With the launch of The Education State, the Department of Education and Training has developed the new Framework for Improving Student Outcomes. This includes six initiatives to help schools lift student achievement, wellbeing and engagement:

1. Empowering Students and Building School Pride
2. Building Practice Excellence
3. Curriculum Planning and Assessment
4. Building Leadership Teams
5. Setting Expectation and Promoting Inclusion
6. Building Communities

Your school is required to choose one of these initiatives areas as a priority for 2016. As the peak body representing school aged students in Victoria, the Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC) welcomes the strong focus on student voice that exists within all areas.

We encourage you to consider adopting the Empowering Students and Building School Pride initiative.

This initiative offers significant opportunities for your school to develop approaches that give students a greater say in the decisions that affect their learning and their lives at school.

We know that student learning and school results are improved in schools where students are actively represented in decision making.

Student voice and participation is integral to every aspect of students’ learning and development. Practices that encourage student voice and the active participation of students are inherent to all six framework areas. Whatever your school’s priority areas, we encourage you to consider ways in which student voice and participation can be amplified.

To assist you in the development and implementation of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes, VicSRC can provide you with support and advice, resources, networks, and professional development. We have enclosed a resource with ideas that may suit your school context.

When we challenge the expectations of what students can do, the possibilities are limitless.

Find out more: www.vicsrc.org.au | 03 9627 3744 | info@vicsrc.org.au
Ideas & action resources for schools
Practical ideas that students and teachers can investigate and implement

Find out more about the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes:

✔ www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/outcomes.aspx
✔ educationstate.education.vic.gov.au

More information about the VicSRC:

✔ VicSRC: vicsrc.org.au
✔ Teach the Teacher: teachtheteacher.org.au
✔ Become a member school: vicsrc.org.au/get-involved/school-membership

Initiative 1: Empowering students and building school pride.

Schools will develop approaches that give students a greater say in the decisions that affect their learning and their lives at school. The whole school community will engage with students so they have a voice in the learning process, and fully and proudly participate in school life.

Ideas to amplify student voice and participation:

- Link the student organisation (eg. SRC) to overall school decision making through election of students to School Council and appointment to other committees and bodies
- Engage your student organisation (eg. SRC) in discussion about the role students can and should have within the school, and how this can happen
- Support Teach the Teacher approaches through which students define and highlight aspects of the school that engender pride, and aspects that need improving
- Challenge your student organisation as to its own practices of inclusion and representation – and build its competence
- Involve students in producing student-led media (including social media representation) about the school
- Support a group of students to produce the school newsletter on behalf of the school
- Build the competent and effective role of student leaders at each level of school, including allocation of resources for training and succession planning amongst student representatives
- Appoint specific positions of support for student voice and participation
- Include distributed support for student voice and participation in a range of job descriptions throughout the school

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Initiative 2: Building practice excellence.

Teachers, principals and schools will work together to exchange knowledge and ideas, develop and strengthen teaching and assessment approaches, build a culture of collaboration, master the use of learning interventions and student data, and enhance feedback to students and staff.

Ideas to amplify student voice and participation:

- Engage your student organisation (eg. SRC) in discussion about the school's criteria for practice excellence, of learning teaching approaches and of assessment
- Implement a Teach the Teacher approach to provide a student-led space for discussions between students and teachers about how the school can build practice excellence
- Support a team of students to formally evaluate specific practices as a curricular or co-curricular initiative
- Formally adopt a regular program of eliciting student feedback on curriculum content, processes, pedagogy and assessment
- Conduct a program of collaborative classroom/learning observations by students and teachers, feeding in to discussions
- Engage students as technology leaders within the school
- Initiate a form of peer or cross-age tutoring within the school

Initiative 2: Curriculum planning and assessment.

Schools will embed a culture of curriculum planning and assessing the impact of learning programs, and adjusting them to suit individual student needs so that students can reach their potential. Schools will strengthen their use of student assessment data and feedback to evaluate students’ progress, monitor the impact of teaching and adjust learning programs and interventions.

Ideas to amplify student voice and participation:

- Engage your student organisation (eg. SRC) in discussion about criteria for curriculum planning and assessment, ways of collecting feedback and other data, and meaning of results
- Implement a Teach the Teacher approach to provide a student-led space for discussions about how the school plans curriculum and assessment, and processes of feedback to teachers and students
- Establish a Student Action Team to investigate responses to data collected
- Seek and include student views and priorities in curriculum planning and assessment
- Provide formal representation of students on curriculum review structures and processes
- Formally adopt a regular program of eliciting student feedback on curriculum content, processes, pedagogy and assessment
- Support a team of students to formally evaluate specific practices as a curricula or co-curricular initiative

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Initiative 4: Building leadership teams.

Schools will strengthen their succession planning, develop the capabilities of their leadership teams in using evidence and proven coaching and feedback methods, build a culture of trust that is focused on improvement, and strengthen the induction of new teachers into the professional learning culture of their school.

Ideas to amplify student voice and participation:

- Recognise the student organisation (eg. SRC) as part of the school's leadership team, and include them in leadership discussions
- Engage your student organisation (eg. SRC) in discussion about the school's leadership approaches
- Challenge the participation of your student organisation (eg. SRC) by regularly asking it to consider and recommend on a broad range of important issues facing the school
- Support Teach the Teacher approaches that focus on building trust, respect and relationships
- Build the competent and effective role of student leaders at each level of school, including allocation of resources for training and succession planning amongst student representatives
- Appoint specific positions of support for student voice and participation
- Include distributed support for student voice and participation in a range of job descriptions throughout the school

Initiative 5: Setting expectations and promoting inclusion.

Schools will work across their communities to implement a shared approach to supporting the health, wellbeing, inclusion and engagement of all students, including setting behaviour expectations, building teachers’ understandings of positive classroom behaviour and engagement practices and ensuring students have the tools and skills to develop positive and self-regulating behaviours.

Ideas to amplify student voice and participation:

- Engage your student organisation (eg. SRC) in discussion about expectations, behaviour, mutual respect – and their roles in this area
- Conduct student-led student forums around topics of expectations, including reasons for behaviour, respect etc
- Allocate time and resources to train and support student representatives to intervene around issues of positive behaviour
- Support Teach the Teacher initiatives that examine the setting of expectations and behaviour guidelines
- Establish Student Action Teams to investigate issues of inclusion and exclusion, and of expectations
- Explicitly challenge and invite students not otherwise engaged to lead roles of investigation and recommendation
Initiative 6: Building communities.

Schools will strengthen their capacity to build relationships with the broader community by partnering with the community sector and providers (for example, through the GPs in Schools initiative), make strategic use of existing community resources and capabilities, and increase the services delivered ‘inside the school gate’. Schools will realise the value of harnessing the full capacity of the community and parents to collectively encourage students’ learning and enhance student outcomes.

Ideas to amplify student voice and participation:

- Engage your student organisation (eg. SRC) in discussion about relationships with community, parents, local business and services
- Create Student Action Teams around issues of interest and concern to both students and the wider community
- Build curriculum links with local resources such as Aged Care, Men’s Sheds, Neighbourhood Houses – where students can undertake collaborative programs of support
- Implement forms of Peer Support and/or Mediation
- Support students to write articles for the local/community newspapers, to present programs on local community radio, and to produce programs about issues of community concern for community television
- Support students to produce community resources and materials and conduct community-based research as part of their curriculum

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