Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership

2025 Teaching Impact Fellowship

Insights Summit posters

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Education

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Bringing Mathematics back to the heart!

Overview

Bringing Mathematics back to the heart focuses on strengthening Mathematics instruction at Sacred Heart Parish School by building coherent structures, consistent teaching practices, and meaningful home school partnerships. The project responds to identified challenges including inconsistent curriculum delivery, varied teacher confidence, limited fluency, and stagnating NAPLAN growth. The development of a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC) was led alongside the embedding of OCHRE resources, the strengthening of daily fluency routines, and the uplift of the Mathematics profile across the community. This work was grounded in evidence-informed practice, collaborative processes, and deliberate structures designed to enhance student outcomes and build collective teacher capability.

Key learnings

> One of the most powerful learnings was that sustainable change is achieved not through intensity, but through intelligent sequencing. A staggered, deliberately paced roll-out allowed each component, curriculum, fluency routines, professional learning, and community engagement: to be meaningfully embedded before introducing the next layer. This built collective efficacy, reduced initiative fatigue, and enabled teachers to experience success early, which fuelled long-term commitment.

> The project highlighted that clarity drives confidence: when teachers were provided with explicit structures, protected planning time, and strong modelling, consistency grew rapidly. Engaging families through the Mathematics Spotlight in newsletters and celebrating achievement through Gone Green certificates elevated Mathematics beyond the classroom, strengthening motivation and pride.

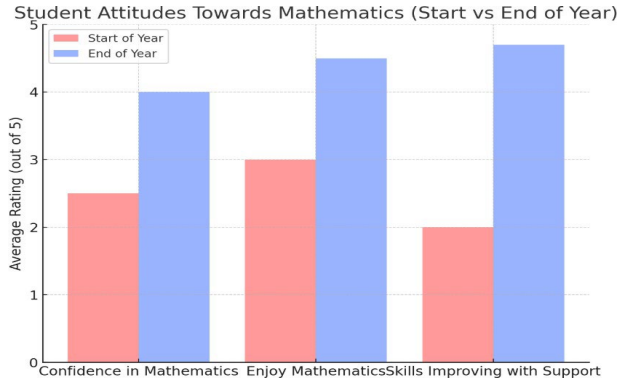
> A final key learning was the necessity of adaptive leadership. Listening to feedback, removing barriers, and prioritising wellbeing (e.g., adjusting competitive structures) ensured the work remained inclusive and enduring. Sustainable improvement is not created by a single initiative, it is cultivated through rhythm, responsiveness, and shared ownership.

Findings and outcomes

Bringing mathematics back to the heart, resulted in strengthened instructional consistency, improved student fluency, and increased engagement across the school community. Implementation centred on four strategies: uplift the profile of Mathematics, establish a GVC, embed daily fluency practice, and implement targeted intervention and extension. Teachers demonstrated 90–95% fidelity to structured lesson routines by Term 4, and 75–80% reported confidence in using OCHRE resources. Students showed rapid growth in fluency, with over 130 Gone Green certificates awarded and senior students achieving recall speeds below 2.55 seconds.

Community engagement deepened through the Mathematics Spotlight newsletter, where families spent 5–6 minutes per issue engaging with activities and insights. Short, targeted intervention cycles supported students at their point of need, while enrichment opportunities (Rocket Maths, AMT) challenged high-achieving learners.

Challenges included maintaining fidelity to the timetable, balancing workload, differentiating effectively, and addressing wellbeing concerns around competition. Adaptive leadership and ongoing feedback enabled responsive adjustments. The project built a strong foundation for sustained improvement, with a clear pathway for continuing curriculum alignment, strengthening fluency systems, and deepening professional learning.



Times Table Rock Stars Data across the year

Year level	End of year expectations	Term 1 average	Term 4 average	Yearly growth	Gone Green
Grade 2	8.00 seconds	7.45 seconds	6.36 seconds	1.09 seconds	1 student
Grade 3M	5.00 seconds	7.32 seconds	4.05 seconds	3.27 seconds	11 students
Grade 4C	3.00 seconds	4.25 seconds	3.03 seconds	1.22 seconds	13 students
Grade 4P	3.00 seconds	3.85 seconds	2.57 seconds	1.28 seconds	19 students
Grade 5B	2.80 seconds	3.63 seconds	2.56 seconds	1.07 seconds	15 students
Grade 5T	2.80 seconds	3.82 seconds	2.49 seconds	1.33 seconds	14 students
Grade 6B	2.70 seconds	3.89 seconds	2.08 seconds	1.81 seconds	24 students
Grade 6N	2.70 seconds	3.87 seconds	2.40 seconds	1.47 seconds	20 students

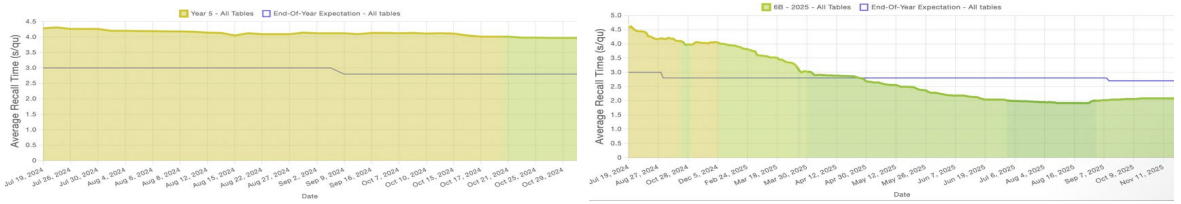


Table: Student attitudes towards mathematics across the year
This table outlines the specific questions students were asked and highlights the results shown in the graph above.

Graph: Student attitudes towards mathematics (start vs end of year)
This graph presents data collected from a sample of 50 students and shows how their attitudes towards Mathematics changed from the beginning to the end of the year.

Table: Times table rock stars data across the year
This table showcases the improvement in students' automatic recall of multiplication and division facts, demonstrating schoolwide growth in fluency over the year.

Graphs: Times table rock stars data
These graphs show the growth from Year 5 2024 cohort to Year 6 2025 cohorts' growth in Times Table across the implementation of TIF. The purple line indicates where we what students to be (end of year expectations).

Mak Bulte, Sacred Heart School

Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership

Teaching Impact Fellowship

Building student connectedness

Overview

The Leadership Team identified through AtoSS Data and verbal feedback from our school community that students did not feel connected to the staff and their peers at the school. Students reported, 'we know when a teacher likes us because…' This was a concern for the leadership team, so we asked the question, 'how do we promote a culture that builds student connectedness and strengthens student-to-student and student-to-teacher relationships?'

The school had been engaging in proactive steps to address this matter through the implementation of Visible Wellbeing, but staff reported that this felt like an add-on and was not contributing to building student connectedness. It was then that the idea of 'Home group' was floated, and the project sought to use research-based strategies to improve student connectedness by establishing a 'Home group' program school-wide.

Key learnings

During this project, several key challenges emerged, which led to some of the most significant learnings not only about leadership but also about the journey of change management and implementation.

- **Leaders must communicate a shared vision**. When a shared vision is well communicated, and staff understand the why, greater buy-in is created early on, with these early adopters becoming champions of the vision.
- **Responsive flexibility is crucial**. When this is present, decision-making is not reactive, focusing on barriers to implementation, but rather responsive to what is working and proactively seeking areas for further improvement.
- **Students are your greatest allies**. A surprising consequence of the whole-school nature of this project was that students talk, and 'fear of missing out' (FOMO) is a powerful advocate. Students were able to create staff buy-in by simply asking "*why aren't we doing that activity?*" An unexpected but welcomed outcome.

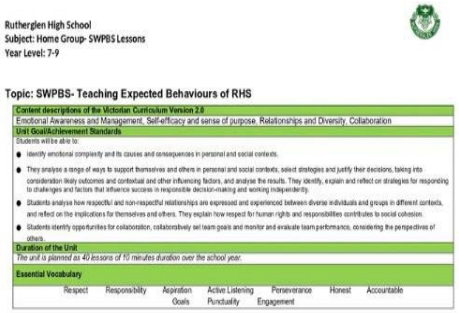
Findings and outcomes

This project, while in its infancy, is building connectedness to school, with both qualitative and quantitative data from students supporting this. Students have indicated that they know that teachers care because, 'they are interested in what I have to say,' and, 'my opinions are valued.' Furthermore, teachers are more open to the idea of the 'Home group' program, and there is stronger student engagement in the classes where staff actively teach students from their home group.

In addition to this, staff are commenting that the interventions (targeted SWPBS lessons, engagement and team building activities are building a sense of connectedness between their home group and the teacher. Junior teachers (year 7-9 home group teachers) can describe how this initiative is improving the student-teacher relationship, using phrases like, 'when students are not engaged, it means I have to change what I am doing.' The same success is not being seen within the senior school. At this stage, 2026 will provide further opportunities to grow and strengthen the program.

Home group teachers are becoming more confident in describing reasons for disengagement in class and are proactively planning lessons that include the explicit language of SWPBS in their classroom practice. Some teachers are reporting that, 'I feel empowered when I use phrases like, *'At this school we…'* to redirect behaviour. Teachers are more confident in naming and identifying positive behaviours demonstrated by students and provide both verbal and written acknowledgement of these to students using Compass.

2026 will be an exciting continuation of this project, with the attendance plan and SWPBS action plan being critical to developing a sustained approach to 'Home groups' and the home group teacher's role at the school.


Rutherglen High School
Subject: Home Group- SWPBS Lessons
Year Level: 7-9

Topic: SWPBS- Teaching Expected Behaviours of RHS

Content descriptions of the Victorian Curriculum Version 2.0
Emotional Awareness and Management, Self-efficacy and sense of purpose, Relationships and Diversity, Collaboration

Unit Goal/Achievement Standards
Students will be able to:

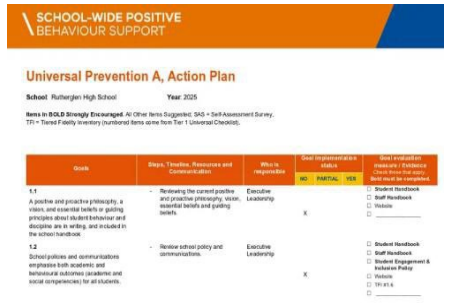
- Identify emotional complexity and its causes and consequences in personal and social contexts.
- They analyse a range of ways to support themselves and others in personal and social contexts, select strategies and justify their decisions, taking into consideration likely outcomes and contextual and other influencing factors, and analyse the results. They identify, explain and reflect on strategies for responding to challenges and factors that influence success in responsible decision-making and working independently.
- Students analyse how respectful and non-respectful relationships are expressed and experienced between diverse individuals and groups in different contexts, and reflect on the implications for themselves and others. They explain how respect for human rights and responsibilities contributes to social cohesion.
- Students identify opportunities for collaboration, collaboratively set team goals and monitor and evaluate team performance, considering the perspectives of others.

Duration of the Unit
The unit is planned as 40 lessons of 10 minutes duration over the school year.

Essential Vocabulary
Respect Responsibility Aspiration Active Listening Perseverance Honest Accountable
Goals Punctuality Engagement

Figure 1

Figure 2


SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

Universal Prevention A, Action Plan

School Rutherglen High School Year 2025

Items in BOLD Strongly Encouraged. All Other Items Suggested. SAS = Self-Assessment Survey, TFI = Tiered Fidelity Inventory (numbered items come from Tier 1 Universal Checklist).

Goals	Steps, Timeline, Resources and Communication	Who is responsible	Goal Implementation status: NO	PARTIAL	YES	Goal evaluation measure / Evidence (Check those that apply. Bold must be completed.)
1.1 A positive and proactive philosophy, a vision, and essential beliefs or guiding principles about student behaviour and discipline are in writing, and included in the school handbook	- Reviewing the current positive and proactive philosophy, vision, essential beliefs and guiding beliefs.	Executive Leadership		X		☐ Student Handbook ☐ Staff Handbook ☐ Website ☐
1.2 School policies and communications emphasise both academic and behavioural outcomes (academic and social competencies) for all students.	- Review school policy and communications.	Executive Leadership		X		☐ Student Handbook ☐ Staff Handbook ☐ Student Engagement & Inclusion Policy ☐ Website ☐ TFI #1.6

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 1: Home group planner
Figure 2: Attendance action plan
Figure 3: SWPBS action plan
Figure 4: Sample SWPBS lesson slide deck

Michelle Heintze-Moller, Rutherglen High School

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Building a collaborative feedback culture through peer observation at Inverleigh Primary School

Overview

My project focused on strengthening teacher collaboration and consistency through a structured peer observation and feedback process. While our school has a strong culture of kindness and belonging, this did not always translate into professional collaboration or shared practice. Teachers often planned in isolation, and differences in experience levels contributed to inconsistent instructional approaches across year levels.

The project introduced a clear peer observation cycle linked to PLC Inquiries beginning with a trial in the F-2 team before expanding school-wide. I developed templates, modelled feedback protocols, led professional learning, and used tools such as the SWIVL robot to reduce barriers around time and confidence. This work directly aligned with our AIP goal of strengthening peer coaching and feedback. The project aimed to build teacher trust, develop high-quality feedback skills, and create more consistent, collaborative teaching practices across the school.

Key learnings

- **Teacher trust and psychological safety are essential.** Starting with a smaller, supportive PLC (F-2) built confidence and demonstrated ear1y success, which helped in scaling the work across the school.
- **Clarity matters.** Teachers engaged more deeply when processes, templates and expectations were simple, consistent and clearly communicated. The 'two stars and a wish protocol was particularly effective in reducing anxiety.
- **Change requires both structure and flexibility.** A clear observation cycle provided consistency, while tools like the SWIVL robot offered flexibility, enabling teachers to complete observations despite time constraints. Investing in practical supports significantly increased engagement.

If I were advising another school, I would recommend startling small, modelling the process, celebrating early wins, and ensuring that. feedback is strengths-based and psychologically safe.

Findings and outcomes

The project introduced a structured peer observation and feedback cycle linked to PLC inquiries, beginning in F-2 with a focus on 'number talks.' Teachers used a shared template and participated in pre-observation discussions, short focused observations, and strengths-based feedback conversations.

Successes:

F-2 teachers demonstrated strong fidelity and acceptability. They reported increased confidence in both being observed and giving feedback. Observations led to improvements in number talks, including stronger questioning, more intentional use of mathematical language, and increased student engagement A graduate teacher highlighted the process as transformative for their early practice, noting that in initial nerves shifted to confidence and excitement.

Challenges:

Years 3-6 engagement was lower due to time constraints and competing priorities. Introducing the SWIVL robot, offering class coverage, and emphasising shorter observations helped reduce barriers, but future implementation will require more leadership support.

Impact:

Teacher collaboration deepened, feedback quality improved, and students showed greater participation and confidence in number talks. The project laid a strong foundation for a whole school coaching and collaboration model.

Figure 1:

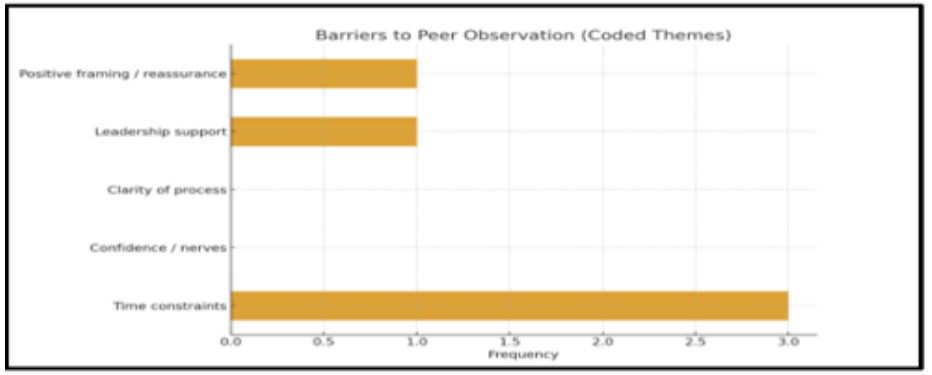


Figure 2:

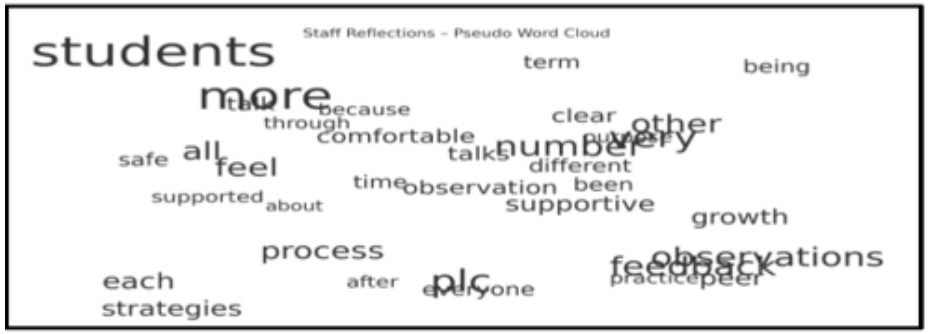


Figure 1: coded themes from term 3 survey responses highlighting the main barriers to effective peer observation; time constraints, confidence, leadership support, and the need for reassurance.
Figure 2: Pseudo word cloud generated: term 3 staff reflections, highlighting key themes such as student focus supportive culture, feedback, number talks, and collective growth.

Carmen Lopez, Inverleigh Primary School

Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership

Teaching Impact Fellowship

Improving mathematics learning through targeted teaching in the classroom

Overview

- This teaching impact project took place at Kyneton High School, a rural secondary school with a diverse Year 7 intake from 21 primary schools. There is a large range in prior learning and attitudes to mathematic.
- Many students can't access grade-level mathematics and numeracy because of gaps in key ideas such as place value and multiplicative thinking and while support was available, there wasn't a shared way of identifying these gaps or responding to them consistently in our Tier 1 and Tier 2 classroom practice.
- Research and practice evidence from *Scaffolding Numeracy in the Middle Years* (SNMY) guided the project. Teacher capability and capacity was developed through shared learning, trialling ideas in classrooms, and developing common understanding to support more confident and consistent teaching and improved access to the mathematics curriculum for Year 7 students.

Key learnings

> **Meeting students' needs is impactful.** When we meet students at their point of need, we see increased engagement and a growth in their understanding. Targeted teaching at students' points of development supports confidence, participation, and readiness to learn, reinforcing the value of this precise teaching approach.

> **Sustainability over speed.** Purposeful momentum is balanced with a sustainable pace. Decisions about sequencing and implementation are adjusted in response to teacher readiness, supporting confidence, preparedness, and collective efficacy over time.

> **Reduce the perceived risk of change.** Modelling practice and making refinements visible lowers the perceived risk for teachers. This builds trust and acts as a catalyst for collaboration and shared ownership.

> **Routines and frameworks matter.** Shared protocols, routines and instructional frameworks increase consistency across classrooms and reduce cognitive load and workload. Teachers can focus on students rather than lesson mechanics.

> **A clear purpose anchors decision-making.** A shared commitment to improving access to the curriculum supports decision-making when workload, time, or structural constraints emerge. Monitoring and adjusting the pace of change sustains engagement and buy-in.

Findings and outcomes

> Data informed a solid understanding of the learning challenge, and an instructional leadership approach was applied. The project was led through direct involvement in classrooms, including modelling lessons, co-teaching, and using classroom observations to plan next steps. Professional learning and moderation focused on making student thinking visible and targeting instruction at students' points of need.

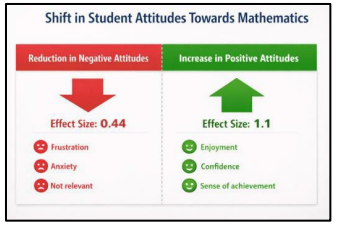
> Variation in teacher readiness, competing time demands, and workload pressures required careful leadership judgement. Decisions about when to consult and when to act decisively enabled routines and resources to be trialed quickly in classrooms, creating practice to collaboratively analyse and refine. Instructional frameworks and routines were developed, reducing individuals' workloads.

> Monitoring teacher readiness supported a sustainable pace of change. An expert workshop with Di Siemon sparked professional curiosity and provided a starting point for teachers' understanding of the Big Ideas in Mathematics and multiplicative thinking. Moderated analysis of SNMY pre-tests was a key driver of impact, strengthening shared understanding of additive and multiplicative thinking, collegial trust, and instructional consistency. Routines and frameworks were adopted across other year levels.

> For students, working at their point of need increased engagement, confidence, collaboration, and persistence, alongside early positive shifts in attitudes towards mathematics. This included a greater willingness to participate and a reduction in work avoidance when challenges arose.

> The teaching team demonstrated increased confidence and fidelity in targeted teaching, and students increasingly explained and justified their reasoning. These shifts provide a strong foundation for ongoing Year 7 implementation and onboarding Year 8 cohorts, with both year levels engaged by the end of 2026.

Figure 1



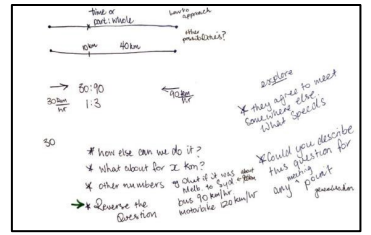
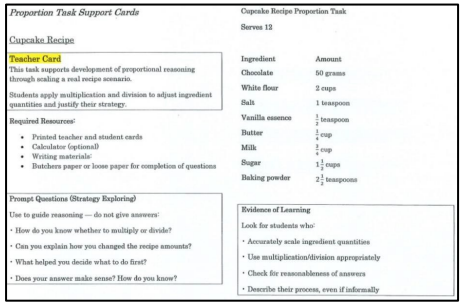


Figure 2

Figure 3



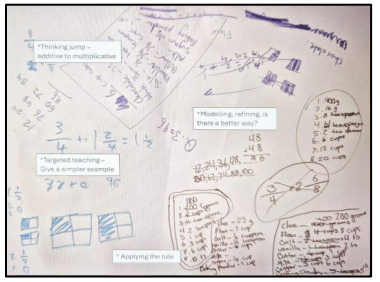


Figure 4

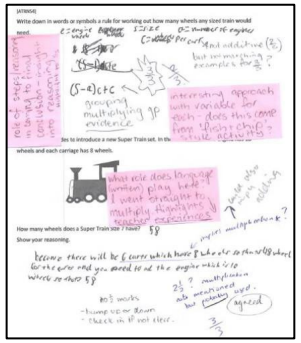


Figure 5

Figure 1: Changes in 7D attitudes to mathematics recorded after 5 weeks of SNMY
Figure 2: Routine (record of teachers anticipating student responses for a task)
Figure 3: Instructional framework (teacher card for 'grandma's cupcakes', zone 4)
Figure 4: Work sample (progression from additive to multiplicative thinking through targeted teaching)
Figure 5: Moderated initial assessment (rich, professional conversations and professional learning)

Samone Towers, Kyneton High School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Craft of writing – freedom and voice

Overview

As a Senior School English teaching team, we identified that students were underachieving in the area of Craft of Writing at Year 12. Data supported this including declining median study score and a score below the state average on this part of the Year 12 English exam paper. We posed ourselves four questions:

- how do we shift the culture so that there is more engagement in the English curriculum at a Senior Campus?
- how can we redesign the craft of writing unit at year 10, according to V2.0 English curriculum so that we start to focus on skill development so that students will engage more actively in their learning, including reading and writing?
- how can the tools of AI assist us developing students' skills, while ensuring that we maintain an authentic voice in their writing?

Key learnings

- **Leadership team and my leadership:** I experienced both support and challenge in this space, as I held no formal leadership position, yet often stepped into complementary or assumed leadership roles. My key learning was the importance of consistently 'reporting up' and drawing on colleagues who are genuinely willing to engage. The support from both my supervisors proved invaluable.
- **English staff:** Curriculum collaboration meetings were central to the project's success, helping us stay aligned with the project's aims. As with any change, there were early adopters and some initial resistance, but by the end of the project there was a clear shift in shared practice and confidence
- **Students:** Students responded positively to the new mentor texts, which better reflected their cultural experiences. Hearing a writer of Maxine Beneba Clarke's calibre speak further deepened and consolidated their learning.

Findings and outcomes

Firstly, our data indicated that students who developed voice, sentence fluency, metaphor, and narrative confidence demonstrated the most significant improvement. After the pilot, self-ratings rose overall by +5.5%, with especially strong gains in understanding and developing voice (their own and character) at +17.5%, emotion in character at +9.2%, and sentence types and structures at +7.1%. These are not superficial improvements, they show students developing agency in how they express lived experience in written form and suggest that voice can indeed be taught, nurtured, and strengthened when the curriculum intentionally makes space for it.

Secondly, survey data showed a +5.5% overall increase in confidence, with the strongest growth occurring in areas explicitly targeted through micro-teaching and modelling of specific skills. Assessment progression reinforced this; many students previously scoring 15–22/30 moved to 20–25/30, and several shifted from 'below standard' to 'at standard'.

Thirdly, qualitative data from the Maxine Beneba Clarke Writer's Festival revealed deep engagement. Students asked courageous questions, experimented boldly with voice, and expressed joy at feeling, 'seen' and 'included in the storytelling.' This aligns with key aims in the college plan: being, 'a place for everyone' and aspiring for 'growth for all.'

Finally, staff survey data showed that AI was used authentically. While some ethical concerns remain, staff reported increasing confidence in using Jeddle as our AI platform.

Key outcome: the unit of 'Freedom and voice' has been shifted to Term 1, 2026. Maxine Beneba Clarke is returning to the College and as a staff we are focusing on developing more consistency in how we teach specific craft of writing skills.

Craft of writing unit: freedom and voice

AI in Education

"Everyone's language leaves a unique signature. A particular use of words, a rhythm, a personality. Someone could read an email, and then read a postcard you sent in 2009 and know for a fact they were sent by the same person. Science, you see…
That's why ChatGPT has been such a godsend. After writing an email, a text, anything really, you can simply run the whole thing through ChatGPT and it instantly deletes your personality. It flattens you out, irons your creases, washes you away, quirk by quirk, until you disappear." —Richard Osman (as François Loubet), *We Solve Murders* (2024)

Snippets of student writing:

Freedom and voice: understanding of the themes

"It was like they thought I was part of the gang. Around the community people were feeling the same way. As a person on foreign soil the microaggressions I could handle, but I felt like we were being painted unfairly with the one brush."

Use of metaphor in writing

Silenced – Bars as a metaphor

The bars were invisible, but he felt them every time he tried to speak—struggling to move through life as if trapped in a cage. He went to school every day with no one to talk to. The walls seemed to press on him, suffocating him in his own silence.

Caged Wind

The suffocating flesh and bone I reside in felt so narrow, as if it were trapping my carefree soul. The constant internal echoes of my restless spirit became quieter and quicker.

Photo from 'writers' festival day'

Craft of writing – freedom and voice had some idealistic vision and the artefacts above capture the student learning that occurred during our project. Ultimately AI is a useful tool, but we want the students to read and write and have confidence in their own voice.

Anne Louise Sheehan, St Xavier Francis College

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Universal Design for Learning in Mathematics

Overview

This project explored how Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can be used to increase student engagement and access to mathematics learning. The project was implemented in a primary school setting, focusing on improving engagement outcomes for students who were previously disengaged during mathematics lessons, particularly when content was pitched too high or presented in a single format. As a classroom teacher and middle leader, my role involved trialing UDL-aligned strategies, gathering student voice data, and supporting team members to embed small, sustainable adjustments into planning. The project focused on reducing cognitive overload, increasing entry points into learning, and providing multiple ways for students to engage with mathematical concepts.

Key learnings

- **Small changes create sustainable impact.** Embedding UDL does not require rewriting curriculum programs. Adjusting representation (visual models, worked examples, chunked instructions) significantly increased student access.
- **Student voice is essential.** Students identified that mathematics disengagement often occurred when learning moved too quickly or assumed background knowledge. Providing scaffolded entry points improved confidence and persistence.
- **Engagement increases when cognitive load is managed.** Breaking complex mathematics tasks into smaller, explicit steps reduced overwhelm and increased task completion, particularly for students requiring Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports.

Findings and outcomes

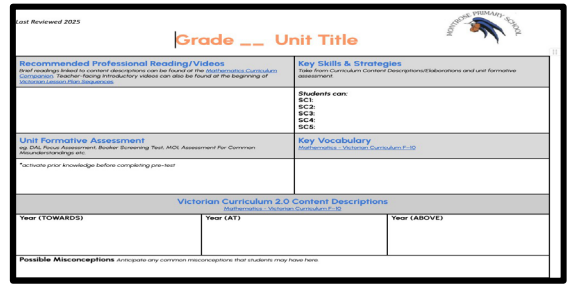
The project involved trialing targeted UDL strategies within mathematics lessons, with a focus on multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression. Strategies included chunked instruction, visual scaffolds, choice in practice tasks, and structured worked examples.

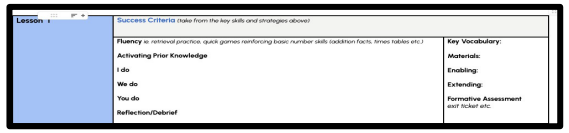
A key challenge was balancing innovation with teacher workload. This was addressed by embedding UDL into existing planning structures rather than introducing new documentation. Professional conversations and PLC sharing supported consistency across teams.

Student outcomes showed increased engagement, particularly among students who previously avoided independent mathematics tasks. Students demonstrated increased willingness to attempt problems, improved task stamina, and stronger mathematical discussion using visual supports and structured language scaffolds.

An unexpected outcome was the positive impact on whole-class clarity. Strategies initially designed for targeted students benefited all learners, reinforcing the value of Tier 1 universal supports.

Future directions include expanding UDL-aligned planning across curriculum areas and strengthening teacher confidence in designing flexible assessment options while maintaining curriculum rigour.





Changes to the mathematic planner to include VTLM 2.0 elements that link to UDL practices (multiple means of engagement, and multiple means of representation). Lessons addressed authentic contexts (collecting data on cars passing), interest (using chalk to create fraction number lines). Students aren't just seeing the lesson, they are feeling textures, hearing the environment, moving their bodies- all helping to encode information into long-term memory. Also linked to VTLM 2.0 'Knowledge and Memory' element

Catling Whiting, Montrose Primary School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Our Values, Our Voice

Overview

This project explored how school core values can be embedded in learning and life through music and songwriting. It was developed at Sophia Mundi, an inner-city P–12 Steiner and IB World School with a strong commitment to values education.
An initial survey indicated that 1 of 77 participants could name the school's 4 core values: Courage, Truth, Responsibility, and Growth. The problem of practice centred on how to transform values from abstract statements on the school website into lived, shared experiences. Key stakeholders included students, the school leadership team, staff, and families. I worked as a composer-in-residence within my role as Head of Music, drawing on values-based education and arts-led inquiry. I employed an iterative co-composing process informed by student voice, songwriting, and Socratic dialogue. Students contributed ideas, lyrics, concepts, melodies, harmony, language, poetry, philosophy, and reflections. We then developed four choir songs with ongoing student input and feedback.

Key learnings

- **Listen, Create, Iterate** Deep listening to how students understand and experience values builds trust and ensures the work reflects authentic student voice rather than adult assumptions.
- **Shared authorship drives engagement** When students genuinely co-own creative decisions, values shift from compliance to identity. This requires teachers to let go of polish and control.
- **Professional artistry can model creative practice** Working as a composer-in-residence allowed students to witness real-world compositional processes, including drafting, revising, and responding to feedback.
- **Impact : Support** 100% buy-in is not always required to have a positive impact.

Findings and outcomes

Findings

> **Students were curious** about the school's core values and keen to see them embedded in school life and curriculum.

> **Teacher support:** Most teachers and leadership were highly supportive of the project and recognised the value of creating a legacy of songs for students and staff to sing for years to come. Some teachers were reluctant to engage students in direct conversations about values, preferring a more subtle, indirect approach to imparting them.

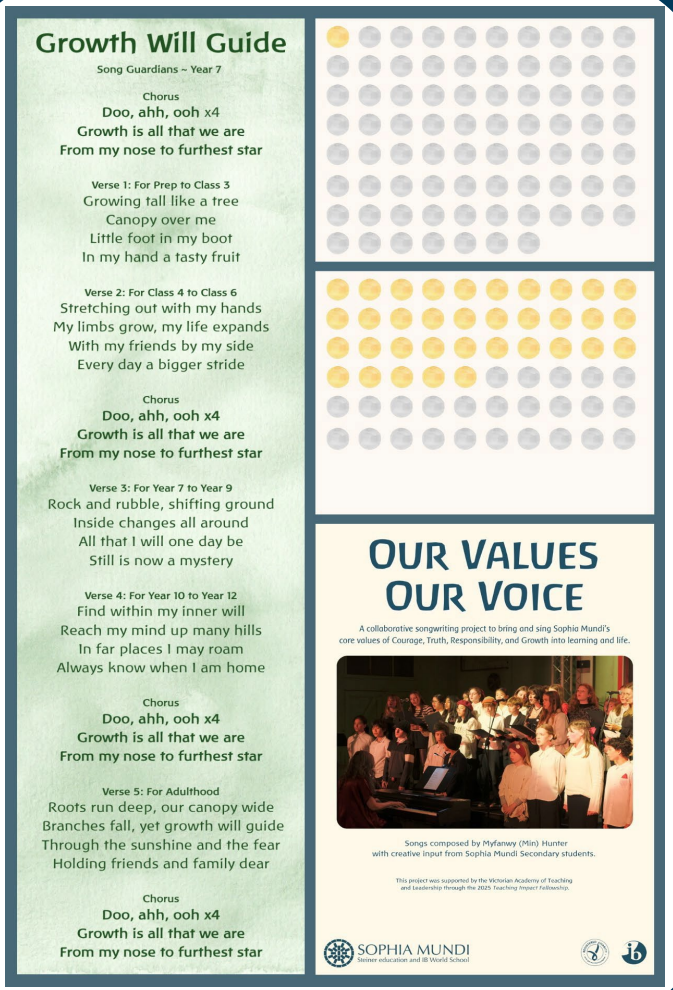
Outcomes

> **Our Values, Our Voice Songbook** A songbook with four original songs embedded with strong student voice, increased engagement with values language, and a strengthened sense of shared identity across the community.

> **Performance Opportunities** at the Annual Music Concert and the end of Term 4 Summer Festival. All students from Class 6 to Year 12 performed Truth Shine Through at the Abbotsford Convent North Laundry. At the Summer Festival, the Secondary Choir sang all four songs with full community participation on the choruses. Both occasions were joyous declarations in song of what matters in the Sophia Mundi community. Students performed Truth

> **Increased awareness of the Core Values** In the December survey, 36 of 60 people accurately named all four core values. Whilst this increase is encouraging, I was aiming for close to 100% familiarity for all students, parents, and staff. The second survey was completed just prior to the final launch of the songs at the Summer Festival on the last day of Term 4. I hypothesise that a survey completed after the launch would now see a further increase in familiarity with the school's four core values.

> **Student ownership of the songs** The next phase of the work now rests with four Song Guardian students from Year 7–10. With support from their Classroom Teachers, these students have been handed the responsibility of keeping the songs alive within the school's ongoing culture and events.



Left: *'Growth Will Guide' lyrics* ***Top Right:*** *Survey 1 results* ***Centre Right:*** *Survey 2 results* ***Bottom Right:*** *'Our Values, Our Voice' Songbook*

Myfanwy Hunter, Sophia Mundi Steiner School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Lexical Cohesion – an essential writing skill

Overview

Bass Coast College (BCC) is a Year 7-12 school of around 1700 students. The 7-9 campuses are at San Remo and South Dudley, while the 10-12 and FLOW campuses are in Wonthaggi.

BCC NAPLAN Writing Relative Growth from Year 7 – 9 over the 2016-21 period, shows a pattern of predominantly medium growth. According to the AERO NAPLAN writing review, students' cohesion skills are an area for improvement, as there is often limited progression from Year 3 to 9.

This project aimed to develop Year 8 students' lexical cohesion skills, to improve their writing in creative, persuasive and analytical texts.

Key learnings

- Teacher knowledge of the lexical cohesion skill set gives clarity and purpose to vocabulary instruction.
- Quality texts are essential for expanding students' vocabulary and for use as grammatical models.
- Semantic mapping supports the development of students' schema, which positively impacts written texts.
- Understanding the levels of text helps students make sense of learning sequences in English.
- An English-Art collaboration strengthens the communication of ideas and builds pride.

Findings and outcomes

Cohesion is an essential language skill across the modes of Reading & Viewing, Writing and Speaking & Listening. Cohesion is a NAP W criterion that impacts on other criteria: Vocabulary; Sentence structure; Paragraphs; Text structure. The VC2ELA04 sequence & the Literacy Foundational Skills provided the developmental detail that supported my planning of teaching sequences, while the VTLM2.0 highlighted the critical elements of learning.

Assessment
Tools to track skill development over time must function for a variety of texts, in order to establish sustainable uptake. Assessments trialled included: student's self-identifying their most effective vocabulary, at word, phrase and clause level in a narrative; teacher-identified theme focused word chains in students' multi paragraph analytical essays; and teacher tracking of the development of ideas through the target language of place and experience in five-piece poetry anthologies, all of which was referenced against the VC2E.

Student opinion survey results
91% understand more words when they hear and or read them.
56% use more words when they speak and or write.
65% recognise word chains when they are reading.
43% include word chains in their writing.
78% agree that planning and/or revising improves their writing.
74% feel proud of their published anthology portfolios.

Key Objectives	Implementation strategies
Understand student's developmental learning stage in writing and monitor their growth.	Identify my year 8 student's writing skills through a range of sources, including NAPLAN data and classroom observations.
	Track my year 8 student's writing skills growth throughout the year, with reference to the cohesion skill set.
Increase my understanding of teaching the cohesion skill set.	Investigate the cohesion skill set in the Victorian Curriculum v 2.0 English and the Victorian Curriculum Foundational Skills v 2.0.
	Research and trial teaching the cohesion skill set.
Begin the reinvigoration of the year 8 English program.	Create and trial teaching and learning resources that increase the focus on vocabulary and writing skills in year 8.
	Provide an author incursion and authentic publishing opportunity to engage students in the writing process.

Figure 1

The mode continuum:

more spoken-like — **more written-like**

Language choices change when we are writing, in contrast to when we are speaking. Clarity of tone, background experience and all references beyond the text, need attention to meet the purpose.

Figure 2

Knowledge
We bring our understanding of the topic, or the text, to our writing.

Planning
We organise our knowledge, before we begin. We are clear on our purpose.

Drafting
We put our ideas on the page. We refer to our plan. We make changes.

Revising & applying feedback
We shape our ideas, so they are clear and engaging, for our audience.

Editing
We improve the readability of our writing.

Publishing
We share our writing.

Figure 3

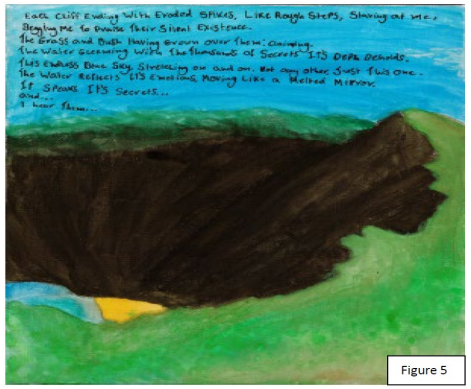

Figure 5

context & themes	whole text	chapter	paragraph / stanza	sentence	clause	phrase	word	morpheme

Figure 4

Figure 1: The project Implementation Plan guided my decision making.
Figure 2: Examples of texts along the mode continuum were read, which highlighted text demands and our writing goals.
Figure 3: The planning and revising stages of the writing process were prioritised.
Figure 4: Explicit instruction was given at all levels of the text, throughout the year.
Figure 5: Art was leveraged to build student pride in the one publishing opportunity at the end of the year.

Claire Robinson | Bass Coast College, San Remo

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Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership

Teaching Impact Fellowship

Coaching for Impact: A Coaching-Led Approach to Improving Teaching and Learning

Overview

- This project explored how a coaching-led approach could strengthen instructional consistency, teacher confidence, and student outcomes. Grounded in the belief that people drive high-impact change, instructional coaching was positioned as a key lever for improvement. Coaching supported clarity around effective teaching practice and strengthened alignment between the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0 and the IB Primary Years Programme.
- The work focused on developing a coherent, relational, and evidence-informed learning culture embedded in everyday practice. Through targeted coaching, supported planning, modelling, learning walks, and feedback, teachers refined explicit teaching and developed shared instructional approaches.
- The development of a structured coaching framework underpinned the work, supporting emerging and middle leaders to drive their own professional growth through the ALEF model and AITSL leadership dispositions. This enabled leaders to reflect on practice, build confidence, and develop adaptive expertise. Overall, the project built trust, collective efficacy, and momentum, embedding coaching as a sustainable driver of professional growth and improved student learning.

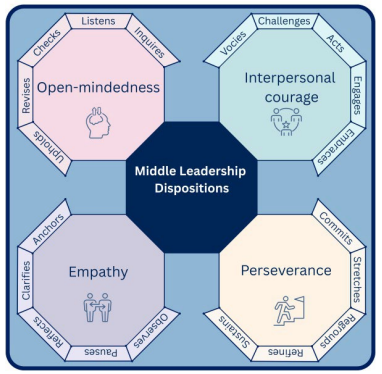
Key learnings

- Instructional coaching is most effective when positioned as a developmental, not evaluative, process.
- A clear coaching framework builds consistency, confidence, and trust.
- Coaching strengthens instructional coherence when explicitly aligned to shared models of practice.
- Relational trust is essential for deep reflection and meaningful professional growth.
- Middle and emerging leaders develop confidence and adaptive expertise when coaching supports sense-making, not solutions.
- Starting with a pilot team enables responsive scaling and builds collective efficacy.
- Sustained impact requires coaching to be embedded in everyday structures, not treated as an add-on.

Findings and outcomes

- This project demonstrated that sustained improvement in teaching and learning is most effectively driven through a coaching-led, relational approach rather than isolated programs or compliance-driven initiatives. Across the year, instructional coherence, teacher confidence and leadership capability strengthened as professional learning became more structured, contextualised and embedded in daily practice. Teachers reported greater clarity around instructional
- Expectations, planning processes and assessment practices, supported by consistent routines aligned to the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0 and the IB Primary Years Programme. These shifts were reflected in improved planning quality, more purposeful collaboration and increased student engagement, particularly in early literacy, where the proportion of students below benchmark reduced significantly.
- A key outcome of the inquiry was the development and implementation of a coherent coaching framework grounded in research and leadership theory. Informed by the Academy Leadership Excellence Framework and the AITSL Middle Leadership Standards, the framework provided shared language, structure and focus for coaching teachers and middle leaders. This supported a shift from task-based leadership to dispositional, adaptive leadership, strengthening leaders' capacity to reflect on impact, activate effective behaviours and build trust within teams.
- Relational trust also strengthened within and across teams. By positioning observation as developmental rather than evaluative, learning walks were introduced using clear protocols and an inquiry stance. This shifted professional dialogue from judgment to curiosity, strengthened collaboration and improved instructional coherence as effective practices were shared across year levels.
- Overall, the findings affirm that instructional coaching, when anchored in theory and enacted relationally, builds collective efficacy, supports leadership growth and creates conditions for sustainable, school-wide improvement.

MOUNT VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL
achieve · succeed · together



Interpersonal Courage

Interpersonal courage is the ability to engage in challenging conversations and decisions that support improved student learning and wellbeing, even when those actions may create discomfort, risk professional relationships, or disrupt long-held norms. Leaders with this disposition are guided by a deep commitment to students. They are willing to confront underperformance, question unhelpful cultural practices, and take professional risks in pursuit of equity and excellence. As Robinson (2018) argues, courageous leadership is often required when improvement efforts involve challenging the very structures or practices that have contributed to the problem. This disposition strengthens a leader's capacity to lead change, uphold professional standards, and model integrity in action (Leithwood et al., 2008; Gurr & Drysdale, 2012; Timperley, 2011).

Voices	Challenges	Acts	Engages	Embraces
Raises concerns clearly and respectfully	Questions assumptions, beliefs or practices that limit improvement	Takes purposeful action despite discomfort or risk	Stays present and open in uncomfortable conversations	Accepts discomfort, vulnerability, and risk as part of leadership
• *Names specific behaviours or issues* • *Initiates difficult conversations* • *Uses respectful tone and direct language* • *Focuses on the impact on students or the team*	• *Confronts deficit talk or fixed views* • *Uses data to reframe assumptions* • *Links concerns to shared goals or values* • *Encourages critical reflection in others*	• *Intervenes when standards are compromised* • *Follows through on what was raised* • *Makes difficult decisions when required* • *Models consistency between words and actions*	• *Listens without defensiveness* • *Maintains calm and clarity* • *Holds steady in the face of pushback* • *Focuses on dialogue, not control*	• *Reflects on fear or hesitation* • *Rehearses and prepares for courageous acts* • *Welcomes feedback about their impact* • *Prioritises student outcomes over personal comfort*

Image A: Mount View Primary School Middle Leadership Dispositional Framework
Image B: Dispositional Framework Elaboration Extract: Interpersonal Courage

Francés Braithwaite, Mount View Primary School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

People not Parrots, Stackers to drive Languages

Student agency in content, process and outcome.

Overview

Parrots imitate, people create. Are we teaching, and assessing, languages so that people can say what they want to say?
There are 3 stacks - independence, variety and complexity. The 'stackers' were born.
Stackers respect students where they are, low, high or medium, and offer choice for their next steps. They are a fun manipulative visual that can be used as success criteria, teacher planning, and students self-assessment.
They visually demonstrate the dance between 'knowledge' and 'use', and the students LOVE them! So do the teachers.
There are now 40 teachers using them.

Key learnings

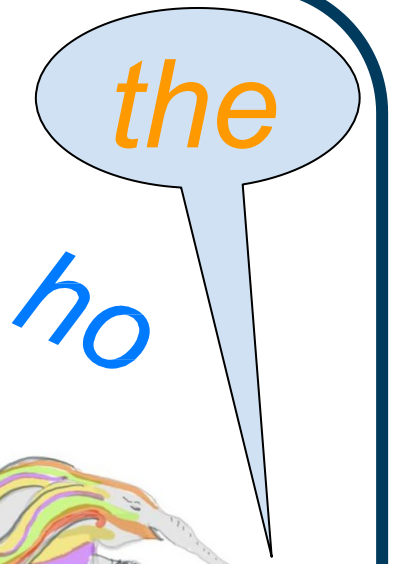
This manipulable visual clarifies without over-simplifying long term learning progress.
Classroom culture shifts from 'winners' to 'personal best' creating space for all students to celebrate their personal growth.
Teachers, like students need multiple exposures, processing and time to trial.

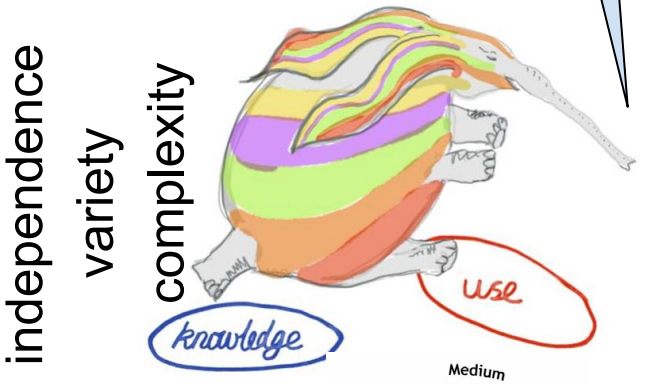
Findings and outcomes

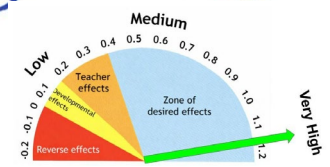
Early indicators show strong impact:
Students in Years 3–6 demonstrated an effect size of 1.16 from March to September. Many increased the types of sentences they could write independently, adding complexities such as conjunctions, adjectives and negatives. Student feedback is that 'stackers help me understand my next steps'.
42 DOSCEL Languages teachers are now using stackers, reporting gains in curriculum confidence, data-informed practice, and pedagogical quality, particularly in fostering spontaneous language use.

Interest has been growing beyond DOSCEL Languages teachers:
Teachers at my school have successfully adapted stackers to Mathematics and English.
30 Languages teachers from all sectors attended my presentation at the Languages Teachers of Victoria Conference.
The Expert Teachers in Residence at the Academy watched my Milestone 3 video and discussed the impact of a clear visual models.

Reaching out:
The Academy's CEO, Marcia Devlin showcased stackers in the Academy Connect newsletter as an example of a simple but powerful framework for guiding learning and teaching.
Professor John Hattie (Melbourne University) and Dr Sarah Buckley (AERO) were contacted, replied and showed interest in the stackers idea.







Assessment that names what we say we value.

Susan Taylor, St Joseph's Primary School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Empowered Teachers, Thriving Learners

Overview

Empowered Teachers, Thriving Learners is a Teaching Impact Fellowship Project grounded in the belief that empowering and supporting teacher practice leads to improved student outcomes. The project was situated at Swan Hill College, a school experiencing staff shortages, high turnover, and disrupted professional learning structures following the complete absence of PLCs in 2024 due to dire staff shortages. As a Leading Teacher for Best Practice within the school, my role focused on rebuilding the conditions for high-quality teaching and learning.

School, staff and parent data highlighted declining student engagement, reduced collaboration, and limited opportunities for reflective practice. Underpinning all of this was a steady erosion in collective efficacy and trust in both leadership and colleagues.

These trends identified a shared problem of practice: the need to strengthen collaboration, inquiry and evidence-informed decision making across teaching teams.

The project sought to address this by introducing structured investigation cycles supported by coaching practices, shared language and reflective routines. Key stakeholders included leaders, teachers and learning support staff, with the work informed by research on coaching, practitioner inquiry and professional collaboration.

Key learnings

This project saw a tremendous increase in my capacity to lead over the year. If I could pass on my wisdom to others going forward with their projects, I would say this:

- Sustainable change grows incrementally. Honor the small wins, keep the long-term vision alive, and trust the momentum you're building.
- You may lead the charge, but sustainability depends on others. Bringing people with you is both a craft and a critical leadership skill, you will not regret the time you put into honing it.
- Hold your ideas lightly. Seek feedback, invite challenge, and stay open to perspectives that stretch your thinking – the black hats are your best friends.
- Start with early adopters. A small group of committed champions can shift culture faster than broad compliance ever will.
- Know your strengths and amplify them. Lead from what you do best and lean on others for the rest.
- True impact lives beyond you. The real measure of your project's success is what others choose to carry forward once you step back.

Findings and outcomes

This project focused on rebuilding professional learning culture through the design and implementation of a Responsive Investigation and Coaching (RIC) Cycle. Situated in a context of staff turnover, disrupted PLCs and declining collaboration, the project sought to strengthen teacher capability, confidence and collective efficacy through structured inquiry supported by coaching.

The method involved a staged implementation: first piloting the RIC cycle with school leaders, then extending it to a volunteer group of teachers and Learning Support Officers. Coaching professional learning, including Growth Coaching International accreditation, Coaching for CoPs, the Effective Mentoring Program and AI coaching PD, underpinned the work and informed the design of tools, protocols and reflective routines.

Key challenges included time constraints, initial uncertainty around coaching, and balancing structure with flexibility. These were addressed through collaboration with leaders, mentors and participants, and through iterative refinement of resources and processes.

Highlights included strong engagement from staff across both pilots, improved clarity of inquiry, deeper reflective practice and growing teacher confidence. Early indicators suggest positive shifts in teaching culture and student engagement. Looking ahead, the work will be sustained through distributed leadership, new curriculum facilitator roles and integration into 2026 planning, with ongoing questions focused on scaling coaching while maintaining fidelity and relational trust.

I set out with the dream of instilling the belief back into staff that being a teacher is the best occupation in the world – naïve about how long this would take, but unwavering in the belief that it could be done. This project is far from complete and whilst what I had hoped to measure as part of the success of this project had changed, the groundwork that this has laid gives be certainty that student measures of success will follow in 2026 and 2027 student data sets. For now, I sit in peaceful contemplation that above all else, this TIF project has undeniably strengthened my capacity to lead change within a school and drive school improvement.

Figure 1:

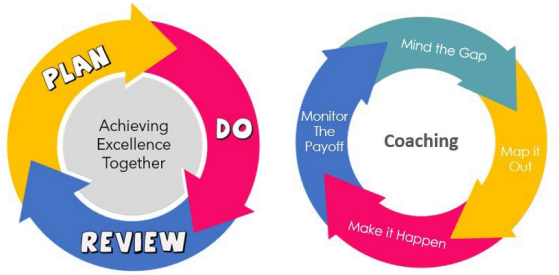


Figure 2:

School Staff Survey Results Over Time

	2022 *First year post COVID-19 Lockdowns*	2023 *A separate Staff Morale Survey was conducted in 2023 in response to a rise of staff leaving the school and so some questions were omitted in SSS in 2023*	2024 *TEP Program Seesaw of Current Assistant Principals moving into and out of Acting Principal role*	2025 *Substantive Principal instated* *My appointment to Leading Teacher of Best Practise who oversaw the creation of a new instructional model* *Implementation of TIF Project* *Implementation of Coaching training and techniques in Leadership team*
Cultural Leadership	39%	-	55%	64%
Instructional Leadership	33%	33%	44%	62%
Leader's Support for Change	44%	-	47%	63%
Intellectual Stimulation	41%	-	47%	67%
Collective Efficacy	36%	24%	32%	38%
Trust in Colleagues	45%	39%	43%	46%
Teacher Collaboration	42%	31%	42%	53%

Figure 3:

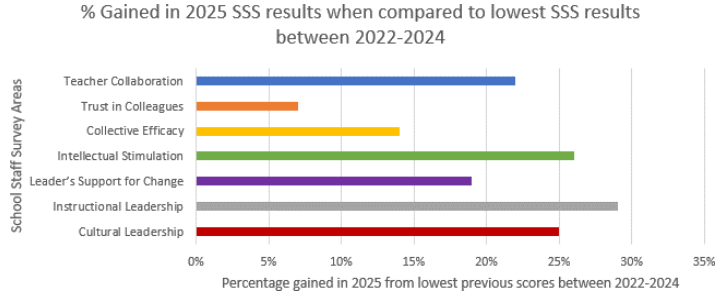


Figure 1: The Swan Hill College Plan, Do, Review Instructional Model alongside the newly designed and implemented Responsive Investigation and Coaching Model
Figure 2: School Staff Survey Results from School Factors Section 2022-2025
Figure 3: Positive improvement across School Staff Survey Factors when compared from lowest results from 2022-2024 and 2025

Mikaela Evans, Swan Hill College

Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership

Teaching Impact Fellowship

Coaching for Impact: Growing Practice, Growing Teachers

Overview

Campbells Creek Primary School including Guildford Campus (near Castlemaine), has approx. 175 students, with 10 students based at the smaller Guildford Campus. As Learning Specialist, I lead curriculum and assessment, with significant evolution of programmes in recent years. In 2025, I assumed a larger coaching role, guiding 19 teaching staff members to improve consistency of practice and build a cohesive learning journey. This project built on an Instructional Playbook created in 2024, aligned with the Victorian Teaching & Learning Model 2.0, and focused on explicit teaching, checking for understanding, feedback and normalising error. To facilitate Responsive Coaching, we identified StepLab as a coaching platform.

Key learnings

- Improvement grows from small, consistent steps, not big initiatives. Starting with a clear, shared picture of effective practice ensures feedback is anchored in something concrete. Keeping coaching tightly focused on one high-leverage goal at a time helps make it habitual. Using a simple structure or platform makes next steps visible and actionable.
- Trust matters more than tools. Investing early in relationships positioned coaching as support, not evaluation. Piloting with willing staff created positivity and helped refine the process before scaling.
- Expect disruption: time, absences and competing priorities are normal, so designing for flexibility is crucial.

Findings and outcomes

Teaching feels like a craft you never quite finish learning. Each lesson is shaped, tested, and refined. Some days it shines; other days it needs reworking. This project arose from treating teaching not as something to perfect but as something to continually hone.

Rather than relying on occasional workshops to hone our practice, I worked as a Learning Specialist to build responsive, job-embedded coaching. The goal to improve the learning of our students by improving the quality of our teaching, supported by our Instructional Playbook and VTLM 2.0.

We began with a small pilot of coaching cycles, then expanded to peer observations and leadership walkthroughs. StepLab supported precise goals, observation notes and small, actionable next steps, keeping improvement realistic and focused on high-leverage practices.

Time pressures, part-time staffing and extended absences frequently disrupted plans, requiring flexibility and constant adjustment. A major highlight was the growth of trust and openness, with classrooms becoming less private and feedback more normalised.

Teachers developed a stronger shared language around modelling, pacing and clarity, and many described being more deliberate in their instruction. Survey and review feedback indicated stronger collaboration and clearer practice, particularly among those most engaged in coaching. The next steps for CCPS+GC are to normalise rehearsal, grow more internal coaches and sustain momentum, despite staffing variability. My next steps are down a different pathway, as I step into the role of an external instructional coach working with teachers across Australia to hone our craft.

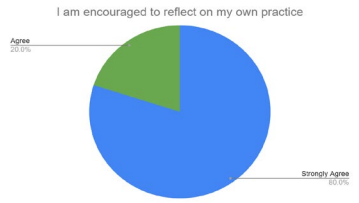


Figure 1.

Figure 2.

Figure 3.

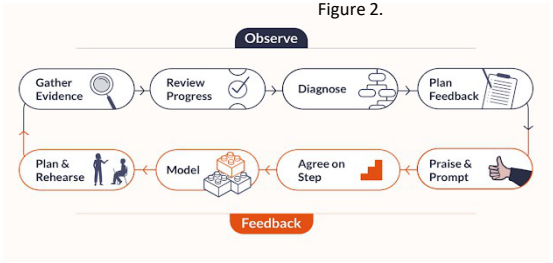
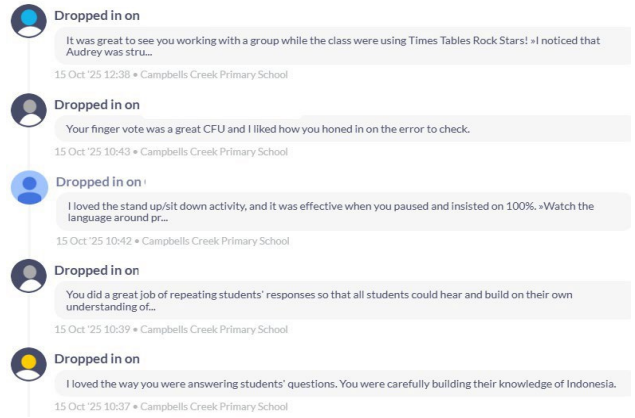


Figure 4.



Figures 1 & 2. Teacher responses to coaching survey (number of participants=10)
Figure 3: StepLab responsive coaching cycle via steplab.co
Figure 4: StepLab 'Drop ins' became the vehicle for peer observations.

James Dobson, Campbells Creek Primary School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Potential Knows No Limits: Designing Inclusive Learning Through UDL

Overview

During my Teaching Impact Fellowship, I explored how building teacher capacity in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) could improve access, engagement, and success for all learners, particularly those with additional needs. At East Gippsland Specialist School, I led the implementation of the Imagine Lab — a STEAM-based learning space funded to provide staff with immediate access to resources, materials, and flexible teaching environments. The project addressed a key problem of practice: ensuring consistent, accessible instruction across classrooms through intentional design, not just individual adjustments.

Key learnings

1. **Inclusive practice must be built into systems, not individuals.** Sustainable change occurs when teachers have shared tools, spaces, and routines that make UDL achievable every day.
2. **Environment drives engagement and behaviour.** Access to hands-on materials, structured spaces, and flexible learning pathways increased participation and reduced reactive behavioural escalations.
3. **Teacher learning is most powerful when embedded in PLCs.** Ongoing professional learning supported staff to redesign classroom instruction collaboratively, creating consistency for neurodivergent learners across the VPC program and throughout the school.

These learnings reinforced that UDL is most effective when supported through whole-school structures and collective ownership.

Findings and outcomes

The project resulted in improved student engagement, significantly reduced behavioural callouts, and fostered stronger teacher confidence in inclusive instruction. Establishing the Imagine Lab provided a central, practical resource that enabled staff to plan lessons with multiple entry points, clearer scaffolds, and hands-on learning options aligned with UDL principles.

The greatest improvement was first documented in one VPC classroom, expanding to two classrooms in 2026. Over the summer break, the school invested further by building an even larger Imagine Lab and relocating resources to support continued growth. In 2027, the program will expand to three VPC classrooms, making scalable inclusive practice essential.

A key outcome was the introduction of a transparent booking and access system, replacing previous ad-hoc processes. Teachers can now plan proactively, collaborate more effectively, and utilise the space purposefully. Importantly, the work is now spreading beyond the school through collegial visits, local presentations, and conference sharing, supporting other settings to strengthen inclusive practice for neurodivergent learners.
Ongoing PLC-based professional learning remains crucial in embedding UDL consistently across classrooms.

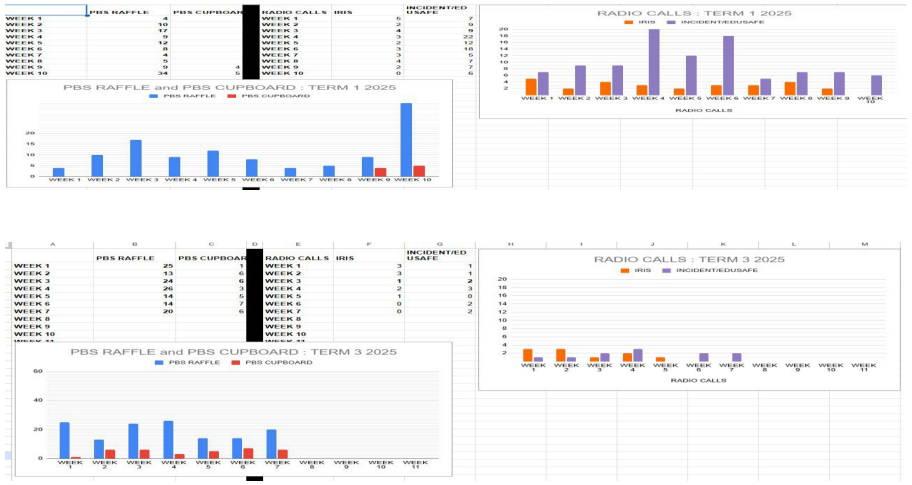

Figure 1: *The Imagine Lab — a STEAM-based inclusive learning environment designed to build teacher capacity and improve engagement for neurodivergent learners through Universal Design for Learning.*

Figure 2: *Staff booking system enabling proactive access to the Imagine Lab and shared inclusive resources.*

Tammy Waters, East Gippsland Specialist School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Student Reflection and Goal-setting

Overview

Through my TIF25 Project I aimed to address wavering attendance, disengagement, many disruptive behaviours and achievement levels below standard in Y7 – Y10 Mathematics classes at Emerald Secondary College. Emerald Secondary College is a coeducational school with a current enrolment of approximately 700 students. It has 70 teaching and non-teaching staff and is located in the picturesque Dandenong Ranges. In my roles of Numeracy Learning Specialist and Maths Domain Leader, I supported Y7 Maths teachers to provide students with relevant and timely feedback in Maths classes, and to implement a framework for students to review feedback, reflect on learning and set learning goals.

Key learnings

- (1) Teachers as agents of change.
- (2) Remain focused on the 'why'. Show flexibility to adapt the 'how' and 'what'.
- (3) Students at the core.

Through both TEP24 and TIF25 I have truly learnt that no matter what goal or project a leader is trying to implement in a school, it is the teachers in classrooms who put the steps/strategies into practice with students, day-in and day-out. They are the champions and agents for change. It is important that they are heard, and their perspectives considered. During the TIF25 Project I had aimed to remain focused on the 'why', and to show flexibility to adapt the 'how' and 'what' to suit the capabilities and needs of both the teachers and students.

Through this process, students were likely to feel more connected to their teachers and to take greater ownership of their learning, resulting in improved student engagement.

Findings and outcomes

Investigation into Mathematical Wellbeing (MWB), as researched by Julia Hill at RMIT University, added a further dimension to my project. She has established a questionnaire/survey based on the seven values of MWB: accomplishment, cognition, engagement, meaning, perseverance, positive emotions and relationships. These questions were used to gauge the MWB of students in Y7 Maths. Responses highlighted that accomplishment and cognition were important aspects for us to focus on. Hence the need for the feedback, reflection and goal setting process that my TIF25 Project focused on.

As the year progressed, I remained in contact with Julia Hill. She made suggestions about the direction of my TIF25 project. She has invited Emerald SC to take part in a further study she will be undertaking in 2026, focused on MWB. She will deliver PL at Emerald SC and guide staff in analysing and interpreting the findings.

My learnings about change taking time and the investment in relationships will carry over to future activities I am involved in. To realise that improvement takes time, and that the changes that occur in the process are definitely not linear in nature helps me to remain true to the 'why'. Working with others is paramount to making improvements. It is vital to keep people informed, to provide clarification, to consider their perspectives and to be flexible so as adaptations can be made to the 'what' and 'how'. Ultimately, this will result in greater confidence and capability by teachers and greater gains in student outcomes.

This is merely the beginning of the work to be done. In 2026, Y7 and Y8 Maths teachers will continue to support students with metacognition and reflective protocols. In the future, it would be ideal if these strategies were put into place by more teachers, across more subject areas, in more classrooms, with more students.

Figure 1

Year 7 Maths: Feedback and Student Reflection

On Compass, access and read your feedback from your most recent learning task/CAT.

Copy and paste the following in the 'conversation box' and provide your responses.

What?

What have I learned?

So what?

What does this tell me about my strengths and about my gaps in understanding and application?

Now what?

What can I do to improve my understanding?

What are my next steps?

What are my targets and goals for moving forward?

Figure 2

MWB Survey Responses:

Student Responses

	Accomplishment				Cognitions			Engagement			Meaning			Perseverance			positive Emotion			relationshi	
	A1	A2	A3	A4	C5	C6	C7	E8	E9	E10	M11	M12	M13	P14	P15	P16	PE17	PE18	PE19	R20	R22
Term 2 Avera	5.45	5.40	5.64	5.51	5.00	5.16	5.38	4.22	4.17	3.92	3.77	4.45	4.03	4.95	5.03	5.56	4.05	3.55	3.82	5.05	5.26
Term 4 Avera	5.41	5.40	5.73	5.51	5.00	5.16	5.43	4.28	4.23	3.81	3.80	4.36	3.98	4.86	5.00	5.48	3.98	3.48	3.73	4.96	5.16
	N	N	H	N	N	N	H	H	H	SL	N	L	L	L	N	L	L	L	L	L	SL

Key: (change from Term 2 to Term 4)	
	SL, Significantly lower = now down 0.1 +
	L, Lower = now down 0.05 to 0.1
	N, Neutral = now -0.05 to 0.05
	H, Higher = now up 0.05 to 0.1
	SH, Significantly higher = now up 0.1 +

Figure 3

Y7 Maths, 2025 - CAT Completion

CAT 3 - Measurement

Class	Number of Students	Completion Rate	Completion Percentage
7A	24	14/24	58.3
7B	20	16/20	80.0
7C	21	19/21	90.5
7D	22	20/22	90.9

CAT 5 - Linear Equations

Class	Number of Students	Completion Rate	Completion Percentage
7A	24	17/24	70.8
7B	20	18/20	90.0
7C	21	20/21	95.2
7D	22	20/22	90.9

CAT 4 - Algebra

Class	Number of Students	Completion Rate	Completion Percentage
7A	24	20/24	83.3
7B	20	16/20	80.0
7C	21	18/21	85.7
7D	22	19/22	86.4

Figure 1: Student reflection protocol
Figure 2: MWB Student survey responses
Figure 3: Year 7 Maths, CAT completion rates

Lana Nunis, Emerald Secondary College

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

3D Printing Extension Project

Overview

As a Digital Technologies teacher at Methodist Ladies' College, my work focused on innovation, global citizenship, and authentic learning. Through my involvement in the Teaching Excellence Program, I identified a key gap in our Junior Secondary curriculum: while students developed strong foundational digital skills, there was no structured extension pathway for highly capable learners ready for deeper challenge and real-world problem-solving.

My Teaching Impact Fellowship project addressed this need by designing an advanced extension program in 3D printing and design. The program leveraged our existing infrastructure and partnered with Swinburne University's engineering and industrial design faculty, including experts in low-cost 3D-printed prosthetics. Students designed prosthetic components for disadvantaged communities, with an initial implementation site in Lagos, Nigeria, and future possibilities in rural Thailand, fostering innovation and purposeful application of digital technologies.

Key learnings

1. **Authentic partnerships amplify impact:** Co-designing learning with Swinburne University and global partners significantly deepened student engagement, strengthened real-world relevance, and elevated the quality of student outcomes.
2. **Scaffolding enables excellence:** Highly capable students still require structured support; targeted pre-learning, explicit CAD instruction, and responsive adjustments were critical to building confidence and capability with complex technologies.
3. **Iteration and reflection drive improvement:** Ongoing feedback, collaboration, and adaptive planning were essential to maintaining program fidelity, overcoming logistical challenges, and ensuring sustained student growth in both technical skill and global awareness.

Findings and outcomes

The findings from the Year 8 3D printing extension program demonstrated strong impact across student learning, engagement, and capability development. Students developed advanced technical skills in CAD modelling using TinkerCAD and Fusion360, including rendering, prototyping, and iterative design refinement. Their work showed clear growth in understanding human-centred design principles, particularly the importance of researching real users, adapting designs to specific needs, and testing for functionality and practicality. Student portfolios and prototype files provided tangible evidence of this progression.

Engagement levels were consistently high, driven by authentic collaboration with Swinburne University experts and peer connections with students in Nigeria. Exposure to real-world industrial design environments and global health applications deepened students' understanding of how digital technologies can create meaningful social impact. Feedback indicated that students valued both the technical learning and the opportunity to contribute to a genuine problem-solving context. The program also strengthened my own instructional capability, particularly in scaffolding complex technologies and leading cross-sector partnerships. Overall, the outcomes confirmed that structured extension pathways, grounded in authentic collaboration and purposeful design challenges, significantly enhance both student growth and the relevance of digital technologies education.

"Initially, I joined this project as a way to learn a new skill in design and 3D printing. It has turned out to be much more than just that. The 3D printing project has really opened our eyes to different and new 3D printing technology, and it's given us an insight into the real-life applications of 3D printing. We've learnt new skills in designing, and it has also been great connecting with school students from Nigeria." Student A

Christian Williams, Methodist Ladies' College

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Geelong Secondary Artist Teachers Network

Overview

This project addressed a common challenge in arts education: visual arts teachers are expected to inspire creativity, yet often lack time and support to sustain their own artistic practice. As Head of Visual Arts, I led a year-long inquiry to reposition creative practice as a valid and valuable form of professional learning. Through structured workshops, collaboration with peers, and an intended shared exhibition, teachers were supported to reconnect with their identity as practising artists. The project aimed to strengthen teacher wellbeing, teaching quality, and student engagement by reconnecting classroom learning with authentic, contemporary creative practice.

Key learnings

- A key learning was that teacher creativity directly influences teaching quality and wellbeing. When teachers were given permission and protected time to create, confidence and professional motivation increased. Leadership played a critical role: modelling creative risk-taking and valuing practice as professional learning helped build trust and shared purpose.
- Collaboration mattered. Working together through workshops and critique reduced professional isolation and created a strong sense of collective ownership. Importantly, reframing art-making as professional learning made the project accessible to school leaders and system partners, rather than positioning it as an optional or “extra” activity.
- The project also reinforced that sustainable change occurs when initiatives align with broader priorities such as staff wellbeing, professional growth, and student engagement. Creativity became a lever for improvement rather than a separate agenda.

Findings and outcomes

The project led to clear early indicators of positive change. Teachers reported renewed confidence, stronger professional identity, and increased engagement in both teaching and creative work. Professional conversations shifted toward artistic process, experimentation, and contemporary practice, strengthening collective capability.

Students benefited from more authentic learning experiences. Teachers drew directly on their own creative practice, leading to richer classroom discussions about risk-taking, problem-solving, and meaning-making. This increased student engagement and helped connect learning to real-world creative pathways.

At a school and community level, the collaborative exhibition strengthened professional pride and external partnerships, positioning the school as a place that values creativity and innovation.

Overall, the findings suggest that investing in teachers as practising artists improves wellbeing, teaching quality, and student learning. The project offers a sustainable and scalable model for professional learning that places creativity, leadership, and impact at the centre of school improvement, with a plan to grow and become a core network in the region.

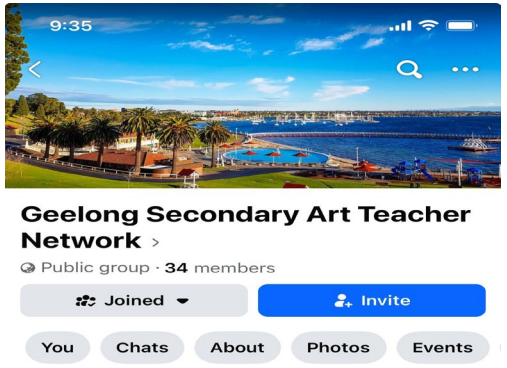

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 1. *Social Networking Group created for visual arts teachers to engage in the project.*
Caption: *This is a catchment space and the core teachers have moved onto another App for more direct contact.*

Figure 2. *Artwork created by visual arts teachers during the project, displayed in a collaborative exhibition.*
Caption: *The PD served as professional learning, strengthening teacher confidence, collaboration, and authentic connections between teaching practice and the wider arts community.*

Joanna Wiltshire, Clonard College

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Fuel the Fluency

Overview

Fuel the Fluency is a Grade 5 and 6 mathematics improvement project I designed to strengthen students' automatic recall of multiplication and division facts, reducing cognitive load and improving students' ability to engage with more complex mathematical concepts and progress in their learning. Implemented in a small Victorian primary school on the Mornington Peninsula, this project formed a central focus of my practice in my dual role as classroom teacher and Learning Specialist. Whole-school data, including NAPLAN, PAT-M and Westwood assessments, identified fluency as a significant barrier to student success. The project introduced a structured daily fluency routine supported by research from AERO, Hattie, Sweller, Rosenshine and Westwood. Key stakeholders included the Grade 5 and 6 teaching team, school leadership and students.

Key learnings

1. Start small to achieve sustainable change

Originally planned as a whole-school initiative, the project showed that meaningful improvement required a targeted pilot. Focusing on the Grade 5 and 6 cohort allowed deeper refinement, stronger teacher ownership and clearer evidence before scaling.

2. Consistency and simplicity drive implementation success

The 10-minute *See It, Say It, Play It, Know It* routine supported strong teacher buy-in and consistent implementation. Shared planning resources and clear routines reduced workload and strengthened classroom consistency.

3- Data transparency strengthens motivation and precision

Westwood assessments, Times Tables Rock Stars heat maps and student tracking tools supported targeted teaching and increased student ownership. Students showed improved confidence, engagement and persistence when monitoring and celebrating their growth.

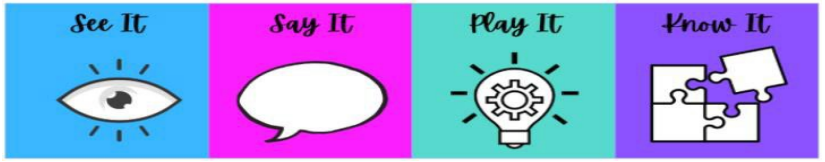
Findings and outcomes

The *Fuel the Fluency* project was developed to improve student automaticity in multiplication and division facts to reduce cognitive load and strengthen mathematical problem solving. Analysis of NAPLAN, PAT Maths, Westwood One-Minute Tests, and classroom observations showed that while students demonstrated conceptual understanding, slow recall of basic number facts limited their efficiency, confidence, and engagement. In response, a research-informed, daily 10-minute fluency routine was introduced using the structure See It, Say It, Play It, Know It. This routine incorporated explicit modelling, retrieval practice, verbal rehearsal, visual supports, fluency games, and student goal setting, supported by collaborative planning and coaching within the Grade 5 and 6 teaching team.

A key challenge was the original whole-school scope, which was refined into a targeted pilot to ensure sustainability and depth of implementation. Strong teacher collaboration with the 5 and 6 teachers, shared resources, and ongoing data reflection supported successful implementation. Student voice highlighted increased confidence and enjoyment, while teachers reported improved instructional clarity and lesson flow. Assessment data showed significant growth in automaticity, particularly in multiplication and division, enabling students to engage more effectively in multi-step problem solving and higher-level mathematical reasoning.

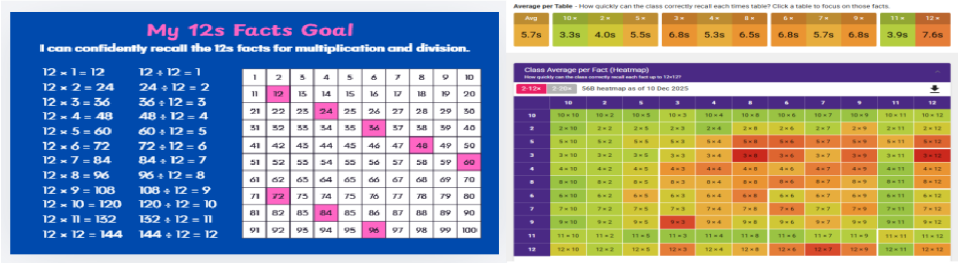
Future directions include scaling the routine into Years 3 and 4, establishing whole-school fluency assessment systems, strengthening leadership alignment and embedding fluency routines within curriculum planning to support long-term student achievement and instructional consistency.

Leading the project strengthened my leadership capability in data-informed decision making, coaching and collaboration, and building collective teacher efficacy. The work reinforced the importance of shared ownership, modelling practice and using student voice and evidence to guide instructional improvement. Key stakeholders included the Grade 5 and 6 teaching team, school leadership and students.

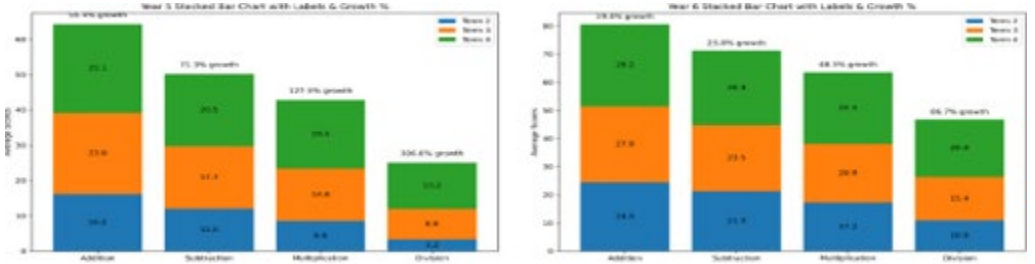


Fuel the Fluency weekly routine

SEE IT: Look carefully at numbers, patterns, or models to notice how maths works.
SAY IT: I explain my mathematical thinking using correct vocabulary and clear reasoning.
PLAY IT: I practice maths through games, activities, and challenges to build speed, confidence and flexibility.
KNOW IT: I can quickly recall and use maths facts and strategies without needing to stop and work them out each time.



Printed postcards that go home with students when they are working towards consolidating a set of multiplication and division facts. Times Tables Rock Stars also provided evidence of growth and motivation for my students.



The above data set demonstrates the growth from Term 2 to Term 4.

Fuel the Fluency demonstrates that daily practice, progress tracking, and goal-focused fluency development build confident mathematicians, just as reading fluency supports strong readers.

Briony Hendy, Moorooduc Primary School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Enhancing Writing: Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment

Overview

My project aimed to strengthen staff expertise in teaching and assessing writing within a knowledge-rich curriculum framework. Its objectives were framed for Lalor Gardens Primary School, situated in Melbourne's northern suburbs. Our school community includes a large proportion of students who speak English as an additional language, making it essential to implement research-based strategies that accelerate early literacy growth. As part of our journey, we explored Comparative Judgement to assess writing, and undertook whole-school staff professional learning. By developing our understanding of best practices in the teaching of writing, as well as utilising a more sophisticated approach to assessing writing, staff were able to identify clearer points of need for their students' writing development, and trial new strategies for addressing them. In 2026, we plan to further develop a knowledge-rich curriculum that is individualised to our student population.

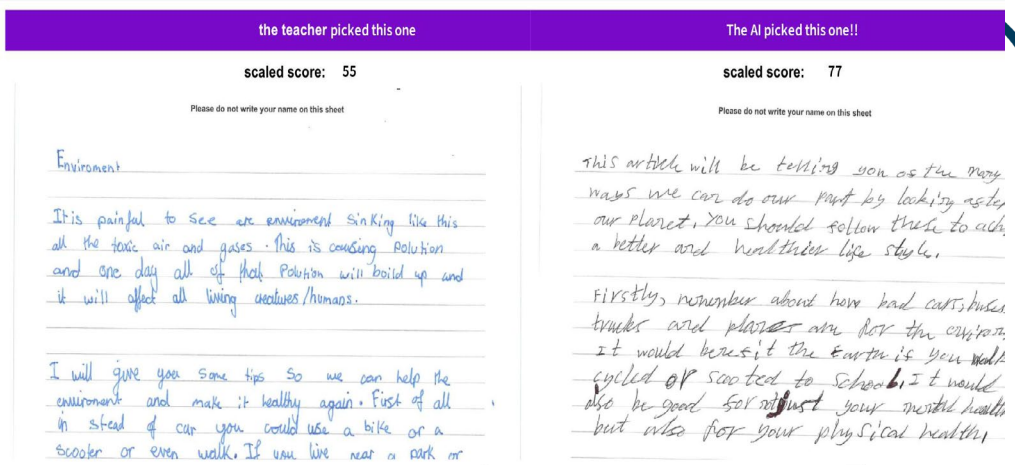
Key learnings

In pursuit of the object's objectives, staff at our school were given new opportunities to further develop their knowledge and skills in the teaching of writing. This highlights a key finding of the program, where engagement of all staff in intentional, high-quality professional learning is crucial to the continued improvement of their capacity as practitioners. By working towards putting these new learnings into intentional, carefully planned practise, teachers were better able to view the connection between a change in their practice and an improvement in student success. Assessing writing using comparative judgement gave students further opportunity to write expressively, while giving their teacher a valuable source of evidence to inform their pedagogy. The project also revealed the obstacles to widespread change within a school among competing priorities, scarcities of time and resourcing, and emphasised the importance of a shared vision and open avenues for staff support across the school year.

Findings and outcomes

By using comparative judgement to assess student writing within the school, we identified handwriting fluency as a major point of need across all year levels spanning from Prep to Grade 6. This highlighted a major barrier to our students' success as writers, because they lacked many of the crucial motor skills for writing expressively (and comfortably) at length. Students who can not write fluently by hand are less able and willing to express themselves through writing.

We divided the teaching staff into Professional Learning Communities who would meet weekly over a one-month phase of the project. There, they were able to analyse their students' writing, identify their needs and modify their class instruction accordingly. As the project reached its later phases, we shifted our focus toward the new year and our goals for utilising our new learnings to continue developing our whole-school, knowledge-rich curriculum – where students build their skills and knowledge through exposure to Science and the Humanities.



2.

	Grade	Score	Age	Range
	Exceeding	599	11y 10m	
	Strong	560	11y 10m	
	Strong	559	11y 10m	
	Strong	552	10y 9m	
	Strong	552	10y 9m	
	Strong	551	10y 8m	
	Strong	549	10y 6m	
	Strong	549	10y 6m	
	Strong	540	9y 11m	
	Strong	536	9y 9m	
	Strong	534	9y 8m	
	Strong	530	9y 5m	
	Strong	529	9y 5m	
	Strong	522	9y 1m	
	Strong	522	9y 1m	
	Strong	520	9y 0m	
	Strong	518	9y 0m	
S	Strong	517	8y 11m	

1. *Comparative Judgement for assessing writing. Teachers are shown two pieces of writing by two different students and choose the better submission.*
2. *Student ranking data. Once all the pieces had been judged, they are ranked and scored using a statistical model.*

George Argyropoulos, Lalor Gardens Primary School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Learning Continuums - planning, teaching, tracking, and assessment

Overview

This project began with a clear problem of practice: although Seaford Park had developed several Mathematics learning continuums through PLC work, they were inconsistent, incomplete and not widely understood or used to guide planning, differentiation or reporting. The original intention was to refine these tools and create a whole-school formative assessment tracking approach. However, formative assessment of teacher readiness—gathered through consultation meetings, surveys and collaborative analysis—revealed a deeper issue: many staff lacked a shared understanding of what a learning continuum is and how it differs from curriculum checklists.

The project therefore shifted from refining documents to building shared conceptual understanding first, establishing a stronger foundation for sustainable whole-school implementation.

Key learnings

- **You can't collaboratively refine what people don't yet understand**. Time spent unpacking the purpose and structure of learning continuums was far more valuable than rushing into document improvement.
- **Start small using real contexts.** Sharing the Junior PLC teams learning throughout the year provided examples of how continuums could be used to plan, teach, assess and track, and reflect on practice.
- **Sometimes people just want to be told what to do**. While teachers valued collaboration and voice, clearer agendas and documentation would have helped maintain momentum.

Advice for schools: Start with one learning area (e.g. Place Value), use real student data and assessments, balance collaboration with clear structure and allow time for ideas to settle and evolve.

Findings and outcomes

The findings of this project reveal that sustainable improvement in Mathematics begins not with tools, but with shared understanding. While the original intention was to refine and systematise existing learning continuums, implementation demonstrated that staff required greater clarity about what a continuum is and how it functions instructionally before refinement could occur.

The most significant outcome was the impact of the Consultation Group model. Rather than mandating compliance, time was invested in collaboratively mapping assessment data to the Place Value continuum and co-constructing a Multiplicative Thinking continuum. This process resulted in 100% of Consultation Group members identifying learning continuums as valuable tools for planning, assessment, and goal setting.

Two out of three members reported a substantial shift in their understanding (4/5 on a Likert scale), describing new insight into developmental "through-lines" across year levels and a move away from checklist thinking.

Whole-school survey data further reinforced this direction, with 65% of staff identifying learning continuums as the professional learning most likely to strengthen Mathematics teaching in 2026.

Although measurable student impact is emerging rather than conclusive, the project has strengthened teacher clarity, surfaced structural barriers within PLCs, and secured leadership commitment for Mathematics as a 2026 priority. Most importantly, it established a sustainable pathway: embedding learning continuums within PLC cycles to drive differentiation, coherence, and collective efficacy.

Figure 1. In what areas of teaching do you see yourself or your team using Learning Continuums in 2026?

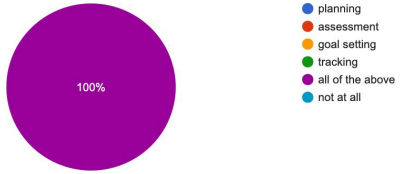

Figure 2.

M, T, W, Th,	F	M, T, W, Th, F	T	T, W, Th, F	
Aquisition: Part, Part Whole understanding for numbers beyond 6	**Aquisition:** Doubling (and halving) that bridge ten using make to ten and base 5	**Aquisition:** Revise Doubling and Halving that bridges 10 using make to 10 and Base 5. Move Quickly into Doubling teen numbers.	**Aquisition:** Double teen numbers using Round to the nearest 10, Split strategy and Base 5 and Base 10	**Aquisition:** Revise double teen numbers using Round to the nearest 10, Split strategy and Base 5 and Base 10. Move quickly into connecting double and half to 2x, /2	**Aquisition:** 8 as a multiplier and visor using Double, double, then, double and Half, half, then, half or other derived strategies
Fluency: Part, Part, Whole Subitising cards, Part, Part, whole cards 0 - 6	**Fluency: Part, Part Whole Cards** **Double and Halve cards 0-5**	**Fluency: Double and Halve Cards 0-10Part, Part whole cards (Base 5)**	**Fluency: Double and halve cards 0-10** **Part, Part whole cards (Base 5)**	**Fluency: Double and Halve cards 0-20** **Moving into 2x, /2**	**Fluency: 4x, 2x, /4, /2 cards**

Figure 3.

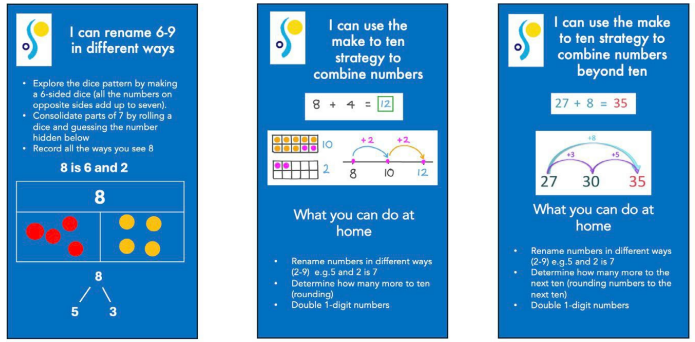

Figure 4.

Figure 1: End of year staff buy in
Figure 2: Continuum use in a MTSS space
Figure 3: Student Goal Magnets – School to home connections
Figure 4: Continuum as a reflection tool

Jodie Dahlstrom, Seaford Park Primary School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

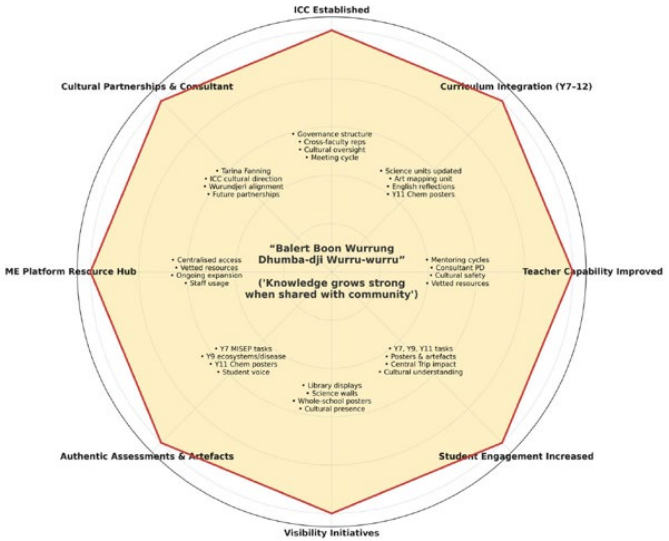
An Indigenous Integration Framework; Building whole-school cultural integrity, teacher capability, and curriculum change

Overview

This project established and implemented an Indigenous Integration Framework to address the absence of a coherent, culturally safe, whole-school approach to embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives at ELTHAM College. Prior practice was inconsistent and often symbolic, limited by low staff confidence and uncertainty around cultural protocols. Through the creation of an Indigenous Consultative Committee (ICC), partnership with Indigenous consultant Tarina Fanning, cross-faculty curriculum co-design (Science, English, Art), targeted professional learning, and increased cultural visibility (library, displays, resources), the project shifted Indigenous integration from isolated initiatives to a system-level, sustainable framework aligned to the Victorian Curriculum, Marrung Strategy, and the school's RAP direction.

Key learnings

> Sustainable Indigenous integration requires structures, governance, and shared ownership for authentic curriculum integration.
> Co-design across faculties builds consistency, capability, and collective efficacy.
> Visibility normalises Indigenous knowledge and strengthens student engagement.
> Leading this work requires adaptive leadership and relational trust.
> Indigenous perspectives are not an add-on, but core to curriculum integrity.



Findings and outcomes

> Increased teacher capability: staff PL data show strong gains in confidence and clarity around culturally safe practice.
> Measurable student impact (Years 7, 9, 11): improved understanding of Indigenous science and valuing of Indigenous knowledge systems.
> High-quality implementation: Evidence of fidelity and acceptability across Science, English and MISEP units.
> Stronger cultural visibility: Library collections, displays and student work increased everyday engagement.
> System-level change: The ICC now functions as ongoing governance and the Framework is embedded in school processes.
> Scalable model: A phased plan supports expansion across faculties and long-term sustainability

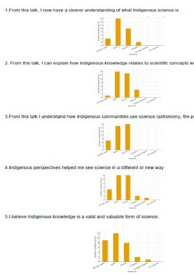


Fig 1: Student Impact

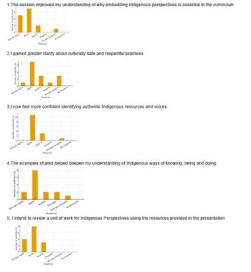


Fig 2: Staff Learning Impact

Fig 3: Indigenous Integration Framework

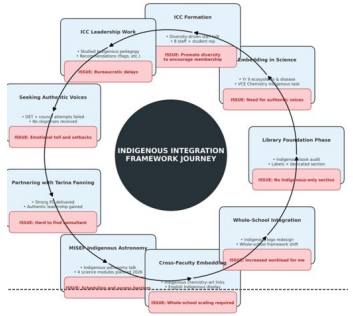


Figure 4: Framework Journey / Challenges

Photo 4 Year 11 Literacy Display on Post Colonialism

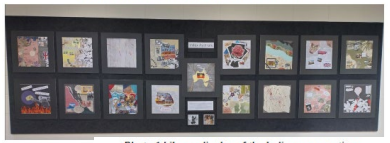


Photo 1 Library display of the Indigenous section

Photo 2 Labelling Indigenous Books

Photo 3 Year 11 Indigenous Chemistry Posters

Figure 5: Cultural Visibility

This project demonstrates that whole-school structures, culturally grounded partnerships, and deliberate capability-building can shift Indigenous integration from symbolic inclusion to sustained, high-impact practice improving student learning, strengthening teacher confidence, and embedding reconciliation into the everyday life of a school.

Dr Lakshmi Sharma, ELTHAM College

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Enhancing Teacher Capacity in Emerging Technologies

Overview

Technology is ever-changing, so teachers need to meet it where it is in order to truly be lifelong learners. In the context of our college, this is an issue that needed to be addressed to reduce cognitive load and maximise access for Digital Learning. Loyola College, a co-ed Catholic school of roughly 1475 students located in Watsonia, is a Microsoft Lighthouse School and adopted SchoolBox as a Learning Management System in 2015. As SchoolBox rolled out its updates and the dawn of AI was breaking, staff were left uncertain as to the best practices when approaching Digital Learning. Following the introduction of the TEP program and the establishment of the Head of Digital Learning role, the organisation initiated work to integrate these areas through the TIF, with a focus on strengthening teacher capability in emerging technologies and increasing student access to digital learning opportunities.

Key learnings

- Research showed that the most impactful methods for teacher training were peer coaching and micro-credentials. However, to avoid over utilisation of peer coaches within the college context, micro credentials became the main focus of the TIF project, using SchoolBox's Online Learning Course (OLC).
- Data is the backbone of sustaining any lasting change. By bookending professional learning with surveys, incorporating a Digital Learning section into the Student Perception survey and tracking user data, "capacity" is a measurable metric.
- The scope and aims of the ICT PL needed to shift and adapt to meet the changing needs arising due to technological advances. The proliferation of AI into both student submissions and staff feedback required quick, decisive shifts to cater to the needs of the college.

Findings and outcomes

The project began as a plan to roll out peer coaching accompanied with an online course that awarded micro credentials to staff so they could facilitate their own learning journey. The reality of the project was quite different.

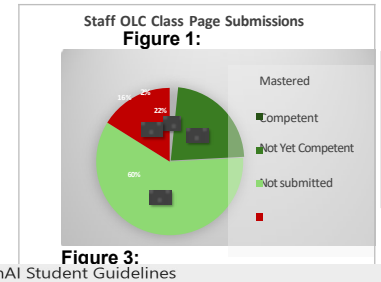
Obviously, the best time of the year to engage staff with enhancing their digital learning capabilities and confidence would be right at the beginning.

However, the rigid nature of the PD program coupled with the busy schedule that teachers face in their day-to-day work lives meant that the ICT PL plan needed to take a back seat in preference for solving other, more urgent problems.

As issues arose regarding student authenticity of work and teachers using artificial intelligence for feedback writing, the project needed to incorporate AI as a focus point to be addressed urgently rather than in the ICT PL sessions.

Guided by the *Australian framework for Gen AI in schools* and MACS instruction we developed our college specific guidelines which were rolled out in an awareness campaign to students and staff. Data showed that information uptake was high initially and consistent thereafter, indicating a success for the campaign.

SchoolBox's OLC proved fruitful also, with staff feedback predominantly positive. Staff received feedback of their own for their submissions, which had the pleasant side effect of supporting a consistent feedback structure being rolled out by faculties.



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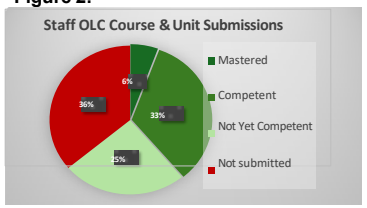

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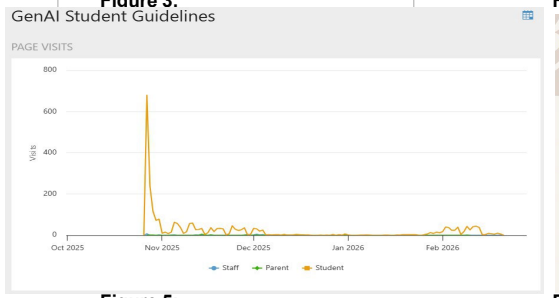

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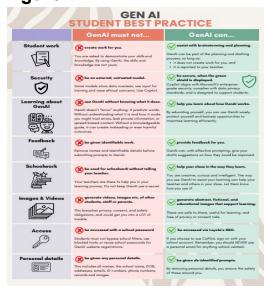

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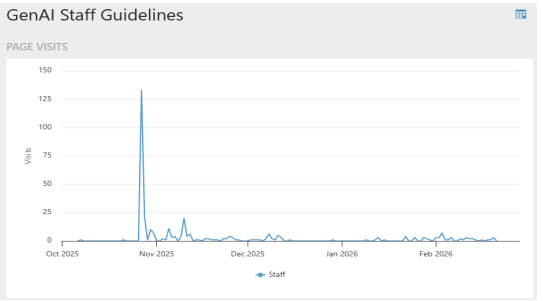

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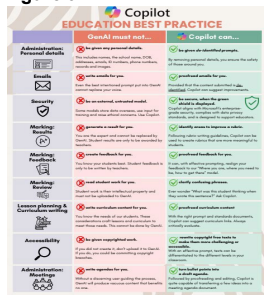

Figure 6:

Figure 1: Staff completion rates and results of the OLC *submit a class page* assessment
Figure 2: Staff completion rates and results of the OLC *submit a course and Unit* assessment
Figure 3: Visit statistics for the *GenAI Student Guidelines* page **Figure 4:** The *GenAI Best Practice* student guidelines poster **Figure 5:** Visit statistics for the *GenAI Staff Guidelines* page **Figure 6:** The *GenAI Best Practice* staff guidelines poster

Jason van Leest, Loyola College

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

Tech School Curriculum Co-Design

Overview

Students deserve learning opportunities in the careers of the future. We co-design programs that break down barriers between students, STEM and industry.

Being told I can't, or that it doesn't work, makes me want to try it more.

My gut told me that as much as Tech Schools are engaging and exemplars of STEM teaching, Industry relevance, and high-impact classroom practice, the nature of the connection between partner schools and Tech Schools makes the Tech School learning siloed. There is little connection between a Tech School program and a cohort of teachers or students back in the classroom. The data collected by both the Department of Education, and me supported this.

So, with vision in mind, I collected a group of partner school staff to help me co-design a unit of work that would cross the lines between Tech School and classroom, and be suited to context, cohort, and collaboration.

Key learnings

The learning could be split between my position, and my team's position. The team I assembled from partner school staff learned about each other's contexts, planning, and approaches, and became champions of the Tech School, confidently vocal about their school's partnership. I learned how to lead, guide, and mentor without holding so tightly to the reins, how powerful it is to set the context and vision early, and how to allow a collaborative space where the whole team has voice and agency.

My key takings from the project are:

- Hold the project lightly; allow others to take it and run with it with minimal interference.
- Preparation on the foundational work provides enough clarity for the team to 'be let loose'.
- There is a hunger for more student influence, but fear of student influence.

Findings and outcomes

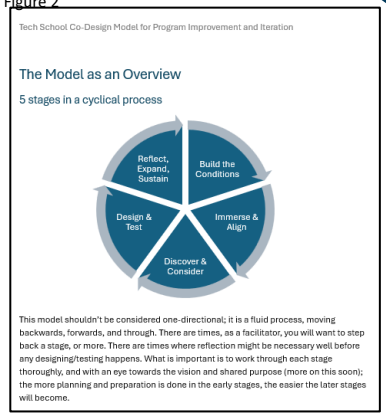
First, it is hard to be definite about student outcomes and growth, having only taken one prototype group through the program. Timing, timetables, and conflicting duties means that the bulk of the testing, the collection of student data, and the analysis of said data, will happen after the end of the TIF. The nature of the Tech School is such that the program is only now on offer to partner schools in 2026. Since I am not at Gippsland Tech School to continue and sustain the project, I am trusting in other staff to see it succeed, with support from school leadership and other staff, and our new partner school champions who co-designed the unit.

What has been produced, and collated, is nothing short of amazing. The goal was to take Tech School resources and knowledge and apply them to opportunities in partner school classrooms to extend and deepen student understanding of the key Science concepts. The unit created – with full lesson plans, student handouts, and assessment – achieves that, at least according to the test group. The Tech School day program is now reflective of the learning done in class, and allows students to apply their understanding in practical, hands-on activity, alongside representatives of local industry (Energy Australia), who partnered with us in the planning of the unit.

The secondary outcome to the project is the model of working, the 'how' of the project. This includes the steps taken, the processes used, the methodology and, more importantly, the reasoning. This was shown at the Tech Schools Branch end-of-year forum, presented to the rest of the network, DE representatives, and external partners, with other Tech Schools showing interest in following the process in their own contexts. After all, that's what the co-design model is about: working in contexts, with stakeholders who understand their students and their needs. My work for the next 6 months is to distil that learning into something useful to others: a working model that shares the project more widely.

Figure 1

Figure 2



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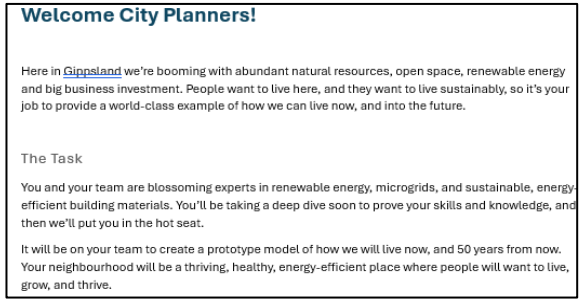

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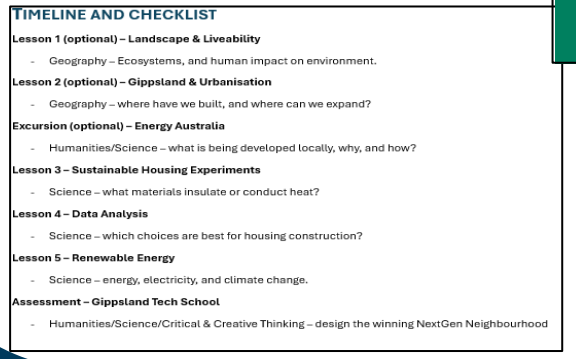

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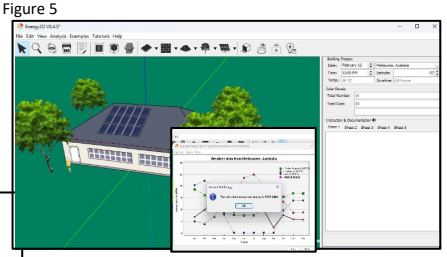

Figure 1 – Presentation made to the STEM Centres Education Network Conference 2025 Figure 2 – A Model of Practice under development for distribution to a broader context Figure 3 – Student handout brief. Figure 4 – Unit outline Figure 5 – Energy3D work sample (inset: energy analysis of student design)

Philip Thomas, Gippsland Tech School

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Teaching Impact Fellowship

SPARK

Overview

Students Promoting Achievement, Respect and Kindness (SPARK) is a comprehensive well-being and student leadership initiative at Mount Waverley Primary School in Melbourne. Developed in response to Attitudes to School Survey data that indicated variability in students' sense of belonging and peer respect, SPARK aims to strengthen connections and respectful relationships.

As a Physical Education specialist and well-being lead, I designed and implemented SPARK to empower students to actively shape school culture. The initiative addresses the challenge of integrating well-being beyond isolated lessons through consistent language, shared experiences, student voice, and social connections across year levels.

SPARK engages student leaders, teachers, and school leadership through explicit teaching and collaborative activities, underpinned by evidence from student feedback and survey data. The program seeks to establish sustainable, student-led well-being practices that enhance connection, belonging, and collective responsibility within the school community.

Key learnings

(1) Start with connection before content

Wellbeing initiatives gain traction when relationships come first. Investing time in building trust, shared language and a sense of psychological safety with students and staff created the conditions for SPARK to succeed. Explicitly teaching connection and belonging, rather than assuming knowledge of these, helped students understand *why* their actions mattered.

(2) Empower students through genuine leadership, not token roles

SPARK was most effective when students were positioned as co-creators of school culture. Giving students real responsibility, choice and voice increased engagement, ownership and accountability. Clear expectations, modelling and reflection supported students to lead with confidence and empathy.

(3) Embed wellbeing through consistent routines and reflection

Sustainable impact came from embedding SPARK into regular practice rather than one-off events. Consistent structures, shared experiences and opportunities for reflection helped reinforce learning and allowed staff to adapt the program responsively using student voice and wellbeing data.

Findings and outcomes

SPARK was implemented as a Tier 1 well-being initiative to strengthen student connections, respectful relationships, and help-seeking through consistent, mixed-age House group experiences. This project addressed a multi-year decline in well-being indicators from 2021 to 2024 and highlighted staff feedback on well-being practices.

From 2024 to 2025, SPARK utilised shared lesson templates, social-emotional skill teaching, structured reflection, and student leadership development. Year 6 students were empowered as leaders, while teachers received support through modelling and ready-to-use resources. Continuous feedback loops enabled responsive adaptations.
Key challenges included varied teacher confidence and a need for clearer scaffolding for student leadership, which were addressed through predictable routines and leadership micro-lessons.

Impact data revealed significant improvement: respectful peer behaviour rose from 47% to 66% (+19%), teachers' awareness of student issues increased from 60% to 71% (+11%), and confidence in seeking help grew from 73% to 79% (+6%).
Though SPARK is no longer implemented in its original form, its greatest impact lies in the system-level learning it generated, enhancing staff capability and shaping my leadership in sustainable well-being change beyond a single program.

1.1

Framework Factor AToSS Results	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Students at this school treat each other with respect	71%	53%	52%	47%	66% **(19% ⬆)**
My teacher seems to know if something is bothering me	64%	48%	61%	60%	71% **(11% ⬆)**
I know who to ask for help at this school	90%	82%	71%	73%	79% **(6% ⬆)**

1.2

1.3

1.1 – AToSS progress leading to SPARK's development
1.2 – SPARK Session Themes -The 16 SPARK themes align with our **school values**, embed key **Resilience Project** principles, and reflect **student voice**. Together, they create a shared language for wellbeing, behaviour, connection and belonging across the school.
1.3 – SPARK Leader Training - Training Year 6 student leaders to confidently facilitate SPARK sessions, model school values, and support connection and belonging across the school community.

Chris Goldstraw, Mount Waverly Primary School