

Connect

supporting student participation

ABN: 98 174 663 341

ISSN 2202-4980

Number 206
April 2014



Resources:

- **YERP** 
- *Forum*
- *VicSRC Congress 2014 Date*
- *Guide to Students on School Boards*
- *Declaration of Human Rights - poster*
- *KidsMatter Conference in Victoria*
- *Connect ... on facebook ... archived ... available on-line ... access to other resources on-line ...*

Hearing Students' Voices!

- **How are students' voices heard in our schools?**
- **Action Research on Engagement**
- **National Schools Constitutional Convention**
- **VicSRC: Homework Submission; Regional Conferences**
- **VISTA: Involving students outside the SRC**
- **International: Student Voice Conference: Cambridge 2014; Transforming Schools in Vermont, USA; Student Voice UK**

Connect

Number 206: April 2014

3 How are students' voices heard in your school?

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 3 The MacRobertson Girls' High School, Vic | Margaret Tran |
| 3 Brauer College, Warrnambool, Vic | Gabby Steel |
| 4 Sydney Road Community School, Vic | Ralph Gotlib |
| 5 St Dominic's Primary School, Vic | Georgia Ryan, Michaela Posar |
| 6 St Ives North Public School, NSW | Carmela May |
| 7 Monte Sant'Angelo Mercy College, NSW | Deborah Brown |
| 7 Elisabeth Murdoch College, Langwarrin, Vic | Judy Curson |
| 8 Melbourne Girls' College, Vic | Sufi Salieh, Kerime Guresci |
| 9 Modbury High School, SA | Pippa Sheridan |
| 9 Constitution High School, Philadelphia, PA, USA | Marc Brasof |
| 10 Bendigo Senior Secondary College, Vic | Sarah Bibby |
| 10 Yarram Secondary College, Vic | Melanie Mitchell |
| 11 Copperfield College, Vic | Thao Pham, Dianna Duong |
| 11 Frankston High School, Vic | Emily Smith, Bridin Walker |
| 12 New Hampshire, USA | Peter Berg |
| 12 North Melbourne Primary School, Vic | Yuan Yuan Liu |

14 Action Research on Engagement:

McClelland College, Vic Lachlan Anderson-Newton, Maggie Callingham, Christy Dihm, Katie Downie, Brayden Farthing, Torie Symons

20 National Schools Constitutional Convention

Sophie Williams

22 VicSRC: Homework Submission: Margaret Tran, Ron Garcia Regional Conferences; VicSRC Congress 2014 Dates

27 VISTA: Bringing the Outside In; VISTA Podcast, dates, meetups

29 International: Student Voice Conference - Cambridge; YATST in Vermont, USA; StudentVoice UK; OBESSU

32 Resources: YERP (Leo Fieldgrass); Forum (Roger Holdsworth)

34 News & Reviews: KidsMatter Victoria - Partners in Wellbeing Conference; Guide to Students on School Boards; Universal Declaration of Human Rights poster; Oops!

36 Connect Publications Order Form

37 CLEARINGHOUSE: Local and Overseas Publications; Websites; Contribute to Connect; Connect on EBSCO

Cover:

Students also hearing student voices

An image from a 2013 VicSRC Regional Conference.

Cover photo and photos on page 11 by Piper Huynh.

Why does Connect exist?

Connect has been
published bi-monthly since 1979.

It aims to:

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

Connect:

ABN: 98 174 663 341

Connect is edited and published by: Roger Holdsworth
12 Brooke Street, Northcote 3070 Victoria Australia
Phone: (03) 9489 9052; Web: www.asprinworld.com/connect

E-mail: r.holdsworth@unimelb.edu.au

This Issue:

It's been a useful question:

"How are students' voices heard in your school?" Within a short time, we've had a range of responses (see pages 3 to 13 of this issue of *Connect*). It's also a question that's useful to keep asking ... and keep asking again!



One reason is that we need to keep probing this issue! The first responses have concentrated on how students' voices are **expressed** in schools, rather than necessarily how they are **heard**. So we need to get those 'expression' responses out of the way - the necessary first answers - and then keep asking the question: "*How are these voices heard?*"

I particularly like the reference from Copperfield College's Dianna Duong to '*silent students with voices*' and the comment from her teacher (Thao Pham) that "*how students' voices are heard in our school is inseparable from the question of the effectiveness of those mechanisms*". That's the start of a great conversation.

So here are some answers provided to us during a period of about 10 days. **What questions do they raise for you?** Ages ago ... well, it was in *Forum* (UK journal) in 2001 ... Michael Fielding asked a set of still resonating question: "*Who gets to speak?*" "*About what?*" "*Who listens?*" "*Where are the spaces for dialogue?*" "*What action results?*" ... and so on. If we are to think about and answer the question: "*How are students' voices heard in your school?*" seriously, then those questions form the basis for asking it again ... and again!

I think it remains a great question. **What's your answer?**

The second section of this issue of *Connect* links closely to this discussion. A team of students and a researcher at McClelland College have been investigating what '*engagement*' means and what shapes it - and what the school can do to enhance engagement. They describe their research and some of the results. What comes through their description of this process is the way this enables student voices to be heard within that school. The school has also been using the *Teach the Teacher* process, and the research team's work complements that creation of a space for dialogue.

Next Issue ...

Because of the **Student Voice Conference** in Cambridge, UK, the next issue of *Connect* will be produced slightly earlier than usual - with a deadline for copy of **Friday May 9th**. This will be the **June 2014** issue (#207) - planned to be in your in-box before the end of May. At the moment, we hope that it will also have a bit of an international flavour, with articles promised about the **Students as Researchers** initiative in Ontario, Canada; an overview of what '*student voice*' means in Italy; reflections of a primary school team of students **researching the US Bill of Rights** in Oregon, USA; and students **negotiating their 'real world' mathematics** learning in Melbourne's western suburbs, Australia.

Hopefully, the "*How are students' voices heard?*" theme will draw continued responses too. We'd love to hear what the situation is in your school! **Are you up for the challenge?**

Roger Holdsworth

Next Issue: #207: June 2014

Deadline for material: May 9th, 2014

How are student voices heard?

We can understand and respond to this question, invitation and challenge in many ways.

We might detail the **mechanisms** by which students, individually or collectively, get to express their views. We might understand that 'student voice' is more than words - but that

it encompasses **action and outcomes**. We might investigate how **some** voices are heard and **some** are silenced. We might ponder if and how these voices are actually **heard** at all! **Who** listens?

Connect extended a call to hear from students, teachers, administrators, consultants, parents and others: "**how are student voices heard in your school?**" We provided a ridiculously short timeline.

This is what some of you wrote ... we'd love to hear from more of you!

The Mac.Robertson Girl's High School, Vic

Ever since coming to The Mac.Robertson Girl's High School, I have been very interested in the number of leadership roles that are offered at my school. There are about **five** roles in each classroom - ranging from **environment captain** to the **SRC representative**. Each year level also had **music representatives**, **sport captains** and **SRC Executives**. This was a big **WOW** factor for me, as so many students could raise their opinions in any of the areas that they were interested in.

I was very fascinated when I heard about the **Student Representative Council**. From the beginning of my first year, I aimed to get to be Year 9 SRC Executive. Miraculously, I was shortlisted and then voted for this role. It was one of the best things that had ever happened to me, as it has led me to great things such as becoming one of 15 **Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC) Executives**.

Our SRC is very different from other schools. First of all, we do not focus on fundraising for charities or organising assemblies. Fundraising is for the social service captains and assemblies are the teachers' responsibilities. We have one SRC Representative who is the **maintenance representative** for the year, and they get queries from students and tell the maintenance crew. We also have an **SRC notice board** with **suggestion boxes** underneath, which are for students to use at any time.

Students are free to talk to any of the representatives, executive members or the SRC cabinet if they have an issue. Aside from responding and making our students' voices heard, we also have many other activities that are required of us every year. Some of these things are organising Health Week, Multicultural Week, the SRC Raffle and formals.

One thing that our SRC doesn't have but I would like, is a **monthly meeting** which is open to all students to raise their suggestions and issues. This would be very beneficial for our school and for the students as they would physically be more involved in the decisions of the school.

The SRC is a wonderful way for all schools to have a student run and led committee which organises events and activities for students.

Margaret Tran
Form Captain, VicSRC Executive

Brauer College, Warrnambool, Vic

There are several different ways in which students at Brauer College can get their thoughts, ideas and opinions heard. After all, it is us, the students, who make the school!

The Student Representative Council, School Captains, and other student leaders often make the connection between the students and the school's hierarchy.

With so many students at our school, it's not surprising that Brauer's student leaders get countless ideas from the student body. We have plenty of willing pupils who participate as student leaders; so you're bound to know someone who can make sure your voice is heard at the top!

When you suggest something to a student leader, the idea is raised at the leadership meeting for further discussion. The group debates the idea, and plans the next steps needed to turn your thought into reality. In our weekly SRC meetings, our representatives often raise a proposal from a fellow student. We talk about why that suggestion could be beneficial to the school or how it could be funded. If it is decided that further action should be taken, they are forwarded to the relevant people and groups, such as the Assistant Principals and School Council for consideration.

Recently, the girls' summer uniform had a welcome change after it was raised by students that a lot of the girls didn't like the dresses. A group brought their suggestion for change to the student leaders, who were then able to forward their proposal to the Principal and School Council. A whole school vote was organised, which resulted in the new uniform being the dress that the students liked most!

So maybe next time you come up with an amazing idea, you can talk to a student leader and let your voice be heard!

Gabby Steel
SRC Representative
Middle School Captain
Form Captain



BRAUER COLLEGE
WARRNAMBOOL

Reinvigorating Student Action Teams at Sydney Road Community School, Vic

Sydney Road Community School (SRCS) in Brunswick (in inner northern Melbourne) recently celebrated its 40th Anniversary. There's a long history of student participation at the school, much of it documented in this publication. However, levels of participation can wax and wane. It takes effort and care to maintain genuine involvement.

At a recent School Council meeting at SRCS, there were three pieces of correspondence tabled. Each of these was a proposal of action from a **Student Action Team (SAT)** within the school. While such a rush of these is not typical of all Council meetings, they have been regular enough over the past few years. This is a good piece of evidence the school is currently at a point where SATs are embedded as a part of the way we do things around here.

This current resurgence began in 2012 with a **School Focussed Youth Service** grant. Roger Holdsworth was engaged as a consultant to advise on the project that involved setting up a SAT of senior students. They were asked to consider the problem of helping younger or newer students to feel like they belonged and were comfortable around the place. We allocated regular class time and had financial resources to support the group. Our students responded well to this and embraced the processes of group discussion, collaborative decision making, forming evidence based arguments and seeking support from affected parties. We were

able to hold reporting and celebration events; students were credited with VCAL Personal Development Skills (PDS) units, they made submissions to School Council, reported on their involvement as part of our school review and ultimately took action. We ended up with a pretty flash gaming console in a refurbished student chill out room.



That was the easy part. The following year, once the money ran out and Roger wasn't regularly on hand with encouragement and advice, we had to find our own way to maintain projects of this type. To be honest, at first we lost some ground. But slowly the true value of SATs was revealed. Some of the VCAL students who had participated in the

school connection project needed PDS units. To get these they had to negotiate projects. It was a natural fit for these to be structured around 'Student Action Team Planning Templates'. The students remembered the processes and accepted the requirements. They planned, researched, consulted, took action and reported.

This year we've gone one step further. Our Year 9 and 10 electives are structured around the **Advance** Program that involves a component of 'Community Projects'. All participating students are required to take part in one of these projects, which of course operate using the SAT model. In this way student participation has become part of our standard curriculum. In addition to all of the integral benefits of being involved in these projects, students gain credit towards VCAL PDS units and make progress towards achieving the **Advance** Certificate.

So **Student Action Teams** will feature prominently in the SRCS curriculum this year and beyond. Our students will continue to learn valuable skills in democratic participatory citizenship and, most importantly, be given opportunities to use these in meaningful ways and to have their voices heard.

Ralph Gotlib

gotlib.ralph.r@edumail.vic.gov.au



St Dominic's Primary School, Camberwell East, Vic

At St Dominic's, we try our hardest to keep everyone happy whilst at school. We have many programs at our school to make sure that every student's voice is heard.

Something new this year is **personalised learning**, a great addition for those who want to learn about topics based on their likes and interests. We have sessions twice a week to research and learn about our chosen topic, like History, Sports Science, Community Service, Living Things (Animals and Plants), Art and Creativity. Year 3 to 6s participate in our newly developed program.

Another great thing we do at St Dominic's is the **Student Action Council** also known as the **Student Representative Council**. Two representatives from each class attend the meetings, on behalf of their class. In these meetings, we discuss issues about the school that we want to fix. We will then try and take action towards these issues. This is yet another great thing we do at our school.

Another new addition to this year is the **Big Ideas Blog**. Our school leaders have created this blog for the students and teachers to post ideas about the school that they want to change or do. As this is only new, it is still a work in progress. We will have small events throughout the year to help take action with some of the ideas.

A great favourite are the leadership positions for every Year 6 student. We have many different teams such as the **Civics and Citizenship Team** (school leaders), the **Active Australia Team** (sports house leaders), the **Community Team**, the **Arts Team**, the **Environment Team** and the **Technology Team**. The teams have different projects they are working on that they organise, for example fundraising days or a committee for a certain project that everyone can be involved in.

We also have many other programs such as **Public Speaking Competitions**, only for years 3 to 6. This is a great way to help hear someone's opinion, and a great confidence builder. Our school newsletter is great as we have a note from the principal in it and important notices or upcoming events. Even leadership teams can submit a notice to publicise one of the things they are working on.

These are only a few of the many programs we include at St Dominic's. We are proud of our school and the welcoming community it creates. We are very happy with these things that we produce at St Dominic's, to ensure that every complaint, comment or positive reinforcement is heard at our school.

Georgia Ryan and Michaela Posar





St Ives North Public School, NSW

At our school we value student voice. It is made apparent through many opportunities made available to the students at a school and class level. We encourage students to take ownership over their learning environment and to feel that their ideas are valued and supported.

For instance, in my classroom, one of the ways that we encourage our students to have a voice is through weekly class meetings. At these meetings students run the meeting, organise the meeting agenda and vote on motions put forward by their peers. These meetings are seen as an important avenue for students to raise issues that are important to them. These issues differ each week according to what individuals decide. One week students may raise improvements they feel could be made around the school; another week students may raise problems they face and ask for help devising a solution.

At a school level, our school values the role of the Prefect leadership team. They are often encouraged to observe the needs of their fellow students and make suggestions about how best to serve them. For instance several students last week suggested that the stairwells needed to be updated and suggested painting a mural to help beautify the walls. They provided a plan and sketches of what they proposed would make a real difference to this learning space for their peers to the principal, and these plans are now being put forward to create a better environment for students.

A few years ago, some staff at our school organised a M.A.D (Making a Difference) Conference. Students were led through a variety of learning experiences and this culminated in students creating their own ideas about how they could make a difference to those around them. One group for example, decided they would like to make a difference in the area of racial harmony. They organised their own Harmony Day list of activities for the whole school to be involved in, resulting in artwork displays, multicultural morning tea and national costume dress up for the day. A real sense of tolerance

and acceptance was instilled in the school, all of which was initiated by these individual students.

Another group of students noticed that there were conflicts over the handball courts and asked if they could design and paint new courts so that there would be enough for the increased numbers of students at our school. A teacher used this opportunity to incorporate a maths lesson and now all students benefit from these new courts.

Another area where student voice at our school was encouraged and supported was in the area of charities. One student at our school wanted to support a particular charity and together with a teacher organised a hairdresser to come in and cut their hair to raise awareness for this charity. Other students then took hold of this event and created their own fundraiser at a local shopping centre to raise money for another charity.

These are just some of the ways our school actively promotes and encourages student voice.

Carmela May

Deputy Principal, St Ives North Public School

CARMELA.MAY@det.nsw.edu.au

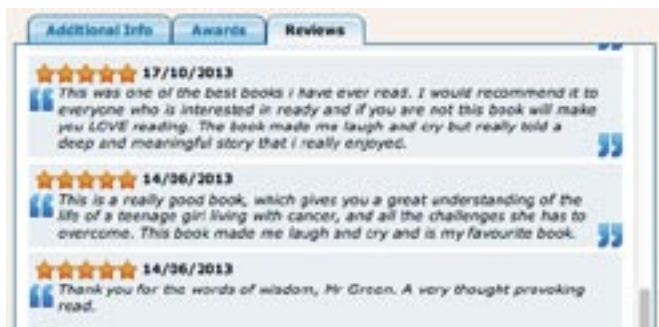


Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College, NSW

It is easy to hear the voices of the extroverts, the gregarious, the outspoken and the opinionated. How much more closely do we have to listen in order to hear the voices of the quiet and the solitary? Susan Cain, in her book *Quiet: The power of introverts in a world that can't stop talking* (2012), writes that "many schools are designed for extroverts" (p. 253). How much do educators and school communities miss out on if we don't hear what those quiet voices have to say?

This year we have been promoting the interactivity of our library catalogue (Destiny Quest) as a mechanism to promote student voice at our school. Traditionally a library catalogue operates as a static list of the books in the library. Not any more. The 21st Century library catalogue is a dynamic, interactive tool enabling students to mine the collective wisdom of their peers in order to find the most engaging page-turners in the library. Student voice echoes through the catalogue in the form of book reviews written by students, for a student audience.

Almost 300 reviews have been added by students to our catalogue this year. Each is vetted by library staff before being 'published', and reviews appear in the catalogue anonymously. We want all students to know that the catalogue is an extension of the library itself: a safe place, but an exciting, creative place, where you can be yourself or lose yourself. The choice is yours.



The ability for us to provide a forum for student voice in the catalogue gives every student, whether they be bookish, reluctant readers, introverted or the life of the party to experience a sense that their opinion is valued, that others will benefit from what they have to say, and that the school community wants to know what they think.

Listen to the 'voices' of these students, as they review their recent reads:

"A shocking twist will leave you wondering what will happen to our heroine."

"An unpredictable book that sends shivers down your spine."

"As a reader I got to delve into the lives of each character, which made the plot more interesting and feeling more personal."

"I challenge you to read this book without putting it down."

As an educator, I love recommending books to students in search of a read, but to a teenager, a recommendation by a peer is worth its weight in gold. These voices in the catalogue resonate throughout the school.



Deborah Brown
Manager, Library and Information Science
Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College
dbrown@monte.nsw.edu.au

Elisabeth Murdoch College, Langwarrin, Vic

Increasingly, our College relies heavily on the student voice – which is one key reason why we are on a rapid improvement trajectory.

We work in partnership with the **Student Leadership Team** who, with their clear role statements, fairly and equally represent every sub-school and every year level. We consider that our leaders form part of the overall College Leadership Team and their positions and views are respected accordingly.

These roles, including those of our College Captains and Vice Captains, are highly sought after and very prestigious. This is not because of the symbols - badges and blazers - but because of the calibre of the students: their values, behaviours and the respect they command across the Langwarrin community. They are ambassadors for our College and young people. Without exception, our student voice has a positive influence on the College culture to help instill a sense of pride in us all.

The student voice has many layers and is heard through many forums:

- College Council representation and the regular reports given;
- Forums with our students, teachers and parents to canvass ideas and opinions;
- SLC meetings – where students bring views and feedback to their teams;
- Community presentations at assemblies, Open Nights and speaking at primary schools to encourage leadership in others;
- Surveys and focus groups;
- Classroom feedback to teachers and through learning reflection activities; and
- Conferences and gatherings with students in other schools.



Each year we run a **Student Leadership Conference**. This is where students are inducted into their roles and work in teams to explore how they might develop their leadership qualities, how their team will be structured, what communication protocols they will adopt and what future goals, priorities and projects they will set for the year. Our students learn the skills to be project managers.

One example of our pride in our student voice is where a Year 11 indigenous student initiated an indigenous flag raising ceremony, a Learning Stone (a meeting place) and is convening a team to run a Cultural Connections Day later this year so the voice of our aboriginal students could be heard and understood. This student has since been elected to the Victorian Youth Parliament so will have a voice in a larger arena.

As a College we value the voice of all our students and encourage everyone to step forward and create change.



Judy Curson
Assistant Principal, Elisabeth Murdoch College
curson.judith.a@edumail.vic.gov.au



Melbourne Girls' College, Vic

The Student Representative Council at Melbourne Girls' College aims to improve the overall wellbeing of the students and teachers at the school. We believe that for this to occur, both students and teachers have to work together and be open to each others' opinions for the student-teacher relationship to be effective. This begins with a strong Student Council team that not only works cohesively but provides an accurate representation of the school.

Currently at Melbourne Girls' College, our Student Representative team consists of three sub groups that meet day to day on a regular basis. These groups include the **Lyceum Representative Council**, composed of Year 7 students wanting to make a difference and step up to organise Year 7 events throughout the year; the main **Student Representative Council** team consisting of 25 Year 8 to 10 students that meets fortnightly; and finally six Year 12 students forming the **VCE Student Council** team.

The idea of implementing a new structure this year is so that our meetings become more effective and the Student Representative team is able to work collaboratively as a group. Amongst both the middle and senior school SRC presidents, we have found that generally this structure has increased the level of productiveness between each year level of Student Council. We highly encourage other schools to adopt this structure or even find out more about implementing other structures in your own Student Representative Council team.

In the past meetings of the main Student Council team, we have covered issues on the topics of facilities, uniforms or general concerns. These would usually be raised by a couple of students throughout the week, and placed on the agenda, ready for the following meeting. As a team, we have also decided to commence work on four portfolio areas: **Facilities, Events, Uniform** and **Policies/Guidelines**.

These portfolios have been chosen according to several issues being brought up during the first couple of meetings. Each portfolio is led by an SRC president and is accompanied by several student representatives who wished to be members of that portfolio group. Currently, we have a great basis for ideas and contacts to go forward with our ideas during the following term.

As a team, we have also chosen to have a *quorum*, which enables us to make decisions if majority of the members of our team are present in the meeting. Our *quorum* involves having a middle and senior school president present as well as at least one student representative from each class. We believe that this will provide us with effective decision-making time that is not interrupted by students being away as a result of other prior commitments.

Furthermore, our fortnightly meetings with the main student representative team also provide the platform for new ideas to be generated during the two weeks between each meeting. Our meetings tend to be well utilised when held fortnightly, enabling us to work together more effectively. Additionally, we have also kept up communication with the Principal team to ensure that there is a similar understanding between both the Student Council and staff teams.

In the terms ahead, we look forward as a team to organise events such as Teach the Teacher, egg mail, a talent quest and many more student run events.

Feel free to contact us if need be through Zack Pretlove, our SRC coordinator: 08835084@mgc.vic.edu.au

Sufi Salieh and Kerime Guresci



Modbury High School, SA

One of priorities of our SRC this year is to **make sure** that students' voices are heard. This decision was made because one of the students' grievances was that they were **not** being heard and we needed to change that.

We now use many different ways to ensure that students' voices are being heard – from the use of student bulletin notices to minutes from meetings. We are also trialing some new ideas this year.

One of the areas that we are trying to improve is communication between the school's Governing Council, the SRC Executive, the year level SRC and the general student body. We have a system in which **minutes** are being taken at every SRC meeting and put into the School Captains' pigeonhole in the Front Office. When the Schools Captains or myself need to find out what happened at which meeting, then it is all in one place. This was particularly handy when the School Captains had to prepare their first report to the Governing Council. The minutes of the SRC Executive are also emailed to Year Level Conveners so they can remind students what needs to be reported back to the year levels.

Another thing that we are trying to improve is the **SRC representative** of each home group reporting to the student body after each Year Level SRC Meeting. Home group teachers give their representatives a chance to report in long home group on Thursday morning. This is also an opportunity for the student body to discuss with their representative anything that needs to be bought up at the next year level meeting.

We are currently running a school-wide survey asking questions about how the SRC is currently being run, do they think that their voices are being heard and what ways can the school be improved. This has been done through *SurveyMonkey* and distributed via *Facebook* and the daily notices. Once the results are in, I will make them public and then the Executive will discuss how to follow through on these suggestions.



Some members of Modbury High School's SRC Executive at work

We have an **SRC noticeboard** in the library where we advertise what the SRC is currently doing and which students are on the SRC Executive. Under this we have placed an **SRC suggestion box** in which students can place their ideas for what they want the SRC to improve around the school. We will then empty it regularly and follow through on these suggestions.

We are very lucky that we have a very supportive Principal and Deputy Principal who listen to the students' voices and follow through with SRC proposals. Examples of this have been the development of the **Student Code of Conduct**, which is updated every year by the SRC and the Peer Support Leaders.

This year Modbury High School's SRC has made it a priority that more student voices are heard. Some of these mechanisms are mentioned here and after the results of the survey many more will come into fruition.



Pippa Sheridan
Modbury High School SRC Convener
Pippa.Sheridan661@schools.sa.edu.au

Constitution High School, Philadelphia, PA, USA

How are students' voices heard at Constitution High School? **Lots of ways!**

Constitution High School, a small public history- and civic-themed school in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has created an innovative student voice structure. Their youth-adult government is modeled after the federal government (executive, legislative, and judicial branches) where students and faculty have the power to make, implement and review school policy. The school also has a civics and government course that teaches students the country's and school's civic culture and practices to help build students' capacities to lead change efforts.

A year-long ethnographic study conducted in 2013 found that this model triggered distributed leadership and organisational learning, and helped to cultivate a sense of community throughout the school.

Students and educators interested in creating a similar model at their school can find a free how-to manual: **We the School**, at the National Constitution Center's website: <http://constitutioncenter.org/learn/educational-resources/lesson-plans/we-the-school>. There are also articles highlighting this model in *Social Education* 2009 73(5) and *Kappan* 2011 92(9).

Marc Brasof
brasofm@arcadia.edu





Bendigo Senior Secondary College, Vic

Amongst the reflections during Bendigo Senior Secondary College's Student Council training day (in central Victoria), it was revealed that members of the group would like to hear more regular feedback from the student body about the role they think the Student Council should play.

Whilst being facilitated by David Mould (*Second Strike*), BSSC SC involved a lot of thought as to how they could get more students involved, without them having to join up and commit to the team. They came to the conclusion that a suggestion box would be the best way to gather students' feedback. This feedback would hopefully include the views of students in BSSC about the way that they feel the school could improve, any events they feel should be run and any other miscellaneous proposals for the Student Council.

Sam Pike, a Year 11 student and one of the Student Council members, took the initiative to develop a web page that gives students of the school a secure portal to project their ideas. Taking a great deal of constraints into consideration, Sam was able to build a page that gives students an opportunity to give their input without having to join the Council or necessarily seek members out, making the process much more effective and much less time consuming. This means that the quality of student input to the Student Council will be higher and the group can better represent the school community by having a bigger base of knowledge about what students want and how they want their representatives to perform.

Harnessing the resources of the school's IT staff, Sam linked his design with the school's website team, and the group are now working diligently to get the page up and running and on the Extranet for the 1,750 strong student populace. Because students only attend BSSC for two or three years and due to the mass of the population, Sam's development has had to be extremely efficient in making the short-term students feel as if they gave the heart of the school all the ideas that they can. The 'suggestion box' will launch soon and will be much appreciated by the Bendigo Senior community.

Sarah Bibby

*Bendigo Senior Secondary
College Student Council*



Yarram Secondary College, Vic

We're a small secondary college in south-east Gippsland, Victoria. Our students have a voice through our Student Representative Council which, over the past few years, has changed significantly to engage those students who want to have a say and get the most out of the process as possible.

We canned the popularity contest to recruit SRC members as we found that we ended up with students who were voted in but didn't necessarily want to be there and, worse still, students who missed out because they weren't voted in despite their eagerness to be a part of it. Instead, students now nominate themselves (or someone else) via a brief written application – fortunately, we've managed to still have representation across all year levels and both genders.

This year, we have changed our structure. We have split our SRC into three working groups. The first group is students who are interested in building school spirit (eg organising house competitions, lunchtime games, etc); the second is those who are passionate about bringing about change in both the school and wider community (eg sponsoring programs, fundraising, etc); third, we have a dedicated team of seven leaders who will be working at the higher level of school policy and planning with the principal team and myself (Student Wellbeing Coordinator).

This year, our focus is primarily on School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support and this is about changing the culture of school across all key areas, such as teacher/student relationships, our reward system and student behaviour management system, as well as the modelling and re-teaching of positive and appropriate behaviour. These students will be providing vital feedback to the leadership team about all of these things, from students' perspectives.

All in all, we have found this way of working is a much more effective way of engaging our students.

Melanie Mitchell

Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Yarram Secondary College
mitchell.melanie.k@edumail.vic.gov.au



Copperfield College, Vic

At Copperfield College, the diverse voices of our students are heard in myriad ways.

We have a strong leadership program that offers students the chance to develop their capacity through Student Leadership, Environmental Leadership and SRC. Our student leaders represent student interests on school committees (key decision making forums at our school) alongside teachers and parents and voice their opinions in dedicated forums such as our Student Leadership Day and leadership meetings. We believe that the more choices students have, the better their opportunities.

Whilst we are always striving to improve student participation and engagement at our school, the broader challenge for us is to ensure that students' voices are not only heard but are also listened to and respected. We are also working towards a greatly more distributive and representative model of student participation to ensure that all students have the opportunity to be heard. Ultimately, we would like to see our students contributing to decision making in the areas that matter most to them.

The answer to the question of how students' voices are heard in our school is inseparable from the question of the effectiveness of those mechanisms. One of our Year 9 student leaders remarked that student voice is dependent on the issue at stake: *"Depends on what it is really. If it's minor like what we could do for Challenge Day then yes. But if it's for something major like what we learn for each subject then no."*

As you can see from our best critic, our students, we have some way to go before student voices are heard on every issue whether large or small.

Thao Pham

SRC Coordinator, Copperfield College
pham.thao.t@edumail.vic.gov.au

Anyhow, in reference to your question: *"How are students' voices heard at our school?"*, I'd say that it varies. Majority of the time, students provide their input by speaking to the SRC, Leadership students, School Captains and various other leadership students. Usually students tend to make either serious requests, or just simple, casual comments based off a small subject, complaint or suggestion (eg How our school notice boards look around the school, not enough trees, etc), which then develops into a new topic of discussion for Leadership groups.

However, there are many other ways in which students' voices can be heard. It is just a matter of boosting the confidence of students (so that they are not afraid to speak), letting leadership students ask and give students the opportunity to offer suggestions (suggestion boxes, surveys, etc), and directing the *"silent students with voices"* to the appropriate leadership member who can advocate their voice to the school/ SRC.

Dianna Duong

School Captain, Copperfield College



Copperfield
COLLEGE



Frankston High School, Vic

We are students at Frankston High School and also members of the VicSRC Executive. In order to profile our school we interviewed our SRC Teacher Advisor Miss Toovey to get a better understanding of her role and her thoughts on Student Voice.

How are you involved in student voice at Frankston High School?

I am currently the (Acting) Director of Co-Curricular Activity - Student Leadership for 2014 at Frankston High School. This role involves working with the Student Leadership Council, which is over 70 students across all year levels. The role is primarily about being a facilitator and providing students with authentic leadership opportunities. It is crucial to guide students to build and improve their own leadership skills, while also ensuring the right scaffolding is in place so that students are not overwhelmed by any task. Giving feedback and providing constructive ways for students to improve is important.

Why did you get involved and why do you stay involved?

The students are the heart of the school and it gives me such pleasure to see how much students love their school and want to be involved in making the school the best it can be. I have been overwhelmed at the passion, enthusiasm and motivation that students have at Frankston High School and that they want to be involved in all aspects of the school. It has been incredible watching students step out of their comfort zone and try new things.

Why do you think student voice is important?

The student voice is very important, as the school is where they spend the majority of their teenage life. It is important for students to have a place where they belong and feel like they can contribute to the school, help make changes and help guide the future of the school.

In the future, what do you think student voice will look like?

In time, I think most programs that are run will be student driven as students become more aware of their passions and areas of their life, including school that they would like to change. One year's rookies become next year's leaders within the SLC.

Any more comments you would like to add?

It is a privilege to be part of the Frankston High School Student Leadership Council and I am very excited about the future.

Emily Smith and Bridin Walker
Frankston High School

from: VicSRC e-News, April 2014



Student Voice in New Hampshire, USA

How student voices are heard in New Hampshire schools ranges from being fully incorporated into the daily life of the school to nonexistent.

Visiting and having been a part of various schools in New Hampshire has given me some insight into the practice of student voice. It is safe to say that some schools merely give lip service to the notion of student voice while others, as in the case of some schools that have a New England style town meeting, just put students through the paces and procedures though they have no real decision making power or voice. As instances like this are merely an exercise, students become frustrated and disengaged once they recognise its futility. This is especially exacerbated when students are kept in the dark about these exercises – which has the double edged effect of apathy and distrust.

In other schools the idea of student voice is viewed as hokum or merely a passing fad. Adults associated with these schools hide behind the notion of 'old fashioned values', which serves as cover for authoritarian practices. Students in these schools have little voice or say adults just roll their eyes anytime a student brings up an issue or speaks up. Viewed as disturbers of the peace, these students are often subject to 'punishments' or loss of privileges.

Thankfully other practices exist: ones where student voice is not only encouraged but celebrated, expected and serves as the driver of school practices. In a few such schools, students and adults collaborate on a wide variety of issues. While the processes may vary, the result is that students have real say and influence over policies and procedures, and ultimately over how they spend their time in school.

In some instances, students have total decision making power as in the case of a student judiciary committee where a panel of students presides when a school agreement is broken or if there happens to be a dispute between two or more students. This doesn't mean an adult won't be called in to consult or offer guidance when needed, but students make the decisions with regard to how to best resolve the issue and restore justice. In other instances, students are given the autonomy to create their own learning maps or programs.

Outside of the school arena, some youth and adults in New Hampshire have created the **Forum for Educational Change in New Hampshire**, which seeks to have student voice be the driving force in creating meaningful, equitable learning opportunities that are responsive to the individual needs, wants and desires of young people. Young people and adults share and discuss ideas, work together both online and in person and provide the space for students to have their voices heard and represented both inside and outside the forum.

As with any practice that seeks to have representative voice with regard to a particular population or issue, student voice needs checks and balances, ongoing support, and the will to embed student voice in our educational pedagogy.

Peter Berg

Educational Coach, Consultant & Developer

www.youthtransformations.com

www.educationtransformation.org

pberg7468@gmail.com



North Melbourne Primary School, Vic

While on placement at North Melbourne Primary School, I planned a lesson about persuasive writing using the idea of asking: *'What switches you on/off to learning?'*

All of the students were quite keen to undertake this 30 minute writing task. It provided useful insights into learning and teaching. First, it provided genuine feedback to improve my teaching. It revealed individual learning needs and enabled me and my mentor teacher to assess whether learning opportunities have been maximized. For instance, two students wrote: *"I have done ordering negative numbers on a number line in grade two; why should I learn this again?"* As this was a persuasive writing task, students used many persuasive techniques they had learnt this term: repetition, tone, simile, and rhetorical questions. One of the two students wrote: *"Would you like to walk to school feeling: I know everything that is going to be taught?"*

Another student wrote: *"Teachers don't think like children. Think about what we like to do. For example, you have to answer a math question and to get people out of jail you have to ask them a math question."* I think these ideas from the students can be very good warm-up activities and I will use them in my next week's math classes.

Besides revealing insights of teaching and learning, this **Switch On/Off** activity also provided reliable information to evaluate some of the school programs. For instance, students thought the following programs had switched them on as they provided channels to encourage students' voice and choice. They also empower them to make positive impacts on other students' lives. These programs include:

Students run their own parliament

At North Melbourne Primary School, students elect members to the parliament, classroom ministers and a Prime Minister. They run their debates in their parliament. Through this activity, students can establish a sense of autonomy and belonging. They set up the organisation for their voice to be heard therefore they believe this organisation would take their voices seriously. This activity has also linked learning (knowledge of democracy) with real life experience, encouraged students to make informed decisions and motivated them to make positive impacts on others' lives. Students said that what switched them on was *"persuasive writing about the classroom ministers' election"*.

Voices about inner self and personal life

At North Melbourne Primary School, students have one or two Writer's Note Book sessions every week and they are very keen to undertake these writing tasks. They use these opportunities to express their feelings, acknowledge the whispers and screams in their hearts, explore their inner selves and discuss concerns in their lives. It provides a window for teachers to understand students, find out what happened in their lives and offer help.

Yuan Yuan Liu

yyma81@yahoo.com.au

Challenging work and topics that I am interested in eg Albert Einstein's theory that universe and matter can be made from nothing and how other universes are infinitely far apart yet inside each other. Challenging work makes me want to learn.

Student response to being 'Switched On'



Action Research on Engagement

In 2013, the leadership team of McClelland College agreed to partner with a PhD researcher from Victoria University (VU), Maggie Callingham. The aim of the research was to gather data about ways in which the school was engaging its students in learning. The research used a *Youth Participatory Action Research* model.

This article tells the story of that research and includes the voices of the student researchers. After a short background about the school, there is a section that provides a brief overview of the research process – from the call for volunteers to the writing of this article. In the body of the article, the student researchers provide details of the research from their perspectives.

Background

McClelland College is a progressive, government 7-12 college in the bayside suburb of Frankston, south-east of Melbourne. It has a current enrolment of 856 students. This school has a history of Student Action Teams that goes back 15 years. Under its previous name of Karingal Park Secondary College, it was one of 20 schools in Victoria that participated in a Victorian State Program of Student Action Teams back in 1999-2000. The focus of these early teams was Community Safety and the Karingal Park SC team chose to act on Driver Safety.

2013 Action Research Team Process

At the beginning of semester 2, 2013, Maggie encouraged students in Years 7 to 10 to volunteer if they were interested in becoming part of an Action Research Team. Five students returned permission forms to take part. The process commenced with two team training sessions. In addition to warm-up and getting-to-know-you activities, session one covered research ethics and visual methods. Two staff from VU, whose expertise was sought in the planning of the first session, were invited to participate: Associate Professor Deborah Zion, Chair VU Research Ethics Committee, and Dr Alison Baker, whose expertise is in photographic methods within arts-based community research. Session two focused on the practice of several data-gathering methods.

Following the team training, Maggie worked alongside and facilitated individual students' research. Each individual decided which Year level he/she wanted to research and devised their method of data gathering. After organising with Year level co-ordinators, these young people conducted their research, analysed their findings, and put a synthesis of the findings into a presentation. Initially their findings were presented to the Action Research Team. This was an opportunity to see what others had found, and to look for themes across the school. Roger Holdsworth kindly agreed to join us for this session.

The next step was for individuals to present their findings to the respective Year level co-ordinators. In order to feed results back to Year level cohorts, the students modified their presentations so that they could be converted to movies to be played on the plasma screens at the relevant Year levels.

Up to this stage, the Action Research Team had investigated and reported what they had found about students' engagement with learning at McClelland College; that is, they had looked back. A further step was to meet again as a team to look at ways the school could move forward and build on the work they were already doing. The findings of this session were scripted and put into a short movie.

At the end of semester 2, the student researchers had another opportunity to present their individual findings, this time at a Family Night. The McClelland College School Council also joined us prior to their final meeting for

2013, for the first public showing of the movie to the families and the School Council. Following the movie screening, the school Principal, Mr Ferra, and Dr Baker helped Maggie to present the students with joint VU and McClelland College certificates of achievement that included an outline of the research they had conducted.

Finally, in response to Roger's invitation to the students to write up their research for an article in *Connect*, the student researchers will explain about the processes they worked through and the methods they chose in order to conduct their investigations. They will also give a summary of their findings and the feedback they gave McClelland College about even more ways the school can continue to engage its students in learning.

Brayden (Year 9): Research at Year 8

When Maggie spoke to the Year 9s about the research, I thought it would be interesting and it felt like a good thing to do. At the end of the talk, Maggie asked if anyone wanted to take some forms. I put my hand up and when Maggie gave me the forms, she also gave me a lolly. Then lots of others put their hands up too – I think because they wanted a lolly. The Year 9 Co-ordinator, Mr Kirk, said he thought doing the research would be good for me. I had started at the school in the second half of 2012 when I moved to live with my dad, his partner, and her children. It was a big change for me and I missed my mum because I used to see her every day and I haven't seen her for a long time. I moved from a country school I loved and it was hard to deal with everything, so I did Year 9 again in 2013 and it was better.

When I took home the forms about the research, my dad thought it would be a good opportunity, so he signed to



MCCLELLAND COLLEGE

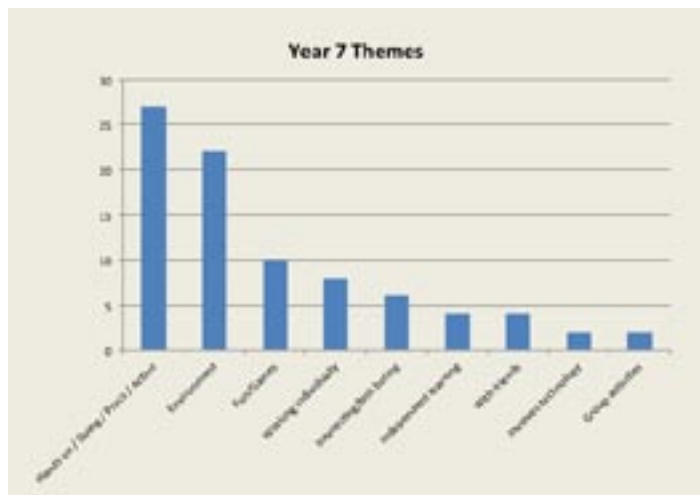


Figure 1: Year 7 Themes

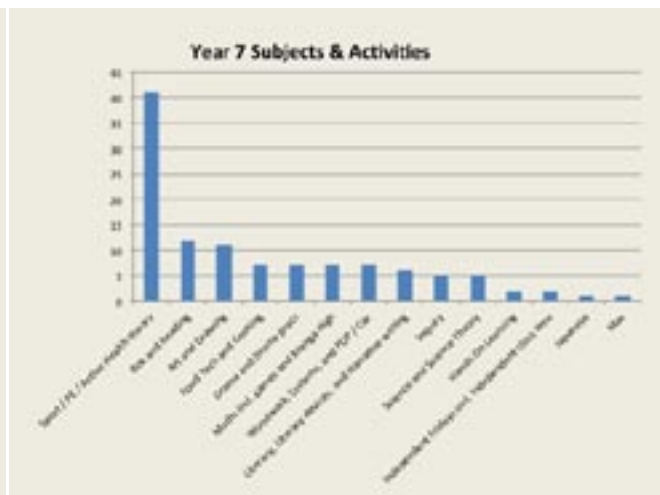


Figure 2: Year 7 Subjects and Activities

give me permission to take part. At the start we had two classes about how to do research and they were interesting. Plus it was good to meet people at other year levels that I didn't know. In the second class we learned about different ways of collecting data and my favourite was called *snowballing*¹. It involved lots of coloured pieces of paper that had the words: "I'm engaged in learning when ..."². The instructions were to take a piece of paper, write what you thought to finish the sentence, and then screw it into a ball and throw it to someone. As we read each other's, it gave us more ideas and we kept doing the activity until everyone had run out of ideas.

I decided to do the research at Year 7 level because I see Year 7 students in the yard and some are all cocky and trying to be popular. I wanted to know how they were in class: are they trying to be popular or do they try and learn? When Maggie and I went across to speak to Mr L'Huillier, the Year 7 Co-ordinator, about the research, he was really supportive and said the same thing as my dad, that it was a good opportunity.

Mr L'Huillier arranged for me to work with groups of Year 7 students and I set up the snowballing data collection like a game. Because I needed more information than when we practised snowballing in the training, I used both sides of the coloured pieces of paper. On one side of the paper I had: "I'm engaged in learning when ..." and on the other side I had: "Examples: subject/s or activity." I think the Year 7s had fun because it was interactive.

1. Carrington, Bland & Brady (2010): Training young people as researchers to investigate engagement and disengagement in the middle years, *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 14:5, 449-462.

2. op. cit. p. 453

At the end, after the students threw the snowballs into a bucket I was holding, I gave them a lolly.

Next, I tipped all the snowballs onto a table. Then Maggie and I unscrewed each ball and straightened the paper. As I read each paper, Maggie typed the data into a table and then I put the paper into a group that was saying the same sorts of things. I ended up with nine groups, or themes. For 'I am engaged in learning when...' the biggest theme included when I am: *Hands on/Doing things/in Pracs/and Active*. After doing this for side one, we turned the papers over and did the same things for 'Examples of subjects and activities' that engaged them. This time there were fourteen groups, with *Sport/Physical Education* as the biggest group – it was 3.4 times bigger than the second one. One Year 7 student wrote about Sport: "I love to be active and have heaps of fun as well as being able to forget about my stress in other subjects."

At the end, the Year 7 co-ordinators got copies of three tables. The first one had the raw data with the information straight from the snowballs. In a second table we used colour coding to show the themes that had come up, and in a third table, like-themes were grouped together. I also decided to use graphs to show the themes of what engaged Year 7 students in their learning (Figure 1) and to show their examples of subjects and activities (Figure 2).

When the Action Research Team came back together to share what we'd done and what we'd found, Roger came to the session. He was fun, and laughed a lot with us and he asked good questions about how we did the research and what it meant. After that session I

gave my presentation to the Year 7 Co-ordinator, this time to Mrs Craig. I wasn't nervous because I thought she would be co-operative. She seemed to get excited about what I found and it was fun seeing her smile. She said that what I found showed how important the personalised learning was at the school and at Year 7. After that I felt proud of what I'd done.

My dad came to the Family Night. Standing up in front of all of those people who were looking at me was interesting. When the School Council came in to see the movie I got a bit worried. I thought: "What if they've had a bad day?" but it went well. In the movie I said that the Year 7s say they like to be active, they like independent time, and to be able to choose what they do. Their examples showed that they do lots of practical activities that are fun and that engage them in learning in lots of different ways. Each year the Year 7 students come from lots of different schools, so I suggested that the Year 7 teachers might be able to talk with them about ways their old schools engaged them in their learning, to see if there are even more ways McClelland College can do this.

After the movie, Mr Ferra and Maggie presented the certificates. Dad was very proud that I had achieved something at school and when we got home he said that we could have pizza the next night to celebrate. Dad quit school at Year 10 so seeing me doing all this stuff made him proud that I'm doing better than him. That's his goal in life, to make some of his sons better than him.

Overall, I developed skills like talking to people. I was surprised how co-operative the school was and doing this research gave me a reason to come to school.

Lachlan (Year 8): Research at Year 8

The Year 8 Co-ordinator spoke to the Year 8s about the research and the first session was during Japanese, which I don't like, so I thought I would give it a try. I pretty much just showed Mum the permission form to take part in the research and she signed it. She really didn't understand what I was doing until near the end.

In the two training sessions there were lots of people I didn't know which was good and I was pretty keen to be involved. At first I was a bit hesitant to do the research at Year 8 level because of some bullying earlier in the year. The Assistant Principal had helped me move classes and the school dealt with the bullies so I decided I would go ahead because there were things I thought about engagement at Year 8 and I was interested in what other students thought as well. I was also interested if Year 8 students thought there had been any changes in their engagement with learning between primary school and Year 8. The survey showed that 83% said their engagement had improved, 15% said it had gone down, and 2% said it was the same. Myself, I have always been engaged but my learning has improved since Year 6 because I was about to stay down and I just passed the year. In Year 7, with the personalised learning, I passed the year with flying colours

I decided to use *Survey Monkey* because I was confident with it from primary school. At primary school I surveyed students to see how much they knew about volcanoes, and I even helped teach some teachers how to use it. Once I had a draft of the survey, I asked my friend Mason to trial it and make any suggestions. He thought that the survey

questions were good but that I needed to fix up the punctuation and spelling. When I had made those edits and it was ready to go, Ms Miller, the Year 8 Co-ordinator, put the *Survey Monkey* link on the school's student share drive and she arranged for groups of students to go to the Year 8 computers to do the survey. I had lollies to give them when they finished.

In the survey I asked students if they were also prepared to be interviewed, and if so to put their name. I was surprised that most said they would. In the interviews I was interested to find out Year 8 students' experience of personalised learning, the online Maths development program, ability groups for English and Maths, the matrix work planner for novels, and student-teacher conferencing of students' work progress. Mason again agreed to trial the interview and he thought the questions were good because he had lots of opinions on those topics.

The interviews were recorded so that I didn't need to try to write it all down. I had to explain to the students that I wanted to record the interviews and if they agreed, I asked them to sign the Audio Permission Forms. I interviewed two students at a time so they'd be less nervous. This worked well for all of the interviews except the last one, when the two students kept laughing. They were being silly so I decided it wasn't worth doing the interview. Mainly the Year 8s had good things to say about their engagement with learning and what also showed up is that they liked to learn in different ways.

I had a lot of data and I estimate it took up to five hours to work out how to

put all this information into a *PowerPoint* presentation. When I presented the findings to the Action Research Team, Roger was there. I'd met him before at the VicSRC Congress. I felt very nervous about going through the findings with the Year 8 Co-ordinator; I'm not really sure why. I think the co-ordinators were surprised by what I'd done and by some of the findings. After that I modified the *PowerPoint* presentation so that the findings could be displayed to the Year 8 students on the plasma screens in their area.

After that was done, the Action Research Team met to talk about ways the school could continue to engage students in learning. Each of us wrote a script to put into *Moviemaker*. My focus was on how the Year 8 teachers can use pre-tests more efficiently so that students who can do the work do not have to repeat it, and so that students working at Year 8 level or above could perhaps help plan, and teach. Overall, from my findings, I thought that it would help students' engagement with learning if they were all encouraged to help plan learning activities that would be interesting for year 8s.

At the Family session, I was quite comfortable going through the findings. After that the School Council came in to watch the movie and the principal presented us with certificates.

I'm glad I took part in the research because it was fun. One of the things I gained from taking part was more confidence in big crowds. I thought it was a good experience and that I did well. It made me realise that at Year 8 there was not much student input. I also found out that what engages students in their learning is to be active.

Figure 3: Year 8s doing Survey Monkey



Christy (Year 7): Research at Year 9

I started at McClelland College halfway through 2013. My first thought was that the school was different. For example, it had four 75 minute periods in a day, and it had areas called Max.

When Maggie came into Year 7 to talk about forming an Action Research Team, I wanted to do it because I started new at this school and wanted to know what people thought about it compared to my old school. I took the forms and so did my friend, but she didn't end up bringing hers back. When I talked to my mum about the research I told her it was a good way to learn about the school, so she signed to give me permission. I brought the form back as soon as possible so I would not miss out on doing it.

The first two training sessions were fun and active. At the same time, they helped me to understand about research, to meet new people, and to learn about what we would be doing. In one session we looked at photo research. I thought the photography was a more interesting way to do research because it wasn't just about asking questions: it involved looking at an area. When I was in grade 6 I did a photography course and that taught me about angles to take photos, and to think outside the box. I chose to do the research at Year 9 because I thought Year 7 and 8 students were too childish and Years 10, 11 and 12 were too old for me, so Year 9 seemed a good fit.

One of the Year 9 students, Hope, showed me around so that I could take photos of all the Year 9 learning areas. I tried to take photos that showed students but without really showing their faces. This meant that I didn't need to worry about getting everyone in the photos to sign permission forms. It was tricky in some areas so I had to get some students' permission to use their photos. I printed the photos A4 size. The idea was to interview Year 9 students and to start the interviews by asking them to choose photos of their three favourite Year 9 learning areas.

When I did the interviews, all the students were asked to sign permission forms so I could record their voices. Maggie typed transcripts of the recordings so that I could look back at what they had said. This was helpful when I wrote my slide show presentation of the findings. I did interviews with two students at a time and sometimes it was hard when people wouldn't say much or when they just agreed with each other, but there were others who were happy to talk. I learned that, to get more useful information, I needed to keep asking why, and to explain a bit more. As I went on I started getting used to it and I found this easier to do.



Figure 4: Year 9 Presentation slide with star

The students said they liked the Year 9 area called the Max because it's just for the Year 9s, but a lot of the students thought that with its three open areas, it was too noisy for learning. A lot of the Year 9s said that the breakout room was the best area in the Max for learning because it's the most quiet; it's away from everyone so it's easier to learn, and there are not many distractions. With the three open areas, one student suggested that you could still have two areas in the open and then have the area at the end with a partition so it would be a bit quieter.

I decided to use a PowerPoint presentation because I could include photos of the Year 9 learning areas and I could make it eye catching. One of the photos I wanted to use had a Year 9 girl who didn't want her face to be in the

presentation. I thought about this and I decided to put a star on the photo where she was sitting, and I made the star to match the McClelland College colours. When I showed her what I had done she thought it was great because the star stayed there even when the photo faded away.

When I went through my findings with the Year 9 Co-ordinator, Mrs Henderson, she was very impressed and said that it was so good to find out what they were doing well. For example, students who had come to McClelland College from other schools all said how much more the teachers here cared about the students. Mrs Henderson was also impressed with what I had done and she told me that she would love me to join the leadership team when I get to Year 9. I told my mum about what I had done and what the Co-ordinator thought about it and she was very impressed.

I had to make quite a few changes to my PowerPoint presentation for the Year 9 plasma screen so that it would have less reading. When I wrote the movie script the hardest part was trying to get a balance. I wanted to say that a lot of Year 9 students said that the Year 9 teachers helped them with their work if they needed it and that the teachers at this school cared about students. But I also needed to say that there were some students who said that they needed more help. There were also students who were in the low ability group who didn't like it because they felt they had more potential than that. As well, I decided to include what one student thought might help: *"Rather than having a task for a full lesson, students could go into independent learning time and if they needed help they could go into a workshop."*

I thought the Family Night went well. I wasn't nervous; I was happy. When I got my certificate I was proud. I achieved my goal and more. I found out that McClelland College is a nice place and has some good learning systems. I also found out that I am confident. I'm glad I took part in the Action Research Team because I learned a lot, plus I made friends across other year levels and I had a good time.

Torie (Year 10): Research at Year 10

I decided to take part in this program because I wanted to do something different and I'm interested in people's views about schools because I have been to so many. I have been to four primary schools and two high schools. I didn't like my first high school. I also thought that I would make some new friends so I took the opportunity without hesitation. I remember that I was the first one to put my hand up for the forms and then a few others followed. Honestly, I didn't tell mum and dad much about the program, I just handed the forms over and brought the Permission Form back about two days later. From the first two training sessions I was excited and just wanted to get started.

I chose to do the research at Year 10 because it was my year level and I knew most of the people so it was pretty easy for me to talk to them. At first I thought I would do a survey on *Survey Monkey* so I set it up. I got one of my friends to have a go to make sure that people wouldn't get confused with what I was asking. I had to change a few questions because they were a bit too hard to understand. She also showed me a better way to set up three- and five-point scales. I didn't really want to have to work out how to get the Year 10s

to go on-line to do the survey so I ended up photocopying it. I just handed out the hard copy and got it back and it helped me get to know the year 10s a bit more. I got a lot of information from the survey and I only got a few stupid answers. I also did interviews and I worded the questions so that I got a bit more of an understanding about what engages Year 10 students in their learning.

What I found out was that Year 10 students said that they were engaged in learning when the work was interesting and they were active, when choices weren't limited to what teachers had already decided, and when work was related to the real world. They also said that communication between teachers and students was important.

When it was time to present my findings to the Senior School Coordinators I was so nervous. We sat in the Senior Centre as I went through my *PowerPoint* presentation. They both congratulated me and that made me feel good about myself. I was surprised and thrilled. You see, when I started the research, my work wasn't completely up to date so I wondered if I had made a good decision to take part but it turns out that I did!

At the Family Night I was confident with what I would be doing but I was nervous that I would stuff something up and embarrass myself in front of everyone. The night before, I went into my room and repeated my presentation out loud over and over again so that I had it in my head. I didn't really want all my family there because that would have made me even more nervous; it was pressure enough having my sister alongside me. In the movie I said that the answer to how the Year 10 work could be made more interesting, active, have more choices in it, and be related to the real world – is to have teachers and students communicating in the planning of units of work. I was happy with how it turned out and happy with myself. After the movie I received a certificate for the research and it looked good! When I went home and showed my mum she was a bit disappointed that she wasn't able to come.

Overall, my experience was good. I learnt that I am more independent when I know what I am doing and that I do like working in groups; I just don't do it often. If I have the chance, I would definitely take part again because it was an amazing experience!

Doing / Active

- Get to move around
- Get to experience things for myself instead of others telling me
- Educational games
- Doing group activities
- Hands on
- Physical activities
- Let us do things ourselves



Figure 5: Year 10 Presentation slide on engagement

Katie (Year 10 VCAL³): Research in VCAL across Years 9-11

When I first heard about the research I wasn't really interested so I didn't take the forms right away. Then about a week later, some of the VCAL teachers asked if I would give it a try because they thought it would be good for me. I'd rather work than be at school, but you have to go to school to go to work so that's why I'm in VCAL. I took the forms home but I found it hard to get the Permission Form signed because my mum was working lots of hours. When she was free we were just spending time together and it wasn't so much about school. In the end Mr. Richardson, the VCAL Co-ordinator, rang my mum and she gave permission over the phone, so he wrote on my form that I had verbal permission and he signed it.

Mum wanted to know why I signed up for the research. I told her it was so I could help make a difference and keep not only me in school, but everyone in school. She was proud that I wanted to make a difference in my schooling.

When I showed up at the first training session I found out about how much one word could change into a really big idea. I realised that by being part of the research team I might help to make VCAL better. It was starting to be too much like VCE⁴, with a lot of classroom assignments and not so many hands-on activities.

When I typed up my survey I talked about the sorts of questions with some of the VCAL teachers and students. Before I finished it, I handed out a couple to see if people understood the questions. I had to change some questions to make them easier to understand. I actually had four surveys. One survey was for Year 9 students who were going into VCAL in Year 10. I wanted to find out what they were hoping VCAL would be like. The survey at Year 10 was to find out if VCAL was what they were expecting it to be like. And at Year 11 I wanted to know if they thought VCAL had changed over the two years they'd been doing it. I also decided to survey the teachers because I wanted to know their opinions of teaching in VCAL. In the teacher survey I wanted to know why they thought this and that was happening, and what they

thought they could do to change it, or what the students could do.

I did my survey in written form rather than on *Survey Monkey* because I don't like to use computers and not many people like doing surveys. I just wanted to get the surveys done so I handed them out and got them back straight away, which saved me a lot of time chasing people up to go on *Survey Monkey*. I did interviews as well because some students didn't answer the questions in full so I wanted to get more details.

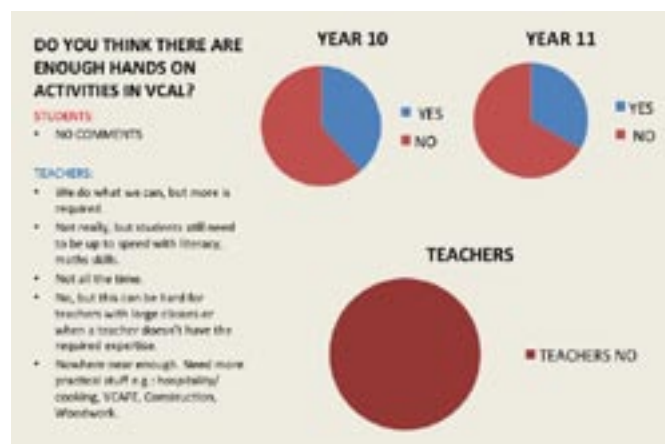
I was pretty surprised with the replies because the teachers all said they wanted to be hands-on but most didn't know how to teach in hands-on ways. This showed that the teachers and the students all wanted more hands-on activities in VCAL, and that they were both willing to help each other with the hands-on activities.

I decided to use graphs to present my findings because I think pictures speak louder than words, and so people could be walking by and have a quick look rather than have to stand and read. In the session where we all came together to share what we found, Roger asked us questions that really opened up our minds a lot more. After that I presented the findings to the Year 10 and Year 11 VCAL students and teachers.

I wasn't really nervous on the Family Night because I was confident. I think the School Council was very proud that some students wanted to make a difference. When I received my certificate I felt I had accomplished something. My mum and aunt were there and they were proud that I finished something that was school-based because I have trouble sticking to one thing. This showed that I could, and I did, and now I know that anything is possible.

Since the research in 2013, things have changed in VCAL and it has become more hands-on. For example, we are making products to sell at market days and I am currently working with a team to redesign an area for the whole school to use as an outdoor class/play area.

Figure 6: VCAL Presentation slide on Hands On Activities



This shows that the school is willing to let students help; it just needed some people to get it started. I am glad I took part because now I am more engaged at school rather than being bored sitting in a classroom for four periods every day. I also learnt new skills and I learnt that to do anything you always need a plan and to back up what you say with studies.

Afterword

Although the research concluded at the end of 2013, it was not shelved with the beginning of the new school year. At a staff meeting in 2014, Maggie gave an overview of the research so that new staff and new Year Level Co-ordinators were made aware of the work that was conducted. Staff were shown where the data could be accessed on the Staff Share drive. In addition, the results were played on Year level plasma screens until the end of Term 1. The movie, which is also on the Staff Share drive, was then screened.

To sum up this session, the Principal encouraged staff to **listen to what the students had to say**. He stressed that **it is one thing to pay lip service to the notion of student voice by giving students the opportunity to have a say, but it is quite another to really listen to what they say – for the implications it has for our work – and then to act on these.**

Lachlan Anderson-Newton,
Maggie Callingham, Christy Dihm,
Katie Downie, Brayden Farthing
and Torie Symons

www.mcclellandcollege.vic.edu.au
margaret.callingham@live.vu.edu.au

3. Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

4. Victorian Certificate of Education

National Schools Constitutional Convention

The 2014 National Schools Constitutional Convention was held in Old Parliament House, Canberra, ACT, from March 12th to 14th.

Students representing each state and territory united in the nation's capital to discuss the topic set that had been: **Australian Federalism: States' Rights and National Priorities**. We put forward our own ideas and opinions on whether or not the Murray Darling Basin and the health care system should be of States or Federal Governments' concern.

After multiple workshop and panel discussions, reporting back and note taking over the two days, the students voted on the topics.

The results of the referendum were as follows:

- The Murray Darling Basin becomes a national priority: (77 formal votes

Yes; 41 formal votes **No**) - it is a national priority issue

- The health care system stays as it is: (44 formal votes **Yes**; 73 formal votes **No**) - it becomes a National issue

A presentation of the communique (incorporating the referendum results) took place in the House of Representatives. The President of the Senate, Senator Hon John Hogg, accepted the communique and the convention was closed for yet another year.

There were also trips to Parliament House, the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, a

visit to the National Archives of Australia and a dinner at the High Court of Australia. Perhaps a highlight was the discussion presented to all delegates by Dr Andrew C Banfield, Professor Fiona Wheeler, and Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO, or speeches given by Matilda House, Ngambri Woman and Huy Nguyen (ACT Young Australian of the Year 2014).

But the whole convention was most certainly an overall highlight for all of us who attended. The opportunities that were relished and the friendships that bloomed, were all signs that this was an experience not to be forgotten.

Sophie Williams

Highview College, Maryborough, Vic

(For organising details, see: www.ncsonline.com.au/projects/nscc/welcome)



NATIONAL SCHOOLS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION





Homework:

Interactive, stimulating, engaging for all students

Earlier this year, the VicSRC Executive carried out its own research into students' views and approaches to homework through an online survey and by talking to peers. The Victorian Parliament's Education and Training Committee called for public input into its inquiry into approaches to homework in Victorian schools, focusing on the impact on student learning. Mrs Kronberg, the Committee chair, said that *"the debate on the effectiveness of homework as an educational tool is not new but this important inquiry will clarify the current approaches in a Victorian context and will provide insights into best practice into the future."*

Ensuring the VicSRC is representative of a broad range of viewpoints was important. In order to capture the voice of students in Victoria we conducted an online survey. The survey was completed by 30 students ranging from Year 8 – 12. Students came from 25 different schools including catholic, independent and government. The survey asked 12 questions under the major headings of:

- What is the value of homework in relation to learning?
- What is the current approach to homework in your school?
- What is the future of homework?

We were excited with the interesting and varied feedback from students.

Most students agreed that homework benefits their study and revision as they don't usually have sufficient time

to complete their work in class. Some students stated that it was good to revise the work that they had covered in school, so that the next day it would be fresh in their minds.

One student said: *"The value of homework to my learning is that it enables me to revise and improve on my knowledge, whilst being more independent. It also encourages me to seek help or further research via other sources, rather than relying on a teacher."* Another agreed, saying: *"Homework provides an ideal way to further work and engage students, whether individually or in a group, usually without the assistance of teachers."*

When asked about the future of homework, students hoped that it would be more 'enjoyable

and valuable'. Other students said they hoped homework would be: *"Interactive, stimulating, engaging for **all** students, not only the bright ones, or the average ones, or the underachievers."* Some students called for homework to be 'less and less' arguing that: *"it should be phased out to better balance a student's life"*. Overwhelmingly students saw the future of homework in Victoria being online in different forms. One student wrote: *"I think the future of homework is soon to become an online one, where students will complete their homework and assignments on portals where teachers can monitor them."*

If you would like to read our whole submission, please see later in this issue of **Connect**, or view it on our website: www.vicsrc.org.au

Margaret Tran and Ron Garcia
VicSRC Executive



The VicSRC has rebranded!

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

www.vicsrc.org.au/joinin/maillinglist

The VicSRC receives funding support from the **Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development** and 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: coordinator@vicsrc.org.au

VicSRC Regional Conference 2014

**URGENT:
Closing NOW!**

Conference Outline:

- Twelve Regional SRC Conferences throughout Victoria: May 6 to June 19
- 1 day conferences (9 am - 3 pm)
- Network with other students and teachers in your region
- Learn how to be more effective student representatives
- Take action on issues you care about
- Special side PD and resources available for teachers



Online Registration !

Online Registration: links for each conference at: on.fb.me/1d9fCV3

No payment is required when booking. Payments can be made via invoice, cheque or Credit Card.

Bookings close: **5 pm Friday 4th April 2014**

Locations and dates:

**** GIPPSLAND**

Tuesday, May 6, 2014
Yarram, VIC | Yarram Secondary College

BALLARAT

Thursday, May 8, 2014
Wendouree, VIC | Ballarat Grammar

**** BENDIGO**

Friday, May 9, 2014
Flora Hill, VIC | Bendigo South East College

**** SOUTH EASTERN SUBURBS**

Tuesday, May 20, 2014
Berwick, VIC | Nossal High School

INNER MELBOURNE

Wednesday, May 21, 2014
Melbourne, VIC | The Mac.Robertson Girls' High School

EASTERN SUBURBS

Friday, May 23, 2014
Heathmont, VIC | Heathmont College

WANGARATTA

Monday, May 26, 2014
Wangaratta, VIC | Wangaratta High school

**** GEELONG**

Wednesday, May 28, 2014
Geelong, VIC | North Geelong Secondary College

NORTHERN SUBURBS

Friday, May 30, 2014
Fawkner, VIC | John Fawkner Secondary College

FRANKSTON/MORNINGTON

Monday, June 16, 2014
Frankston, VIC | McClelland College

**** PORTLAND**

Monday, June 16, 2014
Portland, VIC | Portland Secondary College

WESTERN SUBURBS

Thursday, June 19, 2014
Kings Park, VIC | Copperfield College - Kings Park Junior Campus

Update:

We've had a great response from schools so far, with **over 300 students** registered for the 12 VicSRC Regional Student Conferences around Victoria.

But we are still looking for SRC Students and Student Leaders to attend the VicSRC regional conferences in **Portland, Geelong, South Eastern Suburbs, Bendigo** and **Gippsland!**

For registration information, visit VicSRC Initiatives: www.vicsrc.org.au/initiatives/2014-regional-student-conferences or call the VicSRC Coordinator during office hours on **9267 3744**.



Inquiry into the approaches to homework in Victorian schools, focusing on the impact on student learning

The Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC) is the peak body representing secondary school students in Victoria. We are a democratic network of SRCs working to represent the views of students at every level of decision making. Student Representative Councils (SRCs – sometimes known by other names) are the bodies that exist within most secondary schools to represent the opinions of students. The VicSRC has over 80 member SRCs, representing more than 40,000 secondary students. Our vision is to bring Student Representative Councils together across Victoria to make the voices of students heard at all levels and, through that process, enable students (and their organisations) to develop their vision and capacity for making a difference in their school and across the state.

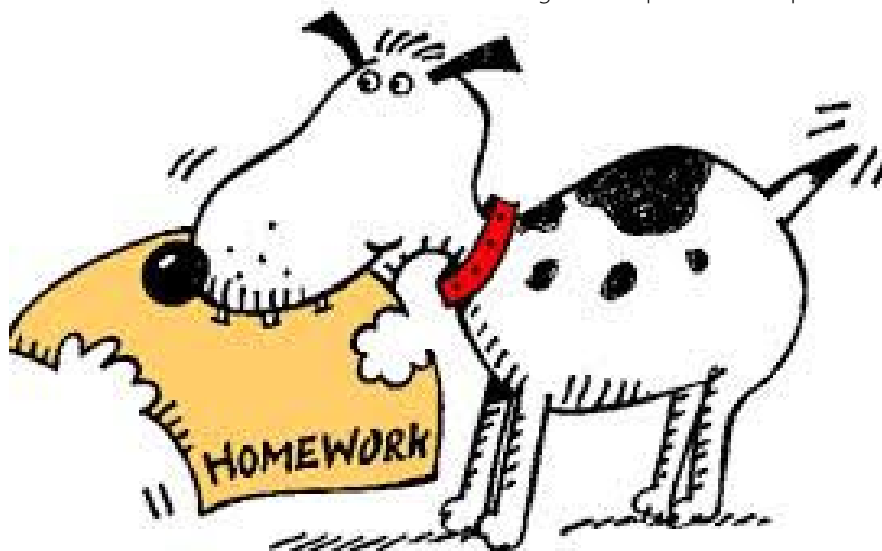
Background

The Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC) is glad to be part of the discussion around *approaches to homework in Victoria, focusing on student learning*. This timely inquiry provides an opportunity to investigate some of the existing challenges for homework in schools and also consider students' perspective about the role of homework in the future.

Student Reflections

Ensuring the VicSRC is representative of a broad range of viewpoints was important.

The VicSRC is auspiced by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, the peak body and leading policy advocate on young people's issues in Victoria. The Youth Affairs Council provides a means through which the youth sector and young people voice their opinions and concerns in regards to policy issues affecting them. The Youth Affairs Council believes that strong student representative structures are essential for the continued achievement of improved student learning outcomes. These structures are the most effective way to engage with students where they are at and thus enhance teacher and school capacity to respond to changes in student learning needs.



In order to capture the voice of students in Victoria, we conducted an online survey. The survey was completed by 30 students ranging from Year 8 to 12. Students came from 25 different schools including catholic, independent and government. The survey asked a total of 12 questions under the major headings of:

- The value of homework in relation to learning
- Current approaches to homework
- Future of homework in Victorian schools

It is important to recognise that the results of the survey do not represent the views of all secondary school students in Victoria; however the evidence provides a good sample of student opinion on the topic. This submission will draw on themes that emerged from the online survey and students' reflections.

1. What is the value of homework to your learning?

Benefits to individual students' learning

Most students agreed that homework benefits their study and revision as they don't usually have sufficient time to complete their work in class. Some students stated that it was good to revise the work that they had covered over school, so that the next day it would be fresh in their minds.

One student said: *"The value of homework to my learning is that it enables me to revise and improve on my knowledge, whilst being more independent. It also encourages me to seek help or further research via other sources, rather than relying on a teacher."* Another agreed, saying: *"Homework provides an ideal way to further work and engage students, whether individually or in a group, usually without the assistance of teachers."*

Contribution to discipline and other life skills

Throughout the responses that were provided, students primarily thought that homework was valuable in developing self-discipline and self-motivational skills. They thought that it helped them with time management: *"It keeps us from getting lazy. It helps us in preparing for the future, when one day we will have to do homework for our workplace."*

Engagement of parents in student learning

Many students thought that homework didn't engage parents, as study at home is very much one-dimensional. Some believed that it was even a hassle if parents began asking about their homework. In other cases, it is partial motivation for students to do homework, as it reminds students of their parents' expectations.

"I never really felt like homework engaged my parents/carers to any extent as I was very independent in school, however I suppose it aims to make them feel a part of their students' education and so that they can actively be involved in what their children are doing (mostly relevant for primary school in my opinion) and be able to help and see where their children may be struggling."

2. Current approaches to homework

Overwhelmingly, students said the current approach for homework is:

- Individual work
- Used to reinforce what has been learnt in the classroom
- Revision

There was little evidence to suggest that homework encouraged teamwork, applied learning or learning new concepts and ideas.

Reporting and feedback methods

Homework was generally used for feedback and reporting. The majority of students reported that homework was given some form of feedback including:

- Teacher signs the homework when complete
- Marks
- Comments
- Corrections
- Notes and grades
- A record if it was done or not

Different approaches between primary and secondary school

Students noted a difference between the types of homework given in primary and secondary school.

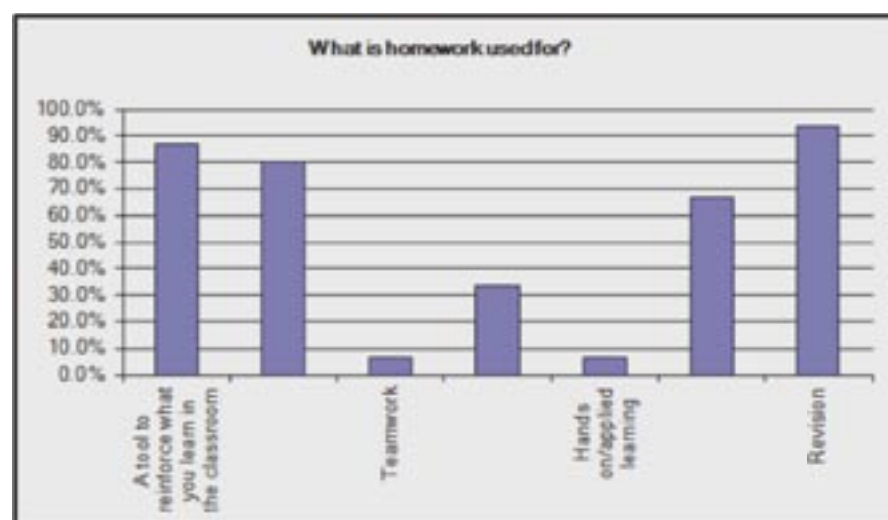
In primary school, homework is minimal, especially due to the ever-sustaining assistance from their parents, making better interaction between child and parent. Students felt that homework in primary school was used to reinforce basic skills such as nightly reading. Homework in primary school seemed to be more hands-on and practical, with activities like projects and small presentations.

In secondary education, many students said that success of homework depended on them.

Most students have stated that any unfinished work in class is simply homework, as well as teachers giving them set homework to prepare and understand the concepts of what they are to learn. But in this case, more homework should be given during the junior years of secondary school, as it will provide better opportunity to organise and step into habitual routine which they will need in their senior years. *"The workload, complexity and importance become much more significant in secondary school."*

Best practice

According to the students surveyed, the best practice model for homework was when it had clear direction. One student noted that: *"I personally just like questions from text books or research tasks - but not just the generic 'tonight read over your notes.'" Other evidence suggested that more creative approaches to homework should be encouraged such as: "Group*



3. Future of homework in Victorian Schools

Balance between reinforcing and extending what has been learnt in the classroom, with time to undertake extracurricular activities and to spend time with family

Teachers should also take into account what their students do apart from their daily school work; homework *"...can take away precious time."* The majority of students said similar things: *"Of course there should be a balance. Students need to have fun whilst learning; that way their minds are fresh and open to new ideas in the classroom."* Having an average of one hour per subject, restricted other areas of their life, such as social life, outside-school activities, family and other non-school related occupations.

Students felt there needed to be differentiated approaches for primary and secondary schools.

"Perhaps in upper primary there should be better preparation for what secondary homework will be like." Secondary school homework should be more centred on the subject: "Secondary school homework should be given quite a lot before reaching the senior years as in the senior years it will become a routine."

Technology and learning seem to go hand in hand for students. It provides information, having [easier] access to *"tricks and tips"*, especially from the internet. Many students found technology to be a benefit: *"I think particularly the internet is the single greatest friend a student has in terms of learning."*

According to VCE students who completed the survey online, groups and portals helped build better interaction between students and teachers:

In contrast, others have said that the classroom is not adapting quickly enough to manage efficiently, and that it could be a possible setback if one does not have access, especially if one does not even have print/hard-copied resources to aid them beforehand. While many secondary schools have implemented the idea of providing students with tablets, laptops, etc to aid schoolwork in and outside the classroom, some state that is a distraction, with another student stating that it *"...can make things very frustrating when something goes wrong..."*

The VicSRC believes it is imperative that the Parliament of Victoria Education and Training Committee hear directly from students about the benefits of homework as they experience it. It is important to engage students as active partners in their own education and learning, both individually and collectively. Such an approach clearly reflects the Government's vision for students within the Victorian education system.

The VicSRC is happy to help facilitate further discussion with young people during this inquiry.

Margaret Tran and Ron Garcia
On behalf of the VicSRC Student Executive





Bringing the Outside In

How we can involve students outside the SRC in our work ?

Depending on how and when you go about selecting the students who will be on your next Student Council, you will more often than not find that you have more students than positions available. With such a small group forming the SRC, how can we tap into these students who have clearly expressed an interest to become involved, but often get forgotten about once the recruitment process is over?

SRC MASCOT:

Having an **SRC Mascot** is one great way of involving junior primary students. This involves a soft toy character 'visiting' the class for a period of time, perhaps for a week, to collect ideas and feedback from students about what they might like to see in their classrooms or within the school. With the help of the classroom teacher, these ideas can then be recorded in a journal or scrapbook that can then be sent back to the SRC for further discussion.

SRC SUGGESTION BOX:

An oldie but a goodie: creating a **suggestion box** is one way of enabling students to provide direct feedback or ideas to your SRC. Here's our tips on how to get the most from your suggestion box:

- Consider what message that old cereal box you are using to collect suggestions is sending to your student population. If you really value students' feedback and suggestions, consider purchasing something strong and solid – or even arranging a student to construct one in woodwork or metalwork classes.
- Depending on where it's located within the school, the SRC Suggestion Box can sometimes turn into an alternative rubbish bin for unwanted lunch items. (Guessing what's in the suggestion box does make for a great game to play at SRC Meetings!). Ensure your suggestion box is placed in a 'student friendly' location within the school; the office reception and library aren't necessarily the best places.
- Make it easy for students to get that great idea to you when they walk past your suggestion box: ensure that you have a supply of pens or pencils along with paper or forms that students can fill in next to the suggestion box.
- If students use the SRC Suggestion Box to write to you, make sure that you check it regularly. Assign this role to an SRC member and make sure you allow time to discuss suggestions in your SRC Meetings by allocating time for it on your agenda as *Correspondence In*.
- If a student has taken the time to write to you, be sure to follow up with them personally. Write a letter back or arrange for an SRC member to discuss their suggestion with them and advise them of the outcome.

OPEN MEETINGS:

Is your SRC a secret society that meets behind closed doors? If so, considering making your meetings open to the rest of the student body. Open meetings allow for students to contribute ideas or suggestions that perhaps the SRC hasn't considered. Doing so can give other students an opportunity to see the workings of the Student Council and an understanding of how decisions are made.

SUB COMMITTEES:

I bet your school has numerous groups and committees for projects running within your school, but have you ever thought of applying this same approach to your Student Council ?

Sub committees are a great way of involving students outside the SRC in projects and activities that you would like to run. Doing so allows you to take on more ambitious projects as you have more 'student power' to help make things happen. For students on the SRC, leading a sub committee provides an authentic experience of co-ordinating a team.

STUDENT SURVEYS:

"Without data, you are just another person with an opinion." When presenting to the school leadership team for permission to run an event or to change school policy, hard data helps to support your cause. Student surveys are a great way of providing the SRC with quantitative and qualitative data and showing students that you really value their opinions and input into your work.

VISTA Podcast:

Episode 7 of *"The VISTA Podcast"* explores the topic of increasing student involvement. Download it from iTunes or listen online at our website: <http://vistapodcast.global2.vic.edu.au> We'd also love your ideas, suggestions and feedback about how you involve students outside the SRC or on anything related to student leadership for our 'Student Voice' segment. Send us an e-mail at feedback@srteachers.org.au and we'll tell you how you can get involved.

The VicSRC **Represent!** Resource Kit has advice on how to conduct a student forum.

VISTA members can access a sample mascot introduction letter, a suggestion box form template and other resources to support greater student involvement, in the Members Only section of our website at <http://srteachers.ning.com>

continued next page ...

VISTA currently receives no additional funding to operate its programs and relies heavily on memberships to support its programs. Visit us at <http://srteachers.ning.com> or e-mail us at vista@srteachers.org.au for details on how to join.

SAVE THE DATES:

Our Executive Team has been hard at work to lock in key dates for the rest of 2014. Be sure to add these dates to your diary so you can join us at one of our upcoming events.

VISTA MeetUps:

Throughout the year, VISTA hosts a series of “Meet Ups” to allow SRC Teacher Advisers to meet and chat with those from other local schools in similar roles.

We also offer informal professional development and the opportunity to share stories and obtain resources.

Our MeetUps for 2014 are scheduled for:

- **Thursday 19th June at 5pm**
Narre Warren South P-12 College
- **Thursday 4th September**
Venue to be advised
- **Thursday 27th November**
Venue to be advised

We are also working on some online events to cater for SRC support teachers in regional and remote locations.

Further details and bookings can be made via our website at:

<http://srctechners.ning.com/>



VISTA Annual General Meeting:

With VISTA now becoming an incorporated association, we are required to hold an Annual General Meeting each year to review the previous year, present an annual report and elect a new executive team.

The date for the 2014 VISTA AGM is scheduled for Thursday 4th September.

To stand for the VISTA Executive or to vote at the AGM you must be a current financial member of the organisation.

Membership forms and prices can be downloaded from our website.

Student Voice Research and Practice Facebook Group

www.facebook.com/groups/studentvoicepage/

This open **facebook** group was initially established by 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 on Facebook

Connect has a presence on **facebook**. Find us at:



www.facebook.com/pages/Connect/360372760717566

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

Student Voice Conference

Accomplishments, Dilemmas, and Aspirations

24-26 June, 2014; University of Cambridge, UK



Draft program:

Tuesday, June 24

- 9.00 **Welcome and Overview:**
Alison Cook-Sather - an overview of the 2.5 days
- 9.15 **Nine Areas of Inquiry & Six Partnerships:** *facilitated by Roger Holdsworth* - picking up from last year with 'Commissions of Inquiry': 1
- 10.40 **Explorations of Research and Practice in Diverse Settings:** Concurrent sessions: Interactive explorations of research/practices/projects; to be shared previously and grouped around themes/topics/contexts
- 12.00 **Lunch and Networking**
- 13.00 **Round Tables: Continued and New Directions for Practice and Scholarship (Part 1):** Like-level groups (elementary, middle, secondary, and higher education teachers, researchers, policy makers, etc) informally share exciting practices, research projects, etc
- 14.15 **Students as Researchers:** Framing by scholars of this work, presentations by student researchers, and reflections by adult partners on lessons learned (*including Jean Courtney, Bethan Morgan, and Roger Holdsworth*)
- 15.45 **Commissions of Inquiry Meetings 2**

Wednesday, June 25

- 9.00 **Explorations of Research and Practice in Diverse Settings:** Concurrent sessions: Interactive explorations of research/practices/projects; to be shared previously and grouped around themes/topics/contexts
- 10.15 **'Deep Dilemma' Round Tables and Large-Group Sharing:** Cross-level group discussions of issues people are already grappling with or issues raised during the conference thus far
- 11.25 **The Appropriation and Distortion of Student Voice:** *facilitated by Susan Groundwater-Smith*
- 12.00 **Lunch and Networking**
- 13.00 **Round Tables: Continued and New Directions for Practice and Scholarship (Part 2):** Continue like-level groups (elementary, middle, secondary, and higher education teachers, researchers, policy makers, etc) informally share exciting practices, research projects, etc.
- 14.10 **How Do We Problematiser?** Individual reflection, small-group work, and whole-group discussion in response to the question: "*How do we continue to problematise our work and open up new reflexive spaces in the ongoing project of student voice?*"
- 15.30 **Commissions of Inquiry Meetings 3:** Synthesise thoughts and prepare for presentations to whole group tomorrow morning

Thursday, June 26

- 9.00 **Reports from the Commissions of Inquiry**
- 10.30 **Where Have We Come From? Where Are We Going?** What has changed and developed over the past 3-4 years? How have these seminars contributed? What now?

An exciting and interactive opportunity to share stories, research, perspectives, concerns and plans. This year's Student Voice Conference is the final in this planned series.

The draft program presented here is still being formed and expressions of interest for leading or taking part in discussions are now being accepted.

For more information and to express your interest in attending, contact:

Alison Cook-Sather
Jean Rudduck Visiting Scholar;
Homerton College, University
of Cambridge, UK
acooksat@brynmawr.edu
Deadline: May 1



<http://yatst.com/>

YATST: Unleashing the Power for Learning



Our Goal:

Increase student engagement, learning and voice in decision making by creating a partnership between students, faculty and the community to increase relevance, relationships, rigor and shared responsibility in Vermont schools.

How do we achieve this goal?

Relevance, relationships, rigor and shared responsibility are nationally recognized as the building blocks of student engagement.

YATST schools conduct **action** research to first establish a baseline for the presence of these qualities in their schools. They bring this data out to 'stakeholders' (students, faculty, school boards, community members) and lead discussions about their findings to better understand causes and explore possible actions. They then commit to a change effort and carefully track the impact of their work.

What are the specifics of a full YATST school commitment?

YATST schools agree to:

1. Create a youth-adult team which will commit to this work for (at least) two years. Students on the team represent a cross-section of the student body
2. Embed this initiative within the school day to the greatest extent possible (ideally a credit-bearing class)
3. Participate in multi-school retreats for training and team planning purposes five days a year
4. Enroll in a graduate level course (adult team members)
5. Institutionalize this working group so that it becomes a permanent decision making body within the school

In all instances, the principals are members of the team and strong advocates for this work.

Not all schools are ready to make this 'Full YATST commitment' and need a start-up year or seek alternative ways to be involved. YATST is fully supportive of 'differentiated membership' and willing to explore with any interested school what that might look like.

What does YATST look like in action?

One example....

The Peoples Academy YATST survey revealed that one in three **students** disagreed 'somewhat' or 'strongly' that: *"Teachers check in regularly to see if I am learning and adjust instruction based on what they hear"*. In marked contrast, 97% of **teachers** 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they *"regularly check in with students to see if they are learning and adjust instruction based on what I hear"*.

The team was struck by this discrepancy, and concerned by the widespread student perception that they have so little voice in classroom curriculum and instructional choices. They brought this concern to faculty and together decided to institute a mid-semester student feedback survey and classroom discussion process. In this way, at least once a semester, every student at PA has the opportunity to share how the class is working for him or her, witness the teacher's response to feedback, and set personal learning goals.

UP for Learning offers strategies, tools and expert coaching for building a school community in which learning is engaging for everyone and youth are fully empowered. Vital youth-adult partnerships lie at the heart of this vision. YATST remains UP for Learning's signature training program and the fullest expression of our core values and principles.

For more information about UP for Learning, go to yatst.com or contact Director Helen Beattie at hbeattie@gmail.com.



The **UP for Learning** newsletter provides a brief snapshot of our work. It documents our efforts, strengthens communication between retreats, sparks reflection and celebration and inspires others. Partnership — we can learn a great deal from each other!

NEWSLETTER DESIGN BY DANA DWINELL-YARDLEY.

StudentVoice (UK)

StudentVoice (UK) is hosting its first National Conference on July 7th 2014. The Conference will take place at the University of London Union from 12:00 noon to 5:30 pm. This is the first ever **StudentVoice** conference and is sure to be an exciting experience.

What is StudentVoice?

StudentVoice is an organisation, supported by the Phoenix Education Trust, which is working to become the representative body for 11-18 year old students. This is irrespective of the means of education they are pursuing – school, college or in an alternative education provider. We support and empower young people who want to have our voices heard in the discussions that concern us – about education, schools and the wider community. All our key decisions are taken in particular by the National Executive, made up entirely of students. Our next elections will be at the Conference 2014!

What is the conference about?

StudentVoice belongs to us, the students. We need to become the recognised voice of 11-18 year old students.

This conference is about us deciding how to do that. How can we best represent the views of students? What should we be fighting for?

Anyone who is between the ages of 11 and 18 can attend, and most of our sessions will be targeted at that demographic. We understand that a number of teachers will have to accompany some students to the event, and so some of our sessions will be targeted at teachers as well. We also welcome student groups, schools or organisations that work with young people to organise 45-minute long workshops. Applications can be made here: <http://bit.ly/SV2014Work>

Above all else though, we are excited to elect the next generation to our National Executive. Only students who are registered members can vote or stand in the election, but you can register for free on the day as well.

StudentVoice represents the opinions and views of
school students just like you
from all across the country. It's time to listen.



Where is it?

The Conference will be held at the University of London Union, Malet Street (in Bloomsbury, Central London). It is within walking distance from Euston Station which is easily accessible from all the major train stations in London. Euston Station is on the Circle, Hammersmith & City, Metropolitan, Northern, and Victoria lines on the London Underground network.

How do you register?

There are two ways of registering for the conference, one for students and one for teachers.

- If students are attending in a delegation with a teacher or youth worker, the adult needs to register here: <http://bit.ly/SV2014Tea>
- Students attending unaccompanied by an adult need a parent or guardian to register them here: <http://bit.ly/SV2014Stu>

More information on the conference can be found on our website: studentvoiceco.uk/conference-2014

See you in London!

James McAsh
james@phoenixeducation.co.uk

OBESSU

The Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions is the platform for cooperation between the national school student unions active in general secondary and secondary vocational education in Europe. It was founded in April 1975 in Dublin, Ireland and brings together Member and Candidate Organisations from more than 20 European countries. All Member Organisations are independent, national, representative and democratic school student organisations.

As OBESSU we stand together...

- to represent the school students as stakeholders of their educational systems, and in issues concerning their lives;
- to provide the national school student unions with assistance and support and to co-operate for the development of school student representative structures;
- to encourage and enable exchange of experience and good practice among the national school students unions;
- to promote equal access to education and to strive for the end of all discrimination and injustice within the educational systems;
- to contribute to the development of democratic educational systems in Europe, that promote active citizenship in all forms;
- to promote solidarity and understanding between young people.



<http://www.obessu.org/>

One big idea: young people making change



The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc (YACVic) is proud to present its new resource to support young people and those who work with them. **Yerp** is an innovative online toolkit for 12-25 year olds who want to make change in their communities. It's also a practical guide for organisations and groups who want to engage young people in what they do.

Yerp is based upon YACVic's 2004 youth participation handbooks, *Taking Young People Seriously*. Taking these much-loved guides as a starting point, YACVic, through the work of Leo Fieldgrass, asked over 300 young people and youth sector workers throughout Victoria how they would refresh and update them into exciting, modern resources.

Twenty different consultations were held by Leo around the state. YACVic hit the road (and rail) to speak with groups in Bendigo, Broadford, Brunswick, Broadmeadows, Corio, Dandenong, Frankston, Melbourne, Mornington, Pakenham, Richmond, Stawell, Sunshine, and Wonthaggi.

These groups were asked questions about two now-familiar terms in youth work: what is **'youth engagement'** and **'youth participation'**?

Workers in Corio told us that engagement is:

"creative empowerment... relationship development... youth-led and decision-making... non-judgemental, non-tokenistic and validated."

In Brimbank, local government workers told us that:

"Collaborative, inter-generational work is vital to increasing community cohesion and perceptions of community safety."

In Bendigo, youth practitioners told us some of the barriers to participation and engagement they faced were 'money', 'community perceptions of youth capabilities', and 'not knowing how to do "youth engagement" (although understanding the goal)'.

YACVic members met us at the YACVic office, and told us engagement and participation is about:

"thinking about young people in the process, as being open and up front about their level of participation they are actually looking for."

"having the dialogue and interrogating each other... 'why do we want this?'... and young people also doing this back with us."

"Flexible structures... based on their [young people's] needs."

Representatives of youth-led organisations told us that youth participation is through campaigning, getting young people to be the drivers in their own communities – "we don't hide under the fact that you're making a big social impact". They told us that they make their organisations 'youth-friendly' by creating "a really communal set-up... There's no closed doors."

We asked young people in Broadmeadows what making change in a community meant to them, and they

told us it was:

"Being able to lead others and show them your visions for the future"

and

"Helping the people out around you."

Young people in Pakenham told us the barriers they faced to being an active part of their community included stereotypes of young people and judgement from older members of the community, young people lacking confidence to take part, and adults not taking young people seriously.

And every group we spoke with gave us their ideas for how they would update the *Taking Young People Seriously* books. Along the way, Leo blogged the development of the project at <https://engagewithyouth.wordpress.com/>, keeping people updated in a completely transparent way. This blog received over 1200 views from 15 different countries!

Such deep consultation obviously created a whole load of data for the project to sift through! Fortunately, this process was guided by an excellent Steering Committee comprised of young people and youth sector representatives. This group helped synthesise the feedback into some guiding principles for any youth engagement work:

Respect

- Recognising and celebrating diverse groups of young people.
- Understanding and promoting positive views of young people.
- Offering meaningful opportunities to young people.



Young people making change
www.yerp.org.au

Commitment

- Remaining sincere, transparent and reflective.
- Creating a supportive, welcoming environment.
- Building a consistent culture in organisations and communities.

Exchange

- Creating equal partnerships between younger and older people.
- Enabling open communication across generations
- Offering opportunities for shared learning

The steering group worked to collate the feedback from the consultation sessions about what new resources we should create. Young people had told us they should be **colourful, fun, comic, cartoony, graffiti-influenced, 'random', meme-like and simple**. Youth workers had told us they should be **simple, clear, bright, colourful**, and **'youthful'**. And both younger and older people told us we needed to create something that was based around a **website**, that could be used on **mobiles**, that was **"like an app"**, with case studies and videos.

The result is an information-packed website (www.yerp.org.au) that's perfectly suited to smartphones and mobile devices. And it unique, fun design reflects the feedback we were given.

Yerp has been created to support one big idea: that young people have an important role in shaping the present and future of Victoria's communities. We know that lots of young Victorians volunteer their time to improve the lives of others. Yerp will give them the tools to continue this work and encourage more young people to get involved in their local area.

Yerp will also give community groups and local councils practical advice to better involve young people in what they do. It supports YACVic's vision for a Victorian community in which all young people are valued as active participants. Meaningfully involving young people ensures a stronger and better community for everyone, and that's what **Yerp** is all about!

To do all this, **Yerp** has 10 instructional topic areas, ranging from skills building and project planning to use of the media. Each area contains a number of 'how to' articles, downloadable factsheets and video examples.

To use **Yerp**, go to:

www.yerp.org.au

This project was funded by the Victorian Government. For more details, contact:

Leo Fieldgrass
lfieldgrass@yacvic.org.au



Forum

More than 12 years ago, Michael Fielding edited an issue of the UK-based journal **Forum** around ideas about **'Student Voice'**. This was a highly influential set of articles from around the world, asking questions that have continued to resonate during that decade plus.

Forum has now revisited some of those ideas with an international 'in progress' section of its latest issue (Vol 56, No 1). Jane McGregor has played a key role in coordinating contributions and introducing 'student voice work in four countries'. What then follows are four glimpses of initiatives that were discussed at last year's Student Voice Conference in Cambridge. As well as a discussion of the way that the VicSRC's 'Teach the Teacher' initiative establishes spaces for partnership and dialogue within schools, **Jean Courtney** outlines Ontario's Student Voice Initiative, **Emily Nelson** from New Zealand analyses 'governance partnerships' within classrooms, as students and teachers negotiate meaning and 'disrupt' traditional hierarchies, and **Alison Cook-Sather** provides an example of a staff-student partnership in higher education in the United States.

The issue continues to provide fascinating and provoking reading for all those interested in ideas about student voice and active decision-making and partnership roles for young people within schools and other areas of education.

On-line access to Forum is available at

www.worlds.co.uk/FORUM

The index and a link to purchase access to this issue is at:

www.worlds.co.uk/forum/content/pdfs/56/issue56_1.asp

While not providing free access to this current issue, **free** online access to all issues is available **three years after their publication**. So hunt out the original **Student Voice** issue of **Forum**: Volume 43 Number 2 from 2001 at:

www.worlds.co.uk/forum/content/pdfs/43/issue43_2.asp

Roger Holdsworth



News and Reviews

Partners in Wellbeing Conference, Vic



KidsMatter is all about participation. That means participation from everyone from the Principal to preps and families as well.

In *Connect* 205 we wrote about our upcoming conference *Partners in Wellbeing*. The inquiry unit and student session at that Conference is promoting the voice of the student to ask: “*What makes your school shine in its promotion of mental health and wellbeing?*”

But how do we make this session truly ‘by the students’, not just ‘for the students’?

Well, we’re flipping standard conference organisation. Sure there will be adults to welcome, manage transitions and keep time but everything else is in the hands of the students. Through our use of a world cafe approach, the students will determine the direction of their conversations, guided by the four inquiry questions. Table changes will actively encourage sharing of opinions and ideas and stories. Tables will even be managed, guided and mentored by senior students from Methodist Ladies College and Castlemaine Secondary College.

This is going to be a truly amazing conference session and we can’t wait till a student takes the stage at the conclusion of the conference alongside a principal, a school support officer, a parent and internationally renowned educator Dr. George Otero, to share the ideas and inspirations of the student session and to clearly and visibly demonstrate the importance of the ‘*voices from the schoolyard*’.

For more information on the *Partners in Wellbeing Conference*, or to register students for the ‘*Voices from the Schoolyard*’ session on May 6, go to our Conference web site:

www.kidsmatter.edu.au/primary/states-and-territories/vic/partnersinwellbeing

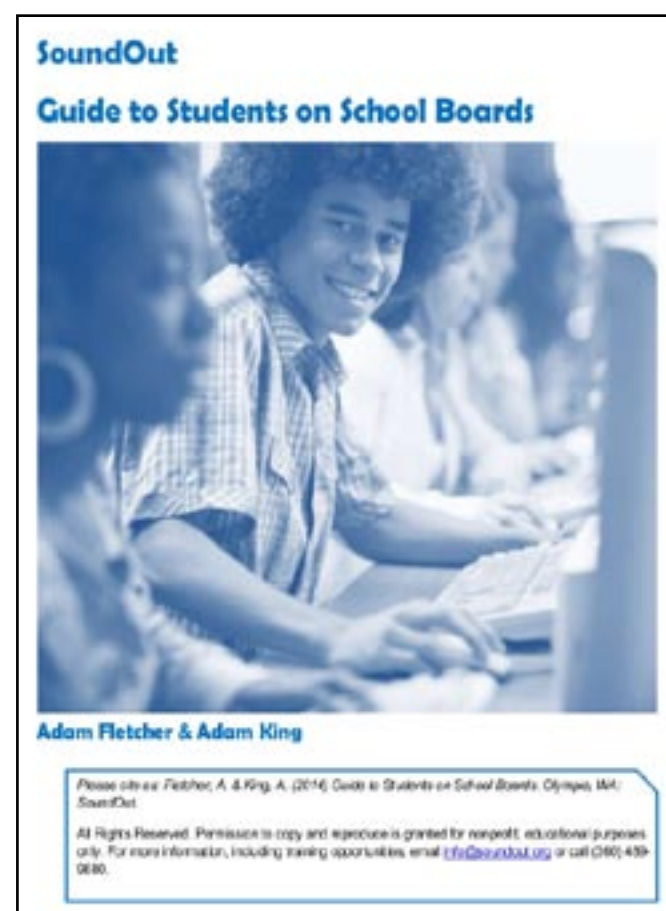
Paul Shelton
Coordinator, Special Projects, KidsMatter
Paul.Shelton@pai.edu.au



Guide to Students on School Boards

The **SoundOut Guide to Students on School Boards** provides information, research, tips, and more about how to get students on boards of education. Written for *SoundOut* by a student activist and national advocate, the **Guide** can be found at:

www.slideshare.net/bicyclingfish/soundout-guide-to-students-on-school-boards



Introducing the Guide:

“Students and adults across the United States and Canada are trying like never before to get regular, full-voting positions for students on school boards.

“*SoundOut* promotes democracy in schools by teaching that people who are most affected by decisions should make decisions. That especially includes school boards.”

About This Guide

“This is a short guide to how to get students on school boards. We conducted research, facilitated workshops, and led a local campaign to get a student on a school board. Through our work, we have identified some best practices and other information we think YOU should know.

“Following are tips, tricks, and ideas about students on school boards.”



The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

October 16, 2013, was Blog Action Day, where thousands of different bloggers from all over the world posted about the same theme. That year's theme was **Human Rights**.

After surfing the net trying to get an idea of what I could contribute, I kept coming across articles about how governments seem to be ignoring people's human rights more and more these days. The thing was, I didn't even know what these magical "human rights" were. Where did these rights come from? Who decided what they were? Are they international law? That's when I came across the Universal Declaration and decided to turn them into an accessible poster because I knew that a lot of people had probably never read them either.

After the horror of World War II, the United Nations was formed in 1945. The UN charter's main two objectives are 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war' and 'to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights.' In 1946, the UN Commission on Human Rights was established. Chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, the commission drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and it was adopted by the General Assembly in 1948 'as a common standard of achievement for all people and nations.' Today, it is the job of the Human Rights Council, an important body of the United Nations, to promote and protect people's human rights around the world.

This poster uses a simplified version of the Declaration. You can read the original wording [here](#). For more information about the history of the Declaration I suggest this [article](#). For more info about Blog Action Day and to find contributions from other bloggers, visit the [official website](#).

POSTER AVAILABLE:

I'm very proud to announce I'm selling this poster in partnership with Amnesty International Australia. You can get the 40cm x 85cm (15" x 33") glossy poster from their online store for only \$8 AUD: <http://shop.amnesty.org.au/products/udhr-poster>

(As they're being shipped from Australia, international postage is quite expensive – you can save if you buy multiple copies for your school or friends.)

Gavin Aung Than
Zen Pencils, Melbourne
from: <http://zenpencils.com/>

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

[www.asprinworld.com/
student_action_teams](http://www.asprinworld.com/student_action_teams)

Oops!

Did anyone notice? Last issue of *Connect* (#205) was accidentally listed as **December 2014** on the front cover - instead of **February 2014**. We were definitely getting ahead of ourselves there! Hopefully we are right this time.

A **resource kit** for students and teachers interested to implement a **Teach the Teacher** program at your school has been developed by the VicSRC. It is part of the **Represent! Plus** resources on the VicSRC website: www.vicsrc.org.au/resources/representplus

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

**See the full
publication
catalogue in
Connect 200**

Connect On-Line Subscription (6 issues annually e-mailed to you FREE):

Simply supply your e-mail address (below or by e-mail) and name and phone number (in case of bounces). There is no cost; however donations to support **Connect's** work are appreciated and acknowledged.



☐ I enclose a donation to support the work of **Connect**.

or: ☐ I am already a subscriber to **Connect**.

A: Donation to Connect: \$

Connect Publications:

		normal price	Connect subscriber price	
... copies	<i>Student Action Teams</i>	\$33	\$27.50*	\$
... copies	<i>Reaching High</i> (with DVD) \$	\$33	\$27.50*	\$
... copies	<i>Reaching High</i> (without DVD)	\$22	\$16.50*	\$
... copies	<i>Switched On to Learning</i> (maximum of 10 copies per order)	\$ 6.60	\$ 5.50*	\$
... copies	<i>Democracy Starts Here</i>	\$ 6.60	\$ 5.50*	\$

Publications available from Connect:

		normal price	Connect subscriber price	
... copies	<i>Foxfire 25 Years</i>	\$22	\$11*	\$
... copies	<i>Sometimes a Shining Moment</i> (1 available) \$	\$22	\$11*	\$
... copies	<i>A Foxfire Christmas</i> (1 available) \$	\$22	\$11*	\$
... copies	<i>Foxfire 9</i> (1 available) \$	\$11	\$ 5.50*	\$
... copies	<i>Students and Work</i> (maximum of 10 copies per order)	\$ 6.60	\$ 5.50*	\$
... copies	<i>SRC Pamphlets Set</i> (2 sets available) \$	\$ 6.60	\$ 5.50*	\$

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

B: Total for publications: \$

NOTE: all amounts include 10% GST and postage/packaging within Australia

(Postage: **Outside Australia** add \$5 per copy of publications \$.....)

Payment and Mailing:

I enclose a cheque /money-order/official order for: **A + B: Total Payment:** \$

(make cheques payable to **Connect**; payment in Australian dollars please; contact **Connect** by e-mail to make arrangement to pay by EFT on invoice)

Mailing details: send to:

Name (attention): _____

Organisation (school etc): _____

Mailing Address: _____

(Town/Suburb:) _____

(State & Postcode:) _____

Country: _____

E-mail (free subscription): _____

Phone number: _____



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*.

Donate to support *Connect*

Connect now has no income except donations and sales of literature (opposite). By supporting *Connect* with donations, you keep us going. 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. We gratefully acknowledge all contributions in *Connect*.

ASPRINworld: the *Connect* website!

www.asprinworld.com/connect

Connect has a website at *ASPRINworld*; *ASPRIN* is the *Australian Student Participation Resource and Information Network* ("a cure for your student participation headaches") – a still-emerging concept. The *Connect* section of the website is slowly growing, with information about subscribing, recent back issue contents and summaries of and order information for *Student Councils and Beyond*, *Student Action Teams*, *Reaching High* and *Switched On to Learning*.

There are also links from the indexes of recent issues to their archived PDFs (see below).

Connect is now also
archived and available electronically:
research.acer.edu.au/connect

All issues of *Connect* are being archived through the ACER Research Repository: *ACEReSearch*. *Connect* issues from #1 to #194 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.

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 on:

(03) 9489 9052 or (03) 8344 9637

Australian:

Research Developments (ACER, Camberwell, Vic) Web version: February 2014

Student Leadership Program (Elisabeth Murdoch College, Langwarrin, Vic) Flyer - March 2014

International:

Guide to Students on School Boards (Adam Fletcher and Adam King; SoundOut) At: www.slideshare.net/bicyclingfish/soundout-guide-to-students-on-school-board

Student Voice-by-Numbers (Gerry Czerniawski; in *Research in Secondary Teacher Education* Vol 2 No 1) April 2012 pp 14-18

UP for Learning (YATST, Vermont, USA) Winter 2014

'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



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

www.aspinworld.com/Connect
www.aspinworld.com/Connect
www.aspinworld.com/Connect
www.aspinworld.com/Connect
www.aspinworld.com/Connect
www.aspinworld.com/Connect
www.aspinworld.com/Connect



Connect On-Line!

All back issues of **Connect** from 1979 to the present (that's over 34 years!) are freely available on-line! Thanks to the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), all back issues of **Connect** have been scanned or up-loaded and are on the ACER's Research Repository: **ACEReSearch**.

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

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!



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

research.acer.edu.au/connect

Free subscription and materials order form: **page 36**

