School Strategic Plan for Yarra Hills Secondary College
Eastern Metropolitan Region
School Number 8815

2012-2015

Review Conducted by Rod Allen – ed SOLUTIONS
| Endorsement by School Principal | Signed………………………………………
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| Name………………………………………
| Date………………………………………

| Endorsement by School Council | Signed……………………………………
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| Name…………………………………
| Date…………………………………

School Council President signs indicating that the School Strategic Plan has been endorsed by School Council

| Endorsement by Regional Network Leader | Signed……………………………………
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------
| Name………………………………………
| Date………………………………………

School Profile

Purpose

Yarra hills Secondary College strives for our students to become motivated and independent learners through the provision of a wide range of learning opportunities for students. Yarra Hills is a stimulating and supportive environment where all can learn and succeed.

Values

We value and want our students to attain, as part of their growth within their time at Yarra Hills Secondary College:

✔ Respect
✔ Endeavour
✔ Achievement
✔ Pride

We want our students to:

Learn, Teach, Read, Calculate, See, Wonder, Feel, Contribute, Listen, Enjoy, Relate, Grow, Meet, Imagine, Touch, Share, Perform, Achieve, Imagine, Create, Play, Dance, Act, Write, Support, Collaborate, Reach, Think, Respond, Cooperate, Evaluate, Change, Nurture, Transform, Excel, Know, Enjoy, Care, Do, Aspire

Our Teaching and Learning program will include:

✔ Personalised Teaching and Learning based on the use of data, observation and interpretation of the context of that information
✔ The use of Professional Learning Teams to share knowledge and expertise and to provide peer to peer mentoring, coaching and collaborative planning
✔ The raising of expectations and aspirations of students and their families
✔ A focus on literacy and numeracy across the curriculum
✔ A focus on what matters most
✔ Professional development
✔ Leadership training and development
✔ Pride in the school
✔ Pathways
✔ Student well-being
Yarra Hills Secondary College is a stimulating and supportive environment where ALL can learn and succeed.

Through:

- **Personal**
  - In a Supportive Community Valuing
    - Respect
    - Caring
    - Responsibility
    - Integrity
    - Resilience
  - Building personal growth and confidence

- **Learning**
  - In the Global Classroom Valuing
    - Endeavour
    - Knowledge and Understanding
    - Creativity
    - Enjoyment in Learning
    - Cooperation and Collaboration
    - Opportunity and Experience
    - Personalised Learning
  - Engaging and empowering

- **Achievement**
  - In a Reflective Culture Valuing
    - Pride
    - Excellence
    - Quality Work
    - Determination
    - Effort
    - Challenges
    - Continuous Improvement
    - Persistence
  - Leading to achievement

Ongoing Learning and Success for All
Environmental Context

Yarra Hills Secondary College is a multi-campus secondary school currently located across three different sites in the outer eastern suburbs 37 kilometres from Melbourne. The 646 students of the college in 2011 were drawn across a large geographical area from Kilsyth and the foothills of the Dandenongs to the Yarra Valley and districts towards Warburton.

The college population is characterised by a low proportion of Language Background other than English (LBOTE) of 0.06 and a Student Family Occupation (SFO) index of 0.51. Student achievement based on the SFO percentile range is predicted to be 40 to 60% and therefore expected to perform around State level.

The staff population and profile is generally one of experience and high level of skills. A number of less experienced staff have joined the college over the review period and taken up significant roles of responsibility. The multi-campus nature of the college and the relatively high level of part-time employment results in complex travel and meeting structures for staff.

An immediate challenge for the college is completion of the final stages of the buildings in readiness for the new 7 to 10 learning community at the Reay Road campus and then the construction and completion of new VCE buildings on the same campus. During this period of construction the other two campuses (Mt. Evelyn and Cambridge) will require continued maintenance. Completion of all building works at the Reay Road campus will result in the Cambridge Campus body of students relocating to Reay Road. This situation will leave the college with two campuses – one 7 to 10 learning community at the Mt. Evelyn campus and two learning communities (7 to 10 and VCE) at the Reay Road campus.

The college enrolment has declined substantially over the past decade due to changes in demographics and increased marketing and promotion by other government and independent schools. Growth in enrolment will need to take place to maintain the diversity of curriculum pathways and indeed to effectively support the new campus arrangements.

The college was a leader in the middle years of schooling. It was a middle years research and development focus school which included a literacy component. The recent review period saw a continuation of the literacy focus. Collaboration and leadership with other schools has continued to occur within the Yarra Valley e-learning community. Recent involvement with other secondary providers has occurred in the development of combined VCE study groups.

The eight key learning areas provide the basis for curriculum structure for years 7 to 10. Integrated curriculum units are available for students in years 7 and 8 and electives are offered in year 9. Year 10 students have curriculum choices and pathways which include acceleration into VCE units. The senior campus offers a range of pathways in VCE study, VET and VCAL programs but student participation has fallen in VET studies.

Students are readily involved in a range of academic competitions, the performing arts – dance, drama and theatre studies and music. Debating and public speaking are also available. Student leadership is encouraged with a range of captains of college, campus, music and sport with established student representative councils at all campuses. There is high participation in sport and other extracurricular activities which include music, camps and exchanges with a sister school in Bangkok Thailand.
The strength of the college lies with the staff and their caring and supportive learning programs for students. Literacy and numeracy achievement by students is seen as key to successful outcomes from year 7 to year 12. Students are varied in their aspirations and the college has developed a more personalised approach to their learning over the past four years. The implementation of a purposeful and positive learning culture accompanied by increased expectations of achievement will enable college goals to be met over the next strategic planning period.
| Strategic Intent |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Goals**       | **Targets**     | **Key Improvement Strategies** |
| **Student Learning** | To improve student learning in literacy and numeracy particularly in the senior years. | By 2015,  
  - Growth of learning of same cohort from Year 7 to Year 9 by NAPLAN mean scores – Reading 45 (2010 = 40.6), Writing 31 (2010 = 26.4), Numeracy 40 (2010 = 36.9)  
  - Proportion of Year 9 students in top two bands by NAPLAN – Reading 18 (2010 = 13), Writing 18 (2010 = 14), Numeracy 14 (2010 = 9)  
  - VCE all study score to 28.0 (2010 = 26.2)  
  - VCE English score to 28.0 (2010 = 24.2)  
  - VCE Mathematical Methods to 27.0 (2010 = 23.9), Further Mathematics to 29.0 (2010 = 28.4)  
  - GAT adjusted scores % at +1.0 or greater to 15 (2010 = 0), at 0.0 and up to 1.0 to 65 (2010 = 0), Between -0.1 and 0.0 to 20 (2010 = 19), less than -0.1 to 0 (2010 = 81) | To build strong, purposeful and accountable leadership.  
To raise the expectations for learning within the college community. |

**Actions:**  
*Develop a shared vision for and values of teaching and learning*
- Review and articulate the college vision and values.
- Associate values with actions that can be readily understood and reflected in everyday use such as classroom teaching and learning behaviour management and extra-curricular activity.
- Develop a teaching and learning focus document which prioritises and links the various policies, programs and initiatives of the college e.g. PoLT, literacy and numeracy strategies, effective schools model, e5, and ICT initiatives.
- Maintain shared understanding of vision through regular meetings with leadership and staff and reflected in all staff performance plans.

**Review leadership teams within the college**

- Develop a new executive leadership structure aligned with strategic plan priorities that take into account the changing nature of the learning communities over the next 4 years.
- Develop criteria to guide leaders in managing and developing their teams of staff.
- Distribute leadership with accountability and clarity around teaching and learning outcomes.
- Continue to strengthen the structured leadership development program.
- Strengthen Professional Learning Teams as the main vehicle for professional learning and sharing of best practice to improve classroom teaching and learning.

**Strengthen the performance and development program**

- Review the formal induction program for staff which includes mentoring, classroom management practices and lesson preparation and observation.
- Provide constructive feedback to and acknowledgement of staff achievement with approaches such as peer appraisal, student surveys, classroom observation and the frequent supportive presence of principal class personnel.
- Provide for more frequent and informal staff reflection of their teaching and program development as part of their performance reviews.
- Develop a college professional learning plan which involves professional learning teams and allows time for embedding of practice and feedback from peers and students.

**Communicate explicitly and positively about learning**
• Communicate high expectations to all members of the school community using a range of media which involve:
  - understanding of the vision and values
  - student engagement policy implementation
  - learning improvement focuses and expected outcomes
• Organise parent forums to increase the understanding of curriculum programs and support parenting
• Enhance the public celebration of student achievement using a range of media and links with primary schools and community groups
• Foster the use of language amongst community members which includes personal best and success for all in learning
• Ensure frequent high quality feedback to students on their learning.

*Enhance purposeful teaching*

• Develop a distinctive year 9 curriculum program with a focus on applied and cooperative learning
• Establish a college wide numeracy improvement plan and refine the literacy improvement plan
• Increase the use of different curriculum activities to suit student learning styles (as identified by VARK data), engage students and deliver relevance in learning
• Increase the use of learning objectives and high quality questioning to differentiate teaching and learning
• Develop targeted interventions for students achieving at the upper levels (A and B grades) and for those achieving at the lower levels (D and E grades)
• Support collaborative teaching practices such as team teaching, sharing of teaching practices in professional learning teams and the mixing of staff professionally across campuses
• Track student progress using learning outcome data to inform teaching and contribute to the development of student profiles
• Investigate new technologies and their use.

*Strengthen teaching and learning practices at VCE*

• Continue to develop domain based tutorial programs
• Strengthen the mentoring of individual and groups of students
• Continue to foster cooperative/collaborative learning groups for VCE students/staff within and between schools
• Strengthen the agreed and common approach amongst VCE teachers to student attendance, behaviour, course completion and train
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Engagement and Wellbeing</th>
<th>To improve the confidence and engagement of students.</th>
<th>By 2015, improve:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Mean student absence rate at Year 7 to 13.3 (2010 = 16.2), at Year 8 to 15.4 (2010 = 16.7) and Year 7 – 12 to 13.4 (2010 = 14.9)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Student attitudes to school survey results: Year 7 to 12 – classroom behaviour to 3.06 (2010 = 2.81), Year 7 to 12 – student motivation to 4.27 (2010 = 4.01), Year 7 to 12 – learning confidence to 3.79 (2010 = 3.59), Year 7 to 12 – student safety to 4.32 (2010 = 4.16), Year 7 Mt. Evelyn – learning confidence to 3.87 (2010 = 3.64), Year 8 Mt. Evelyn – learning confidence to 3.72 (2010 = 3.27)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actions:</td>
<td></td>
<td>To build student confidence and motivation in learning.</td>
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*Engage parents more fully in student learning*

- Develop a strong liaison with parents about all aspects of student progress, not just behaviour, using the home group system
- Provide professional learning to enhance the skills required of staff to directly contact parents
- Use individual learning plans, student portfolios and parent-teacher-student conferences to engage parents more fully in their child’s education
- Broaden the means by which school contact with parents occur e.g. meeting, letter, email, phone and sms.
Develop distinct learning communities

- Prepare for and cultivate the future separate learning communities and cultures at the Reay Road campus
- Define and embed the learning culture at Mt Evelyn campus
- Consider the cross movement of year 9 and year 10 students between Mt Evelyn and Cambridge in 2013 and between Mt Evelyn and Reay Road campus in 2014.

Re-evaluate the balance of welfare of the individual and welfare of the school

- Review the student engagement policy and consequences for low engagement
- Reaffirm a positive behaviour program for students
- Track and target individual student and cohort behaviour with preventative strategies.

Increase the level of student voice and leadership

- Develop effective and relevant leadership opportunities to capture the responsibility and confidence of students in each of the three learning communities
- Raise the level of student voice in areas such as policy, curriculum (and extra-curricula), student management, school daily organisation including lunchtimes activities, uniform and assemblies
- Enhance the presentation skills of students by providing more avenues for speaking at different forums, presenting to peers, mentoring and visits to other secondary schools.

Student Pathways and Transitions

To improve student transition with a focus on successful pathways.

By 2015, improve:

- Real Retention percentage rate (Years 7 to 10) to 75% (2010 = 70.8)
- Real Retention percentage rate (Years 7 to 12) to 50% (2010 = 45.1)
- VET participation percentage (for at least one unit of completion) to 26.1% (2010 = 18.1)

To build strong and attractive transition into and through the college.

To effectively prepare and provide for students entering senior school studies.
- VCAL participation rate to 15.5% (2010 = 11.4)
- Parent Opinion Survey (transition) to 5.40 (2010 = 5.28)
- Percentage of exit students at Year 11 not to education and training to reduce to 24% (2010 = 31)
- Percentage of unknown exit destinations for Years 10 – 12 to reduce to zero (2010 = 2.6)

**Actions:**

1. **Identify and develop learning aspirations at transition points of entry into learning communities**
   - Strengthen the understanding of prospective students through assessment of prior learning and parent interviews
   - Induct students and their parents effectively into the culture and learning pathways of each learning community through the Ready to Learn program

2. **Develop an awareness of self in students at an early stage to assist in later pathway choices**
   - Introduce a careers education program into each year level 7-10
   - Further develop comprehensive MIPs plans for all year 9 students.

3. **Increase staff interaction with primary feeder school**
   - Develop a program for years 7 and 8 teachers to interact and team teach with teachers of grades 5 and 6
   - Use instructional rounds to observe primary teaching
   - Strengthen the interaction between primary and secondary students
   - Establish a ‘high achievers’ program for primary aged students to undertake secondary school studies in conjunction with feeder primary schools
**Establish a high quality and distinctive year 10 program**

- Investigate grouping all year 10 students on the same campus for an extended ‘ready to learn’ program
- Use VCE student leaders to role model and support year 10 students
- Develop tutorials/homework clubs for year 10 students to enhance understanding
- Ensure common assessment tasks occur across all KLAs for year 10 students.

**Expand and refine student pathways**

- Pursue funding of federally funded Trade Centre (Round 6 second half of 2012)
- Strengthen the ‘ready to learn’ program at year levels 11 and 12 involving communication (and understanding) with parents about pathway choices
- Raise the level of VET programs available at the college through direct and cluster offerings
- Monitor the participation of students in VCAL to ensure it is the most suitable pathway for students
- Examine the possibility of providing ‘preCAL’ or similar programs to year 10 students
- Continue to foster aspirations through exposure to future courses available at tertiary level.