The VicSRC acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government. The VicSRC is auspiced by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.
The VicSRC would like to thank the following organisations:

- All schools, students and SRCs in Victoria that have hosted, participated in and assisted with VicSRC activities over the past 12 months
- The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria
- The University of Melbourne
- Second Strike
- Victorian Institute of SRC Teacher Advisors (VISTA)
- Connect magazine
- The Victorian Electoral Commission
- Victorian Rural Youth Services
- Exodus Hoodies
- The Bastow Institute for Educational Leadership
- ROSA – Residential Outdoor Schools Association
- Our Say

The VicSRC would also like to thank the following individuals:

- VicSRC Executive 2013-2014
- The Hon. Minister for Education, Martin Dixon
- Supporters: David Mould, Roger Holdsworth and Scott Duncan
- Volunteers and Congress Crew
- Krista Seddon, VicSRC Coordinator
- YACVic staff: Leo Fieldgrass, Georgie Ferrari, Catalina Sinclair, Liz Leahy and Ian Johnson
- Kate Wilde, VicSRC Regional Conference facilitator
- Piper Huynh and Krystal Walker, photographers
- Helga Svendsen, consultant
- Matthew Gordon, Our Say
Introduction

The VicSRC
The Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC) is the peak body representing students in Victoria. The VicSRC is auspiced by the Youth Affairs Council Victoria, and funded through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Victoria (DEECD).

Our Aims
• Strengthen SRCs and student voice
• Be a representative body for secondary school students in Victoria
• Facilitate and coordinate action by secondary students at all levels
• Be democratic and participatory

Aims of the VicSRC Congress
The VicSRC Congress is an annual conference of secondary students from schools throughout Victoria. It aims to provide an opportunity for these students to raise issues concerning their school communities and propose ideas to address these issues. The resolutions created by students at Congress become the agenda for the VicSRC and its Executive for the following year.

In addition, Congress involves wide ranging discussions on how to strengthen SRCs, networking opportunities with other SRCs and the opportunity to stand for election to the VicSRC Student Executive.

Organising the VicSRC Congress
The VicSRC Congress was planned and run by the VicSRC Student Executive with support from the VicSRC Coordinator and volunteers. Several organisations and individuals supported the Executive in their preparations for Congress and the team acknowledges their expertise and encouragement.

Information about Congress was sent to SRCs and support staff in all Victorian secondary schools. SRCs were each invited to nominate up to five representatives to attend Congress and to identify issues they wished to discuss amongst their peers.

Our Vision
We want an education system where learning is enjoyable, practical and meaningful, and where Student Representative Councils (SRCs) are valued and supported to contribute to making this an ongoing reality.

We want the VicSRC to foster connections between SRCs and to be recognised as the peak body for secondary students in Victoria.
900 students consulted in the lead up to Congress

15 volunteers

1 re-tweet from the Premier of Victoria

162 student delegates voted on seven key priority areas for 2014-2015

1 visit from the minister for Education Martin Dixon

2 staff

4 media stories
Throughout the past year, the VicSRC has experienced a time of great change and increased opportunity. In August 2013, delegates at that year’s Congress elected an entirely new Student Executive team (apart for one student) and a new Coordinator started in the role during the same month. As a new team, we faced a steep learning curve but we also brought new ideas and a fresh perspective to the organisation.

The Executive

During 2013-2014, the VicSRC had many opportunities to represent students’ opinions to various stakeholders and decision-makers in the state on a wide range of issues. Our journey as an Executive began at the 8th Annual VicSRC Congress in 2013. As a newly elected Executive, we were guided by the formal proposals passed by the 90 delegates during the Congress proceedings. During our Executive term, we managed the affairs of the organisation while continuing to work on our assigned portfolios.

Our monthly meetings continued to be held at the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic). In addition to meetings, we attended two training camps, which allowed us time for intense planning and visioning work. While we spent much time doing work for the organisation, we also were able to use camp time to bond, thereby creating a much more effective and cohesive Executive team.

With such a grounded role in the education sector, the VicSRC has been able to increase the depth and breadth of the programs the organisation offers. This includes the further development of our Teach the Teacher program, and the continued expansion of our resources and initiatives for schools, primarily through our major resource Represent! and associated Represent! Plus documents.

VicSRC Regional Conferences

A key element of our program is providing support to strengthen SRCs across the state. We do this annually through our series of SRC Regional Student Conferences. This year, we held 12 conferences around Victoria with attendance 616 students and 90 teachers from 94 schools. The smallest conference was held at Portland Secondary College with 24 students and 4 staff in attendance. The largest conference was held at John Fawkner College with 86 students and 9 staff attendance.

In 2014, VicSRC hosted 12 regional conferences with attendance of 616 students and 90 teachers from 94 schools - an increase of 157% in student attendance from 2013.
Students who attended the conferences worked on skills to build the capacity of their SRCs. They publicly defined a range of issues of concern to students and articulated student views on these (thus also highlighting roles of SRCs beyond traditional limits). Finally, students selected issues that were brought to Congress in the form of resolutions. The priority issues that were discussed for students across all regions of Victoria were

- Technology (including issues with technology, inappropriate use, and lack of access).
- Engagement in school, lack of motivation and disruptive behaviour in class.
- Student wellbeing services and support (including access to confidential support and services in schools, mental health issues, peer pressure, bullying, fitting in and self-esteem, and lack of sleep).

**Teach the Teacher**

Our flagship program this year was the Teach the Teacher professional development program. We received core funding from the DEECD for 2013-2014 but additionally received $50,000 to roll out the VicSRC model of school-based professional development for teachers that is initiated, organised and run by students. In 2013-2014, the VicSRC provided training and support to 10 schools around Victoria to complete the program. The project was externally evaluated and recommendations were suggested for the continuation and expansion of the program. It has opened up a space for constructive dialogue between students and teachers in these 10 schools, assisting them to address issues faced in the classroom by both students and teachers.

**Advocacy on behalf of secondary school students**

The VicSRC has continued to play an active role in the advocacy for students’ rights at a legislative level. The organisation maintains a key position in departmental consultations and in the past year we have made submissions on issues such as the importance of teachers providing ongoing feedback to their students. Further, the VicSRC has continued our position with key stakeholders, especially in liaison with the DEECD.
This year we have presented to the DEECD, met with the Education Minister Martin Dixon and consulted on student views from Congress, discussed issues with the Department Secretary Sonia Sharpe, consulted with the National Children’s Commissioner Megan Mitchell, spoken on behalf of students on several panels to aspiring principals and teachers, presented at university lectures, led the Junior School Congress and taken part in many more meetings.

Recognition Awards
The VicSRC is passionate about supporting and recognising the excellent work of SRCs across Victoria. Our primary means of recognising SRC best practice is through our annual VicSRC Recognition Awards. These awards aim to give credit and recognition for the work of SRCs – work that often goes uncelebrated. The awards for 2012-2013 were presented at the 2013 Congress by Christine Fyffe MP, Member for Evelyn.

Communication
In the first half of 2014 VicSRC rolled out a new logo, website and social media platform. The logo was designed to be youthful, fun and professional. The organisation moved to a monthly online VicSRC e-Newsletter instead of the more traditional paper-based newsletter. By the end of the financial year, we had 622 subscribers and a monthly click rate of around 23%, which is above industry average. Our Facebook page has grown from 553 likes to 673 likes and our Twitter account has grown from 122 followers to 244 followers.

We love sharing stories written by the VicSRC Executive team: examples of student voice in schools, events, resources and opportunities for teachers and students.

Looking forward
The organisation has come so far in a short space of time. As our Executive term ends, and another begins, we wish the new Executive all the best of luck. Their journey is just beginning, and with them come fresh ideas and experiences, all of which will help to build the organisation into the future, and strengthen the goal that all students will have a voice, and that those voices will be heard across Victoria.

Margaret Tran on behalf of the 2013-14 Student Executive
Tess Shacklock, Templestowe College; Emily Smith, Frankston High School; Tevhid Ajkic, Minaret Secondary College; Sarah Bibby, Bendigo Senior Secondary College; Kristen Sellings; Yarram Secondary College; Bridin Walker, Frankston High School; Margaret Tran, The Mac.Robertson Girls’ High School; Samantha Chapman, Casey Grammar School; Jordyn Kruger, Mooroolbark College; Ron Garcia, Lalor Secondary College; Qais Sadat, Minaret Secondary College; Sophie Williams, Highview College; Bryan Tapping, Templestowe College; Shannen Henrickson, Beaufort Secondary College.
Our aim for every Congress is to get students involved and hear what really matters to them; the 9th annual VicSRC Congress was nothing short of this. In 2014, we hosted the biggest Congress to date, with 175 students in attendance. This year was a great opportunity for delegates to connect with a larger spectrum of students and participate in some heated debates.

The bright eyed and bushy tailed Congress delegates arrived on the Friday morning at our new venue (Lord Somers Camp), prepared for the exciting day that followed. We jumped straight into teamwork and getting to know each other activities, before moving into an introduction to how the 2014 Congress would be run. Also in our introduction session, we had a brief report back from the 2013-2014 Executive team on all of their work throughout the previous year.

We then proceeded to the first session, an ‘issues cafe’, where delegates got a general feel for the issues that the students of Victoria have brought to the table during the VicSRC Regional Conferences. These included topics of sustainability in schools, the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), bullying and student wellbeing services.

Students then had the opportunity to think through one particular issue more deeply in smaller groups and start preparing proposals for the formal Congress sitting. Promptly after this session, we moved into the topic of how we were going to debate and discuss issues in formal settings. We were off and ready to start our first session of Congress.

One of the day’s highlights was a visit from the Minister for Education, the Hon. Martin Dixon. Once VicSRC representatives met the Minister and gave him a Congress 2014 t-shirt, he was very happy to show it off to the delegates as he made a motivating and fascinating speech to the delegation. He then opened up the floor to take on-the-spot questions from the students. After graciously and honestly answering them all, he kindly then opened the first official sitting of Congress and stayed to listen to the debate.

The first sitting of Congress was filled with great ideas and debate; no one was short of ideas to share. After our discussions, Congress was adjourned until Saturday. We then moved into our formal dinner, heard a talk from our Returning Officer (Sarah Bibby) about our Executive nomination process.
and received an inspiring talk on the value of leadership and volunteering from ex-Executive member from 2007, Sarah Chadzynski. We wrapped up the day with a Disney inspired Cluedo night — putting the colours back into Disney.

The next day was quite busy as we had our final Congress sitting, Executive nomination speeches, voting, prioritising our issues, and an advocacy workshop. We managed to get everything done, whilst sailing smoothly. The new 2014-2015 VicSRC Executive Committee was elected in the most hotly contested election, with over 40 students nominating for 15 positions on the VicSRC Executive. Delegates left with a smile on their faces, and seven resolutions were passed to guide the Executive’s work in 2014-2015.

The VicSRC could not have asked for a better level of participation, dedication and hard work from all delegates who attended the 9th annual VicSRC Congress. From the bottom of my heart, thank you to everyone who worked tirelessly to pull this event off: the members of the 2013-2014 Executive, crew members, our coordinator and supporters. Most importantly thank you to the students who contributed to Congress 2014: you made it possible!

Samantha Chapman, Congress Coordinator 2014
**Resolutions from Congress**

**Proposals passed**

**Education Maintenance Allowance**
That the VicSRC advocate for the preservation of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) to support financially disadvantaged students, and also raise awareness of other avenues for financial support.

**Gender Identity**
That the VicSRC partner with youth service organisations to advocate for youth and create resources about sexual and gender identity acceptance and equality.

**Interschool Collaboration**
That the VicSRC resolve to establish links of communication and collaboration between schools.

**Student Wellbeing Counsellors**
That the VicSRC advocate for the government to provide extra student wellbeing counsellors for secondary schools and equivalent places of learning when requested for by schools.

**Anti-Bullying Resources**
That the VicSRC encourage schools to develop resources that promote anti-bullying and the positive actions and activities schools are taking to address this issue.

**Green Initiatives**
That the VicSRC support the implementation of green initiatives in schools. The aim of these initiatives would be to reduce our carbon footprint and to create a more positive environment in terms of sustainability.

**Extra-Curricular Activities**
That the VicSRC establish a website/platform to promote and inform both teachers and students about extra-curricular activities within the community, highlighting the benefits of participation in a diverse variety of activities.
Proposals defeated

Life skills
That the VicSRC Executive committee present to the VCAA the necessity of including a compulsory life skills subject in the curriculum.

It is proposed that the VicSRC advocates to the Department of Early Childhood and Development (DEECD) and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) for the introduction of a politics-specific component in high school education.

Autonomous learning
The VicSRC lobby the government to provide students with the opportunity to become autonomous learners through up-to-date personal equipment and greater liberty in accessing the internet.

Stress and pressure
To create a student survey for all Victorian schools to increase teachers' knowledge of schools' issues, particularly stress and pressure.

That the VicSRC investigate to find a solution to the issue of stress and pressure put on students to succeed, using the Teach the Teacher program.

Current Affairs
That the VicSRC encourage students to take interest and be aware of current issues around the world.

Learning styles
That the VicSRC introduce anonymous surveys to give to teachers to inform them about different learning styles in the classroom.

Student feedback
That the VicSRC develop an online resource where feedback is provided by students and teachers on the best ways to motivate and engage students in their education.
Where we’ve been in 2013/2014

Western Suburbs – Copperfield College Kings Park Campus
South Eastern Suburbs – Nossal High School
Eastern Suburbs – Heathmont College
Northern Suburbs – John Fawkner College
Inner-Melbourne – The Mac.Robertson Girls’ High School
Regional Bendigo – Bendigo South East College
Regional Gippsland – Yarram Secondary College
Regional Ballarat – Ballarat Grammar School
Frankston/Mornington Peninsula – McClelland College
Regional Geelong – North Geelong Secondary College
Regional North – Wangaratta High School
Regional South West - Portland Secondary College
Portsea, Bayplay Lodge
Nayook, Rubicon Outdoor Education Camp
Somers, Lord Somers Camp
Frankston High School
Bellarine Secondary College
Bentleigh Secondary College
Narre Warren P-12 College
Portland Secondary College
Ringwood Secondary College
Edenhope College
Koonung Secondary College
Heathmont College
McClelland College

VicSRC Regional Conference
VicSRC Regional Conference
VicSRC Regional Conference
VicSRC Regional Conference
VicSRC Regional Conference
VicSRC Regional Conference
VicSRC Regional Conference
VicSRC Regional Conference
VicSRC Regional Conference
VicSRC Regional Conference
Executive training camp
Executive training camp
Congress
Teach the Teacher program
Teach the Teacher program
Teach the Teacher program
Teach the Teacher program
Teach the Teacher program
Teach the Teacher program
Teach the Teacher program
Teach the Teacher program
Schools Represented at Congress

- Balwyn High School
- Bayside P-12 College
- Bendigo Senior Secondary College
- Blackburn High School
- Brauer College
- Braybrook College
- Bundoora Secondary College
- Caroline Chisholm Catholic College
- Casey Grammar School
- Copperfield College Kings Park Junior Campus
- Copperfield College Sydenham Campus
- Epping Secondary College
- Fairhills High School
- Firbank Grammar School
- Footscray City College
- Frankston High School
- Highview College
- John Fawkner College
- John Monash Science School
- Kurnai College
- Lalor Secondary College
- Loyola College
- The Mac.Robertson Girls’ High School
- Macleod College
- McKinnon Secondary College
- Melbourne Girls’ College
- Minaret College
- Mooroolbark College
- Mount Waverley Secondary College
- Mt Eliza Secondary College
- Narre Warren South P12 College
- Northern College of the Arts and Technology
- Nossal High School
- Phoenix P-12 Community College
- Reservoir High School
- Rochester Secondary College
- Ruyton Girls’ School
- Scotch College
- South Oakleigh College
- Swinburne Senior Secondary College
- Taylors Lakes Secondary College
- Templestowe College
- The University High School
- Trafalgar High School
- Wangaratta High School
- Warringa Park School
- Yarram Secondary College
We are very pleased to introduce the newly elected VicSRC Executive team for 2014–2015. As state representatives, these students will advocate on behalf of secondary school students across Victoria and guide the work of the VicSRC for the next 12 months.

**Incoming VicSRC Executive 2014/2015**

Lucas Muehleisen, John Monash Science School; Natalie Elizabeth, Northern College of the Arts and Technology; Sabrina Bassal, Minaret College; Demi Irwin, Rochester Secondary College; Kristen Sellings, Yarram Secondary College; Marine Chu, The Mac.Robertson Girls’ High School; Ron Garcia, Lalor Secondary College; Spencer Davis, Footscray City College; Qais Sadat, Minaret College; Danai Harawa, Frankston High School; Jordyn Kruger, Mooroolbark Secondary College; Tess Shacklock, Templestowe College; Samantha Chapman, Casey Grammar School; Margaret Tran, The Mac.Robertson Girls’ High School; Sam Illbitchilin, Frankston High School.
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