Levin and Gina Mosier; with a response by Phillip Woods
- *Race, Residential Segregation, and the Death of Democracy*, by Lori L. Martin and Kenneth J. Varner
- *Reading Democracy and Education in the Context of World War I*, by Thomas Fallace

Also in this issue, you can find responses to previously published articles, including the following:

- Lisa Weasel and David Backer respond to *"Education for Deliberative Democracy"*
- Chris Corces-Zimmerman, Jamie Utt, and Nolan Cabrera respond to *"Sam and Cristina: A Dialogue Between a High School Teacher and Student about the Commoditization of People of Color"*
- Moeketsi Letseka responds to *"The Cultural Contours of Democracy: Indigenous Epistemologies Informing South African Citizenship"*
- James Gambrell and Barbara Thayer-Bacon and Marian de Souza all respond to *"Democratic Foundations of Spiritual Responsive Pedagogy"*

BOOK REVIEWS

- *Rethinking Sexism, Gender, and Sexuality*, reviewed by Caitlin Howlett,
- *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood...and the Rest of Y'all Too—Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education*, reviewed by Awad Ibrahim and Tahmina Reza
- *What Philosophy Can Do*, reviewed by Nakia Pope

Submit a Response

Issues of *Democracy & Education* contain five to six 'conversations' between scholars. We see this kind of sustained, public engagement as crucial to knowledge formation and dialogue in a democracy. We are seeking responses to any of the newly published articles in this issue in essay (4,000 words) or alternate forms, such as edited videos or artwork. All submissions are peer reviewed. You can submit a response or a new feature article online.

About Us

The mission of *Democracy & Education* is to provoke rigorous, open, and inclusive engagement with the challenges of educating youth in the pre-K-12 age span for active participation in a democratic society. The journal seeks to support and sustain conversations that take as their focus the conceptual foundations, social policies, institutional structures, and teaching/learning practices associated with democratic education.

Scott Fletcher

Executive Editor, Lewis & Clark

Liza Finkel

Editor, Lewis & Clark

PJ Nelsen

Editor, Appalachian State University

Sarah Stitzlein

University of Cincinnati

Our mailing address is:

Democracy & Education
0615 SW Palatine Hill Rd.
Portland, OR 97219 USA

International Journal for Students as Partners

For colleagues who are interested in student voice/partnerships in higher education:

I'm delighted to share that we have launched the first issue of the **International Journal for Students as Partners**. You can view it at:

<https://mulpress.mcmaster.ca/ijsap/issue/view/306>

Author submission guidelines and links to become a reviewer for us are also available on the journal website. Please circulate amongst your networks. We are on twitter as @InterJournalSaP

Cherie Woolmer

McMaster University, Canada



Save the Date!

2017 National Students as Partners Roundtable

Monday 9 October 2017

The University of Adelaide at the
National Wine Centre of Australia

Contact *Melissa Banelis*: Melissa.Banelis@adelaide.edu.au



Inspire, Educate and Engage

Wellbeing in Schools Australia (WISA) would like to invite you to our

2017 Victorian School Wellbeing Conference

***Ensuring safety and the basic needs for all students:
It takes a village to raise a child***

When: Friday August 4th 2017

Where: The Treacy Conference Centre, 126 The Avenue, Parkville, Victoria

Featuring Keynote address from Professor Helen Cahill

(Youth Research Centre, The University of Melbourne):

'Respectful Relationships Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum'

Plus workshops addressing:

Protect Child Safety Standards and National Safe Schools Framework; Punishment versus restoring relationships; One school's community partnership response to addressing the challenge of family violence; Principals and school leadership building a collaborative staff team and strong parent and community engagement; One P-12 school's example of how basic dignity is critical to engagement and basic necessities can't be taken for granted; What students think about transition from Primary to Secondary; Prevention and early intervention in mental health; One school's action research experience of the strong correlation between positive relationships in the classroom and increased student collaboration and engagement.

Receive practical useful tools and resources that make a real difference.

Who should attend: School Leaders, School Counsellors, School Chaplains, Wellbeing Coordinators, Teachers including Year Level Coordinators and Home Group Leaders, Education Support Staff, Parents/Carers and anyone with an interest in Wellbeing in Schools.

To register please go to the WISA website at <http://www.wisawellbeing.com.au/>

We look forward to welcoming you.

Student Voice in the Early Years Sector

We are an international group of academics and practitioners interested in developing better understanding of what voice means in the early years sector and providing guidance and provocations to support the improvement of policy and practice.

It is essential this work has a clear grounding in early years practice and this is why we are interested in what you think eliciting voice with children from birth to seven might look like.

Further information on the project as well as information on how to submit an example of practice can be found on our website: www.voicebirthtoseven.co.uk

We are looking for examples of practice working with children from birth to seven. It could be examples of normal working, innovation or creative approaches and it could have worked amazingly or not as well as you hoped. We will accept a written account, photos, film, examples of outcomes from children, images of display work, work samples or anything else that can be uploaded to our secure server.

To submit an example follow this link: www.voicebirthtoseven.co.uk/submission/

If you have any questions or want to find out more about the project then please get in touch at the address below.

Kate Wall, University of Strathclyde
Kate.wall@strath.ac.uk



Inspire, Educate and Engage

Wellbeing in Schools Australia (WISA) would like to invite you to our

2017 Tasmanian School Wellbeing Conference

***Ensuring safety and the basic needs for all students:
It takes a village to raise a child***

When: Thursday August 10th 2017

Where: Tailrace Centre, 1 Waterfront Drive, Riverside, Launceston, Tasmania

Featuring Keynote addresses from Jac Van Velsen (CEO WISA):

'How Wellbeing in Schools improves educational and academic outcomes.'

and **Matthew Healey** (Director, Strategic Projects Department of Health and Human Services):

'From Child Safety to Child Wellbeing – Redesigning the child protection system and its integration with a broader service system for the wellbeing of children and their families.'

Plus workshops addressing:

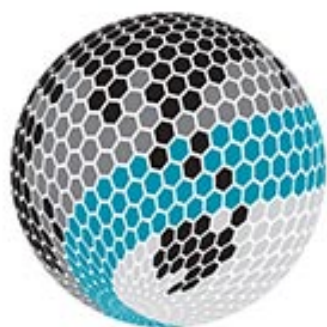
The *Respectful Relationships Education* resource package in action; The top five most effective bullying interventions for use in schools; School Leadership Wellbeing; **RADAR**: A Re-engagement Program; What really made a difference?; Putting the school wellbeing essentials in place; Active student research, voice and participation around child safety

Receive practical useful tools and resources that make a real difference.

Who should attend: School Leaders, School Counsellors, School Chaplains, Wellbeing Coordinators, Teachers including Year Level Coordinators and Home Group Leaders, Education Support Staff, Parents/Carers and anyone with an interest in Wellbeing in Schools.

To register please go to the WISA website at <http://www.wisawellbeing.com.au/>

We look forward to welcoming you.



ADI
ALFRED DEAKIN INSTITUTE FOR
CITIZENSHIP AND GLOBALISATION



Youth, Digital Participation and Citizenship in the Asia Pacific

A two day workshop: 8-9th November, 2017; Deakin University, Burwood, Vic

Amelia Johns, Anita Harris, Xinyu Zhao (Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation) and Julian Sefton-Green (Research for Educational Impact), Deakin University, are convening a two-day workshop to explore how the landscape of young people's digital media practices enables or hinders political and civic engagement in Australia and the Asia Pacific region.

About the Workshop

Young people's engagement with digital media is commonly understood as both an opportunity and a risk. This frames education and policy in and for digital citizenship and digital literacy as a prophylactic - 'protecting' young people from harm and regulating online behaviour - rather than seeking to learn how young people use digital media to:

- perform political acts (Isin and Ruppert 2015);
- negotiate cultural and political rights and responsibilities;
- generate alternative cultures and practices of resilience;
- make a place for themselves in a region characterised by both diversity and transnational mobility as well as glaring social disparities and conditions of political inertia.

With widespread and broad digital participation among young people in the Asia Pacific region and improved digital infrastructure, the policy focus has shifted from simple questions of access to how ubiquitous digital media is reshaping young people's civic connections, political participation and understanding of themselves as citizens. This has also raised questions of what level of monitoring and control (by government policymakers, educators, and increasingly digital platform operators themselves) is required to maintain 'the digital' as a civil space.

This workshop aims to move beyond issues and questions surrounding 'control' and regulation of young people's user-driven digital media practices, to consider what youth are doing themselves in terms of civic and political practices online. Specifically,



- How do the digitally mediated civic and political practices of young people change our conceptualisations of citizenship and 'belonging' for an interconnected generation?
- Does the use of digital platforms and modes of participation extend the possibilities for marginalised youth cohorts (indigenous and ethno-religious minority youth, queer and gender diverse youth) to better exercise their rights and/or have their voices heard?
- Is too much weighting given to positive potentials - forms of political participation that challenge inequality or a democratic deficit? ie what do we make of emergence of online racism, cyber-bullying and extremism which have an equal potential to reassert racism, sexism, homophobia, ethno-nationalism, and other practices which negate democratic or cyber-libertarian values and principles?
- How are forms of digital citizenship changing our understanding of the 'social', the 'civic', and the 'political' and the boundaries between these domains?

The workshop will invite participation from scholars working across the Social Sciences, Education and Media and Communications, digital artists and activists, policymakers and industry partners. We want to open up potentially new questions and spaces of inquiry, while tracing theoretical connections between young people's digital practices and modes of multicultural, cosmopolitan, transnational and/or global identity and citizenship.

The workshop will involve a series of panel presentations focused around six thematic clusters (see below), in addition to a half-day Masterclass for PhD students:

- Digital citizenship and belonging
- Social media conflict, surveillance and intervention
- Sexualities and 'queer youthscape' (Yue, 2017)
- Digital cultures and everyday politics
- Mobile youth, transnational connections
- Digital activism and online movements

Convenors:

Amelia Johns, Anita Harris and Xinyu Zhao (Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University) and Julian Sefton-Green (School of Education, Deakin University)

Funded by:

Diversity and Identity Research Stream, the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation and the Research for Educational Impact, Strategic Research Centre, Deakin University.

For further enquiries:

Amelia Johns
amelia.johns@deakin.edu.au

Xinyu Zhao
xzhao@deakin.edu.au

All about Student Action Teams, including some hyper-linked mini-case studies, at:

www.asprinworld.com/student_action_teams

'Student Councils and Beyond'

On-Line! FREE!

We've almost run out of print copies of the first *Connect* publication: ***Student Councils and Beyond*** (from 2005). And many of the ideas have subsequently been reflected in the *Represent!* kit from the VicSRC (www.vicsrc.org.au/resources/represent).

So we have made all of ***Student Councils and Beyond*** (a compilation of articles and resources from many earlier issues of *Connect*) available on-line for **FREE**. It can be downloaded (as one document or in sections) as PDFs from the *Connect* website. Find it at:

www.asprinworld.com/connect

Student Voice Practitioners: Blog & Podcast

*A community for
young people and adults*

<http://studentvoicepractitioners.com/>

The **Student Voice Practitioners** blog is a Canadian-based community of young people and adults who believe in the power of the student's voice and who have first-hand experience in initiating and implementing student voice projects or programs or in advising policy makers.

Launched in September 2015, posts have included:

- *Who represents student voice?*
- *Empowering Students to be the Change;*
- *Student Voice=Student Choice;*
- *Students as Researchers*

as well as a challenge to readers to prioritise the disengaged.

Student Voice Podcasts are a new option. Episodes will be available bi-weekly. Subscribe to the **Student Voice Podcast** series and, bi-weekly, young people will talk about their issues, share their advice on policy, programs, curriculum and much more.

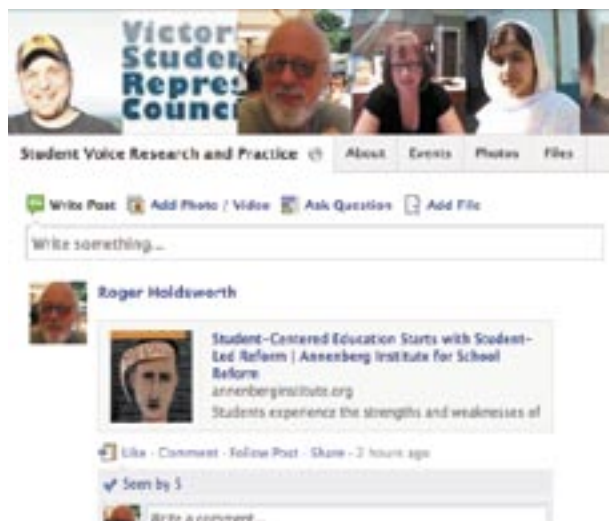
Have a **Student Voice Practitioner** story to share? Would you like to be interviewed for a podcast? Please join our growing community of contributing authors. Email:

FeedbackSVP@gmail.com
for more information.

Student Voice Research and Practice facebook group

www.facebook.com/groups/studentvoicepage/

This open facebook group was initially established by Professor Dana Mitra, and is now supported by the work of academics, practitioners and students throughout the world. It provides a valuable community of people working and interested in the area of 'Student Voice' - in Australia, USA, UK, Italy and elsewhere - as well as access to useful resources and examples, and up-to-date information about initiatives. You can easily log on and join the group at the above address.



Connect Publications: Order Form

Tax Invoice: ABN: 98 174 663 341

To: **Connect**, 12 Brooke Street, Northcote VIC 3070 Australia
e-mail: r.holdsworth@unimelb.edu.au



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Connect Publications:

		normal price	Connect subscriber price	
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... copies	<i>Reaching High</i> (with DVD) \$	\$30	\$25*	\$
... copies	<i>Reaching High</i> (without DVD)	\$20	\$15*	\$
... copies	<i>Switched On to Learning</i> (maximum of 10 copies per order)	\$ 6	\$ 5*	\$
... copies	<i>Democracy Starts Here</i>	\$ 6	\$ 5*	\$

Publications available from Connect:

		normal price	Connect subscriber price	
... copies	<i>Foxfire 25 Years</i>	\$20	\$10*	\$
... copies	<i>Sometimes a Shining Moment</i> (1 available) \$	\$20	\$10*	\$
... copies	<i>A Foxfire Christmas</i> (1 available) \$	\$20	\$10*	\$
... copies	<i>Foxfire 9</i> (1 available) \$	\$10	\$ 5*	\$
... copies	<i>Students and Work</i> (maximum of 10 copies per order)	\$ 6	\$ 5*	\$
... copies	<i>SRC Pamphlets Set</i> (2 sets available) \$	\$ 6	\$ 5*	\$

(\$ check availability before ordering; * discounted rate for subscribers to **Connect**)

B: Total for publications: \$.....

NOTE: all amounts include postage/packaging within Australia (GST not applicable - input taxed)

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Clearinghouse

Contribute to *Connect*

Anyone may submit an original article to be considered for publication in *Connect* provided he or she owns the copyright to the work being submitted or is authorised by the copyright owner or owners to submit the article. Authors are the initial owners of the copyrights to their works, but by successfully submitting the article to *Connect*, transfer such ownership of the *published* article to *Connect* on the understanding that any royalties or other income from that article will be used to maintain publication of *Connect*.



ASPRINworld: the *Connect* website!

www.asprinworld.com/connect

Connect has a website at *ASPRINworld*. The *Connect* section of the website is slowly growing, with information about subscribing, index of recent back issue contents (hyperlinked to PDFs) and summaries of and order information for *Student Councils and Beyond*, *Student Action Teams*, *Reaching High* and *Switched On to Learning*.

**Connect is also archived
and available electronically:**

research.acer.edu.au/connect

All issues of *Connect* are archived through the ACER Research Repository: *ACEReSearch*. *Connect* issues from #1 to the current issue are available for **free** download, and recent issues can be searched by key terms. See the *ASPRINworld* site for index details of recent issues, then link to and download the whole issue you are interested in.

www.informit.com.au

In addition, current and recent issues of *Connect* are now available on-line to libraries and others who subscribe to RMIT's *Informit* site – a site that contains databases of many Australian publications. You can access whole issues of *Connect* as well as individual articles. Costs apply, either by a library subscription to *Informit*'s databases, or through individual payments per view for articles.



Articles from *Connect* are also discoverable through *EBSCOhost* research databases.

www.asprinworld.com/connect
&
research.acer.edu.au/connect

Local and International Publications Received

Connect receives many publications directly or indirectly relevant to youth and student participation. We can't lend or sell these, but if you want to look at or use them, contact us and we'll work something out.

Australian:

Policy Platform (VicSRC, Melbourne, Vic) May, 2017

Research Developments: School Edition (ACER, Camberwell, Vic) April, 2017

Student Voice Workshops 2017 (YACVic, Melbourne, Vic) Workbook

TLN Journal Teacher Learning Network, Abbotsford, Vic) Issue No 1, 2017: *Feedback*

Yikes (YACVic, Melbourne, Vic) April, 2017

International:

UP for Learning (Vermont, USA) Winter, 2017



Donate to support *Connect*

Connect now has no income except donations and sales of literature (previous page). By supporting *Connect* with donations, you keep us going. Even though we are now solely on-line, there are still costs associated with publication. To make a donation to the work of *Connect*, use the form in this issue or contact us for bank account details in order to make an electronic transfer of funds.

For over 37 years ...
www.asprinworld.com/connect
 1979-2017 ...
www.asprinworld.com/connect
 For over 37 years ...
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 1979-2017 ...
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Connect On-Line!

Free subscription
 and materials
 Catalogue:
 see page 40

All issues of **Connect** from 1979 to the present (that's now over **37 years!**) are freely available on-line! Thanks to the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), all the issues of **Connect** have been scanned or up-loaded into the ACER's Research Repository: **ACEReSearch**.

You can find these issues of **Connect** at:

<http://research.acer.edu.au/connect>

The left-hand menu provides a pull-down menu for you to select the issue number > **browse**; the front cover of the issue is displayed, and you can simply click on the link in the main body of the page to download a PDF of the issue. Recent issues are also **searchable** by key words.

Connect has a commitment to the sharing of ideas, stories, approaches and resources about active student participation. We are totally supported by donations - see page 41!



Let us know

There may be some gaps or improvements necessary. As you use this resource, let us know what you find. (If an issue of **Connect** seems to be missing, check the issues either side, as **double issues** show up only as one issue number.) If you have any ideas for improving this resource, please let us know.

Most importantly, please USE this resource.

All copies of *Connect* are
 available on-line ... for free!

<http://research.acer.edu.au/connect>

