GIPPSLAND
TECH SCHOOL
Approaches that support student engagement and retention

PeCALE Symposium – Friday 26th July 2019

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The Churchill Fellowship - Background

- Received award in November 2016

- Travelled and completed research October to December 2018

- Supported 7 weeks of funded travel through the USA and Canada

- Visited Secondary Schools, Colleges, Community Organisations and Government Agencies

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Student engagement and retention – Why is this important?

The Mitchell Institute (2015) Senior School years: school completion uneven across Australia

- Less than 64% of students in inner regional and outer regional Australia achieve a Year 12 equivalency

- Socio-economic status is a key determinant of success

- Male students are 10% less likely to achieve a year 12 equivalency compared to female students

- Gippsland students are amongst some of the most disadvantaged in Victoria

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Student engagement and retention – Why is this important?

- ABS (2011) shows that Year 12 attainment is "regarded as a key factor in the formal development of an individual's skills and knowledge….which contributes to the development of a skilled workforce, and in-turn, to ongoing economic development and improved living condition"

- Cassidy (2019) highlights the impact that governments can have on school compeltions, referencing the lift in retention rates from 30% to 70% from 1983 to 1995 under the Hawke-Keating governments

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Student engagement and retention – Why is this important?

- The Foundation for Young Australians (FYA, 2018) in their *New Work Reality* report claim that a *"lack of appropriate education and limited employment opportunities and experience will further erode a young persons post-schooling opportunities especially in a rapidly changing workforce"*

- Policy makers need to look to new approaches to improve year 12 completions whilst looking to operational models that apply internationally for inspiration

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Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

- Cooperative education model – linking secondary school credits to work experience

- Managed at the local school board level – focused on local industries

- Funded and coordinated by provincial government

- Pathway opportunity to formal apprenticeships

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Careerwise - Colorado

- Marketed as the "Modern Youth Apprenticeship System"

- Linking school completions with apprenticeships

- Industry had direct input into the design of qualifications

- Flexibility is critical

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TXRX Labs - Houston

- Community Maker Space

- Philanthropically funded – future funding sources in negotiations with school boards

- Primary school and community focused

- Influencing technology, design and curriculum in primary schools

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P-Tech – New York

- Grades 9-12 linking careers, work experience, mentorship and college

- IBM is the primary industry partner – offers graduate positions and peer support

- Open admissions – targets underserved communities in NY

- No cost to families

P·TECH Pathways in Technology Early College High School

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Central Pennsylvania Institute - Bellafonte

- Similar in nature to the VETis framework in Victoria

- Greater recognition of VET and external experiences in the completion of a senior secondary outcome

- Supported and flexible qualifications with greater cross-over between school and industry

- Tuition free – focused on future careers and employment outcomes

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AgWorks – Cyber Charter School – Harrisburg

- Cyber Charter school

- Students from Kindergarten to Year 12

- No on-site permanent students

- Focused solely on agricultural technologies with a specialization on aquaponics, airponics and hydroponics

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Messicks and Dept Agriculture - Harrisburg

- Co-design apprenticeship program to link schools to farms with a formal school completion

- Developed in response to changing nature of the agriculture sector and the rise in new technologies

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Recommendations

- Greater collaboration between schools in regional communities

- Credits from high school and TAFE studies being recognized against one Year 12 qualification

- Further investigation of the Swiss Vocational Education system and how this has influenced changes in the Colorado model

- Greater flexibility to add new skill-sets and qualification to meet the needs of industry

- Greater involvement of industry in program design and recognition of their role in future skills and careers

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Recommendations

- Further investigation of micro-credentialing and its application in a school outcome

- Greater involvement of careers counsellors in supporting students to achieve their best

- Equity and access for all – remove the financial barriers that limit opportunity for families from disadvantaged circumstances

- Grow the capacity of TAFE's to research practice and link the outcomes to schools and careers

- Further investment o release teachers to experience real-world industry

- More exposure for students to careers in their local communities

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Churchill Fellowship Report

https://www.churchilltrust.com.au/fellows/detail/4099/Paul+Boys

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